



Story: Esther Becomes Queen

Supplies Needed

You will need the following:

- 11 Sheets of [Cardstock](#) (8.5" x 11")
- 11 3 mil Laminating [Film](#)

Directions

- Print pages 2-23 two-sided on cardstock. Laminate the pages.
- Hold up the pictures while you read the story.



Medes and Persian Empire

Jerusalem



Susa (Shushan)

Ethiopia

India

Before holding up the picture:

What did we talk about last time in class? (*Ezra returned to Jerusalem*)

What sin had the Israelites committed that upset Ezra? (*married foreign women*)

What did the Israelites agree to do to show they had repented? (*They sent their foreign wives and children away*)

Hold up picture:

King Xerxes (also known as Ahasuerus) is now the ruler over the Persian Empire, which stretched over 127 provinces from Ethiopia to India. The capital of the Persian Empire was Susa (or Shushan). There were many Israelites still living in the Persian Empire...not all of them had returned to Jerusalem like Ezra.



Hold up picture:

In the third year of his reign, King Xerxes invited all his noble friends and princes to a feast, which lasted for 180 days.

Explain / Ask:

Wow! 180 days is a long time! Do you know how many months is 180 days? **(6 months)** How would you like your birthday party to last for 6 months?



Hold up picture:

After the feast, the king invited everyone at his palace in Susa to another feast, which would last for 7 days. The king's palace was very fancy. There were white and blue curtains fastened with fine linen cords to silver rings and marble pillars. The couches were silver and gold sitting on floors of red, blue, black, and white marble.

Explain / Ask:



Hold up picture:

Everyone drank from cups of gold, and each cup was different from the others. King Xerxes had an abundance of wine that he shared with his guests. Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women in another part of the palace.

Explain:

It was custom for the Persians to recline on couches as they ate at the table. And notice that the women had a separate feast from the men.



Hold up picture:

On the seventh day, King Xerxes, who was drunk, ordered his seven servants to bring Queen Vashti to him so he could show off her beauty to his friends.



Hold up picture:

But the servants reported back to King Xerxes that Queen Vashti had refused to join him.

Explain / Ask:

Do you think the king was happy about the queen's refusal? (No)



Hold up picture:

The king was furious. His wise men advised him saying, “The queen has not only insulted you but everyone. She has set a bad example in not showing honor to her husband, for the queen’s behavior will become known to all women causing them to rebel against their husbands.”

