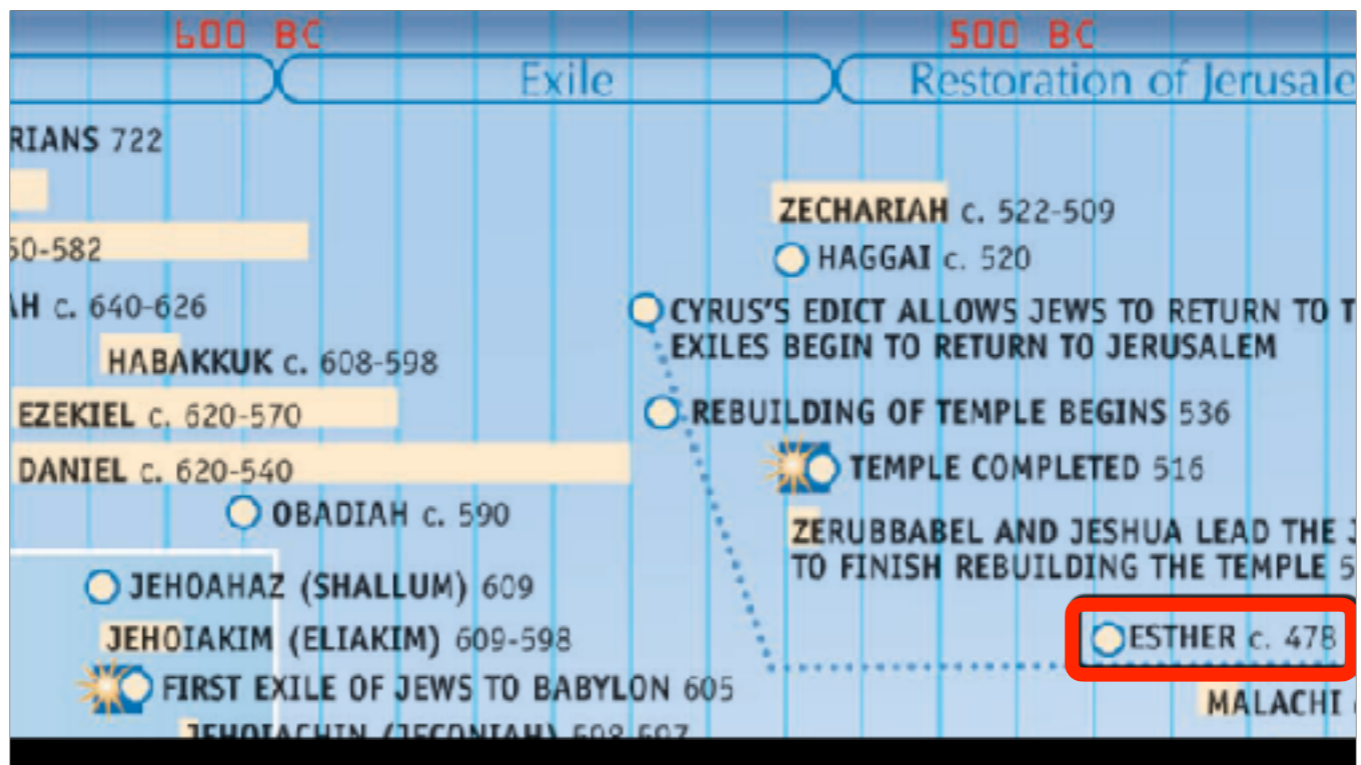




• Esther





• Map: Susa



In Persia, exiled Jewish orphan raised by cousin becomes the queen.

A Persian named Haman is promoted, all commanded to bow down to him (3.1).



