



THE SCOTTISH SLEUTHS

..... and

THE CASE OF THE HIDDEN HERO

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM
TEACHER'S MANUAL: 4 AND 5 YEAR OLDS



PRE-SCHOOL
VBS01PSTM

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Scottish Sleuths Vacation Bible School curriculum series. Each year, our Scottish Super Sleuths, Angus McTavish and Professor Dabney Thornwell, are called in to solve a Biblical “case” with the help of the VBS children. The detective characters symbolically portray the message that we want the students to learn to become thoughtful investigators of Biblical truth.

The Case of the Hidden Hero centers on an in-depth study of the Old Testament Book of Esther. It is a fascinating story of God’s providential protection of His people. The overall goal of this study is for your children to grow in a knowledge and love for God, the “Hidden Hero” of the Book of Esther!

Curriculum Distinctives

1. Focuses on the verbal transmission of Bible stories (The art of storytelling).
2. Emphasizes class discussion in an open question and answer format.
3. Age-appropriate.
4. Maximizes the small amount of time with profound truths without trying to be too theologically elaborate.
5. Reduces the amount of “busy work.”
6. Does not overload with too much content or too many activities.

Vacation Bible School is a ministry of the local church that is intended to be primarily evangelistic in nature. The curriculum presents the gospel message from God’s Word in the context of loving relationships between

teachers and their students. Therefore, it is vital for each teacher to remember that VBS is all about:

- a) Showing the love of Christ to each one of your students;
- b) Faithfully and clearly presenting the gospel of Jesus Christ from God’s Word; and,
- c) Praying for God’s Spirit to do His sovereign work in the lives of the VBS children.

Please feel free to use your creative energy to mold this curriculum to your own personality and the learning styles of your particular students. Remember that the end goal of all our teaching is to bring students face-to-face with the gospel of Jesus Christ with full dependence on His Spirit to change hearts and minds.

On Classroom Setup

The most important thing to remember about your classroom setup is that it should be conducive to learning. Arrange the room in such a way that the students can effectively hear and see the teacher(s) and have classroom discussion. Also, post the Scripture Memory, Application Points and other visual aids that will focus the minds of the children on God’s truths.

Don’t worry about decorating according to the theme—but you are welcome to be as creative as possible. The priority is making the room a place that helps the children learn.



OVERVIEW OF DAILY LESSONS

PERFECT PLAN

DAY ONE

Theme: God has a **PERFECT PLAN** for His People.

Bible Text: Esther 1:1-2:20

Scripture Memory: Isaiah 46:9b, 10b

PERSECUTED

DAY TWO

Theme: God's People are **PERSECUTED** by God's Enemies.

Bible Text: Esther 2:21-4:3

Scripture Memory: Matthew 5:11a

PARTICIPATE

DAY THREE

Theme: God's People **PARTICIPATE** in God's Plan.

Bible Text: Esther 4:4-5:14

Scripture Memory: Ephesians 2:10a

PROTECTS

DAY FOUR

Theme: God **PROTECTS** His People.

Bible Text: Esther 6:1-8:11

Scripture Memory: Psalm 91:2

PRAISE

DAY FIVE

Theme: God's People **PRAISE** God for Their Protection.

Bible Text: Esther 8:15-10:3

Scripture Memory: Review all memory verses



SCRIPTURE MEMORY

DAY ONE: ISAIAH 46:9B,10B

I am God...I will accomplish all my purpose.

DAY TWO: MATTHEW 5:11A

Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you...

DAY THREE: EPHESIANS 2:10A

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works...