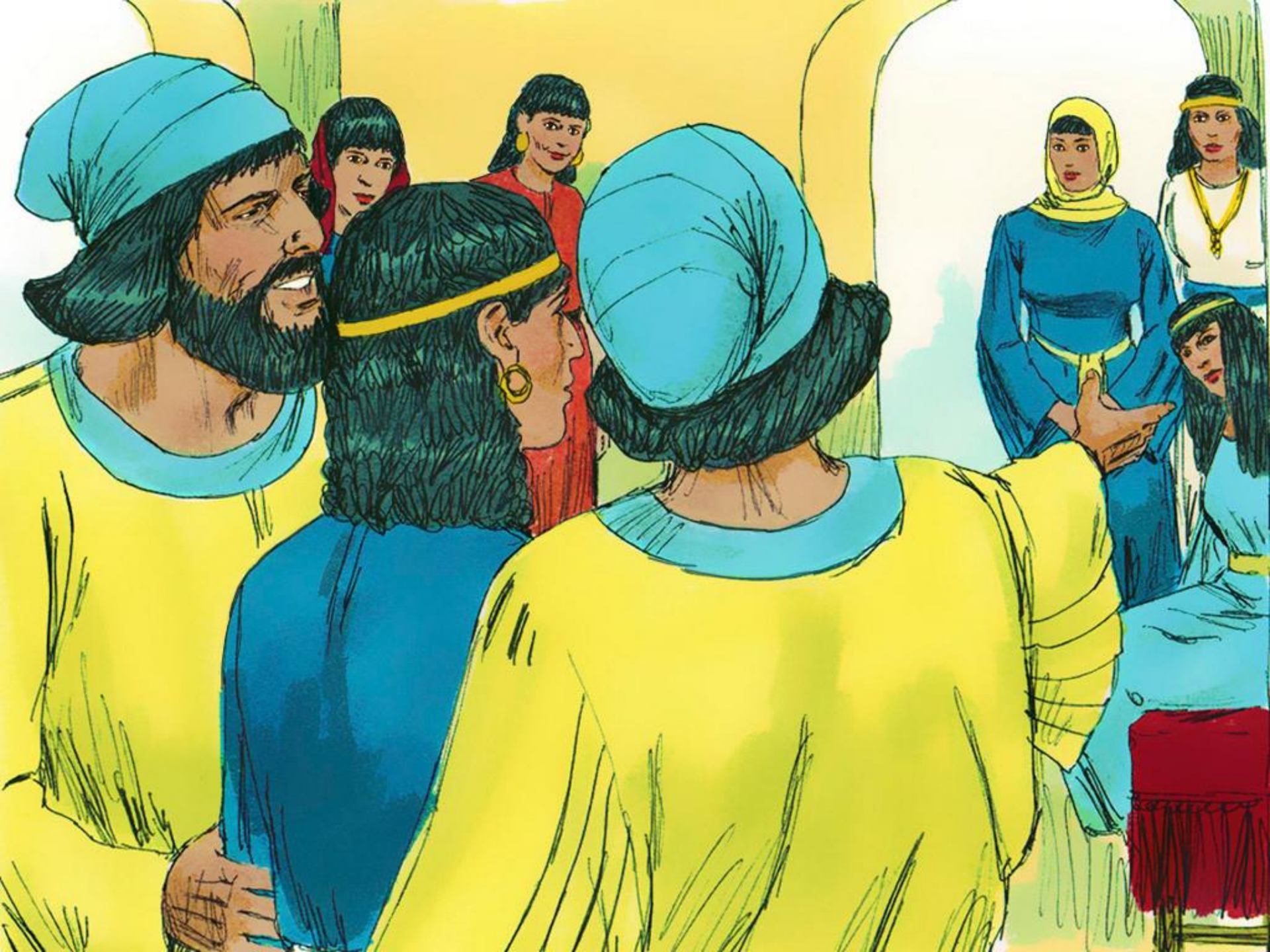
Explain:

The king’s advisors were worried that once all the women in the empire learned about Vashti refusing to obey the king, all the women in the land would refuse to obey their husbands too.



Hold up picture:

So, from that day forward, Vashti was no longer the Queen, and she was banished from ever seeing King Xerxes again. Also, King Xerxes issued a decree. The law was read aloud throughout the land saying that all wives must honor and obey their husbands and that each man should be the master in his own house.



