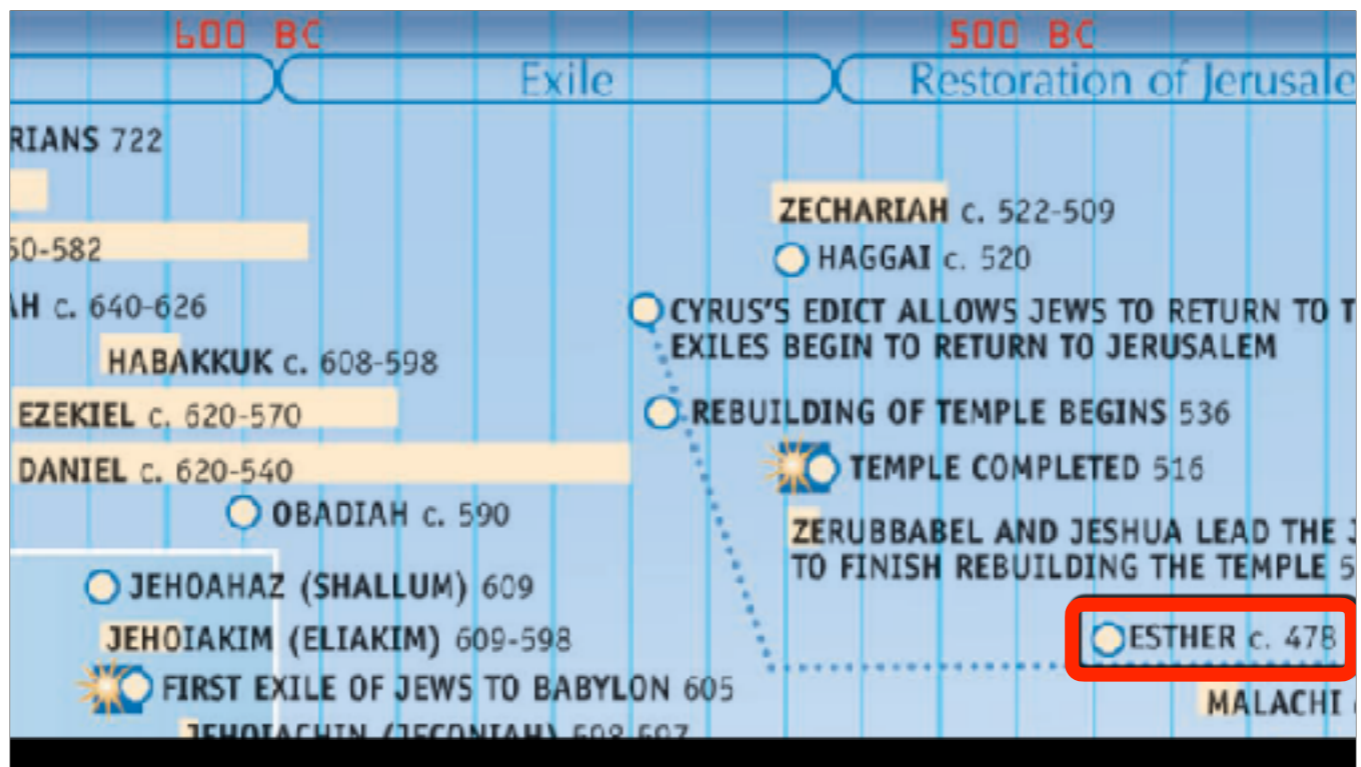




• Esther





• Map: Susa