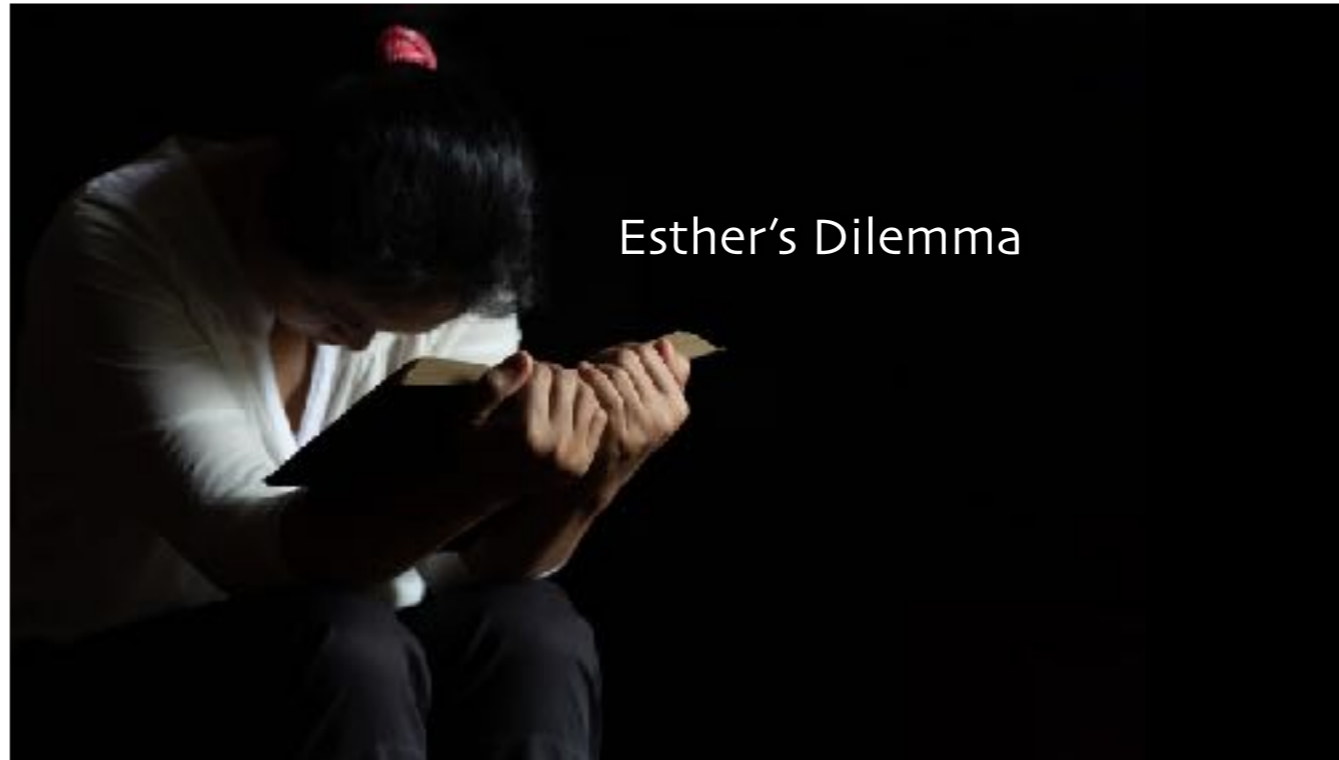
- Winning favor in difficult situations
 - Jewish orphan
 - Taken to be a part of the king's harem under Hecai
 - "women were gathered" (voluntary?)
 - "pleased him" (NET: good in his eyes; impressed)(
 - "won his favor" (hesed (!))
 - cosmetics, food, and seven chosen women
 - **ADVANCED** her to **BEST PLACE**



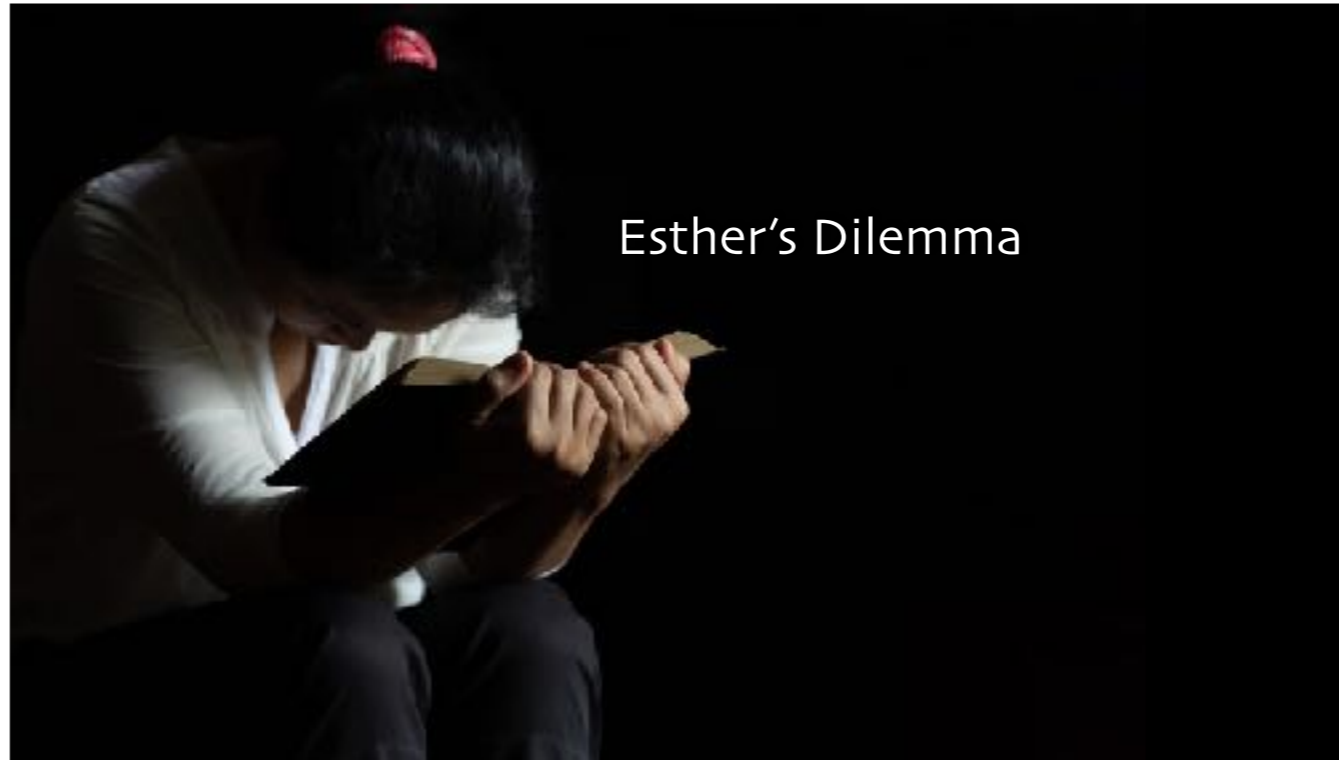
- Esther 3:1-2 (ESV) 1 After these things King Ahasuerus promoted Haman the Agagite, the son of Hammedatha, and advanced him and set his throne above all the officials who were with him. 2 And all the king's servants who were at the king's gate bowed down and paid homage to Haman, for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai did not bow down or pay homage.



