

Old Testament Bible Heroes

Esther - Devotion

Ready (*Plant the seed*)

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 your royal position for such a time as this?

—Esther 4:14

Set (*Get the conversation started*)

Our next Old Testament Hero is Queen Esther. Queen Esther ascended the throne in Persia when she married Persian King Ahasuerus who didn't realize she was actually a Jewish exile. Esther was also an orphan. After her parents were killed, she was raised by her older cousin Mordecai. She was devoted to her people and loved her adopted father. When Mordecai wouldn't bow down to Haman, one of the king's highest officials, Haman conspired to have all of the Jews killed. Being the Queen of Persia, Esther was in the unique position to save her people but she was not permitted to approach the king unless he summoned her. Breaking this law was punishable by death. She asked Mordecai to have the Jewish people join her in fasting and prayer for 3 days, and then she would approach the king. The king loved her so much and granted her anything she wished. She bravely told him of Haman's plan and confessed that she herself was Jewish. King Ahasuerus has Haman put to death and provides an edict saving the Jews from death. Esther's story is one of bravery and devotion to her people. She was willing to put her own life at risk to save them.

Reread the Bible verse. God puts us in places where he can use us to help others, but ultimately it is our choice to do what is right. Esther chose to put her life at risk to save her beloved people. Just as God placed Esther as queen, you have been placed into a position on your team or within your school that gives you the opportunity to help others. When you see injustice, you have the choice to speak up. You can pray, as Esther did. You can approach your coaches, teachers and parents with the problem. Most of all, though, you can trust in God's plan for you; that He put you right where you can do the most good to honor Him.

Grow (*Talk it over*)

- Tell of a time when you witnessed injustice on the field or the court.
- How can you stand up for your teammates/friends/family and still show the love of Jesus?
- Which makes you feel worse: seeing others hurt or being hurt yourself?

Pray

Father God, you are all-knowing and all-powerful. You put us in the places where we can serve you best. We thank you for the gift of friendship and ask you to grow us in strength and courage to stand up for others, especially when it may be hard. We trust that you know what is best. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Overtime (*Team Building Game to Support Concept*) Beat the Ogre

-Directions: 1 player is the ogre, 1 player is the knight, rest of team are soldiers. The knight's job is to get his soldiers in order from shortest to tallest before the Ogre gets to them. Line the soldiers up along the half-court line if using full court or sideline on half-court. The Ogre starts under the rim (or sideline opposite soldiers) and takes a step then shouts "Fee, Fi, Fo Fum!" then takes another step towards the group and shouts again trying to make it to the soldiers before the knight places them in order (Pace the Ogre as necessary). Meanwhile, the knight is organizing his soldiers. Once they are all in line from shortest to tallest, they draw their pretend swords and yell to the Ogre "Fee Fi Fo, NO MORE!"

-Play Game

-*Say: You will find yourselves in situations where you feel like you are facing a nasty ogre of injustice. God wants you to act and serve your family and friends by standing up for what is right!*