

Story Time - Read the story to the children
Lesson 127: ESTHER BECOMES QUEEN
ESTHER 2:1-18

King Xerxes of Persia had a party once that lasted seven days. His wife Vashti also had a party for the women. King Xerxes was drinking wine and commanded his servants to bring Queen Vashti into the room wearing her crown to show everyone how beautiful she was. When one of the servants told Queen Vashti what King Xerxes commanded, she refused to come, which made Xerxes very angry. It was the custom for the king to ask the advice of the experts about the law and punishments. So King Xerxes spoke with the wise men who understood the laws. They were very close to the king. He asked them what should be done about Vashti. They told him that she must be punished, because all the other women in the kingdom would stop obeying their husbands too. They will say to their husbands, 'King Xerxes commanded Queen Vashti to be brought to him, but she refused to come.' So they told him that King Xerxes should make a command that Queen Vashti could never come into the presence of the king again, so King Xerxes made letters and sent them to all parts of the kingdom saying that each man was supposed to be the leader of his own family. Later, King Xerxes stopped being angry. Then he remembered Vashti and what she had done. He remembered his commands about her. Then the king's personal servants had a suggestion. They said, "Search for beautiful young unmarried women for the king. Let the king choose leaders in every province of his kingdom. Then let the leaders bring every beautiful young unmarried woman to the capital city of Susa. These young women will be put with the group of the king's women. They will be under the care of Hegai, the king's servant, who is in charge of the women. Then give beauty treatments to all of them. Then let the one who is pleasing to the king become the new queen in Vashti's place." The king liked this suggestion, so he accepted it. Now there was a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin named Mordecai. Mordecai was the son of Jair, and Jair was the son of Shimei, and Shimei was the son of Kish. Mordecai was in the capital city, Susa. Mordecai had been carried into captivity from Jerusalem by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. He was with the group that was taken into captivity with King Jehoiachin of Judah. Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah. She didn't have a father or a mother, so Mordecai took care of her. Mordecai had adopted her as his own daughter when her father and mother died. Hadassah was also called Esther. She had a very pretty face and a good figure. When the king's command had been heard, many

young women were brought to the capital city of Susa. They were put under the care of Hegai. Esther was one of these women. She was taken to the king's palace and put into Hegai's care. Hegai was in charge of the king's women. He liked Esther. She became his favorite, so he quickly gave Esther beauty treatments and special food. He chose seven slave women from the king's palace and gave them to Esther. Then he moved Esther and her seven women servants into the best place where the king's women lived. Esther didn't tell anyone she was a Jew. She didn't tell anyone about her family background, because Mordecai had told her not to. Every day Mordecai walked back and forth near the area where the king's women lived. He did this because he wanted to find out how Esther was, and what was happening to her. Before a young woman could take her turn to go in before King Xerxes, she had to complete twelve months of beauty treatments--six months with oil of myrrh and six months with perfumes and cosmetics. When her time came to go in to the king, she could choose to wear or take whatever she wanted from the women's living area. In the evening the young woman would go to the king's palace. And in the morning she would return to another area where the king's women lived. Then she would be placed under the care of a man named Shaashgaz. He was the king's eunuch in charge of the slave women. She would not go back to the king again unless he was pleased with her. Then he would call her by name to come back to him. The time came for Esther to go to the king. She was the one Mordecai had adopted, the daughter of his uncle Abihail. All she wanted to take with her was what Hegai, the king's officer in charge of the women, suggested. Everyone who saw Esther liked her. So Esther was taken to King Xerxes in the palace. This happened in the tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his rule. The king loved Esther more than any of the other young women, and she became his favorite. He approved of her more than any of the others. So King Xerxes put a crown on Esther's head and made her the new queen in place of Vashti. And the king gave a big party for Esther. It was for all his important people and leaders. He announced a festival in all the provinces and sent out gifts to people, because he was a generous king.

127. ESTHER BECOMES QUEEN

(ESTHER 2:1-18)



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ESTHER 2:15

127. ESTHER BECOMES QUEEN

ESTHER 2:1-18

MEMORY VERSE:

"Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised."
PROVERBS 31:30

TRUE OR FALSE

1. King Xerxes' servants said, "Search for beautiful young unmarried women for the king."
TRUE or FALSE
2. King Xerxes' servants said, "We want Vashti to be queen again!" TRUE or FALSE
3. Mordecai had raised Esther, his uncle's daughter. TRUE or FALSE
4. Esther was not very beautiful. TRUE or FALSE
5. Esther only took what Hegai the king's servant in charge of the women told her to take
when it was her turn to go before the king.. TRUE or FALSE

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. Why did Mordecai raise Esther? Didn't she have a mother and father?
2. Why did the king's servants choose Esther to be taken before the king? Was it probably because she was so beautiful?
3. Did Mordecai like Esther? Was she his favorite?
4. What did the women have to do before they could go before the king? Did they have to have beauty treatments?
5. Did people like Esther?
6. What happened when it was Esther's turn to go before the king? Did he like her? What did he do? Did he make her queen instead of Vashti?

Lesson 127 Craft

Draw Esther the Queen and her Crown!

Draw Esther Art Project

Give the children the opportunity to draw Esther's face and crown to show off their creativity. The project is simple enough for preschoolers, but still fun for older children as well.

