

Questions

1. Read Hebrews 2:14-17; 7:23-28, Hebrews 10:11-12, 19-21. What more do these passages tell us about Jesus as our great high priest (his role, his work) and the effect it has on us?
2. What does Esther 4:14 suggest about the relationship between God's sovereignty and our responsibility? (See also Genesis 50:20; Jer. 1:4-7) How do you think understanding God's completely sovereignty should move us to action and obedience, and not complacency?
3. Read 1 Peter 2:9. What do we learn about our priesthood?
4. In Jewish tradition, the "third day" (5:1) symbolizes a day of deliverance. And this acceptance of Esther foreshadows the deliverance her mediating work will produce. Read Gen 22:4; 31:22; Jonah 1:17; Hosea 6:1-3; Matt. 16:21; 27:62-64; John 2:19-21; 1 Cor. 15:1-4. Reflect on these passages and discuss how "on the third day" points to Jesus.
5. In Jesus—the greater mediator—we have power to take faithful steps of obedience. Knowing that, where in your life are you in need of turning from fear to faith?
6. Again, because Jesus first identified with us, he now empowers us to do the same. Are there areas in your life, or particular people, that you struggle to identify with Jesus clearly and boldly? Why do you think that is?
7. Jesus mediated between warring parties by satisfying God's just anger against our sin through his shed blood. So now, instead of hostility between us, there now only remains peace. How should knowing this move us toward God (when we sin, when we struggle, when we "feel" God is angry at us, when His providence seems bitter)?



The Mediator

Esther 4:1 – 5:8

Stuart McCray, Associate Pastor

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In Esther 4:1-5:8 God's people need a mediator to intercede on their behalf before the King; Esther will be that. This side of the cross, Jesus is the greater mediator. In this passage, we see 4 realities of a mediator that point to Jesus as the greater mediator.

Esther isn't the main character in this story. God is! Esther points to Jesus, the greater mediator. This side of the cross, we know the whole Bible is all about Jesus. It all points to him.

1. The Need of a Mediator – 4:1-8

*After each service, if you need prayer,
someone will be available up front to pray with or for you.*

If Esther will not identify with her people—claim them as her own—she will not risk the danger involved in being their mediator.

We too need a mediator who will identify to intervene on our behalf before Holy God. And, in Jesus Christ, God has provided us with such a mediator! A mediator who identified with his people, stood in the gap between us and God, and offered himself as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. (Hebrews 2:14-17.)

2. The Cost of the Mediator – 4:9-11

There is about 400 years of silence between the end of the OT and the birth of Jesus. And even then, it's thousands of years from Creation to the birth of Jesus. But when God determined that the right time came, He providentially provided Jesus to save His people. It was not our plan to provide Jesus, it was God's plan!

4. The Boldness of a Mediator – 5:1-8

There is a big reversal between Esther and Jesus. The people whom Esther was contemplating intervening for were innocent victims who didn't deserve the King of Persia unjustly pouring his unrighteous wrath on them. But the people whom Jesus would intervene for were guilty sinners who did deserve the King of the Universe justly pouring his righteous wrath on them.

3. The Provision of a Mediator – 4:12-17

Esther, after much fear, bravely says, "If I perish, I perish". And she does bravely face the possibility of death to bring salvation for her people, but in the end she doesn't. But Jesus, the greater mediator, faced the certainty of death to bring salvation for his people, and in the end He does.