

THE BEAUTIFUL BRAVE QUEEN

Esther 3:1-15; 4:1-17; 5:1-14.

LESSON 100 -- Primary Course

MEMORY VERSE: “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace” (Hebrews 4:16).

BIBLE TEXTS

Esther 3:1-15;

1 After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.

2 And all the king's servants, that were in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.

3 Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?

4 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.

6 And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai.

7 In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar.

8 And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them.

9 If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries.

10 And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy.

11 And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee.

12 Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

13 And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

14 The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day.

15 The posts went out, being hastened by the king's commandment, and the decree was given in Shushan the palace. And the king and Haman sat down to drink; but the city Shushan was perplexed.

Esther 4:1-17;

1 When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry;

2 And came even before the king's gate: for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.

3 And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 So Esther's maids and her chamberlains came and told it her. Then was the queen exceedingly grieved; and she sent raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his sackcloth from him: but he received it not.

5 Then called Esther for Hatach, one of the king's chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her, and gave him a commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was.

6 So Hatach went forth to Mordecai unto the street of the city, which was before the king's gate.

7 And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him, and of the sum of the money that Haman had promised to pay to the king's treasuries for the Jews, to destroy them.

8 Also he gave him the copy of the writing of the decree that was given at Shushan to destroy them, to shew it unto Esther, and to declare it unto her, and to charge her that she should go in unto the king, to make supplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people.

Esther 5:1-14.

1 Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house.

2 And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court,

9 And Hatach came and told Esther the words of Mordecai.

10 Again Esther spake unto Hatach, and gave him commandment unto Mordecai;

11 All the king's servants, and the people of the king's provinces, do know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death, except such to whom the king shall hold out the golden sceptre, that he may live: but I have not been called to come in unto the king these thirty days.

12 And they told to Mordecai Esther's words.

13 Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews.

14 For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

15 Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer,

16 Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

17 So Mordecai went his way, and did according to all that Esther had commanded him.

that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre.

3 Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? and what is thy request? it shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom.

4 And Esther answered, If it seem good unto the king, let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet that I have prepared for him.

5 Then the king said, Cause Haman to make haste, that he may do as Esther hath said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that Esther had prepared.

6 And the king said unto Esther at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed.

7 Then answered Esther, and said, My petition and my request is;

8 If I have found favour in the sight of the king, and if it please the king to grant my petition, and to perform my request, let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them, and I will do to morrow as the king hath said.

9 Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai.

10 Nevertheless Haman refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife.

11 And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

12 Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited unto her also with the king.

13 Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

14 Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made.

NOTES

Crowning the Queen

A little Jewish girl named Esther was left alone when both her parents died. Mordecai, a kind cousin, took her into his home as his own daughter. Later on, when the king wanted a new queen, he chose Esther, out of many young women, for she was very beautiful. The king set a royal crown upon her head and she became the queen in the land of Persia. Mordecai told her not to let anyone know that she was a Jewess, for the Jews were not liked by the people of this land. Although Esther was an orphan girl living in a strange land, God had a great work for her to do.

The King's Helpers

Mordecai was a very faithful man who seemed to work at the king's gate as watchman. The king liked him and trusted him with an important place. There was another man, Haman, who was given power in the kingdom. Everyone bowed down before Haman, for the king had commanded the people to do so. But Mordecai, the Jew, loved and worshiped the Lord and would not bow down before any man. Of course, that hurt Haman's pride and made him angry at Mordecai and all the other Jews. So Haman went to the king and said that the Jews were not obeying the laws of the land. He asked the king to give a command that all the Jews should be

killed. He said he would pay a very great sum of money to the government if the king would give that command. The king believed Haman's words and gave consent to have all the Jews destroyed.

The Sad News

Letters were sent to all the people saying that on a certain day all the Jews should be killed; not one was to escape, but every man, woman, and child was to be destroyed. The king put his seal upon the letters. When the Jews learned the sad news they became very frightened. There was much weeping throughout the land. When Mordecai heard of it he tore his clothes from him and put on clothes made of sackcloth, for that was what people wore when they were sad. He stood in front of the palace and cried bitterly. He was sorrowful not only for himself but for all the Jews as well. The queen heard about Mordecai's sorrow and wanted to know what had happened. As she saw him sitting near the palace, dressed in sackcloth, she sent him some better clothes to put on. She loved her cousin and had not forgotten his kindness to her in taking her in when she was a little orphan girl. It made her feel bad to see him in such sorrow.

