

Lesson 11: Hebrews 8 A Better Covenant

I. Introduction

Hebrews 8 serves as a crucial chapter that juxtaposes the Old Covenant with the New Covenant instituted by Jesus Christ. It emphasizes Jesus as a Better Priest Forever. The author of Hebrews unites the concept of Jesus as the High Priest eternally functioning under a Better Covenant. The author explicitly states that the "chief point" is that we have a High Priest **seated** in ultimate power at God's right hand, offering constant intercession. Unlike earthly priests who stood because their work was never done, Jesus' seated position signifies His sacrifice is **finished and complete**.

Jesus does not serve in an earthly, man-made temple but in heavenly sanctuary. The earthly Tabernacle built by Moses was merely a "copy and shadow" of this heavenly original. Because Jesus serves in the real sanctuary and mediates a superior covenant, His ministry surpasses that of the Levitical priest. The New Covenant is "better" because it's not based on flawed human effort (which always failed, as seen in the Old Covenant) but on God's promise and Christ's perfect mediation.

Instead of external laws on stone, the New Covenant promises God's law written on the heart and mind, leading to genuine, Spirit-enabled obedience and a new nature. This covenant brings complete forgiveness, a promise absent in the old system where sins were only covered temporarily. The Law of Works couldn't save; it revealed sin but provided no power to overcome it, leading to condemnation, whereas Christ fulfills the Law's demands: The blood of Christ, a full remission of sins was provided.

The focus of this chapter is to reveal Christ's supreme glory as the Mediator of a covenant that offers not merely regulations, but also life, power, and eternal salvation through His perfect blood and exalted position, a stark contrast to the inability of the old Mosaic Law's inability to save. Charles Spurgeon states, "the old covenant has vanished away, with all its types, and symbols, and sacrifices. As the morning mists dissolve upon the rising of the sun, as darkness flies away when the light shines, so has the covenant of works departed for ever; and, in its place, stands out the everlasting covenant of God's unmerited mercy to the most guilty and vile of the sons and daughters of men."

II. Study the Scriptures: Read the Passage Hebrews 8

Note your thoughts as you read:

Write down any questions that come to mind as you read:

III. Think Through the Following Questions:

1. According to Hebrews 8:2, Jesus' ministry as our High Priest takes place in the heavenly tabernacle,, what does it mean that Jesus serves in the "true tabernacle" in heaven, and how does this contrast with the priests in the earthly tabernacle?
2. What were the shortcomings or limitations of the Old Covenant? Does the New Covenant render the Old Covenant obsolete, or did the Old Covenant act as a shadow?
3. According to verses 10-11, how does the presence of God's law inscribed upon our hearts change our perspective on obedience to Him?
4. In what specific ways am I allowing Holy Spirit to transform my heart rather than just trying to follow a set of rules?
5. How does the New Covenant offer a level of intimacy with God that was limited under the Old?
6. How is the New Covenant promise of forgiveness better than the Old? What is the significance of God no longer remembering our sins?
7. If the New Covenant means 'everyone knows the Lord' from within, not regulation through external law, how does that change the way we teach and encourage one another in the church?

IV. Lessons Learned: Are there any new things you learned from this passage today?

V. Application: How do you think this will impact your thinking and/or actions going forward?