

# THE ISLAND

<b>LEADER</b>	<b>DATE (am)</b> 16 November 08
<b>HELPERS</b>	<b>TIME (mins)</b> 40 minutes
<b>PUPPETEER</b>	<b>No. of KIDS (m/f)</b>

➤ **SERIES / LESSON:** Old Testament Heroes / Esther

➤ **SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** The Book of Esther

➤ **CONCEPT:** God helps me

## GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To help kids realise that God is on our side and ready to help, even when there are wicked plans stacked against us.
- To challenge kids to talk to God about their problems and worries.
- To lead kids into a prayer time and help them understand that God listens.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ DVD player / laptop / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Song DVD
- ✓ Treasure Chest – with the measuring tape inside (from last week's story)
- ✓ Map or globe
- ✓ Esther graphic
- ✓ Large bag or case of cosmetics and perfumes – these can be empty containers. Include one special lotion container to be put into the treasure chest at the end of the lesson. You may also want to include a container of kid-friendly lotion for the kids to try out on their hands.
- ✓ Picture of gallows
- ✓ Prayer Net
- ✓ Prayer cards and pen
- ✓ Name tag box

<p><b>A. Worship through Music (with puppets) 10 minutes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Welcome kids and invite them to praise God by singing.</li> <li>2. Sing 2 songs together. (<b><i>Supernatural / Everyday</i></b>)</li> <li>3. Open in prayer.</li> <li>4. Ask kids to lift a mat each and sit down.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b>  <i>DVD player / projector</i>  <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</i></p>
<p><b>B. Message 15 minutes</b></p> <p><b>1. Recap (2-3 minutes)</b>  Ask a child to help you open the treasure chest and take out the measuring tape which you placed there last week. Ask for someone to remind the group what you measured with the tape last week. How tall was Goliath? <i>Over 9 feet / 3 metres</i>. Recap last week's story of David and Goliath by asking a few follow-up questions. Finish by eliciting the Bible concept: God helps me do difficult things.</p> <p>You could also ask if anyone remembers last week's memory verse and have them recite it, individually and as a group. Or refer kids to the verse if you displayed it following the last session – <i>"If God is for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31</i></p> <p><b>2. Set the scene</b>  Esther was a beautiful young woman. <i>Show picture of Esther on screen</i>. She lived with her uncle Mordecai because her mummy and daddy had died. Mordecai looked after Esther as if she were his own daughter, and Esther loved her uncle very much. They lived in a place called Persia. Today, we call that country, Iran. Who can help me find Iran on our globe? <i>Allow a child to find Iran on the globe in relation to their own country</i>. Now, Esther and her family were not from Persia. They were Jewish people from Jerusalem, which is quite far away from where they were now. <i>Show the distance on the globe</i>. You see, her family, as well as many other Jews, had been taken captive in Jerusalem and brought to Persia as prisoners of war. The people of Persia were not Godly people. They didn't follow God. But Esther, her uncle Mordecai and the many Jewish people living there trusted God and believed that God was looking after them in Persia.</p> <p><b>3. Tell the story</b>  The king of Persia was called King Xerxes. He was a powerful man because his kingdom was huge! He ruled over many different places, from India right over to Ethiopia! <i>Show the expanse of the kingdom by referring to the globe</i>. King Xerxes was very rich, and he loved having parties for his palace workers, the army captains, the princes and the local celebrities.</p> <p>King Xerxes was looking for a new queen. The king's helpers went out to look for girls to bring them back to the palace. Esther was one of them. Esther was so pretty and beautiful, and such a kind person, that the king's helpers chose her, out of all the girls, to start a special training programme before she would meet the king. For a whole year, Esther had expensive beauty treatments every day with oils and perfumes and cosmetics. <i>(Take a large bag or case filled with perfumes and cosmetics – they can be</i></p>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b>  <i>Treasure chest with the measuring tape inside (from last week's story)</i></p> <p><i>Graphic – Esther portrait</i></p> <p><i>Globe / map</i></p> <p><i>Globe / map</i></p> <p><i>Bag of cosmetics and perfumes to display (with</i></p>

*empty containers. Let the kids see the kinds of products a modern-day Esther would need to use, and have them guess how long it might take her to get ready in the mornings! You could let the kids have some child-friendly lotion to put on their hands.)* She had to eat special food and look after her body so that she would be as beautiful as possible when she went to see the king. When King Xerxes saw the beautiful young Esther, he fell in love with her and decided that she would be his new queen.

No one in the king's palace knew that Esther was a Jew, one of God's people. Her uncle had told her to keep quiet about it. Every day, uncle Mordecai walked up and down the street outside the palace to hear any news about Esther and make sure she was okay. One of those days while Mordecai was walking up and down outside the palace, he overheard two of the king's servants planning to kill the king! Mordecai sent a message to the palace and the king's life was saved! The two servants were killed in punishment for their evil plan, and Esther's uncle Mordecai was written down in the king's book for having saved the king's life. Mordecai was a good man.

