

First to Third Grade

GOD'S HEROES: FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY!

Day: Monday

1st-3rd Grade

Theme: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego remain faithful

Lesson 1: *God saves 3 faithful young men from the fire*

Bible reference: Daniel 3:1-12 (13-28)

Memory verse: Daniel 3:28

Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. Dan. 3:28ab (NRSV)

OBJECTIVE

God frees us of the danger if we are faithful

PREPARATION

- *Seek God's direction in prayer, asking Him to give you wisdom and the right words so that students will understand the objective of this class.*
- *Pray also for children that you will have in your class, so that the Holy Spirit would move in the hearts of those with needs.*
- *Dedicate time to prepare class. Read the passage, keeping in mind the biblical and cultural background (Daniel 1 and 2).*
- *Read the Bible passage many times so that you are very familiar with the plot that reveals the story of these faithful young men of God.*
- *When possible, bring an illustrated Bible to the class and share the pictures with the children.*
- *Rehearse the class many times to measure the timing, using visual aids related to the class for support. If you'd like, you may use a flannel board. If you chose to do so, have the characters ready in the order in which they appear in the story.*
- *If there is enough time, you can act out the story with the children, allowing them to participate on the spot.*
- *Obtain all of the materials that you will use (pictures, flannel board, or dresses).*

- *Prepare the memory verse in a visual way (poster board, markers or figurines). Learn it well so that the students see your example, and if possible, keep the text in the classroom every day.*
- *Prepare the materials and have them ready to be used exactly the way you want them. For this class we suggest the following:*

MATERIALS

- *Images of:*
 - *The furnace*
 - *The Golden Statue*
 - *The king Nebuchadnezzar.*
- *Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (these images are included)*
- *Red and Yellow cellophane strips taped to the end of a stick or cardboard strip to represent a torch.*
- *Activity sheet, drawing of an angel (included). Option: cotton and aluminum foil.*

Optional Activities

- *Activity sheet, included at the end*

BIBLICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

The people of Israel had been conquered by Babylon, and King Nebuchadnezzar sent for "young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace" (Daniel 1:4, NIV); "children in whom was no blemish, but well favored, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace" (Daniel 1:4 KJV).

It was the tradition of the conquerors at that time to impose the customs, religion and traditions on the conquered people.

The king's objective for bringing these young men to the palace was to make them faithful servants, not only to the king, but also to the gods of Babylon. It should be said that because of their good behavior, the king had made them administrators of the provinces of Babylon, and therefore their commitment to the king was greater.

INTRODUCTION

- *Start with a welcome and introduce all of the children, including those from the church. Let them know how happy you are to have them in your class to learn more about God.*
- *You can sing (or teach) a welcome song (if possible, write it using large letters and use a few illustrations related to the song to facilitate memorization).*
- *Give each child a name tag and take attendance. (use angels figures)*
- *Present the general theme of the VBS: **God's Heroes: From Ordinary to Extraordinary!** Then present the title of the lesson: **God saves from the fire 3 faithful young men***
- *Say a prayer for each of the children present and for those who will later come to the class.*

Practice the memory verse, Daniel 3:28 " Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him. Dan. 3:28ab (NRSV)

TEACHING THE CLASS

- *Ask if anyone knows what a furnace is*
- *Explain what a furnace is and show the picture of it.*
- *Ask if anyone has ever gotten burned before.*

Today I am going to tell you a nice Bible history. It is about 3 Jewish young men named Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. One day the soldiers of a foreign king led them to live in a very distant place called Babylon. The king was Nebuchadnezzar. He give orders to make a golden statue (*show them the figure*) in order that they all incline in the presence of it and adore it. When his workers finished it his soldiers shouted: "This is what you are commanded to do, O peoples, nations and men of every language: As soon as you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, lyre, harp, pipes and all kinds of music, you must fall down and worship the image of gold that King Nebuchadnezzar has set up. Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace." (Daniel 3: 4-6). This order was indisputable because the king had given it. (*Show the picture of the furnace*) and say to them: do you know what happens to the things or persons that come in direct contact with the fire? *Take the pretend torch you created with the cellophane strips*

and help the children pretend that it is real fire. Help the children to think what would happen if that torch would touch some sheets of paper, or a dry tree, or even would touch a person's skin. Tell them about the way the fire would consume those objects.

Knowing what the punishment was, as soon as they heard the music, all of the people bowed down and worshipped the golden statue. But the Bible says that these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, did not do it. So the astrologers went before the king and said to him, "Your Majesty has given the order that all of the people of the nation bow down and worship the statue, and that whoever does not follow the order will be thrown into the fiery furnace." And your Majesty has put Jews in charge to govern the province of Babylon, and they have not followed your order - they do not worship the statue.

When he heard this, the king became very angry and he sent for them. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood in front of the king and the king said to them, "I have heard that you do not honor or worship my gods, nor the statue that I had made. Now when you hear the music, you had better bow down and worship the gold statue that I made or I will send you to be thrown into the furnace, and there will not be a god capable of freeing you from my hands." Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego responded that they did not need to defend themselves from the king, and they replied confidently, "If we are thrown into the fiery furnace, the God that we serve can free us from the furnace and from your Majesty's own hands. But even if our God does not, know that we will not honor your gods or the statue."

The king was furious. He ordered that the furnace be heated seven times hotter and that they be thrown into it. The furnace was so hot that when the soldiers threw in the three young men, whose feet and hands were tied, the heat itself killed the soldiers who were throwing the youth into the fire.

The king, anxious to see how they were burning, leaned out to see, and in that moment he asked his messengers "Weren't there three men that were tied and thrown into the fire?" The counselors replied that there were. Shocked, the king said, "Look! I see four men in the fire, without ropes and unharmed, and the fourth man has the appearance of a god."

Then he went to the furnace door and ordered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to come out. When they did, all of the satraps, governors, judges

and magistrates went up to them and saw that the fire had not harmed them— not even one of their hairs had been burned, and they did not even smell like smoke.

So king Nebuchadnezzar said, "Glory to the God of these men, who sent an angel to save them. They trusted in Him and challenged a royal order, preferring to die before honoring and worshiping other gods that were not theirs."

And he gave them even higher positions in the province of Babylon.

Talk to children about how the power of God can do all things and how He uses His children to show His glory.

Through these young men, God showed His power before the king and all of the governors, and what's more, he made them conquerors by not fearing what could have happened in the furnace. (In Christ we are more than conquerors).

