

LESSONS FROM

THE BOOK OF ESTHER



*God's Invisibility
Does Not Mean
He Is Absent!*

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*God's Invisibility Does
Not Mean He Is Absent!*

*God is NOT directly mentioned
in the book of Esther*

*But His providential care is
glaringly obvious!*



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The events in the Book of Esther extend over a decade

Most ascribe it to the years 483 - 473 b.c.

(Xerxes' 3rd year to the end of his 12th year)

(Esther 1:3; 3:7).

The events recorded in Esther would have
occurred between the events of Ezra 6,7

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Xerxes, called Ahasuerus
throughout the Hebrew
text of Esther (cf. niv
marg.), ruled the Persian
Empire for 21 years from
486 to 465 b.c. (1:1)



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**Xerxes ruled over 127 provinces...
from India to Cush (1:1; cf. 8:9).**

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Emperors of The Persian Empire

1. Cyrus (539-530 B.C.) Gave a decree allowing Jews to return to Jerusalem (Ezra 1)
2. Cambyses (530-522 B.C.)
3. Guamata or Pseudo-Smerdis (522 B.C.) a usurper
4. Darius I (522-486 B.C.) (Ezra 5-6)
5. **Xerxes I**, (Ahasuerus) (486-465 B.C.) (Esther)
6. Artaxerxes I (464-424 B.C.) Both Ezra & Nehemiah's work belong to this period (Ezra 4:6ff)

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Esther Becomes Queen (chap. 1-2:18)



- The king's 180 day conference & 7 day banquet - (1:1-9)
- Vashti deposed (1:10-22)
- The plan to replace Queen Vashti - (2:1-4)
- Esther [star] (Hadassah [myrtle]) was raised & loved by her cousin, Mordecai - (2:5-7)
- Esther taken to Kings palace for 12 months of preparation to meet the King - (2:8-15)
- About 4 years passed from the events of 1:1-9 before Esther was brought before the king [483-479 b.c.] - (16)

Esther 1:3 (NKJV)