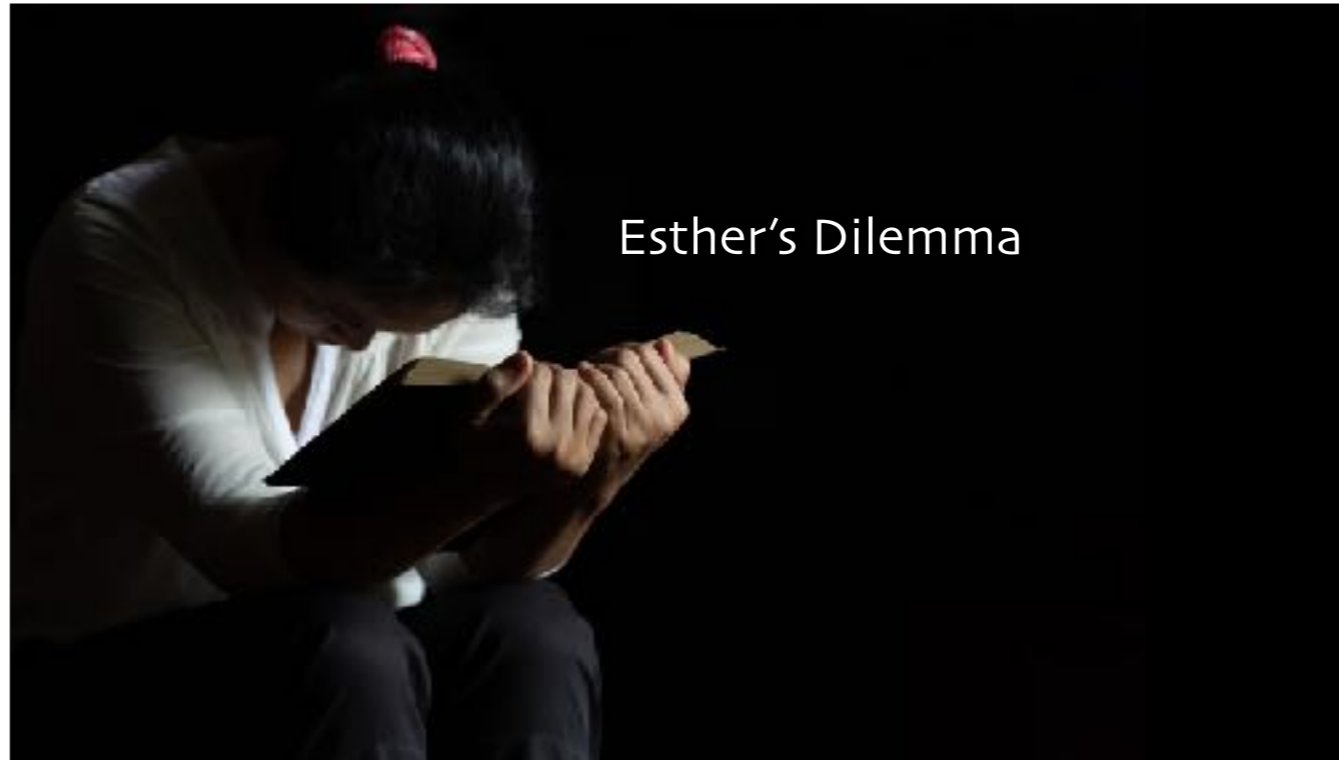
In Persia, exiled Jewish orphan raised by cousin becomes the queen.

