

But she was also very wise and invited him and Haman to lunch, two times. The second time she told king Xerxus that she is a Jew and that Haman had bad plans to kill her and all her people. King Xerxus was very sad and so cross that he told his servants to kill Haman.



Then king Xerxus gave Haman's house to queen Esther. Mordechai became the king's most important helper, he was second in charge under the king. He also let Mordechai and Esther write a new law on behalf of the king. It was that all the enemies of the Jews in Persia had to be killed so that all the Jewish people would be safe.

From that day until now, on the same day every year, the Jews have a holiday to remember that their people were saved. They send each other presents and they also give presents to the poor people on that day. They call it Purim.

King Xerxus' became a even greater king. And Mordechai became quite famous too! All the Jews loved him because he looked after them while they were living in Persia and because he helped them to live in peace.



THE STORY OF ESTHER

A long time ago a great king, Xerxus from Persia was looking for a new wife to become the next queen. He sent his messengers out to find beautiful girls to be trained and then he would choose a queen.

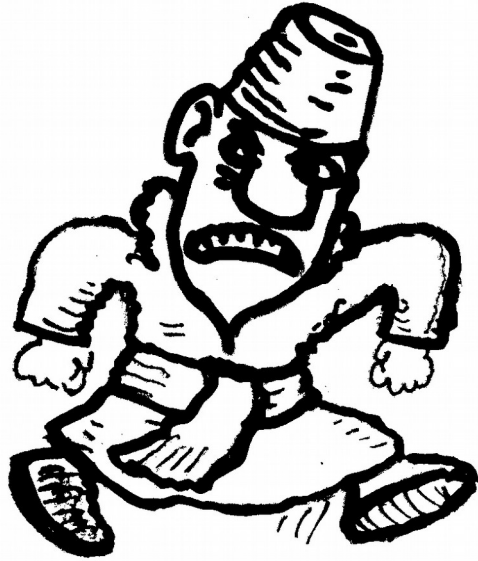
Esther was one of them. Her mom and dad died and she lived with her uncle Mordechai. All the Persian people believed in other gods but Esther's people loved the only true God. They were called the Jews. Esther was a beautiful young girl with a clean heart because she obeyed God.

Mordechai told her not to tell anyone where she comes from.

When Esther completed her training, king Xerxus called her. She didn't ask for any fancy dress, or make-up, because she wanted to go just as she is. When king Xerxus met her, he fell in love with her immediately. He put the royal crown on her head and she became the queen! She still did not tell anyone that she is a Jew. Not even the king.



One of king Xerxus' important helpers hated the Jews and tried to kill all of them who lived in Persia. In a cunning way, he got the king to agree to his plans. Mordechai heard about this and asked Queen Esther to help her people. He said :
"Maybe it was for a time like this that you were made queen!"



All the Jews were very scared that they were all going to die. In those days the kings were very, very strict and nobody was allowed to go to the King when he was on His throne except if he calls them. Not even the queen. But Esther was very brave and was willing to go. She asked her people to pray and ask God to help her. They all didn't eat for 3 days while

they prayed for Esther and for their own safety.



In the mean time king Xerxus read a true story about Mordechai. It was like this : When 2 spies wanted to kill king Xerxus, Mordechai heard about it and told the king's men.

The spies were killed and Mordechai saved the king's life. King Xerxus wanted to honor Mordechai, so he asked Haman "What good deed can I do to a good man?"

Haman thought that the king wanted to honor him, so he said : "That man should be treated like a king, ride on the king's horse in town and everybody must bow down to him."



The king was happy with this plan and told Haman to do that to Mordechai. Haman even had to lead the horse with Mordechai sitting on it!

Oh you can just think how bad

Haman was feeling about doing that! He became very, very cross and hateful and after this he built a gallows to hang Mordechai on.

On the 3 day of Esther's fast & prayer time, Esther went to the king sitting on his throne. When he saw Esther coming, he was happy to see her. He stretched out his golden scepter to her. That means that she was allowed to speak to him. Esther touched the tip of the scepter. She was so relieved! Then the king said to Esther : "What would you like, queen Esther? You can ask me anything, even if it is half of my kingdom."