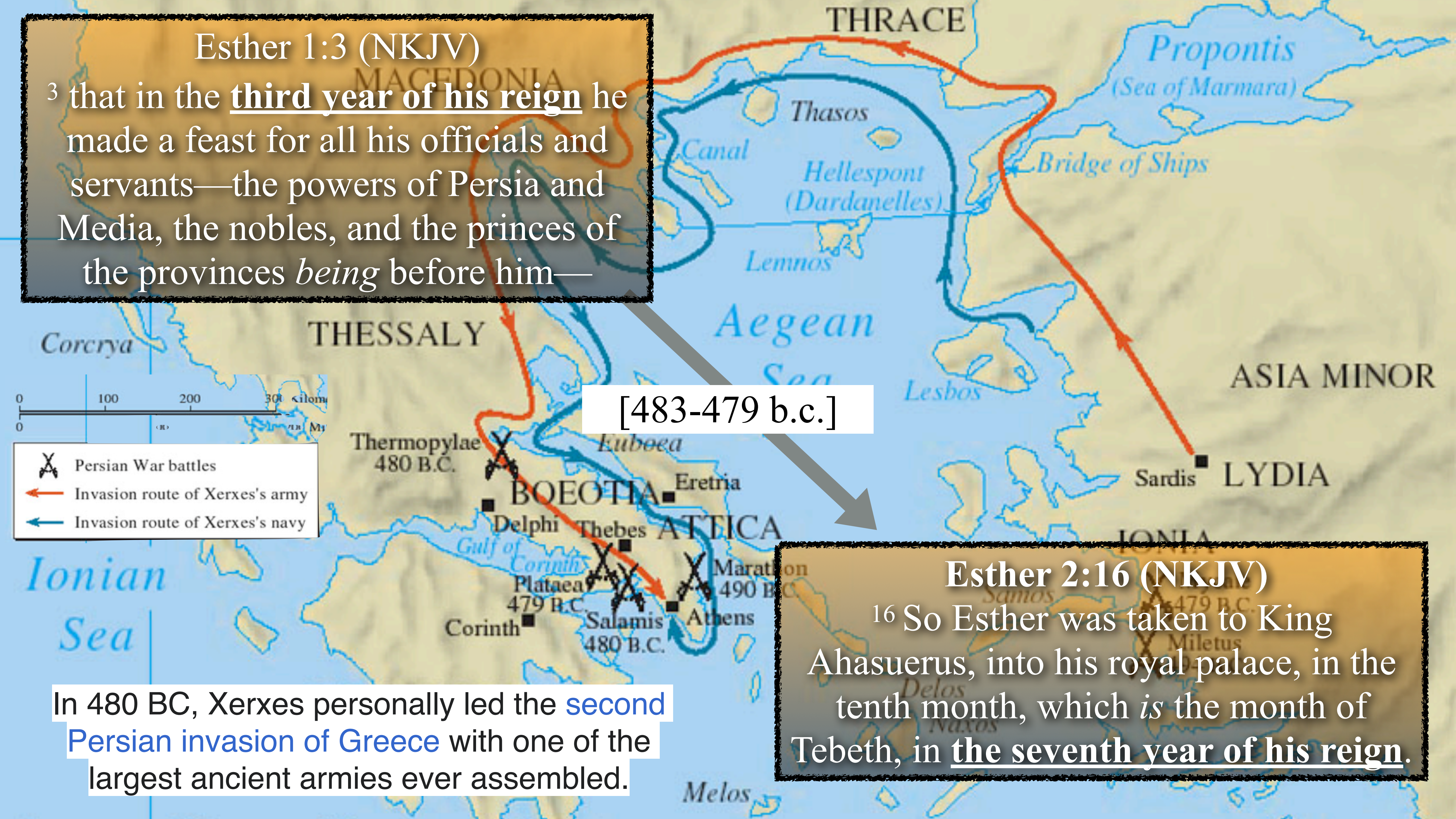
³ that in the third year of his reign he made a feast for all his officials and servants—the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the provinces *being* before him—

[483-479 b.c.]

Esther 2:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ So Esther was taken to King Ahasuerus, into his royal palace, in the tenth month, which is the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign.

In 480 BC, Xerxes personally led the **second Persian invasion of Greece** with one of the largest ancient armies ever assembled.



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Esther Becomes Queen (chap. 1-2:18)



Esther 2:17–18 (NKJV)

¹⁷ The king loved Esther more than all the *other* women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti. ¹⁸ Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king.

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King Saved by Mordecai (2:21-23)



- Mordecai sat inside the king's gate where he learned of a plot to assassinate the king by royal guards Bigthana and Teresh (2:19-21)
- Mordecai tells Queen Esther, who reports this to the king and credits Mordecai for uncovering the scheme (2:22)
- The two men were hanged on a gallows (or "tree," kjv, "post," niv marg). (2:23)
- A record of Mordecai discovering this assassination attempt was written in the official royal record (2:23; cf. 6:1-2).

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Haman's Plan To Eradicate The Jews - (2:21-3:15)



- Ahasuerus made Haman second in command—all were to bow and pay him homage, but Mordecai refused. (3:1,2)
- Haman became so angry, he determined to destroy all the Jews in the king's provinces, (every single Jew including in Jerusalem), and cast lots to determine the day. (3:6,7)
- Haman told the king there was a small insignificant people who did not follow his laws. He offered 10,000 talents of silver to enrich the king's treasury if he allowed them to be destroyed. (3:8,9)

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Haman's Plan To Eradicate The Jews - (2:21-3:15)



- The king's signet ring is given to Haman and he is given authority to do what "seems right" to him (3:11)
- Haman assembles the king's scribes and has a decree written in the name of the king on the "thirteenth day of the first month" commanding the eradication of ALL the Jews on the "thirteenth day of the twelfth month," which is the month of Adar [March 7, 473 BC] (3:12,13)
- It was sealed with the king's signet ring & sent throughout the empire (3:14,15)