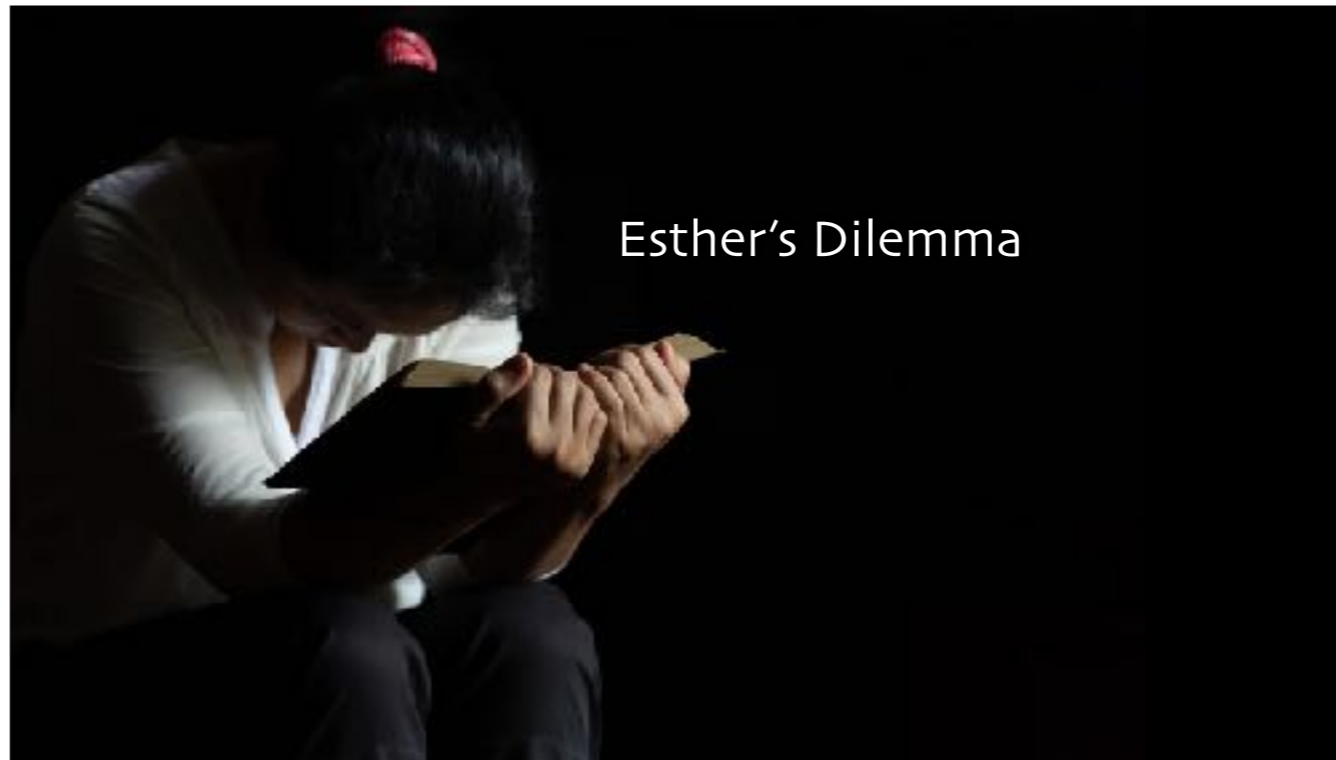
- Mordecai and Haman (about 478 BC)
 - Haman - the Agagite
 - Agag (About 1000 BC)
 - king of the Amelekites
 - Defeated by Saul (about 500 years prior!)
 - Killed by Samuel
 - Mordecai
 - son of Kish, as was King Saul
 - descendant closely related to King Saul
- Did they know? Is this coincidence?
- Because of Mordecai's slight, Haman decides to kill all Jews and persuades (bribes) the king to allow him.