REFLECTING ON THE PASSAGE

Ask the children the following questions to help them participate and analyze the theme.

- What was King Nebuchadnezzar's order? Worship the golden statue
- What was the punishment for anyone who did not obey? to be thrown into the furnace
- Who disobeyed the order given by the king? Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. Remind the children that these three young men feared God and trusted completely in Him.
- What happened in the fiery furnace? The king saw four persons in it.
- Why didn't Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego get burned, even though the soldiers that threw them into the furnace were caught by the flames and died? *Emphasize that God loves those who are faithful and obedient to His commandments, even when in danger or in a difficult situation. Having faith does not mean that everything will always turn out right, but if we trust in God, everything that happens to us will be for our good.*
- How did the king react when he saw Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego without ropes and unharmed inside the furnace? He changes his attitude and he worship to God.

Help your students see how God uses His children to do extraordinary things so that others will know Him in the world.

APPLYING THE MESSAGE

God saved Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego by sending an angel to take care of them and they come out unhurt. These young men remained faithful to God. When we place our trust in God, we never will be let down. God is always ready to help us, doing extraordinary things with people like these young men, people like you or me. Because of it we must be faithful to God no matter what are the circumstances that surround us. We must not be afraid, just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were firm in their faith. They knew that God can save them. God ordered an angel to protect them from the fire. They were not hurt because they did not bow down before the statue but rather trusted in God. God free them of the flames of the furnace.

Option One:

Decide if you have enough room in your classroom for the students to play this game, or if you have to go elsewhere to play it. You can modify the number of children involved in each team according to class size.

Create groups of seven students. Tell them that two students will be the fire, four of those students will be the angels and one of them would be of the faithful young men from the story. The four angels will hold hands and will form a circle around the one young man. The angels will form a circle in such a way that they are turned to look outside the circle, with their backs to the young man in the middle of the circle. The two students that are the fire will try to touch the young person in the middle of the circle and the angels, without letting go of their partner's hand, will try to keep the fire away from the person they're protecting. Let the students play for a while and then allow them to change their role in the game. Let them play as long as your timeline permits.

Emphasize when you are done with the game that God protected Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego because they were faithful. Remind them what the

young men said to the king before being thrown into the fire: "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up." Daniel 3:17-18. They did not know how exactly God would do this (that is, free them or how God would free them). However, they decided to be faithful to God, never doubting that God would do God's will one way or another.

Option Two

Ask the students to complete the alphabet soup worksheet to find the memorized verse.

CONCLUSION

If you want to be a faithful child, ask God to help you behave as God wants you to. Believe in him and he will never leave you. Having faith does not mean that everything will be OK. We have to take action and stay faithful and God will be in charge that all things will turn out as God wants them for our benefit. God takes care of us. God delivers us from danger. Always praise God. Of ordinary people, God makes extraordinary people!

Prepare the children whom God has chosen to accept Christ this week. Tell the class: God loves you so much! God wants to help and bless you. When you come to church you learn more and more about God's love. We hope that what you learn this week will help you feel that love, and will allow you to deepen your relationship with God. Let's ask God to fill us with gratitude for his love.

Conclude the class with a brief prayer, asking that the children repeat after you.

1st – 3rd Grade

Alphabet Soup

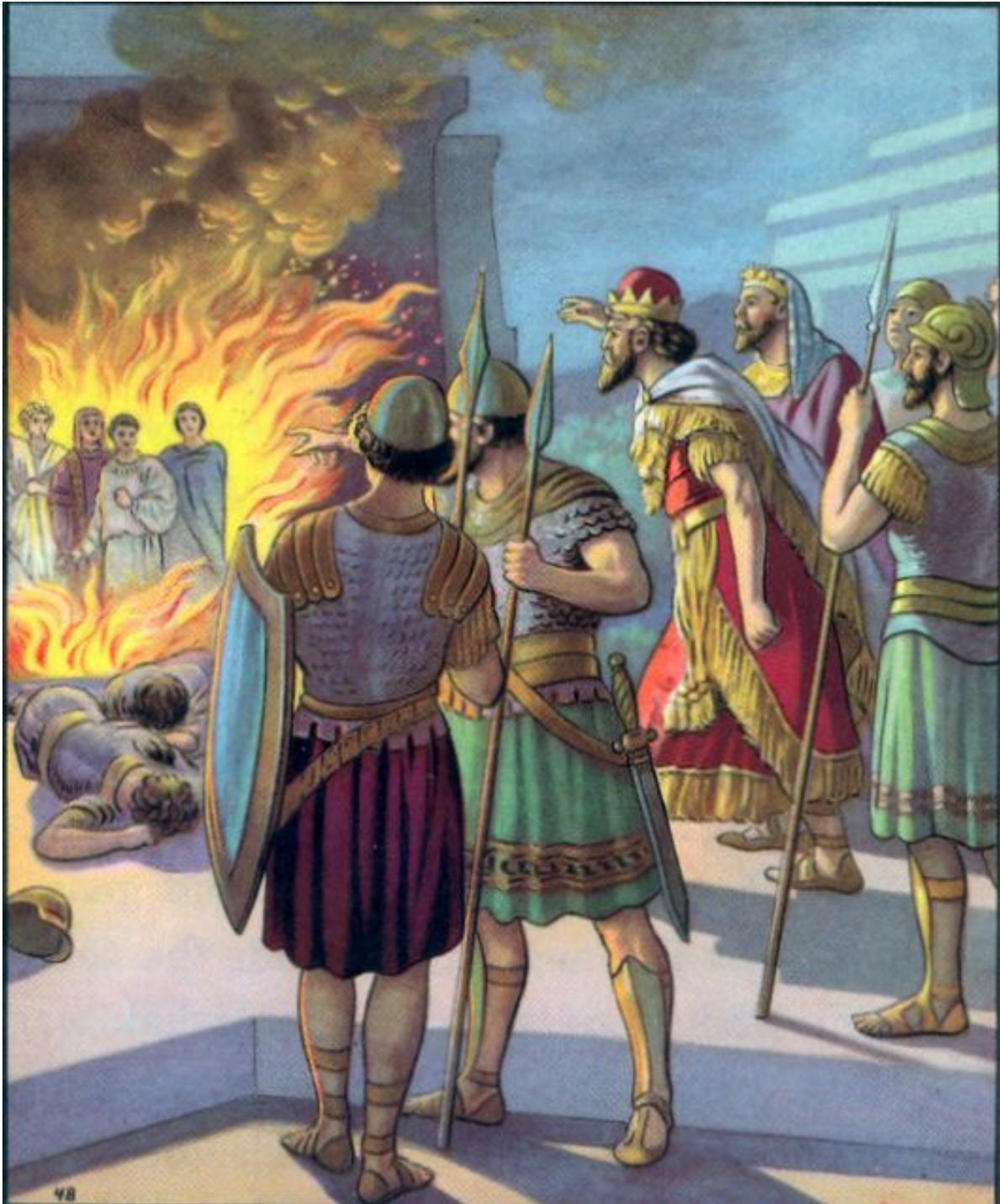
“Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent his angel and delivered his servants who trusted in him.” Daniel 3:28

