

Hebrews 8

- Remember, we said that the writer is taking a four part approach to demonstrating the superiority of Christ
 - Last week in Chapter 7 we saw the superiority of his priesthood, because He came from a better order
 - But then the writer made the important conclusion
 - To be a priest from a different order must mean that there has also been a change in law
 - The logic was simple
 - Law “A” created priesthood “A”
 - But then we see priesthood “B” arise
 - Therefore, there was also be Law “B” responsible for this new priesthood
 - And in fact, he showed that Priesthood “B”
 - Mel’s order
 - Existed prior to Priesthood “A”
 - Aaronic Priesthood from the Law
- Now that leaves the writer with a new opening through which he is going to form the basis for chapters 8, 9 10
 - Four pillars of Jewish worship
 - Chapter 7 = priesthood
 - Chapter 8 = covenant
 - Chapter 9 = tabernacle
 - Chapter 10 = sacrifice
 - The topics in these chapters run more or less consistently with the chapter breaks but not perfectly

- There is overlap
 - In fact, the first 6 verse of chapter 8 don't even get into the discussion of covenant
- He uses the beginning of chapter 8 to set up the discussion in 8, 9 and 10
 - But he introduces the discussion of covenant and the remaining two pillars by hinging off of priesthood using two arguments
 - The first argument is in verses 1-3

[Heb. 8:1](#) ¶ Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

[Heb. 8:2](#) a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

[Heb. 8:3](#) For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer.

- The main point of what he's been saying in chapter 7 is this:
 - We have a high priest who serves in heaven
 - He is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty (God the Father)
 - But if Jesus serves as priest in Heaven (right now), then think what that means
 - A priest needs a tabernacle to serve in
 - And so He does
 - Verse 2 says that He is a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle in heaven
 - One built by God not by men
- So the Think what the writer is saying
 - He's exploring what it means that Jesus, the Messiah, is called a high priest by the Father in Psalms 110
 - It wasn't just a compliment

- It wasn't just a title
 - It's a job
- See verse 3
 - Every High Priest must have something to offer
 - This is a syllogism
 - A logical construct that has a major premise, followed by a minor premise which leads to a conclusion
 - Example
 - God granted Man dominion over animals
 - My poodle is an animal
 - Therefore, I have dominion over my poodle
 - OK, bad example
 - All poodles are a pain in the neck
 - My dog is a poodle...
- In this case, the major premise was that All High Priests must have something to offer in their service (a sacrifice)
 - Jesus was a High Priest
 - Therefore, Jesus must have something to offer
 - A sacrifice
 - The writer addresses the nature of Christ's sacrifice in 9
 - But for now, the writer's point is there is a real expectations for the High Priest in Heaven
- Yet he is seated at the right hand (Mark 14 & 16)
 - Priests never sat in the temple
 - To remain standing means you are still at work

- To sit means you are done with your work
- So Jesus is not a figurehead priest; He's a real priest
 - Yet His work is finished
 - But that work must have included some kind of offering
- And it's a service in the heavenly tabernacle
 - Which means there is a real physical place in heaven that requires the services of a priest on behalf of man
 - Remember, Jesus exists now in human form, having taken that form to serve as a high priest on behalf of men
 - He is glorified now, but he is no less man
 - He still exists in the body of a man
 - So there is a real tabernacle in Heaven when Jesus serves
 - And as we have already studied, He lives to interceded on behalf of believers
- But no matter how magnificent the earthly tabernacle was (more in 9), it is all merely a cheap imitation of the original

[Heb. 8:4](#) Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law;

[Heb. 8:5](#) who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, "SEE," He says, "THAT YOU MAKE all things ACCORDING TO THE PATTERN WHICH WAS SHOWN YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN."

- The writer now introduces argument #2
 - The first argument was that priests must have something to offer
 - Now the major premise is that priests serve in a tabernacle
 - The minor premise is that earthly tabernacle already has the Levitical priests
 - In fact, if Jesus were still on earth, He wouldn't even be allowed to serve as a priest
 - Because there are those who offer gifts according to the Law