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Mordecai Petitions Esther To Help - (4:1-4:14)



- When Mordecai learns of this genocidal decree, he tears his clothes, dresses in rags, puts ashes on his head, and mourns openly. (4:1-3)
- Esther hears of Mordecai's actions, a copy of the edict is shown to her, & Mordecai asks Esther to go to the king and intercede for her people. (4:4-9)
- Fearful of being put to death, she is reluctant to go in to the king unannounced. This was against the law & she could be put to death. (4:10-12)

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Mordecai Petitions Esther To Help - (4:1-4:14)

Esther 4:13-14 (NKJV)

You are dead if you do & dead if you don't

Key verse of the Book - *(God's will, will be accomplished)*

God's providence provides opportunities - we must choose!

¹³ And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews.

¹⁴ For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

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Faith & Courage of Esther - (4:15-5:3)



Esther 4:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!"

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Faith & Courage of Esther - (4:15-5:3)



Esther 5:1–3 (NKJV)

¹ Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on *her* royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house. ² So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, *that* she found favor in his sight, ...

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Faith & Courage of Esther - (4:15-5:3)



Esther 5:1–3 (NKJV)

and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that *was* in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter. ³ And the king said to her, “What do you wish, Queen Esther? What *is* your request? It shall be given to you—up to half the kingdom!”

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Fall of Haman & His Evil Plot - (5:4-7:10)



- Esther requests that the king & Haman attend a banquet with her that she has prepared (5:4)
- The king accepts, calls for Haman, they attend the banquet - again offers Esther up to half the kingdom (5:5,6)
- Esther requests that the king & Haman attend another banquet the next day - to which he again agrees (5:7)

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Fall of Haman & His Evil Plot - (5:4-7:10)



- Haman is ecstatic - “joyful with a glad heart” - but his joy is spoiled when he sees Mordecai not bowing before him (5:9)
- Haman confers with his family & decides to build a gallows 75’ tall on which to hang Mordecai (5:10-14)
- That very night, a sleepless king calls for the royal records and is reminded of Mordecai’s role in exposing a plot to kill him (6:1-3)

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Fall of Haman & His Evil Plot - (5:4-7:10)



- Haman arrives at the palace to recommend Mordecai be hung, but things do not go as planned!
- Haman is humiliated by being forced to publicly honor Mordecai (6:4-13)
- As Haman bemoans these events with his family - the king's eunuchs arrive to take him to Esther's second feast (6:14)

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Fall of Haman & His Evil Plot - (5:4-7:10)



- Haman is exposed (7:1-6)
- King Ahasuerus is furious, walks out in a rage - comes back in finding Haman pleading with Esther for his life (7:7-8)
- Haman is hung on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai (7:9-10)

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Jews Saved & Rejoice - (8:1 - 10:3)



- Mordecai given royal position (8:1-2)
- Second proclamation sent out (8:3-14)
- Jews rejoice (8:15-17)
- Jews defend themselves (9:1-19)
- Feast of Purim Established (9:20-32)
- Greatness of Mordecai Described (10)

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Lessons We Need To Learn



- Courage to say no (Vashti) (1 Cor. 15:33,34)
- Courage to not violate our conscience (Mordecai) (Acts 4:19,20; 5:28,29; Rom. 14:23)
- Courage to do what is necessary for the wellbeing of others (Esther) (Phil. 2:1-5)
- Courage to take advantage of an open door (Mordecai, Esther) (Rev. 3:7,8; 1 Cor. 16:9)

