

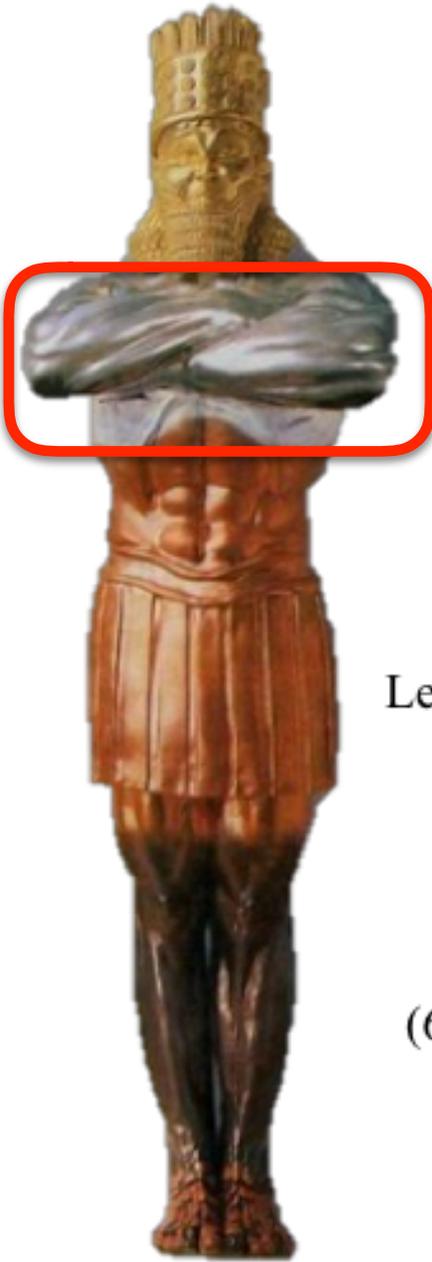
Mt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute  
[www.kjbstudy.com](http://www.kjbstudy.com)

*Dr. Joseph Speciale, Instructor*

A ministry of the  
***Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church***

**Lee Swor, Pastor**

# THE FOUR GENTILE WORLD EMPIRES



## 1. Babylon

Head of Gold  
Lion with Eagles' wings  
(606 BC- 537 BC)



## 2. Medo-Persia

Breast and Arms of Silver  
Bear with three ribs in mouth  
(537 BC- 334 BC)



## 3. Greece

Belly and Thighs of Brass  
Leopard with four heads and four wings  
(334 BC- 64 BC)



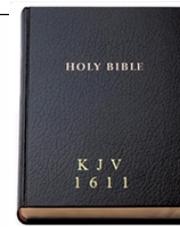
## 4. Rome

Legs of Iron  
A dreadful and terrible beast  
(64 BC- Second Coming of Christ)

### *The Final Form of Rome*

Feet and Toes part Iron and part Clay  
10 horns on the beast





Alt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute

# The Four Gentile World Empires

*The Medo-Persian Empire*

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:1-2



## XERXES I

### **Est 1:1-2**

1 Now it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus, (this is Ahasuerus which reigned, from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and seven and twenty provinces:)

2 That in those days, when the king Ahasuerus sat on the throne of his kingdom, which was in Shushan the palace,

- AHASUERUS= the Hebrew transliteration of the Old Persian word *Khshayarsha* meaning “the mighty; great warrior”, from which the modern Persian word *Shah* is derived
- The ancient Greek equivalent of AHASUERUS is XERXES
- AHASUERUS was a throne name (e.g.- Pharaoh; Caesar) the Persians attributed to their kings of the Achaemenid dynasty and their Median predecessors who ruled over Persia following the affinity between the two kingdoms instigated by Astyages in 585 BC cf. (Dan 9:1)
- AHASUERUS appears 31x and refers to three different kings: (1) Astyages (Dan 9:1); (2) Cambyses II (Ezr 4:6); and (3) Xerxes I (Est 1:1-2,9-10,15-17,19; 2:1,12,16,21; 3:1,6-8,12; 6:2; 7:5; 8:1,7,10,12; 9:2,20,30; 10:1,3)
- The Ahasuerus of the book of Esther ruled the Medo-Persian empire during its territorial peak (Est 1:1); so he could only be Darius I Hystaspes or Xerxes I

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:3; 3:7,12-13



Alt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute

## XERXES I

- The events of the book of Esther take place over a period of time lasting 10-12 years, from the third year of the reign of Ahasuerus (Est 1:3) to the 13th or 14th year of his reign (Est 3:7,12-13)

### **Est 1:3**

**In the third year of his reign**, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him:

### **Est 3:7,12-13**

**7 In the first month**, that is, the month Nisan, **in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus**, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, **to the twelfth month**, that is, the month Adar.

**12** Then were the king's scribes called on **the thirteenth day of the first month**, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring.

**13** And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, **to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews**, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even **upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month**, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey.

