

LESSON 2  
ESTHER

## LESSON AT A GLANCE

**WONDER TRUTH:** God Is Working Even When We Can't See It

**SCRIPTURE:** Esther 1–5; 8

**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Because God is always working, a young Jewish woman named Esther becomes queen of Persia and prevents an evil plan to kill all the Jewish people in the kingdom.

**WORD OF WONDER:** God will never leave us. —from Hebrews 13:5b

## CURIOSITY

## BELIEF

## FAITH

- **Curiosity Activity: Hidden Message**
- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: My Help, Praise
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing





**INVITATION**

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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“That was a total God thing.” I heard that phrase as a woman told a story about her granddaughter, who had run into an old friend from church at a coffee shop and now is considering coming back to church. I could have told her it was just a coincidence that the two teenage girls happened to go to the same coffee shop, but as a believer in the providence of God, I see it too. Running into a girl who would point her granddaughter back to her roots in the church at the perfect time in her life would indeed appear to be “a God thing.”

As Christ followers, we can see God’s providential hand in each and every interaction throughout our days. We praise Him for the little things, like a close parking spot on a rainy day, and the big things, like a friend being healed of cancer after years of treatment. We do this because we know God is working even when we cannot see it.

Read the book of Esther and look for God to be named—you won’t find it. If you were to read it without context, you could say each event was random, complete coincidence, without divine intervention. But the author would have us search and find where God is working, and in doing so, consider our own lives and how God might be working, creating “God things” in every moment.

—**Courtney Wilson**

Children’s Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS**

**WHO?**

Esther is a Persian name meaning “star,” derived from the name of the Babylonian deity, Ishtar. Esther’s Hebrew name is *Hadassah*, which refers to the myrtle plant. Her parents died when she was young, and she was adopted and raised by her cousin Mordecai.

**WHAT?**

The narrative of Esther offers a peek into God’s work behind the scenes in the days of Israel’s exile. Esther rises to the level of queen during a vital moment. A man named Haman tries to eliminate all the Jews in the land. However, Queen Esther intervenes by asking the king to save her people.

**WHERE?**

Susa was one of the oldest cities in the world. It was the ancient capital of Elam and later, Persia. It was situated on a plain near the Zagros mountains and had a temperate climate. Many Jews, including Esther and Nehemiah, lived there and became prominent during exile.

**WHEN?**

King Xerxes reigned 486–465 BC. The events of the book of Esther probably took place during 483–474 BC. During this period, King Xerxes and the Persians were involved in multiple campaigns against the Greeks, including at Thermopylae and Athens.

**CONNECTING TO GOD’S BIG STORY**

Purim is a Jewish festival celebrating the story of Esther. It is joyous time of remembering when God worked behind the scenes through Esther to overturn Haman’s plot to destroy the Jews. In the same way, God has worked through Jesus to overturn Satan’s plot to destroy all humankind.



LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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Welcome

**Slide: Series Welcome Loop**

**As kids arrive...**

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

**Video: Countdown**

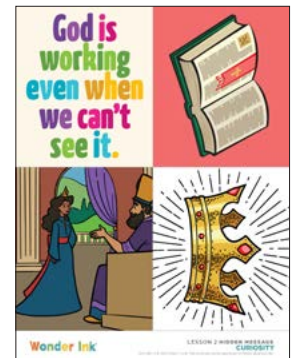
Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

Curiosity Activity: Hidden Message

**SUPPLIES:** white printer paper, flashlight, glue (optional)

**RESOURCES:** Hidden Message Sheet

Before kids arrive, print the Hidden Message Sheet. Place a blank sheet of white printer paper over the top of the Hidden Message Sheet and set out a flashlight nearby. You might want to glue the edges of the pages together, so they don't slip apart as you're doing the activity. Place the papers on a table, with the white paper on top. If your printer paper is thin or if it's very bright in your room, try dimming the lights. This will help "hide" the hidden pictures underneath the blank paper.



