



A lovely Jewish girl named Esther lived in Persia with her cousin Mordecai. When King Xerxes of Persia decided to search for a new queen, he sent for beautiful girls from all parts of his kingdom. Esther was chosen to go to the palace.

Mordecai warned Esther, "Don't tell anyone you're a Jew. There are people who hate us, so keep it a secret."



Esther prepared for twelve months to meet the king. She was beautiful and kind, and the king chose her over all the other women. He put a crown on her head and made her queen.

And just in time, too, for something terrible was about to happen.



A stuck-up official named Haman hated Mordecai. Other people bowed to Haman, but Mordecai would bow only to God.

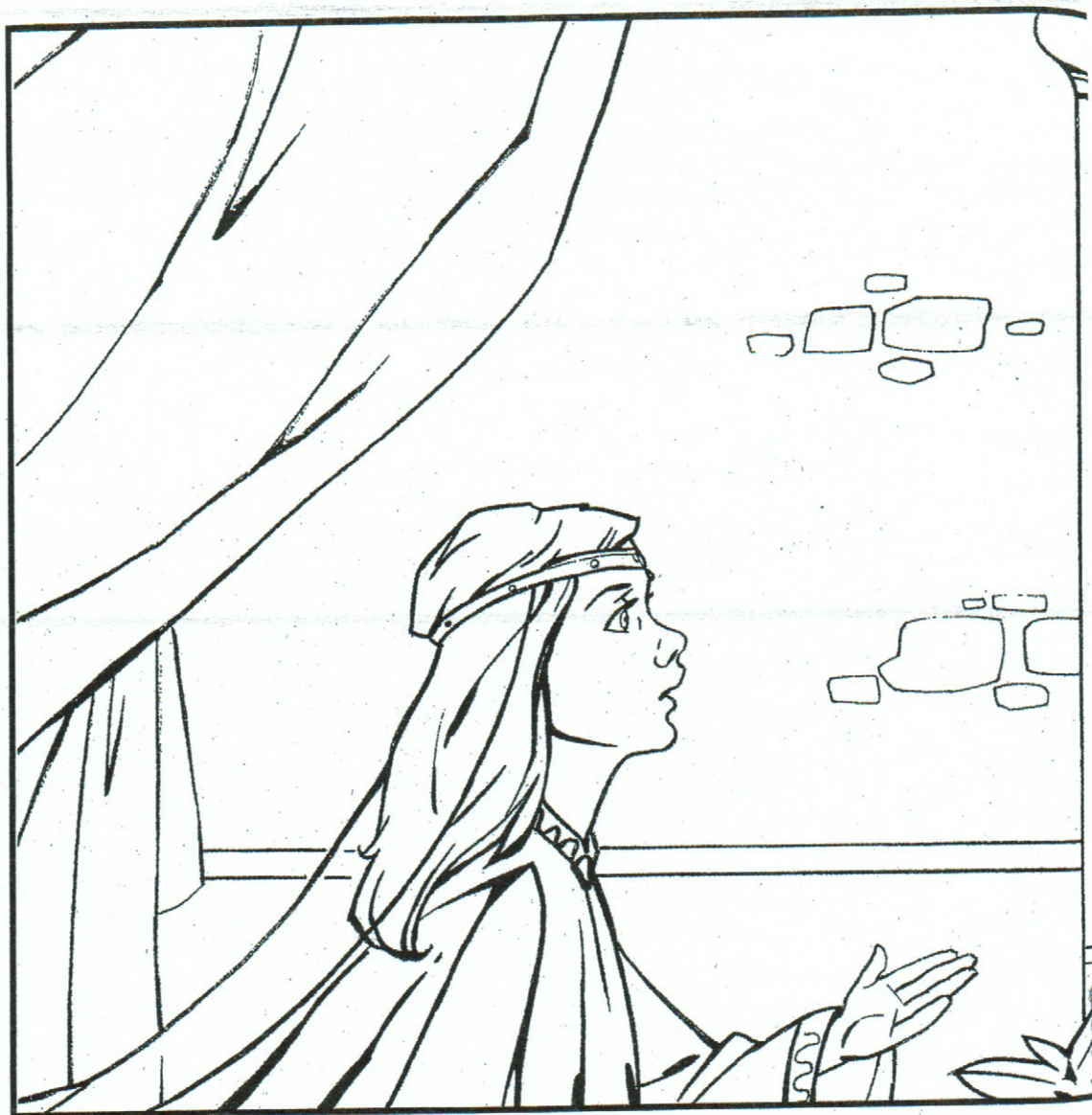
Haman knew that Mordecai was a Jew. He started working on a plan to kill not only Mordecai, but all the Jewish people. Haman told the king lies about the Jews and got the king to sign a law saying that all the Jews could be killed on a certain date.



When Mordecai found out about this plan, he got word to Queen Esther.

"You've got to help," he told her.

"But if I go to the king without an invitation, I could be killed," she answered.



"You *must* do this," Mordecai insisted. "Maybe God has made you queen just so you can help our people."

Esther agreed to go to the king, and she asked all the people to pray for her. When the king saw Esther, he invited her to come in. She asked the king to come to a special dinner. She invited Haman too.



At dinner Esther told the king that someone had ordered that she and all her people be killed. The king was outraged and demanded to know who had done it.

"This man!" Esther said, pointing at Haman.

The king had Haman put to death. He wrote a new law saying the Jews could defend themselves against their enemies. And so a lovely queen saved her people.

THE
·LORD'S·COMING·

