

*God's Silence Does Not  
Mean He Is Absent*

*Lessons From The Book of Esther*



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- ◆ The events in the Book of Esther extend over a decade—from 483 b.c. (Xerxes' 3rd year; Es. 1:3) to 473 (the end of Xerxes' 12th year; 3:7).
- ◆ The events in this book occurred between those recorded in Ezra 6 and 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)





**Persian Empire**  
(c. 400 B.C.)

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 too 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.) (Ezra 4:6 / Esther)
6. Artaxerxes I (464-424 B.C.) Both Ezra & Nehemiah's work belong to this period

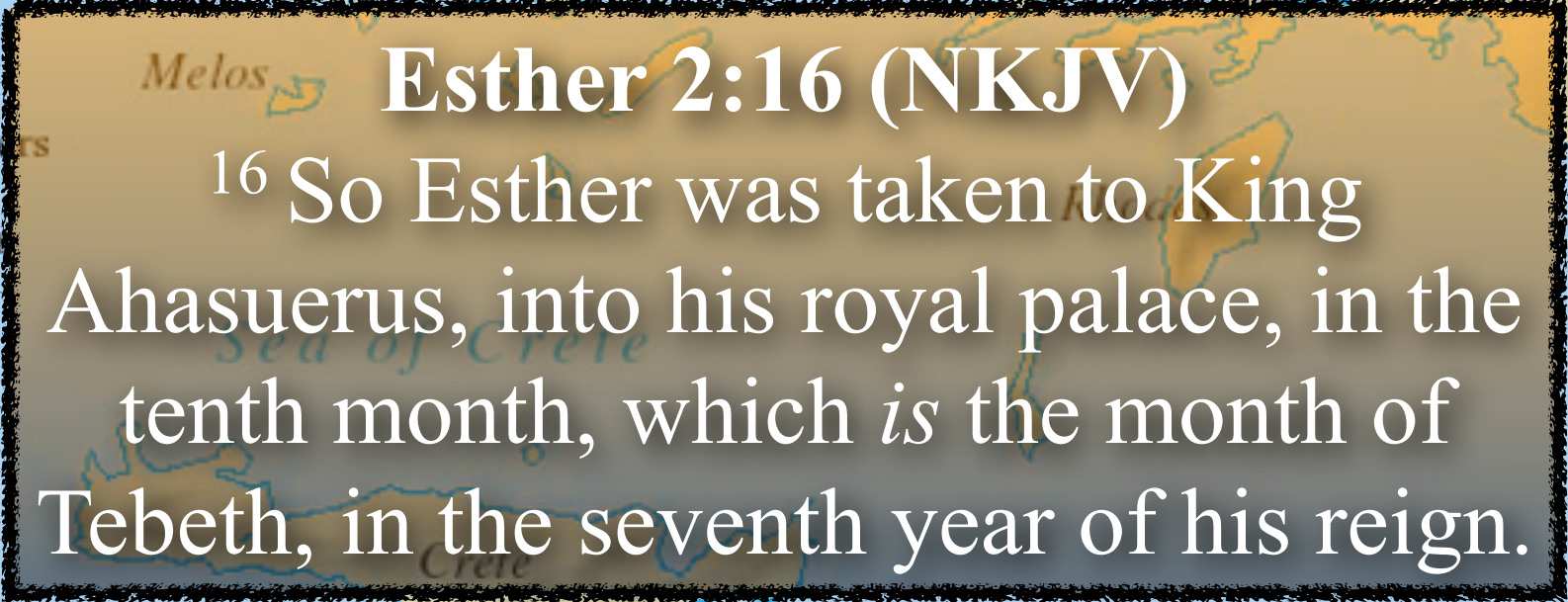


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## Esther Becomes Queen (chap. 1-2:18)

- ◆ 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 before Esther was brought before the king [483-479 b.c.] - (16)







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## King Saved by Mordecai (2:21-23)

