

Esther

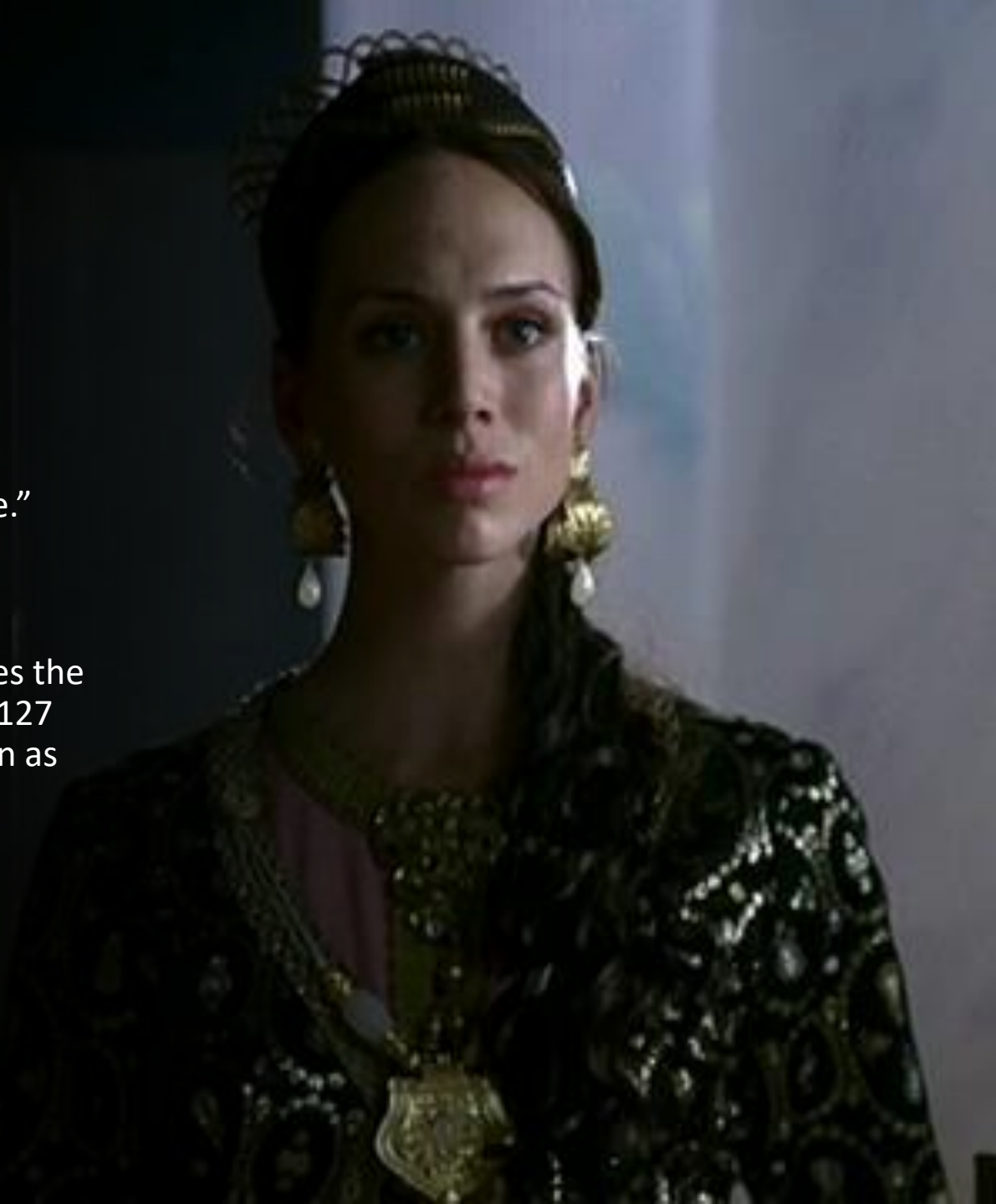
Come Follow Me



Esther

Her Hebrew name is Hadassah הַדַּסָּה- a word that means “myrtle tree.”
(see Esther 2.7)

The book of Esther is divided into 10 chapters. The first chapter locates the story “in the days of Ahasuerus, the same Ahasuerus who ruled over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia.” The king in question is better known as Xerxes, who reigned from 485-465 B.C.



Hadassah

Her Hebrew name is Hadassah הַדַּסָּה- a word that means “myrtle tree.” The myrtle is an evergreen (Targ. Sheni, Esth. 2:7), and the rabbis thus compared it with the good qualities of Esther whose Hebrew name was Hadassah ("myrtle"). Its aromatic branches were used for preparing the bride-groom's wreaths (Tosef., Sot. 15:8). They were used in festivities and betrothal celebrations... The leaves of the myrtle have the shape of the eye (Lev. R. 30: 14). [[The Jewish Virtual Library](#)]





Themes

The story draws on conventional themes of ancient storytelling known from the Bible and from extrabiblical sources from the Persian period... a rivalry between courtiers, a woman who uses her charm to save her people, an ancient ethnic feud, hidden identities, and the triumph of the forces of good over the forces of evil. (*The Jewish Study Bible*, p. 1620)

Similarities between Judith and Esther

The apocryphal book of Judith and the canonical book of Esther have several similarities:

1. Both show powerful women willing to take risks to save their people.
2. Both involve reversals.
3. The opening scene in the book of Esther contains similarities with Holofernes' canopy (see Esther 1.5-7 and Judith 10.21).



Credibility

Such a time as this

Mordecai said,

"For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4.14)