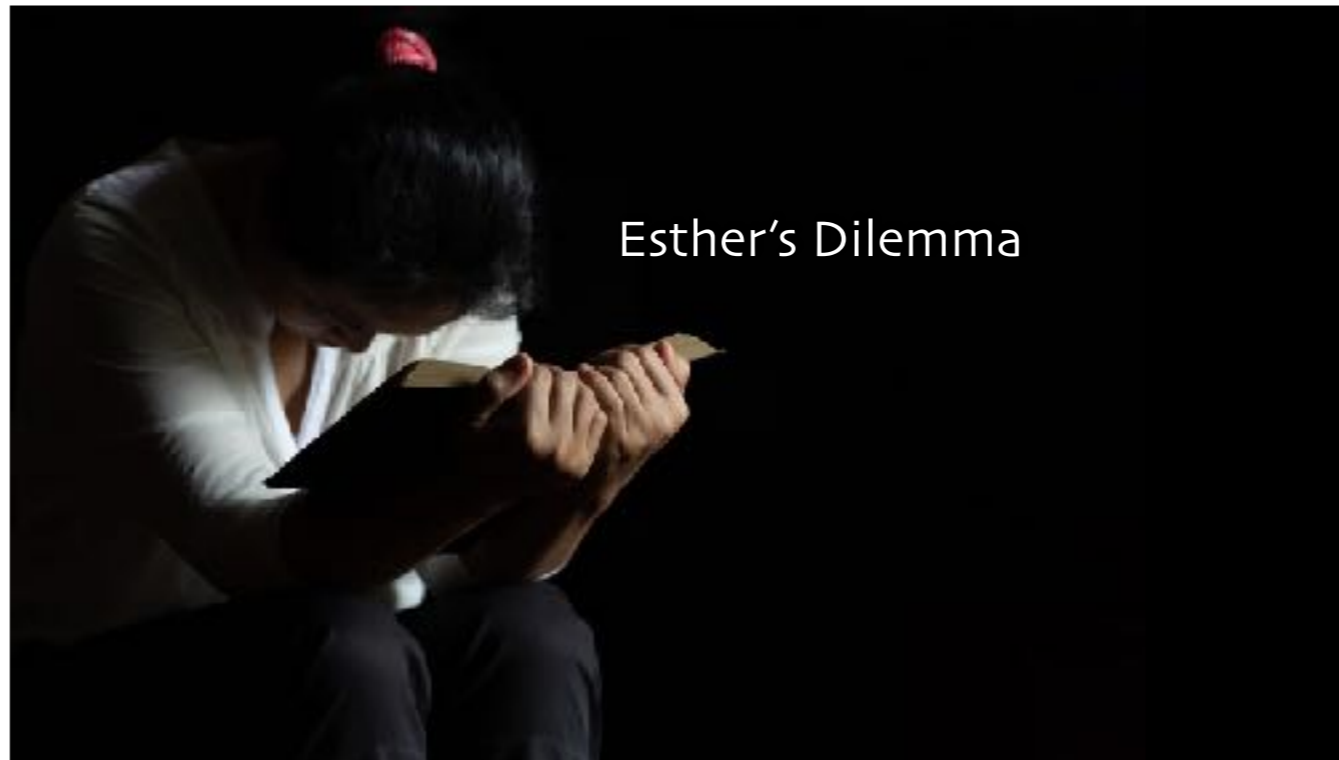
- The mourning of the Jews (4:1-3)
- Esther hears about Mordecai's very public mourning
 - deeply distressed (writhe in pain, great agitation, overcome with anguish)
 - sends clothing, which he refuses
- 4:8 - Mordecai requests that Esther go to the king, to beg, seek favor (mercy), plead for the people
- 4:11 - Esther: If I go before the king
 - without permission — death
 - unless he extends scepter.
 - haven't been called to king for 30 days



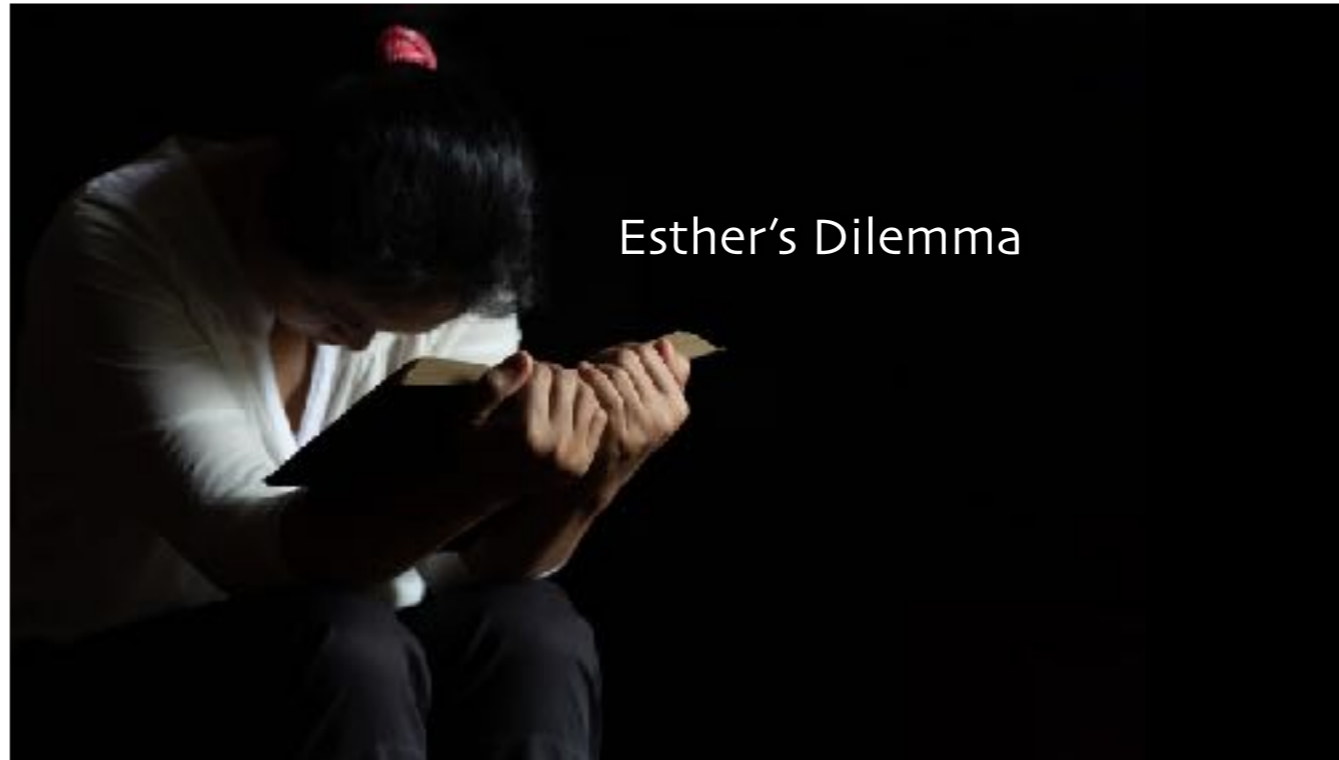
- 4:13 - Mordecai
 - Do you think you will escape even in the palace?
 - If you keep silent
 - relief and deliverance for Jews will rise from another place
 - You and your family will perish
 - Who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?
- We don't know God's plan to such fine details, nor even fully comprehend his will.
 - How do we cope with knowing our plan or our action?
 - Israel knew that Jehovah blessed them but only if they were faithful.



