God's People Ask for Help!

Bible Lesson: God's People Ask for Help – *Esther 4:1-17*

Main Teaching: Pray to God and trust Him to help you.

Word Up: Pray to God!

Supplies:

- Word Up Booklet – Word Up (Resource Pack)
- Recording for "Trust in the Lord" and "I Look to You" - Worship (Sing About the King 2 CD)
- Optional Song Visual for "I Look to You" – Worship (cefpress.com)
- Half piece of cardstock and scissors for several people (or everyone) in the class. Example half piece of cardstock mounted on a flat piece of cardstock – Object Lesson
- Flashcards for Bible Story "God's People Ask for Help" – Bible Lesson 3
- "Go" reproducible cards, Ten sheets of paper per team, Throne *(chair),* Container – Review Game (Resource Pack)
- Esther color sheet, half sheet of cardstock and scissors for older kids – Small Group
- Quiet Time Sheet Week 3 (Resource Pack) - Dismissal

Schedule at a Glance (75 min club):

15 min – Small Group
10 min – Worship / Rules / Word Up
10 min – Object Lesson
15 min – Bible Lesson
10 min – Review Game
5 min – Missionary Story
10 min – Small Group

INTRODUCTION

"Help us!" God's people desperately needed His help as the month and day of their approaching destruction drew near. Mordecai challenged Esther with these famous words: "…who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Esther was thrust from obscurity and safety to become queen of the land for *this* time, *this* moment. What could she do to save her people? Before approaching King Ahasuerus, Esther and the other Jews in Shushan looked to the King of all—the one true God. What a timely lesson for children (and adults) to hear and understand—call on God and trust that He will help you. The help may not look like you thought it would, but God, in His sovereignty, is at work and will help. Build some suspense as you continue telling this exciting story!

SMALL GROUP

Say Memory Verse

Have kids say their memory verse from last week to their small group leader.

God Can Help You Discussion

Can you think of something you have trouble doing? It may be hard for you to obey or share. What's hard for you to do? When you need help, who can you turn to? *(Allow responses.)* God can help you with all of those things and more. Today we are going to learn about asking God for help.

WORSHIP

To learn songs and motions, go to YouTube and type in CEF and the name of the song in the search bar.

"Trust in the Lord"

"I Look to You"

RULES

Go over the Up Rules – Sit Up, Look Up, Listen Up, Hand Up and Zip Up

WORD UP!

"Pray to God!"

If you're having trouble with your homework, who might you ask for help? If you hurt yourself while playing outside, who might you ask for help? If you are hungry and need a snack, who might you ask for help? *(Allow responses.)* When we need help, we ask others for help. We all need help with things at different times. Did you know God is also willing and able to help you when you have problems in life? You can pray and ask Him for help! **WORD UP!**, **"Pray to God!"** *(Say with children.)*

OBJECT LESSON

Impossible Paper

Supplies:
Half piece of cardstock and scissors for several people (or everyone) in the class.
Example half piece of cardstock mounted on a flat piece of cardstock (see picture below).

Say: "Your goal is to transform your piece of paper into something that looks like my example". (Give students a minute to try.) After a minute say "You can ask anyone, you want in the class for help". After letting them struggle for another minute, collect all the papers.

"Now I'm going to show you how to do it. I told you you could ask anyone in the class for help. Who should you have asked for help?" Let them talk about it and usually they will finally say they should have asked you, because

you are the one that made it. “That’s right. It is important when you are looking for help to look to the right source for help. Here is how I did this.”

Cut the half sheet of paper like the picture below. After you make the 3 cuts, Grab the paper by the sides and turn the sides in the opposite directions (one toward you and one away from you.) Crease the folds. It will now look like the example above.

“Many times when we need help we look to Google or our friends or even our parents for help and that is not bad, but who should we turn to first when we need help? We should turn to God, our Heavenly Father. He is always ready to listen to us. We can talk to Him anytime in prayer. If you go to God for help, He will give you the direction and answers you need. When you follow God’s plan, you can do things you never thought were possible.”

