

Hebrews Chapter Eight

In Hebrews chapter eight we are told that in Christ we have a better covenant than what was possible under the Old Testament law. God had previously made covenants with Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel. But, this new covenant made through Christ far surpasses them all.

The main point (verses 1-6)

The writer begins this section by pointing out that all things previously mentioned can be summed up in this main point: We have such a High Priest. This High Priest is Christ. He is said to be seated at the right hand of the throne of the majesty of God in the heavens. Other passages that mention Jesus being seated at the right hand of God are found in Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 5:31; Ephesians 1:20; and 1 Peter 3:22.

Jesus is also described as a minister of the sanctuary and the true tabernacle, erected by God and not man. The duty of priests is said to be offering gifts and sacrifices in verse three. Since Jesus is now our High Priest it is necessary that He have something to offer. What He offered was Himself.

Once again it is pointed out in verse four that Jesus was not legally qualified under the Law of Moses to be a priest, since He was from the tribe of Judah. Verse four also tells us about the priests of the tribe of Levi who offer gifts according to the law. But, these priests are said in verse five to serve only the copy and the shadow of the heavenly things. This is in contrast to Jesus who is the reality (Colossians 2:16-17).

Even Moses was only allowed to build things according to the pattern shown him by God. The quote in verse five comes from Exodus 25:40. Stephen made mention of this fact in his speech in Acts 7:44. Jesus has obtained a more excellent ministry and is the

mediator of a better covenant (1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1-2). This ministry and covenant is founded on better promises than those available under the Law of Moses.

A new covenant (verses 7-13)

The Law of Moses had faults, it was not perfect. Therefore a new covenant had to take its place. The lengthy quote found in verses 8-12 comes from Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Jesus spoke of the New Covenant when He instituted the Lord's Supper on the night He was betrayed (Matthew 26:28). Jesus is also described as the mediator of the New Covenant in Hebrews 12:24.

The new covenant is not like the Law of Moses! Instead of ten commandments written on stone, God puts the laws of the new covenant in our minds. The laws are written by God in our hearts (Romans 7:22; 2 Corinthians 3:2-3).

Verse eleven speaks of a universal spiritual knowledge that is possible through the new covenant. In Revelation 14:6 we find that the gospel is for every nation, tribe, tongue, and people.

Under the new covenant God is merciful to our unrighteousness and our sins are remembered no more. This is quite unlike the Law of Moses which required a remembering of sins year after year.

In very strong language the writer informs us in verse thirteen that God has made the Law of Moses obsolete and that it is vanishing away. This thought is also found in various places such as Luke 16:16; Ephesians 2:15; and Colossians 2:14.