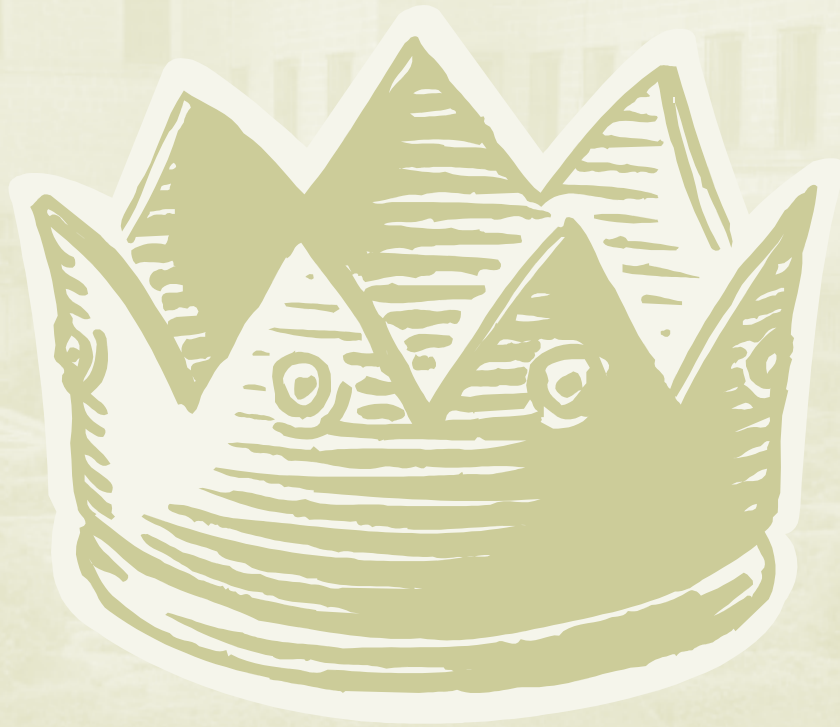


The Persian Press

ALL THE NEWS FROM INDIA TO CUSH



Volume 1, Issue 4

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 2:19-3:15

ALL HAIL . . . HAMAN?

**HEAD-
LINES:**

- Mordecai saved the king's life.
- Haman was honored.
- Haman's hatred of the Jews is related to King Saul's disobedience.
- God is fair. In fact, He is more than fair. He offers us life when we deserve death.

**INSIDE THIS
ISSUE:**

Headlines	2
All Hail . . . Haman?	2
Who was honored?	3
From the Editor	3
Behind the Scenes	3
Activities	4
Next Issue	4

EXTRA, EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

There was a death threat on King Xerxes' life and Mordecai saved the day! We spoke with Mordecai who told us that he had been sitting at the palace gate when two of the king's officials, Bigthana and Teresh, plotted to take the king's life. He immediately reported the news to Queen Esther who then reported it to the king.

Sources inside the palace have verified Queen Esther's report.

Bigthana and Teresh were put to death and hanged for everyone to see.

Then, all that had happened was written in the king's official records. "It was written down while the king was watching." (Esther 2:23 NIV)

But instead of honoring Mordecai for his service, King Xerxes has honored Haman, who now has a

higher position than any of the other nobles! He has been given a seat of honor and the king has commanded that everyone honor Haman by kneeling before him.

But Mordecai, who just saved the king's life, refuses to do so. He refuses to honor Haman at all! Could he be jealous?

Other officials at the palace questioned Mordecai about his refusal to honor Haman. Mordecai's response, "I am a Jew." Jews aren't to bow down to or worship anyone or anything but God.

Haman is furious, so furious that, when he found out Mordecai's nationality, not only does he want Mordecai dead—but all Jews anywhere in King Xerxes' kingdom!

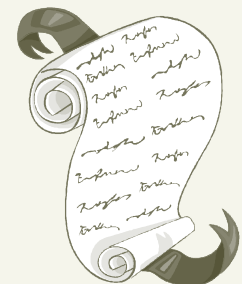
Haman has convinced the king that the Jews are disobeying his laws and has cast the lot (like flipping a coin) and chosen the thir-

teenth day of the twelfth month of Adar for exterminating all the Jews. Haman even offered to add 375 tons of silver to the king's bank!

The king has refused the money, but that is no comfort to Jews everywhere. The king's own ring has sealed the deal. The day is set and, according to the law of the Persians, cannot be changed. Messengers have been sent to all 127 provinces to make the announcement.

As King Xerxes and Haman share a peaceful drink in the palace, the entire city of Susa is reeling from the news.

Reporting from Susa: Fortress of the Persian Empire



WHO WAS HONORED?