On the other hand, there was a bad man in the palace called Haman. He was very rich and was the king's right-hand man. All the other palace workers knelt down on the ground whenever Haman walked past because he was so important, but Mordecai refused to do this. He would not bow down to a man like Haman. Mordecai would only worship God. This made Haman very angry indeed! In fact, when Haman discovered that Mordecai was a Jew, he went to the king and persuaded him to make a law saying that all the Jews in Persia would be killed! Messages were sent out all over Persia, telling the people that the Jews – young and old, women and children – would be killed and destroyed on one single day!

It was a terrible law. The Jews in the country of Persia were crying and wailing in despair. They hadn't done anything wrong, only worship the living God. Uncle Mordecai tore his clothes (that's what people did in those days to show that they were upset) and went out into the city, crying loudly. Esther heard that her uncle was very upset and she sent a servant out to ask him what was wrong. Uncle Mordecai told the servant all about Haman's evil plan to kill God's people throughout the land, and he told the servant to tell Esther to go to the king and beg for mercy so that the Jewish people might survive – after all, Esther was a Jew, and this law included her too!

Esther didn't know what to do. You see, no one could go to see the king unless the king himself had invited them. If someone went to the king's court without an invitation, they could die! Esther thought about it carefully, and she knew that she had to at least try to save her people, the Jews. She sent a message back to her uncle Mordecai. She told him to gather together all the Jewish people in the city so that they could pray together. They were not to eat or drink anything for three days, night or day, while they were praying. After that three days, even though it

*a special container of lotion – to be put in the treasure chest later)*

was against the law, she would go to speak to King Xerxes. She was nervous and scared, but she thought to herself, 'If I die, I die.'

Esther and the Jews didn't eat or drink for three days. They prayed hard. Then, Esther put on her royal robes and went to the king's court in the palace. How nervous must she have been?! When King Xerxes saw his beautiful queen, he was not annoyed. He didn't want her to be punished for coming to see him without an invitation. He loved his beautiful queen, and he asked her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request?" Esther had an idea. She invited King Xerxes and the evil Haman to a feast, a special dinner party. So the king and Haman went to the special dinner Esther had prepared for them. While they were eating and drinking, the king asked Esther again, "What is your request?" Esther answered him, "Come tomorrow to a feast I will prepared for you, and bring Haman also. Then I will answer your question."

Haman went home a happy man. He was rich, he was more important than anyone else in the kingdom except for the king himself, and he was the only person Queen Esther had invited to join the king at her special dinner the next day. On his way home, Haman saw Esther's uncle Mordecai. As usual, Mordecai did not kneel down or show any respect for Haman, and Haman was angry. He went home and told his wife about this infuriating Jew. Haman's wife had an idea. "Have a gallows built, seventy-five feet high, and ask the king in the morning to have Mordecai hanged on it. Then go with the king to the dinner and be happy." (Esther 5:14) Haman liked the idea, and he built the gallows (something like a scaffold – show a picture, if you like, to illustrate – this is how prisoners were killed in the old days).

*Picture of gallows*

That same night, the king couldn't sleep, so he thought he would read the royal record book. He saw Mordecai's name there, and read about how Mordecai had saved the king's life by sending the warning message to the palace about the two servants who had wanted to kill the king. But Mordecai had not received any reward. King Xerxes called for Haman and asked him, "What should be done for the man the king wants to honour and reward?" Well, Haman automatically thought that the king was talking about him! So Haman answered, "... have them bring a royal robe the king has worn and a horse the king has ridden ... Let them robe the man the king delights to honour, and lead him on the horse through the city streets, proclaiming before him, 'This is what is done for the man the king delights to honour!'" (Esther 6:8-9)

Haman couldn't believe it when the king told him to give all this special royal treatment to MORDECAI! Haman was SO angry! But he had to carry out the king's command, and so he dressed Mordecai in the king's robe, and put him on the king's horse, and led him through the streets for everyone to see how the king was honouring Mordecai. Grrr! Haman was boiling with rage!

After that, Haman went with the king for the special dinner with Queen Esther. The king asked Esther again what she wanted.