DAY FOUR: PSALM 91:2

"My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

DAY FIVE: REVIEW ALL MEMORY WORK

*Note: All Scripture Memory passages are from
the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.*



DAILY SCHEDULE

9:00 - 9:15	_____	OPENING PROGRAM
9:15 - 9:45	_____	WELCOME/ICEBREAKER BIBLE LESSON
9:45 - 10:05	_____	RECREATION
10:05 - 10:25	_____	SNACK TIME
10:25 - 10:45	_____	MUSIC
10:45 - 11:05	_____	BIBLE APPLICATION
11:05 - 11:25	_____	CRAFTS
11:25 - 11:45*	_____	BIBLE MEMORY
11:45 - NOON	_____	CLOSING PROGRAM

**Day Five Only: 11:30 - Noon
Closing Celebration*



GOD HAS A PERFECT PLAN FOR HIS PEOPLE

DAY ONE

BIBLE TEXT

Esther 1:1-2:20

MEMORY VERSE

Isaiah 46:9b,10b

SCRIPTURE TRUTH

Things do not happen by chance;
God is in control of all things.

LESSON AIM

For the students to understand that an obedient heart allows the child of God to enjoy the fact that God is in control of all circumstances of life.



OPENING PROGRAM

The opening program includes a skit to introduce the day's theme, a time of singing, and announcements. After the opening program, go with your students back to your classroom.



WELCOME

Introduce yourself, your co-teacher(s), and your classroom helpers. Greet the boys and girls warmly, working diligently to memorize their names. Make sure each student has a name tag.



ICEBREAKER

[Note: Each day's icebreaker is intended to 1) Help the children feel comfortable in their new class; 2) Build relationships between teachers, helpers, and students; and 3) Get the children excited about the Bible lesson.]

Materials: One sheet of poster board; a few crayons or markers.

Have all the children sit on the floor facing you. Hold up the blank poster board.

Say: *This morning you will each have a chance to draw one shape on my poster board. I'll start with a circle. Draw a small circle. You can draw any shape you desire. Have the children come up one at a time and draw a shape.*

Ask the children to name each shape after it is drawn.

Upon completion, say: *What have we drawn a picture of? Let the children answer. It shouldn't look like a discernible picture!*

Transition: *We needed a PLAN in order to really draw a picture as a group. Our way didn't work! In our lesson today, we will learn about how God has a PERFECT PLAN for His people.*



BIBLE LESSON

[Note: The "Bible Lesson" time is intended to: 1) Allow the students to hear God's Word, getting acquainted with its stories and truths; and to 2) Enable them to begin learning about God and their responsibilities toward Him.]

Materials: Younger children need this storytelling time to be dramatic and visual. Feel free to bring in pictures, drawings, or puppets as visual aids. **Flannelgraph figures are one of the best options!**

Gather all the children together for the Bible Lesson.

Opening: *Are you ready to become good Bible detectives like Angus McTavish and Professor Thornwell? Great! I have a very important story to tell you this week. Show the children your Bible. It is found in the Bible, in the Old Testament—in the Book of Esther. It is one of the most amazing stories you will ever hear!*

Introduce the Book of Esther to your students: *The events in our story occurred a long, long*

time ago (483-473 BC). Years before our story began, God's people, the Jews, were taken into captivity. They ended up living in a country called Persia. Years later, they were allowed to return home. But many of the Jews decided to stay in Persia, living among the Persian people, under the rule of King Ahasuerus. The Book of Esther records the story of some of these Jews in this foreign land.

Today, we begin our story with King Ahasuerus holding a week-long party to celebrate the glory of his large kingdom. He calls for his wife, Queen Vashti, to come to the party, so he can show her off to the crowds. The queen refuses to come. Can you believe it? This makes the king of Persia very, very angry. Let's read what happens

[Note: All references are from the ESV.]

Read Esther 1:16, 18.

¹⁶ Then Memucan (the king's advisor) said in the presence of the king and the officials, "Not only against the king has Queen Vashti done wrong, but also against all the officials and all the peoples who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus... ¹⁸ This very day the noble women of Persia and Media who have heard of the queen's behavior will say the same to all the king's officials, and there will be contempt and wrath in plenty."