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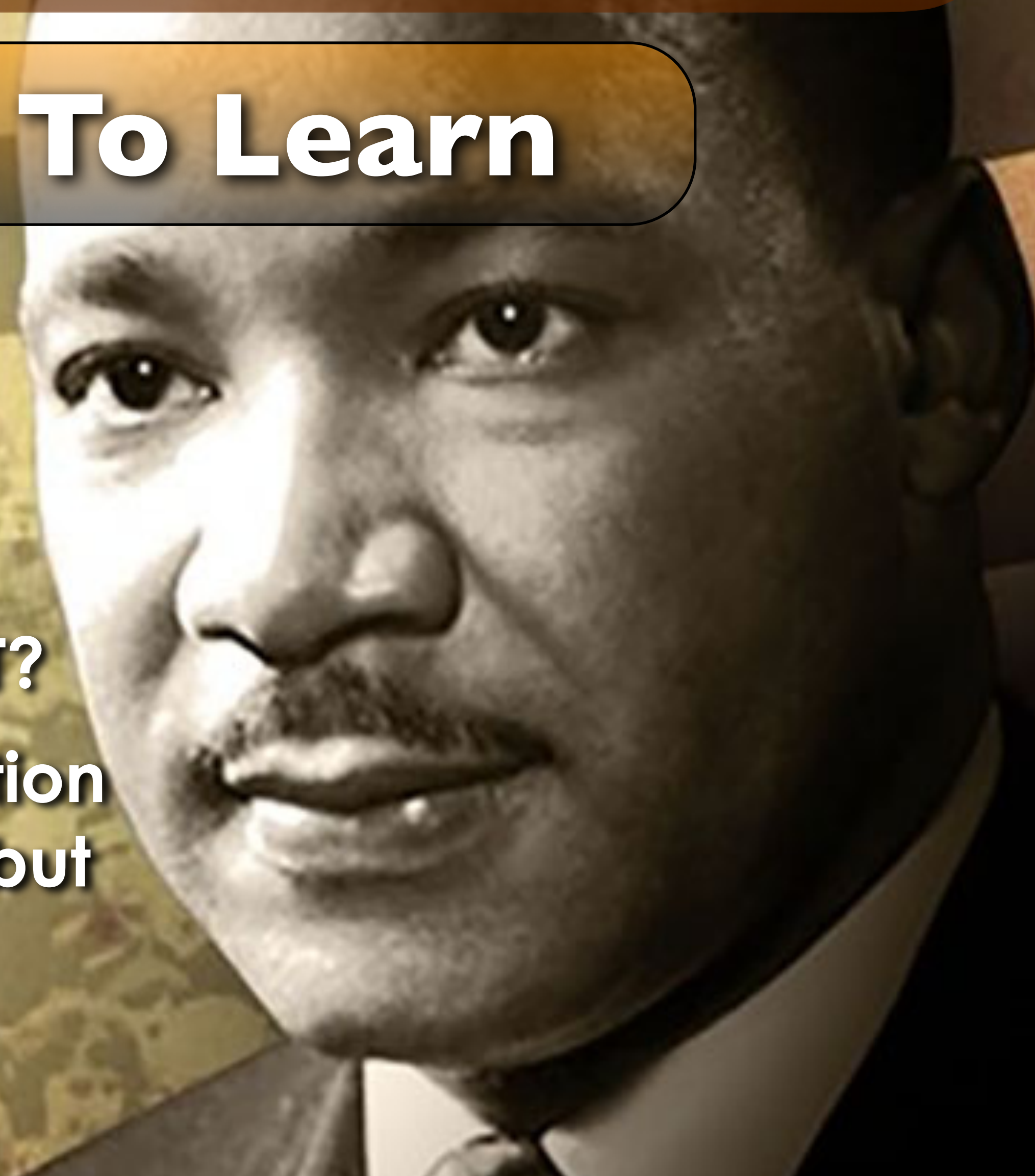
Lessons We Need To Learn

“Cowardice asks the question: Is it safe?
Expediency asks the question: Is it politic?
Vanity asks the question: Is it popular?

But conscience asks the question: IS IT RIGHT?

And there comes a time one must take a position
that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular — but
one must take it because it is right!”

— Martin Luther King Jr.



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Daniel 4:34–37 (NKJV)

³⁴ And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom *is* from generation to generation.

³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And *among* the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, “What have You done?” ³⁶ At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. ³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works *are* truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down.