- The Law said that only Levis could serve as priests
 - Jesus was a descendent of Judah
- The tabernacle that the Levite priests served in was the earthly tabernacle or temple
 - So, Jesus wasn't qualified to serve as a priest in the earthly tabernacle, had He tried
 - The earthly tabernacle is reserved for the Aaronic priesthood and the Levites
 - Now the conclusion is that Jesus must serve in a different tabernacle
 - Of course, the only other tabernacle is the heavenly one
- That gives the writer the opportunity to make the real point which leads into the heart of chapter 8
 - The things done on earth are shadows of the real thing in heaven
 - A shadow is something unique to scripture
 - It's a present day work of obedience to teach future fulfillment
 - The present day obedience is the observance of a shadow
 - The future fulfillment is the thing that the observance points toward
 - For example, the observance of Passover was a shadow of the Lord's sacrifice for sin on the cross
 - In the way Passover was observed, it was an act of obedience
 - The shadow only worked when it was observed obediently
 - But the obedient observance of Passover provided a vivid picture of the true atonement of Christ on the cross
 - So that once the real thing has come, the shadow has done it's work and is no longer required

- It may still be done from time to time as a memorial (pointing back rather than forward)
- But it should never be confused with the original
 - Another example is the Sabbath
- Think of how a shadow works in real life
 - Only good until the real comes (around a corner)
- So the earthly tabernacle was useful as a shadow until the real comes
 - The real tabernacle is in heaven
 - The shadow of the earthly tabernacle existed as a shadow if the heavenly until the heavenly was inaugurated
 - We will study more of the moment of the inauguration in chapter 9
 - Once the inauguration of the heaven tabernacle took place, the shadow was no longer needed
 - The design of the earthly was a copy of the heavenly, in fact
 - And just to demonstrate that fact to the Jewish reader, the writer reminds them of what God said when He gave Moses the design in verse 5
 - Exodus 25:9

[Ex. 25:9](#) "According to all that I am going to show you, *as* the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct *it*."

- The word for pattern is tabnith, which literally means copy or likeness
 - God apparently showed Moses the heavenly tabernacle which he then copied when he built the earthly tabernacle
 - So Jesus is the HP for the heavenly tabernacle, which is now in operation, thus rendering the earthly tabernacle unnecessary
 - So if the new priesthood serves in a new tabernacle, with new sacrifices, then there must be a new covenant in place
 - This leads to the heart of the issue

[Heb. 8:6](#) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

[Heb. 8:7](#) For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

- There is a new and better covenant now
 - One that has better promises than the first
 - And the writer's first point is that there was in fact a need for a new
 - This is a challenging thought even for some Christians today
 - What does it say about God that his earlier covenant needed to be replaced
 - Did He make a mistake?
 - Did it not work as He expected?
 - And if it wasn't a mistake, then why is it being replaced?
- Look where the writer himself starts
 - In verse 7 he states a logical premise
 - If the original covenant had been perfect (faultless), then God would never had looked for an opportunity to bring another
 - This is simple logic
 - And it goes even deeper
 - The fact that the Mosaic covenant (including the priests, tabernacle, sacrifices) was to be followed by something else means that they were never supposed to address all man's needs
 - They were temporary since God had prepared to bring a new covenant
 - And as temporary, they had to serve a purpose which itself was temporary
 - The writer already said in chapter 7 that the Law was weak and useless
 - Now he's saying that it was always God's intention to replace it

- And the proof, once again, was found in the OT itself
 - Jer 31

[Heb. 8:8](#) For finding fault with them, He says,
 "BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD,
 WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT
 WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH;

[Heb. 8:9](#) NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR
 FATHERS

ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND
 TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT;
 FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT,
 AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS THE LORD.

[Heb. 8:10](#) "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE
 HOUSE OF ISRAEL

AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD:
 I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS,
 AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS.
 AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD,
 AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

[Heb. 8:11](#) "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW
 CITIZEN,

AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,'
 FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME,
 FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.

[Heb. 8:12](#) "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES,
 AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE."

- The first line of verse 8 is important
 - For = because
 - God found fault
 - With them
 - So He said...
 - Jer 31
- The reason we have a New Covenant promised in Jer was that God found fault with them
 - Not with it = the Law

- But with them, plural
- The Israelites who couldn't follow the Law
- Now think carefully about this
 - The Law was weak and useless
 - Relative to some goal
 - The goal of producing righteousness
 - It was weak because a law cannot produce righteous behavior
 - It can only reveal unrighteous behavior
 - It was useless because unless it compels righteous behavior, there is no hope of reaching the goal of righteousness
- The Law then did the work it was intended to do...it found fault with the Israelites
 - It revealed sin
 - And because it revealed sin, there was need for a new Covenant to ultimately meet the goal
 - That the shadows held together in the Old Covenant would only be realized in a New Covenant
- Verse 8 quotes Jer where God said there will be a new covenant
 - And it specifically will be with Israel and Judah (both kingdoms)
 - Not gentiles
 - Not like the Mosaic covenant
 - Which He gave the Israelites
 - But they couldn't follow it
 - And therefore, God didn't care for them through it
 - It was a conditional covenant
 - It required performance in order to receive the blessings