Discussion: *Did you hear that? The king's advisor tells King Ahasuerus that Queen Vashti has set a bad example by not obeying her husband. Now, listen to his advice...*

Read verses 19, 21.

¹⁹ If it please the king, let a royal order go out from him, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes so that it may not be repealed, that Vashti is never again to come before King Ahasuerus. And let the king

give her royal position to another who is better than she." ²¹ This advice pleased the king and the princes, and the king did as Memucan proposed.

Discussion: *What punishment was suggested for Queen Vashti's disobedience? [She would no longer get to be queen.] Did the king do what his advisor suggested? [Yes.]*

Summary: *So now King Ahasuerus needs a new queen! He instructs his servants to search the whole kingdom for a beautiful young woman who could be the new queen. Let's see what happens.*

Read Esther 2:5-7.

⁵ Now there was a Jew in Susa the citadel whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjaminite, ⁶ who had been carried away from Jerusalem among the captives carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away. ⁷ He was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther, the daughter of his uncle, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman had a beautiful figure and was lovely to look at, and when her father and her mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

Discussion: *Esther was a beautiful orphan girl, raised by her cousin Mordecai. Both Esther and Mordecai were Jews—God's chosen people.*

Let's continue. Read verses 8-10.

⁸ So when the king's order and his edict were proclaimed, and when many young women were gathered in Susa the citadel in custody of Hegai, Esther also was taken into the king's palace and put in custody of Hegai, who had charge of the women. ⁹ And the young woman pleased him and won his favor. And he quickly provided her with her cosmetics and her

portion of food, and with seven chosen young women from the king's palace, and advanced her and her young women to the best place in the harem. ¹⁰ Esther had not made known her people or kindred, for Mordecai had commanded her not to make it known.

Discussion: *What happened to Esther?* [She was chosen to be a candidate to become queen.] *What did Mordecai tell her NOT to do?* [Not to tell anyone she was a Jew.] *Did Esther obey him?* [Yes.]

Now, let's listen carefully and finish today's part of our story...

Read verses 17-20.

¹⁷ Now the king was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, and she won his favor and approval more than any of the other virgins. So he set a royal crown on her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. ¹⁸ And the king gave a great banquet, Esther's banquet, for all his nobles and officials. He proclaimed a holiday throughout the provinces and distributed gifts with royal liberality. ¹⁹ When the virgins were assembled a second time, Mordecai was sitting at the king's gate. ²⁰ But Esther had kept secret her family background and nationality just as Mordecai had told her to do, for she continued to follow Mordecai's instructions as she had done when he was bringing her up.

Discussion: *Who did the king choose as his new queen?* [Esther!] *What did the king do for Esther?* [He gave Esther a great banquet; proclaimed a holiday, etc.] *Did Esther continue to obey Mordecai's instructions?* [Yes.]

Conclusion: *We will look at our points of application later on, and then read more of this story tomorrow.*

Close this time with prayer, thanking God for His Word.



RECREATION

Go with your children to the Recreation Area. The Recreation Team will be responsible for your students during this time. **Use this time as a break.**



SNACK

Snacks will be delivered to your classroom. Have a volunteer lead the class in a prayer of thanks for the food and drink. Make sure the students respect each other while eating and clean up after themselves. **Encourage the children to use the bathroom at this time.**



MUSIC

Escort your children to the Music Area. The Music Team will lead the class in a time of singing and learning the various VBS songs. **Use this time to sing along, or as a break.**



BIBLE APPLICATION

[Note: The Bible Application time is intended to reinforce what was presented during the Bible Lesson time. The “Application Point” titles are included here just for the teacher’s understanding, since they are too difficult for most of this age group to comprehend. One or two word basic concepts will be the focus of the activities during this segment.]

Arrange the children on the floor so they can see and hear the teacher.

Application Point 1:

Disobedience brings consequences

*Raise your hand if you have ever disobeyed your parents. **Make sure all the children raise their hands!***

*When you disobey your parents, what happens to you? **Allow them to call out answers. Encourage sharing.***

Who disobeyed the king in our story today? [Queen Vashti.] What happened to her? [She was removed as queen.]

