

A low-angle, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a person's legs and feet standing on a city street. The person is wearing dark jeans and black sneakers with white soles. The background is a blurred city street with buildings and streetlights, creating a bokeh effect. The word "CHOICES" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font, centered horizontally and partially obscured by the person's legs. Below it, the phrase "THE MOMENTS THAT CHANGE LIVES" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, flanked by horizontal lines.

CHOICES

THE MOMENTS THAT CHANGE LIVES







King Xerxes (Ahasuerus)

- Persian king (modern-day Iran), who ruled over 127 provinces stretching from India to Cush (1:1)
- Unsuccessfully led a major invasion of Greece (300 Movies)
- Threw a party for 180 days in order to display the vast wealth of his kingdom and the splendor and glory of his majesty (1:4)
- Requested the queen to display her beauty to his guests, but she refused (1:10-12)
- Decided to banish and replace his queen (1:19)



Esther

- A Jew, who were God's chosen people, who's family had been taken as prisoners of war from Israel by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (2:5-6)
- Raised by her cousin Mordecai after her parents passed away (2:7)
- Instructed by Mordecai not to reveal her nationality or family background (2:10)
- Chosen by King Xerxes to become his new queen (2:17)



Haman

- An Agagite, who were the first ones to attack God's people after Moses lead them out of Egypt (3:3)
- God promises Israel will fight with the Amalekites until their memory is blotted out (Ex 17, Deut 25)
- Became King Xerxes's right hand man, to whom others were commanded to kneel down and honor, which everyone did except Mordecai (3:1-2)
- So enraged that he determined to kill not only Mordecai, but all of Mordecai's people—the Jews—too (3:5-6)




Haman

- Told the king that there was a group of people in his kingdom who kept to themselves, had their own culture, and didn't obey the king's laws (3:8)
- Suggested the king issue a decree to destroy all these people (3:9)
- The king agreed (3:11)
- The Jews were set to be destroyed on a day 11 months away (3:13)



