

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to Hebrews 8

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this amazing letter – because that is what it really is.

A letter that was written to group of Jewish believers.

And - We know it was directed at Jewish believers because the writer expects the reader or the listener to be very well acquainted with the system of Levitical worship and sacrifices.

And, we have also seen the writer use the Old Testament in a way that expects the reader/listener to fully understand what he is talking about.

We also know that these believers were encountering very strong persecution.

And times were so bad that some were beginning to wonder if they shouldn't quit following Jesus and go back to Judaism.

They were thinking about leaving the simplicity of faith in Jesus Christ and go back to the formalism of the law and the rituals and ceremonies.

They were tempted to go backward

They were tempted to leave faith

So - the writer of Hebrews writes this letter to try to encourage this group of Jewish believers and to help them endure.

Let's pray...

Last week – in Ch 7 – we studied how Jesus is a greater priest because He is from a higher order than the Levitical priests, Jesus is from the order of Melchizedek – His priesthood is never-ending and never changing.

Keep that in mind -

[Heb 8:1-13 NKJV] 1 Now [this is] the main point of the things we are saying:

The writer of Hebrews is going to summarize everything that he has been telling – he is trying to wrap it up for them.

We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

I had you make a note of the phrase – “we have”

Remember that these Jewish believers were outcasts

They were kicked out of their synagogues, they lost their family, they lost their jobs

And one of the things that they would be asked is –

"Why are you worshipping Jesus?"

We have the temple,

we have the priesthood,

we have the ceremonies,

we have the law

What do you have?

And so the writer here reminds them – "we have the greatest High Priest"

We have the fulfillment of it all

Jesus is greater than anyone and anything

Today. Right now – Jesus is at the right hand of the throne of God, continuing to minister and serve on the behalf of those who put their faith and trust in Him.

No Old Testament priest could ever say that.

Jesus deals directly with God the Father.

He has a place of honor beside God the Father.

We saw in our study last week – the writer of Hebrews referencing Psalm 110 – a Messianic that connected Jesus to Melchizedek

(Psalm 110:1 NKJV) The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

Now, from our study in the Exodus – you might remember that the tabernacle of Moses was the tent that God instructed Moses to build in the wilderness.

From the outside – it looked like a normal tent

However, from the inside – God gave Moses specific instruction on how to build the tabernacle – what type of material to use and how much -

And the reason is that the tabernacle was supposed to be a model or a copy of God's throne room.

This is where the Levitical priests would minister to the Lord on behalf of man – this is where they would burn incense, sprinkle the blood from the sacrifices on top of the mercy seat – where God dwelt.

However, because of the work of the cross and by faith

We have direct access to God

And that access is not based upon our own good works – but by His good work.

3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore [it is] necessary that this One also have something to offer.

A priest in the Old Testament – they had a twofold ministry

They would represent God to the people and they would represent the people to God

They would represent God to the people by speaking forth the Word of God to them
and they would represent man to God by bringing their gifts and sacrifices – all the
offerings that we find in the book of Leviticus

Jesus – because He is our High Priest – the Great High Priest – He has something to
offer too.

And He gave the perfect offering –

He offered up His own blood –

**[Heb 9:14 NKJV] 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the
eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from
dead works to serve the living God?**

**4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who
offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the
heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make**

the tabernacle. For He said, "See [that] you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

If Jesus had not ascended into heaven –

He would not have been a priest –

1- He wasn't a Levite, and He wasn't a descendant of Aaron. He was from the tribe of Judah.

2- But also, as the writer is writing this – the Temple was still around. It had not been destroyed. That means that there were already priests running around doing priestly work in the temple.

Those priests were ministering to God in the copy or the shadow of the real thing

Here is an illustration that might help.

It is Wednesday night – I am pretty sure some of us have had a long day and some of us are hungry.

Imagine if on the round table – I placed a high-quality picture of a plate of tacos with all the fixings – and then right across the table I had the actual plate of tacos that the picture was taken of.

None of us would go for the picture

Because we want the real thing!!!

So the writer is saying –

Why go back to the temple?

Why go back to the tabernacle?