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

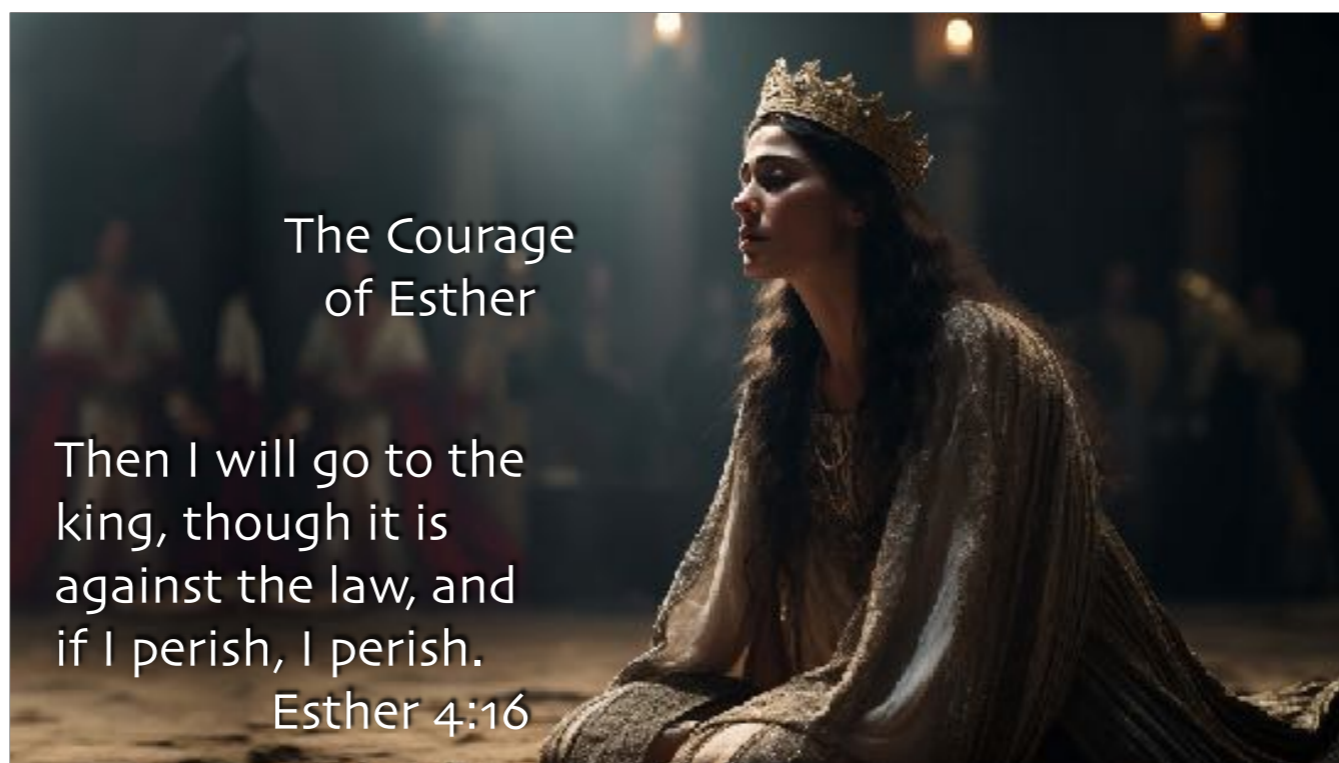




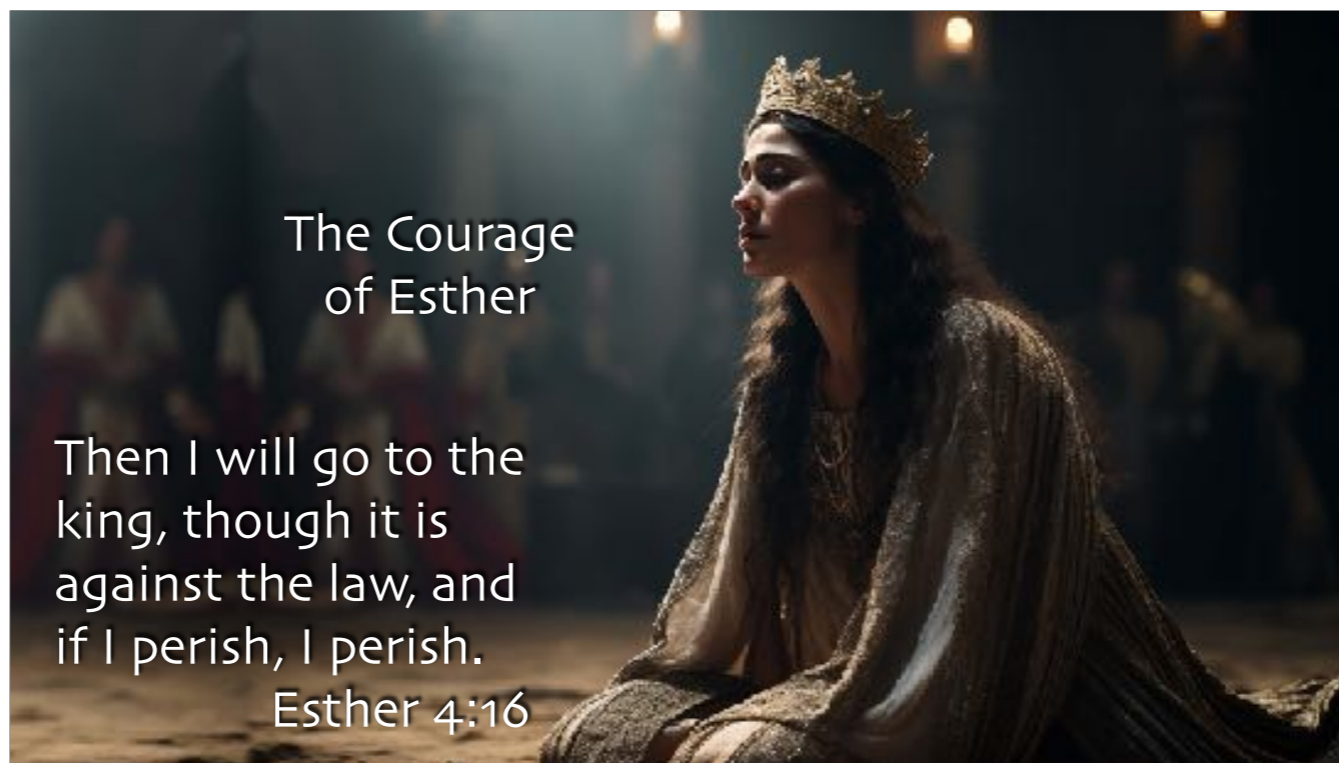
- Winning favor — strive for excellence
  - With God and Man



- Saving the Jews might cost Esther her life.
- Esther listened to what Mordecai said — Wisdom
-



- 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



## The Courage of Esther

Then I will go to the  
king, though it is  
against the law, and  
if I perish, I perish.

Esther 4:16

- Courage
  - She prepares herself understanding the consequences
  - She gathers allies to join with her
  - They appeal to God through fasting





- Wisdom of Esther
- Having gained the king's favor, she now shows that she has a plan
  - “up to half the kingdom” (tempting?)
  - Why doesn't she just say what her request is?
    - Honestly, we probably don't know all the subtleties of their culture or their court behaviors.
    - But she's also had three days to think, plan, wisdom
    - But Esther also needed to be sure that Haman did not have a way of escaping judgment: it's a trap.



- Her Plan
  - Doesn't ask for anything outright (was this unusual?)
  - Invites the King and Haman to a feast
    - Offered half the kingdom
    - Asks for King and Haman to come to another feast tomorrow
      - Haman is elated
      - My guess: king is intrigued? Haman feels special in this small group



- Next feast
  - Offered again
  - “If I have found favor” (7:3)
    - The importance of being salt and light is seen again
    - Certainly, it doesn’t always make a difference
  - My life, my people, sold to be destroyed
  - Esther, about Haman: A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman





- Second Request (8:3)
  - Fell at king's feet
  - Wept and Plead to avert Haman's plan
  - 8:6) How can I bear to see calamity coming on my people
  - King could not revoke the law
  - But allowed Mordecai to write an edict for the Jews to defend themselves



- Using Wisdom in this World

- As we face trying circumstances, we must use wisdom given to us by God
- Esther seems to have prepared herself through the fasting and three days
- Being a follower of Jesus doesn't mean that we stop thinking and reasoning and trying to understand.



be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16



- Our God expects us to reason and think.
- When Jesus sends out the 12
  - Matthew 10:16: “Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16

Eve — saw the tree was



good for food

delight to eyes

desired to make one wise

she took of it's fruit and ate



- Our struggle with thinking

- Eve: Genesis 3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16

David — Saul departs peacefully  
↓  
one day perish by hand of Saul  
escape to land of Philistines  
Saul despair of seeking me  
There's nothing better for me