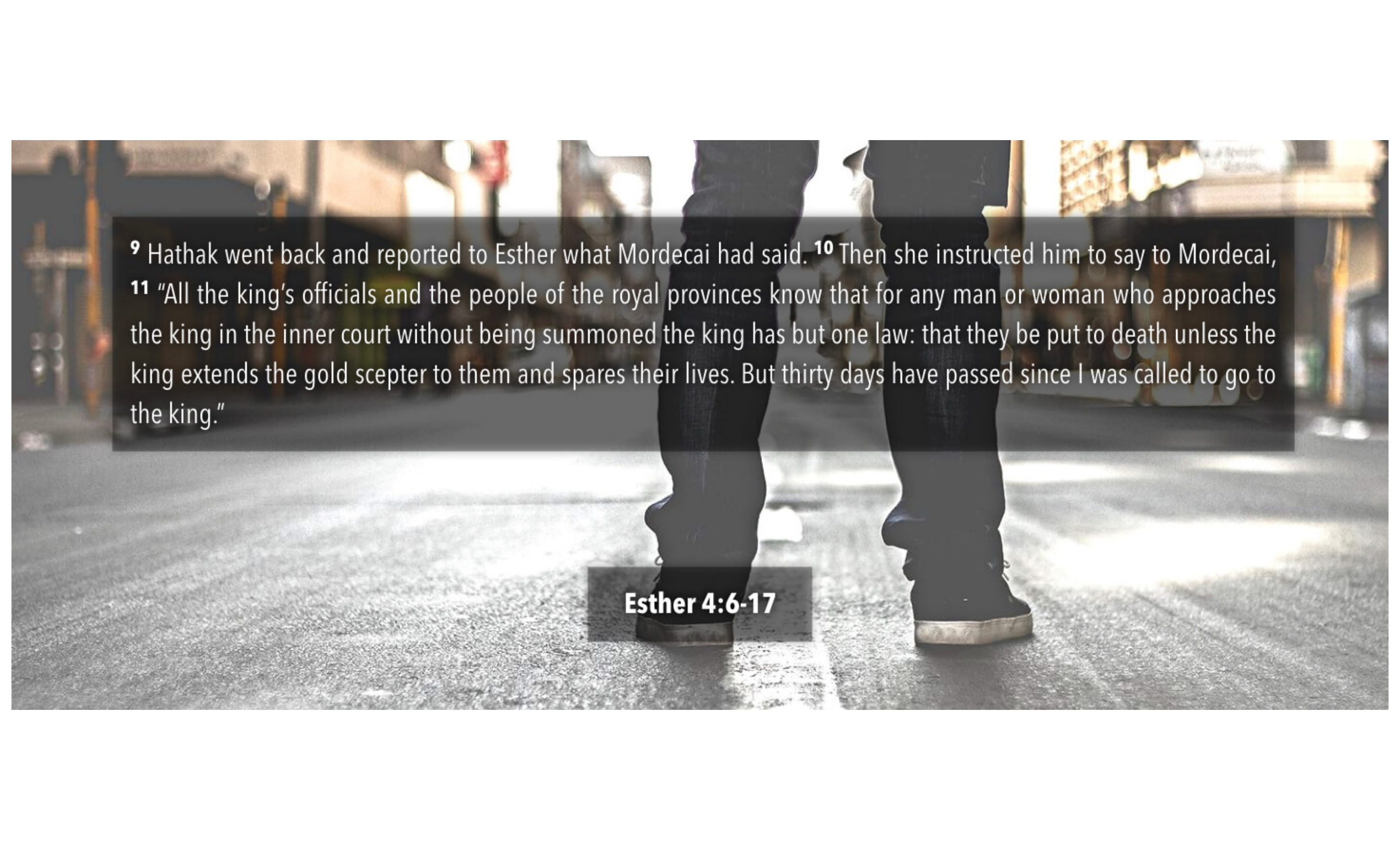
Mordecai

- After hearing the decree, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and began to wail loudly and bitterly outside the king's gate (4:1-2)
- Not just Mordecai, all the Jews throughout the kingdom began to mourn (4:3)
- When Esther heard what Mordecai was doing she sent a servant to find out what was wrong (4:5)



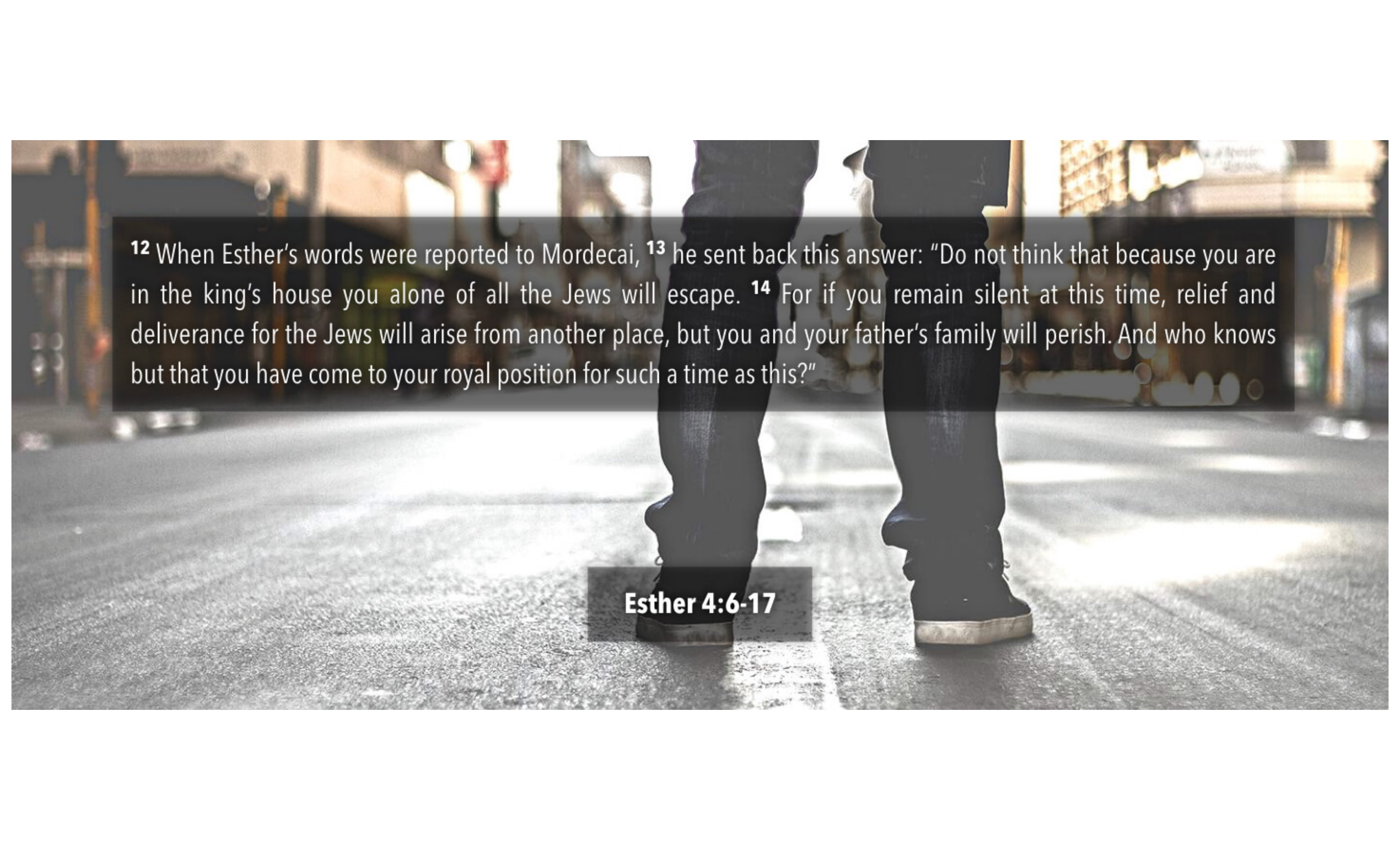
⁶ So Hathak went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate. ⁷ Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. ⁸ He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to instruct her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.

