

Purim Treasure Hunt

by Sandra and Elisabeth Niedrauer

For Mordechai and Esther, the story of Purim was an ordeal of suspense. They did not know the outcome, but they did what they knew was right, trusting that God had all their circumstances in His hands. As readers of their story, we have the advantage, in that we can see where the hand of God was working in all the events of their lives to bring about His purpose.

Read the Megillah. In several places in the story, the hand of God is almost visible. At those points (listed below), read the appropriate clue and let your young ones search for treasure. Remind them that there is "treasure" to be found in seeking for God's hand in their own lives as well.

Clue #1: Read this clue at the point in the story when Vashti is deposed.

Jewish tradition says that Vashti looked in the mirror and saw a pimple on her nose. She was so embarrassed, she refused to go when the king called to her. Find your treasure near a mirror.

Clue #2: Read this clue when Esther is chosen as queen.

When Esther was chosen as queen, she had to move from the harem into the queen's apartments. Find your treasure in a suitcase.

Clue #3: Read this clue when Mordechai overhears the conspirators and tells Esther about it.

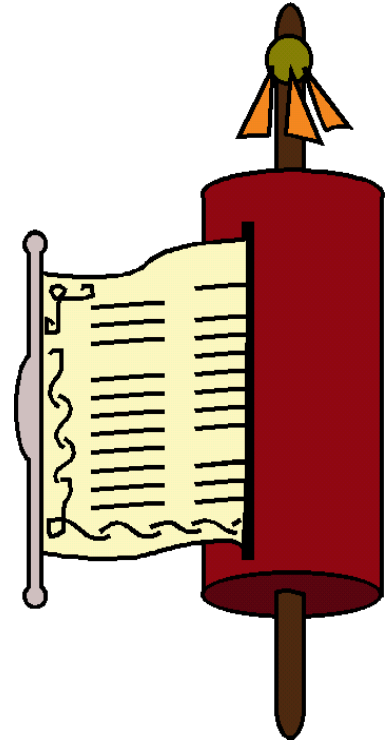
Jewish tradition says that the conspirators were speaking openly in their own language, thinking no one could understand. Mordechai, however, knew 70 languages, and so was able to understand their words. Find your next treasure near a dictionary.

Clue #4: Read this clue when the king extends his scepter to Esther.

Esther approached the king after a three day fast, so she must have been very hungry. Find your next treasure near the refrigerator.

Clue #5: Read this clue when the king is unable to sleep and is reminded of Mordechai's service to him.

Jewish tradition says that the king could not sleep because an angel knocked him out of bed. Find your next clue under a bed.



Clue #6: Read this clue when the king gives the Jews permission to defend themselves.

The king's message went out to all his kingdom by means of letters. Find your last treasure in the place where letters are written.

Each clue will lead to a separate "treasure." The hidden goodies can be an assortment of things, including little snack-sized boxes of raisins or dried cherries, snack-sized bags of pretzels or candy, hamtentaschen, a collection of funny party hats, a stack of fake glasses with noses, and enough felt masks for all the children (for instructions on making masks, see page 11). If you run out of ideas, head for the party store and pick up a collection of inexpensive party favors.