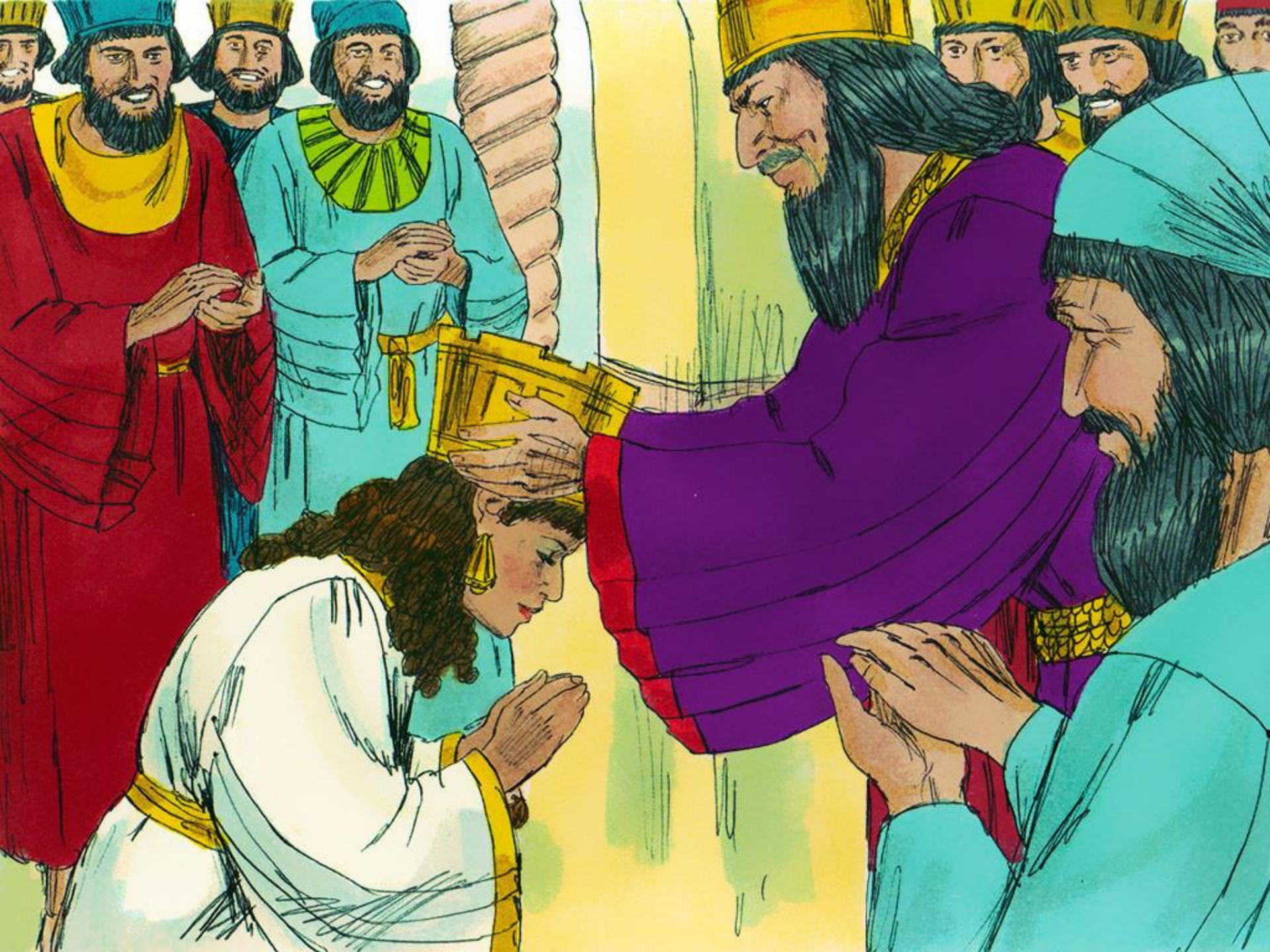
Hold up picture:

Who would replace Vashti as queen? The king sent his officials throughout the empire to search for the most beautiful, young, unmarried women. And all the young women were brought to the palace under the supervision of Hegai, the king's servant.



Hold up picture:

Working in the palace was a Jew, named Mordecai. Mordecai had a cousin called Esther, whom he had raised because her parents had died. Esther was a beautiful young lady and chosen to join the other young women at the palace. Mordecai advised her not to tell anyone she was a Jew. Esther and all the other young women underwent 12 months (that's a whole year) of beauty treatments before they were presented to the king.



Hold up picture:

Of the many women presented to King Xerxes, Esther was the one that the king loved the most. Esther was crowned as Queen to take Vashti's place, in the seventh year of Xerxes reign. Then the king gave a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants, and he declared a holiday in all the provinces to honor his new Queen. But in all of this, Esther told no one that she was a Jew.

Explain / Ask:

Why do you think Mordecai told Esther not to tell anyone that she was a Jew? *(answers might vary)*
Mostly likely, it was because the Israelites were looked down upon. Remember that they had been captives/slaves, so she might have been disqualified if the king knew she came from the slaves.

You might not have realized it, but God is never mentioned in the whole book of Esther. But does that mean that God didn't have a hand in helping Esther become queen? *(No, God is placing Esther in a position that will help the Jews years later)* Sometimes we might wonder if God is active in our daily lives. We need to remember that just because we can't see God, it doesn't mean He can't see us. We have to trust that God sees and knows how best to help us.