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Write the text

_____, _____, _____, _____

Daniel 3: 28



Source:

<http://www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/Pictures/Standard%20Bible%20Story%20Readers.%20Book%20Four/target22.html>

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God's Heroes: From Ordinary to Extraordinary...

Héroes de Dios: De Ordinario a Extraordinario...

Joseph Interprets Dreams

Day One **1st to 3rd Grade**

THEME:	God makes us extraordinary when God gives us different gifts.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Genesis 41:1-28 (29-37) 38-40.
MEMORY VERSE:	We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. Rom. 12:6a

Objective	Children will identify their talents and ways in which they may use them to honor God as Joseph did.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read the Bible story of Joseph and the Pharaoh's dreams in Genesis 41:1-40.• Familiarize yourself with previous stories of Joseph from childhood through his imprisonment in Egypt.• Think about the talents God has given you and how you share them.• Gather materials needed to present Joseph's story.• There is more than enough material to fill a twenty-minute session. Please select from the discussion questions and activities to provide a meaningful experience for the children.
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pillow• Small quantities of various grains, such as oats, corn, wheat, and rice• A map of the world• Crayons and paper• Pictures of cows and grain• Vocabulary Words:• Interpret, Pharaoh, famine, immigrant, talent

Introduction

Greet the group. Let the young people know how happy you are to be there with them. Make them feel welcome and happy to be learning about God.

Meanwhile hand out nametags to the students and write their names on a list.

Open the class with prayer, giving thanks to God for the opportunity of being together and also ask God to give students understanding and open up their hearts and minds so they may apply God's teaching for the day.

Memory verse is Rom. 12:6a: We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

Hold the pillow to your head and tell the children a dream you've had.

Ask the children to share a confusing or scary dream they've had. Have them identify who helps them after a scary or confusing dream.

Introduce today Bible hero, Joseph the Interpreter of Dreams. Be sure to define the word "interpreter".

Studying the Bible passage

Background:

Joseph was the youngest son of Jacob. His mother was Rachel. Joseph had many brothers, but he was his father's favorite child. Jacob showed his favoritism by presenting Joseph with a fine coat of many colors. Joseph's brothers were jealous and resentful of their youngest brother. Joseph had powerful dreams about becoming a great ruler and he shared these dreams and his interpretation with his family. This did not improve his popularity with his brothers. His brothers got even by throwing him into a well. They plotted to kill him, but sold him to traveling merchants from another region instead.

Joseph was sold in Egypt and became a slave to Potiphar, an official of the Pharaoh. Joseph worked hard for his master. Potiphar recognized that Joseph had great faith and that God was with him. Potiphar gave Joseph greater responsibilities and they prospered. Potiphar's wife unfairly accused Joseph of wrongdoing and Joseph was imprisoned.

In prison, Joseph interpreted the dreams of two of the Pharaoh's servants. These dreams came true. It was the Pharaoh's cupbearer who remembered Joseph's talent in today's story.

Passage:

- 1. Show the children where this story is located in the Bible.*
- 2. Gather them together and tell them the story in your own words. Be sure to describe the dreams fully and to dramatize the Pharaoh's confusion and alarm about these dreams. Include how his advisors were unable to make any sense of these dreams. Include the cupbearer's account of his dream and how accurate Joseph's interpretation was.*
- 3. Break from the story and ask the children what ideas they have about the Pharaoh's dreams and who can help him.*
- 4. Continue the story with Joseph's interpretation of the dreams. Be sure to stress how Joseph honored God by telling the Pharaoh that God will help him interpret the dreams. (Verse 25)*
- 5. Finish the story with Joseph's "reward" from Pharaoh and how the people of Egypt all were helped because Joseph used his talents to help others. Joseph's plan to store food in preparation for a famine makes him a hero to the people.*

Reflecting on the Bible passage

- 1. Joseph's talent was the ability to interpret dreams. Share a talent you have and ask the children to name a talent they have. Be prepared to help them identify these from your observations of them in class.*
- 2. Discuss how Joseph shared his talent with others and gave God credit for his ability. Share how you use your talent to honor God and ask the children to think of talents they have and ways they can share their talents.*

Applying the Bible passage to our life

1. Show the children the map of the world and where Joseph lived during this story. Describe the geography of Egypt and the importance of the Nile River to the people as a water source. Ask the children what happens to the people when they do not have enough water to drink or grow food.

2. Pharaoh's dreams described 7 years of plenty followed by 7 years of famine. Thanks to Joseph, the people had saved food so that they could survive times when there was less food. This issue may be one these children are personally familiar with. Ask them how their families, friends, and villages take care of each other. Ask them what they can each do to help one another (such as not being wasteful in times of plenty).

3. Show the children the different kinds of grain and identify foods that can be prepared from them.

Activities:

1. Have the children draw a picture of one of the Pharaoh's dreams. Show a picture of a cow and a stalk of grain in case they do not know how they look.

2. Have the children re-enact any portion of this story.

Conclusion

God has special work for each one of us. God wants us to use the gifts that God gave us. God loves us a great deal. When you come to church you learn about the love of God, but you also learn that we human beings sin and that this becomes a barrier for our connection with God. This week, let's ask God to help us overcome that barrier through Jesus. In this way, we can use the gifts God has given us. *Conclude with prayer*

GOD'S HEROES: FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY!

Day: Wednesday

1st-3rd

Theme: Queen Esther Saves Her People.

Lesson 3: Esther the Brave Queen.

