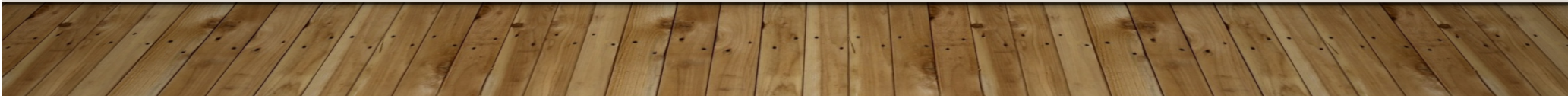


A NEW LOOK AT ESTHER



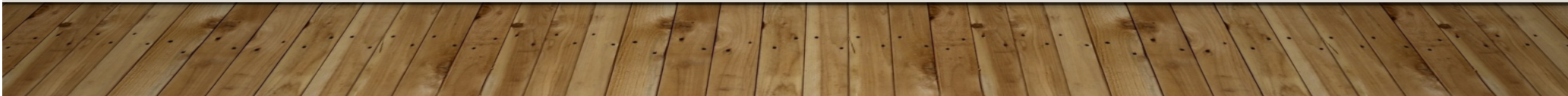
Esther 4:1 – 4:17

Esther's Dilemma



ESTHER 4:1-3

- 1) When Mordecai **learned all that had been done**, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the **midst of the city**, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry.
- 2) He went up to the **entrance of the king's gate**, for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth.
- 3) And in every province, wherever the king's command and his decree reached, there was **great mourning among the Jews**, with fasting and weeping and lamenting, and many of them lay in sackcloth and ashes.



ISAIAH 29:9-10

- 9) Astonish yourselves and be astonished; blind yourselves and be blind! Be drunk, but not with wine; stagger, but not with strong drink!
- 10) For the **Lord has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep**, and has closed your eyes (the prophets), and covered your heads (the seers).

ESTHER 4:4

- 4) When Esther's young women and her eunuchs came and told her, the **queen was deeply distressed**. She sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.

ESTHER 4:5-8

- 5) Then Esther called for Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs, who had been appointed to attend her, and ordered him to go to Mordecai to **learn what this was and why it was.**
- 6) Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, .

ESTHER 4:5-8

- 7) and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him, and the **exact sum** of money that Haman had promised to pay into the king's treasuries for the destruction of the Jews.
- 8) Mordecai also gave him a **copy of the written decree** issued in Susa for their destruction, that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and command her to go to the king to beg his favor and plead with him on behalf of her people.

ESTHER 4:9-12

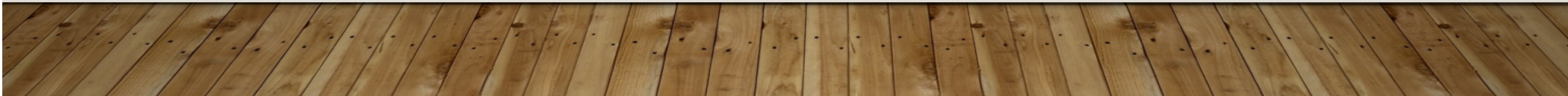
- 9) And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said.
- 10) Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say,

ESTHER 4:9-12

- 11) “All the king’s servants and the people of the king’s provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law - **to be put to death**, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.”
- 12) And they told Mordecai what Esther had said.

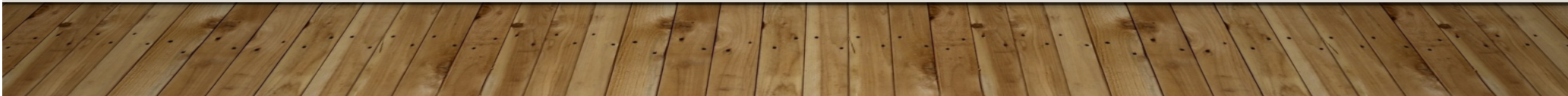
DANIEL 3:16-18

- 16)** Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter.
- 17)** If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.
- 18)** But if not, **be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods** or worship the golden image that you have set up.”



