

# LESSON SIX ON EZRA & ESTHER

The Achaemenid palace in Susa was built during the reign of Darius the Great. The First Court (shown middle) is probably identical to the Inner Court mentioned in Esther. It gave access to the King's Hall (shown top), where the king received his guests. The King's Gate leading to the King's Hall was where Mordecai discovered a plan to kill king Xerxes. Herodotus also mentions people at the gate, waiting for an audience. In front of the great gate stood a statue of king Darius the Great that was excavated in 1972. Inside the gate, two heavy columns carried the roof. The column bases contain an Achaemenid royal inscription that says: "King Xerxes says: By the grace of Ahuramazda, king Darius, my father, built this portico." Adjacent to the King's Hall were two smaller rooms without entrance (shown bottom). The only access must have been from above, which suggests that these rooms were treasuries. When Alexander the Great captured Susa in December 330 BC, he found 40,000 talents of precious metal in these rooms.

KING'S GATE



FIRST COURT



TREASURY