“In our Bible story today, God’s people are in a really hard situation, and they need help. Let’s see what they do.”

Find Demonstration at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFgtOxtoaq4 or search Easy Object Lesson to teach Prayer, Obedience by Maria Eckersley on You Tube

BIBLE LESSON

INTRODUCTION

Raise your hand if you have heard news that made you really sad or that you worried about. *(Allow response.)* Maybe your parents got a phone call about someone being hurt or sick. Or maybe you heard something on the TV or internet about something bad happening somewhere in the world. Hearing bad news can be very scary. Does anyone remember from last lesson, what bad news the Jewish people heard? *(Allow response.)* Haman had made a law that all the Jews were to be killed on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month.

PROGRESSION OF EVENTS

Flashcard 3-1
In every province the Jews fasted (stopped eating) and wept after they read this law. Many showed their sorrow by wearing sackcloth—clothing made of rough fabric—and covering themselves in ashes. This was often how people who were very sad would dress. That way other people would know they were very sad. The Jews knew the law could never be changed.

As Mordecai read the decree, he felt very sad for his people. He stood outside the king's gate and showed how upset he was by crying out loudly, covering himself in ashes, and wearing sackcloth. Can you act like you are really upset? *(Do with children.)*

Flashcard 3-2
In the palace, Queen Esther's servants told her that Mordecai was outside the king's gate dressed in sackcloth and crying loudly. She wondered why he was wearing sackcloth and sent a servant to give him some clothes and find out what happened.

But Mordecai refused the clothes. When Esther found out, she was very concerned. She sent Hatach *(HAY-tak),* a trusted servant to find out what was wrong with Mordecai.

Flashcard 3-3
Mordecai explained the new law to Hatach and handed him a copy of the decree that had been posted in the city. "Take this to the queen," Mordecai urged. "Tell her that she must go to the king and beg for the lives of her people!"

Hatach returned to Queen Esther and handed her the copy of the law. He told her exactly what Mordecai had said.

Flashcard 3-4
Esther read the words of the new law. Let's all pretend to open a scroll and read it. *(Do with children.)*

Now Esther knew the great danger she and her people were in. But Mordecai was asking her to go to the king. That would be dangerous too! The law in Persia stated that if anyone—even the queen—went before the king uninvited, the king could have that person immediately put to death unless the king held out his golden scepter—a special rod that showed his power. The king had not asked Esther to come to him for the past month.

This was a problem for Esther. Either she could die going to the king, or her people would certainly die if she didn't. Esther needed help.

When you need help in your life, do you worry about what you should do? All of us face hard things at some point. Maybe you're starting a new after-school activity and you worry the kids won't like you. Maybe you are scared about getting hurt or dying. Or maybe you have a decision to make about which sport to play and you aren't sure what to do. Sometimes you can get worried, afraid, or even angry when troubles happen in your life. But if Jesus is your Savior, you can **pray to God and trust Him to help you.** Tell Him what troubles you're facing and trust Him to help you. **WORD UP!**, **"Pray to God!"** *(Say with children.)* Our memory verse from last week talks about this. *(Quote Philippians 4:6 with children.)* You don't have to worry or be afraid when you trust God. God loves you and wants to help you.

Esther and her people needed help. Trouble could come if she went to the king. But if she didn't go to the king, her people would die.

"You must give Mordecai this message," she said. "If I go to the king without being called, I could be put to death. And he has not called for me for thirty days." Hatach hurried out to deliver the message to Mordecai. Stand up and hurry in place like Hatach did. Maybe he was out of breath when he got there. *(Do with children.)*

Flashcard 3-5
Mordecai looked at Hatach and said, "You must take this message to Queen Esther: Do not think that because you are the queen and live in the palace, you will escape when all the rest of God's people are

killed. If you do not speak up for your people, they will be saved in some other way, but you and your father's family will be destroyed."

