**Hebrews 8:1-13: A Better Covenant**

**October 12-13, 2016**

*The New Covenant is the primary focus in chapter 8. As we have seen, the high priest of this New Covenant is Jesus Christ who occupies a unique seat at the right hand of God the father. Christ's sanctuary or place of ministry under this new arrangement is not an earthly tabernacle but a heavenly one. There he continues to administer on behalf of his people bringing their heartfelt gifts (worship, praise, repentance, dedication, thanksgiving) to the Father.*

*Jesus is superior position and his superior sanctuary are clear evidences of his superior ministry. The Old Covenant was impersonal, external, legal code written on tablets of stone and given to a nation that merely provided for the temporary covering of sin. The New Covenant promised an internal law written on the hearts of individuals. It provided full and final forgiveness of sin. And more importantly it provided a new power for individuals to live as they ought. With this in mind, why should anyone be satisfied with the old priesthood and sacrifices which are only copies and shadows when they can have real forgiveness and real reconciliation in Jesus Christ? What Old Covenant priest could compare with Jesus Christ, the incomparable high priest of the New Covenant? This chapter answers these questions and more.*

*The Old Covenant symbol is not bad and never was bad. It had a beautiful God-given purpose. It pointed to the Son, represented the Son, and foreshadowed the Son before he came to earth. But now that the Son has come the symbol has no more purpose and God means for it to be discarded. The old sacrificial system actually was over when the veil was split in two and Christ's sacrifice was complete. At that time Christ's unique, never to be repeated sacrifice was finished with the result that all men in Christ had direct access to God (1 Timothy 2: 3-6). The destruction of the temple completed the closing of the Old Covenant by removing the place of sacrifice that no longer served a purpose. The age of the Mosaic law and Levitical priests was over. The age of the Son was here forever.*

*“New Covenant”****:*** *the covenant that provides forgiveness of sins through the death of Christ. The old Mosaic covenant under the law only showed all who were under its demands and condemnation their desperate need for salvation by grace alone. In contrast, God promised a New Covenant with a spiritual divine dynamic by which those who know him would participate in the blessings of salvation. This New Covenant was announced by Jesus Christ in Luke 22:20 and fulfilment was to individuals yet also to Israel as a nation.*

*“Mediator”:**The word describes a go between, in this case between man and God. It refers to someone who intervenes between two parties to resolve a conflict or ratify a covenant. Jesus Christ is the only mediator who can restore peace between God and sinners.*

**Read Hebrews Chapter 8: 1-13**

Recap: What was chapter 7 setting up for the author to refer to in v.1?

*“High Priest seated at the right hand…” A brief description of Jesus’ priesthood in the heavenly sanctuary which is better than Aaron’s because He serves in a better sanctuary.*

*“Main Point” The writer arrives at the main point, that we have (current possession) a superior High Priest who is the fulfillment of all that was foreshadowed in the Old Testament*

Where is Christ seated right now? Why is the significance of this position? (v.1-2)

*“Minister” same word used of the angels in 1:7. Jeremiah 33:21 it was used of the priests.*

*“Sanctuary” the holiest place where God dwelt*

*“true tabernacle” refers to the heavenly dwelling place of God.*

What does it mean that priests offer gifts and sacrifices, and how does Christ do this as well? (v.3)

*“not be a priest” v.4 Jesus was not qualified to be a Levitical priest because He was not of the tribe of Levi. Because it’s used in the present tense, this verse indicates that the Levitical system was still in operation at the time of writing, indicating it was before the destruction of the temple in AD 70.*

The writer states that the priests then serve at sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven, what do you believe that means? What is the significance of this? (v.5)

*“copy and shadow” This does not mean that there are actual buildings in heaven which were copied, but rather that the heavenly realities were adequately symbolized and represented in the earthly tabernacle model.*

How does this chapter demonstrate the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant? How is this relevant to you today?

*“If there was nothing wrong with the first covenant…” The older covenant, incomplete and imperfect, was only intended to be temporary.*

*“ready to vanish” v.13 Soon after the book of Hebrews was written the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and its Levitical worship ended.*

**Read Jeremiah 31:31-34**

This passage refers to a covenant God made when he delivered the Israelites from Egypt, why is God replacing that one?

How do you think the original hearers of this revelation might have reacted to such news? How do you respond to its promises?

How does the New Covenant effect internal heart change?

**Read 1 Timothy 2:2-6**

Why is it necessary to have a mediator between God and man? Why is Christ the only one who can truly fill that role?

What does living under the better covenant of forgiveness and grace that we have in Jesus mean to you?

How can you use this good news to encourage someone else who may be trying to earn God's favor?

Name several specific ways that this news can/should affect how we view our relationship with Christ. Does this change at all the way we approach he and the Father?

References: *Hebrews: John MacArthur*