Session 8: October 23

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Today, girls and boys began a two-week study of the book of Esther. Many years after the Jewish people had been conquered and taken into captivity by Babylon, Babylon was defeated by the kingdom of Persia. Persia was ruled by King Ahasuerus, who liked to celebrate his wealth and prosperity by hosting parties. At one of his parties, the king ordered that the queen, Vashti, appear. The king wanted to show off Queen Vashti's beauty, but Vashti refused. This led to Vashti's dismissal as queen and a new search for a queen began. As readers of this story, we can clearly see what the Jewish people have acknowledged for centuries—God had a plan for Esther and His sovereignty is displayed as Esther was chosen to be the new queen of Persia. As you review the first two chapters of Esther this week, don't forget to check out the discussion questions on the back of this week's Family Card.

BIBLE PASSAGE: Esther 1–2
MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 27:1
BIBLE VERSE: Psalm 139:16
OLDER KIDS TEXT TRUTH: God had a plan for Esther, and God has a plan for my life.
YOUNGER KIDS TEXT TRUTH: God has a plan for my life.

Esther and Mordecai

Esther 1–2

Many years had passed since the Babylonians had taken the Jews into captivity. The Persians had come and defeated the Babylonians, but still the Jews lived a long way from their home.

One day, King Ahasuerus (uh haz yoo EHR uhs) gave a party for all his officials and helpers in the Persian Empire. He called for Queen Vashti (VASH tigh) to join the celebration, but she refused. She was sent away and forbidden to be in the palace.

Later, after the king's anger was gone, his servants suggested he choose a new queen. Among the girls to be presented before the king was Esther (also called Hadassah, huh DASS uh), a beautiful Jewish girl.

Esther was cared for by her older cousin, Mordecai (MAWR duh kigh), because she did not have a father or mother, for they had died. Mordecai instructed Esther not to tell anyone she was Jewish.

For a year, the women received beauty treatments to prepare for meeting the king. When it came time for Esther to meet the king, the king saw that Esther was beautiful. He loved her more than any of the other women and made her queen.

One day Mordecai, while sitting at the King's Gate, heard that two guards were planning to kill the king. He told this news to Queen Esther, who told the king. Mordecai saved the king's life.