ESTHER 4:13-14

- 13) Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, “**Do not think** to yourself that in the king’s palace **you will escape** any more than all the other Jews.
- 14) For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father’s house will perish. And **who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?**”



- 1) Don't think that you will be safe in the **PALACE**
- 2) **YOU** are our only hope

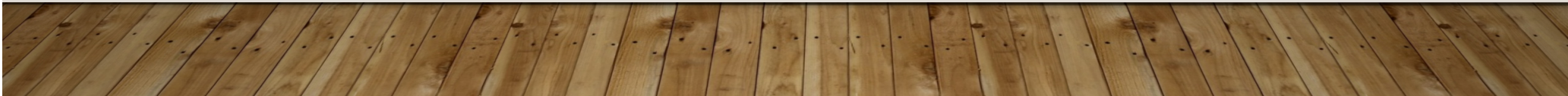
DANIEL 3:17-18

- 17)** If this be so, **our God whom we serve is able to deliver us** from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king.
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- 1) Don't think that you will be safe in the **PALACE**
- 2) **YOU** are our only hope
- 3) The survival of your **FAMILY** is in your hands

ESTHER 4:15-17

- 15) Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai,
- 16) “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and **hold a fast on my behalf**, and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my young women will also fast as you do. **Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law**, and **if I perish, I perish.**”
- 17) Mordecai then went away and **did everything as Esther had ordered him.**



BEING A HERO IS NOT BEING FAITHFUL

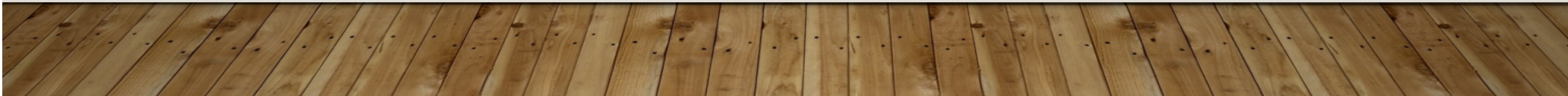
- 1) Esther decides to risk her life only when **pressured** by Mordecai, and only after he informs her that her life is in danger also
- 2) Esther's words, *"If I Perish, I Perish"* are far from an **Affirmation of Faith**, but are instead a **Declaration of Fatalism**
- 3) Again: **NO** mention of God, **NO** mention of faith, **NO** clear reference to prayer, or **NO** repentance is uttered by either Esther or Mordecai

CONCLUSION

- The Book of Esther should be read as a **WARNING** to us as how **NOT** to act
- Don't assume that if the right **FORM** are present, the right **FUNCTION** is also present
- The Book of Esther is trying to teach us that we can go through the **right motions** and yet never really **know God**

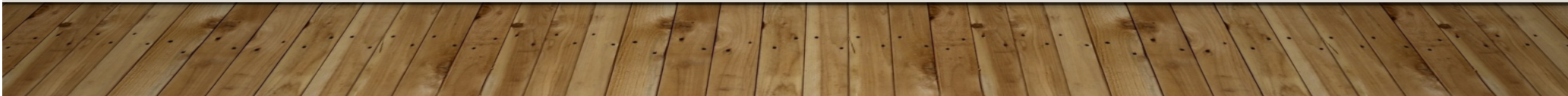
AMOS 5:21-22

- 21) “I hate, **I despise your feasts**, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
- 22) **Even though you offer me your burnt offerings** and grain offerings, **I will not accept them**; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them.



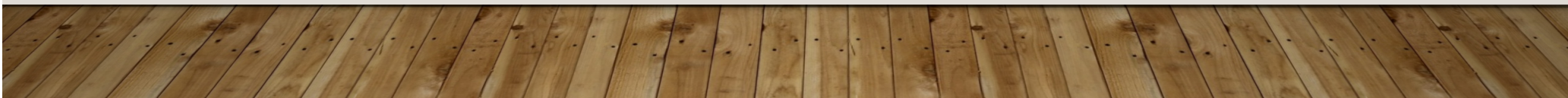
MICAH 6:6-8

- 6) “With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?
- 7) **Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams**, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”
- 8) He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the **Lord require of you** but to **do justice**, and to **love kindness**, and to **walk humbly** with your God?



2ND TIMOTHY 3:1-5

- 1) But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.
- 2) For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,
- 3) heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,
- 4) treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,



2ND TIMOTHY 3:1-5

- 5) **having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.**
Avoid such people.

FUNCTION OVER FORM

- Faith must be judged not by its **FORM** but by its **FUNCTION**
- Having the **FORM** of Christ's Ecclesia is not the same as the **FUNCTION** of the Ecclesia
- Just because someone doesn't look like **YOU**, doesn't mean that they are not like **CHRIST**
- Don't think that because we are going through the **Right Motions** we are living in **True Fellowship** with God

FUNCTION OVER FORM

- Don't go through life thinking you are a Believer simply because you have **OBSERVED** certain **FORMS**
- Being a Believer isn't about what **YOU** have done, but about trusting in what **CHRIST** did
- Believers don't trust in **FORM**
- Believers put their trust in Christ **ALONE**