

Esther

By

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Theme:

This play conveys the courage Esther showed when she stood up to Haman and King Xerxes to save the Jewish people from Haman's persecution.

Biblical Reference:

Esther 4-7

Approximate Running Time:

15 minutes

Props:

Costumes that reflect Bible times.

Cast of Characters:

Esther: Esther is already the queen and is dressed in fine clothes. She is prim and proper and shows great respect to those she speaks with.

Mordecai: Mordecai isn't afraid to call things as he sees them and is never afraid to say what's on his mind. His bold manner is contagious.

Haman: Haman is a bad guy who is out to kill all Jews. He is vengeful and makes people cringe in his presence.

Guard: The guard is one of Haman's henchmen. He has a great deal of respect for Haman and is willing to do what Haman tells him to do.

Scene I

[Haman and the Guard are meeting in secret somewhere in the King's palace.]

Haman: I wish there was something I could do to get that Mordecai back for not showing me the respect I deserve.

Guard: What do you mean?

Haman: Come on. Don't you notice it? Every time I go out of the King's gates everyone bows to show me respect but that stupid Mordecai. He just stands there refusing to bow to me. It's embarrassing. It's like he's mocking me. Everyone else shows me the respect I deserve as a high official in the land except that Mordecai.

Guard: So, he's just one little man. Everyone else shows you respect. What's the big deal if just one little man fails to show you the respect you deserve?

Haman: You don't understand. It may not be a big deal right now, but it can become a big deal in a short period of time. It only takes one little man to start a revolt. Remember that. When you're in a position of power and control, you want to be in control of every man, no matter how little he may seem.

Guard: Do you want me to make him bow before you the next time we go out of the King's palace?

Haman: No. I don't know if that would be enough to teach a lesson to others. Besides, he may only bow because you're making him.

Guard: Do you want me to kill him?

Haman: You're thinking in the right direction, but I still don't think that would be enough to teach a lesson to the others. And there was that time when Mordecai saved the King's life. I don't know if the King would let me kill him if he knew that Mordecai had saved his life.

Guard: That is a good point. Well, I know that he's a Jew. Do you want me to find out where other Jews are and take them out too? I mean, you might not be able to kill just Mordecai, but you might be able to kill Mordecai if you've been told to kill **ALL** Jews.

Haman: How are you going to do that? There are too many Jews for you to kill. You'd need an army.

Guard: Yeah, you're right. Well, what if we started an army?

Haman: That would take too long. We need to do something fast.

Guard: What if we got a decree from the King that says all Jews are to be killed.

Haman: Yeah. That might just work. The king probably doesn't know that Mordecai is a Jew. Yeah. A decree from the King would mean that ALL Jews would be killed, and that would include Mordecai. That's it - we get a decree from the king. That's genius. [Pause.] Uh, there's only one problem.


Guard: What's that?

Haman: How are we going to get a decree like that from the king? I mean I just can't go in there and say that he should kill all Jews just like that. There has to be a reason other than the fact that I don't like them.

Guard: Well, what if you went to the king and told him that you wanted to kill the Jews because you thought they were an enemy of the King?

Haman: I like it. It might just work.

- CURTAIN -



Scene II

[*Mordecai is talking to Esther somewhere within the Palace grounds.*]

Esther: What is it Mordecai?

Mordecai: We're in big trouble Esther. The king has just signed a proclamation that says that all Jews are to be killed.

Esther: What? I don't think that the king would do something like that. Are you sure you didn't hear it wrong?

Mordecai: I was just in the village square and I heard the proclamation read for the first time myself. I didn't believe it at first either, so I even went and read it after it was posted for everyone to see.

Esther: What did it say?

Mordecai: It said that the great King Xerxes has ordered to destroy, kill, and annihilate all Jews - young and old; men, women, and little children - on a single day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, and then to take all their stuff.

Esther: Are you sure?

Mordecai: That's exactly what it says. I read it myself.

Esther: That's horrible.

Mordecai: I know. You have to do something about this. You can't just stand by and watch your king kill your people.

Esther: Me? You want me to do something about this? Why me?

Mordecai: Esther, you are the queen. Can't you talk to him and try to talk him out of the proclamation? He's not going to listen to me. He'll listen to you, though.

Esther: Mordecai, you don't understand. I can't just walk in there and tell him that I want to talk to him. He has to ask for me.


Mordecai: Come on. You've got to be kidding me. You can't just walk in there and say you want to speak to the king, who just happens to be your husband?

Esther: No, I can't. Anyone who just walks in there and asks to speak with him can be put to death on the spot, including me. I'd be scared to death to walk in there and ask him to talk to me.

Mordecai: Well, doesn't he ask you to speak with him every day?

- Esther: No, in fact it's been about a month since I last spoke with him and I don't know when I'll be asked to see him next.
- Mordecai: But you've got to speak to him. All of the Jews are going to be killed. Isn't there even a chance that he'll listen to you?
- Esther: Well, there is a little chance that he'll listen to me. If I do approach the king and if he chooses to listen to me he'll extend his golden scepter and I won't be put to death. But I've never heard of him doing that for anybody.
- Mordecai: But you're not just anybody. You're the queen.
- Esther: I may be the queen, but the rules of the King and his court apply to me as well. He's proven that with other queens in the past.
- Mordecai: You can't think that you'll be okay just because you are in the king's house. You'll be in trouble when they find out you are a Jew too and if God chooses to save His people some other way then you and your father's family will surely die.
- Esther: I know that I cannot run and hide. But I'm afraid to go and confront the King.
- Mordecai: God may have called you into this royal position for such a time as this.
- Esther: But I'm afraid for my life.
- Mordecai: I understand. But you should be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of your king. The Lord your God goes with you. He will never leave you nor forsake you. You have nothing to be afraid of when you have God on your side.
- Esther: Okay. You talked me into it. But will you do something for me, too?
- Mordecai: Name it.
- Esther: Gather together all of the Jews who are in the land and ask them to fast and pray for me for three days and three nights. All my friends and I will fast too. Then I will go before the king and if I die, I die, but at least I'll try.

