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NOVEMBER 2008

## TEACHING PLANS

AN EXPLORATION OF THE BOOKS OF 2 KINGS AND ESTHER

### TELL ME THE STORY AGAIN...

This issue we're going old school — way back to the first part of the Old Testament. Not sure what your students remember about all the kings (and queen)? You're going to have the opportunity to introduce or reacquaint them with some amazing stories. If this is the first time they're digging into the Scriptures of the OT, they are in for a drama-filled treat — and an opportunity to discover a lot about wisdom, obedience, and knowing God in a deeper way.

### WHAT'S OLD IS NEW...

With this quarter, we have redesigned the *Collegiate* online features, bringing you a more structured teaching plan with additional helps and more relevant questions to equip you to lead a strong discussion-based lesson. The same sections are here: *Getting Started* helps introduce the topic and get your students engaged in the lesson. *Explore the Bible* leads them through the Scripture passages of the lesson, helping them understand the text, its historical and cultural context, and what it means to them today. *Apply to Life* gives you ideas for furthering the application of the Scripture, so students can take active steps to process what they're learning and how it impacts their lives. Be sure you also utilize the commentary provided ([threadsmedia.com/collegiate](http://threadsmedia.com/collegiate)) to help with your preparation and personal study of the lessons.

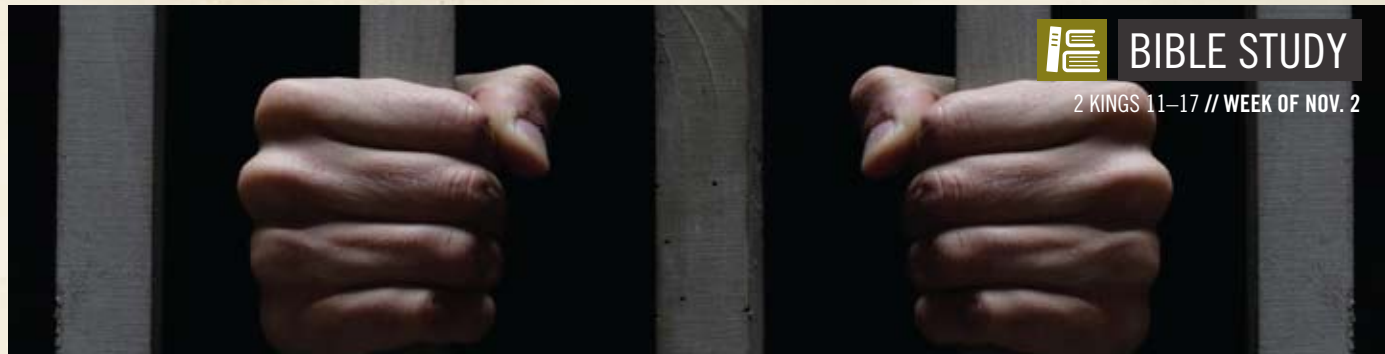
Of course, we know our work is not done. All things can be improved and we are anxious to know what you think of the new *Collegiate*. So please send us your questions, thoughts, and suggestions. Let us know what we could do better and how these teaching plans could be even more relevant to your students and your ministry.

Waiting to hear from you,

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editor in chief of Threads  
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70 sheets/college ruled  
11x8½in/27.9x21.5cm

notebook



## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 38 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONGS "THE GOSPEL" BY JIMMY NEEDHAM, FROM THE ALBUM *SPEAK*, AND "THIS WORLD" BY CAEDMON'S CALL, FROM THE ALBUM *MY CALM/YOUR STORM*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

## NEED TO KNOWS

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Israel had been living in rebellion to God by imitating the practices of the pagan nations around them. Their sins caught up with them, and they were defeated and dispersed by Assyria. The Assyrians moved foreigners in to resettle the land, and these foreigners eventually became known as Samaritans. Even through Jesus' time the Jews resented the Samaritans (cf. John 4:9).

### FOCAL PASSAGES

2 KINGS 11–17

2 CHRONICLES 22:9–28:27

### KEY VERSES

2 KINGS 17:7-8

2 KINGS 17:13

## WHY ALL THE JUDGMENT?

### GETTING STARTED

Have the songs "The Gospel" by Jimmy Needham and "This World" by Caedmon's Call playing in the background as students arrive.

Lead students in a discussion centering around the concept of judgment. To do so, begin by asking them to think about one of the most popular, and misunderstood, Bible verses. Tell them that "Judge not, lest ye be judged" has become a very popular verse, both inside and outside the church. Then lead them through a discussion about the phrase:

- What do you think this verse means?
- What do you think people wish it meant?
- How are those two things different?