Bible reference: Esther 3:12-13, 4:1-17, 5:1-4, 7:1-6, 10

Memory verse: Esther 4:14

For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this? Est.4:14 (NIV) (use all or part of the verse).

OBJECTIVE

The student will know the story of Queen Esther, be able to tell about her bravery in defending her people, and will identify God's response to His people's fast.

PREPARATION

- *Seek God's direction in prayer, asking Him to give you wisdom and the right words so that students will understand the objective of this class.*
- *Pray also for the children that you will have in your class so that the Holy Spirit would move in the hearts of those with needs.*
- *For this class you will already know the children who have attended this week a little bit better; pray for them, especially for those you sense have the greatest needs. Ask the Lord to use you to help these children.*
- *Read the Bible passage many times so that you are very familiar with the plot that reveals the story of this young Jewish girl who would become queen.*
- *When possible, bring an illustrated Bible to the class and share the pictures with the children.*

- *Rehearse the class many times to measure the timing, using visual aids related to the class for support. Make your class enjoyable and try to make each class different from those before. This keeps the children interested. (Remember that we can use flannel boards, puppets, figurines, or whatever objects we have available-it's only a matter of imagination and creativity).*
- *If there is enough time, you can act out the story with the children, allowing them to participate on the spot.*
- *Obtain all of the materials that you will use (pictures, flannel board, or dresses).*
- *Prepare the memory verse in a visual way (poster board, markers or figurines, etc). Learn it well so that the students see your example, and if possible, keep the text in the classroom every day.*

MATERIALS

Directions for making a cardboard box T.V.:

1. Make a T.V. out of a cardboard box. Make a square-shaped hole for the screen (the size of an 8 1/2 x 11 inch piece of paper).

2. Make two holes in the top of the box and two holes in the bottom of the box-the top and bottom holes should be at the same position. Insert a paper tube (such as from a roll of aluminium foil) into the holes so that the tube goes in through the top of the box and comes out through the bottom.

3. Print the scenes (at the end of the document) and glue the scenes end-to-end. Roll the lesson (divided into picture scenes) around the left-hand tube, and glue the first scene onto the right side of the tube. As you show the lesson, spin the tube so that the paper moves toward the right side of the box.

The images for this activity are at the end of the document.

BIBLICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

This happened during the time of King Ahasuerus who ruled over 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush (Esther 1). Some Jews were dispersed and scattered among the people of the land ruled by King Ahasuerus (Esther 3:8).

At that time King Ahasuerus reigned from his royal throne in the citadel of Susa (Esther 1:2). There was in the citadel of Susa a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin named Mordecai who had been carried into exile from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon (Esther 2:5-6). Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, who was also known as Esther (Esther 2:7; 2:15). Even though both the parents of Esther passed away she was brought up by cousin Mordecai who had taken her as his own daughter (Esther 2:7).

Esther, descendant of the tribe of Benjamin, from the house of Israel, was beautiful, lovely in form and features. The book of Esther describes the time when all the Jews in the 127 provinces of kingdom of Ahasuerus got relief from their enemies with the help of Queen Esther.

The story revolves around king Ahasuerus. It was the third year of his reign when he gave a banquet for all his nobles and officials. One of those days King Ahasuerus was in high spirits, and he asked for Queen Vashti to be brought before him, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at. But Queen Vashti refused to come into the presence of the King.

As a consequence of the Queen's conduct King Ahasuerus consulted his experts in matters of Law and justice. He inquired about what must be done to Queen Vashti, for she had disobeyed a royal command. Foreseeing that the Queen's conduct would be known to all women in the Memucan kingdom, one of the wise advisors of the king predicted that women of the nobility would respond in the same way to all the nobles of the king.

Therefore, disrespect and discord amongst men and women would have no end in the kingdom. In this context, Memucan proposed that Vashti should never again enter the presence of king Ahasuerus, and that the King would give her royal position to someone else who was more worthy than she. As a result, all women would respect their husbands, from the least to the greatest.

The King and his nobles were pleased with this advice, so the king did as Memucan proposed. Beautiful girls were selected in every province of the kingdom. The one who pleases the king would become Queen instead of

Vashti. Once chosen, a girl had to complete 12 months of beauty treatment before she was taken to the presence of the King.

Esther was selected amongst the beautiful girls of the kingdom. She was put under care of Hegai, who was in charge of the women in the Harem at the citadel of Susa. Esther pleased him and won his favor. He took good care of her and moved her to the best place in the Harem. When the time came for Esther to go to the King she followed Hegai's advice. Esther won the favor of everyone who saw her. The King was attracted to Esther more than to any other woman, and she won his favor and approval. He set a royal crown on her head and made her Queen instead of Vashti.

In those days two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway conspired to assassinate King Ahasuerus. Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were hanged on a gallows. At this time Mordecai would not receive honor or recognition for saving the life of the king.

After these events, King Ahasuerus honored Haman, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles. The king commanded that all the royal officials at the king's gate should kneel down and honor Haman. This they did, except Mordecai, for he said he was a Jew. Haman was enraged because of the conduct of Mordecai and looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus. To do so Haman spoke to the King. Haman told king Ahasuerus about the existence of people in the kingdom whose customs were different from those of all the other people and who wouldn't obey the laws of the king. He persuaded king Ahasuerus into issuing a decree to destroy them.

From this moment on, Esther would use her gifts and wisdom to save all the Jews in the 127 provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus from those enemies who sought to annihilate them- young and old, women and children- in a single day.

INTRODUCTION

- *Welcome each child to the class and introduce the new children. Always demonstrate how happy you are to be with them again to continue learning about God.*

- *Sing the welcome song (if you taught one) and pass the attendance list.*
- *Don't forget to remind the students of the general theme of the VBS- "God's Heroes: From Ordinary to Extraordinary!"*
- *Review the verses you've already memorized and the titles of the previous classes.*
- *Present the title and key verse of today's class.*
- *Say a prayer for all of the children who have been blessed in coming to the VBS. Give thanks to God for what has been learned and for this lesson.*
- *Note: try to maintain eye contact with each student, preferably seating them in a semicircle.*

TEACHING THE CLASS

The Bible tells us the story of a young and very nice girl who was orphan (she did not have parents), but she had a cousin named Mordecai who took care of her and raised her. What do you think the life of a person who does not have parents is like? *Listen to children's comments.* They were living in a country very far from his and her mother land since they were Jewish, where there was a king called Ahasuerus. He was a king who had many friends. One day invited them to his palace to a great banquet.