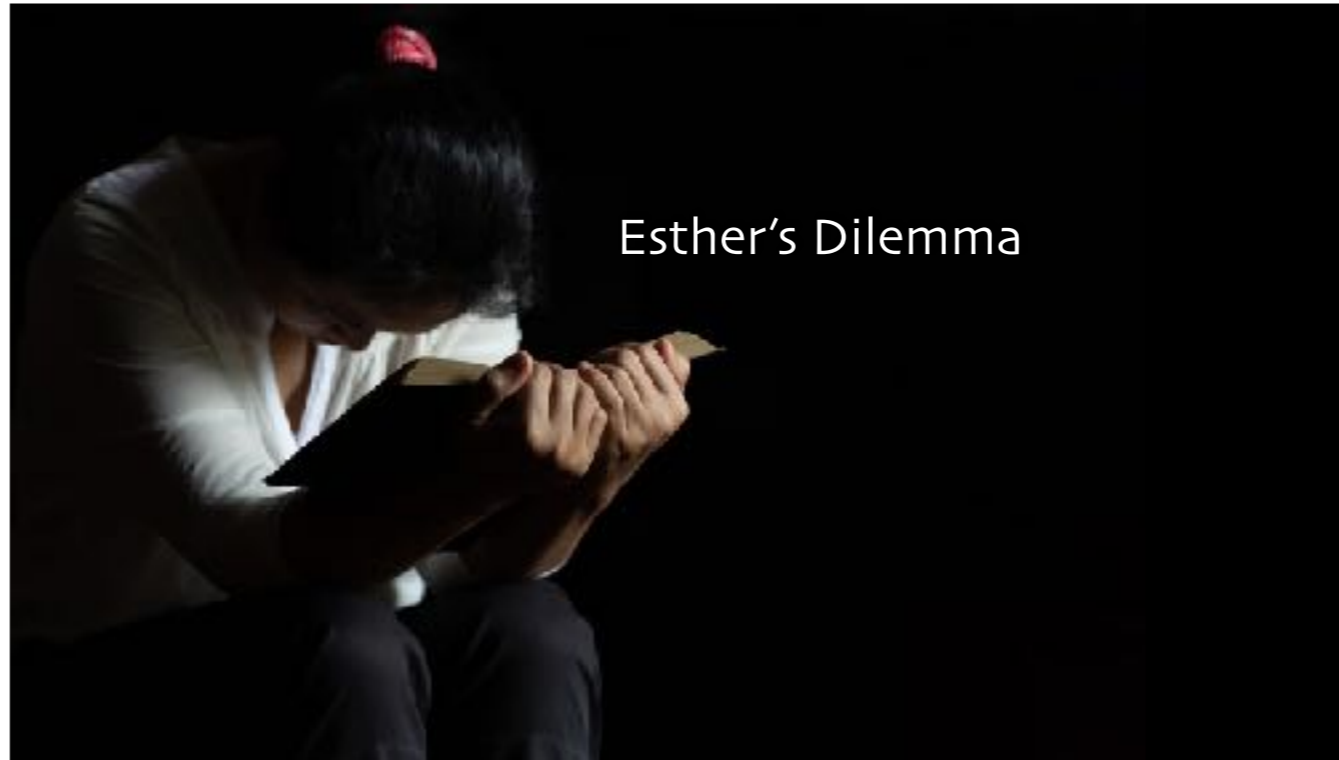
- Such a Time as THIS
 - Dangerous and difficult times happen
 - We're complacent because for the most part we don't face persecution — like this.
 - But we still face very dangerous situations: within and without
 - So ... it's real, even for us.
 - There are still things that need to be done for Jesus' kingdom.
 - There are still moments that define us.
 - There are times when we don't know what to do.



