

Better: A Study of Hebrews - Hebrews 8:1-13

Pleasant View Church of Christ – Winter / Spring 2025

The Greater Promises
(Chapter 8)

The Greater Covenant (Chapters 8 to 10)

The point of Jesus being the greater mediator...mediator of what?

A Greater Covenant

"true tent"

- "true tabernacle" (KJV, NIV84, NASB)
- Contrast between the earthly tabernacle and the true tabernacle in heaven.

- Ex 25:40; 27:8

- Even though Jesus came to earth, his priesthood is in heaven.

- 7:11-19; Num 18:1-7

"They... shadow"

- Tent
- Priests
- Gifts

"establish"

The new covenant was established by God, not negotiated with man.

Jer 31:31-34

- A new covenant would be established by God that included forgiveness of sins

¹Now 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, ²a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. ³For every high priest is appointed to ***offer gifts and sacrifices***; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. ⁴Now 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.***" ⁶But 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. ⁷For if that first covenant ***had been faultless***, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. *What was the "fault" with the old covenant? → Rom 7:7-25*

⁸For 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***, ⁹not 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. ***For they did not continue in my covenant***, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. ¹⁰For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: 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. ¹¹And 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. ¹²For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and ***I will remember their sins no more.***

¹³In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Right Hand of God

-Psa 110:1
-Mark 16:19
-Luke 22:69
-Acts 2:33; 5:31
-Rom 8:34
-Eph 1:20
-Col 3:1
-Heb 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2
-1Pe 3:22

"something to offer"

-The author introduces the topic, but does not say what is offered
-He will explain this fully in chapters 9 and 10.

"better promises"

-Forgiveness of sins
-Making man acceptable of God

Judah and Israel were separated when Jeremiah wrote this

Part of the "fault" with the old covenant rested on man's inability to follow God perfectly

New Covenant

(1) Inward
(2) Relationship
-Ex 6:7
-Rom 5:1-11
-Eph 2:11-22
(3) Teacher
-Knowledge of God and His ways will be personal, not just national.
-Every believer is able to approach God confidently and directly because of Jesus' mediating work
-Heb 4:16; 7:25; 10:19-22; 12:22-24

Hebrews Chapter 8 - Questions for Discussion

Where is our High Priest Seated? Why is this significant? (v. 1)

What is the “true tabernacle?” Who built it? (v. 2)

Why would Christ not be a priest if He were on earth? (vv. 4; 7:13-14)

What is the “copy and shadow of the heavenly things?” What is the significance of the phrase “according to the pattern?” (v. 5)

Why is the ministry of Jesus superior to the ministry of the Levitical priests? (v. 6)

What is the “better covenant?” In what way are its promises better? (v. 6, 12)

What “fault” did the first law have? (v. 7; 7:11, 18-19; Rom 7)

What is a “covenant?” Why was there a need for a new covenant? (v. 9; Jer 31:31-34)

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Four Elements (Features) of the New Covenant: (vv. 10-12)

1. “I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts...” (v. 10)

In what way is this different or distinct from the old covenant?

2. “and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (v. 10)

In what way is the new covenant better able to bring followers into a closer relationship with God? (v. Rom 5:1)

3. “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.” (v. 11)

Does this mean that there is no need to teach others under the new covenant? If not, then what is this verse saying?

4. “For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.” (v. 12)

Compare this to how God dealt with sins under the old covenant?

What was made “obsolete?” In what sense is it obsolete, and what part of it will “vanish away?” (v. 13)

Teacher's Notes

RIGHT HAND OF GOD

Psalm 110:1 (ESV)

¹ The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool."

Mark 16:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

Luke 22:69 (ESV)

⁶⁹ But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God."

Acts 2:33 (ESV)

³³ Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

Acts 5:31 (ESV)

³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

Romans 8:34 (ESV)

³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Ephesians 1:20 (ESV)

²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,

Colossians 3:1 (ESV)

¹ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)

³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Hebrews 8:1 (ESV)

¹ 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,

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Hebrews 10:12 (ESV)

¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God,

Hebrews 12:2 (ESV)

² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Tabernacle

Exodus 25:40 (ESV)

⁴⁰ And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.

Exodus 27:8 (ESV)

⁸ You shall make it hollow, with boards. As it has been shown you on the mountain, so shall it be made.

Earthly Priests / Levites

Hebrews 7:11–19 (ESV)

¹¹ Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need would there have been for another priest to arise after the order of Melchizedek, rather than one named after the order of Aaron? ¹² For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. ¹³ For the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴ For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

¹⁵ This becomes even more evident when another priest arises in the likeness of Melchizedek, ¹⁶ who has become a priest, **not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent**, but by the power of an indestructible life. ¹⁷ For it is witnessed of him,

“You are a priest forever,
after the order of Melchizedek.”

¹⁸ For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness ¹⁹ (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

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Numbers 18:1–7 (ESV)

¹ So the LORD said to Aaron, “You and your sons and your father’s house with you shall bear iniquity connected with the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear iniquity connected with your priesthood. ² And with you bring your brothers also, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may join you and minister to you while you and your sons with you are before the tent of the testimony. ³ They shall keep guard over you and over the whole tent, but shall not come near to the vessels of the sanctuary or to the altar lest they, and you, die. ⁴ They shall join you and keep guard over the tent of meeting for all the service of the tent, and no outsider shall come near you. ⁵ And you shall keep guard over the sanctuary and over the altar, that there may never again be wrath on the people of Israel. ⁶ And behold, I have taken your brothers the Levites from among the people of Israel. They are a gift to you, given to the LORD, to do the service of the tent of meeting. ⁷ And you and your sons with you shall guard your priesthood for all that concerns the altar and that is within the veil; and you shall serve. I give your priesthood as a gift, and any outsider who comes near shall be put to death.”

Fault

Romans 7:7–25 (ESV)

⁷ What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. ⁹ I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰ The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹ For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

¹³ Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body

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of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

New Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31–34 (ESV)

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² 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, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. ³³ For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ³⁴ And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Relationship

Exodus 6:7 (ESV)

⁷ I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Romans 5:1–11 (ESV)

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Ephesians 2:11–22 (ESV)

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by

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hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Mediating Work

Hebrews 4:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 7:25 (ESV)

²⁵ Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

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Hebrews 10:19–22 (ESV)

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 12:22–24 (ESV)

²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.