

The law could not be changed, but they could make new laws. The king made a law that said the Jews could fight back. People were afraid and nobody attacked the Jews on the set day.

The king gave Mordecai the important job that had belonged to Haman. Esther, by being a friend of God, and being brave enough to stay His friend, even in a palace, had saved the lives of all the Jews living in the kingdom of Persia.

Do you think God might have a special job for you, too, just like He did for Esther?



GOD'S YOUNG FRIENDS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

LESSON 10 Esther: Friend of God

Esther was a Hebrew girl who lived in Persia. The Hebrews had been able to go back to their homes in Jerusalem years ago, just as God had promised. But many of them chose to stay in Persia, including Esther's family.

Esther's parents died when she was little. She went to live with her cousin Mordecai who worked for the king at the palace gates.

Read Esther 1:6 and color in the circles with Mordecai's answer.

Tell me again about the palace, cousin Mordecai! It sounds so beautiful!



"It is," said Mordecai. "The draperies are

- cotton with
- hangings. They are held with
- cords and
- rings on marble pillars.
- couches

and even the floor is marble and jewels."

One day the king got very angry with his queen and sent her away. Find that queen's name in Esther 2:1 and write it here: _____

The king held a beauty contest to find a new queen. All of the beautiful, unmarried girls were invited to come to the palace. Each one would have a turn to visit the king. He would choose his queen from among these girls. Esther went too.

I don't want to leave you, cousin Mordecai.

I know. You have been just like a daughter to me, and I will miss you terribly. Maybe you will be able to see me at the gate from your window.
One thing is very important. Do not let anyone know you are a Hebrew. You must even take a Persian name. We will call you Esther.



What was Esther's name before the beauty contest? Find the answer in Esther 2:7, and write it on the line below.

_____ This name means "shining star."



Dear God, what should I do? You know there is a law that if I go to the king without his invitation, he could have me killed. I am scared. You have always taken care of me. Maybe you allowed me to become Queen of Persia because You knew this was coming. Okay, I will go to the king, and if I die, then I will die. You are my friend and I want to do what is right.

Esther did go see the king, and he was not angry. In fact he was *delighted* to see her. She invited him and Haman to a special dinner.

This was a wonderful dinner, Esther. Now, what can I do for you, my pretty Queen?

Would you and Haman come again for dinner tomorrow night?



We'd love to!

Mordecai was horrified! He had no way to tell Esther. She lived inside the palace in a part where he was not allowed to go. So he dressed in funeral clothes and stood in his spot by the gate, praying for God to do something to help him.

Hathach, come to the window. Look at that gatekeeper. He is wearing mourning clothes like someone important has died. Please go find out what is upsetting him.



Yes, my Queen.



What did Hathach find out?



Read Esther 4:6-8 and circle the correct answers.

1. Your favorite aunt has died.
2. You must go to the king for help.
3. We will all die because of this law.
4. Haman promised to pay for killing the Jews.
5. Don't worry. Be happy.

There were some very bad people in the palace. One of them was named Haman. He was the second in command under the king. When Haman walked by, everyone would bow down to him. Everyone, that is, except Mordecai.

I only bow down to my God.



Argh! I hate people who do not bow down to me! I hate Mordecai. In fact, I hate all Jews!

Someday I am going to figure out a way to get rid of those nasty people.

Meanwhile in the palace, Esther was getting ready for her turn to visit the king. The girls in the beauty contest were allowed to take pretty clothes, jewelry and make-up with them when they went to the king. They would live in a separate place afterwards. When Esther's turn came she did not ask for anything special.



I don't understand! All the girls see this as their opportunity to be selfish and take as much from the palace as they can. Esther is so different. Since she did not ask for anything, I am going to give her the best we have!

It was Esther's turn! What would the king think?



Find out what happened in Esther 2:16, 17 and then choose the boxes that seem most like what the king might have said. Cross out the wrong answers.

Yuck! This one is ugly!

I love this one! She would be a great queen!

This one's nose is too big!

This is the most beautiful girl in the whole kingdom!

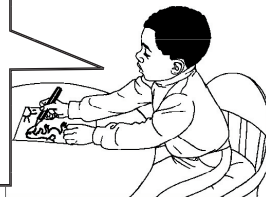


So Esther became queen of the Persian Empire. She was married to the most powerful man in the world. What was his name? Find it in Esther 2:1 and write it on the line below.



I am glad my name is not a hard one to learn. It would take me a long time to learn to spell it.

If you were the king of the Persian Empire, you would not have to. You could have a scribe write it for you!



Meanwhile, Haman was hard at work. He had thought of a way to get rid of all the Jews in the entire kingdom. . .

Your Majesty, did you know that there is a large group of people in this kingdom who are disrespectful to you? They keep their own laws, not your laws, and they do not think you are important at all!

I will be glad to!

Not respect me? How awful! Get rid of them!



A law was passed for the entire kingdom. What did it say? Read Esther 3:13. Write the important parts of it below.
