Book of Esther/ Lesson 8
Esther Saves Her People

Esther Saves Her People

Esther 8:1-17

Servants Preparation instructions:

- Pray, read the chapters in the bible and the lesson thoroughly.
- Within the lesson you will find actual verses of the chapter and explanation of the part
- Make sure to use the maps and the intro info [from lesson1] for all the upcoming lessons as reminder.
- **Attention gritter** is an ice breaker and intro to the lesson, use your discretion for age appropriation; if it does not suit your class age try tweaking it a bit to fit
- There are **activities and crafts**; they are meant to engage the class and have them pay more attention; , use your discretion for age appropriation; if it does not suit your class age try tweaking it a bit to fit
- Announce the **Lesson goal** and have the kids point out where is the goal in the passages you read together.
- There are video resources/ games resources at the intro [from lesson1] make sure to incorporate some for each lesson.
- Questions and assignment at the end: you don't need to do all of them, but you can use them either during class for checking on comprehension/ or at the beginning of the next class for revision/ as a home work or at the end of the book as a competition assignment with rewards.

3	The banquet of the feast of Purim	Chapters 8 – 10

Outline of the part 2 of Esther's book

An introduction to the feast of Purim

- **Preparation for the feast of Purim Chapter 8**
- **Celebration of the feast of Purim Chapter 9**
- **The greatness of Mordecai Chapter 10**

Chapter outline

1. The king gives Haman's house to Esther	1
The king gives his signet ring to Mordeccai	2
Esther stands before the presence of the king	3 - 4
4. A new royal decree is issued	5 - 14
5. The glorified Mordeccai	15 - 17

MEMORY VERSE

PROVERBS 11:10

"When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; andwhen the wicked perish, there is jubilation."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:
Two bean bags for this game and four sheets of various colors of construction paper.

A bag of ring pops to use as signet rings, paper, and crayons or markers.

Strips of various colored card stock paper approximately 1/2" wide, markers, glitter, small "precious stones."

ATTENTION GETTER!

Messengers of the Good News! [Intro Game/ use as age appropriation]
Today, we will learn about a proclamation of good news for the Jews. Their lives were going to be saved from the wicked plan of Haman. Is it not wonderful that someone shared with us the good news of salvation in Jesus? Satan wants to destroy us, but Jesus has provided salvation for all who believe on Him. Use this game to introduce today's lesson and theme.

You will need 2 beanbags for this game and four sheets of various colored construction paper. Tape the construction paper to each corner of your room. Split your class in half. Have the youth line up on opposite sides of the room against the wall. The object of the game will be to have one youth at a time take the message (bean bag) to the four corners of the room (can represent the four corners of the world) and tag each corner. After tagging all four corners, the child will hand the bean bag to the person in the front of the line, go to the end of the line, and sit down. The person at the front of the line will take the message to the four corners and, then, pass it on to the next person. Declare the team a winner when all children have taken a turn and are sitting down.

With purpose, passion, and a sense of urgency, let us take the good news of the Gospel to the four corners of the world as Jesus commanded!

LESSON TIME!

- **In this lesson we will learn about:**
- **The institution of the feast of Purim**
- **Lesson Goal: God protects His people.**

[Group Discussion]
Esther chose to yield her life to God's purposes, and God used herin a mighty way—to deliver the whole Jewish population that had been sentenced to death. Let's consider the godly characteristics of Esther—one who God used as a leader in accomplishing His will.
+ Ask the youth what were the Godly characteristics of Esther?
[Here are some answers to help]

1. Esther disciplined herself to be **obedient** to authorities in herlife (Esther 2:8-9, 20).: She was obedient to God, Mordecai and the laws of the Palace.
2. She had **God's call** upon her life (Esther 4:13, 14).