This king during a party in his palace, called his queen Vashti in order that his friends meet her but she did not want to come to him. His friends advised him to take the throne from Vasti and to look for another woman in order that she may become his queen. Then the King chose Esther from among other women in order make her his queen, though he did not know that she belonged to the Jewish nation.

The king loved Esther more than any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti And the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his nobles and officials. He proclaimed a holiday throughout the provinces and distributed royalty gifts.

In the God's perfect plan she passed from being a simple orphan to occupying the royal throne. Her cousin told her that she should not declare her origin yet. Even though she was the queen, she was obeyed her cousin.

During that time Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate, and two of the king's officers who guarded the doorway became angry and conspired to assassinate King Ahasuerus. But Mordecai found out about the plot and told Queen Esther, who in turn reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai. And when the report was investigated and found to be true, the two officials were hanged on the gallows. All this was recorded in the book of the annals in the presence of the king.

But at this moment, Mordecai was not honored nor received recognition for saving the life of the king.

Haman was one of the King's officials. All the royal workers at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him homage. When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him homage, he was enraged. Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to destroy all Mordecai's people, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus. Then Haman said to King Ahasuerus, "There is a certain people dispersed and scattered among the peoples in all the provinces of your kingdom whose customs are different from those of all other people and who do not obey the king's laws; it is not in the king's best interest to tolerate them. If it pleases the king, let a decree be issued to destroy them, and I will put ten thousand talents of silver into the royal treasury for the men who carry out this business."

So the king took his signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews. "Keep the money," the king said to Haman, "and do with the people as you please."

Haman ordered an edict punishing the Jewish people because Mordecai would not pay homage to the king nor kneel before him. When Mordecai found out about this, he covered himself with ashes, put on clothes for mourning, and went out of the city shouting bitterly. Since no one was allowed to enter the palace dressed for mourning, he only made it to the king's door (he did this as a protest), and sent Hathach, a eunuch, (servant, employee) to tell Esther everything that was happening. *(Explain to the children that at that time the queen was not allowed to present herself before the king without being summoned, for it could cost her her life).* So Esther explained that she could not present herself before the king because she would be putting her life in danger, unless the king reached out with his scepter as a sign that he would

spare her life. When Mordecai heard this he reminded her that despite being the queen she was also part of the Jewish people, and that it was possible that God had put her there in order to do something for them. Esther sent word to Mordecai to gather all the Jews that were in Susa to pray and fast for her for three days, without eating or drinking anything. She would do the same, and at the end of the three days she would present herself before the king. It didn't matter to Esther that she would be risking her life-she was certain that God would hear the prayers of His people. Esther said that she would do this, even though it went against the law. She said, "If I die, then I die". So Mordecai did what Esther had asked. Esther put on her royal robes and presented herself before the king. She was asking for her people to be freed from death. When he saw her, the king reached out his scepter as a symbol of pardon. What's more, he asked her what her petition was, saying, "even if you ask for half of my kingdom I will give it you!" If it pleases your Majesty, come today to the banquet that I will give in your honor, and also bring Haman. The king immediately had Haman sent for in order to fulfill Esther's request. So the king and Haman attended the banquet given by Esther, and being there he asked her, "What is it that you want?" And he told her again that even if she asked for half of his kingdom he would give it to her. Esther replied, "My wish and petition, if I have earned your Majesty's favor, is that you and Haman come to the banquet that I will give tomorrow, and then I will give my answer." *(Remind the students that before Esther did all this, she had been praying and fasting along with Mordecai and the Jewish people).* "On the second day, the king and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet, and while they were enjoying themselves the king asked the queen again what her petition was. She replied, "If I have earned your Majesty's favor, and if it seems fitting to you, my wish is that you grant me my life. My petition is that you would have compassion on my people, because both I and my people have been sentenced to be extermination, death, and annihilation. If only we would have been sold as slaves I would have stayed quiet, for such anguish would not be motive for disturbing your Majesty. *(Show the children how Esther acted with humility before the king, even though she was the queen).* King Ahasuerus asked Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?. Esther said : Is Haman" Then the king answered as to what would be done with Haman. Haman was punished and sent to be hanged on the same gallows that had been prepared for Mordecai.

(Emphasize how God takes care of His children and gives us solutions to our worries and dangers).

REFLECTING ON THE PASSAGE

Esther acted with faith, along with her people, in prayer. Faith brings us to conviction, which brings us to action, which results in blessing. The result is up to God. Remember that God will not abandon us, and He always protects His people. Everything that happens is guided by Him and is for our good. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things, just as in this story He used Esther, who was just like you and me. She became queen and saved the lives of an entire people, and she accomplished all this by trusting in God.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 1

Act out the moment in which Esther speaks to the King while the people fasted. Choose a person to be Queen Esther and one to be King Ahasuerus. Bring some costumes, crowns, etc. Then ask the rest of the class to be the people of God, on their knees praying while Esther spoke with the King. Help the group take turns so that several or all the students get a chance to have the roles of Esther and Ahasuerus

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY 2

Complete the sentences at the end of the document.

APPLYING THE MESSAGE

Can you imagine what it must feel like to be orphaned with out parents to take care of you? Esther was an orphan but had a cousin who took care of her and taught her to trust in God. Esther completely trusted her cousin. When her cousin asked her to protect the Jewish people, she took a great risk to do so.

Have you ever obeyed your parents to do something that scared you, but since your parents were asking you to do it you did it anyway? Esther was not afraid to face the danger of speaking to the King without permission. The

rule was that if the king did not extend his scepter to her, she ran the risk of being executed by order of the king.

Have you ever prayed for God to help you when you had a big problem? Have you seen your parents pray when they had a big decision to make? God listens to the prayers of God's people. The story tells us of a special way of praying. It's called Fasting. Do you remember what I told you fasting was? It is not eating in order to focus on praying to God. It is a very special way of praying and God listens to these prayers because they show how serious the people who are praying are. God heard the cry of his people praying, and God made the king to extend his scepter towards Esther and therefore sparing her life. Esther not only accomplished this, but also got the king to order the Jews to be able to defend themselves and be saved. As a result, the Jewish people had light, joy, happiness and honor in a foreign land.

CONCLUSION

We need to imitate Esther's decision and courage, which brought peace and wellbeing. We need to be ready to help others. God will make us decisive, courageous and extraordinary people if we trust in God.

