Exile

“Esther”

Series Objective:

 Students will learn:

* The story of the Fiery Furnace
* The story of the Lion’s Den
* The story of Esther

Series Theme Verse: “He is the living God. He will live forever.’” – Daniel 6:26

Lesson Objective: For students to understand that God us wherever we are to accomplish God’s

 purposes.

Lesson Passage: Esther

Materials Needed: Small strips of paper, tape, pen or pencils or fine tip markers, Series Theme Verse on poster

Lesson Plan:

 Talking Points: Esther

* Use the “Story of Esther” at the end of the lesson to tell the story of Esther.

 The Story Retold:

* Have the students make a list of characters needed to retell the story.  It is best to keep the number of characters small, or the size of your class if possible.
* Have students draw faces or simple characters on small pieces of paper leaving a space to the left and right of the character.
* Roll the paper like a small tube around your finger and, using tape, attach it in the back to form the finger puppet.  Do this for each character.
* Have students move their character around as you retell the story.

The Story and Me:

* Have the Series theme verse written on a poster or white board.
* Have the students read the verse together.
* Let the students create a voice for their finger puppet and have each student say the Series Theme Verse using their finger puppets and their voice.

**Story of Esther**

 King Xerxes was King over the Persian Empire. That meant that he was king over the biggest kingdom in the world at that time. Even though King Xerxes was rich and powerful, he was sad because he did not have a queen. The first queen’s name was Vashti. King Xerxes had thrown a big feast and gotten drunk. He wanted Vashti to dance in front of all the men at the feast but Queen Vashti said “no.” The King became so angry that he told her that she would never be the queen again. He never saw her again.

 The king’s helpers searched the whole kingdom to find the most beautiful girls so the king could choose a new queen. The girls were brought to the palace. The girls were given the best makeup and perfumes. They spent a whole year learning how to be a queen. One of the girls was a beautiful young Jewish girl called Esther. Esther did not have a father or a mother. Her cousin, Mordecai had raised her and treated her like a daughter. Mordecai taught Esther how to love God and how to be a Jew.

 When it came time to choose the new queen, the king chose Esther. Esther was a good queen. The king did not believe in God but Esther did. She never forgot her cousin Mordecai and she never forgot that she was one of God’s children. Sometimes it was hard for Esther because the other Jews were treated badly. They did not have the riches that Esther had. Esther tried to use the good things that God had given her to help other people.

 One time Mordecai helped the king. Mordecai heard that someone was trying to kill the king. He told Esther about it and she told the king. The plan was stopped. Mordecai saved the king’s life! This was very special so it was written about in the king’s record book.

 Another man became famous in the kingdom. His name was Haman. The king thought Haman was a good man so he ordered everyone in the kingdom to bow down to Haman. But Haman was a bad man and he hated the Jews. Mordecai would not bow down to Haman. Haman was so angry that he planned a way to kill Mordecai and all of the Jews.

 Haman told the king that the Jews were bad. Finally, the king believed him and made a law. The law said that people could kill the Jews and not get in trouble. Haman was glad. He had a huge gallows built and he planned to have Mordecai hanged.

 When Mordecai heard about the plan he told Esther. “Please, Esther, you have to save our people! Maybe God knew this would happen and that is why he let you be Queen.”

 Esther was very frightened. She had never told the king that she was a Jew. Would he be mad at her like he was mad at the first queen? No one was allowed to go to the king unless he asked them first. Even the queen could not go to the king without an invitation. If anyone went to the king without an invitation they could be put to death. The only thing that could change this was if the king pointed his scepter at the person who came to him.

 Finally, Esther decided to go to the king without being asked. When she came to him she was very frightened. Would she be put to death? Then the king pointed his sceptre at her and told her to come to him. The king liked Esther. He told her she could have anything she wanted.

Esther had a plan. She told the king that she wanted to have a special feast just for the two of them and for Haman. Esther and the king planned the feast for the very next day.

 The king went to bed that night but he could not sleep. Sometimes reading a book helps you sleep. So the king asked one of his helpers to bring one of the old record books. The helper brought the book and began to read to the king about things that had happened long ago. He read about the time Mordecai had saved the king’s life! The king got very excited. He wanted to do something special for Mordecai. The king called for Haman to come into his chamber. Haman was happy because he thought the king was going to do something nice for him. The king asked Haman what should be done for someone who deserved honour. Haman thought the king was about to honour him so he said: “That person should be given a royal robe and one of the king’s horses. They should be led through the streets so everyone knows that the king likes them.”

“That is a great idea,” said the king. “Go and do those things for Mordecai!”

 Haman was shocked! He could not believe that the king liked Mordecai. Now, Haman knew he was in big trouble. The king liked Mordecai but Haman was trying to kill Mordecai. What would the king do when he found out?

 The next day Haman went to the special feast with Esther and the King. The worst thing that Haman imagined happened. Esther told the king that someone was trying to kill the good man, Mordecai, who had saved the king’s life. The king was very angry. He said that the man should be put to death. Haman was hung on the very gallows that he had built for Mordecai.

Then Esther told the king that she was a Jew. He was very sorry that he had made the law that Jews could kill the Jews. Even the king could not change the law. Then Esther asked the king to make another law – a law that said the Jews could fight back if someone tried to kill them. The king knew that this was a good idea so he made the law. From then on, if someone tried to hurt the Jews then the Jews fought back. Soon, no one wanted to hurt the Jews anymore.

 Mordecai and all of the Jews were saved because of Esther.