- CURTAIN -



Scene III

[Haman and the guard are meeting in secret somewhere in the King's palace.]

Guard: How are things going with our plan?

Haman: They're going great. In fact, you won't believe this, but they're going better than I would have expected. The king bought it. He even let me write the declaration that says that all Jews throughout the land are to be killed; man, woman, and child. The king sent couriers on his fastest horses to take the news to the entire land. Now everyone knows that all Jews will be killed on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month.

Guard: That's great. Now we just have to sit back and wait for the day to come.

Haman: And watch Mordecai sweat it out.

Guard: Yeah, that will be fun. If only he knew that you were behind it all. I bet he'd bow to you now. So, what else is new?

Haman: Life is good right now. Things are going just great ever since the king has given me this great position of power and authority. I've got everything I ever wanted. I have money, I have power, I have been blessed with sons, and it seems like the king has been honoring me every time I turn around. Hey, the queen even invited me to have dinner with her and the king last night.

Guard: How was it?

Haman: It was great. It was just me and the king and Esther hanging out in the king's quarters, eating this great king food, talking about king stuff, playing king games, and making king plans for the future. I think that he likes me. I wouldn't be surprised to find out that King Xerxes thinks that I'd make a great king myself someday.

Guard: Hey, that could happen you know.

Haman: I don't know. How could it happen?

Guard: Hey, you never know. I think you'd make a great king - if it means anything to you.

Haman: Thanks. And I think that you'd do a good job doing what I'm doing if I were the king.

Guard: Thanks. Hey, since you and the king are getting along so well, why don't you ask him if you can have a gallows made outside of the king's gate - one that's really, really big - so that you can make a big deal of killing the king's enemies?

Haman: That's a great idea. We could make it huge so that everyone can see what happens to those who cross the Great Haman.

Guard: And then why don't you ask King Xerxes if you could have Mordecai hanged as the first of the Jews to be killed. Don't you think that would be something special?

Haman: That does sound like something special. Ha! How would Mordecai feel then?

Guard: I bet he would bow to you if he thought it would save his life.

Haman: That's it. I can tell him that I'll spare him if he bows to me and then he'll do it and I'll kill him anyway. I've got the power - not that wimpy little Mordecai. Hey, that's a great plan.

Guard: So, when are you going to see the king next?

Haman: Soon. In fact, I'm having dinner with the king and Esther again tonight.

Guard: Again?

Haman: Yeah. I told you they really like me. It'll be just me and the king and Esther hanging out in the king's quarters, eating great king food, talking about king stuff, playing king games, and making king plans for the future - again.


Guard: Haman, you've really got it made in the shade.

Haman: I know. I better get going. I have to go get ready for dinner with the king.

Guard: Don't forget to talk to him about Mordecai.

Haman: Don't worry, I won't forget.

- CURTAIN -



Scene IV

[*Mordecai is talking to Esther somewhere within the Palace grounds.*]

Mordecai: [*Really excited.*] Esther, you won't believe what the Lord has done for us!

Esther: What is it Mordecai?

Mordecai: King Xerxes was having a hard time sleeping last night so he asked his scribe to read through recent business and it was then he realized that he hadn't thanked me for saving his life. Just then Haman came to talk to him about something and the king asked Haman how he should honor someone who did something great for the king.

Esther: What did Haman say?

Mordecai: Haman thought the king was going to honor him so he said that the person to be honored should wear royal robes and ride on a royal horse throughout the city streets with someone going before him saying that he had done great things for the king.

Esther: That does sound pretty special.

Mordecai: So the king then tells Haman that I was the one to be honored and he told Haman that he should be the one that leads me through the streets telling everyone that I was someone who has done something great for the king.

Esther: [*Smiling.*] I saw you on that horse, dressed like a king. You looked great! And I saw Haman walking before you looking like he was having the worst time of his life. Did you have fun?

Mordecai: It was incredible. It really was a lot of fun. I still think it was more than the king should have done. I know that I did what anyone else would have done. But it was a lot of fun.

Esther: I have good news for you too. I invited the King and Haman to a dinner I prepared on three separate nights. On the third night I made a great dinner for the King and Haman. After dinner I told the King that Haman was planning to kill all my people and the king was so mad that he ordered that Haman be hanged on the gallows he built to kill you.

Mordecai: Haman was hanged on that huge gallows just outside of the king's gates?

Esther: Yes, and that's not all. The King wants you to write a proclamation that will reverse the one that Haman wrote to kill the Jews. We're safe. You have protected us. Thanks.


Mordecai: Me? What have I done? You were the one that bravely went before the king when you knew you could have been killed. You are the one who has saved the Jews.

Esther: It was God who saved the Jews.

Mordecai: Amen to that. Come on, let's go write that proclamation.

[*They exit.*]

- CURTAIN -

A decorative flourish consisting of a horizontal line with a central scroll-like ornament.

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