But Mordecai did not accept the clothes she sent. He sent a message to her telling of the plan to kill all the Jews; and, since she was a Jewess, he said she need not think that she would escape. He said that she and her people would all be destroyed. But, he said, perhaps it was for just such a time as this that she had become the queen. He felt that God had let Esther become queen so that she might save the lives of her people. Mordecai loved God and knew that God loved him and all the Jews. If we have faith to trust God, He will never fail us. He did not fail Mordecai, as we shall soon see.

Risking Her life

Mordecai told Queen Esther to go to the king and ask him to protect the Jews. But the queen told her cousin that there was a law that if anyone came into the place where the king was without being asked to come, that person should be killed, unless the king held out the golden sceptre, or staff, to him. It would be very dangerous for her to go before the king when he had not called for her. But she told Mordecai to have all the Jews pray for her and not eat or drink for three days and nights. She said she and her maidens in the palace would also fast. She wanted God's protection as she went in before the king. She knew that only God could soften the king's heart to hear her request. No doubt Mordecai had taught her to pray when she was a little girl. She purposed to go in before the king, although it was against the law to do so unless called for. She would plead for the life of the Jews. She said, "If I perish, I perish."

Surely she had the love of God in her heart for her people, the Jews. If the king would not hold out the golden sceptre to her, she would be killed, but she was willing to risk her life for her people.

After three days of fasting, the queen put on her most beautiful clothes and went to the king's house. When the king saw her timidly standing in the court that day in all her beauty, he was pleased with her. Can you imagine the joy she must have felt when he held out the golden sceptre to her? She came near to him, and with her hand touched the top of the sceptre. The king asked her what her request was. He said he would give her anything she asked, to the half of the kingdom.

Queen Esther was very happy that the king did not send her away but he listened to her story. Thus far the Lord had helped her. She probably wondered whether the king would really grant her request and spare the lives of her people. She did not tell at once of the great sorrow in her heart. She asked that the king and his friend Haman come to a great feast that she was preparing for them. They promised to come.

Mordecai Honoured

The next night as the king lay on his bed he was unable to sleep. Perhaps he was thinking about the letters that had gone out saying that all the Jews were to be killed. It may be that some of the weeping among the

heartbroken Jews had reached his ears. The Jews were God's people and it was not His will that they should be destroyed. Doubtless it was the Lord who kept King Ahasuerus awake that night in order that his heart might be turned toward the Jews. Then the king asked that a book of records be brought and read to him. There in the book they found written a story of how Mordecai had saved the king's life some time before. Then the king asked if anything had been done for Mordecai for this great deed. The servants answered that nothing had been done for him. So the king commanded that fine clothing should be given to Mordecai, and a crown placed upon his head. He should be given a horse, and should ride horseback through the street of the city and be highly honoured.

All this made Haman very jealous of Mordecai. He hurried home in shame. He had hoped that he should be the one to ride through the streets of the city dressed in the king's clothes. He thought he should have been the honoured one instead of this humble Jew. He had carefully made his plan to have Mordecai and all the Jews destroyed. But God on the throne saw it all. He always takes care of His own people.

Esther's Plea

As yet, the king did not know that the lovely queen was a relative of Mordecai. But at a great feast, Queen Esther perhaps told the king that Mordecai was her cousin. She fell down at the feet of the king, and with tears in her eyes begged him to spare her people from death. Again the king held out the golden sceptre to her. Then she rose and stood before the king. The king kindly listened to her plea and granted her desire. He sent letters promising protection for the Jews. The letters were swiftly carried through the land. That was a happy day for all the Jews: God had heard and answered their earnest prayers.

Mordecai was given a high place in the kingdom. God knew the heart of the wicked Haman, and he was punished for the terrible things he had planned for the Jews.

Sorrow Turned to Joy

The whole city rejoiced and the Jews were very happy that the beautiful queen had saved their lives. Every year the Jews held a feast of thanksgiving to God for His mercy in saving them from their enemies. God had used Queen Esther as a means of protecting His people, the Jews. Their sorrow was turned into joy and their mourning "into a good day." Many of the Jews today still hold this yearly feast of thanksgiving to God, which is called the Feast of Purim.

Faith and Courage

Sometimes it takes courage for us to do exactly as the Lord wants us to do. But if we pray, and trust the Lord as Esther did, He will help us to do His will. God has work for every person to do, young or old. God has a purpose in letting this orphan girl become the queen. He knew that she had a heart full of faith and courage and that she would carry out the plan He had for her. Let us pray that God will help each and every one of us to work for Jesus and fulfil His plan in our life.

QUESTIONS

1. Why was Haman angry at Mordecai? Esther 3:5.
2. What did Esther ask the Jews to do before she went to talk to the king? Esther 4:16.
3. Did the king hold out the golden sceptre to Esther? Esther 5:2.
4. Were the Jews spared? Esther 8:11.
5. Do you remember the story of another captive maid who worked for the Lord? II Kings 5:1-27.

LESSON RESOURCES

TITLE

THE BEAUTIFUL BRAVE QUEEN

Lesson 100

Esther 3:1-15; 4:1-17; 5:1-14

There Is Victory For Me

WATCH AND PRAY 33



d` ; r` , m` : s : t : r` : d` :-:

m` ; f` , s` : m` : d` : m` : r` :-:

s` ; f` , m` : m` : r` : d` : l : f` :-

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s` : s` :-: f` : m` :-: m` : m` :-: r` : d` :-:

