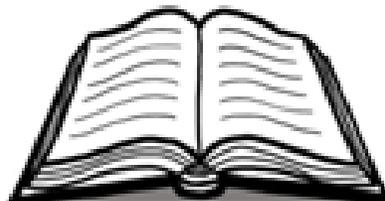


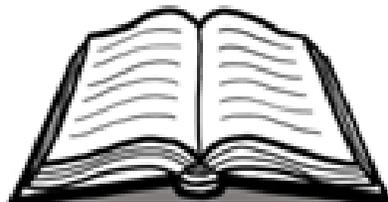
## Esther 4: 1-17



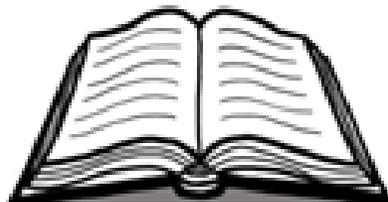
When Mordecai learned all that had been done, Mordecai tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and he cried out with a loud and bitter cry. He went up to the entrance of the king's gate, for no one was allowed to enter the king's gate clothed in sackcloth. 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. 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.



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. Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, 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. 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 favour and plead with him on behalf of her people. And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said.

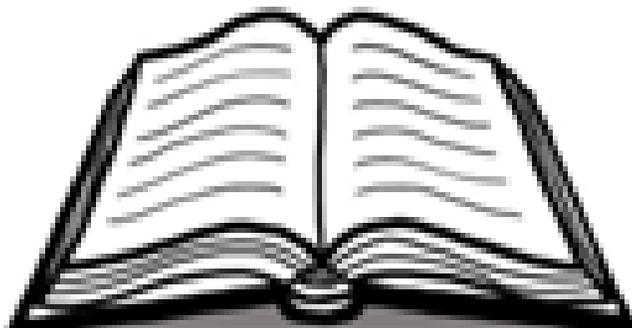


Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai and say, “All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law—to be put to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden sceptre so that he may live. But as for me, I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.” And they told Mordecai what Esther had said. 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. 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?”



Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, “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.”

Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.



## Sackcloth and ashes

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.



# Persian Protocol

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.



# Bad News

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.



## What's wrong?

When Esther's young women and her eunuchs came and told her, the queen was deeply distressed.

**They** told her that something was wrong.



Esther had not heard what had happened.

## Dressed to enter?

She sent garments to clothe Mordecai, so that he might take off his sackcloth, but he would not accept them.



**No comfort at this time.**

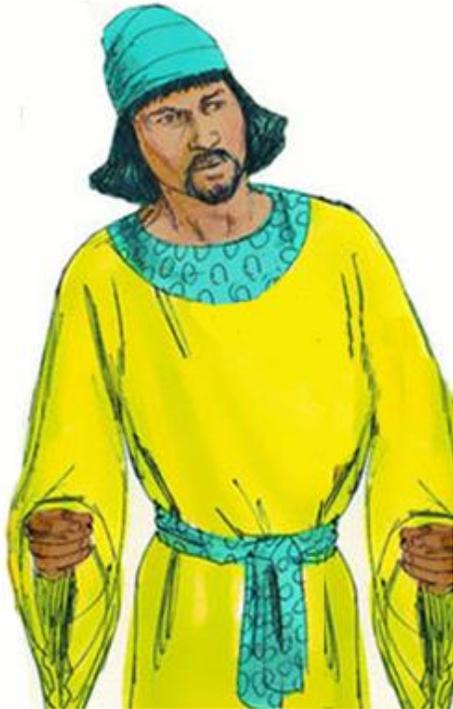
## Find out what's wrong.

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.



## Detailed information

Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate, 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.



Haman's malice is real

# Written proof

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

Esther needs to know all the details because of what Mordechai wants her to do.



## Time to tell.

that he might show it to Esther and explain it to her and **command her** to go to the king to beg his favour and plead with him on behalf of **her people**.

What can he expect since he knows the Persian law?

**It isn't WHAT you know,  
it's WHO you know.**

both for Esther and for  
Mordechai !



