

# Who Knows? • Esther 4:14

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## INTRO

1. At the dawn of time, there was nothing but a quantum field, a limitless dimension of potentiality.
2. Then, something like a burp in the field caused a wave that produced a single sub-atomic particle.
3. That acted on the field, causing more waves and more particles.
4. But, all this happened *so fast*, it created a huge explosion we know as The Big Bang.
5. Matter was cast across ever-expanding space.
6. Gravity then pulled this matter into swirling clouds of gas that became galaxies, stars, & planets.
7. One of those planets circling a yellow dwarf star, was at *just the right distance* that something interesting happened.
  - a. Though statistically impossible, the laws of probability not allowing it, it nevertheless produced the conditions that allowed for the emergence of life.
  - b. It happened like this ...
    - 1) As the planet cooled, it developed oceans and continents.
    - 2) The thin crust of the planet floated on a core of molten rock.
    - 3) That crust cracked, forming vast plates that rubbed against each other.
    - 4) That tension caused the land to buckle, forming mountains.
    - 5) Water in the form of rain fell on the mountains.
    - 6) At night it froze, causing the stone to crack.
    - 7) Eventually, a rock, caused by those cracks, broke loose and tumbled down the hillside where it smashed into other rocks caused by the same, slow process.
    - 8) As the rocks banged into each other, a square little button formed.
    - 9) More totally random banging etched a figure like a 5 on the button.
    - 10) Now it looked suspiciously like a key for a keyboard.
    - 11) Even more knocking about saw the 5-key fall into a frame along with a bunch of other key, with numbers and mathematical symbols on them.
    - 12) That key-board just happened to then get knocked onto a case holding a circuit board.
    - 13) Voila. A calculator.

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8. That of course, is absurd.
  - a. Yet the complexity of this (calculator) comes no where close to the complexity of a dandelion, let alone a human.
  - b. NO ONE believes the calculator came about as the result of random chance. **No one.**
  - c. The engineering of this (calculator) REQUIRES a designer; an engineer.
  - d. What's made, by virtue of it's very existence, **demand**s a maker.
9. Yet we're told = Everything came from nothing.
  - a. And complex life came about as the result of nothing more than a bunch of random particles knocking about over a very long time.
  - b. The materialist says that given enough time, ANYTHING is possible.
  - c. Uh, no. Time doesn't DO anything.
  - d. Set a dozen chimpanzees in front of keyboards, they will *never* hammer out Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*.
  - e. Even the famous evolutionist Charles Darwin recognized the problems of the materialist view on the origin of life.
  - f. He saw **no way** evolution could account for the development of the eye.

- g. He said that the whole idea the eye could arise by chance was, to use his word, “absurd” and it caused him a “cold-shudder.”
  - h. Nevertheless, he said, the eye **must** have evolved.
  - i. Why? Because he **WOULD not** accept the existence of a Creator.
  - j. None is so blind as those who **WILL** not see.
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### Why Start Here?

1. You may wonder why I start a message out of the Story of Esther here.
  2. Because only 1 of 2 options is possible: Either God exists, or He doesn't.
  3. Wherever you land on that has HUGE consequences.
    - a. In fact, it's **THE** most important thought you have.
    - b. Because it drives every other thought and the choices they propel.
  4. The existence of God, specifically the God of the Bible, is the main idea shaping the story before us.
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### Setting the Scene

1. v14 is our goal. But it requires context.
  2. The setting is the winter palace of the Persian Empire at the height of it's glory.
  3. The Persian King is Xerxes; the villain in the movie *300*.
    - a. But trust me, the real Xerxes was *nothing* like the guy in the movie)
    - b. His Hebrew name is Ahasuerus.
  4. He needed a new Queen so they did a Persian version of *The Bachelor*.
  5. He picked a beauty named Esther, who kept her identity as a Jew, secret.
  6. An orphan, Esther was raised by her much older cousin Mordecai, an official of the royal court.
  7. Enter the villain of the story; **Haman**.
    - a. King Ahasuerus promoted him to 2<sup>nd</sup> most powerful in the Kingdom,
    - b. Commanding that all bow when he passed by.
    - c. But Haman was an Amalekite, a people God told Israel's King Saul to wipe out for their incredibly evil ways.
    - d. Saul refused to. As a result, the Amalekites resurged.
    - e. And centuries later, one of them, Haman, pledges to do to the Jews what Saul had failed to do to them – wipe them out.
  8. While everyone else bowed to him, Mordecai refused.
  9. Enraged, Haman decided to not just go after Mordecai; he'd end both he and all his fellow Jews.
  10. He manipulated the king into signing a decree calling for a Holocaust of all Jews in the Empire.
  11. The date was set at just under a year away.
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### Mordecai Tells Esther

1. Mordecai suspects that living an isolated life in the palace, Esther doesn't know about the decree.
2. So he sends her a message. // Her response in effect is, “What do you expect me to do?”
3. He tells her she has to go before the king, interceding on behalf of her people >>
4. And therein lies the problem.
5. Esther tells Mordecai ...

<sup>11</sup> “All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, *he has* but one law: put *all* to death, except the 1 to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these 30 days.”

1. This rule of the Persian court is verified by the Greek historian Herodotus.
  - a. No one was allowed to enter the inner court where the royal throne was unless summoned by the king.
  - b. If someone wanted an audience, they sent a request that took weeks, sometimes months, to process.
  - c. The Jews didn't have that kind of time.
2. If anyone appeared before the king *unbidden*, it was a presumption punishable by death.
3. **Unless**, on a whim, the king showed mercy by extending his scepter.
4. That rule applied to all; even the queen.
  - a. Esther had little hope of an invitation as Ahasuerus hadn't called for her in a month.
  - b. His initial fascination with her has dimmed. He's spending time with his harem instead.