3. Esther **trusted** God's promises for her life (Esther 4:14-16).
4. God gave Esther His instructions; sensitive ears to God's voice (Esther 2:22, 4:8-14).
5. She **accepted God's will** and had Faith (Esther 4:16).
6. She was confident of God's **providence** and help (Esther4:15,16).
7. She was able to stir her people to **fasting and prayer** as sheherself set the **example** of fasting (Esther 4:15,16).
8. She **considered the timing** of her actions with a lot of **wisdom** (Esther 5:1-8).
9. Her **influence** was unusual for a woman of her time.
10. She wrote an edict that was entered in official records (Esther9:29, 32).
11. Esther was **courageous and self-sacrificing** (Esther 5:16).

Esther was quite an example to follow for those of us who seek to live our lives in a way that will please God. In today's lesson, Esther will again demonstrate courage and self-sacrifice. You may remember from our last lesson, God's people in Persia have a big problem. The king's decree which gave permission to the people of Persia to destroy the Jews on a certain day—the thirteenth day of the twelfth month—could not be reversed, even by the king himself! It was law.

Esther 8:1-2

Esther Saves the Jews

8 On that day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the house of Haman, the enemy of the Jews. And Mordecai came before the king, for Esther had told how he *was related* to her. **2** So the king took off his signet ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai; and Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman

King Ahasuerus gave the house of Haman to Esther. Note, Haman is referred to as the "the enemy of the Jews" What a sad legacy! As the Jews enemy, he had become God's enemy. Zechariah 2:8 tells us, "For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple ofHis eye.'"

Why was the house of Haman taken and given to Esther [Who appointed Mordecai over it]??

It was the custom that the properties of a traitor, in this caseHaman, became the property of the king. King Ahasuerus gave theconfiscated property to Queen Esther as restitution for the offence against her. Not only was Mordecai's life saved from Haman's wrath, when the king gave Mordecai his signet ring, it indicated hewas promoted as Haman's successor in the court.

Esther put Mordecai in charge of Haman's estate, which made Mordecai wealthy. Haman's attempt to kill Mordecai led to Mordecai's exaltation and Haman's own destruction. The Bible says, "And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" (Matthew 23:12). **God protects His people.**

Esther 8:3-6

[3] Now Esther spoke again to the king, fell down at his feet, and implored him with tears to counteract the evil of Haman the Agagite, and the scheme which he had devised against the Jews. [4] And the king held out the golden scepter toward Esther. So Esther arose and stood before the king, [5] and said, "If it pleases the king, and if I have found favor in his sight and the thing *seems* right to the king and I am pleasing in his eyes, let it be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman, the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to annihilate the Jews who *are* in all the king's provinces. [6] For how can I endure to see the evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?

Esther pleads for her people [people of Israel]:

Esther again boldly approached the king who held out the golden scepter. (Esther, once more, endangered her life; remember, if the king does not hold out the golden scepter, an uninvited guest will be put to death.) Esther's life and Mordecai's life had been spared, but Esther was concerned for the lives of her people who remained sentenced to death by the king's decree. She pleaded to the king, imploring him to take away Haman's wicked decree against the Jews in the kingdom and, thus, spare their lives. What a beautiful picture is created as Queen Esther identifies herself with her people, showing her love for them. "For how can I endure to seethe evil that will come to my people? Or how can I endure to see the destruction of my countrymen?"

What an example of love! The Bible says, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (John 15:13). Jesus loves us that way! The Bible says the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance. God does not want to see anyone die and spend eternity in hell. Roman5:7,8 states, "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But Goddemonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." We were all under a death sentence. God provided forgiveness and redemption through faith in Jesus Christ. Have you received His gift of grace?

Esther 8:7-14

[7] Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Indeed, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he *tried to* lay his hand on the Jews. [8] You yourselves write *a decree* concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal *it* with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring no one can revoke."