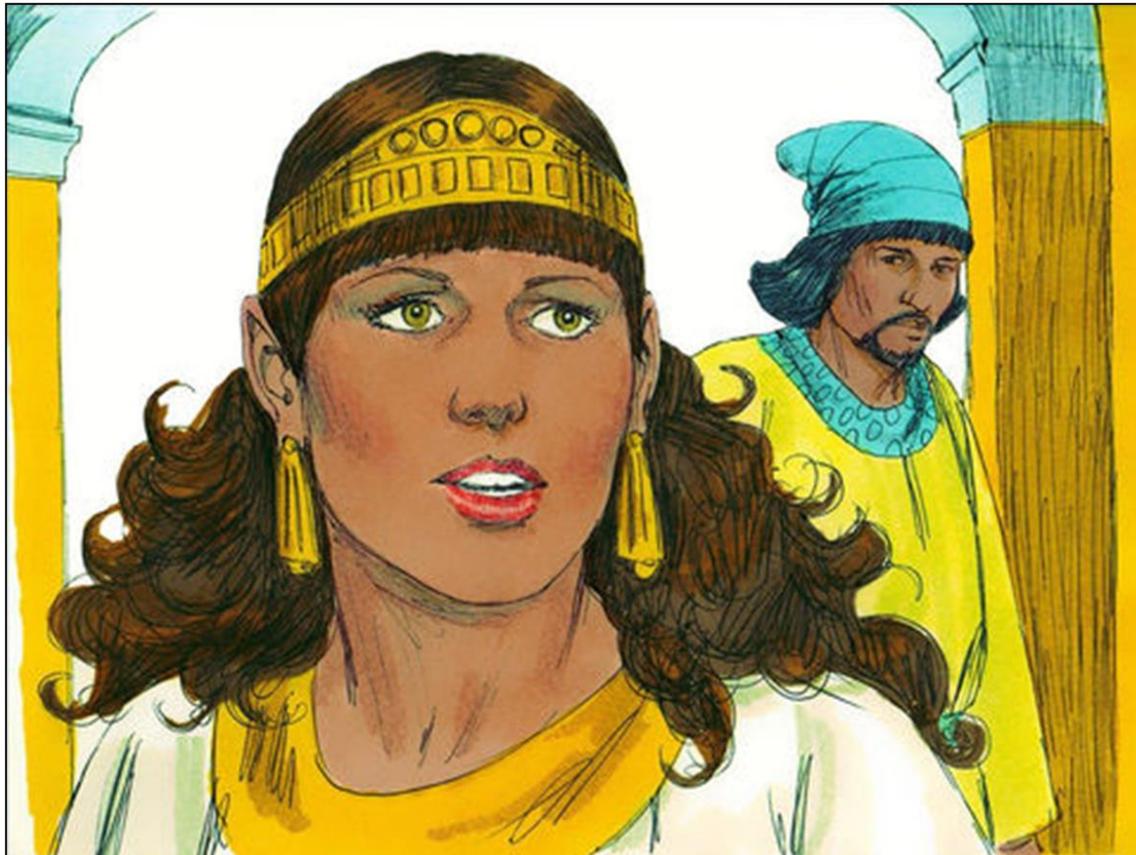
## The faithful Go-Between

And Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. Then Esther spoke to Hathach and commanded him to go to Mordecai.



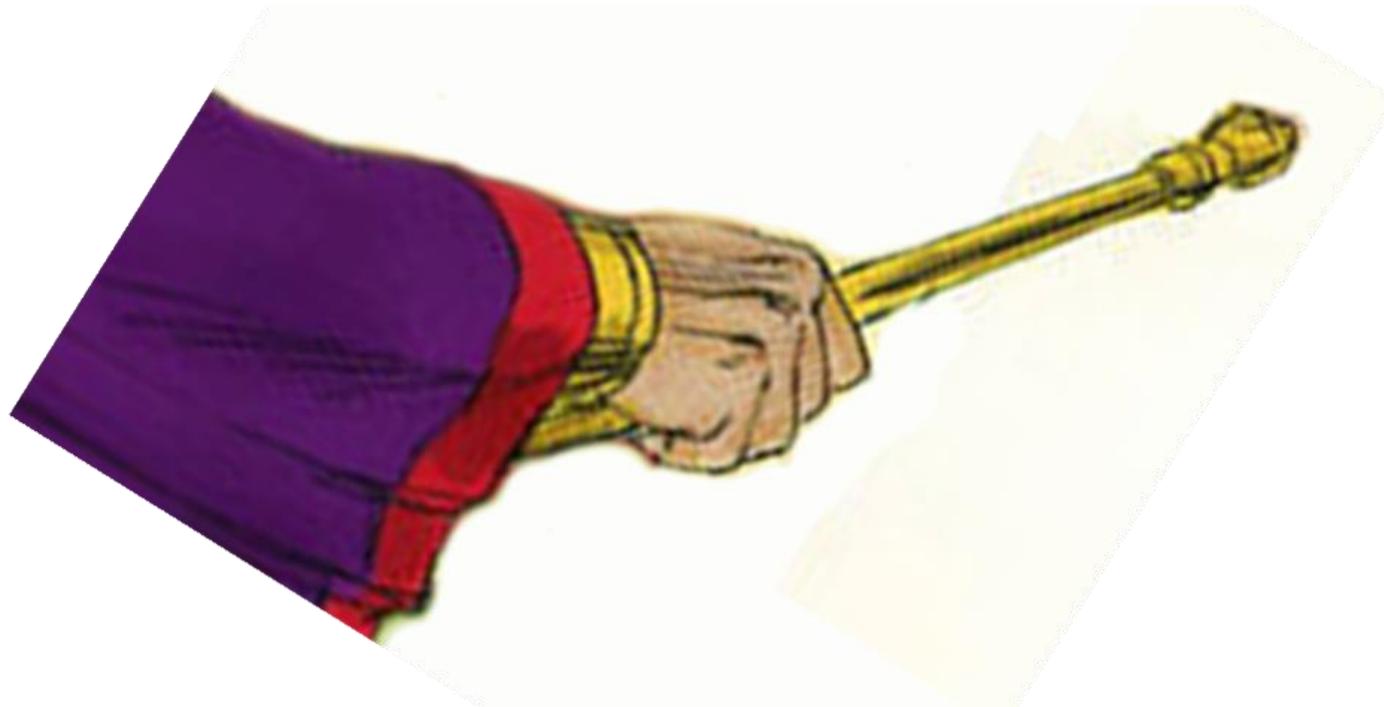
## You know the rules! Persian Protocol - again