**<sup>12</sup> So they told Mordecai Esther's words.**

1. The entire exchange between Esther & Mordecai has been carried on by messenger.

**<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.**

1. Esther had kept her identity a secret from the king.
2. But for sure, some of the palace staff knew.
3. Once the pogrom began, she'd most likely be outed by someone.
4. Maybe one of the harem, jealous for her position.
5. Esther's rags to riches, orphan to queen, fairytale dream-life has turned to a nightmare.

**<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.**

1. Mordecai knew God's promise to preserve His people.
2. Though Haman's conspiracy would bring death to many thousands, at least a remnant would survive.
3. But Esther was in the **best** position to help her people.
4. **Dangerous** times demand **daring** action.
5. Mordecai wants to see Esther rise to the occasion so he speaks the fate-bending words around which the entire story of Esther is spun.

**Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for *such* a time as this?"**

### **Who Knows?**

1. Those words have been quoted many times since Mordecai first spoke them.
2. **When** he did, it was a >> *Supposition, a Possibility*.
  - a. He says, "Who knows? Maybe **this** is why you're queen."
  - b. "Maybe **this** is why God gave you physical beauty, so you'd be one of the young women selected a few years ago for that beauty pageant to select a new queen."
  - c. "Who knows? Maybe **this** is why the previous queen, Vashti, was deposed for refusing Ahasuerus' summons."
  - d. "Who knows? Maybe **this** is why your parents died, so Mordecai would raise you and form a connection that would bring you word of the decree & present this challenge."
  - e. "Who knows? Maybe the king hasn't called you for a month so the absence will make his heart grow fonder so when he sees you & he'll extend his scepter."
  - f. "Who knows? Maybe God really is in control & the best thing to do is to trust Him & step out in faith."
3. This brings us back to where we started. // Either God exists or doesn't.

4. **If He doesn't**, the universe is a meaningless collection of atoms in random reactions.
  - a. What we call life is nothing but a set of those reactions.
  - b. There's no REAL right or wrong, good or evil; no purpose, meaning, nor goal.
  - c. We're insignificant sacks of meat on a tiny ball of mud, circling a sphere of burning gas in an empty universe.
5. But: If God **does** exist, then the universe **and you** exist FOR A REASON.
  - a. There IS meaning, purpose, and a goal.
  - b. You're **NOT** the result of atoms banging against each other in random reactions.
  - c. No. YOU are a *human being*, created in God's image that you could have a REAL, eternally-intimate relationship with Him.
  - d. History *isn't* a meaningless sequences of events with no origin nor end.
  - e. It's *His-Story*. One in which you and I are called to have a part; to PLAY a part.
  - f. You don't live here-now *by chance*.
  - g. Despite what a parent or sibling may have said years ago when you were young, you are **NOT** a mistake.
  - h. **You** have a divine assignment.

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6. Because God IS God, His will, **ultimately** will be done.
  - a. Everything is going to come about as He's decreed.
  - b. The question is: Will we follow the course & plan He's set **for us**?
  - c. Will we do what **we're** here to do, or not?
7. **Your** life, **your** story, is no less the path God set for you than Esther's.
8. You've been called to the **Kingdom of God** for this moment → Here/Now.
9. Consider history ...
  - a. it's the same pattern, over & over.
  - b. Someone becomes the hinge round which events swing.
10. Take **Abraham Lincoln** for example.
  - a. His life was mostly a long list of failures.
  - b. He went bankrupt as a shop-keeper.
  - c. He was repeatedly defeated running for public office.
  - d. But God eventually brought him to the White House where he became the moral conscience of a nation.
  - e. By sheer force of his convictions, he saw the Union preserved and restored.
11. **Winston Churchill** had an interesting past.
  - a. Of the English nobility; he had a privileged life as a child.
  - b. We might think he'd be soft, but he was a POW during the African Boer War & suffered cruelly.
  - c. He lived a real *The Great Escape*, & made his way through extremely harsh conditions to safety.
  - d. Before WWII, he was a discredited politician.
  - e. But thru all this God shaped Churchill to be one who'd almost single-handedly resist the Nazi juggernaut.
  - f. He rallied the free world to stand against evil in one of the darkest times of human history.

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12. Here we are, as history moves to its grand climax.
  - a. The battle between good & evil rapidly heats up.
  - b. The spirit of antichrist is moving; an End-Time-Haman casts his shadow across the world,
  - c. Threatening a Final Holocaust.
13. And THIS is the moment God's called **us** to live, living in His grace & truth,
14. Boldly declaring The Gospel of Jesus Christ, the only message that saves.
15. All that hinders us is what hindered Esther, **fear**.

16. One of the greatest disasters in history took place in **1271**.

- a. Niccolo & Matteo Polo (father & uncle of Marco) visited Kubla Khan, ruler of China, India, & the East.
- b. The Khan was attracted to the story of Christ & said to the Polos, →  
“Go to your (Pope) and tell him on my behalf to send me a hundred men skilled in your religion and I shall be baptized, and when I am baptized all my barons and great men will be baptized and their subjects will receive baptism, too, and so there will be more Christians here than there are in your parts.”
- c. The Polos returned to Europe with the Khan’s message, **but nothing was done**.
- d. Because of fear, **no one** went for the next 3 decades.
- e. Then finally, Marco set out and 3 priests // But they bailed when the journey became difficult.
- f. Think what a difference it would have made if in 14<sup>th</sup> C China, India, & the Far East were covered with the Gospel.

18. Don’t give in to fear. Step out in faith, trusting in the God who created you FOR HERE & NOW.

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