

Esther Becomes Queen

Esther 2:1-18

MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 31:30

"Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a women who fears the Lord, she shall be praised."

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

A balloon and a small piece of paper for each child in your class

Pencils and paper (optional for younger children: red construction paper, scissors and markers).

Yellow construction paper, scissors, tape and markers.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Pop Question

To introduce today's lesson play a game of "Pop Question." You will need a balloon and a small piece of paper for each child in your class. Tell the class that in our story today we will learn about Queen Esther. She was just a regular girl who was suddenly chosen to be queen. We are going to give the class a chance to think about what it may have been like to be a king or queen. Tell the class to imagine that someone came to them and told them they were now king or queen. How would they answer the "pop question"?

Before class write questions on each small slip of paper and insert each one into a balloon. Think of silly questions for the children to answer. Start with, "If I were king or queen I would..." then on the slip of paper finish with an idea for the child to answer. For example, one might say, "If I were king or queen I would...(on slip of paper) 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 question. Have them answer, have fun and a lot of laughs, then go into today's story. NOTE: For younger children you will have to read it for them or alter it to their level.

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.

LESSON TIME!

In today's lesson we are going to learn about a young girl named Esther. Esther was a young Jewish girl who lived in a foreign land. Her people had been taken captive and forced to move. Both of her parents had died and her older cousin adopted and raised her. In many ways Esther had a very difficult life. But we are going to learn about how God used a young girl, in a foreign land to accomplish His purposes.

Sometimes we do not understand why things happen in our lives, but God has a reason and a plan. He sees the whole picture. We need to stay faithful to God and obey His Word. His plan for us is better than we could ever imagine.

God had a plan for Esther's life. There would be a time when her people would be in great danger. God placed Esther in the exact place where He wanted her to be in order to protect His people. God made Esther queen of the land. This story shows that God can do amazing things in difficult circumstances through those who will yield to His plan. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

ESTHER 2:1

After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what had been decreed against her.

In chapter one of Esther, the king who gave big party. He wanted his wife, the queen, to come so he could show off her beauty to everyone. She refused to come. This made the king very angry. The king met with his advisors and decided that Vashti would no longer be queen; a new queen would be chosen to replace her.

After the party was over, the king was not angry anymore. He actually became sad about banishing the queen; but by law, he could not go back on his word. He never saw the queen again. If we do something out of anger we may come to regret it later. So we have to make sure that we are not speaking or acting out of our emotions, but rather we need to think through everything we say and do. Sometimes we might speak angrily and hurt someone's feelings. That person may forgive us but we can never take back those words. We may hurt someone with careless words. We need to be more like Jesus and watch what we say and what we do.

But God knew what was going to happen and was going to use this event for His plans. God can do all things and will even move the hearts of kings in order for His plans to be accomplished. Just because a king does not serve the Lord, does not mean that God cannot work out His plans. God knew that His people would one day need protection from an evil plan against them. He was

already working ahead of time to provide a way of deliverance and that deliverance would come through a young Jewish girl by the name of Esther. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

ESTHER 2:2-4

Then the king's servants who attended him said: "Let beautiful young virgins be sought for the king;

"and let the king appoint officers in all the provinces of his kingdom, that they may gather all the beautiful young virgins to Shushan the citadel, into the women's quarters, under the custody of Hegai the king's eunuch, custodian of the women. And let beauty preparations be given them.

"Then let the young woman who pleases the king be queen instead of Vashti." This thing pleased the king, and he did so.

The king's aides made the suggestion that all the beautiful, young girls be brought to the king's harem. The girls were to have beauty treatments to make them ready for the king. The girl who pleased the king the most would be made queen replacing Vashti. The king liked this suggestion and followed it.

Again we see God working in this situation. Esther had no way of realizing what God was about to do in her life. But she loved the Lord and remained faithful to Him. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

ESTHER 2:5-6

In Shushan the citadel there was a certain Jew whose name was Mordecai the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite.

Kish had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captives who had been captured with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.

There was a Jew at the palace named Mordecai. He had been captured when Jerusalem was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar, and had been exiled to Babylon along with King Jeconiah of Judah and many others.

Their family had been in captivity there for a long time. Mordecai was actually the great-grandson of Kish who was the original man taken to Babylon from Jerusalem. But God was about to do something wonderful in this family's life. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

ESTHER 2:7

And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman was lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter.

This is where we are introduced to Esther. Mordecai had a beautiful and lovely young cousin named Esther. Esther's parents had died so Mordecai adopted Esther into his own family. Mordecai raised her as his own daughter. Mordecai loved Esther very much and took care of her as she grew up. Perhaps Esther had a difficult time growing up without her parents, but God provided for her needs and gave her Mordecai to look after her and care for her. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

ESTHER 2:8-9

So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, under the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women.

Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women.

As a result of the king's decree, Esther was brought to the king's harem at Shushan Palace, along with many other young girls. She was entrusted to Hegai, who had charge of the harem. Esther impressed Hegai so he gave her special treatment. He gave her special food, beauty treatments and seven maids from the palace. He also gave her the best apartment in the harem.

Already God had given Esther favor in the king's palace. Hegai recognized that Esther might very well be the king's choice for a new queen so he helped to prepare her for that day when she would stand before the king. What a different life it must have been for Esther. All of a sudden she is pampered and given beauty treatments and given servants to attend to her every need. What must have gone through Esther's mind as she was preparing to go before the king. Do you think she was ever afraid?

Sometimes we might be afraid when the Lord has us doing something new. He may have plans for us that we can not understand. But like Esther, we have to trust Him and know that He is going to work everything out. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

A “Proverbs 31” Queen

Esther’s beauty was not just on the outside; it was on the inside too! She had a lot of good qualities because she loved the Lord.

Have a contest to see which team can find the most “qualities” of a “Proverbs 31 Wife.” Split the class into two teams. Have each team turn to Proverbs 31:10-31. Have each team go to a separate part of the room. Give them a piece of paper and a pencil. Have them choose who will keep notes.

Say “go” and give each team three minutes to go through the verses and list all of the qualities or virtues found in the verses. When you say stop have the children keeping the lists go to the chalkboard and write their answers. You may have to play judge if some are not quite right.

Determine a winner and allow them to serve small prizes to the whole class. Use this exercise to reinforce what true beauty is in the eyes of the Lord.

For younger children who cannot read yet, you will need to do a different activity. You can use some sheets of red construction paper and have the children cut out rubies. Write Proverbs 31:10 on the ruby and explain to the class together what beauty is in God’s eyes and how Esther was beautiful.

ESTHER 2:10-11

Esther had not revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal it.

And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.

Mordecai had told Esther not to tell anyone that she was a Jew. He may have been afraid that if everyone knew that she was a Jew, the king would not choose her. The Jews were still in captivity and were looked down upon, so Esther obeyed and did not tell anyone.

Mordecai checked on her every day because he was worried about her. This showed how much Mordecai loved Esther. Mordecai wanted to make sure that she was all right. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

ESTHER 2:12-14

Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.

Thus prepared, each young woman went to the king, and she was given whatever she desired to take with her from the women's quarters to the king's palace.

In the evening she went, and in the morning she returned to the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch who kept the concubines. She would not go in to the king again unless the king delighted in her and called for her by name.

Esther spent a whole year just getting ready to go before the king! Before a young girl was taken to the king, she was to have 12 months of beauty treatments; six months with oil of myrrh to make her skin soft, and 6 months with perfumes and cosmetics to make her attractive.

When it was Esther's turn, she could choose whatever clothes and jewelry she desired. When she returned, she would go to another part of the harem where the king's wives lived. She would live there rest of her life and would not return to the king again unless he asked for her by name.

There was nothing more she could do. Everything was prepared. She had spent the last year getting ready. Now it was up to the Lord. She had to trust in Him. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

ESTHER 2:15-16

Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.

So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

The time had finally come to go before the king. When Esther's turn came, she followed the advice of the eunuch in charge of the harem and dressed simply. She was taken to the king at the palace in January of the seventh year of the king's reign.

God had given Esther favor everywhere she went. When God calls us to do something for Him, He will give us favor. He will help us do whatever He asks us to do.

ESTHER 2:17-18

The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king.

The king loved Esther more than all of the other girls. He was delighted with her and set the royal crown on her head. Esther was declared queen. The king had a celebration for all his officials and servants, giving expensive gifts and granting a tax refund to the provinces.

Esther trusted in God and followed His leading, just as Mordecai had advised, and God blessed her. Just as God had a plan for Esther, God has plans and purposes for our lives. He will use our lives if we let Him. We will see in the upcoming lessons how God used Esther in the lives of His people.

Sometimes things happen in our lives that we do not understand, but if we follow God, trust in God, and are faithful to God, He will bless us. His plans for our lives are always the best. **God is in control even when we do not understand His plan.**

Crowned With Purpose

For this craft you will need yellow construction paper, scissors, tape and markers. Give one sheet to each child. Fold the paper in half-length wise and cut. Place the two strips together and cut one edge in angles to make the top of a crown. Tape the two ends together and help children to determine the size of their head and cut to the appropriate size.

Next decorate the crown by drawing jewels, etc. You may also want to write, "God Has a Plan for Me!" on the crown. When the children are done decorating, tape the ends together and allow them to wear it. Ask them how they think Esther must have felt when she was chosen as the queen.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to trust in the Lord no matter what. Even if they don't understand everything that God is doing in their lives they can trust that the Lord will be with them. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.