Do you want to be an extraordinary person? God makes ordinary people to become extraordinary, just like the lesson. God wants to be in your heart and make you a part of God's family.

I invite you to surrender your life to Christ, confess your sins, and ask God for forgiveness. *If you have a positive response from any children, ask them to stay for a moment and finish presenting the plan of salvation. If you can't do it yourself, ask another teacher for support in doing so. (If possible, get the full names and addresses of these children).*

Conclude the class with prayer, giving God thanks for Jesus and for the members of the class.

Lesson 3

1-3 Grade

A completar

Complete the following sentences

Ester era una joven _____

(Esther was a young woman...)

Asuero era un _____

(Ahasuerus was a ...)

Vasti fue _____

(Vashti was...)

Mardoqueo era tío de _____

(Mordecai was uncle of...)

_____ le tenía coraje a Mardoqueo

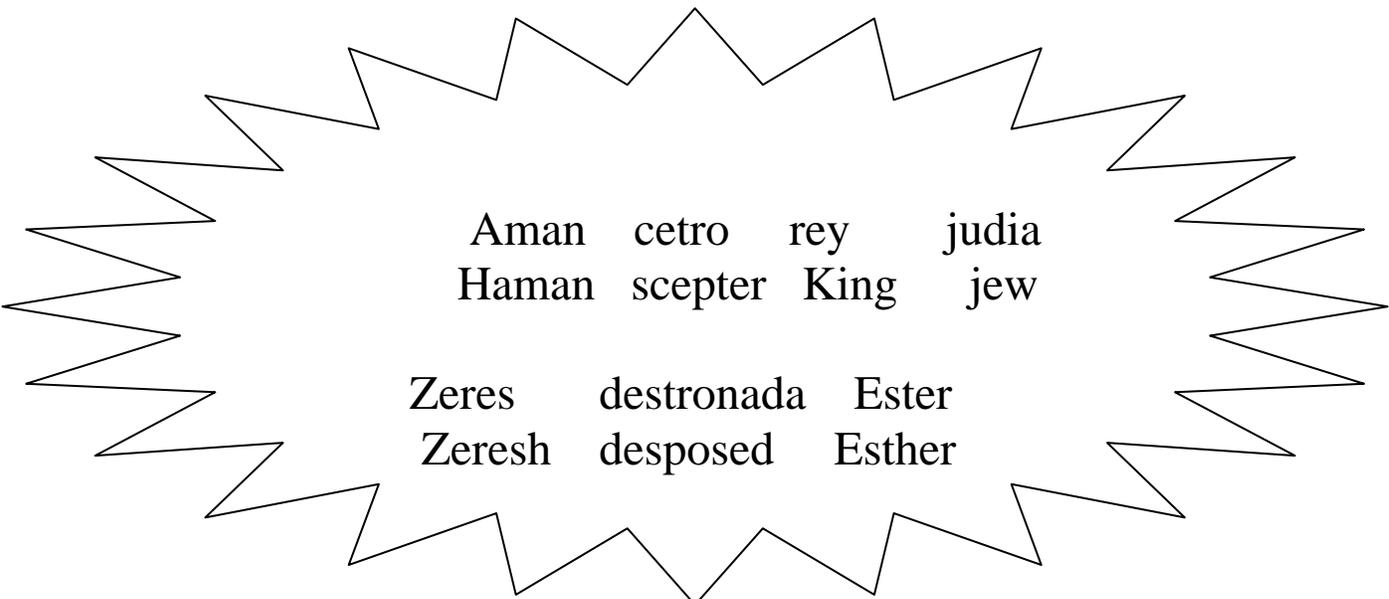
(... Was(has) anger to Mordecai)

la esposa de Aman se llamaba _____

(Haman's wife was...)

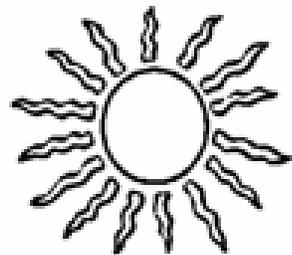
El rey le extendió el _____ a Ester

(the king held out the to Esther)

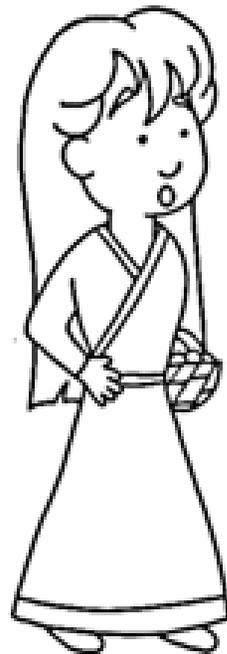


Aman cetro rey judia
Haman scepter King jew

Zeres destronada Ester
Zeresh desposed Esther



The King begins his search for a new Queen and even the young Jewish girl Esther must leave her home and move to the palace..



2

Esther packs her meager belongings and prepares to leave for the palace. She promises her uncle Mordecai to be on her best behaviour and to keep secret the fact that she is a Jew.



3

Esther arrives at the palace and meets Hegai who is responsible for helping the girls during the year they spend preparing for the King. Esther and Hegai soon become friends. Hegai provides her with small gifts and reassurance.



4



Finally Esther meets the King. He is taken with her beauty and gentleness and chooses to be his queen.

5

Mordecai overhears Bigthan and Terish plotting to kill the King. He quickly tells Esther who passes the word onto the King and saves him.



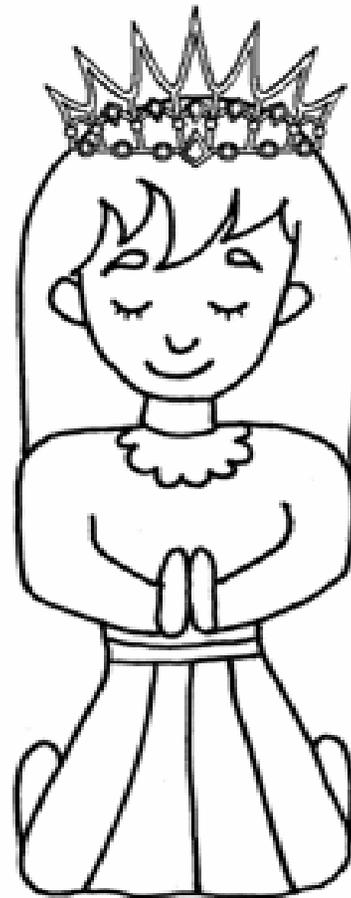
6

Haman, a cruel little man and one of the King's closest advisors was angry that Mordecai wouldn't bow to him. He listed all the "important things" he'd done for Persia, but Mordecai still refused. As revenge, Haman convinced the King to order the death of every Jew in the land.