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

except the one to whom the king holds out the golden sceptre  
so that he may live.



King Jesus has done that for us!

## Not interested anymore? – a dangerous time

But as for me,  
I have not been called to come in to the king these thirty days.

His wife hasn't seen him for

**30 DAYS**

Could this also be  
God's providence?

When he sees her  
again after all that  
time!

And they told Mordecai what Esther had said.  
Then Mordecai told them to reply to Esther,

**It's a big risk  
BUT what is the  
alternative?**



**You can't say "It's nothing to do with me?"**

Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews.

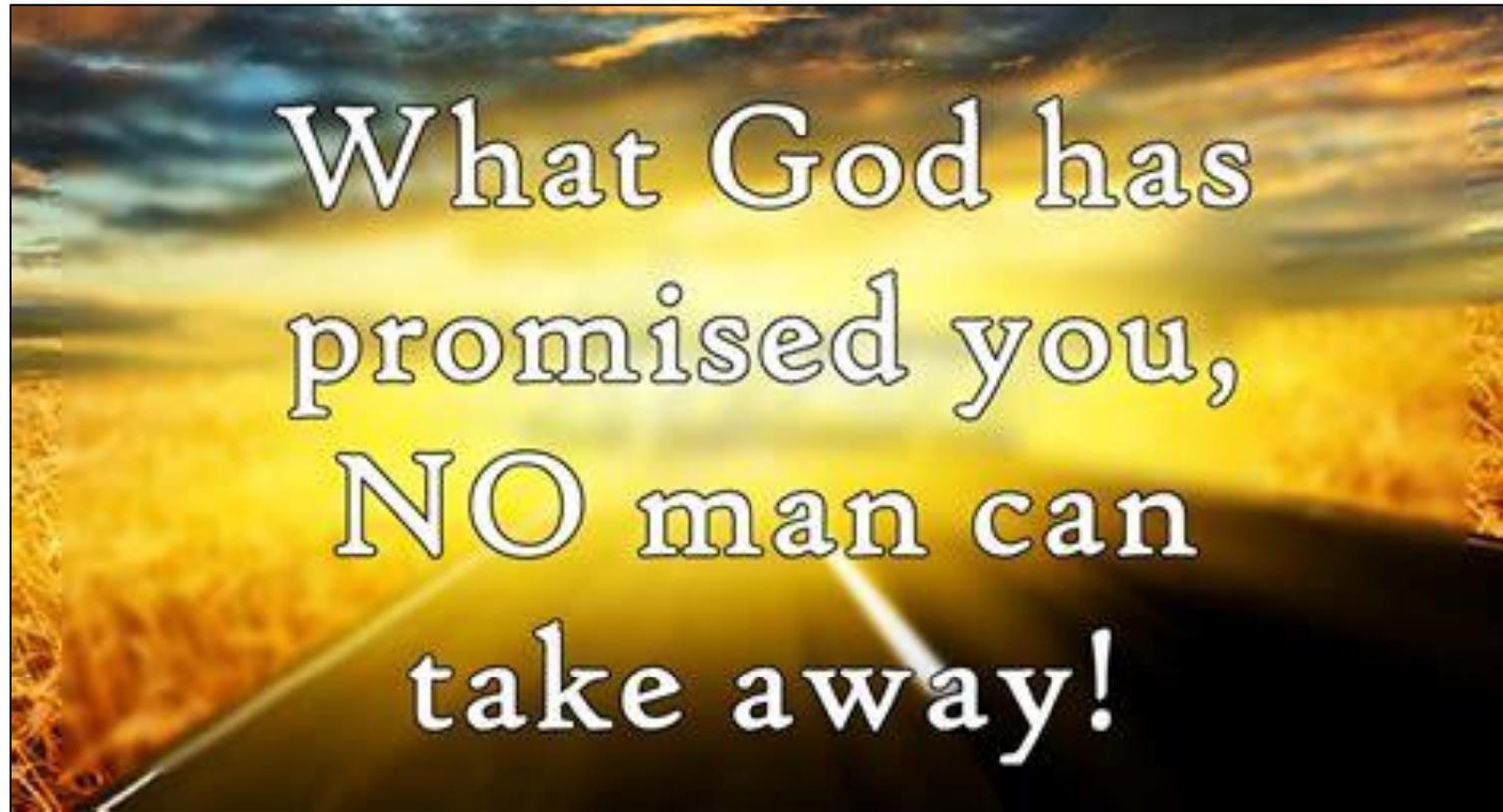


**NO ESCAPE**

Your disobedience will not be blessed