[9] So the king's scribes were called at that time, in the third month, which *is* the month of Sivan, on the twenty-third *day;* and it was written, according to all that Mordecai commanded, to the Jews, the

satraps, the governors, and the princes of the provinces from India to Ethiopia, one hundred and twenty-seven provinces *in all,* to every province in its own script, to every people in their own language, and to the Jews in their own script and language. **10** And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus, sealed *it* with the king's signet ring, and sent letters by couriers on horseback, riding on royal horses [b]bred from swift steeds.

11 By these letters the king permitted the Jews who *were* in every city to gather together and protect their lives—to destroy, kill, and annihilate all the forces of any people or province that would assault them, *both* little children and women, and to plunder their possessions, **12** on one day in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, on the thirteenth *day* of the twelfth month, which *is* the month of [c]Adar. **13** A copy of the document was to be issued as a decree in every province and published for all people, so that the Jews would be ready on that day to avenge themselves on their enemies. **14** The couriers who rode on royal horses went out, hastened and pressed on by the king's command. And the decree was issued in [d]Shushan the [e]citadel.

+The creation of a new Law:

By law, the king could not revoke his edict. However, nothing could prevent him from making a new law. The king gave Esther and Mordecai the permission and responsibility to create a new law; and he would approve it with his seal.

Now, there would now be a second law that would be as strong as the first one, but would turn the whole situation around. The new law gave the Jewish people the right to arm and protect themselves and nine months to prepare themselves. Now, the people of the land would understand that the king did not want the Jews to be harmed. **God protects His people.**

A beautiful illustration of this act; "Can you see here an illustration of how God saved the sinner from his plight? You were under condemnation because of the law of sin and death. God did not revoke that law - He obeyed it! He sent HisSon to die for our sins and to bring in 'the law of the Spirit of life' (Romans 8:2). Any sinner who believes the message and trusts the Savior and repent will receive everlasting life (John 3:15-16)." ---

The New Royal Decree

Through the love presented by Mordecai and Esther, the new royal decree was issued, with the following text as it came in the annex to the book of Esther (Chapter 16):

(1) **A judgment of Haman for his pride**: "Many people, the more they are honored with the most general kindness of their benefactors, the prouder do they become" (16: 2). In the first decree, Ahasuerus counted Haman like a father-figure; Now he judges him as being proud. So it is with us: When we fall into sin, we count the enemy (the devil) as a father; but the banquet of the cross, exposed his truth as a proud creation that abused God's gift to it.

(2) The king counted what was to dwell on the Jewish people, as though on him personally (3 – 12);

and that Haman intended to deceive the rulers and princes appointed by the king. So it is with the Lord, who, by the cross, counts every oppression and deception by the devil against us, as directed against His kingdom, and touches God Himself as we are His own.

(3) He called the Jewish people: "The children of the living God, most high, most mighty, who has directed the kingdom both for us and for our ancestors in the most excellent order" (16: 16). Therefore, through those events, the heathen king could touch God's hand; and the temptation turned into a secret of blessing, that many have forsaken idol-worship, and came to believe in the living God. If the Jews have been saved from annihilation in the flesh; many of the heathens have been saved from the death of idol worship.

Sealed by the Holy Spirit [Activity]

You will need a bag of Ring Pops (candies that resemble rings with large gems on them) to use as signet rings, paper, and crayons or markers. Have the team that won the "Messengers" game serve the ring pops to the rest of the class. Use this opportunity to discuss with the class what the Bible talks about concerning "seals." Youcan use the following definition: to help you explain what seals are and what they were used for in Bible times.

> SEAL - A signet containing a distinctive mark which stood for the individual who owned it. The earliest seals foundso far date to before 3000 B.C. Seals varied in shapes and sizes. Some were round and were worn around the neck. Others were rings worn on the finger. The mark was madeby stamping the seal into soft clay. Many cylinder seals have been found which contain scenes that communicate a message. These were rolled in the clay to form the impression. Tamar asked for Judah's signet as collateral ona pledge he made (Gen. 38:18). Joseph was given pharaoh's ring when he was placed in command of the country (Gen. 41:42), symbolizing Joseph's right to act with the ruler's authority. Jezebel used Ahab's seal to sign letters asking that Naboth be tried and stoned to death (1 Kings 21:8).

