

A Better Mediator (Esther 4:1-7)

Reacting to the Edict (4:1-3)

- But how will the Jews specifically respond to Haman's plan?
- All Jews throughout empire respond with "mourning, fasting, weeping and lamenting" and putting on sackcloth and ashes
- In short: The people are broken!

Mordecai Sends Word to Esther (4:4-11)

- Esther had to be told what was happening to Mordecai (4:4)
 - Living in the palace, she was sheltered – she didn't know what was happening outside the luxury of the palace
- Mordecai tells Esther what has been happening outside of the palace
- Esther wonders what she is supposed to do
 - No one – not even her as the queen – can enter the king's presence without being called for
 - Entering king's presence uninvited had one of two outcomes
 - Either he lowers his scepter to welcome the person
 - Or his axeman lowers his axe
 - And Esther has not been invited to see the king for 30 days

Everything Changes (4:12-17)

- Mordecai warns Esther not to think herself safe
- The hope of deliverance
 - Most important verse in Esther: *"For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place..." (4:14)*
- Decision time... aka Esther's conversion
 - Most famous verse in Esther: *"For such a time as this..." (4:14)*

Exiles

- As we have seen, Mordecai and Esther had done their best to fit into the empire
- They forgot they were exiles... they had grown quite comfortable being assimilated
- The Bible describes us, Christians, as exiles as well (Phil 3:17-20)
- Like Esther and Mordecai, all of us as going to have to make a decision at some point: Are we going to assimilate to the empire, or are we going to identify ourselves as citizen's of God's kingdom?

Repentance

- Why did Mordecai and the Jews react to the edict the way they did?

Joel 2:12-15	Esther 4
Fasting, weeping, mourning (2:12)	Fasting, weeping, mourning (4:3)
Rend your hearts, not your clothes (2:13)	Mordecai tears his clothes (4:1)
"Who knows..." (2:14)	"Who knows..." (4:14)
"Consecrate a fast" (2:15)	Esther declares a fast (4:16)

- Like Esther and Mordecai, for all of us, the first step in being used by God is to repent and return to the Lord our God

A Better Savior

- *"If I perish, I perish" (4:16)*
- Esther is going to become the mediator of the Jews
- If: Esther risked her life on an "if"
 - For Jesus, there was no risk, no if
 - His death was a sure part of the plan
- Esther's actions saved some of God's people
 - Those in the Persian empire at that point in history
 - Jesus' actions saved all of God's people in every time and every place
- Esther agreed to do so when she scared and reluctantly
 - Jesus went to the cross humbly and willingly... and confidently
- The difference: Unlike for Esther, for Jesus, the outcome was assured. He would die, yes, but he would rise again both as Mediator of God's people and as their Savior

Esther risked her life to save some of God's people at a particular point and place in history. Jesus gave his to save all of God's people in all places and for all times.