Esther 4:6-17

A low-angle, close-up shot of a person's legs from the knees down, standing on a paved city street at night. The person is wearing dark blue jeans and black sneakers with white soles. The background is a blurred city street with warm, yellowish light from streetlights or buildings, creating a bokeh effect. A semi-transparent dark grey rectangular box is overlaid on the upper half of the image, containing white text. Another smaller, solid black rectangular box is positioned at the bottom center, containing the text 'Esther 4:6-17' in white.

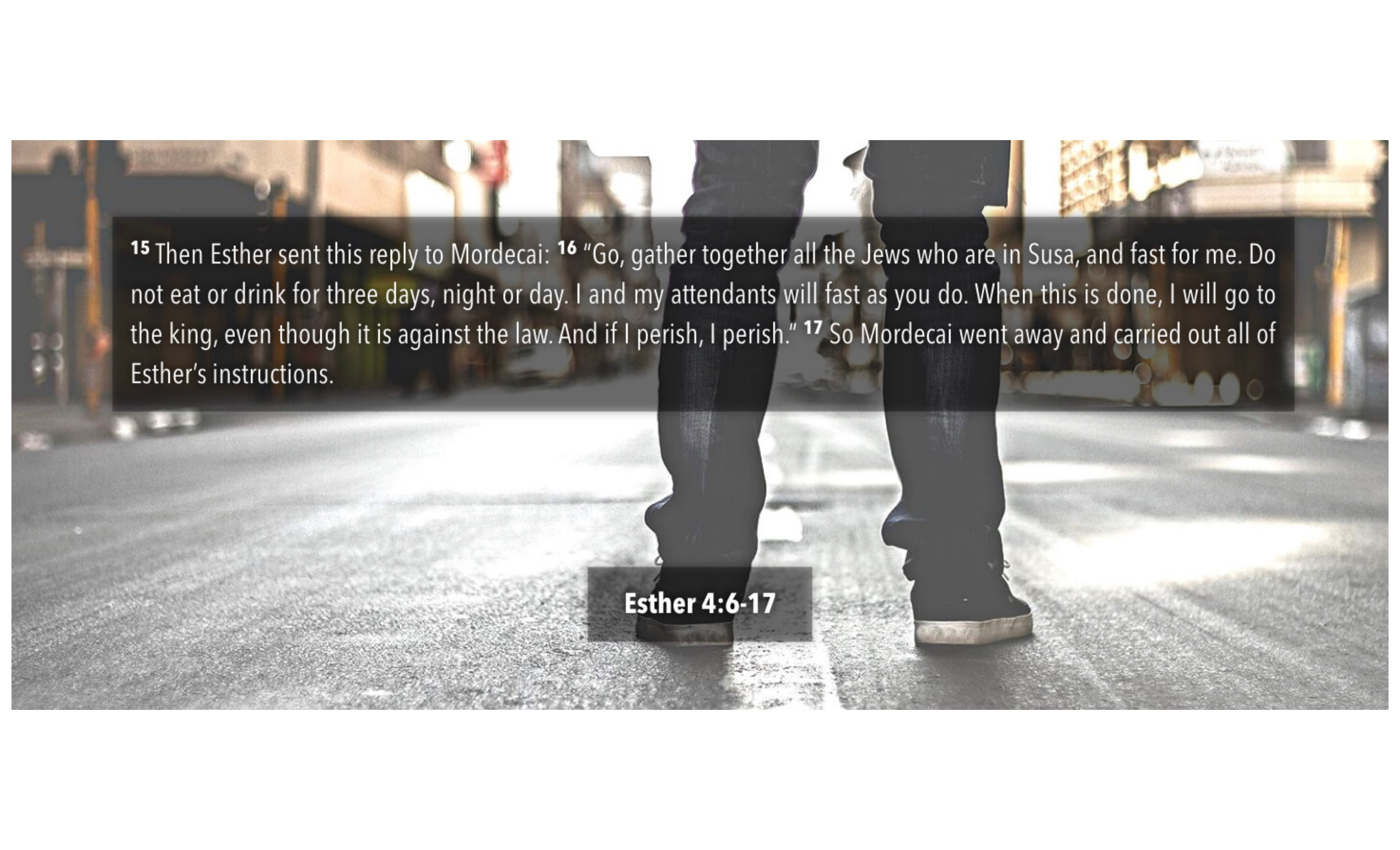
⁹ Hathak went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. ¹⁰ Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, ¹¹ "All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that they be put to death unless the king extends the gold scepter to them and spares their lives. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king."

Esther 4:6-17



¹² When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, ¹³ he sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. ¹⁴ For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

Esther 4:6-17



15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: **16** "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my attendants will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish." **17** So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther's instructions.

Esther 4:6-17



RESPONSE

What if God has me in my current spheres and situations for a reason?

Where in my life might God want to use me to make an impact?

Will I choose to believe that God has me in these places *for such a time as this*?