

A Better Temple, Better Ministry, and Better Covenant Hebrews 8:1–13

Context

What Came Before?

- Explanation of Jesus's High Priesthood
 - Jesus is a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (7:1–10)
 - Jesus is Greater than the Priests of Aaron (7:11–28)

What Comes Next?

- Explanation of Christ's sacrifice (9:1–27)

What is the Content?

- Two Parts
 - Contrast of Temples (vv. 1–6)
 - Contrast of Covenants (vv. 7–13)

What is the relationship between Temple, Priest, Covenants?

- Hebrews 3:1–6
- Hebrews 4:14–16
- Hebrews 7:11–12

What is the application?

- We can come up with some . . .
- But Scripture gives us the application . . . Hebrews 10:19–25

Before we can move to the application, we need to see what is here:

A Better Temple (vv. 1–6)

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,
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.” Exod. 25:9, 40

A Better Ministry

NOW Heb 1:2
6 But as it is,

Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old Heb 1:4
as
the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.
[9:16; 12:24]

A Better Covenant (vv. 7–13)

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,

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.

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:

[1] I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and

[2] I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

¹¹ [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.

¹² For [4] I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and
I will remember their sins no more.”

Conclusion

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.

What do we learn about the High Priest and His Ministry?

1. Christ's Better Priesthood

- a. Seated vs. Standing (v. 1; cf. Heb. 1:3)
- b. In Heaven vs. On Earth (v. 2, 4–5)
- c. Plural Gifts and Sacrifices vs. One Offering (v. 3; cf. Heb. 9)
- d. Imperfect Law vs. Perfect Life (v. 4; cf. Heb. 7:16)
- e. Better Ministry vs. Vanishing Ministry (v. 6)

2. Heaven: Christ's Place of Service

- a. Heaven is a temple
- b. This temple is holy
- c. This is the true tent
- d. This tent was made by God

Temple: Levitical Priests

- Temple is heaven on earth
- This temple can be defiled
- This is a copy and shadow (cf. 10:1)
- This temple made by men

3. Christ's Better Service (v. 6)

- a. Better Ministry . . . How so?
- b. Better Covenant
- c. Better Promises

What do we learn about the Better Covenant?

1. It replaces the old

- First covenant is faulty
- God find fault with them / or it (ESV: *'For finding fault with it he says to them'*)
- "In context, . . . a wedge should not be driven between the sin of the people and the defectiveness of the covenant." (Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 249)

2. It comes at the end of days

“Now” (8:6) . . . “The Days are coming” (8:8)

- **The Days are Coming (Jeremiah 1–51)**
 - 7:32 – Exile is coming; mirth will be removed from Jerusalem; judgment is coming because of Israel’s wickedness (7:30–34)
 - 9:25 – Judgment is coming on those “circumcised merely in the flesh”; Judah is grouped with the nations
 - 16:1 – A new exodus: no longer will Israel be defined by their salvation from Egypt; now it will be their salvation from the North Country (16:14–21). This includes the promise of “men-fishers” (v. 18), which is fulfilled in Matt. 4:18–22, Mark 1:17; Luke 5:10
 - 19:6 – repeats the judgment of 7:32
 - 23:5, 6, 7 – Twice the promise of future days is mentioned (v. 5, 7), plus a shorter allusion in v. 6. The Branch is promised in these future days.
 - 48:12 – Once more judgment is promised on Moab.
 - 49:2 – Judgment extends to Ammon.
 - 51:4, 5 – Judgment is coming to Babylon.
- **Jeremiah’s Day (Jeremiah 30–33)**
 - “**Days are coming**” (30:3) – Restore fortunes of Israel
 - “That day” (30:7, 8) – God will save Jacob and break off the bondage of the nations
 - “In the latter days” (30:24) – The judgment will come and then the latter days will follow
 - “There shall be a day” (31:6) – . . . “Let us go up to Zion”
 - “**Days are coming**” (31:27) – God will sow the house of Israel and Judah with the seed of man and beast (= to the exiles, he will restore the promise of fruitfulness)
 - “In those days” (31:29) – the children will no longer suffer their fathers sins
 - **The days are coming (31:31)** – the central promise in the book of Comfort
 - “**The days are coming**” (31:38) – the city shall be rebuilt
 - “**The days are coming**” . . . “in those days” . . . “in those days” (33:14 , 15, 16)– God will fulfill his promise to Israel / Judah
 - Cf. Jeremiah 31:36; 32:14, 20, 31, 39
- **When is this?**
 - Hebrews 1:2; 9:26
 - Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:28 (cf. 1 Pet. 1:20)
 - When is the new covenant?
- **How should we understand it?**

The New Covenant | Hebrews 8:7–13

What It Is?