- Draw Esther's face and crown.
- Optional: instead of drawing the crown, feel free to give the children pieces of foil wrapping paper and allow them to cut out a crown shape and glue it onto her head.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Pop Statement

To review today's lesson, play a game of "Pop Statement." You will need a balloon and a small piece of paper for each child in your class. Queen Esther was just a regular girl who was suddenly chosen to be queen. Imagine what it would be like to be king or queen. How would you complete the following statements? Before class, write the statements to be completed on each small slip of paper and insert each one into a balloon. Think of silly statements for the children to complete. Start with, "If I were king or queen I would..."; then finish with an incomplete statement. For example, one might say, "If I were king or queen I would only eat _____ everyday." Use the examples below and/or come up with your own. Give each child a turn. Have them blow up their balloon and then pop it to get their statement. Have them imagine, have fun, and a lot of laughs, then go into today's story. Here are some question ideas:

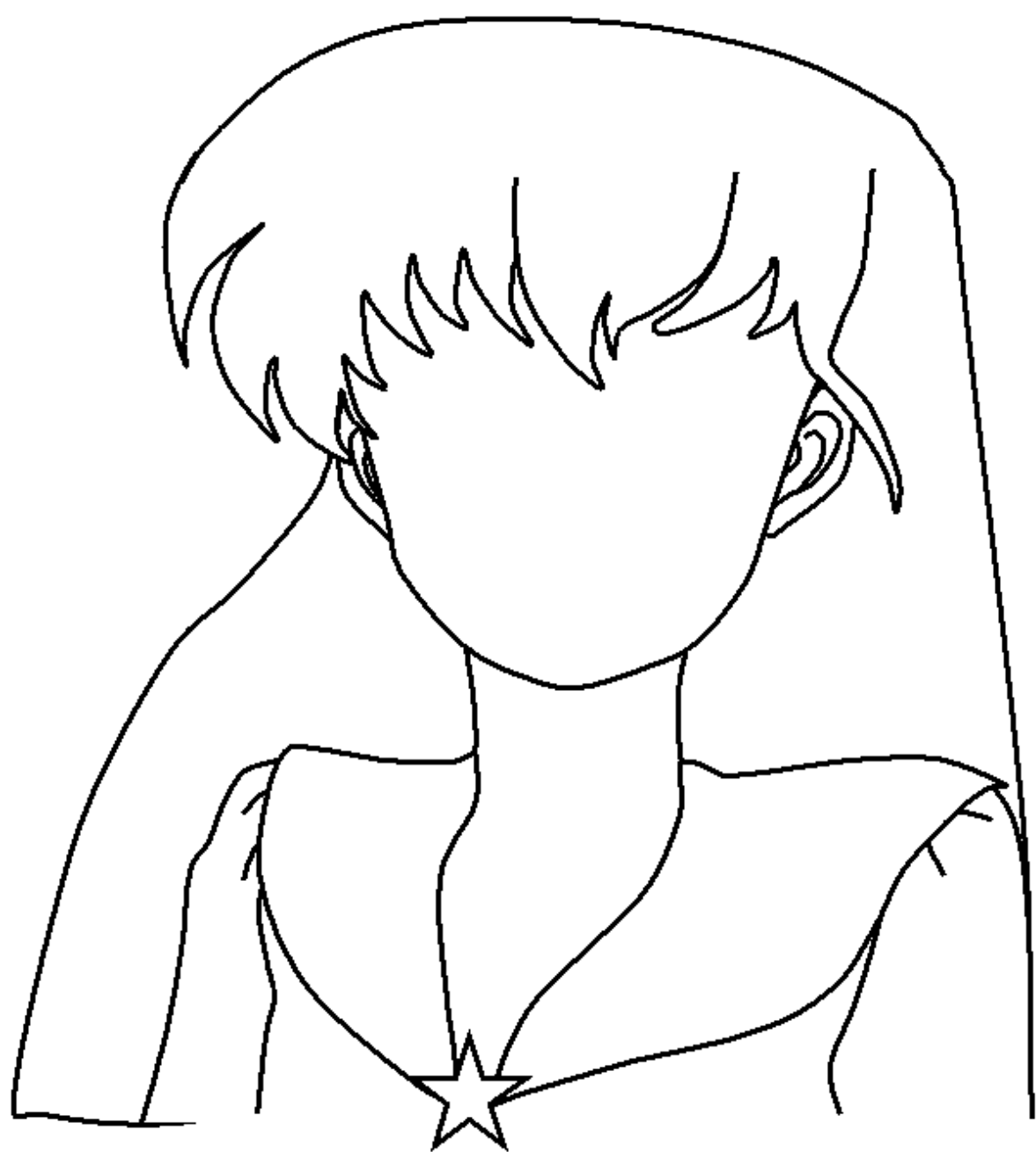
"If I were king or queen I would..."

1. Only eat _____ every day.
2. Travel to _____.
3. Pass a law that _____.
4. Buy _____ (number) pairs of shoes.
5. _____ with my leftover food.
6. Help others by _____.
7. Hire _____ (name) as my court jester.

Come up with some more on your own.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust in the Lord no matter what the circumstances--even if they do not understand everything that God is doing in their lives. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.



Draw Queen Esther's face and crown.