Why go back to the law? Remember from our study last week – the law could only reveal our failures and shortcomings, but it couldn't change us - I used the illustration of the mirror.

We don't get up in the morning – look in the mirror and then blame the mirror for how we look.

We don't get a new mirror.

The law could not change us – only God can change us.

So we don't go back to the copies – when we have the real thing in Jesus.

As valuable as these models and types and shadows are that point us to Jesus – our ultimate goal is not the model – it is the real thing.

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

Here in verse six – the writer changes the focus from Jesus being better than the Levitical priests, to Jesus' New Covenant being better than the old covenant.

So he is using the same logic that he used to discuss the priesthood -

"Why would God refer to a new priesthood in Psalm 110 – (the Messiah under the order of Melchizedek – while they were still under the law)

So this same logic he is using to refer to the old covenant – the covenant of the law that was given to the Children when God delivered them out of Egypt.

He is going to show the how in the Old Testament – that God spoke of a New Covenant / a better covenant

Covenant – just means promise or agreement

And there are a few Covenants that God makes in the scriptures

God made a covenant with Noah

God made a covenant with Abram

God made a covenant with David

The Old Covenant refers to the Mosaic covenant – and the New Covenant refers to the one that Jesus speaks of in Luke 22 - "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

So again – the new covenant is referring to life in Jesus Christ

Now, we need to be careful with the word better – because the word better here means: more useful, it means more excellent

The New Covenant doesn't do away with the Old Covenant

We don't disregard the law – the law served a purpose

And Paul talks about that purpose in Rom 7

It is through the law that we know we are sinners and in need of a savior.

7 For if that first [covenant] had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—

Remember – the fault of the first covenant was that it was unable to change a person

It was unable to give a person the power to make the needed changes that it revealed.
(the mirror)

So what the writer is saying here is –

If the Law of Moses was enough to get you into heaven, then why would there be something prophesied about a “new covenant”?

And the writer here is quoting from the book of Jeremiah 31

9 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. 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 in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 "None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 13 In that He says, "A new [covenant]," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

So the Mosaic Covenant or the Old Covenant – it served a purpose

And notice the New Covenant would be

a change of mind,

a change of heart

it would be internal

and it would replace the Old Covenant

Turn to Romans 8

Because Paul says the same thing here in a different way.

[Rom 8:2 NKJV] 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

Or we could say for the New Covenant has made me free from the Old Covenant

Here is the thing church –

Under the old covenant – it was based on how well we adhered to God's Word

If we followed God's Commandments, we would live but if we disobeyed God's commandments we would die.

Someone had to die in order to appease the wrath of God

In the Old System – on the Day of Atonement, there were three animals that were sacrificed.

There was the animal that the High Priest offered for his own sins, he would then offer one for the people and then there would be a third animal that didn't get sacrificed - the scapegoat.

Turn to Lev 16 –

[Lev 16:6-10 NKJV] 6 “Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which [is] for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house. 7 “He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD [at] the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 8 “Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. 9 “And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer it [as] a sin offering. 10 “But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, [and] to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.

So the high priest – he would get the live goat – he would place his hands on the goats head –(that was the transferring of sins of the nation to the goat) and then they would send the goat away – and it would be a picture of their sins going away

And they would have to do this year after year

BTW – the scapegoat is a shadow of Jesus Christ

[2Co 5:21 NKJV] 21 For He made Him who knew no sin [to be] sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Our sins were laid on Christ – He bore our sins just as the scapegoat bore the sins of the Israelites.

However, under the New Covenant – we are no longer under the law of sin and death

We have the good news that our sins can be forgiven – that they will be wiped away

That we will become a new creation in Christ

The New Covenant is different

It is not predicated on how well we adhere to God's commandments or how good we are or our works

The New Covenant is predicated on the finished work (just one) – the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

He is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world

[Col 2:13-14 NKJV] 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Remember church – whenever we come to a point in our walk where we doubt the love of God

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If we even wonder about God's love for you or even for this crazy world that we live in today

We need to get back to the cross

Because it is on the cross – where God declares for everyone, forever that He loves you