*Boys and girls, disobedience has what we call **CONSEQUENCES**. Consequences are problems that come into our lives because of the wrong things we do.*

*Raise your hand if you like getting punished when you disobey your parents! Why don’t you like these **CONSEQUENCES**? **Allow answers.***

*The **LORD** tells us not to be disobedient, which means...we must obey!*

Application Point 2:

Obedience means doing what those in authority tell you to do

Let’s play a game. When I tell you to do something, you do it, ok?

Give the children various commands: Stand up, sit down, wave your hands, stomp your feet, turn around, etc.

*Okay, now let me ask you a question: Why did you just do all of those things? **Allow answers. [The right answer is: Because you told us to do those things!]***

*That’s right! Most of you just demonstrated **OBEDIENCE**. Obedience is doing what someone tells you to do.*

*Who are you supposed to obey? **Have children call out answers.** God tells us to obey **ALL** those in authority over us.*

*Who in our story **DID NOT** obey? [Queen Vashti.] Who in our story **DID** obey? [Esther.] Who did the right thing?*

*God tells us to obey **ALL** those in authority, and that means obeying **HIM** most of all. We need God’s grace to **OBEY**, don’t we?*

Application Point 3:

God has a perfect plan for His people

*Do you remember our poster we made earlier this morning? **Show the poster.** Did all of our shapes make a pretty picture? Why not? I’ll tell you why not—because we didn’t have a **PLAN!***

*In our Bible story today, do you remember Esther? **Hold up a picture or flannelgraph figure.** Do you think it was strange that a young*

Jewish girl became queen of a big foreign nation like Persia? I do! Do you think this happened by chance? [No.] I don't either.

Boys and girls, God has a PERFECT PLAN for His people. We will learn this week that He had a PLAN for Queen Esther and Mordecai and for all of the Jews.

Do you think God has a plan for your life? Yes! God does have a PLAN for all of our lives. And it is PERFECT.

Close in prayer, asking God to give us obedient hearts that can fully enjoy His perfect plan for our lives.

[Note: If you need to fill some time before Craft Time, have coloring sheets available for the children.]



CRAFTS

Have your helpers escort your students to the Craft Area. The VBS Crafts Team will lead your students in a crafts project. Use this time for a break or to prepare for Bible Memory Time. Your children will return to the classroom for Bible Memory.



BIBLE MEMORY

Begin this segment by teaching the students the importance of memorizing God's Word:

- 1. We "hide it in our hearts" so we will turn away from sin and obey God.**
- 2. It changes the way we think—focusing on pleasing God instead of pleasing self.**
- 3. It helps us to know Jesus more and love Jesus more.**

If time, relate to the students how Scripture memory has impacted your life.

**Today's Scripture Memory is found in
Isaiah 46:9b,10b.**

I am God...and I will accomplish all my
purpose...

Write the Scripture memory passage on poster board.

Say: *Today's memory verse tells us that God is in control of all things. He has a PERFECT purpose or PLAN that will always stand forever.*

Activity: Memory Rhythm. Help the children make up a "rhythm" to enable memorization. Make it fun!

Example:

I am God... (echo—I am God)

And I will (clap, clap)

ACCOMPLISH! (echo—ACCOMPLISH!)

All my purpose... (stomp, stomp)

Isaiah... (clap, clap)

46:9b,10b

Review the Scripture a number of times to allow memorization. Allow students to perform their rhythms in front of the class. Or, have various groups do it together.

If extra time, have coloring sheets available.

Hand out Scripture memory reminder cards and encourage the students to have dad or mom help them memorize.



CLOSING PROGRAM

Go with your students back to the area designated for the Closing Program. Remind them to be respectful of others on their way to and during the Closing Program. Afterwards, escort the students to their pick-up location.

END DAY ONE