Continue by talking about the nature of judgment.

- What are the qualities you would want in a judge?
- Why would those qualities be essential to the occupation of judging?

Point out that though honesty, integrity, and compassion are desirable traits in a judge, probably the most essential one is equality. It's fairness. If a judge is completely and perfectly fair, then every person gets what they deserve.

**EXTRA:** As the students arrive, direct them to write on the board or a large sheet of paper as many of the Ten Commandments as they remember. Instruct them to list them in order to the best of their ability.

Play a clip from a video of *The Ten Commandments* (animated or theatrical). Then lead students to reflect on why God gave the Commandments to His people.

- What was the purpose of the Commandments?
- What significance do they have for us today?

### DIG DEEPER

Found on page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine:

*Justification* — right relationship between God and man (Rom. 5:1). God establishes this relationship through Christ, so that it is not merely a temporary state that can be destroyed by man's actions but a state that results in eternal peace between the redeemed and the Redeemer.

Consider reading a brief excerpt from one of these books, expanding on the concept of justification:

- *Basic Christianity* by John Stott
- *The Pursuit of Holiness* by Jerry Bridges
- *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis

# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## 1). GOD JUDGES OUR CONFORMITY (2 KINGS 17:7-13).

Lead in prayer, asking God to show students His purposes and His holiness. Ask the Lord to reveal any areas of disobedience that may need to be taken care of within the group.

### READ 2 KINGS 17:7-13.

*<sup>7</sup>This disaster happened because the people of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God who had brought them out of the land of Egypt from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt and because they had worshiped other gods. <sup>8</sup>They had lived according to the customs of the nations that the LORD had dispossessed before the Israelites and the customs the kings of Israel had introduced. <sup>9</sup>The Israelites secretly did what was not right against the LORD their God. They built high places in all their towns from watchtower to fortified city. <sup>10</sup>They set up for themselves sacred pillars and Asherah poles on every high hill and under every green tree. <sup>11</sup>They burned incense on all the high places just like those nations that the LORD had driven out before them. They did evil things, provoking the LORD. <sup>12</sup>They served idols, although the LORD had told them, "You must not do this." <sup>13</sup>Still, the LORD warned Israel and Judah through every prophet and every seer, saying, "Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments and statutes according to all the law I commanded your ancestors and sent to you through My servants the prophets."*

Discuss the ungodliness of Israel's rulers and Israel's offenses. Israel did all these things while claiming to be God's people and while pretending to worship Him.

- What words stick out to you in this passage as being particularly strong or relevant? Why do you gravitate toward those words?
- By whose standard was Israel judged?
- What right did God have to judge Israel?

- Why do you think the author of 2 Kings brought up what God had done (v. 7) for Israel in the past?
- Why do you think Israel fell into these disobedient practices over and over again?
- How do you think God feels about judging His people?
- Does God still judge people? How do we see that judgment fleshed out today?
- How do we reconcile that truth with God's love and compassion, based on this passage?

A few things are clear from these verses. It's clear that God is long-suffering. He was patient with His people, giving them chance after chance and warning after warning. But it's also clear that He won't be patient forever. Ultimately, God's people were — and are — called to live differently, in opposition to the standards of the world. We experience God's judgment when we live like the world instead of living in obedience to His standards.

- What indicates Israel was living like the world?
- What was God's judgment?
- Is God's judgment the end, or is there another purpose in His judgment?
- What is redemptive about God's judgment?

Let's turn to the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20:1-17. Now compare the list of the commandments they made earlier.

- Looking at the Ten Commandments, which ones were specifically broken by the people?
- Why did God give these laws to the people?
- Looking at 2 Kings 17:13, how did God warn the people?
- How are we warned by the governing authorities today to obey the laws of our land?

- What's the significance of having laws?
- What role is the Ten Commandments supposed to have in our own lives?

The Israelites were not wrong for living in the world. They became offensive to God when they imitated the ungodly world in which they lived. Living according to God's ordinances is meant to set apart the people of God from the rest of the world. But God doesn't want us to be isolated from the world either.

There is a difference between things in the world and things that are worldly. Being involved in things of the world is not wrong, but the way we behave in the world can be offensive to God.

- How do you think God feels about human culture? Is it good or bad or both?
- How is the church supposed to respond to the culture around it?
- By whose standards are we to live?
- What happens when we live like the world rather than by God's standards?