<p>Esther asked the king to let her live. She also asked him to have mercy on her people, the Jews. She told him about the terrible plan to kill and destroy the Jewish people in the land, and she told him that evil Haman was the mastermind behind the plan. King Xerxes started to go red from the neck up. He was so mad with Haman! He couldn't believe what he was hearing! One of the palace workers told the king about the huge gallows Haman had built to hang Mordecai. The king, pointing at Haman, said, "Hang <i>him</i> on it!" So the guards took Haman away and hanged him on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai.</p> <p>Haman was dead. Esther's uncle Mordecai got Haman's job so he became the king's right-hand man. King Xerxes passed a law allowing the Jews to live and defend themselves. They were saved! God had heard the prayers of Esther and his people and saved them. The Jewish people were so happy that they had a great big party to celebrate God's goodness to them. They ate and drank and gave presents to each other and to the poor people. They were happy to be alive! Then the king passed another law – he told the Jews that they should celebrate how God had saved them from Haman's wicked plan every single year. They would call it the festival of Purim. Even today, the Jewish people still celebrate God's goodness at Purim every year.</p> <p><b>4. Explain</b> Boys and girls, God saved his people from Haman's wicked plan to kill and destroy them. That was a long time ago, but God still saves people today. When God sent His son, Jesus, to die on the cross, that made a way for us to be saved from hell. Remember – Jesus died, but after three days God brought Him back to life. Now, He waits for us in heaven. If you want to be saved and live for Jesus, make sure you talk to me or one of the leaders before you go home today. God loves you so much!</p> <p>Let's put Queen Esther's special lotion into the treasure chest. We'll take it out next week to see how much you remember about her story.</p>	<p><i>Special lotion container</i> <i>Treasure chest</i></p>
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<p><b>C. Prayer Net</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>10 minutes</b></span></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask a child to explain what it means when we <i>pray</i> – We talk to God and He listens.</li> <li>2. Explain that prayer / talking to God is very important because that's how we get to know Him.</li> <li>3. Choose a child to retrieve the prayer net. Lift out the prayer cards you put there last week. Ask the kids for updates on those situations.</li> <li>4. Explain that when we have worries or things to be thankful for, we need to tell God about those things. Remember that He hears all our prayers and He will answer us – maybe not with the answer we want, but He always knows best.</li> <li>5. Tell kids that we are going to make a note of some special prayers today and put them in the prayer net. Next week they will tell us what happened in those situations.</li> <li>6. Ask a few kids if they have a prayer to put into the net. As</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b> <i>Net (with last week's prayer cards)</i> <i>Small cards / postcards</i> <i>A pen</i></p>
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<p>they tell you, write their name and the topic of their prayer on a small card. Ask the child to say a prayer aloud (help them to do so) before they place their card into the prayer net.</p> <p>7. Finish by leading a prayer for the whole group.</p>	
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<p><b>D. Conclusion (with puppets)</b> <b>5 minutes</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Challenge kids to remember to be like Esther – pray about your worries and be ready to do what you can to help others.</li> <li>2. Remind kids to come back this evening.</li> <li>3. Sing a closing song. <b>(Everyday)</b></li> <li>4. Ask kids to put their mats away and put their name tags in the box before they leave.</li> </ol> <p>*Have some evangelical kids' literature to hand in case anyone wants to know more about asking Jesus into their life.</p>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b>  <i>DVD player / projector</i>  <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</i>  <i>Name tag box</i></p>
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## THE ISLAND cont'd

<b>LEADER</b>	<b>DATE (pm)</b> 16 November 08
<b>HELPERS</b>	<b>TIME (mins)</b> 40 minutes
<b>PUPPETEER</b>	<b>No. of KIDS (m/f)</b>

### GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To reinforce today's Bible concept by learning a related Scripture verse.
- To internalise today's story and explore Jewish Purim tradition by making *Hamantaschen* (Haman's hats) – the most popular sweet made at Purim.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ Song DVD / DVD player / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Activity:
  - tables
  - Oven – pre-heated to 180C
  - A few pre-made hamantaschen sweets (recipe and photos below)
  - A ball of raw hamantaschen dough
  - Rolling pin
  - Round cookie cutter
  - Pre-cut circles of raw dough (at least one per child)
  - A few teaspoons
  - Jam(s) – you could use a couple of different flavours
  - Spatula
  - Baking sheets lined with greaseproof paper
  - Pastry brush
  - Beaten egg or milk
  - Serving plate
  - Pre-prepared sandwich bags (one per child) with 2 pre-made hamantaschen in each
  - Recipe cards for hamantaschen – attach one to each sandwich bag for kids to take home
- ✓ Memory Verse Activity: Slide (1 Peter 5:7)  
Beanbag
- ✓ Small prizes (selection of bookmarks, stickers, pencils, etc.)
- ✓ Name tag box





6. *Explain:* All the ingredients are mixed together to make the dough. It is then rolled out using a rolling pin (*show them a rolling pin so they understand the process*). When the dough is rolled out flat and thin, it is cut into circles using a glass or cookie cutter (*show them a round cookie cutter*).
7. Then the circles are filled with jam or seeds. I brought strawberry jam to put inside mine. *Using a teaspoon, put a small spoonful of jam into the centre of a pre-cut circle of dough.*
8. Then we need to make the circle into a triangle, like Haman's hat. Lift up the two sides to meet at the centre, above the filling ... then lift the bottom side up to meet the other two sides at the centre.