And that the full sacrifice, all the penalty and weight of sin, all the wrath of God toward your sin and mine was poured on Jesus at calvary

It was His righteousness for our unrighteousness

It was His perfection for our imperfection

Under the New Covenant – our relationship with God is predicated upon His promises

That He promised to put His word in our minds and in our hearts

You see, all the Law does is remind us that we are sinners and that we will surely die

All the law tells us is do this and live, do this and live

But God promised to do the work Himself

And notice verse 11 again

[Heb 8:11 NKJV] 11 “None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

Under the old covenant – it was only a selected few that new God's word –

However, under the new covenant – everyone will be taught because we will have the Holy Spirit – teaching us and bringing things to remembrance.

We have the author of God's Word living inside of us

The New Covenant brings us into a relationship with God.

He doesn't want us to only know about Him, God wants us to know Him.

The writer is telling this group of Jewish believers, "Guys – why are you going backwards – you have the New Covenant – you have the Holy Spirit living inside of you – you don't need the priests or the sacrifices, Jesus died for you – He lives in you - He is changing you from the inside out

And by the way – that old covenant that you are thinking about returning to – it is coming to an end.

Remember that when Jesus died on the cross – what happened?

The veil tore from the top to the bottom –

And it is only going to be about 6 years after the writer wrote this that the Temple would be destroyed by Rome.

Why would we go back????



Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

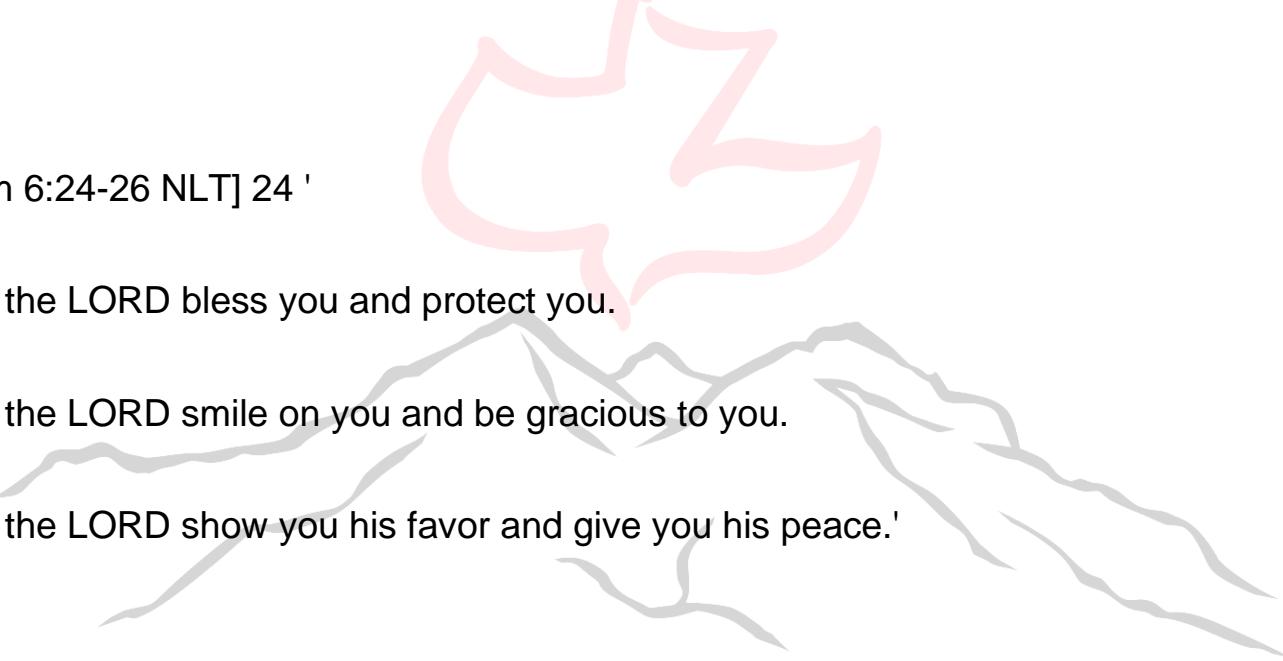
I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'



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