

Haman's Evil Is Repaid

Esther 7:1-10

MEMORY VERSE

ROMANS 12:21

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A pair of socks or two pieces of cloth to be used for two blindfolds.

As many cornucopia templates as need for the children in your class, construction paper (various colors), glue stick and markers

ATTENTION GETTER!

Where's My Shoes?

Divide the class into two teams. Sit on opposite sides of the room. Have everyone take off their shoes and pile their shoes in the center of the room. Let the two teams mix them together. Have the two teams go back and sit down together and close their eyes. Have them count to 25 slowly.

While they are counting and have their eyes closed, mix up and hide their shoes (in trash can, outside classroom, under chairs, etc.). After they have counted to 25 say “go!” and allow them to find their own shoes and put them on. The first team who all have their own shoes on, laced or buckled up wins.

Today we are going to learn that the Lord can turn trials into triumphs. He can take something messed up and bring order to it, like our shoe activity. We don't know what it was like to walk in Esther and Mordecai's shoes, but we know that they had to go through a very difficult time and had to trust in the Lord. He worked everything out for good and He will do the same in our lives.

LESSON TIME!

Sometimes in our lives we may have to face things that happen that we don't understand or that may be very difficult. These times or events in our lives are called trials. In one way or another we all face trials at different times. Sometimes trials are brought on because of our own bad decisions. Maybe we don't listen to our parents or obey God's word, and then something bad happens in our lives because of that. In these situations difficult times might come because of our own sin.

Other times trials may come because God is allowing us to be tested. He wants to produce patience and character in our lives. One of the best ways for patience and character to be produced in us is for difficult things to happen in our lives. Trials force us to rely more upon the Lord and to trust Him to help us get through the difficult times.

There are a lot of different reasons for trials, but no matter the reason they will certainly happen. Sometimes we can be overwhelmed by trials. Things may seem to be totally out of control. But God is never out of control. This is what we will see in our lesson today.

As we study our lesson today we will see God's faithfulness to His people. We will learn that **God can turn trials into triumphs**. He knew that Queen Esther and the Jewish people would be faced with a life threatening trial, but He used it to bring judgment and justice to the one responsible. Queen Esther and her people needed to trust in God's protection and plan for their lives.

ESTHER 7:1

So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther.

You will remember from previous lessons the story of Esther, Mordecai and Haman. We have been looking at the life of Haman and discovering how that pride has taken control of his life. Haman had a problem with pride and anger. Mordecai refused to bow down to Haman as he passed by. This infuriated Haman and his hatred grew towards Mordecai.

Not only did Haman want to have Mordecai executed, he wanted all the Jewish people to be destroyed as well. With the king's approval and financial support, Haman now had the power and authority to carry out his evil plan to destroy God's people, as well as everything they stood for.

When Queen Esther first heard of Haman's plot to destroy all the Jewish people, she became frightened. She would have to risk her life to go before the king in the inner court, when it was forbidden without his permission. But she sent word to have all the Jewish people pray and fast in her behalf to find favor before the king (Esther 4:1-17).

Queen Esther knew what she had to do and that it could cost her life yet she put her life in God's hands. We should have the same commitment to do what is right despite the possible consequences. Faith sometimes is doing what God wants and trusting Him to work out the results. **God can turn trials into triumphs.**

After three days of fasting, Queen Esther approaches the king with her request. God had heard the prayers of His people, for the king was pleased to see Queen Esther as he held out his golden scepter towards her. He was so glad to see her, she was asked to make a request, even up to half the kingdom (Esther 5:1-8). What a relief for Esther, as she humbly approaches the king to find favor with him.

With the opportunity given her, she invited the king and Haman to come to a banquet she had prepared. Esther told the king that she would tell him her request at the banquet (Esther 5:8). But on the first day of the banquet Esther waits to make her request to the king.

ESTHER 7:2-4

And on the second day, at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!"

Then Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request.

"For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king's loss."

Haman was very happy about his sudden good fortune with the king and queen. Everything was going his way. Returning home after the first banquet, he boasts to his family of his success. But Haman couldn't enjoy his good fortune, because he was mad at Mordecai who refused to bow down to him (Esther 5:12).

In our previous last lesson we learned that Haman is humiliated when the king remembers about the time when Mordecai saved his life from people trying to kill him. He wants to honor Mordecai and asks Haman what he should do to honor someone special. Haman thinks the king wants to honor him so he comes up with a great plan for the person who the king wishes to honor to be paraded through the city in royal robes and on the king's horse. The king agreed with the idea and tells Haman that he is to do that for Mordecai.

It certainly seems like God has a sense of humor. Haman who hates Mordecai and wishes to kill him now had to parade through the city giving honor to Mordecai. But this would only be the beginning of Haman's humiliation as his evil plan to kill Mordecai and the Jews was about to come to light.

On the next day, as they gathered at the banquet, the king again asked Esther her request, and again he promised that he would grant it to her. The door was open for Esther to make her request and she gave her petition without hesitation. She wanted life for her and her people. It was now clear to the king that his queen was a Jew who was condemned to die under Haman's crusade to kill the Jews (Esther 2:10, 3:8-9).

Here we see God's hand of protection and faithfulness. He placed Esther in this position to be used for good at this very time. He loves His people very much and wants us to trust in Him. Sometimes problems around us may seem too big to overcome. But **God can turn trials into triumphs.**

Trust and Twirl

Queen Esther learned that she had to trust in the Lord even when she didn't understand what He was going to do. This game will help us to always remember to trust in the Lord.