Gather kids around the sheets of paper. Point at the white sheet of paper. **"I have a special picture! What do you see?** Kids should not be able to see anything on the paper. **It's just a white sheet of paper. We can't see any picture. But we're going to see a hidden message revealed! I have a flashlight here that will help us see the secret message.** Turn the flashlight on and shine it on the front of the paper carefully, without allowing the kids to see the hidden picture underneath (or see that you have another paper underneath).. **Do you see a secret message?** Kids should still not be able to see anything on the sheet of paper. **That didn't work! Let's see what happens if we put the flashlight behind the paper.**



Pick up both sheets of paper from the table, being careful to keep them stacked together, and shine the flashlight through the papers from behind both papers. The secret pictures should appear. Shine the flashlight alternating on top of and behind the papers. Shine the light on each picture of the Hidden Messages Sheet, starting with the Bible. You can also cut apart the pictures and show each picture one at a time.

**Wow! Our hidden pictures appeared! The first picture is a Bible, which reminds us that this story is in the Bible. The second picture is a crown because we're learning about a king and queen. Then we can see a picture of a woman—that's Queen Esther. And the last picture says "God is working even when we can't see it." That is our Wonder Truth for today. And it has a picture of someone on it. That's a special clue for our part of God's big story for today. Whom do you think is in this picture?** Allow kids to guess and then share with them that her name is Esther.

**Our paper had a special message for us even though we couldn't see it at first. And in God's big story today, we'll learn how God was working in Esther's life even when she didn't realize it! God is working even when we can't see it."**



**Leader Tip:** If time allows, let kids take turns shining light through the back of the papers to make the hidden picture appear.

## Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

Introduce the kids to Tac, the curious cat.

**Leader:** Good morning, Tac! I heard you had some exciting news to share with us today.

**Tac the Cat:** I do! Did you know that I like to run? I'm a fast cat! And I got chosen to be the leader of my cat race team.

**Leader:** Wow! Congratulations, Tac! That's great!

**Tac the Cat:** I was really surprised that I got chosen to be the leader. There were a lot of people on my team I didn't know.

**Leader:** Did you get to know them better while you were racing?

**Tac the Cat:** I did! I started talking with some of my new friends, and I found out that several of them were feeling lonely. They didn't have any friends!

**Leader:** Oh, that's sad. Everybody needs friends.

**Tac the Cat:** Yeah, I felt bad for them! But then I realized that as the team leader, I could help them out.

**Leader:** How did you do that, Tac?

**Tac the Cat:** I helped all the people on my team get to know each other. Before long, we all became friends! Now no one is lonely anymore, and we have lots of friends.

**Leader:** That's amazing, Tac! God knew what He was doing when He chose you to be the leader of the team!

**Tac the Cat:** Yeah, I guess so. I didn't know why I got chosen to be the leader, but God helped me to help my friends! That's pretty neat.

**Leader:** God is good at doing that! Sometimes we don't even realize it, but He is working to help others through us. In God's Big Story today, we are going to hear how God worked through a young woman to save lots of people.

**Tac the Cat:** God is pretty amazing! I can't wait to hear that story! For now, I have to run. One of my new friends is coming over to hang out. I'll see you all later.

**Leader:** OK, Tac! Tell your friend we said hello. We'll see you later.

**"Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: has God ever worked through you to help someone else? Allow the kids to respond. Have you ever wondered why something happened to you? Allow the kids to respond. We all see and hear things that make us curious. Did you ever stop to think about how God is working even when we can't see it?"**

### **SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH**

Today's Wonder Truth is **GOD IS WORKING EVEN WHEN WE CAN'T SEE IT**. Today we'll discover how God is working in our lives even when we can't see it!"

## **Prayer of Invitation**

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use your own words. Here is an example: **God, sometimes we don't realize that You're working in our lives even when we can't see it. Help us see what You're doing in our lives today and help us hear from You. In Jesus' name, Am**

## Declaring God's Wonder

### SLIDE: DECLARATION

Encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.

**Thank You, God, that You made me!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

**And I am Your kid!** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

**Jesus loves me so much;** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

**His love for me is big.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

**The Holy Spirit leads me,** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from the sky, making a path in front of you.

**And I can follow You.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

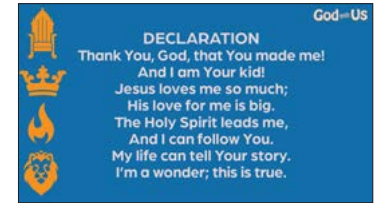
March in place like you're following the leader.

**My life can tell Your story.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

**I'm a wonder; this is true.** (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shaking your fingers, celebrating ("praise hands").