7

Esther fasts and prays for three days and then gathers up the courage to go and see the King. She invites the King and Haman to a feast two nights in a row. At the second banquet she confesses that she is a Jew and foils Haman's plans to kill her people.



God's Heroes: From Ordinary to Extraordinary...

Héroes de Dios: De Ordinario a Extraordinario...

Mary prepares to serve God

Day Four **1st to 3rd Grade**

THEME:	God makes us extraordinary when God chooses us to do special things.
BIBLE PASSAGE:	Luke 1:26-38
MEMORY VERSE:	Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Lk.1:38

Objective	The children will see that Mary was a woman of faith, willing to serve God and be used for God's plan.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read Luke 1:26-38.• Reflect on the story from scripture as you prepare for the lesson and familiarize yourself with it.• Try to place yourself in Mary's position of being poor, unwed and female.
Material	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice telling the story.• Bible(s)• Flashlight• Cotton balls• Blindfolds• Ice cubes (if possible)• Small balls• Paper and crayons

Introduction

Welcome the children warmly. Hand out nametags to the students and write their names on attendance sheet.

Open the class with prayer, giving thanks to God for the opportunity of being together and also ask God to give students understanding and open up their hearts and minds so they may apply God's teaching for the day.

Ask children to raise their hands if they have ever been surprised by something so unusual that it grabbed their attention and maybe even startled them. Ask a few children to share what surprised them and how they felt when that happened. Were they afraid? Were they confused by what was happening?

Have the children show you their best "surprised faces" (mouths open, leaning back, hands raised, gasping...)

Tell them that you want to share a story from the bible about a woman who was surprised, yet showed great faith..

Studying the Bible passage

Read the story from the Bible-Luke 1:26-38

Ask them to tell you what the story tells us about Mary (female, from a town called Nazareth, engaged to be married to Joseph, virgin...)

How does Mary respond when the angel Gabriel says, "Greetings favored one! The Lord is with you? (Confused at first and wonders what it all means)

Once the angel explains that she will have a baby that will be the Son of the Most High (God), named Jesus and that he will reign forever, what does Mary say? (How can this be?) The angel goes on to explain that the Holy Spirit will be with her and the child will be born holy.

Now comes the most important thing that Mary does! She says: "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

Act out the story using 2 children (angel Gabriel and Mary). Have the angel use the flashlight to shine on Mary's face as he greets and surprises her.

Help the class memorize the passage for today: "Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Luke 1:38

Reflecting on the Bible passage

- 1. Have some of the children loosely place cotton in their ears (one cotton ball per child split in half will do), while others put on blindfolds. Ask the children to do a simple task that requires listening or seeing. (This will be difficult for them to obey and accomplish with the cotton and blindfolds). Ask them to return their attention to you and ask "how would the story be different if Mary had not been willing, even when she was afraid, to look at the angel and listen with her ears and heart to what message the angel was giving her?" (Mary would not have served God and God's plan would not have worked out in this way.) Have you ever ignored an important message from your parent or a teacher by pretending not to hear or see?*
- 2. Have the children sit cross-legged in a circle. Place an ice cube in the middle of the circle. As it melts, talk about how sometimes we are not willing to hear or see what our parents or teachers are telling us. Why is that? Are we afraid, too busy, angry, don't care or have trouble believing? If we have faith and obey willingly, all the reasons and excuses melt away like this ice cube and then we are ready to hear what God has planned for us.*

Applying the Bible passage to our life

Still in circle, tell the children: Mary was an ordinary young woman, not yet married who discovered that she was going to be the mother of Jesus, the Son of God! Mary had great faith in God

because she knew God, and knew God had done great things for her people. She was willing to be the Lord's servant saying "here am I".

Have the children place their hands on their knees with the palms down and close their eyes. Tell them that they are special to God and that God may choose them to do something special. Have them turn their palms up and say "Here am I, Lord help me to serve you."

Choose one of these activities:

- 1. Set the children up in teams for a relay, where a ball is passed through the line using their elbows only. Do the relay a second time, but while keeping the children in their spots, remove someone from the line and have them attempt to do the relay again. Illustrate the point that God needs us to serve on his team.*
- 2. Have them trace their hands on paper and write on the hands what makes them special and what things they can do to serve God. Put all the hands together and say that when we all use our gifts to serve God, extraordinary things can happen!*

Conclusion

We have learned the story of Mary today, an ordinary young woman who served God in an extraordinary way-bringing Jesus into the world. She was willing to serve God and to help carry out his plan. May we all be part of God's team, being willing to hear what God tells us and to serve him.

God loves you so much! With Jesus in your heart, you have a special relationship with Jesus. Let's ask God to help you continue to grow in your knowledge and love of Jesus.

Conclude with prayer.

**GOD'S HEROES:
FROM ORDINARY TO EXTRAORDINARY!**

Day: Friday

1st - 3rd

Topic: Peter walks on water.

Lesson 5: Peter takes up the challenge

Bible passage: Matthew 14:22-33

Line to memorize: Matthew 14:28

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." Mt 14:28 (NIV)

OBJECTIVE

Students will know the story of Peter walking on water when Jesus commanded it.

PREPARATION

- *Seek God's direction in prayer, asking Him to give you wisdom and the right words so that students will understand the objective of this class.*
- *Pray also for the children that you will have in your class that the Holy Spirit would move in the hearts of those with needs.*
- *For this class you will already know the children who have attended this week a little bit better; pray for them, especially for those you sense have the greatest needs. Ask the Lord to use you to help these children.*
- *Read the Bible passage many times so that you are very familiar with the plot that reveals the story.*
- *When possible, bring an illustrated Bible to the class and share the pictures with the children.*
- *Rehearse the class many times to measure the timing, using visual aids related to the class for support. Make your class enjoyable and try to make each class different from those before. This keeps the children interested. (Remember that we can use flannel boards, puppets, figurines, or whatever objects we have available-it's only a matter of imagination and creativity).*
- *If there is enough time, you can act out the story with the children, allowing them to participate on the spot.*
- *Obtain all of the materials that you will use (pictures, flannel board, or dresses).*

- Prepare the memory verse in a visual way (poster board, markers or figurines, etc). Learn it well so that the students see your example, and if possible, keep the text in the classroom every day.