- ◆ Mordecai sat inside the king's gate learned of a plot by Bigthana and Teresh, royal guards, to assassinate the king -(2:19-21)
- ◆ Mordecai told Queen Esther, who reported this to the king & gave credit to 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. Es. 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 Jer.)* - (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 473 B.C.] - (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 heard about this genocidal decree, he tore his clothes, he dressed in rags, he put ashes on his head, he mourned openly - (4:1-3)
- ◆ Esther hears of Mordecai's actions, a copy of the edict was shown to her, & Mordecai asked Esther to go to the king and intercede for her people - (4:4-9)
- ◆ At first, fearful of being put to death, she was reluctant - to go in to the king unannounced was against the law & could be a death sentence - (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!

<sup>13</sup> 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.

<sup>14</sup> 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 - (4:15-4:17)



### **Esther 4:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> "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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## Fall of Haman & His Evil Plot - (5:1-7:10)



- ◆ Esther goes in before the king and is accepted - she is offered up to half the kingdom - (5:1-3)
- ◆ 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 - (5:1-7:10)



- ◆ 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 7 1/2 stories high to hang Mordecai on - (5:10-14)
- ◆ A sleepless king 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 - (5:1-7:10)

- ◆ 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 - (5:1-7:10)



- ◆ 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 receives royal position (8:1-2)
- ◆ Second proclamation sent out (8:3-14)
- ◆ Jews rejoice (8:15-17)
- ◆ Jews took revenge (9:1-19)
- ◆ Feast of Purim Established (9:20-32)
- ◆ Greatness of Mordecai Described (chap. 10)



