

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews

The Superior Covenant

Hebrews 8:1-13

I. FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION

A. The Previous Studies

1. Christ's superiority to creation (Hebrews 1:1-14; Hebrews 2:1-18)
2. Christ's superiority to Moses, Aaron, and Joshua (Hebrews 3:1-19; Hebrews 4:1-16; Hebrews 5:1-14; Hebrews 6:1-20; Hebrews 7:1-28)
3. Note: The first portion of this epistle emphasized the person of Jesus Christ. It demonstrated that Christ was a *better*...
 - a. Messenger than the angels (Hebrews 1:1-14; Hebrews 2:1-18)
 - b. Founder than Moses (Hebrews 3:1-19)
 - c. Conqueror than Joshua (Hebrews 4:1-16)
 - d. Mediator than Aaron (Hebrews 5:1-14; Hebrews 6:1-20; Hebrews 7:1-28)

B. The Present Transition

1. The precursor to transition (Hebrews 8:1)
 - a. The reminder of the past—"Now of the things which we have spoken"
 - b. The substance or summation of the past—"this is the sum"
2. The destination of this transition
 - a. The making of a better covenant (Hebrews 8:1-13)
 - b. The offering of a better sacrifice (Hebrews 9:1-28)
 - c. The provision of a better sanctification (Hebrews 10:1-39)
 - d. Note: We began the epistle with the study of the *person* of Christ and now transition to the *work* of Christ. This dichotomy is the manner in which any person of the Godhead ought to be studied.

II. THE PRIEST OF THE COVENANT (Hebrews 8:1-6)

A. The Position of the Priest (Hebrews 8:1)

1. Comparatively
 - a. The statement of comparison—"We have **such** an high priest,"
 - b. The subject of comparison
 - (1) The superiority of Christ's priesthood to that of the Levitical priesthood (Hebrews 5:1-10)
 - (2) The superiority of Christ/Melchisedec in person, position, and qualification (Hebrews 7:1-28)



2. Specifically
 - a. His posture—"who is set"
 - (1) Why this matters
 - a) The Old Testament was constantly labouring. His work was seemingly never done.
 - b) When Christ accomplished His death, resurrection, and ascension, He sat down (Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 12:2; see also Colossians 3:1).
 - (2) An unusual moment (Acts 7:55-56)
 - b. His position
 - (1) Literally
 - a) On the right hand (Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalm 16:11; Psalm 110:1, 5; Matthew 22:44; Matthew 26:64; Mark 12:36; Mark 14:62; Mark 16:19; Luke 20:42; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:25, 33, 34; Acts 7:55-56; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; Hebrews 10:12; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22)
 - b) Of the throne of the Majesty
 - i) Descriptive of God or His surroundings (1 Chronicles 29:11; Jeremiah 37:22; Psalm 29:4; Psalm 45:3-4; Psalm 93:1; Psalm 96:6; Psalm 104:1; Psalm 145:5, 12; Isaiah 2:10, 19, 22; Isaiah 24:14; Isaiah 26:10; Micah 5:4; 2 Peter 1:16; Jude 1:25)
 - ii) As a title of God (Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 8:1)
 - c) In the heavens—that is the third heaven, or the place of God's abode
 - (2) Figuratively
 - a) A place of victory (Hebrews 12:2)
 - b) A place of power (Ephesians 1:19-23)
 - c) A place of intercession (Romans 8:34)

B. The Place of Ministry (Hebrews 8:2)

1. The place
 - a. The description
 - (1) The sanctuary (Psalm 102:19; Revelation 11:19; Revelation 15:5)
 - (2) The true tabernacle
 - b. The teaching
 - (1) The place of Christ's ministry was the original, actual, or true tabernacle.
 - (2) The tabernacle in which the Levitical priesthood ministered was merely designed after the pattern of the true and heavenly tabernacle or temple (Hebrews 8:5; Hebrews 9:23-24).
2. The pitcher
 - a. The Lord
 - b. Not man



C. The Offerings of the Priest (Hebrews 8:3-5)

1. The ordaining for gifts (Hebrews 8:3)
 - a. Every high priest was ordained to offer...
 - (1) Gifts
 - (2) Sacrifices
 - b. It is of necessity that “this man” (the Lord Jesus Christ) have an offering as well. Note: The scripture does not here pause to identify Christ’s offering. Instead, we are introduced to the thought now and will be further educated on the subject in the next chapter. The sacrifice Christ gave was Himself (Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:14).
2. The contrast of shadows and the true (Hebrews 8:4-5)
 - a. The earthly priesthood (Hebrews 8:4-5)
 - (1) Its exclusion of Christ (Hebrews 8:4)
 - a) If Christ were on earth, He should not be a priests.
 - b) There were priests who offered gifts according to the law.
 - c) These priests would have been Levites and would exclude one from Judah.
 - d) Remember the breakdown of Christ’s ministries
 - i) His earthly ministry—Prophet
 - ii) His passion, crucifixion, resurrection, and present—
Priest
 - iii) His future kingdom—King
 - (2) Its presentation (Hebrews 8:5)
 - a) An example or shadow
 - b) Of heavenly things
 - b. The true (Hebrews 8:5)