God has the right to claim exclusive loyalty to Him and to expect those who claim to be His people to live according to His standards. When God's people violate His clear commands and model their lives after the world, it necessitates His judgment.

Read aloud the definition of justification in "Word Study" on page 38 of *Collegiate* magazine.

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## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 39 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "KNEES TO THE EARTH" BY WATERMARK, FROM THE ALBUM *A GRATEFUL PEOPLE*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

## NEED TO KNOWS

### CHARACTERS

**HEZEKIAH** — Son of Ahaz and his successor as king of Judah (716/15–687/86 B.C.). He became king when he was 25 years old and is remembered for bringing religious reform to Judah.

**SENNACHERIB** — King of Assyria during its empirical dominance (704–681 B.C.).

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

**2 Kings 19** — After Sennacherib's army had captured all the cities of Judah, he sent a letter telling Hezekiah to surrender. Hezekiah prayed to God, who answered by sending an army to attack the Assyrian camp and forcing them to leave.

### FOCAL PASSAGES

**2 KINGS 18-21**  
**2 CHRONICLES 29-33**

### KEY VERSES

**2 KINGS 19:15-19**  
**2 KINGS 20:4-6**

## HOW SHOULD I TALK TO GOD ABOUT PROBLEMS?

### GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Knees to the Earth" by Watermark playing in the background as students arrive.

Lead the discussion on prayer. To do so, ask the opening question:

- Does God change His mind?

Follow up that question with a discussion of why we pray then. Some additional questions might include:

- If He does not, then why do we pray?
- Clearly God wants us to pray, but why? What is the benefit of prayer?

Allow students to volunteer reasons why people pray (in praise, to petition, confession, and so forth), how prayer can be conducted (silently, individually, corporately), and the differences in prayers (from a child's bedtime/mealtime prayer to pastoral prayers in worship).

Explain that the purpose of prayer is three-fold:

- a) To help us understand God's will;
- b) To accomplish God's purposes; and
- c) To give us an opportunity to speak to God and to hear Him speak to us.

Share with students your own experience with petitioning God and receiving an answer. Allow time for volunteers to share their own answers from God.

Pray for the group, asking God to lead them into a greater understanding of how much God wants to answer and be the help we need for the problems we encounter in life. Thank Him for being the One who hears us when we pray.

**EXTRA:** To open the session, play an online music video of the group Casting Crowns ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnnhYE1DhC4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnnhYE1DhC4)).

### DIG DEEPER

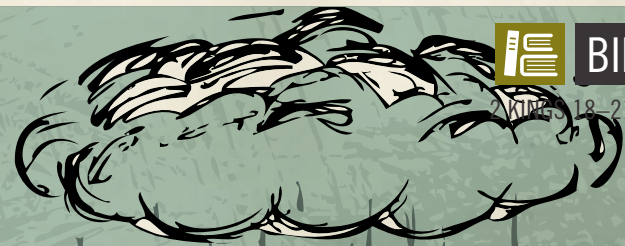
Found on page 39 of *Collegiate* magazine:

#### Philippians 4:6

*"Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."*

Consider reading a brief excerpt about prayer in the midst of struggles from one of these books:

- *Power Through Prayer* by E. M. Bounds
- *Operation World* by Patrick Johnstone, Jason Mandryk, and Robyn Johnstone
- *The Art of Prayer* by Timothy Jones
- *The Sacred Echo* by Margaret Feinberg



# EXPLORE THE BIBLE

## 1). BRING YOUR NEEDS AND REQUESTS TO GOD THROUGH PRAYER (2 KINGS 19:14-34).

### READ 2 KINGS 19:10-12.

<sup>10</sup>“Say this to Hezekiah king of Judah: ‘Don’t let your God, whom you trust, deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria. <sup>11</sup>Look, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the countries: they destroyed them completely. Will you be rescued? <sup>12</sup>Did the gods of the nations that my predecessors destroyed rescue them — nations such as Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the Edenites in Telassar?

In order to better understand the situation that prompted Hezekiah’s prayer, it’s helpful for us to have a little context. An enemy of Judah had come to mock the people, mock Hezekiah, and mock God’s Word. The enemy was trying to deceive them into thinking that God really did not say He would spare their lives.

- What tone do you think the message had to it?
- What was the problem that King Hezekiah faced?
- What attributes of God were being challenged?
- What was at risk in Hezekiah’s response?
- Have you ever been in a situation where circumstances challenged what you knew about God? When?