## Mordechai's FAITH

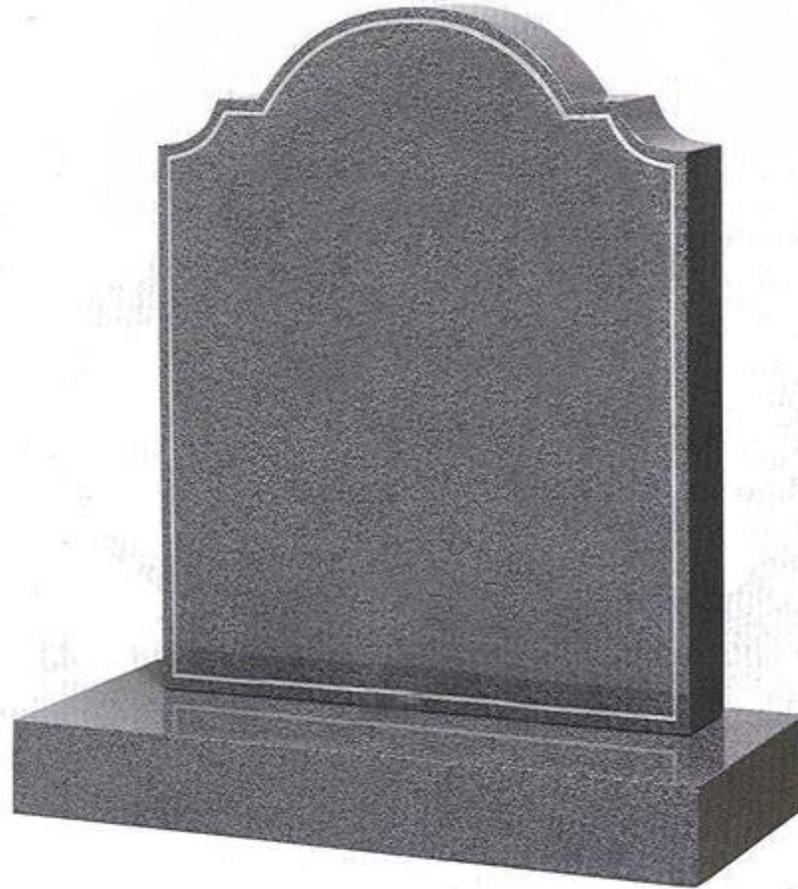
For if you keep silent at this time,  
relief and deliverance **will** rise for the Jews from another place,



Jeremiah 31:35-36

**No faith – no action – no hope (no pressure)**

but you and your father's house will perish.



## Is this God's providence?

And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"



There's a mystery in God's plans and timing in our lives.

# Spiritual Action!

Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai, “Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf,”

God’s name and prayer isn’t mentioned but what is the fast about?

Earnest prayer for Esther.

This isn’t “virtue signalling”

It’s serious!

Cf. Matthew 6:5-17



# How long was the “three days”?

and do not eat or drink for three days, night or day.”

