

BRAVE QUEEN ESTHER

A long time after King Cyrus had died, his grandson Xerxes became king. Xerxes was also called Ahasuerus, which sounds like a name for a dinosaur. So we'll just call him **XERXES**.

Xerxes was not as good a king as Cyrus. He wasn't as smart or as wise as Cyrus. And he had a bad temper.

Xerxes had a wife named **VASHTI** who was very beautiful. Xerxes wanted to show his beautiful wife off to his friends at a party one night, but Vashti wouldn't come out of her room.

"Come out!" Xerxes said.

"No!" Vashti told him.

This made Xerxes angry. So angry that he threw Queen Vashti out of his palace and said she wasn't his queen anymore. Yep, Xerxes had a bad temper, all right!

Xerxes' friends said, "You need a **NEW** queen. An even better queen!"

Xerxes searched throughout the Persian Empire for the best queen of all.

And Xerxes found **ESTHER**.

Esther was an orphan—she had no mother or father. Esther lived with her cousin **MORDECAI** who worked for King Xerxes at his palace.

More importantly, Esther was a **JEW**.

What's a Jew? God's people were called the "Israelites," because they were the children of Israel. After Israel split in two, the southern half was called "Judah." People from Judah who ended up living in the Persian Empire were called "Jews."

King Xerxes didn't know Esther was a Jew. He just knew she was very pretty and very kind. The king liked Esther so much, he made her the new **QUEEN**!

Then things got complicated.





King Xerxes had a friend named **HAMAN**. And Haman didn't like Jews at all. Haman especially didn't like Esther's cousin Mordecai because Mordecai wouldn't bow down to Haman.

Have you ever met someone who wanted to be the boss of everyone? Haman was that kind of person.

Like Xerxes, Haman had a bad temper. Over and over he **DEMANDED** that Mordecai bow to him, and over and over Mordecai refused. Finally, Haman was so angry he wanted to kill Mordecai.

Then Haman had an even worse idea. *Why kill only Mordecai? Why not kill all the Jews in Persia?*

Haman lied and told King Xerxes that the Jews were troublemakers and that the Persian Empire would be better if there were no Jews. King Xerxes trusted Haman.

So the king signed a paper announcing that all the Jews would be **KILLED**. He hung the paper outside his palace where Mordecai worked. Mordecai couldn't believe his eyes.

"Esther!" Mordecai said. "You have to go talk to the king!"

Esther was **TERRIFIED**. No one talked to the king without being invited. If you walked into the king's room without an invitation, you could be killed. **EVEN** if you were the queen!

But Mordecai said, "Esther, you can save your people. Maybe this is why you became queen!"

So Esther gathered her **COURAGE** and walked into the king's room. She waited to see if the guards would grab her and kill her! But King Xerxes said, "Let her talk to me."



Esther invited the king to a banquet and at that banquet, she invited him to another one. By the second meal, Esther had gathered enough courage to tell the king about Haman's plan.

"Someone is going to **KILL** my whole family and me!" she said.

King Xerxes was angry. *Who would try to kill his queen?*

Esther pointed to Haman.

"Haman," she said. "Haman plans to kill all the Jews. And I am a Jew!"

King Xerxes was **FURIOUS**. "Whatever you were going to do to the Jews," he said to Haman, "will be done to you!"

And that was the last time anyone had to worry about Haman.

God used the bravery of Esther, an orphan girl who became a queen, to **SAVE** the children of Israel.



BRAVE QUEEN ESTHER

FAMILY CONNECTION

ESTHER



EVERYDAY TRUTH

God can use me to
be a part of His story
in amazing ways.

TALK

Why do you think God allowed Esther to become queen during this time?

What is the best thing about being where you are right now?

Dear
God...

PRAY

Dear God, thank You for letting us be a part of Your plan right now, right where we are. Show us ways we can love and help others. Amen.



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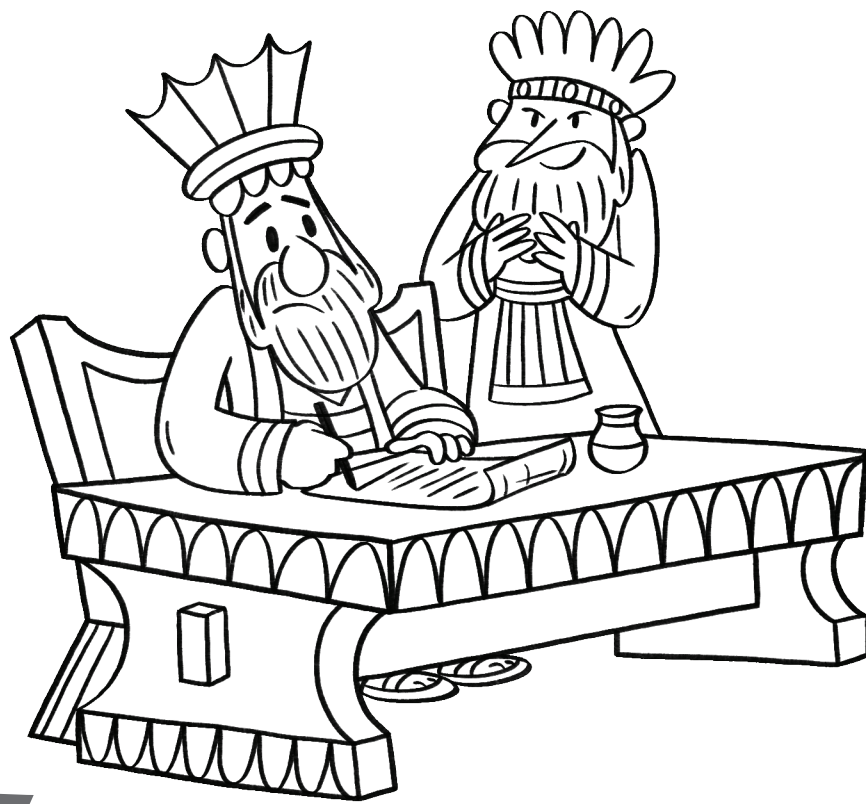
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