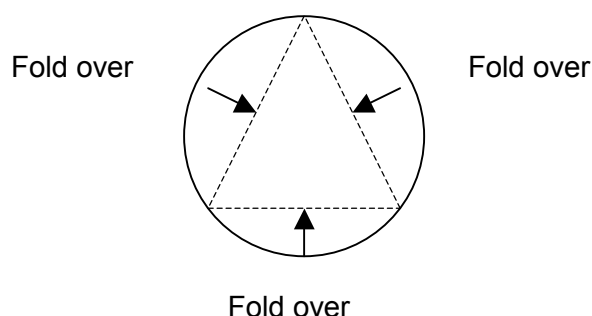
*Rolling pin*

*Round cookie cutter*

*Pre-cut circle of dough*

*Teaspoon*

*Strawberry jam*



10. Using a spatula, place the sweet on a lined baking sheet.  
*This is the end of the demonstration.*

*Spatula*

*Baking sheet lined with greaseproof paper*

11. Give each child a pre-made circle of raw dough.

12. Have adult helpers spoon the jam into the centre of each child's circle of dough. You could have a couple of flavours to choose from.

*Pre-cut circles of dough*

### Teaspoons

*Jam(s)*

13. Help kids to fold the three sides inwards to make the triangle shape, as shown above.

14. Lift each child's sweet onto lined baking sheets using a spatula. Tell kids that when they are baked, we will put them on a plate for the mums and dads to eat after church (*then the sweets do not need to be labelled with the kids' names*).

*Spatula(s)*

*Baking sheets lined with greaseproof paper*

15. When all the sweets are on the baking sheets, brush the dough with a little beaten egg or milk.

*Pastry brush*

16. Place them in a pre-heated oven and bake for about 20 minutes. **\*\*Take note of the time they go into the oven.\*\***

*Beaten egg / milk*

**Pre-heated oven (180C)**

17. Tidy up and put the tables to the side.

Idea adapted from

<http://www.dltk-kids.com/world/jewish/purim/hamantashen.htm>

## G. Memory Verse

## 10 minutes

***You'll need ...***

*"Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you."*  
1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

1. Have kids stand in a circle around the room.
2. Remind kids of how worried Queen Esther must have been

<p>when her uncle Mordecai told her about Haman's plan to kill all the Jews in Persia. Esther and the Jews were afraid for their lives! What did Esther do? She and the Jews didn't eat and they prayed for three days before she went to speak to the king. Esther prayed – she knew how important it was to talk to God about her worries because He was the only one powerful enough to help her and save His people. And God heard Esther's prayers. Esther and the Jewish people were saved.</p> <p>3. Boys and girls, you might think that your worries are not as important as Queen Esther's, but the Bible tells us that they are important. Like we learn every week, God wants us to talk to Him. He wants us to tell Him about our worries and our problems because He loves us and wants to help us, just like He helped Queen Esther and her people.</p> <p>4. Here is our verse today – <i>show verse on screen.</i></p> <p>5. Say the verse through once and then have the kids repeat it a few times with you, as a group and individually. When the kids have grasped it, move to a blank screen.</p> <p>6. Stand in the centre of the circle of kids with a beanbag. Tell them that you will throw the beanbag to someone. That person must then say the memory verse. Then they should throw the beanbag back to you in the centre. You will then repeat this with another child, and again, until all kids have had a chance to say the verse. <i>Make sure kids throw the beanbag underarm and gently so that no one gets hurt!</i></p> <p>7. Finish with a group repetition of the verse.</p>	<p><i>Memory verse slide (1 Peter 5:7)</i></p> <p><i>Beanbag</i></p>
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<p><b>H. Conclusion (with puppets) 5 minutes</b></p> <p>1. Invite kids to praise God's goodness to Esther and to us by singing. <b>(Supernatural / Everyday)</b></p> <p>2. Ask one boy and one girl if they can recite the memory verse. The puppets / another leader will judge if they deserve a prize. Award the prizes.</p> <p>3. Let kids see you take the hamantaschen from the oven and arrange them nicely on a plate to be served to the adults following the service. Tell them they did a good job! <i>(They will be too hot for the children to eat or even touch, so this gives them a chance to cool down as well as impressing the grown-ups!)</i></p> <p>4. Give kids a pre-prepared sandwich bag with two pre-made hamantaschen inside to take home with them. You could also attach a recipe card to each bag so the kids can try to bake them at home with their families.</p> <p>5. Close in prayer. Remind kids to come back next week!</p> <p>6. Collect kids' name tags in the green box.</p>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Small prizes – bookmarks, stickers, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Spatula</i> <i>Serving plate</i></p> <p><i>Sandwich bags with two hamantaschen in each, with recipe cards attached</i></p> <p><i>Name tag box</i></p>
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