Has the king forgotten Mordecai and how he saved the king's life? How crazy does this story sound?! Mordecai uncovers a murder plot against the king and all that happens is that it is recorded in some book! Don't forget that God is working behind the scenes, that "The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the

Lord; He turns it whenever He wishes." (Proverbs 21:1) And be sure that "God is fair. He will not forget what you have done. He will remember the love you have shown Him." (Hebrews 6:10a NIV) Your friends may not treat you fairly. Your teachers may not treat you fairly. Your bosses may not treat you fairly

or give you the promotion you may deserve. Your parents may not even treat you fairly. **BUT WITH GOD** everything He does is fair and right. (Job 37:23)

That is something you can trust in. That is something you can be assured will never change. Our God is fair and right in everything He does!



Life may not treat you fairly, but everything God does is fair and right.

*God is fair.
He will not
forget what you
have done. He
will remember the
love you have
shown Him.
Hebrews 6:10a*

FROM THE EDITOR

Haman was Mordecai's enemy, but you and I have an enemy—Satan. The Bible describes him like a lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

What have you noticed from our lesson to day about Haman's attitude?

Various translations explain Haman's response to Mordecai this way, "filled with rage," "burned with anger," "very angry," even

"furious." His family history explains a bit, but what does God say about anger? Matthew 5:21-24

Explain that it's not enough simply to not murder. We shouldn't be angry with each other. James 1:14-15 explains why, "But your own evil longings tempt you. They lead you on and drag you away. When they are allowed to grow, they give birth to sin. When sin has grown up, it gives birth

to death." Matthew 5 also talks about the need to seek forgiveness from those we have wronged.

Haman wanted death for his enemy Mordecai. do you realize that you and I deserve death for our sin? (Romans 6:23) But God doesn't want death for us. (2 Peter 3:9) Instead, He offers us eternal life through His Son, Jesus Christ. Won't you invite Him into your life today?

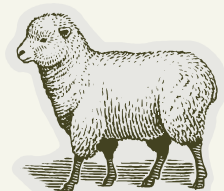
BEHIND THE SCENES

What is going on here? Haman's hatred for Mordecai and all of the Jews seems a bit extreme! The answer lies in Haman's family history and the disobedience of a king. When we first read about Haman, he is introduced as "the son of Hammedatha . . . from the

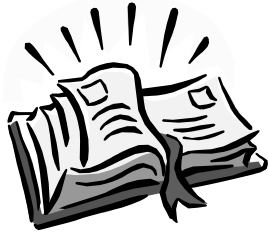
family line of Agag." (Esther 3:1 NIV) That may seem pretty insignificant, but 1 Samuel 15 explains what happened. Almost 600 years before Haman's decree, Israel's first king, Saul, was commanded by God to completely wipe out the evil Amalekites. Saul partially

obeyed, i.e. disobeyed! Saul saved the best of the sheep and oxen. He also spared the life of, among others, the king. the king's name was Agag! The king was ultimately killed by the prophet Samuel, but it left an indelible impression on the survivors and descendants—of

which Haman was one. His hatred of the Jews goes back a lot further than Mordecai.



ACTIVITIES



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

Memory Verse Activities for Hebrews 6:10 - Print the verse on a sheet of classified ads from the newspaper. Omit some of the words and leave blanks where the words would be. Print the omitted words on suitable sized pieces of paper and place them in a box. Have students take turns hunting through the box to find the missing words and placing them in the blank spots.

Provide coloring sheets that include the memory verse.



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

For older students: Read through 1 Samuel 15. Talk about the importance of obedience—complete obedience. Especially focus on the 22nd verse. Discuss the consequences of Saul's disobedience.

Talk about the fact that much of the time life is not fair. Discuss Mordecai's service and Haman's honor. Look at the memory verse and talk about the fairness of God. Also talk about what we deserve from God and what He offers instead (Romans 3:23, 6:23).

*"Think about what
God has done.
Who can make
straight what he
has made crooked?"*
Ecclesiastes 7:13

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

Flip a coin or roll a die to make all of your decisions today. For example: what to have for snack, who will be on what team, who is first in line, etc. Talk about the practice of casting lots to make decisions.

On your wall-sized timeline, mark the date of Haman's decree. (King Xerxes 12th year, 474 BC)

Design your own "royal" seal by "carving" a sponge or small potato.

Make your own dice. Make a cube from cardstock. Decorate with dots. Practice "casting lots."



Casting lots is a lot like flipping a coin or rolling a die. In biblical times, lots were cast to make decisions. Many things could have been used like sticks or dice.



**IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:
ESTHER 4:1-17**

**MISSION ARLINGTON
MISSION METROPLEX**