MATERIAL

Directions for making a cardboard box T.V.:

1. Make a T.V. out of a cardboard box. Make a square-shaped hole for the screen (the size of an 8 1/2 x 11 inch piece of paper).
2. Make two holes in the top of the box and two holes in the bottom of the box-the top and bottom holes should be at the same position. Insert a paper tube (such as from a roll of aluminum foil) into the holes so that the tube goes in through the top of the box and comes out through the bottom.
3. Print the scenes (at the end of the document) and glue the scenes end-to-end. Roll the lesson (divided into picture scenes) around the left-hand tube, and glue the first scene onto the right side of the tube. As you show the lesson, spin the tube so that the paper moves toward the right side of the box.

For the introduction: a container with water and objects made from different materials, wood, plastic, paper, stone, tree leaves, etc.

For the memory verse, have a paper boat prepared for every student with the written text; they will be able to take it home at the conclusion of the class.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Activity: color the water and the ship



Activity:

BIBLE CONTEXT

Jesus Christ was walking beside the Sea of Galilee and asked Simon, also known as Peter, to follow him. From there he became one of the 12 disciples of Christ (Matthew 4:18-20; 16:16).

Peter was impulsive (Matthew 16:22, 17:4, 26:33, 35; John 18:10) and full of weaknesses (Matthew 14:28, 30; 19:27, 26:40; John 18:17, 25, 27)

Jesus Christ predicted that Simon Peter would become the building rock upon which the church of Christ would be built (Matthew 16:17-19)

Peter disciplined himself through years of trials. After the Ascension of Christ, Peter wrote some letters, which show a difference on the character of Peter.

First epistle of Peter

Peter had become what Christ predicted: a rock for his church. This letter is likely to have been written during the last years of his life

The epistle is addressed to God's elect, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia & Bithynia.

INTRODUCTION

- *Welcome each child to the class and introduce the new children. Always demonstrate how happy you are to be with them again to continue learning about God.*
- *Sing the welcome song (if you taught one) and pass the attendance list.*
- *Don't forget to remind the students of the general theme of the VBS-God's Heroes: From Ordinary to Extraordinary!"*
- *Review the verses you've already memorized and the titles of the previous classes.*
- *Present the title and key verse for today's class.*
- *Say a prayer for all of the children who have been blessed by coming to the VBS. Give thanks to God for what has been learned and for this lesson.*
- *Note: try to maintain eye contact with each student, preferably seating them in a semicircle.*
- *Allow that the students to put different objects inside the container with water and observe if they sink or float, comment about what they could observe*

TEACHING THE CLASS

(Share your visual aids as you tell the story).

Ask why ships and boats can float on the water. Ask them if a person can walk on the surface of the water. Listen to their answers and say to them: the Bible tells us the story of a disciple of Jesus named Peter who walked on water. One day Jesus was preaching, and after seeing off the multitude, he rose to the mountain to pray alone. A lot of time passed by and it was very late when he went towards the boat. Due to the strong wind and the waves the boat floated far enough from land. It was already late at night when he approached the boat walking on the water. The disciples saw him but did not recognize him because it still dark. They were very scared and were shouting fearfully that it was a ghost! When Jesus heard it, He said to them: calm down! It is I. Do not be afraid.

Peter, one of the disciples, having heard him immediately said to him: Lord, if it is you, order me to go to you on the water. Jesus said to him: come. Peter quickly got out of the boat and he started walking on the water. He put his faith in action, risked walking on the water with the full knowledge that this is impossible for human beings. We were not made to float on water. However reason did not matter to him, only his faith. He managed to take several steps towards Jesus, but when he felt the strong wind it frightened him, and then he started sinking in the water. Peter cried out to Jesus and said to him: Lord, save me! Jesus then stretched out his hand and saved Peter from sinking.

REFLECTING ON THE PASSAGE

Ask to the children why Peter started sinking. Make clear to them that it was because when Peter felt the force of the wind he started doubting. He stopped being focused on Jesus and instead looked at the adversity. But Jesus saved him. Christ wants that we trust only in Him, that we do not look at the problems, but that we stick with Him. He's always ready to help us, so that we may do extraordinary things.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Act out the moment in which Peter climbed out of the boat and started walking on the water towards Jesus. Choose a person to be Peter and one to be Jesus. The students may wear some costumes, and place the chairs in a circle to represent the boat. Then ask the rest of the class to be the disciples on the boat. Help the group take turns so that several or all the students get a chance to have the roles of Jesus and Peter

THINKING ABOUT THE BIBLE PASSAGE OF TODAY.

God is the only one that can make things happen that are out of the ordinary. He's the only one that can walk on the water and make another person like Peter be able to walk on water. We must deposit our faith in God though we have difficulties in our life. In Peter's case the wind was against him, but if we fix our eyes on Jesus, He's always ready to help us to overcome our fears or adversities. He wants us to be BRAVE AND THAT WE TRUST IN HIM.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

You can play a game of "Jesus Says." Ask the students to form a line in front of you. Explain to them that you'll give them orders to do some things (take a step forward, jump, etc.) but that they should only do them if first you say "Jesus says..." When you give an order without first saying "Jesus says..." then those who followed the incomplete order and sit down and the rest of the group will continue. Likewise, those who do not follow the order exactly when you do say "Jesus says..." must also be seated. Play as long as you would like, time permitting.

CONCLUSION

Peter, though he was a person like you and me, he was able to walk on water. However, when he was frightened and started sinking he cried out Jesus and He helped to Peter.

We must always turn to Jesus. Only He can help us. It is part of our calling to share this joy from God with others. Tell your siblings, your parents, and your friends that having Jesus in your heart makes you feel His love.

Jesus wants to be in your heart. If you have not yet invited Jesus to enter into your heart, you can do it now. *If you have a positive response from any children, ask them to stay for a moment and finish presenting the plan of salvation. If you can't do it yourself, ask another teacher for support in doing so. (If possible, get the full names and addresses of these children).*

Conclude the class with prayer. Thank the students for coming all week. Tell them goodbye and invite them to keep coming to Sunday School.

Lección 5: Pedro camina sobre las aguas.



1 PREESCOLAR











Activity: