

Title: Hidden: The Bold Queen

Text: Esther 1

Date: January 17, 2021

WARM-UP QUESTIONS:

1. The formal pomp and circumstance of our Inauguration Day marks the transfer of power in our government every four years. How are you feeling about this week's event and the possible aftermath?
2. In your mind, who are the individuals in our country who possess the most power - whether political, economic, social? How have they come to that stature? What is the greatest blessing and curse to be such a position?
3. Concerning power, when have you felt most powerful? What makes you feel most powerless? When have you let power blind you to the sufferings of others?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Studying Vashti's storyline in Esther 1: What made Vashti powerful (her position, background, appearance, etc)? What might have prompted Vashti to refuse to appear before the king and his guests? What compelled the king to edict such severe punishment for Vashti's action (or lack of)? What might we infer as to his motivations in doing so?
2. Studying Esther's storyline (beginning in Esther 2): What made Esther vulnerable (her sex, origin, experience, background, nationality, circumstances, etc.)? What did Esther do to steward her status and place during the preparation period (gaining favors from all around her, listening to her wise cousin) and later during the direct threat to her life (asking for prayers and fasting from her people)? What can we learn from the ways Esther was able to discern and act from such a place of vulnerability?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

1. What areas of your life may you falsely feel secure about? How has Vashti's story altered your perspective? How can you better learn to put your control in God's hands?
2. What powerful things can you accomplish today through God's help from your powerless place in the world? Identify the people and circumstances God has put in place to help you.