Have the youth take a piece of paper and markers and allow them to design their own seal. They might use the initials in their name or something that would describe what is important to them.

After drawing their seal, have the children look up (or you can read to them) 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 and Ephesians 1:13-14. Talk about how we have been "sealed" by the Holy Spirit and what that means to us as Christians.

[From Father Tadros Yacoub Malaty]:

This is the royal signet ring, (the authority of sonhood) which we get by the Holy Spirit in the water of baptism, called 'the signet ring of the soul' by several fathers, . About it **St. Augustine** says: [Hold fast to it, it will never change, for it is a royal seal].

And according to father **Theodor of Massisa:** [By this seal, you enter into the possession of God; It is the sign of your Father, for you have become the flock of Christ6].

And according to St. **Cyril of Jerusalem**: [By this seal, you join the spiritual military. Each one of you would come forward, and introduce himself before God, in the presence of an uncountable army of angels; the Holy Spirit puts a sign on your souls, to be included in the army of the great King7].

Esther 8:15-17

15 So Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, with a great crown of gold and a garment of fine linen and purple; and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad. 16 The Jews had light and gladness, joy and honor. 17 And in every province and city, wherever the king's command and decree came, the Jews had joy and gladness, **a feast** and a **holiday**. Then many of the people of the land became Jews, because fear of the Jews fell upon them.

Mordecai, dressed in royal attire, receives a joyful welcome from the city of Shushan from both the Gentiles and Jews. God exalted Mordecai to a position he did not seek. The Bible says, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up" (James 4:10). Psalm 75:6,7 states, "For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south. But God is the Judge: He puts down one and exalts another."

Now, the Jews are rejoicing; what a contrast to their reaction when they heard the first decree of death! As the people around themsaw how they had been delivered, many of them "became" Jews. They were converted! While under Haman's decree, it was dangerous to be a Jew; under Mordecai's decree, it was no longer a danger, but a desire to many.

God had delivered His people. He had worked behind the scenes. He used willing vessels to accomplish His purposes and plans—Esther and Mordecai. Once, again God's heart of love and desire to work on behalf of His people was beautifully displayed. **God protects His people.**

In that day; the Purim feast was instituted:

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE FEAST OF PURIM

What does 'Purim' mean: the word Purim is plural of 'Pur', meaning (a lot).

Background of the reason to celebrate:
This day was set to celebrate God's exalted work with His people, having saved them from the collective slaughter, prepared by Haman against the Jews, all over the Persian empire, after the magicians and the diviners cast 'pur' (that is a lot) before Haman to determine the day and the month, until it fell on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar (February – March).

Having saved His people on the hands of Mordecai and Esther, the day set for their slaughter turned into a day of destruction for their enemies, and instead of disgrace, the Jews enjoyed glory.

When is the Purim feast celebrated?
The Jews used to celebrate that feast on the fourteenth and the fifteenth of that month. In the days of the Maccabees in the second century B.C., it was celebrated as the 'the day of Mordecai'; And the historian Josephus wrote that in his days the Jews celebrated that feast all over the world.
The rites of celebrating that feast are as follows:

(1) The Jews fast on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar. And if it is a Sabbath, they would start on the eleventh of the month.

(2) In the evening, when the new day begins, according to the Jewish rite, the Jews gather together in their synagogues all over the world; and after the evening prayer, they read the book of Esther. Once the name 'Haman' is said during the reading of the book, all those present used to cry out, saying: 'Let his name be blot out'; or 'let the name of the wicked be blot out' And the names of Haman's ten sons are read quickly in one breath, as a reference to their crucifixion together.

(3) The people return to the synagogue the next day to consummate the religious statutes of the day, then spend the rest of it with joy and gladness before the Lord. And the rich give gifts to the poor.