1. “New Covenant”

- a. Either New or Renewed – How do we know? What are the options?
- b. **Renewed** – the main covenant is God’s promise to Abraham . . . the New Covenant restores / fulfills this promise . . .

$A \leftarrow \leftarrow \leftarrow N = \text{All 1 People}$

- c. **New** – the covenant is with Christ is wholly different . . . but this does not negate the promises to Israel . . . it simply builds a second covenant

$A / I / D + N = 2 \text{ People (Israel and Church)}$

- d. **New** – the main covenant is with Christ . . . the New Covenant fulfills all the OT covenants

$A \rightarrow [I] \rightarrow D \rightarrow N = \text{Church as Jew + Gentile}$

How do we decide?

- a. We might look for other “new covenants” in the Old Testament

- a. You won’t find any . . . however, see
- b. Isaiah 53–55; Ezekiel 36; Hosea 3; Joel 2

- b. Keep reading

2. “With Israel and Judah”

- **What is the story of Israel and Judah? – One and the same? Different? When did they divide? How did they divide?**

- **What does it mean to make a covenant with Israel *and* Judah?**
 - It is the reunification of the God’s House – **Ezekiel 37:15–23**
 - It is the reestablishment of a Davidic King – **Ezekiel 37:24–28**

- **When does this happen? When does God reunite the kingdom?**
 - If we take our cues from Ezekiel 37, we might say at Christ’s resurrection
 - If we stay in Jeremiah, we see reunification at the new covenant and when God replants Israel
 - John 15 – Jesus as true vine is producing fruit
 - Acts 1–10 – Jew, Samaritans, Gentiles united
 - Acts 15 – House of David rebuilt between Jew and Gentile
 - Ephesians 2 – Jew and Gentile make up new temple

What It's Not

3. NOT like a covenant made with their fathers . . .

- **What covenant is this?**
 - Sinai Covenant

- **What do we know about that covenant?**
 - Fathers . . . this law-covenant adds to the covenant with Abraham
 - Covenant came after exodus / redemption . . . Exodus Pattern
 - Sinai . . . **Significance?**
 - They broke God's covenant . . . **Why?**
 - God showed no concern for them . . . **What does this mean?**

- **What is the relationship between last covenant and this one?**
 - The old was put to an end . . .
 - The new was established [made = *karat*, not *hakim*]

- **How do we know?**
 - God showed no concern for them (v. 9 = Jer 31:32)
 - God makes *this* covenant with the house of Israel (v. 10)
 - God makes, not establishes, a new covenant
 - God makes a covenant after those days – indicates time separation
 - Three of the four parts are unique
 - First one is obsolete and ready to vanish (v. 13)
 - The priesthood is going away
 - The temple is going away
 - The law has been fulfilled

- **Great discontinuity . . . with some continuity**
 - Same God (“declares the Lord” 3x)
 - Same refrain: I will be their God, and they shall be my people

What It Is Again

1. New Law

- Israel's uncircumcised heart (Jer. 4:4; 9:25–26) will be circumcised (Deut 30:6)
- Where Ezekiel and Joel speak of the Spirit, here the focus is on the law
- This doesn't mean we know the whole law or will do the whole law, but now we love the law – Psalm 119

2. New Relationship

This refrain is shorthand for God's covenant with Israel. It gives continuity to the New Covenant. Yet, the other three aspects are different.

- **Gen. 17:8** – And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and *I will be their God.*"
- **Exod. 6:7** – *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.*
- **Leviticus 26:12** – *And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people*
- Jer. 7:23; 11:4; 24:7; 30:22; cf. Exod. 29:45, 46; Lev. 22:33; Deut. 29:13; Ezek. 11:20; 14:11; 36:28; 37:27; Hos. 2:23; Zech. 8:8; 13:9; Rev. 21:7

3. New Priesthood

Under the OC, the priests were the stewards of the Law. They had knowledge on their lips (Malachi 2:6–7) and were commissioned to teach the people (Lev. 10:10–11). Now the people don't need the Levitical priesthood; they are priests to one another – see Jeremiah 33:14–26.

All will be saved – the OC is a mixed covenant; the NC is not

4. New Pardon

Sin was always the thing that broke the covenant. But now this covenant is based on a full and final forgiveness of sin.

What Is The Result?

- The new covenant has displaced the old covenant – there is no remainder
- The old covenant is ready to vanish away

Application?

1. The New Covenant is *THE* Covenant

“The author doesn’t envision a situation where the old and new coexist. The two covenants are not complementary to each other in that sense. Instead they are successive.” (Schreiner, *Hebrews*, 254)

2. Hold fast to Christ

3. Draw Near to God – Hebrews 10:19–24

4. Our standing before God depends on God – I will make . . . (v. 8, 10) . . . I will (5x in vv. 10–12)

- a. OC is gracious . . . but weak

- b. NC is gracious . . . and strong (Dan 9:26-27)