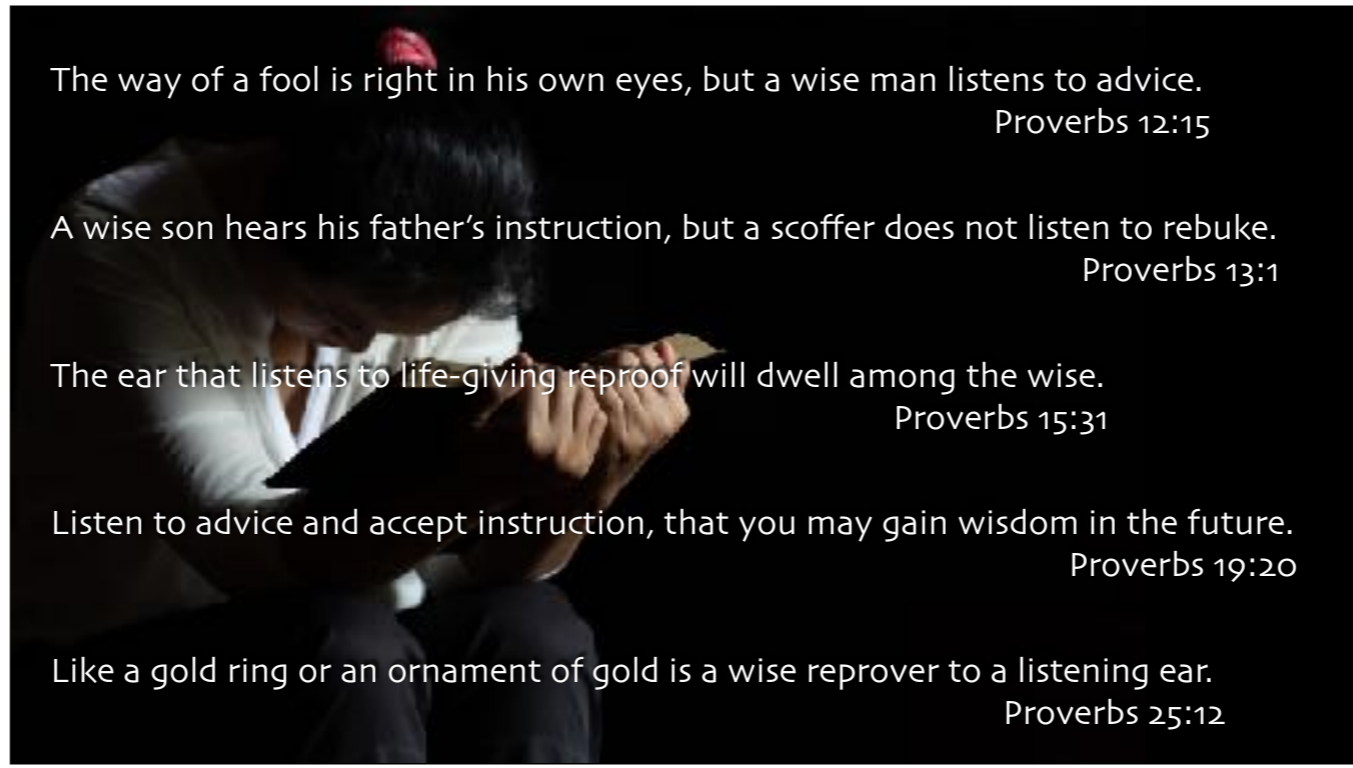
- There maybe times when there are no good choices.
 - That's Esther's original response ... I'm going to die if I do this.
- At times like this, how do we choose?
 - Will we save God's people?
 - Will we save lost souls?
 - What if I die?



- Whether YOU
 - It would be very difficult for Esther to think that she rose to be queen without any help from Jehovah
 - orphaned,
 - But is this why she rose to be queen?
- It's really not a question of the times (often emphasized...)
 - It's about you and what you're going to do.



- I'm safe
 - ignoring a problem doesn't mean it disappears
 - but more often we rationalize that our moment hasn't come yet.
 - no matter who you are, you have responsibilities to your family and kingdom
- I'll keep silent
 - but God will accomplish his purpose.
 - And there may be consequences
- It's not my job
 - like Moses thought at the burning bush?
 - Are you willing to be used by God to accomplish his purpose?