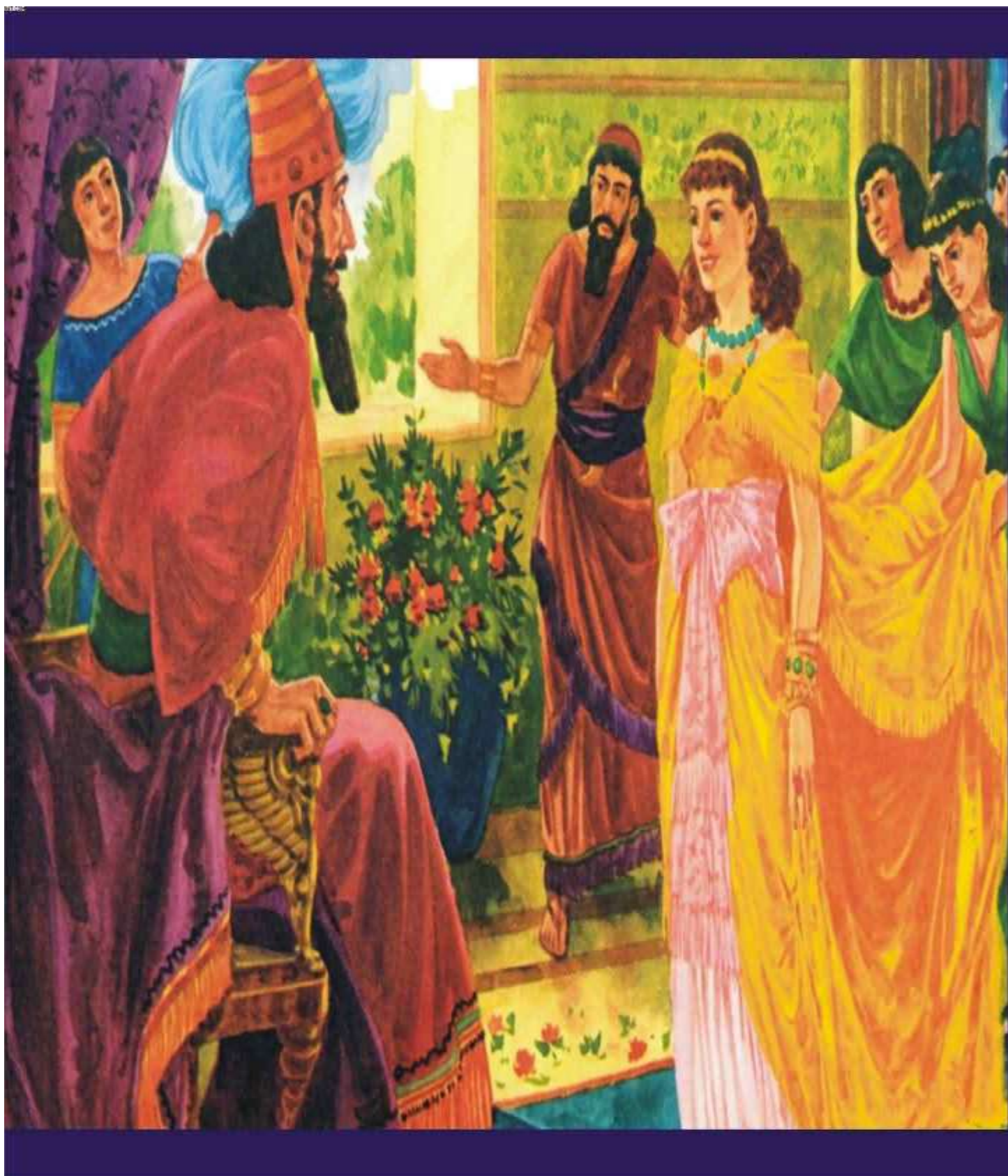
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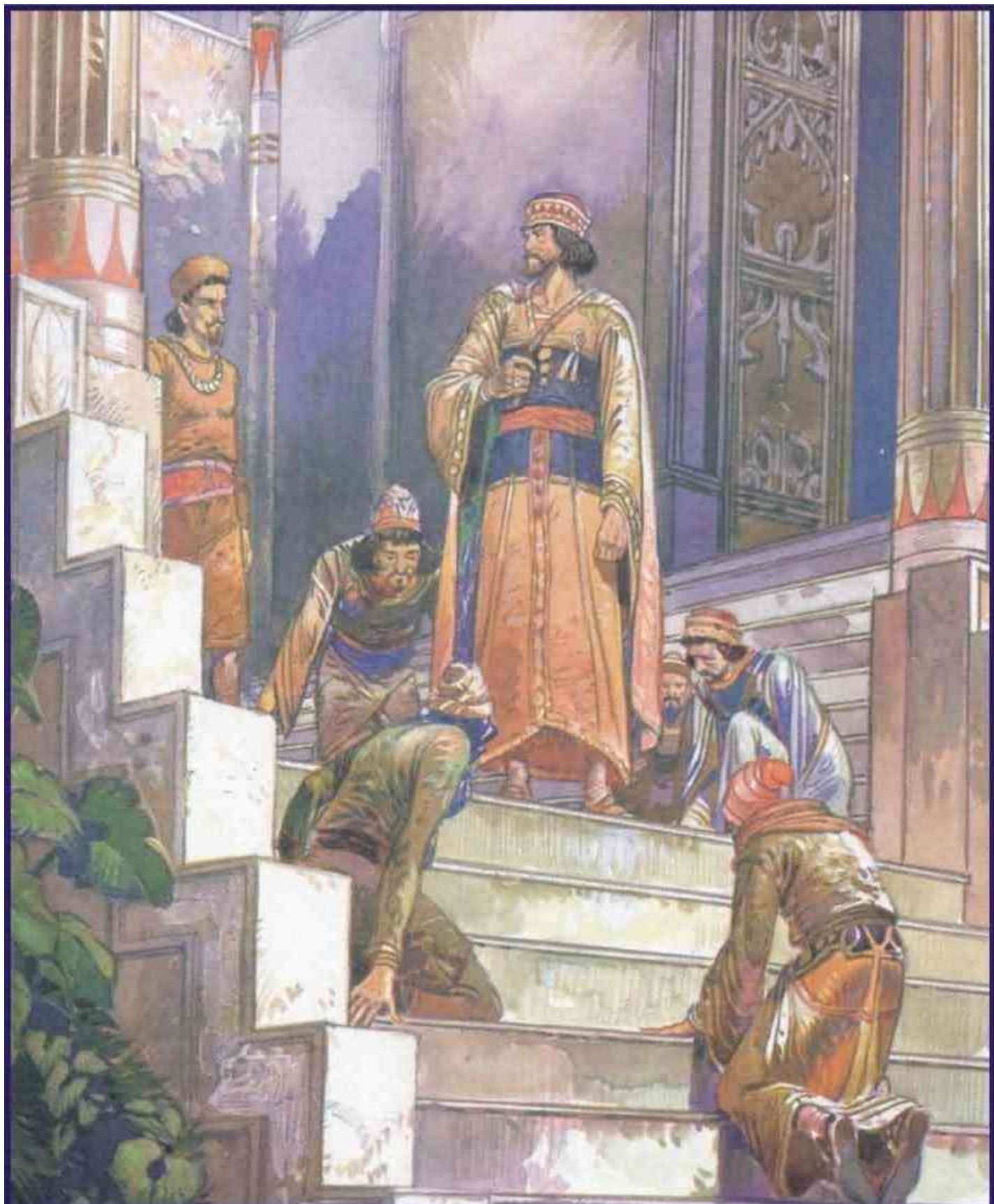
There Is Victory For Me