Mordecai trusted that God is sovereign—He was in control! Mordecai trusted God to protect His people. He knew God had made a promise to the Jews.

God would always protect His people. He promised that through the Jews, a Savior would come into the world. The Bible tells us that God kept His promise. Many years after this story took place, God sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, into the world to die on a cross for your sins—for all the ways you break God's laws. No one had to teach you how to be mean, swear, or steal. You were born wanting to sin. You deserve to be punished—separated from God both now and forever. But Jesus was perfect—He had no sin of His own. He didn't have to die for sin. But He was willing to die because He loves you! *(Read Romans 5:8.)* Even though you are a sinner, God showed His love to you by sending Jesus, the Savior. Jesus was beaten and bruised. Blood came from His hands and feet as they nailed Him to the cross. Jesus took the punishment you deserve. After He died, they took His body from the cross. He was buried, but He didn't stay dead. On the third day He came alive again! Now He's in Heaven, ruling as King. God kept His promise to send a Savior through the Jewish people. He would protect His people.

Mordecai knew God had made a promise. He trusted that God is sovereign and would protect His people, even if Esther did not help.

Mordecai gave Hatach one more message for the queen. *(Read Esther 4:14b.)* Mordecai believed God had arranged everything so Esther could be queen at just this time and help her people.

Flashcard 3-6
Hatach returned to Queen Esther and told her all that Mordecai had said. Now Esther knew what she must do. She said to Hatach, "Tell Mordecai to gather all the Jews in Shushan and tell them to fast. Tell them to do this for three days and nights. My maids and I will fast too." Count to three with me. *(Do with children.)* That's how many days the Jews would not eat any food! Would you be hungry if you didn't eat for three days? *(Allow response.)*

In asking the Jews to fast, Esther was asking them to completely rely on God for His help. In that culture, fasting and prayer usually went together. When the Jews fasted and prayed, they were looking forward to God's answer! Esther knew she and her people couldn't face their trouble alone. They needed God's help.

You don't need to face your troubles alone, either. If you know Jesus as your Savior, you can **pray to God and trust Him to help you**. Maybe you worry about being liked, are scared about getting hurt or dying, or you have a difficult decision to make. When troubles happen, don't be afraid or worried.

WORD UP!, **"Pray to God!"** *(Say with children.)* Let's say our memory verse together. *(Quote Philippians 4:6 with children.)* God wants you to bring your worries to Him in prayer. Remember that you belong to Him and He loves to hear your prayers. Instead of being worried or afraid, **tell God** about that trouble in your life. Ask Him to help you and trust Him to answer you. While you wait for His answer, you can do what our memory verse says and thank God for how He will answer and for what He has already done for you. God will help you in His perfect time and way. The verse after Philippians 4:6 says, *(read Philippians 4:7).* God will give you peace even in the midst of your trouble. Because God knows everything, He knows the best way to help even if it's not what you expect. No matter how God chooses to answer your prayer, you can **pray to God and trust Him to help you.** You don't have to face your troubles alone.

Esther knew that she and her people couldn't face their trouble alone. They needed God's help. She sent Hatach to tell Mordecai to gather the Jews and have them fast for three days.

CLIMAX

Esther said, "After the three days of fasting, I will go before the king, even though I could be killed. If I die, I die!"

CONCLUSION

Hatach took Esther's message to Mordecai. What relief Mordecai must have felt, knowing that Esther would stand up for her people! He hurried off to spread the message among the Jews. Esther had called for their help and the Jews did what she asked. But Esther and the other Jews' hope was not in what they said or did. Their

hope was in God. What will happen when Ester goes to the king? Will he accept her, or will he have her put to death? You will have to come back next week to find out!