The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.
Proverbs 12:15

A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.
Proverbs 13:1

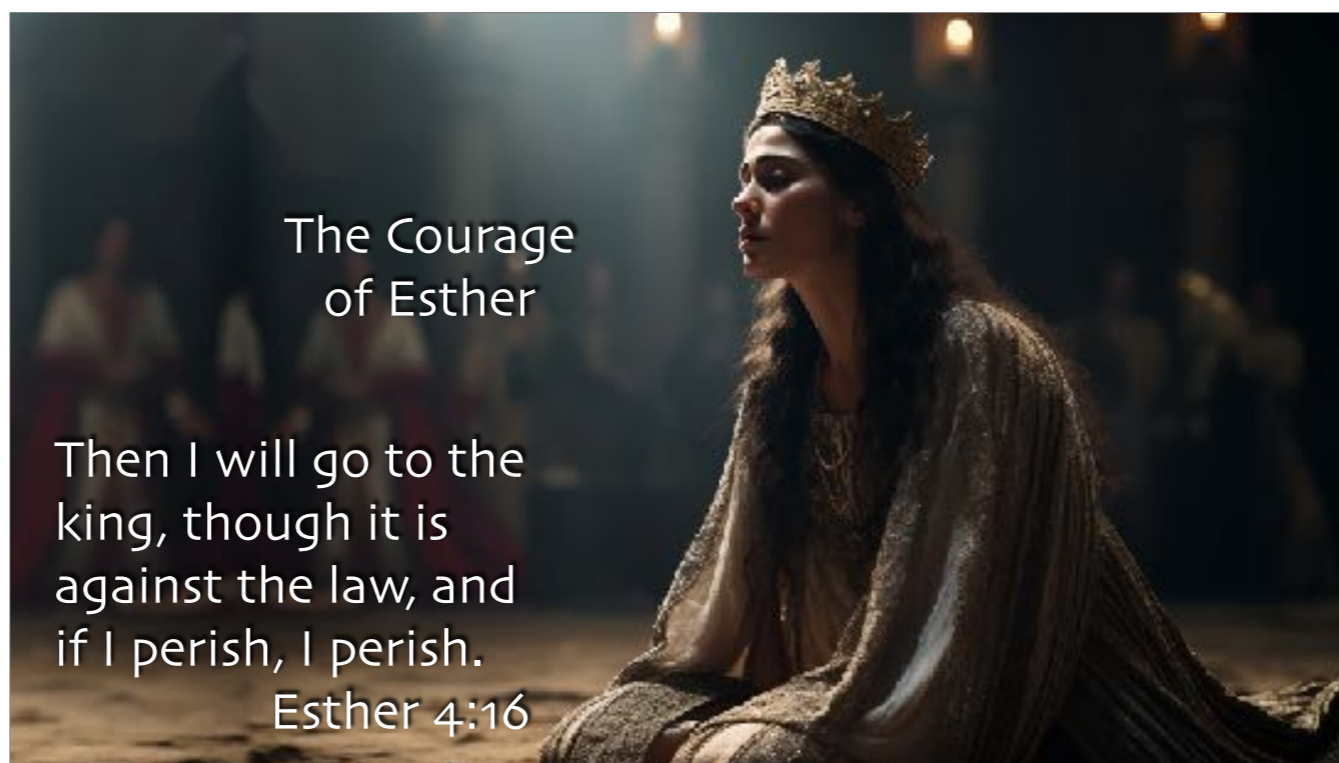
The ear that listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.
Proverbs 15:31

Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future.
Proverbs 19:20

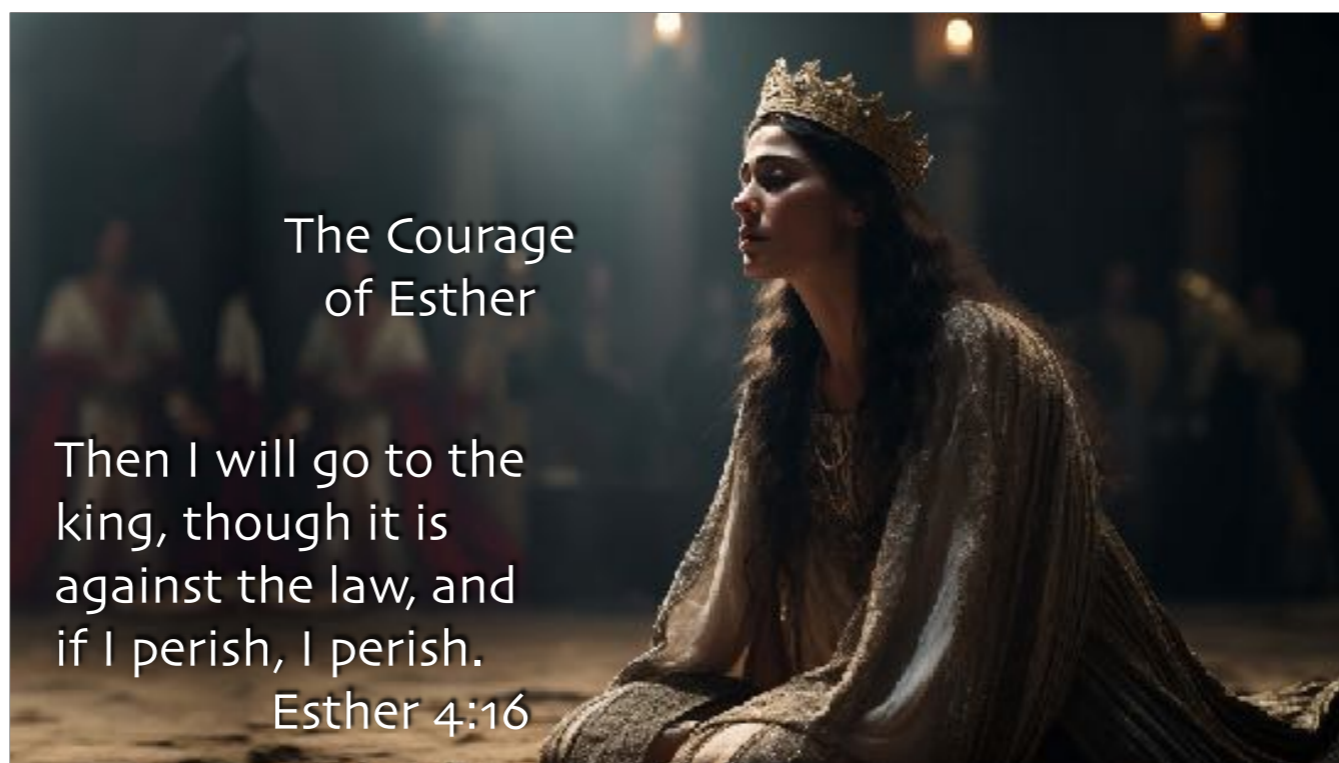
Like a gold ring or an ornament of gold is a wise reprover to a listening ear.
Proverbs 25:12

