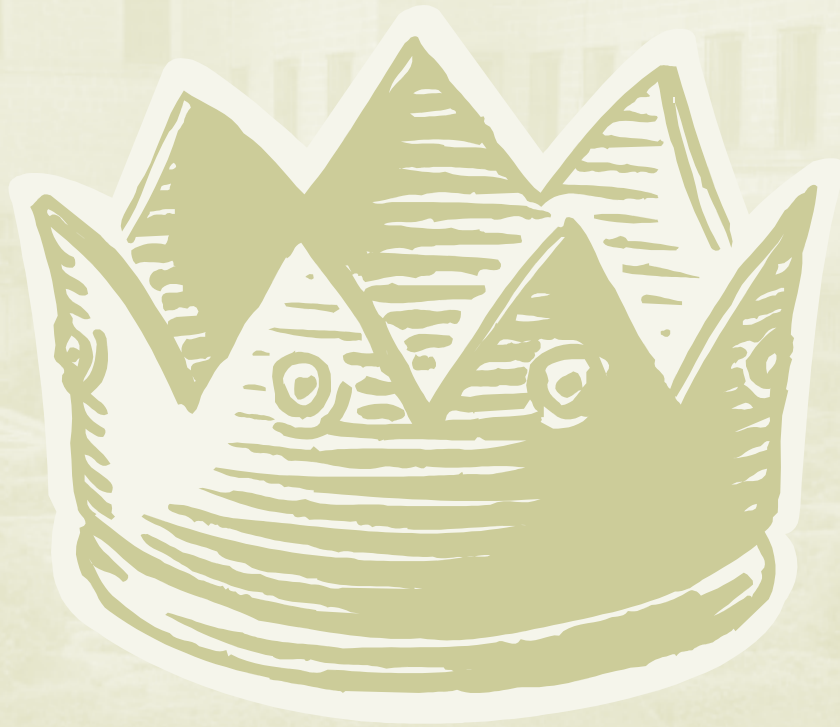


# The Persian Press

ALL THE NEWS FROM INDIA TO CUSH



**Volume 1, Issue 3**

**Teacher's Copy**

MISSION ARLINGTON / MISSION METROPLEX CURRICULUM-SUMMER 2009

Created for use with young, unchurched learners  
Adaptable for all ages including adults

# The Persian Press

ESTHER 2:1-18

## AND THE WINNER IS . . .

**HEAD-  
LINES:**

- Four years passed before King Xerxes chose another queen
- During that time he attacked Greece
- After a national beauty pageant, Esther, the Jew, was chosen queen
- Esther kept her nationality a secret

**INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE:**

Headlines	2
And the Winner is . . .	2
Four Years is a Long Time	3
From the Editor	3
Behind the Scenes	3
Activities	4
Next Issue	4

**EXTRA, EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!**

The king was ready for a new queen. He called for a beauty contest to decide the winner.

The contestants: All the beautiful young virgins from every one of Persia's 127 provinces.

The winner: An unknown young beauty from right here in the capital city of Susa.

Her name: Esther

Her story: Esther was an orphan. When her parents died, her cousin Mordecai raised her as his own. You may know Mordecai. He is one of the king's attendants.

Well, when all the young virgins came to the palace, Esther was taken there, too.

There is something special about this girl. Even

before her twelve months of beauty treatments, she was winning the favor of everyone around. Everyone was pleased with her.

An inside source (Hegai—the keeper of the women) has told us that Esther stood out among all of the girls. Even they knew there was something special about her—and they were in competition! And after the twelve months of required beauty treatments King Xerxes knew there was something special about her, too.

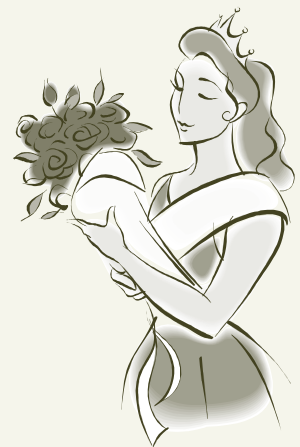
“The king liked Esther more than he liked any of the other women. She pleased him more than any of the other virgins. So he put a royal crown on her head. He made her queen in Vashti's place.” (Esther 2:17

NirV)

Then . . . another party! King Xerxes gave a party for his new queen, Queen Esther. All of the nobles and officials were invited. Everyone all over the empire received a tax holiday and the king generously gave gifts.

Congratulations Queen Esther!

Reporting from Susa: Fortress of the Persian Empire



## FOUR YEARS IS A LONG TIME

Have you ever noticed that the second chapter of Esther (NASB) begins with, "After these things . . .?"