There is Vic-to-ry for me,
There is Vic-to-ry for me,
In the blood of Christ my Saviour,
There is Vic-to-ry for me.
For me, yes me,
For me, yes me,
In the blood of Christ my Saviour
There is Vic-to-ry.

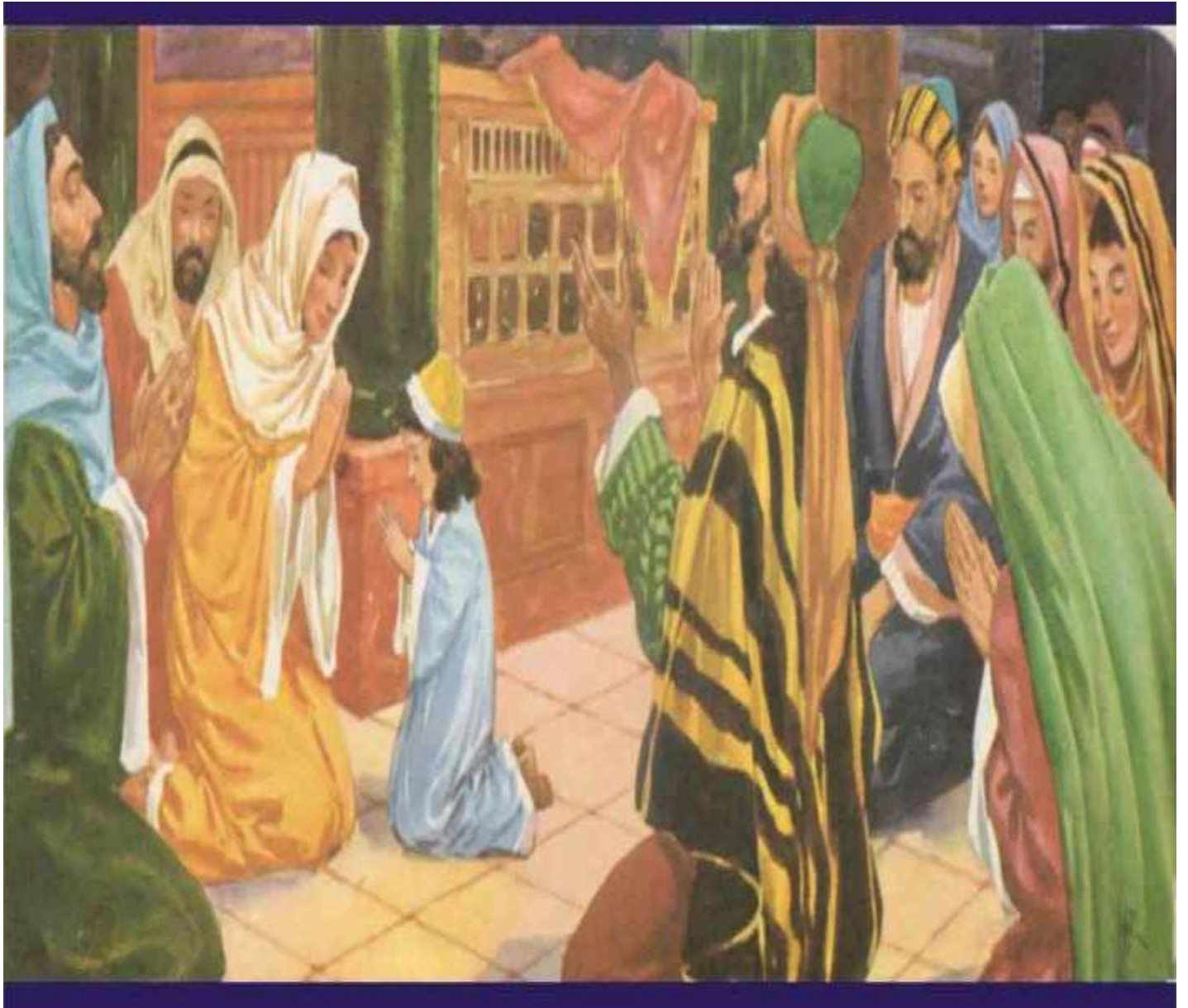
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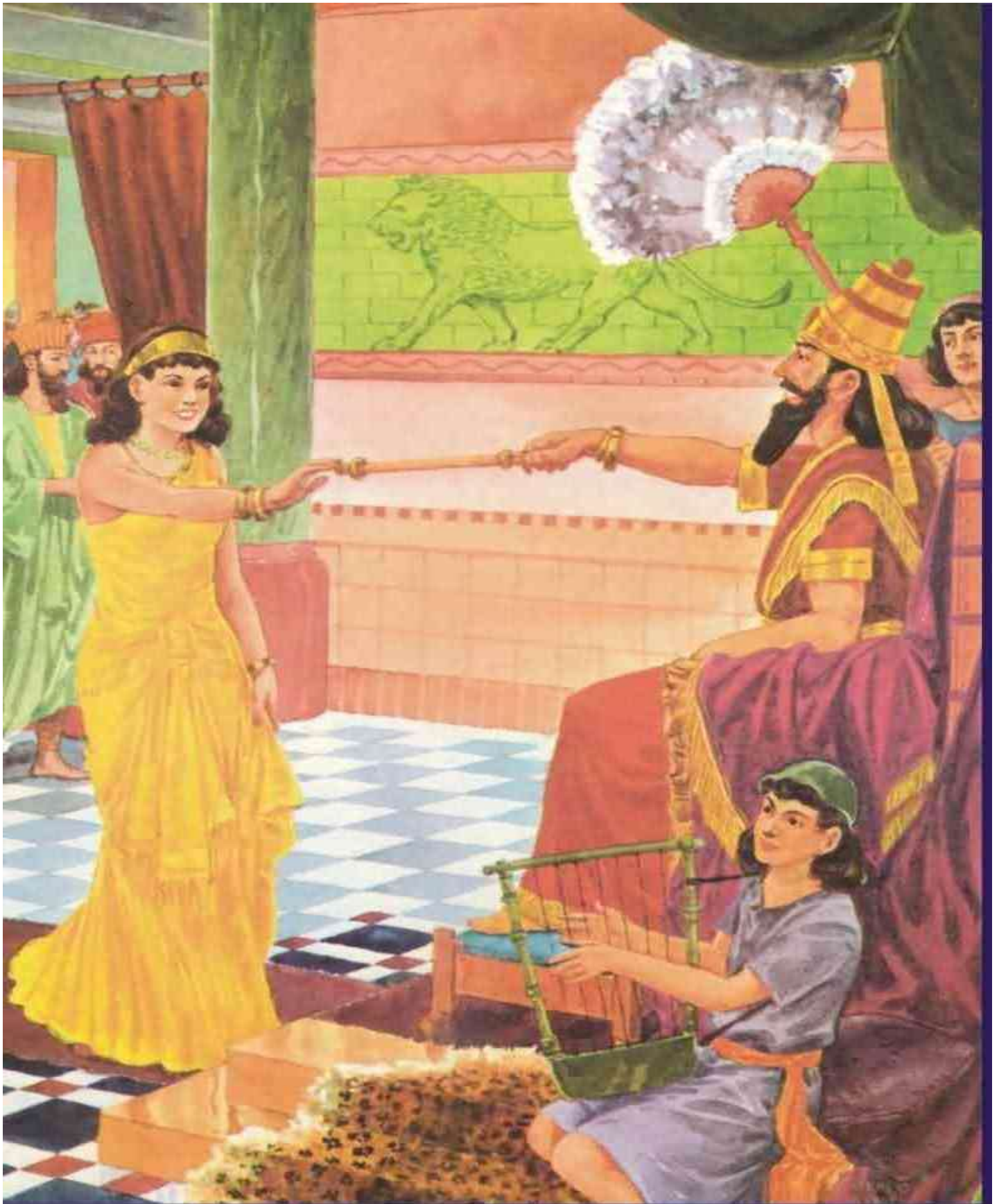
PICTURE 2



PICTURE 3



PICTURE 4



PICTURE 5