- Esther listened to what Mordecai said — Wisdom
 - This is not about her being a woman, or even younger
 - She is actually in a position where it would be easy for her to choose not to listen
 - I'm the queen, you should respect me
 - I'm not your daughter, I'm not a child anymore
 - Esther chooses to listen to Mordecai's wisdom

- Proverbs 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.
- Proverbs 13:1 A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.
- Proverbs 15:31 The ear that listens to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.
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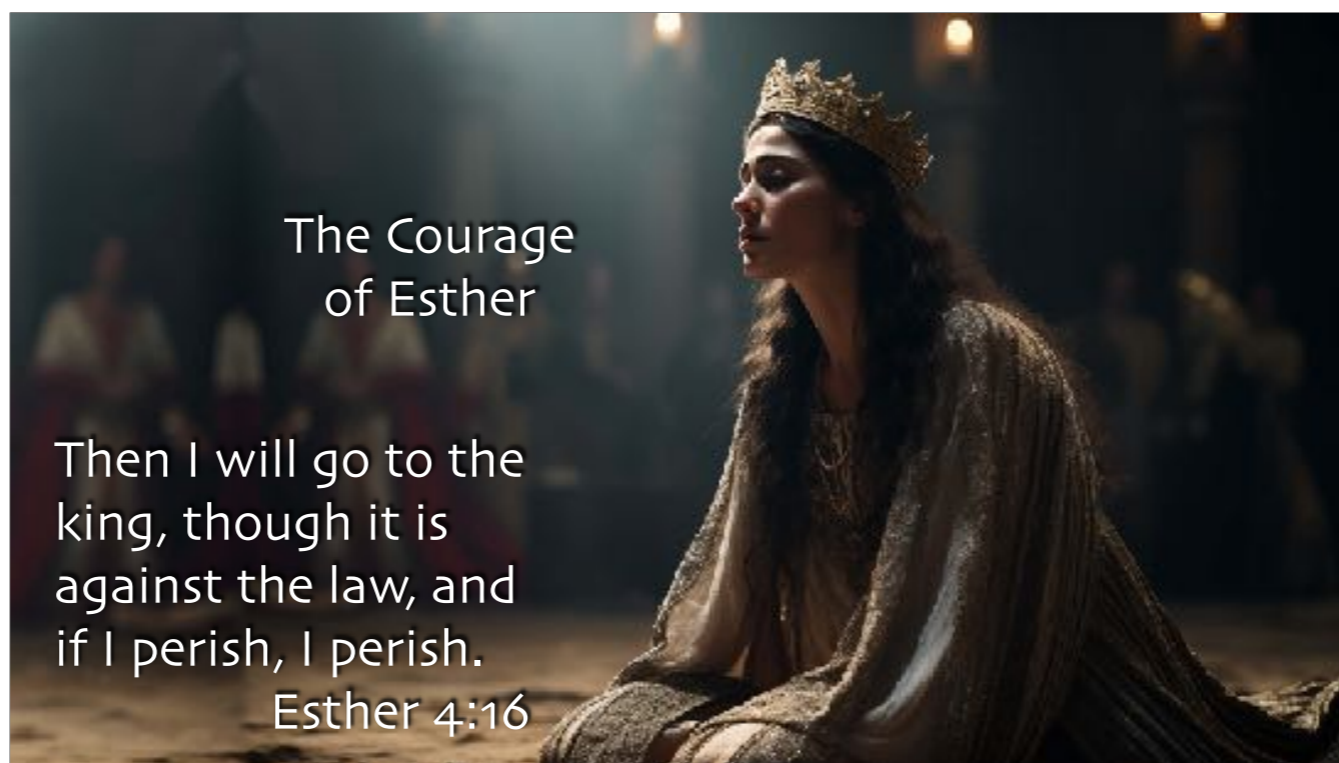


- Esther's choice (4:16) — to Mordecai
 - gather all the Jews: hold a fast on my behalf
 - we will fast
 - I will go to the King
 - against the law
 - If I perish, I perish



- **Courage**

- She prepares herself understanding the consequences
 - Some things are of more value than our physical lives.
 - Submission to God's will
 - Trust
- She gathers allies to join with her
 - Seeks help, and doesn't consider it "nothing or meaningless" even though it's not tangible.
 - Mordecai and others listen to her!
- They appeal to God through fasting



- She goes to the king (5:2)
 - On third day
 - Everything hinges on this moment.
 - What wins the heart of the king?
 - Favor
 - Esther had already established that she was a person that others wanted to be around.
 - So when the time came, her demeanor became her greatest tool against Haman

We implore you
on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:20

Call to Action

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If I Perish: The Wisdom and Courage of Esther

Esther

Synopsis: Esther reminds us of the importance of living excellently, being salt and light in our society; of being facing dilemma and listening; of living courageously before God and man; and using wisdom to help God's people.

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“Let all that you do be done with love.”