D. The Mediatorship of the Priest (Hebrews 8:6)

1. A **more excellent** ministry
 - a. The time of obtaining—“now”
 - b. The comparison
 - (1) The ministry of Christ = More excellent
 - (2) Than the ministry of the Levites
2. A **better** covenant
 - a. Christ’s role in the covenant
 - (1) Note: Although the covenant spoken of in the context is not speaking of the same covenant we enjoy as New Testament believers, it is still imperative to understand that Christ is identified in the Church Age as the ONE MEDIATOR between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5-6).
 - (2) Christ serves as this covenant’s mediator as well (see Job 9:32-33 for a better understanding of the work of a mediator).
 - b. The comparison of covenants
 - (1) The new covenant = a better covenant
 - (2) Than that given under the law of Moses



3. **Better** promises
 - a. The foundation of the covenant = promises
 - b. The comparison of the promises
 - (1) The foundation of the new covenant = better promises
 - (2) Than the promises upon which the law was built

III. THE PARTAKERS OF THE COVENANT (Hebrews 8:7-9)

A. The Fault in the First Covenant (Hebrews 8:7-8)

1. The partakers of the first covenant (Hebrews 8:8)
 - a. The house of Israel
 - b. The house of Judah
2. The problem with the first covenant (Hebrews 8:7-8)
 - a. The declaration of a problem (Hebrews 8:7)
 - (1) If it had been faultless
 - (2) No place would have been sought for the second
 - b. The identity of the problem—"finding fault with **them**," (Hebrews 8:8)
 - (1) The weakness of the first covenant (the law) was the flesh (Romans 8:3).
 - (2) The people continued not in God's covenant (Hebrews 8:9).

B. The Details of the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:7-9)

1. The improvement of this covenant (Hebrews 8:7)
 - a. It is faultless.
 - b. It is superior to the first covenant.
2. The timing of this covenant (Hebrews 8:8)
 - a. "The days come,"
 - b. "I will make"
 - c. This covenant will be fulfilled in the Jews at the establishment of the earthly and millennial kingdom.
3. The comparison of this covenant (Hebrews 8:9)
 - a. The old covenant was the law of Moses as given to the children of Israel.
 - (1) In Exodus 24:1-8, we have the record of the formal making of this covenant between the Lord and the Israelites.
 - (2) Moses sprinkled the blood of the covenant on the altar and on the people and the people promised to keep the words of the book of the covenant.
 - (3) This is the covenant mentioned in Jeremiah 31:32.
 - (4) The old covenant of the law failed because of the failure of the Jews to obey it.
 - b. The new covenant is promised in Jeremiah 31:31-34 and also in Ezekiel 37:21-28.



- c. Historically and primarily, the new covenant was promised to the Jewish people.
 - (1) Jeremiah 31:31 is very specific. It will be made with the house of Israel (the northern kingdom) and with the house of Judah (the southern kingdom).
 - (2) There is no way to spiritualize this promise and keep the meaning intact.
 - (3) This was the covenant Paul had in mind in Romans 11:25-29.
 - (4) However, the Gentiles of this age have been enabled to partake of some of the privileges of the new covenant through the cross of Christ.

IV. THE PROVISION OF THE COVENANT (Hebrews 8:10-13)

A. Divine Fellowship (Hebrews 8:10)

1. The laws of God will be put into the minds of the Jews and written in their hearts (Jeremiah 31:33). Ezekiel 37:26-27 refers to this “new heart” and “new spirit” that will cause them to walk in God’s statutes and keep His judgments.
2. Israel’s relationship with God will be perfect.
 - a. He will be their God and they will be His people (Jeremiah 31:33).
 - b. This is a common expectation in the Old Testament (Exodus 6:7; Leviticus 26:12; Jeremiah 24:7; Jeremiah 30:22; Jeremiah 31:1; Jeremiah 32:38; Ezekiel 11:20; Ezekiel 37:27; Zechariah 13:9) and is finally fulfilled in the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:3) when all the righteous will be included.

B. Divine Knowledge (Hebrews 8:11; see Isaiah 2:3; Jeremiah 31:34)

1. They will all know the Lord, from the least to the greatest.
2. This provision does not apply to the age of grace since all do not know Him today and this demonstrates the fact that the new covenant will not be completely fulfilled until it is fulfilled in the Jewish people—the people to whom it was originally promised.

C. Divine Reconciliation (Hebrews 8:12)

1. God will be merciful to their unrighteousness.
2. Their iniquities and sins will be completely forgiven (Jeremiah 31:34). Romans 11:25-27 shows how this promise directly applies to Israel.

D. Divine Replacement (Hebrews 8:13)

1. The introduction of the new declares the first to be old.
2. The old is ready to vanish away.