King Size Rings [Craft / age appropriation discretion]

In this craft, the youth will make signet rings out of card stock paper. You will need strips of card stock paper approximately 3/4" wide. The paper should be various colors. Using different colors of card stock or construction paper, have the youth cut out shapes for their signet rings and then decorate as they please. (They can duplicate their design from the last activity if they would like). You may want to provide glitter or plastic gems. Glue the shape or signet onto the band. Have the youth wrap the band around their finger and help them cut it to the size of their finger. Using a glue stick or white glue (allow time for drying if using white glue), glue band together at the end.

PRAYER

Lead the youth in a prayer of trust to commit to the Lord anything that might make them afraid, knowing that God will always protect His people.

CHAPTER 8 Questions:

1. Who took the signet ring after Haman's death?

a) Esther b) Haman's family c) Mordecai

2. What were the Jews permitted to do according to the letters sent to the provinces? (Esther 8:11)

Application Questions

What instructions did Esther give to Mordecai regarding the future? (Esther 8:16-17)

What was the result of the king's edict in behalf of the Jews? (Esther 8:8-9)

How did Esther's courageousness save the lives of her people? (Esther 8:1)

What was Mordecai's advice to Esther regarding the future? (Esther 8:10-14)

How did Mordecai's promotion serve as a vindication of his diligence? (Esther 8:2)

What did Esther request of the king on behalf of her people? (Esther 8:3)

How did the king's edict in behalf of the Jews affect Haman's family? (Esther 8:6-7)

How did Esther respond to Mordecai's advice? (Esther 8:15)

Exegetical Questions

What does this chapter teach us about the character of God?

What does it mean that the edict was sealed with the king's signet ring?

What does the edict allow the Jews to do in response to their enemies?

What do you think was the motivation behind the king's change of heart?

What does this chapter teach us about human nature?

How would you explain the seeming contradiction between the king's previous edict and this one?

What does the edict prohibit the Jews' enemies from doing to them?

What does it mean that the king's edict was written in the name of King Ahasuerus?

Observation Questions

How did Haman's wife and friends react to his impending doom?

How did the king respond to Esther's request?

How did Mordecai persuade Esther to change her mind?

How did Esther respond to Haman's death?

What was Haman's reaction to the king's edict?

How did the Jews react to the king's edict?

What was Esther's initial reaction to the king's edict?

What was Esther's request of the king?

Group Discussion Questions

What does it mean that "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord" (v. 1)?

How did Esther's conversation with the king in vv. 15-17 change his attitude towards the Jews?

What can we learn from Esther's example about being bold in faith?

What was Haman's plan for the destruction of the Jews (vv. 5-6, 9-10)?

What does Mordecai's statement in v. 11 ("For the deliverance that the Lord will work for us") indicate about his faith?

What can we learn from Mordecai's example about being persistent in prayer?

How did Esther's actions save the Jews from Haman's plan?