You will need a pair of socks or two pieces of cloth to form two blindfolds. Have kids form pairs and have pairs decide which partner would like to be blindfolded first during this game. Only one partner is to be blindfolded. Give one blindfold to each pair and have them put them on. Only two pairs of children will race at a time.

Next have both children in each pair stand back-to-back. Then have them link arms and line up at one end of your meeting room. Tell partners that on "go," they must race to the opposite wall and back by spinning around in circles. Tell the seeing partners that they're responsible for the welfare of their blindfolded partners. Have them race to the other end of the room. Switch blindfolds and race again. Next, allow other pairs of children who would like to race to go and then talk to the class about what it means to trust in the Lord even when we can't "see" what He may be doing.

ESTHER 7:5-6

So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?"

And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman!" So Haman was terrified before the king and queen.

The king is amazed at what he is hearing. Who would dare murder his queen and her people? He wanted to know who was doing such a thing to Esther. Without a doubt, Haman realized that he was about to be exposed before the most powerful man on the face of the earth. He knew that he was in big trouble, as terror gripped his face.

Esther revealed that wicked Haman was the enemy. Haman's hatred and evil plotting ruined him as his true intentions were discovered. Not only was he guilty of plotting the scheme, he had persuaded the king to ignorantly agree to it. He had nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

Though the name of God is not mentioned in the book of Esther, we see His hand working on behalf of His people. Just by chance or with the people's best efforts they could not overcome this trial that Esther and her people were going through. Only God could help them. Esther's only hope was that God would move in the heart of the king to have concern and compassion for them. With the situation put into God's hands through fasting and prayer (Esther 4:16), Esther could face the horrible ordeal with confidence that God was with her.

What do you do when you are faced with a difficult trial? Maybe you're having trouble with someone in school, or maybe it's something not as threatening, such as schoolwork. No matter how difficult times may get, we can have confidence in God to help us when we go to Him in prayer for help. He is bigger than all our troubles and our fears. God is someone we can turn to and never be disappointed. **God can turn trials into triumphs.**

ESTHER 7:7-8

Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine and went into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king.

When the king returned from the palace garden to the place of the banquet of wine, Haman had fallen across the couch where Esther was. Then the king said, "Will he also assault the queen while I am in the house?" As the word left the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

Overwhelmed by Esther's revelation, the king, now filled with anger, goes outside to his palace garden. Queen Esther was special to the king, and the thought of her now under his own edict to be killed must have broken his heart.

The king's declaration to get rid of the Jews was now law and because of this law, many innocent people would be killed. How could he have let this happen?

With the king out in the palace garden, Haman stays with Esther, begging her to spare his life. Maybe she could talk to the king for him to have the king show mercy to him. The mighty Haman, full of pride and power, is now reduced to a humble beggar, pleading for his life. In one moment's time his life was completely turned around, for he saw that harm had been determined against him by the king.

At just the moment when Haman had fallen on the couch with Esther to plead for his life, the king walks back in. Disgusted with Haman's actions, the king accuses Haman of assaulting the queen. Though Haman was only begging for Esther to spare his life, the

king wouldn't put up with anything else that Haman might try to do. Haman was now a doomed man, suffering the consequences of his wicked heart.

ESTHER 7:9-10

Now Harbonah, one of the eunuchs, said to the king, "Look! The gallows, fifty cubits high, which Haman made for Mordecai, who spoke good on the king's behalf, is standing at the house of Haman." Then the king said, "Hang him on it!"

So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's wrath subsided.

Harbonah, one of the king's seven eunuchs (Esther 1:10), told the king about the gallows which Haman had built during the previous night to kill Mordecai (Esther 5:14). He didn't waste any time to point out to the king that Haman had prepared an execution for Mordecai who had recently saved the king's life. Without any hesitation, the king orders Haman to be taken and hanged on his own gallows.

The enemy of all the Jewish people was now dead. The king's anger had gone away, yet the threat of the king's decree to kill all the Jews was still looming over their heads. Just like God triumphed over Haman, He will triumph over his wickedness. **God can turn trials into triumphs.**

God was faithful to Queen Esther and her people. They called upon Him for help in a situation that was bigger than them. Through all their influence and resources, They would have no way to turn Haman's wicked scheme around for good but God could and He did. He was faithful to help His people as they put their life in His

hands. As they face the next trial of dealing with the king's decree, they must trust in God to help them again. But they have learned **God can turn trials into triumphs.**

How will you respond when a trial comes your way? You need to remember that God will help you go through it, you will not be alone. We can trust Him to work all things together for good to those who love Him (Romans 8:28). He too will turn your trial into a triumph.

Cornucopia of the Spirit

Using the templates enclosed with the curriculum make cornucopias filled with the fruit of the Spirit. In today's lesson we learned that Haman's pride and hatred ended up destroying him. What we can learn is that we need to always be filled with the Holy Spirit so that we won't do the works of the flesh. This craft will help us to remember the fruit of the Spirit.

You will need the templates provided with the curriculum, construction paper (various colors), glue stick and markers. Pass out a "cornucopia" template to each child, use construction paper or paper scraps to make nine different kinds of fruit. List a fruit of the Spirit on each fruit that is cut out. Refer to Galatians 5:22-23. Glue the cornucopia onto a sheet of construction paper and then glue the fruit onto the cornucopia. Write "The Fruit of the Spirit" on the outside of the cornucopia or on the construction paper background.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving that God turns our trials into triumphs. Ask the children to share any specific trials that they may be experiencing. Some children may want to share something. Pray for those situations and for the children. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