## Worship

"Today we are learning about how God is working even when we can't see it. Let's sing about God working in our lives!"

**WORSHIP VIDEOS: My Help, Praise**

## God's Big Story

**SUPPLIES:** Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Esther in the Bible.

Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

**Bible Time Rhyme**

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

**I open my Bible and what do I see?** (Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)

**God's big story, waiting for me!** (Point to yourself.)

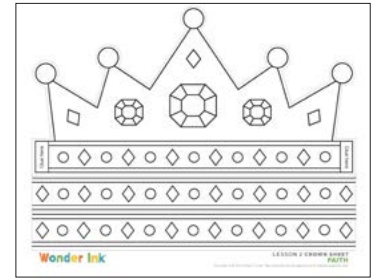
"Let's watch part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Esther in the Bible."

**VIDEO: GOD'S BIG STORY**

# GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

**SUPPLIES:** Bible, crowns (2)

**RESOURCES:** [Crown Sheet](#)



Choose one kid to play King Xerxes and place a crown on his head.

**"The book of Esther tells one story about how God helped His people when they lived in a faraway land. The king, named Xerxes (pronounced ZURK-seez), was looking for a new wife. King Xerxes, can you put your hand above your eyes and pretend you are looking for something?** Invite kid playing King Xerxes to look around. **King Xerxes chose a woman named Esther to be queen.** Encourage the kid playing King Xerxes to choose another kid to play Queen Esther. Place the other crown on Queen Esther's head. **Queen Esther was the most powerful woman in the land. Esther would soon find out there was a special reason that she was the queen.**

**This is what happened: King Xerxes made a man named Haman the most important worker. The king told everyone to honor Haman and kneel before him. Let's pretend we are everyone else in the kingdom. Can you show me how you would kneel down?** Demonstrate to the kids how to kneel. **But a man named Mordecai said he wouldn't kneel to Haman because God was the most important. Mordecai was Esther's cousin. Haman got so mad that he planned to kill Mordecai and all his people. Mordecai's people were God's people—the Jews. Haman told the king that the Jews were bad for the kingdom, so the king said Haman could get rid of them. This meant Esther was in danger!**

**Mordecai found out about Haman's plan. Mordecai and the Jews were sad and afraid. Can you all look sad and afraid?** Invite kids to look sad and afraid. **When Esther heard about it, she was also sad. Queen Esther, can you look sad too?** Give the kid playing Esther a moment to do the action. **Mordecai asked Esther to go to the king. She would ask the king to save her people. There was a problem though. Esther could get in big trouble for talking to the king when he did not ask for her. Mordecai told Esther that she may have become queen for a time just like this (Esther 4:14). She may have become queen to help save her people.**

**Esther sent a message to Mordecai and all the Jews. Esther's message told them to pray because she was planning to go to the king. Esther needed God's help when she talked to the king. Let's all pretend we are praying just like Esther did.** Allow all the kids to do a praying action.

**Esther prayed and got ready. Esther, can you pretend to pray too? Then she went to talk to the king.** Encourage the kid playing Esther to walk over to the kid playing King Xerxes. **First, she made a nice meal for the king and asked him to come back the next day.** Have Esther pretend to serve the king a meal and walk away. **Then she invited him to another meal that she had prepared again the day after that.** Have Esther walk back to the king. **She told him about Haman's plan to kill Mordecai and the Jews, which included her!** Have Esther pretend to talk to the king. **The king was very mad and got rid of Haman.** Have the kid playing King Xerxes pretend to get really mad. **The king said the Jews would be saved! God made Esther queen to help protect God's people. God is working even when we can't see it."**



## Connecting the Wonder Truth

Ask the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

### **SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH**

"Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD IS WORKING EVEN WHEN WE CAN'T SEE IT**. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

**God worked through Esther to stop Haman's evil plan and save His people. In the same way, God has worked through Jesus to save us from sin."**

## Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish their activity, pray with them, thanking God for working even when we can't see it. Use your own words. Here is an example:

**God, thank You for working in our lives even when we can't see it. Give us the courage to help others and to do the right thing even when it might seem scary. Thank You for working through us. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them. Use your own words. Here is an example:

**Blessing:** May God make your faith bigger as He works, even when you can't see it. God will never leave you! May this truth give you peace.