"After what things?," you might ask. That is a very good question. What do you remember from chapter one? King Xerxes throws two parties and deposes a queen. But that was in the third year of his reign (483 BC) as king. Queen Esther wasn't chosen until King Xerxes

seventh year (479 BC) as king.

"History books tell us that during that time, this particular king made an ambitious but disastrous attempt to conquer Greece. So 'after these things' means that these events took place after he had led an expedition against Greece and returned home to Susa in defeat. . . You see, [King Xerxes] is not drunk any longer.

He's thinking clearly now. And his own needs are intensified by his loneliness."<sup>1</sup> The outcome . . . the search for a new queen.



**The King's failed expedition against Greece**

<sup>1</sup> Swindoll, Charles R. *A Woman of Strength and Dignity: Esther*. Nashville: Word Publishing, 1997.

*Charm can  
fool you.  
Beauty fades.  
But a  
woman who has  
respect for the  
Lord should be  
praised.  
Proverbs 31:30*

## FROM THE EDITOR

You know, beauty is a nice thing, but is that all there is to life? It seems like it sometimes with all the make-up and gels and beauty treatments available for women as well as men. Our memory verse says, "Charm can fool you. **Beauty fades.** But a woman who has respect for the Lord should be praised." (Proverbs 31:30 NIV) Respect for the Lord isn't

just a girl thing! Psalm 33:8 (NIV) says, "Let the **whole earth** have respect for the Lord. Let **all** of the people in the world honor him." What does it mean to have respect for God? "To have respect for the Lord is to hate evil." (Proverbs 8:13 NIV) Being a friend with the things the world says is okay makes you an enemy of the God who created you and shows that you

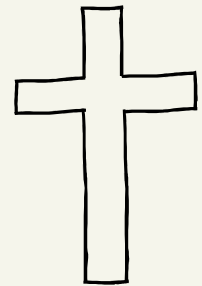
hate God and what He stands for. (James 4:4) "Do not long for what sinners have. But always show great respect for the Lord." (Proverbs 23:17 NIV) There is a promise for those who respect God, "Having respect for the Lord leads to a longer life." (Proverbs 10:27 NIV) Don't you want that to be you? It starts with a relationship with God . . . Let me tell you how today.

## BEHIND THE SCENES

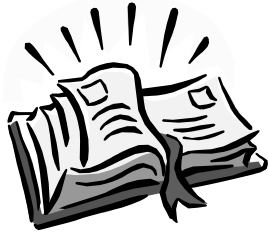
Something is going on behind the scenes that hasn't been spoken. You see, Esther, and her uncle Mordecai, are Jews. They are living in Persia because Mordecai's great, great grandfather was taken away from Jerusalem by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar,

around 600 BC. The Babylonian Empire ended when Persia invaded! Esther's family decided to stay in Persia rather than return to Jerusalem. As Esther was being taken to the palace for the beauty contest, her uncle asked her to keep their nationality a secret.

Esther agreed and is a woman of her word. But why should it be a problem if a Jewish girl is chosen queen? We will see in the weeks ahead!



# ACTIVITIES



Hide God's Word in your heart!  
Psalm 119:11

## Memory Verse Activities for Proverbs 31:30

Make mirrors with cardstock and aluminum foil. Print the memory verse on the back of the mirror.

Provide coloring sheets that include the memory verse.

## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

**For older students:** Divide your girls and guys if possible. For the girls: Talk about what kind of girl they are trying to be. Is all of their focus on outward appearances? Look at 1 Samuel 16: 7. For the guys: Talk about what kind of girl they are looking for. Are they only looking for someone who is beautiful on the outside? Discuss Proverbs 31:10-31.

Talk about the timing from Babylonian captivity to Persian Rule.



*"People are wise and understanding when they think about the way they live."*

Proverbs 14:8

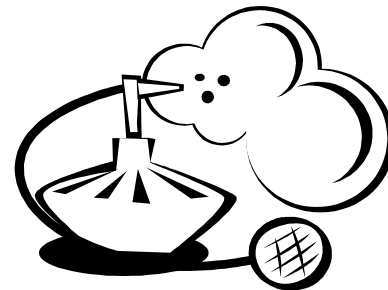
## HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

Make perfume using rubbing alcohol and things like cinnamon sticks and orange peel. Several days are needed for best results.

Make an enormous timeline from Babylonian captivity to Persian reign. Use butcher paper on a wall in your classroom space.

Make cupcakes with "jeweled" sugar crystal topping.

Have a "beauty day" with your girls. Paint nails, fix hair, and talk about the importance of loving God by obeying. Send them home with beauty bags that include the memory verse.



**All of the beautiful young virgins went through a whole year of beauty treatments before they were presented to the king!**



**IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:  
ESTHER 2:19-3:15**

**MISSION ARLINGTON  
MISSION METROPLEX**