

Heroes of Scripture and Screen:

Esther and Star Wars: A New Hope

After watching the movie, read these **questions** and the Bible passage and talk about them as a family. It's best to do this right after watching the movie but you can also do it in the next day or so. The conversation could take anywhere from 10-20 minutes but we hope that it sparks an interest in noticing and sharing God throughout your daily life.

A Moment to Remember: **Which moment in the movie did you like the most? Why?**

Read this passage from the Bible (Esther 4:10-16, 8:4-8, 17 NRSV):

Then Esther spoke to Hathach and gave him a message for Mordecai, saying, 'All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—all alike are to be put to death. Only if the king holds out the golden scepter to someone, may that person live.... When they told Mordecai what Esther had said, Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, '...Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this.' Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, 'Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish.' The king held out the golden scepter to Esther, and Esther rose and stood before the king. She said, 'If it pleases the king... let an order be written to revoke the letters devised by Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote giving orders to destroy the Jews who are in all the provinces of the king. For how can I bear to see the calamity that is coming on my people? Or how can I bear to see the destruction of my kindred?' Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to the Jew Mordecai... 'You may write as you please with regard to the Jews, in the name of the king, and seal it with the king's ring; for an edict written in the name of the king and sealed with the king's ring cannot be revoked.' In every province and in every city, wherever the king's command and his edict came, there was gladness and joy among the Jews, a festival and a holiday.

*If you have the time, take a look at this Venn Diagram and talk about whether it lines up with how you interpret the scripture and the movie (or just skip to the rest of the **questions**):*

Esther

Her entire people are under threat of being wiped out.

Lives in a palace.

Must continue to suffer living with the cruel tyrant.

Royalty.

Up against a vast empire ruled by a cruel tyrant.

Helped by a wise uncle-like figure.

Chooses to take a stand despite almost certain peril and saves the lives of countless others.

Leia

Her entire homeworld is destroyed along with her family, friends, people.

Flies around on space ships.

Heads off to the next adventure.

Theme in Scripture – Hope:

Although scripture says “king,” what it’s really talking about is an emperor of the formidable Persian Empire. Ahasuerus is quite possibly the most powerful person in the world at this point. Esther is the queen or Empress. She is a replacement for the previous queen, who lost her place after refusing to allow the king to treat her like property. Let’s be clear, Ahasuerus is not a good person. Haman, the court official, easily persuades him to commit to an act of genocide against the Jewish people. Esther and Mordecai have to step in to avert mass murder. During this whole ordeal, Esther and Mordecai are under the constant threat of death. They succeed in convincing King Ahasuerus to help them, but things could have easily gone the other way. In fact, they put themselves at even greater risk, by taking action. **Where is God in all of this?**

Where do Esther, Mordecai, and all the Jewish people find the hope to go on?

Theme on the Screen – Hope:

Princess Leia has already spent years of her life fighting the evil galactic empire. With the emergence of the planet-killing Death Star, she now must step in to avert mass murder. Like Esther revealing that she is Jewish, Leia exposes herself as part of the rebel alliance while passing on the plans that will ultimately destroy the death star, and Tarkin. Her act of courage, unfortunately, does not prevent Grand Moff Tarkin, under the direction of the emperor, from destroying Leia’s entire planet. **How in the world, or the galaxy, are the rebels able to find the hope to keep on fighting against an empire so powerful it can wipe out entire planets?**

The Scene that Says it All: Which scene in the movie best represents this theme of Hope.

Why? (Is it when Leia rescues Luke, Han, and Chewie’s attempt to rescue her, or when Luke “uses the force,” or another scene?)

Bonus question: If you became a Jedi, what color would your lightsaber be? Blue, Green, Red, Purple, Yellow, Black, or White?