Often, time is counted inclusively – a part day being counted as a whole. Also the Hebrew day begins at night.

Part day	1
Night – day	2
Night – part day	3



## Shared strength and encouragement.

I and my young women will also fast as you do.



Did Esther fast too? If so, how did she look so good after it?

# I'm willing to trust and try.

Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law,

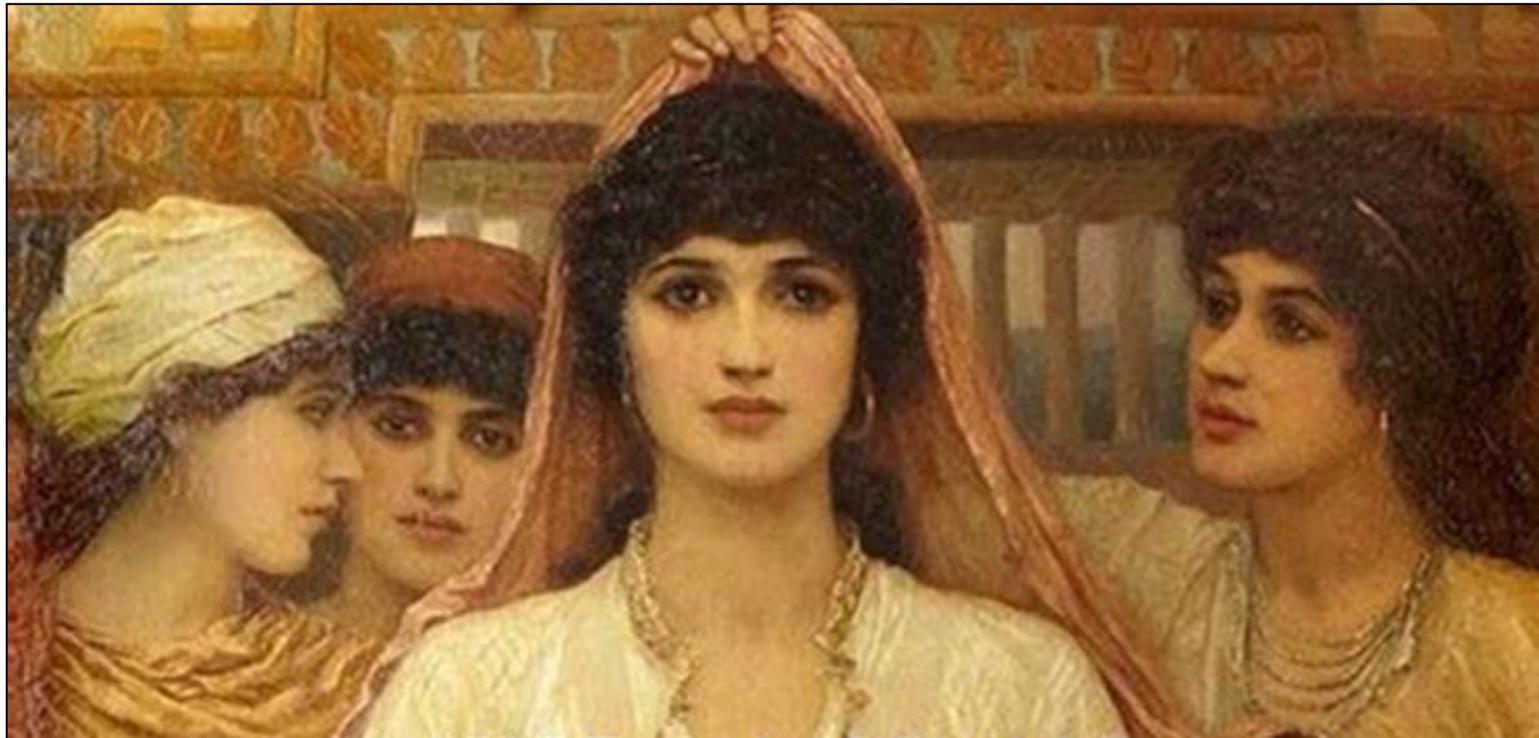
This isn't civil disobedience – it's her own life at risk.  
It is a necessity –but does she know how it is going to work out?



**It is all in God's hands**

and if I perish, I perish.

She is willing to die – it's an uncertain personal outcome.



God cannot be manipulated – by fasting etc. BUT you can ask!

## Contact the fellowship network

Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.



All this occurs round about Passover time – the first month.  
Are we going to see another great deliverance for the Jews?



It takes courage.