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## Lessons We Need To Learn

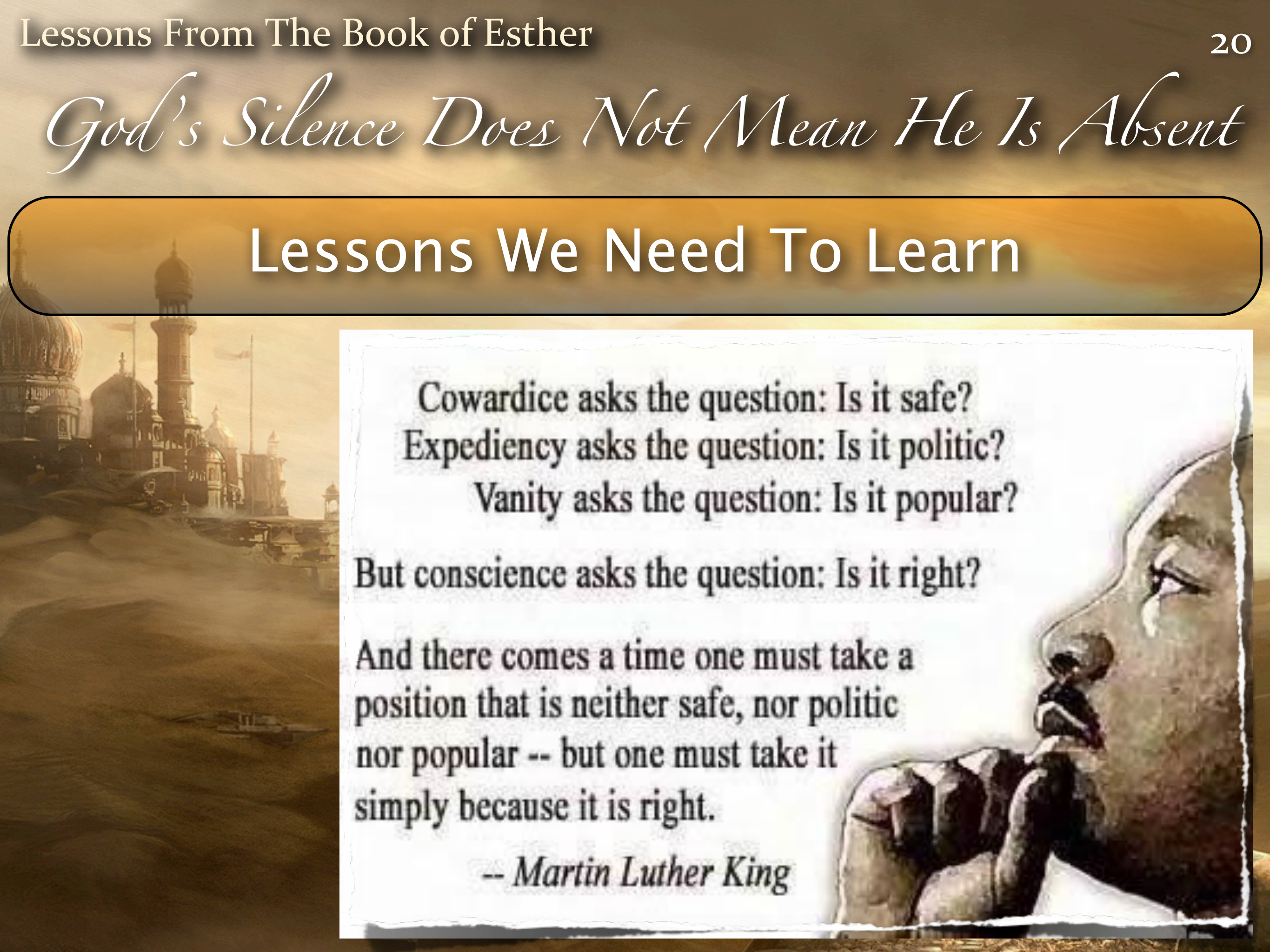


- ◆ Courage to say no - (**Vashti**)
- ◆ Courage to not violate our conscience - (**Mordecai**)
- ◆ Faith in God to keep His promises - (**Mordecai, Esther**)
- ◆ Courage to do what is necessary for the wellbeing of others - (**Esther**)
- ◆ The courage to take advantage of an open door - (**Mordecai, Esther**)




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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  
simply because it is right.

-- *Martin Luther King*





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## Lessons We Need To Learn



- ◆ We do not know what is going on behind the scenes - we just need to trust God - (**Mordecai**, Esther; Rom 8:28; Titus 1:2)
- ◆ Pride, resentment, anger & hatred negates joy & results in destruction - (**Haman**)
- ◆ One's "trouble shall return upon his own head" - (**Haman**; Gal. 6:7-9; Ps 7:14-16)



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## Lessons We Need To Learn



### **Psalm 7:14-16 (NKJV)**

<sup>14</sup> Behold, the wicked brings forth iniquity; Yes, he conceives trouble and brings forth falsehood. <sup>15</sup> He made a pit and dug it out, And has fallen into the ditch which he made. <sup>16</sup> His trouble shall return upon his own head, And his violent dealing shall come down on his own crown.



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## Lessons We Need To Learn



- ◆ Danger of rash decisions - (**Ahasuerus**)
- ◆ Willingness to correct wrongs in our life - (**Ahasuerus**)
- ◆ Great reward is the result of faithfulness - (**Mordecai**)
- ◆ God will take vengeance upon His enemies and the enemies of His people - (Heb 10:30; 2 Thes. 1:6-9)



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## Which Character Do We Most Resemble?



- ◆ **Ahasuerus** - Irrational, unpredictable, unconcerned, hasty, ignorant, etc.?
- ◆ **Haman** - Prejudiced, Proud & arrogant, deceitful, angry, hatred, vengeful, etc.?
- ◆ **Mordecai** - honorable, faithful, conscientious, trusting, wise?
- ◆ **Esther** - submissive, sacrificial, courageous, wise?







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## **Genesis 50:15-21 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him." <sup>16</sup> So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying, "Before your father died he commanded, saying,



## **Genesis 50:15-21 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> 'Thus you shall say to Joseph: "I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you." ' Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father." And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. <sup>18</sup> Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, "Behold, we are your servants."



## **Genesis 50:15-21 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup> Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? <sup>20</sup> But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. <sup>21</sup> Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.