

## Let's Talk: Day 225-One Story

Esther – Mordecai's Plot Against the Jews & Esther's Courageous Risk to See the King

Today's Reading: Esther 3; Esther 4; Proverbs 21:1

Choose something to fast from for three days: it could be media, a favorite toy or a treat. Pray for strength and courage in some area during that time, like Esther did.

Questions:

1. Describe Haman. Do you know anyone who is like Haman?
2. What did Mordecai do that made Haman so angry? What did Haman do as a result?
3. What did Mordecai ask Esther to do? What is the scariest thing you have had to do in your life? What is the scariest thing you can imagine doing?
4. How did Esther initially respond? How did Mordecai reply? How might you be in a unique position or circumstance for a God-ordained moment where you can be His messenger? How did Esther respond after hearing from Mordecai the second time?

## Let's Talk: Day 226

Esther – Esther's Banquets, Mordecai's Honoring & Haman's Death  
Today's Reading: Esther 5; Esther 6; Esther 7

It took several questions before Esther revealed what was bothering her. Pick an "Esther" and play "20 Questions" to guess what that person is thinking about. Younger kids could play "I Spy." Jewish people make Haman's Hat when they celebrate Purim. Here is the link to the recipe: <http://blogs.kqed.org/bayareabites/2010/02/28/eating-hamans-hat-hamantaschen-for-purim/>.

Questions:

1. What did Esther say was her request when the king asked? Was that really it? Why do you think she invited them to dinner?
2. What did Haman plan against Mordecai? During the same evening, what did the king hear about when he couldn't fall asleep? How do you see God at work in today's reading even though we never see His name mentioned in this book? How might God be at work in the circumstances of your life?
3. In 24 hours, how did Haman's life change? How did his pride and hatred come back to ruin him?
4. Mordecai lived a life of integrity, devotion to God and servitude to the king. He eventually reaped what he sowed (Galatians 6:9), as did Haman. What kinds of things are you "sowing" in your life?

### **Let's Talk: Day 227**

Esther – The King's Decree, the Jews Saved & the Feast of Purim  
Today's Reading: Esther 8; Esther 9; Esther 10

Recap the Esther story on video and watch either the VeggieTales version of Esther, the Girl Who Became Queen (younger kids) or One Night with the King. Discuss as a family afterward what parts were different from the Bible and what were the same.

Questions:

1. What new job did Mordecai take? How cool is God?
2. How did Mordecai help write a new law to counteract the effect of the law Haman made regarding the destruction of the Jews?
3. What happened in the day of the battle? How did God completely reverse the evil Haman intended? Is there an area of your life that you need to pray that God would reverse? Are you willing to have Esther's attitude so God can do it?
4. What holiday do Jews still celebrate to remember how God delivered them? How can you take time to celebrate God's victories in your life?

### **Let's Talk: Day 228**

King Cyrus – Cyrus Doesn't Know God but Fulfills Prophecy About Rebuilding the Temple

Today's Reading: Ezra 1; 2Chronicles 36:15-23; Isaiah 45:1-7  
Cyrus acted as the hands of God without being a full follower of Him. Be the hands of one family member and get it on video. Have one person stand with his arms inside his shirt. Have a second person stand behind the first and "be that person's arms." Give directions on what these hands need to do: brush your hair, pour a glass of water and take a drink or scratch your nose. Be creative.

Questions:

1. What had happened to the temple of Jerusalem and all its contents?
2. What decree did Cyrus King of Persia make? How does this enable the Jews to obey 2 Chronicles 36?
3. What did King Cyrus send with the Jews that went back to Jerusalem?
4. What did God tell King Cyrus through the prophet Isaiah? Have you ever considered how God uses leaders in history that don't even follow Him? Can you think of any other examples?

### **Let's Talk: Day 229**

Zerubbabel – The First Return of People From Captivity to Rebuild the Temple

Today's Reading: Ezra 2; Jeremiah 29:10-14; Psalms 126

Research how long a trip this would have been from Persia to Jerusalem. If you could only bring what you could carry, what would you take? (Younger kid option: go to your room and get the most important thing you would want to take with you.)

Questions:

1. What's your favorite name in the list of people who returned to Jerusalem? Why do you think God had Ezra include this in the Bible?
2. How many people total came in this first exodus back to Jerusalem? What do you think the people talked about and did at night as they walked all the way back?
3. How is this an answer to the prophecy in Jeremiah 29? How can you apply Jeremiah 29 to your own life? How are you currently seeking Him?

4. What emotions do you find in Psalm 126? How can this psalm encourage someone who is currently in a hard circumstance?

### **Let's Talk: Day 230**

Zerubbabel – The Temple Rebuilding Project Is Stopped & the Church Is a Temple

Today's Reading: Ezra 3; Ezra 4; Ephesians 2:19-22

The Jews followed specific instructions to build the temple. If your family was building a dream church, how would you design it? Either work together to draw it or make a list of what should be included in it.

Questions:

1. What did the people build before they started the foundation of the temple? Why do you think they did that? What kind of offerings or prayers do you give to God?
2. When the foundation of the temple was laid, some people wept while others shouted for joy. What caused these two very different responses?
3. How did the enemies of the Jews try to stop the building of the temple? How did they succeed? Was their accusation altogether honest?
4. Ephesians 2 likens the church to a temple being built. How does your local church fit into the larger church? What part do you play within your church?

### **Let's Talk: Day 231**

Today's Reading: Weekly day OFF

Weekly Review: Think back on this week's reading. What story stands out to you and why? As a family, pick a verse from the week to meditate on or memorize.