- They disobeyed, therefore God did not care for them in the sense of the blessings of the covenant
- And what made the New Covenant different and better?
 - It will be different because it won't rely on man's performance to achieve it's purpose
 - And it's better because it will have the power to achieve it's purpose
- In other words, it won't be weak not will it be useless
 - It won't be weak because it will have the power to compel righteous behavior
 - And it won't be useless because it will have the power to impart righteousness
- Let's see how that happens
 - Verse 10
 - This is a covenant made with Israel
 - Not gentiles
 - God puts the laws in their hearts
 - Writing them on their hearts
 - And the effect of that supernatural change will be absolute obedience and holiness
 - They will follow God faithfully
 - So the first effect is that the New Covenant will have the power to conform the behavior of the Jewish people to God's law because those laws will be internalized in the person
 - They won't merely reside on stones as in the Old Covenant
 - Rather, they will literally live out God's holiness in perfection

[Ezek. 36:22](#) ¶ “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.

[Ezek. 36:23](#) “I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight.

[Ezek. 36:24](#) “For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land.

[Ezek. 36:25](#) “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

[Ezek. 36:26](#) “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

[Ezek. 36:27](#) “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

[Ezek. 36:28](#) “You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God.

- Notice this change will happen after the scattered tribes of Israel are regathered in the land
 - Just like in Jeremiah when God promises to make this covenant with Israel and Judah
 - Israel is scattered (lost) even to this day, so this is still a future event
 - God does the cleansing
 - By way of the New Covenant, he gives them a new heart and spirit
 - And it will cause them to walk in His statutes
- Now look at verse 11 of Hebrews
 - It gets even more miraculous
 - The Jewish people will teach everyone his fellow citizen (all Jews)
 - To know the Lord
 - For all will know Me

- It means that the Jewish nation will be 100% believers in Jesus
 - No unbelieving Jews in this day to come
- Finally in verse 12
 - This New Covenant will have the effect of eliminating from God's memory any trace of past sins
 - They will be forever seen as sinless and pure before God from that day forward
- This is the New Covenant
 - Does this look like anything we see today?
 - Not exactly
 - Some elements are familiar, but there are obvious elements to this covenant that have yet to take place
 - So this covenant has yet to be made with Israel
- Before we explore the implications of this New Covenant, let's finish the chapter by looking at the final verse

[Heb. 8:13](#) When He said, "A new *covenant*," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

- This is a simple but brilliant statement
 - Who was the first one to use the term new covenant?
 - God Himself in Jeremiah 31:31
 - By definition, if you invoke the term new with regard to anything, you immediately designate the former to be old
 - If I purchase a second car call it my new car
 - Then by definition, the previous car becomes the old car
 - If I get a new job, then my previous job is automatically my old job

- Furthermore, by choosing to call the covenant to come a new covenant, God also suggested that the previous covenant was being replaced
 - The term old, the writer says, implies something that is becoming obsolete and growing old
 - And ready to disappear
- In other words, God chose His words carefully, of course,
 - So when He said New, He immediately gave rise to the terminology Old to describe the covenant He made with Israel through Moses
 - And He chose New and Old (rather than any other pair of words) so that we would understand one replaced the other
- So this New Covenant that is promised to the Jews replaces the covenant that was given to the Jews under Moses
 - It has better promises
 - Promises to impart righteousness and compel righteous living
 - To never count sin against the nation again
 - To never forsake them
 - It will apply to all Jews in the day
 - It is a future covenant
 - Until a Jew is under the New Covenant, they remain under the Old Covenant
- Here are the questions we probably need to answer about what we've learned before we can go further in the book
 - When will this New Covenant happen for the Jews? (Zech 12, Zech 14)
 - And what about us, the Church? (Rom 11)
 - Aren't we a part of the New Covenant already?
 - If so, how can we be part of a covenant given to the Jews?
 - And if we are under it, why aren't we seeing all the blessings found in that covenant?