### READ 2 KINGS 19:14-19.

<sup>14</sup>Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers, read it, then went up to the LORD’S temple, and spread it out before the LORD. <sup>15</sup>Then Hezekiah prayed before the LORD: “LORD God of Israel who is enthroned above the cherubim, You are God — You alone — of all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the heavens and the earth. <sup>16</sup>Listen closely, LORD, and hear; open Your eyes, LORD, and see; hear the words that Sennacherib has sent to mock the living God.

<sup>17</sup>LORD, it is true that the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands. <sup>18</sup>They have thrown their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but made by human hands — wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. <sup>19</sup>Now, LORD our God, please save us from his hand so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are the LORD God — You alone.”

- Is your first response to pray when something challenges what you know to be true about God? Why or why not?
- What character trait does Hezekiah exhibit through this prayer?
- How does Hezekiah address the Lord in his prayer? Why is that significant?
- What actions did Hezekiah include in his time of prayer? What is significant about those actions?
- In what order does Hezekiah pray? What does that order reveal about his belief system?
- For what reason does Hezekiah want the Lord to answer his prayer? (v. 19)
- How does that motivation measure up against our own? What is your motivation when you pray?
- What does Hezekiah’s prayer life say about his walk with God?
- What does your prayer life say about your relationship with God? What do you wish it said?

Take a look at some of the key aspects of Hezekiah’s prayer. He was a humble servant who sought the Lord, the God of Israel, the one enthroned above the cherubim. King Hezekiah began with praise and adoration of God before he ever expressed his sense of urgency and desire for deliverance from his enemy. He then called out to the Lord

to hear what their enemy was saying about Him. It was primarily for the Lord’s sake that Hezekiah wanted the Lord to answer.

- In what ways do we fail to follow Hezekiah’s example?
- How can we start to pray more like Hezekiah?
- What is it about this kind of prayer that the Lord desires?
- What keeps us from bringing our requests before the Lord?

Distribute index cards and instruct students to record a specific prayer need they are currently facing. Remind them that prayer is their opportunity to talk to God about their needs and to make requests of Him. Direct students to take time right now to pray about what they have written. Challenge them to pattern their prayer after Hezekiah’s. Allow a few minutes.

- How can God be honored through the need for which you prayed?
- Does anyone feel as if God has already given you an answer to your prayer?
- Do you think God always answers in the way we want Him to? Why or why not?
- How can we deal with the truth that God doesn’t always answer the way we think He ought to?

God will answer our prayers out of His love for us, but as you know, an answer may not be revealed right away.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

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## ... EXPLORE THE BIBLE CONTINUE

### READ 2 KINGS 19:20,29-34.

<sup>20</sup>Then Isaiah son of Amoz sent a message to Hezekiah: "The LORD, the God of Israel says: 'I have heard your prayer to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria.'

<sup>29</sup>This will be the sign for you: This year you will eat what grows on its own, and in the second year what grows from that. But in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit. <sup>30</sup>The surviving remnant of the house of Israel will again take root downward and bear fruit upward. <sup>31</sup>For a remnant will go out from Jerusalem, and survivors from Mount Zion. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will accomplish this.

<sup>32</sup>Therefore, this is what the LORD says about the king of Assyria:

*He will not enter this city or shoot an arrow there or come before it with a shield or build up an assault ramp against it.*

<sup>33</sup>He will go back on the road that he came and he will not enter this city, declares the LORD.

<sup>34</sup>I will defend this city and rescue it for My sake and for the sake of My servant David.

- How did the Lord respond?
- For what reason does the Lord desire to respond? (v. 34)
- How do you think Hezekiah felt about the response?
- Share a time you have been completely satisfied with God's response to prayer.
- How about the opposite? Have you ever been dissatisfied with what God has answered? When?
- What keeps us from being content with the answers God gives us?

**OPTION:** Check out [www.imb.org](http://www.imb.org) for testimonies of people on the mission field and how God answers their prayers.

### 2). ACCEPT HIS ANSWER (2 KINGS 20:1-11).

#### READ 2 KINGS 20:1-11.

<sup>1</sup>In those days Hezekiah became terminally ill. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came and said to him, "This is what the LORD says: 'Put your affairs in order, for you are about to die; you will not recover.'"

<sup>2</sup>Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the LORD, <sup>3</sup>"Please LORD, remember how I have walked before You faithfully and wholeheartedly and have done what is good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

<sup>4</sup>Isaiah had not yet gone out of the inner courtyard when the word of the LORD came to him: <sup>5</sup>"Go back and tell Hezekiah, the leader of My people, 'This is what the LORD God of your ancestor David says: I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Look, I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the LORD'S temple. <sup>6</sup>I will add 15 years to your life. I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for My sake and for the sake of My servant David.'"