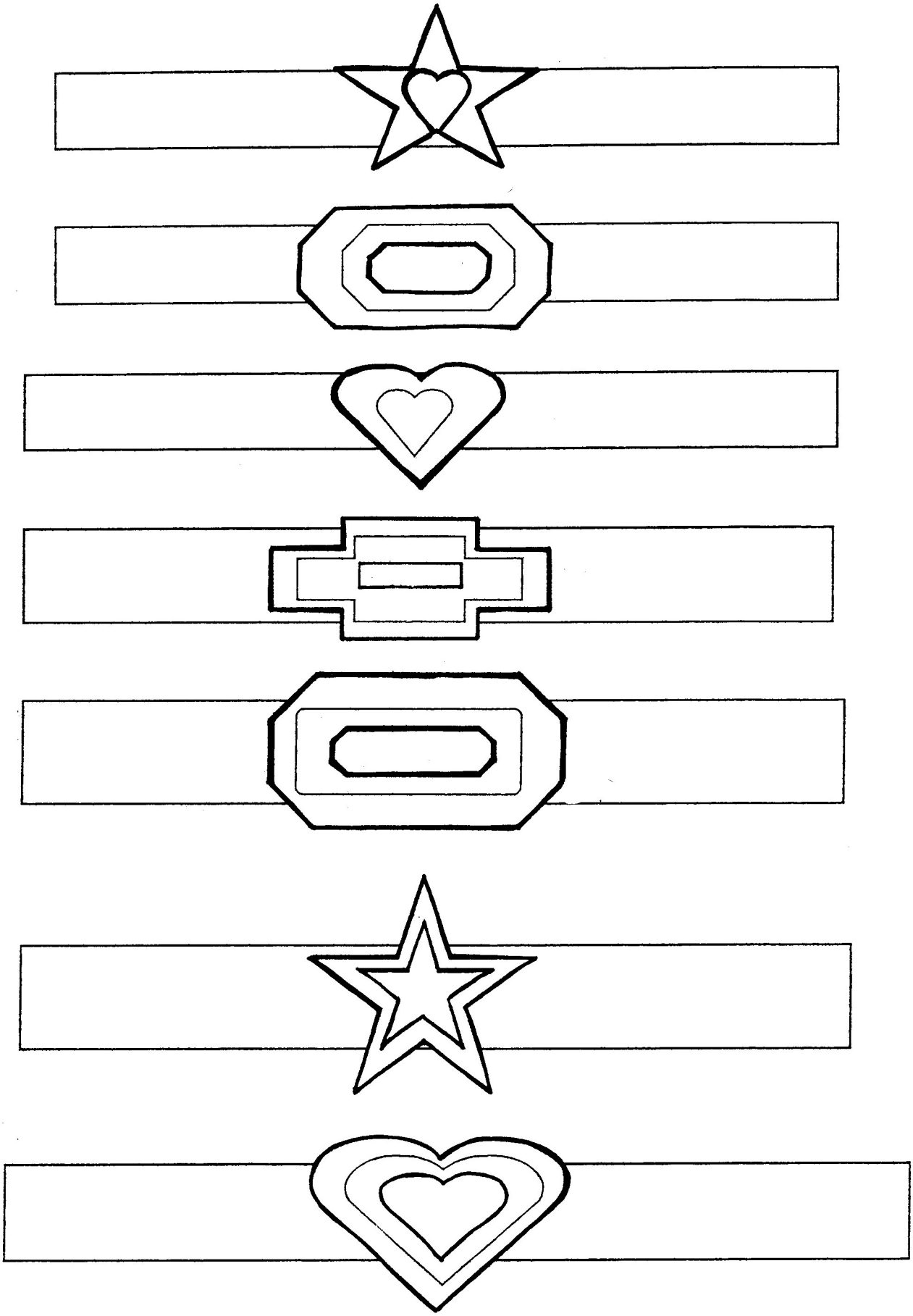
Why was Esther's request for a three-day fast (v. 3) significant?

Assignments on Esther 8

Please read Esther 8 and answer the following questions.

1. What position did the king give Esther? What did she tell the king about – 8:1?
2. What did the king do for Mordecai? What did Esther do for him – 8:2?
3. Nevertheless, what problem remained? What did Esther do about it – 8:3-6?
4. Application: List other examples in which the evils people do may outlive them.
5. Why was Haman's decree not simply reversed? What did the king authorize Esther and Mordecai to do – 8:7,8?
6. How was Mordecai's decree made known to the people – 8:9,10?
7. What did the decree state? How did this differ from the original decree – 8:11,12?
8. Describe the honors that were given Mordecai – 8:15.
9. How did Jews feel about the new decree? How were other people affected – 8:16,17?
10. Although the new decree did not directly revoke the old decree, how would Mordecai's position and favor help counteract the first decree?

Template - King Size Rings



These are examples of how the children might design their King Size Rings.Tape or glue the ends toegher to form the ring