

JESUS IS BETTER

An In-Depth Study of Hebrews

Course Outline

<u>Week</u>	<u>Passage</u>	<u>Topic</u>
1	Hebrews 1:1-4	Introduction to Hebrews, God's Final Word in His Son
2	Hebrews 1:5 – 2:4	Jesus is Greater Than the Angels
3	Hebrews 2:5 – 3:6	Jesus' Sonship is Greater than Moses' Servanthood
4	Hebrews 3:7 – 4:13	Jesus' Rest is Better than Joshua's Rest
5	Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10	Jesus, Our Great Appointed High Priest
6	Hebrews 5:11 – 6:20	Exhortation to Persevere in Light of God's Promises
7	Hebrews 7:1-28	Jesus, The Greater Melchizedekian High Priest
8	Hebrews 8:1-13	Jesus, The Greater High Priest of the New Covenant
9	Hebrews 9:1-28	Jesus' Sacrifice is Greater than the Temple's
10	Hebrews 10:1-39	Persevere In Light of Jesus' Sacrifice
11	Hebrews 11:1-40	The Faith of the Ancients in Action
12	Hebrews 12:1-29	Running the Race with Perseverance
13	Hebrews 13:1-25	Concluding Words

Recap from Session 7

Hebrews 7:1-28

- The pastor has been hinting throughout his sermon that Jesus is the high priest in the order of Melchizedek. However, it is only in Chapter 7 that he explains what that means.
- Melchizedek was a king-priest of God most high in Genesis. God himself announced that the coming Messiah will be a priest in the order of Melchizedek in Psalm 110:4. This establishment of a new priesthood means the obsolescence of the Levitical priesthood.
- The pastor recognises that Jesus himself is this high priest in the order of Melchizedek. Unlike the Levitical priests, Jesus is sinless and lives forever. He is the only one who is "holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens" (7:26).

Hebrews 8

- Hebrews 1:1-4 – God has Spoken to Us in a Son Who is also High Priest
- Hebrews 1:5 – 4:13 – Jesus’ Greater Sonship
 - Hebrews 1:5 – 2:4 – Jesus is Greater than the Angels
 - Hebrews 2:5 – 3:6 – Jesus’ Sonship is Greater than Moses’ Servanthood
 - Hebrews 3:7 – 4:13 – Jesus’ Rest is Better than Joshua’s Rest
- *Transition Passage - Hebrews 4:14-16 – Jesus, the Son of God who is also High Priest*
- Hebrews 5:1 – 10:39 – Jesus’ Greater Priesthood
 - Hebrews 5:1 – 6:20 – Exhortation to Persevere in light of Jesus’ Priesthood
 - Hebrews 7:1-28 – Jesus is the Greater High Priest in the order of Melchizedek (this session)
 - *Hebrews 8:1-13 – Jesus is the Greater High Priest of the New Covenant (this session)*
 - Hebrews 9:1-28 – Jesus’ Sacrifice is Greater than the Temple’s
 - Hebrews 10:1-39 – Persevere in light of Jesus’ Sacrifice
- Hebrews 11 – Perseverance by Faith of the Ancients
- Hebrews 12:1-3 – Fix our Eyes Upon Jesus
 - Hebrews 12:4-17 – Endure God’s Discipline as Sons
 - Hebrews 12:18-28 – We Have Come to a Better Mountain
- Hebrews 13:1-25 – Concluding Exhortations

High Priest of a New Covenant

Having explained the nature of the high priesthood of Jesus Christ, it is only natural to expect the pastor to go on to explain the nature of the sacrifice that this high priest brings to God. However, as we learned from our last session, the priesthood is deeply connected and intertwined with many of the elements of Old Testament worship. If the priesthood is changed, this means that the nature of the sacrifices is changed as well. If the nature of sacrifices changed, this also means that there is also a change in the temple. Undergirding all these elements is God’s covenant with the Israelites. Thus, if those elements are changed, this also means that the covenant itself is also changed. This is where the pastor will begin. He will go on to talk about the nature of this new temple and sacrifice. In Hebrews 8, he spends the time to elaborate on the nature of this new covenant. He quotes extensively from Jeremiah 31:31-34.

Hebrews 8:1-13

The High Priest of a New Covenant

8 Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, ²and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being.

³Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. ⁴If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. ⁵They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: “See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” ^c ⁶But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.

⁷For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. ⁸But God found fault with the people and said:

“The days are coming, declares the Lord,
when I will make a new covenant
with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah.

⁹It will not be like the covenant
I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand
to lead them out of Egypt,
because they did not remain faithful to my covenant,
and I turned away from them,
declares the Lord.

¹⁰This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel
after that time, declares the Lord.

I will put my laws in their minds
and write them on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

¹¹No longer will they teach their neighbor,
or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’
because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest.

¹²For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more.” ⁿ

¹³By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear. ¹

¹ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Heb 8:1–13.

Homework

Hebrews 8 – 10

Divisions

The artistry of the pastor's presentation is like a symphony in three movements (8:1-13; 9:1-22, 9:23 – 10:18) developing these three themes – sanctuary, sacrifice, and covenant. Each movement begins with the theme of sanctuary (8:1-2; 9:1-10; 9:23-24) and ends with covenant (8:7-13; 9:16-22; 10:15-18). At the center of each is the ever-expanding theme of sacrifice (8:3-6; 9:11-15; 9:25 – 10:14). The pastor appeals to his hearers through the growing beauty of his presentation as well as the cumulative cogency of his argument. When the author as conductor has finished his symphony, he would leave his hearers overwhelmed with the magnitude and wonder of this High Priest and ready at all cost to persevere through the benefits he affords. The pastor makes this purpose clear in the encore that follows (especially 10:19-25)²

² Gareth Lee Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Eerdmans, 2012), 346–47.