<sup>7</sup>Then Isaiah said, "Bring a lump of pressed figs." So they brought it and applied it to his infected skin, and he recovered.

<sup>8</sup>Hezekiah had asked Isaiah, "What is the sign that the LORD will heal me and that I will go up to the LORD'S temple on the third day?"

<sup>9</sup>Isaiah said, "This is the sign to you from the LORD that He will do what He has promised: Should the shadow go ahead 10 steps or go back 10 steps?"

<sup>10</sup>Then Hezekiah answered, "It's easy for the shadow to lengthen 10 steps. No, let the shadow go back 10 steps."

<sup>11</sup>So Isaiah the prophet called out to the LORD, and He brought the shadow back the 10 steps it had descended on Ahaz's stairway.

- What did Hezekiah remind the Lord of concerning his life?
- How did the Lord choose to respond?
- Does that mean we can earn positive answers to prayer? If not, what do you think it means?
- Do you think God changed His mind here? If not, what happened?
- What do you learn about God through His response to Hezekiah?
- Was it wrong for Hezekiah to ask for a sign to confirm God's word? Why or why not?
- What does this encounter reveal to us about the nature of prayer?

The Lord chose to respond to Hezekiah's plea. He heard his prayer and desired to answer it by giving Hezekiah 15 more years of life. He went from having just a few days left to 15 years. The Bible doesn't say that King Hezekiah argued with God about His response, but he accepted the answer he received.

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## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 40 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.

## NEED TO KNOWS

### CHARACTERS

**JOSIAH** — King of Judah (640-609 B.C.). He became king as an 8-year-old. During his reign the book of the law was found, and he worked to bring religious reform to Judah by removing the idolatry from the land.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

It is believed that “the book of the law” included parts of the book of Deuteronomy, probably chapters 5–26 or 12–26 that address Israel’s devotion to God alone. At this time, Assyria was lessening in power and Babylon was becoming the dominant empire. Josiah was killed in the Battle of Meggido against Egyptians troops (2 Kings 23:29).

### FOCAL PASSAGES

2 KINGS 22–25  
2 CHRONICLES 34–36

### KEY VERSES

2 KINGS 22:18-20  
2 KINGS 23:4-6

## HOW CAN I RENEW MY WALK?

### GETTING STARTED

After students arrive, announce that for the next few minutes, the group will be the collective ruling body for your community. They are in position to make significant changes in town.

Challenge students to call out suggestions they have to change the moral stature of your city. Record the list on the board or a large sheet of paper. Then share about Josiah, who had this same challenge during the time of his reign over Judah.

Lead in prayer, asking the Lord that He would reveal any personal reforms that need to be made in the lives of the students. Ask Him to give them the courage to make those changes and renew their hearts to Him.

**EXTRA:** Show a clip from the movie *Freedom Writers*, and discuss the reforms the main teacher was trying to make.

- What were the obstacles she faced, what was her response to them, and what was the result?
- Relate this to living as a follower of Christ. What are the obstacles involved, the characteristics needed to affect change, and what are the possible results?

### DIG DEEPER

Found on page 40 of *Collegiate* magazine:

*Reform* — bring about a change in someone so that they no longer behave in an immoral, criminal, or self-destructive manner.

### Isaiah 30:15

“For the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said: ‘You will be delivered by returning and resting; your strength will lie in quiet confidence. But you are not willing.’”

### Luke 5:32

“I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

### Romans 2:4

“Or do you despise the riches of His kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?”

### Philippians 4:8

“Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable — if there is any moral excellence and if there is any praise — dwell on these things.”













## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 41 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME" BY PILLAR, FROM THE ALBUM *FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

## NEED TO KNOWS

### CHARACTERS

**ESTHER** — A Jew who was chosen as the most beautiful, eligible woman in the Persian empire and replaced the disobedient Vashti as queen. Esther's birth name was Hadassah. The name Esther means "a star."

**MORDECAI** — Esther's cousin who raised her after she was orphaned. He may be the person who renamed her in order to keep her Jewish identity hidden from the king.

