

The Persian Press

ALL THE NEWS FROM INDIA TO CUSH



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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 6:1-14

THE KING COULDN'T SLEEP

**HEAD-
LINES:**

- As Haman was preparing for Mordecai's death, God was keeping the king awake
- In his sleeplessness, the king listened to the royal records
- Although Mordecai had saved the king's life, he had yet to be honored
- Haman's pride resulted in leading a parade for Mordecai

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EXTRA, EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

He couldn't sleep at all last night. The king tossed and turned! It has never been news before, but because of it something amazing has happened!

When the king can't sleep he asks for the "records of his royal rule to be brought in." (Esther 6:1 NIRV) He probably hopes to be lulled to sleep by the boring chronicles! But last night, as the king was hearing the story of his life, it just happened to include Mordecai uncovering the plot to kill King Xerxes! Don't you remember when Bighthana and Teresh, two of the king's officials, tried to kill the king? Mordecai overheard the plan and told Queen Esther. The queen, in turn, told the king.

It was right after that when Haman was honored and we realized how unfair life is, but wait! Listen to how the events unfolded this morning! The king wanted to know what had been done for Mordecai. "Nothing has been done for him," his attendants answered." (Esther 6:3b NIRV)

Then the king wanted to know who was in the courtyard. Haman just happened to be in the courtyard.

Remember, Haman had spent the night preparing for Mordecai's death and had just come to the palace to ask the king's permission. So Haman was brought into to king's presence. "The king asked him, 'What should be done for the man I want to honor?'" And Haman, arrogant as he was, "said to himself, 'Is there anyone the king would rather honor than me?'" (Esther 6:6 NIRV) And thinking of himself, Haman answered, "You should put a crown on him. You should also take a robe you've worn and a horse you've ridden and have one of your most important nobles parade him around town saying, 'This is what the king does for the person he wants to honor!'"

"Great idea," thought the king. "Go right away," the king commanded Haman. "Get the robe. Bring the horse. Do exactly as you have suggested. Do it for the Jew Mordecai." (Esther 6:10 NIRV) Can you imagine the look on Ha-

man's face! Although it's the last thing he probably wanted to do, Haman obeyed the king. He paraded Mordecai all through the city streets announcing, "This is what the king does for the person he wants to honor!"

After the parade, Mordecai returned to the city gates where he always sat, but Haman went home a sad man. He told his wife and friends what had happened. They said, "If this Mordecai is in fact a Jew, your bad luck has only begun. You don't stand a chance against him—you're as good as ruined." (Esther 6:13 MSG)

While they were still talking, men came from the palace. "They hurried Haman away to the big dinner Esther had prepared." (Esther 6:14 NIRV)

Reporting from Susa: Fortress of the Persian Empire



WHAT IS PRIDE?

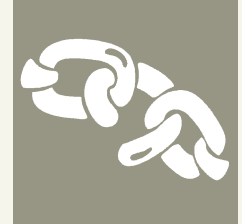
We have seen Haman's pride throughout our lesson today. How was Haman prideful? Do you remember when the king wanted to honor someone? Haman's first thought was that there was no one better than himself to honor!

What exactly is pride? It is haughtiness, stubbornness, and arrogance. It is thinking more of yourself than you should.

What does the Bible say about pride? It says that pride leads to arguing, disobedience, and destruction. It says, "Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." (Proverbs 16:18 NIV)

So, if we are prideful does that mean there is no hope for us? Isaiah 38:15 says, "But what can I say? You have promised to heal me. And You your-

self have done it. Once I was proud and bitter. But now I will live the rest of my life free of pride." With God there is always hope. He is the one who can free us from pride and change our hearts. He can help us to be like our memory verse and not do anything only to get ahead, or because you are proud. Instead, we can be free of pride and think of others as better than ourselves.



Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. Proverbs 16:18

*Don't do anything
only to get ahead.
Don't do it because
you are proud.
Instead,
be free of pride.
Think of others
as better than
yourselves.
Philippians 2:3*

FROM THE EDITOR

Let's think about the end of our lesson. What did Haman's wife and friends tell him about the day's events? They said, "If this Mordecai is in fact a Jew, your bad luck has only begun. You don't stand a chance against him—you're as good as ruined." (Esther 6:13 MSG) Do you know that God not only cares for and protects the Jewish people, but He also cares for and protects believers,

those who choose to follow Him? We read in Romans 8:28 that, "in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." Is that you? Do you love God? I'm sure your first thought is "yes." The Bible says that if we love Him we will obey Him. Do you obey God? Do you know that God's salvation (and His care and

protection) is offered to everyone? Have you accepted God's offer of salvation? He sent His son to take your place on the cross. Jesus died for your sin and mine. And if we follow Him in faith, His care and protections goes along with the eternal life promised to us. What are you waiting for? Talk to Him today.

BEHIND THE SCENES

We have talked about how the heart of the king is in God's hand and how He turns wherever He wishes. Who knew that included sleepless nights as well! Of all nights! Haman has spent the night preparing for Mordecai's death and Queen Esther sensed God telling her to wait when she could have uncovered Haman's evil plan

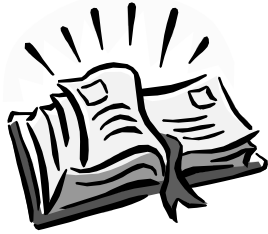
at the first dinner. Of all nights for the king to suffer from insomnia! This was the extra day God intended when Esther sensed the need to invite the king and Haman to another dinner. Haman's pride and haughtiness have come full circle. And what timing! Who better to be in the king's court when King Xerxes felt the need to honor

Mordecai than the one who had undeservingly received honor in the first place - Haman. And what about the foreshadowing at the end of chapter six? Do you know what foreshadowing is? It is when you are given a hint of what's about to happen. Do you remember what Haman's wife and friends told him? "If this Mordecai is in fact a Jew,

your bad luck has only begun. You don't stand a chance against him—you're as good as ruined." (Esther 6:13 MSG) What could possibly happen next?



ACTIVITIES



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

Memory Verse Activities for Philippians 2:3 - Make up motions to go along with each phrase of the memory verse.

Talk about practical ways to “think of others as better than yourselves.” Encourage your students to make a commitment to adopt those practices.

Provide coloring sheets that include the memory verse.



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

For older students: Read Romans 8:28, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, and 1 Peter 1:3-5. Discuss God’s protection of those who are His. How does it come about? Through salvation. Review the Roman Road to Salvation (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 10:9.)

*As I lie on my bed
I remember you.
I think of you
all night long.
Psalm 63:6*

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

Make a booklet or cartoon strip of the lesson.

Make wrist watches from card stock. Print on the band “God is Always on Time!.

Make construction paper pillows. Use two pieces of equally sized construction paper. On one, write, “As I lie on my bed I remember God. I think of God all night long.” Staple or tape the paper together, leaving one side open. Stuff with plastic grocery sacks and close the remaining side.

Play Jenga or Uno Stacko or build a house of cards. Talk about how easily they fall. Talk about Proverbs 16:18 and how pride has the same consequences in our lives.

Make colorful peacocks. Small children can simply trace their hands while older students can cut individual pieces for the plumes. Talk about the saying “proud as a peacock.” Review the memory verse.



Haman was proud as a peacock. He strutted around bragging.



IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:
ESTHER 7:1-10:3

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