INVITATION

In this story, God's people were in a lot of trouble. But you are in a lot of trouble too. The first trouble you need God's help with is your problem of sin. Jesus made a way for you to be close to God when He died and came alive again. If you have never believed on Jesus to save you from sin, you can do that right now. *(Read Romans 10:13.)* "Whosoever" means anyone, including you. To call on the name of the Lord means to believe completely on Jesus as the only one who can take away your sin. If you call on Him, you will be saved. You will not be separated from God, instead you will have a wonderful friendship with Him here on Earth and in Heaven someday. Will you call on Jesus and be saved today? Please bow your head and close your eyes. If you are ready to call on the Lord Jesus, believing on Him to be saved from sin, show me by raising your hand. *(Acknowledge responses.)* You may all open your eyes. If you raised your hand or you want to know more about being saved, meet me *(designate time and location)* so I can show you from God's Word how to be saved.

REVIEW GAME

Go!

Supplies: "Go" reproducible cards *(See GNC Resource Pack.),* Ten sheets of paper per team, Throne *(chair),* Container

Instructions: Esther was encouraged to go to the king. Which team will help Esther go to the king first?

Divide children into two teams and put a throne (chair) between them up front. For each team, make a stone path (ten sheets of paper) to the throne. Choose an "Esther" from each team to stand at the beginning of their team's path. Put 20 cards in a container—10 blank and 10 with praying hands. Large clubs may want to double the amount of cards. Ask questions, alternating between the teams. If the answer is correct, the child who answered announces his birth month. Then all the children on his team born in the same month choose a card from the container. Count how many "praying hands" were chosen then return all cards to the container. The Esther from their team, moves forward one stone for every praying hands chosen. For larger clubs you may wish to do every five or more praying hands chosen depending on the size of your club. The team who gets their Esther to the throne first, wins.

1. What did Mordecai do when he found out about the new law? (He dressed in sackcloth and ashes and cried loudly.)
2. How did Esther find out what was wrong with Mordecai? (She sent a servant out to talk to him.)
3. What did Mordecai want Esther to do to save the people? (He wanted her to go and ask the king to save her people.)
4. Why would this be a dangerous thing for Esther to do? (Anyone who went before the king without being called for could be killed.)
5. What does our memory verse tell you to do when you face troubles in your life? (Don't worry; pray.)

6. What promise did God make to the Jewish people? (That the Savior would come through them.)
7. What did Mordecai tell Esther would happen if she didn't go to the king? (The Jews would be saved in some other way, but Esther and her family would be destroyed.)
8. What did it mean when Esther asked the Jews to fast for her? (They wouldgo without food and drink; they would rely on God for His help; they would pray for her.)
9. Why do you think Esther would want the Jews to pray? (She needed God's help for courage to go to the king and for the king to allow her to speak.)
10. What are some troubles boys and girls might need to pray about? (Answers will vary.)
11. What did Esther say she would do for her people? (Go to the king and ask him to spare their lives.)
12. What should you do when God helps you with a problem? (Thank Him.)

MISSIONARY STORY

Robert Foster
Part 4

Last week we heard many ways God was faithful to Bob and Belva. Can you name one way God was faithful? *(Allow response.)* God had provided Dr. Bob with money and supplies to help the sick people in Africa. Soon, Bob, Belva, and little Stephen climbed aboard a big ship for the journey to Zambia in southern Africa. After weeks of traveling, they arrived in Africa. Belva and Bob faced many changes. They would have to eat new things and live in a house made of mud, sticks, and grass. There was no running water. They would even learn a new language. They didn't have much time to learn their way around. As soon as the people heard there was a doctor at Mukinge *(Moo-keen- gay)*, they crowded the mission station.

"My little girl is dying," a young mother cried, holding her weak baby out to Dr. Bob. "The evil spirits have made her sick. I took her to the witch doctor but she is not getting better."

Many people in Zambia thought evil spirits made people sick. When someone got sick they would go to a witch doctor, who they thought could talk to evil spirits and convince them to stop making people sick. They were afraid of the evil spirits and thought they had a lot of power. ButDr. Bob wanted to show the people that God was more powerful and could help them get better.

With the medicines and knowledge God had given, Dr. Bob was able to help this child get well.