**KING AHASUERUS** — Also known as Xerxes I, King of Persia from 486–465/64 B.C.

**HAMAN** — Prime minister of Persia under Ahasuerus. Plotted the extermination of the Jews who were in exile in Persia.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Book of Esther provides the background for the Feast of Purim, a Jewish holiday that celebrates the deliverance of the Jews from genocide. The name Purim comes from the Hebrew *pur*, meaning "lots," in connection with the lots Haman cast to decide when he would begin the genocide effort. The holiday is celebrated on the 14th or 15th day of March.

### FOCAL PASSAGES

ESTHER 1-4

### KEY VERSES

ESTHER 4:13-17

## WHY AM I WHERE I AM?

### GETTING STARTED

Have the song "For the Love of the Game" by Pillar playing in the background as students arrive. After students arrive, distribute paper and pens. Lead students to briefly write in one or two sentences their thoughts about where they are in life at the moment. From an outside perspective, what do they see, hear, or feel about their circumstances?

Write on the board or a large sheet of paper the word *providence*. Beside it, write the Latin word for providence: *providential*. Underneath these two words, write the words *pro* and *videntia*. Explain that *pro* means "before" or "ahead of time." The word *videntia* is from *videre*, which means "to see." Beside the two words, record the meaning of the word *providence* — to see ahead of time.

This is what God does: He sees the events of life ahead of time, and He works to accomplish His purposes through those events. Remind students that nothing can ever happen apart from the knowledge, presence, care, and protection of God. Help students to see that believers can face difficult circumstances with the assurance of God's presence and the knowledge that He is in control.

Pray for students to gain a greater understanding of God's purposes for their lives at this time and in the places where they live. Ask God to reveal His specific purposes to them. Thank Him for the example of Esther and her willingness to be used by Him.

**EXTRA:** Ask for students to tell you about their favorite fairy tale. After several people have shared, transition the discussion into a discussion of Esther. Explain that she, in some ways, lived a fairy tale life. Here was a poor slave girl elevated to the position of the queen. But unlike a fairy tale, her life wasn't easy after that. She had difficult choices to make, and had to decide if she would simply enjoy her position or be a force for good.

### DIG DEEPER

Found on page 41 of *Collegiate* magazine:

*Providence* — the protective care of God or nature as a spiritual power.

### Acts 17:26-27a

*"From one man He has made every nation of men to live all over the earth and has determined their appointed times and the boundaries of where they live, so that they might seek God."*

For more about the story of Esther, see the article "Royal Shake-Up: A Young Queen's Courageous Reign," by Janice Meier, on page 44 of your *Collegiate* magazine.













## THIS WEEK YOU'LL NEED

- A COPY OF THIS LEADER GUIDE
- THIS WEEK'S LESSON IS ON PAGE 42 OF THE FALL ISSUE OF *COLLEGIATE*.
- THE SONG "RISE" BY ROBBIE SEAY BAND, FROM THE ALBUM *GIVE YOURSELF AWAY*, TO PLAY FOR THE CLASS AS THEY ARRIVE.

## NEED TO KNOWS

**FOCAL PASSAGES**  
ESTHER 5-10

**KEY VERSES**  
ESTHER 7:1-4  
ESTHER 8:7-8

## HOW CAN GOD USE ME?

### GETTING STARTED

Have the song "Rise" by the Robbie Seay Band playing in the background as students arrive. Show a clip from the film *One Night with the King*. Emphasize that although Esther was an ordinary woman, God used her to make a valuable impact on her culture.

Lead discussion on people who have made a difference in their world. As volunteers share names, record them on the board or a large sheet of paper. Discuss what made those individuals successful in their cause, and what they accomplished on their own.

Pray for students to gain an understanding of just how valuable their lives are and how much good they can accomplish in their lifetimes. Thank God for the example of Esther and for the difference she made in her generation.

**EXTRA 1:** Show the scene from the film, *Luther*, where Martin Luther is under trial and has to make a crucial decision that would effect reform and ultimately be the mantle for the Reformation. Discuss the characteristics that Luther possessed and the changes that came about as a result of his courage to act.

**EXTRA 2:** Show the scene from the movie, *Amazing Grace*, where Wilberforce struggles to determine whether his involvement in the Parliament is going to make a difference in eliminating the slave trade in Great Britain. Discuss the obstacles he faced, but emphasize his determination and perseverance to accomplish the task.

### DIG DEEPER

Found on page 42 of *Collegiate* magazine:

#### Romans 8:28

*"We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose."*

Consider reading a brief excerpt from one of these books:

- *Freedom from Fear* by Neil T. Anderson and Rich Miller
- *Esther: A Woman of Strength and Dignity* by Charles Swindoll
- *Don't Waste Your Life* by John Piper







