

A STUDY OF HEBREWS

The Arrival of the New Covenant (Part 2) - Chapter 8:1-13

I. Review of Chapters 1-7

A. Jesus Christ is the greatest and final Prophet and enthroned Son of God.

1. Therefore we must pay closest attention to His Gospel... (1:1-2:18)

B. Jesus Christ is infinitely greater than Moses and gives eternal, not just temporal, rest.

1. Therefore we must persevere in faith lest we fall like those in the wilderness... (3:1-4:13)

C. Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest who sympathizes with us in our suffering and temptation.

1. Therefore we who have profound needs must fly to God's throne of grace... (4:14-5:10)

D. A SHORT DETOUR due to the dullness of hearers (5:11-6-20)

1. Warning against apostasy (6:1-12)
2. Assurance of God's promise (6:13-20)

E. The mysterious Melchizedek, the OT priest-king, is a foreshadow, or 'type', of the coming Christ.

1. Therefore flee to the eternal, oath-sealed, Mechizedekian sinless human sacrifice for sin (7:1-28)

Most recent thought: *"For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens."* (Heb 7:26)

II. Text: Hebrews 5:1-10 – Christ is Better Than Aaron and Other Former Priests

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven,² a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.³ For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.⁴ Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law.⁵ They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."⁶ But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

⁸ For he finds fault with them when he says:

*"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord,
when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel
and with the house of Judah,*

[declaration of a new covenant]

*⁹ not like the covenant that I made with their fathers
on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.*

[the reason this is a good thing]

*For they did not continue in my covenant,
and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord.*

*¹⁰ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, declares the Lord:*

[re-declaration with hopeful
covenant aspects emphasized]

*I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts,
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*

*¹¹ And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,'
for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.*

*¹² For I will be merciful toward their iniquities,
and I will remember their sins no more."*

[reason all of this is possible]

¹³ *In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.* (Heb 8:1-13)

The Superiority of Christ as Priest (So Far):

- Sealed with a divine oath (7:21)
- Priesthood is everlasting (7:24)
- Sacrifice has eternal efficacy (7:27)

1. What additional (and more complex) reason is Christ’s priestly ministry better than the old (v. 6)?

“Covenants in Scripture are solemn agreements, negotiated or unilaterally imposed, that bind the parties to each other in permanent defined relationships, with specific promises, claims, and obligations on both sides (e.g., the marriage covenant, Mal. 2:14)... The covenant framework embraces the entire economy of God’s sovereign grace.”
 - J. I. Packer on “Covenant”, *Concise Theology*, 87-89.

The Heart of the Covenant of Grace = “I am to be your God, and you are to be my people.” (Exod 6:7, Jer 31:33, Ezek 37:26, Zech 8:8, Matt 1:23, 28:20, 2 Cor 6:16, Heb 8:10, Rev 21:3).

2. What is the first reason that the old covenant (primarily signified by Moses’ law for Israel) is deficient (v. 7, 13)? Where did we see this logic at work in chapter 7 on the Levitical priesthood?

3. In your own words, what was deficient about the old covenant (again, primarily Moses’ law economy, but encompassing all of OT)?

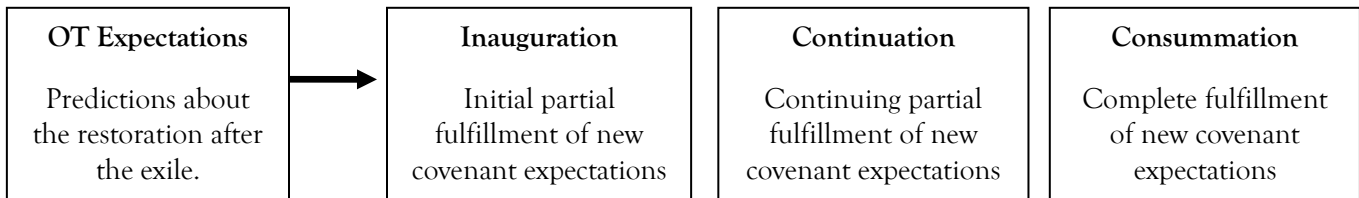
“As Hebrews 7-10 explains, God brought in an enhanced version of his one eternal covenant with sinners (13:20)—a better covenant with better promises (8:6) based on a better sacrifice (9:23) offered by a better high priest in a better sanctuary (7:26-8:6; 8:11, 13-14), and guaranteeing a better hope than the former version of the covenant ever made explicit, that is endless glory with God in “a better country—a heavenly one” (11:16, cf. v. 40).”
 - J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology*, 89.

4. What are three reasons given by Jeremiah that the New Covenant is “enacted on better promises” (v. 10-11)?

5. Do these promises represent a wholesale revision of the way God related to people in the OT? To put it differently, were there new covenant realities at work in the lives of OT believers? What happens in the New Testament?

“What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.”²⁷ This is he of whom it is written, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.”²⁸ I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” (Luke 7:26-28)

6. Are the new covenant promises mentioned in Jeremiah’s prophecy a reality today? Why and why not? What should we do to make them more of a reality???



And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” (Rev 21:5)