- David: 1 Samuel 27:1 Then David said in his heart, “Now I shall perish one day by the hand of Saul. **There is nothing better for me** than that I should escape to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will despair of seeking me any longer within the borders of Israel, and I shall escape out of his hand.”

be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16



Balaam — curse Israel for Moabites



Inquired of Jehovah — “No”

Inquired of Jehovah — “Only what I say”

Greed

Balaam went with the princes of Moab

• Balaam (oversimplified)

- Inquired of Jehovah about going to curse Israel in Moab. God said no
- Inquired again, when offered more riches, God said “only what I say”
- but he went anyway because of his greed.



- We often struggle with making wise choices
  - There are almost always a lot of factors to consider.
  - But we also almost always think we are making the best choice.
  - good, delight, desired, escape, nothing better
- Jesus' instruction is interesting because he combines a factor that we sometimes omit.
  - Wise
  - Innocent
    - Will it be pure? sincere? genuine?
    - Will it be motivated by love?
    - How will my choice affect others?



be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16

But since we belong to  
the day, let us be sober  
1 Thessalonians 5:8

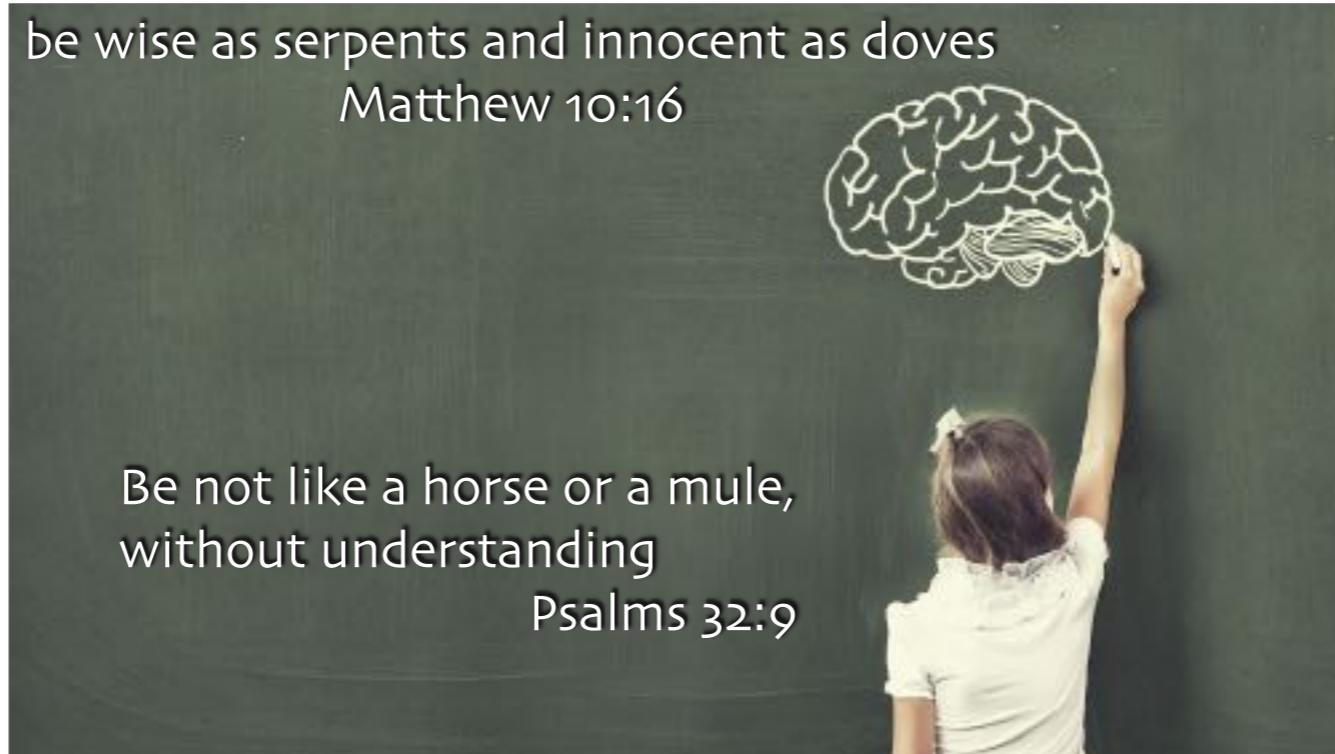


- Soberminded

- 1 Thessalonians 5:6-11 (ESV) 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk, are drunk at night. 8 But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.



- (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Abridged - Little Kittel)) When the word is used figuratively the subject is a person or the human logismós and what is meant is the opposite of every kind of fuzziness. Sober judgment is highly valued in both individual and public life.
- (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Abridged - Little Kittel)) néphō means acknowledgment of the reality of revelation and discharge of the resultant ministry in worship, hope, love, and conflict.



- God's Warning: Don't Be Without Understanding
  - Psalms 32:8-9
    - 8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
    - I will counsel you with my eye upon you.
    - 9 Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
    - which must be curbed with bit and bridle,
    - or it will not stay near you.

be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16

The beginning of wisdom  
is this: Get wisdom,  
and whatever you get,  
get insight.

Proverbs 4:7



• Get Wisdom: Proverbs 4:5-9 (ESV)

- 5 Get wisdom; get insight;
- do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth.
- 6 Do not forsake her, and she will keep you;
- love her, and she will guard you.
- 7 The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom,