- Assuming the Ahasuerus of Esther is Xerxes I, this equates to 484 BC- 473 BC and means the second Persian invasion of Greece (480 BC- 479 BC) took place during the events of Esther



# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:3-4

## XERXES I

- Esther begins in the third year of Ahasuerus (i.e.- 484 BC- 483 BC) with the king making a feast for the power of Persia and Media which included all the princes and nobles of the 127 provinces, and his servants (i.e.- possibly soldiers) (Est 1:3)
- This feast corresponds to Xerxes' calling for an assembly of the nobles and princes of the provinces (i.e.- governors; satraps) at the royal palace in Susa to share his plans regarding the second invasion of Greece and get their opinions (*The Histories*, 7.8)
- The feast lasted 180 days (i.e.- 6 months or 1/2 of a year), during which Ahasuerus (Xerxes) showed the nobles and princes the RICHES of his kingdom (Est 1:4) in an effort to: (1) convince them that the vast invasion could easily be financed; and (2) to gain their support since every province would need to commit forces

### **Est 1:3-4**

**3** In the third year of his reign, he made a feast unto all his princes and his servants; the power of Persia and Media, the nobles and princes of the provinces, being before him:

**4** When he shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom and the honour of his excellent majesty many days, even an hundred and fourscore days.

### **Dan 11:2**

And now will I shew thee the truth. Behold, there shall stand up yet three kings in Persia; and the fourth shall be far richer than they all: and by his strength through his riches he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia.

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:3-4



Alt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute

## XERXES I

- Susa was the king's residence for six months out of the year, usually during the fall and winter months due to the intense heat there during the summer months
- If secular history is correct and Xerxes was coronated as king in October 486 BC, then the THIRD year of his reign would have started in OCTOBER 484 BC
- It is possible that the 180-day feast during the third year of Ahasuerus started on his coronation anniversary in October 484 BC and lasted until March 483 BC, half way through the third year of his reign (i.e.- he had reigned 3 1/2 years at this time)
- To host such a feast, construction on the royal palace at Susa must have been far enough along to accommodate upscale room and board requirements for up to 127+ people, and the riches immediately available to the king could accommodate parading them before the nobles and princes continuously for 180 days
- After the 180-day feast for the POWER of Persia and Media (i.e.- the princes and nobles), the king spared no expense in holding an additional 7-day feast in the court of the palace's garden for all the PEOPLE at Susa, in which they were given vessels of gold to drink from (Est 1:5-8)



# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:5-8

## XERXES I

### **Est 1:5-8**

**5** And when these days were expired, the king made a feast unto all the people that were present in Shushan the palace, both unto great and small, seven days, in the court of the garden of the king's palace;

**6** *Where were* white, green, and blue, *hangings*, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble: the beds *were of* gold and silver, upon a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black, marble.

**7** And they gave them drink in vessels of gold, (the vessels being diverse one from another,) and royal wine in abundance, according to the state of the king.

**8** And the drinking *was* according to the law; none did compel: for so the king had appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do according to every man's pleasure.

- This additional 7-day feast could have taken place in mid-late March 483 BC
- During the same 7-day feast for the people, Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which belonged to the king (Est 1:9)

### **Est 1:9**

Also Vashti the queen made a feast for the women in the royal house which *belonged* to king Ahasuerus.

- VASHTI appears 10x (# of GENTILES; DOMINION) (Est 1:9,11-12,15-17,19; 2:1,4,17)

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:9



## XERXES I

- VASHTI= Heb. *Vashtiy*, a transliteration of the Persian word for “beautiful woman”, so it could be a title or “nickname” rather than a proper name
- Secular history lists only one queen during the reign of Xerxes and her name was AMESTRIS
- It is possible that the Biblical VASHTI is the AMESTRIS of secular history
- Xerxes married Amestris upon his ascent to the throne; her father was Otanes (one of the seven conspirators against Smerdis) and her mother was a sister of Darius
- This means Amestris was of the royal and noble bloodline, and Xerxes’ cousin
- AMESTRIS= Old Persian for “strong woman”
- Herodotus mentions Amestris by name 8x in *The Histories*, and she is depicted as a vengeful and evil woman whom Xerxes privately feared
- She murdered and mutilated her sister-in-law because she believed she was behind an affair Xerxes had with her daughter (*The Histories*, 9.107-112)
- In her old age, she had 14 children buried alive as a thank-offering to the god of the underworld (*The Histories*, 7.114)

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:10-12



Alt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute

## XERXES I

- On the seventh day of the feast, Ahasuerus commanded his seven chamberlains (i.e.- eunuchs) to bring Vashti before the king, wearing the royal crown, so all the people and the princes could behold her beauty, but Vashti refused (Est 1:10-12)

### **Est 1:10-12**

**10 On the seventh day**, when the heart of **the king** was merry with wine, he **commanded** Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, **the seven chamberlains** that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

**11 To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty**: for she was fair to look on.

**12 But the queen Vashti refused** to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was **the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him**.

- Feminists look to Vashti as an example of a strong woman who stood for women's equal rights (v.9) and refused to submit to the demands of a misogynist husband, ruler, and society
- The reason for her refusal is not yet clear, but the theory that it was because she was commanded to come nude is refuted by the fact she was commanded to come wearing the royal crown
- She was likely expected to come in full regality, including a royal gown

# The Medo-Persian Empire- Est 1:10-12



Alt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute

## XERXES I

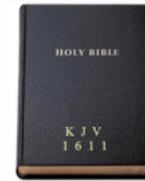
- Ahasuerus was incensed by her public defiance and disobedience against a direct command of the king, but does not have her executed to pacify his wrath as he does later to Haman for just the appearance of evil (Est 7:8-10)

### **Est 7:8-10**

**8** Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and **Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was.** **Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me** in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face.

**9** And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then **the king said, Hang him** thereon.

**10** So **they hanged Haman** on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. **Then was the king's wrath pacified.**



Alt. Pleasant  
Bible Institute

Please visit our website at:

**[www.kjbstudy.com](http://www.kjbstudy.com)**

for access to over 1,500 audio lessons  
as well as outlines, study guides, and presentations