When he did an operation, the people often crowded at the windows of the hut to watch. Dr. Bob wanted the people to see that sickness was caused because of a problem in the body, not because of evil spirits. Bob was glad to be able to take care of the people and have the chance to tell them about Jesus.

Sometimes he had to perform operations he had never done before. He propped his medical book nearby and looked at it as he cut into the patient. He knew there were many things he didn't know. He was glad he could trust God each day as he tried to help everyone who came to him. Some of the people who came to the mission station were too sick to travel home and had to sleep in huts on dirt floors. Bob still dreamed of having a hospital. He had been drawing the building design and asking God to take care of this important need. Would God provide?

Bob had no doubts. God had given him three tons of supplies for a hospital. It was silly to think He wouldn't also give him the building to put them in. The hospital would cost $25,000—that's a lot of money now but back then it was even more. It would be more than $250,000 today. As Dr. Bob stitched up wounds from crocodile bites or gunshots, he put his trust in God for the hospital

that was so greatly needed.

By faith he picked out a spot to build and began getting it ready. Then he discovered there was no cement available in the whole country.

They couldn't build a hospital without any cement! What would you do if you were Bob? Come back next week to learn what Bob does next.

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Color Sheet, Esther story discussion and Impossible Paper practice

Have kids retell you the Esther story as they color the picture. Be sure to focus on how Ester prayed and asked others to pray for her when she faced a hard time. If you have older kids, have them make their own Impossible Paper from the Object Lesson and challenge them to share with a friend how you can go to God for help when you face something hard.

DISMISSAL

Hand out a Quiet Time Sheet (Week 3 in the Resource Pack) to each child. Encourage them to fill it out and bring it back next week. As children are getting picked up, try and connect with the parents and let them know the kids are working on praying to God when they need help.

God's People Ask for Help - Esther

This page has been designed for you to photocopy and place in you Bible as a ready reference.

Lesson Outline

I. **INTRODUCTION**
Raise your hand if you have heard news that made you really sad or worried.
(Allow response.)

II. **PROGRESSION OF EVENTS**

A. **Flashcard 3-1** (Esther 4:1-3)
1. The Jews fasted, cried, and wore sackcloth and ashes.
2. Mordecai also wore sackcloth and ashes and cried loudly outside the king's gate.

B. **Flashcard 3-2** (Esther 4:4-6)
1. Esther's servant told her about Mordecai.
2. She sent Mordecai clothes, which he refused, so she sent Hatach.

C. **Flashcard 3-3** (Esther 4:7-9)
1. Mordecai explained everything to Hatach and gave him a copy of the law to give to Queen Esther.
2. Mordecai said Esther must go to the king and beg for the lives of her people.

D. **Flashcard 3-4** (Esther 4:10-12)
1. Esther knew that if she went to the king uninvited, she could be put to death.
   All of us face hard things that make us worry. [Philippians 4:6]
2. Esther sent a message to Mordecai. The king had not called for her in 30 days.

E. **Flashcard 3-5** (Esther 4:13-14)
1. Mordecai knew that if Esther did not speak up, the Jews would be saved some other way but she would be destroyed.
   God would always protect the Jews because of His promise to send a Savior. [Romans 5:8]
2. Mordecai sent one more message to the queen.

F. **Flashcard 3-6** (Esther 4:15-17)
Esther told Mordecai to have the Jews fast.
Pray to God and trust Him to help you. [Philippians 4:6-7]

III. **CLIMAX**
Esther said, "After the three days of fasting, I will go before the king, even though I could be killed. If I die, I die!"

IV. **CONCLUSION**
Mordecai was relieved that Esther would stand up for her people.
Will you tell God about your trouble and ask Him to help? [Philippians 4:6-7]
The first trouble you need help with is your problem of sin. [Romans 10:13]

Scripture verses in parentheses are background text.
Bracketed verses should be quoted or read from God's Word.

God Protects His People: The Life of Esther Coloring Sheet, Lesson 03