- and whatever you get, get insight.
- 8 Prize her highly, and she will exalt you;
- she will honor you if you embrace her.
- 9 She will place on your head a graceful garland;
- she will bestow on you a beautiful crown.”

be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16

The beginning of wisdom  
is this: Get wisdom,  
and whatever you get,  
get insight.

Proverbs 4:7



• Proverbs 8:6-11 (ESV)

- 6 Hear, for I will speak noble things,  
• and from my lips will come what is right,
- 7 for my mouth will utter truth;  
• wickedness is an abomination to my lips.
- 8 All the words of my mouth are righteous;  
• there is nothing twisted or crooked in them.
- 9 They are all straight to him who understands,  
• and right to those who find knowledge.
- 10 Take my instruction instead of silver,  
• and knowledge rather than choice gold,
- 11 for wisdom is better than jewels,  
• and all that you may desire cannot compare with her.



be wise as serpents and innocent as doves  
Matthew 10:16

I hope to see you in passing as I go  
to Spain, and to be helped on my  
journey there by you, once I have  
enjoyed your company for a while.

Romans 15:24



- Paul Made Plans Too

- Romans 15:24 I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while.

- God not only gave us the ability to reason, but he expects us to think clearly (sober)

- But with that ability to reason comes responsibility for our actions

- Be wise

- Be innocent



- Esther (and we) have three things going for us.
  - We have God and His revealed Word
    - Implied in their fasting and in their celebration
  - We have our Character as followers of Jesus
    - Being salt and light
    - Favor with God and man
    - We also have wisdom in our brethren if we will listen



- Being able to understand people and how the world works
  - How the court of the Persians worked (Vasti was replaced ... )
  - The king
  - Haman
    - (These are not things learned by just reading the scriptures)
    - Wisdom from God's word helps us to discern things about people
- With this wisdom
  - We Pray
  - We make a plan
    - Wisdom from God's Word
    - Innocent
    - Wisdom as we consider the world
  - Put it into action





- 1) Live excellently in this world: others may favor us, be pleased by us
- 2) When facing a dilemma: Listen
- 3) Be courageous: maybe you are the
- 4) Be wise: Use the wisdom God has given you to understand and do what is needed.



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

2 Corinthians 5:20

Call to Action

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## **My Wish and My Request: The Wisdom of Esther**

Esther

Synopsis: Esther reminds us of the importance of using wisdom to help God's people.

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