The Superior Covenant

Compare each of the pairs and decide which you think is superior. Then discuss how and why you know it is superior.

	VS	
	VS	
	VS	

8:1-2 – “...we do have such a high priest...”

“...the true tabernacle...” (cf. Psalm 11:4, 18:6, Micah 1:2, Habakkuk 2:20)

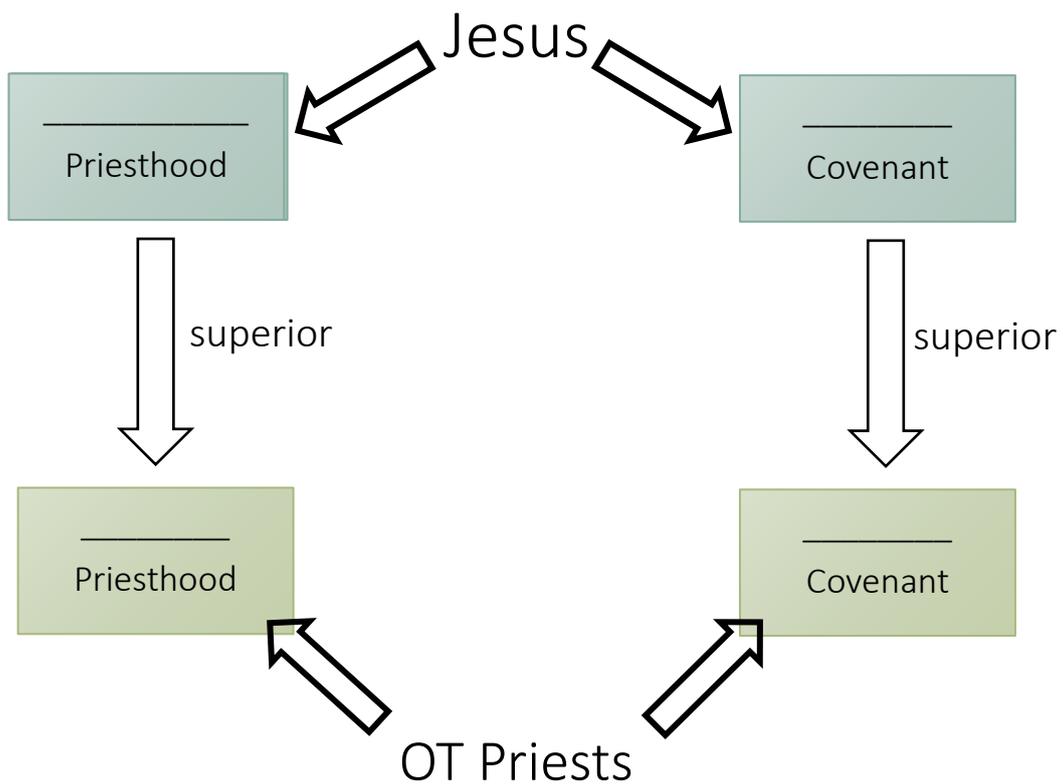
High Priests

8:3-5 – The earthly Levitical priests

A different sacrifice to the Levitical priests (v4)

“...a copy and shadow of what is in heaven.”

8:6 – The superior ministry



8:7-13 – Jeremiah 31:31-34 (cf. Heb 10:16-17)

God's Covenants

Covenants in the Old Testament

<u>Covenant</u>	<u>Passage</u>	<u>Significance</u>

The first/old covenant

What was wrong with it?

The Promised New Covenant

8:8-9 – "...when I will make a new covenant..."

8:10-12 – "...I will be their God, and they will be my people."

8:13 – "...he has made the first one obsolete..."

A New Covenant

The main point of Hebrews 8 is found right at verse 1. The pastor tells his listeners that we have a high priest in the order of Melchizedek (which is superior to the Levitical priesthood), and with that in mind, this high priest is also the mediator of a new covenant. This high priest also serves in the “true tabernacle set up by God himself, instead of the earthly tabernacle. He will go on to elaborate on the nature of the tabernacle in the next chapter. This is why the new covenant is superior to the old, in the same way that the Melchizedek is superior to the old priesthood.

God himself promised a new covenant to his people, in the same way that he promised a new priesthood. By promising a new covenant, he is declaring that the current one is obsolete. The pastor makes his case by quoting Jeremiah 31:31-34. This new covenant is superior because this time, God will put his laws in the hearts of his people and that his people will not need a mediator anymore to help them know God (v11) – they will all know him. God’s people will all know him personally is because God himself will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more. (v12).

However, how will God accomplish that? This is the subject that the author will turn to in the very next chapter – the sacrifice of this high priest that secures forgiveness and cleansing for God’s people.

Homework

Read Hebrews 9:1-28.

- Find and print out a simple layout of the tabernacle during Moses’ time.
- Fill in the table below with the contrast that the pastor draws between the Old Covenant tabernacle worship and the New.

	Verse	The Old	The New
Tabernacle			
Access to the Most Holy Place			
Sacrifice			

Bibliography

Cockerill, Gareth Lee. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. Eerdmans, 2012.