

**HEBREWS 8**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Hebrews chapter 8 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

As we have seen in our studies so far, this letter was written to Jewish believers who were struggling with their faith. They were being drawn back into Judaism and the Law because of the persecution they were facing.

Unbelieving Jews did this, pressured them to come back; and sometimes it was from their own family.

Also, the Temple was still standing and as they saw the priests offering the sacrifices, they may have had this desire to go back to those things.

Thus, the writer of this letter is systematically dismantling what they held in high esteem showing them that Jesus is superior to all; He is the substance of what they are to put their faith in.

He starts out slowly showing them that Jesus is superior to the prophets and the angels.

He then goes to their deliverer, Moses, the Lawgiver, and he shows them how Jesus is superior to Moses.

From there he moves to Joshua, the one who brought them into the Promise Land, the land of Canaan, and he shows them that Jesus is superior to Joshua.

Now, in a section we began a few weeks ago, starting in Hebrews chapter 5 and continuing on through Hebrews chapter 10, Paul shows them that Jesus is superior to the Levitical priesthood.

Now, to us, this may not seem like a big deal, but to the Jews, this was sacred territory.

You see, the priest's function was to represent God before the people and the people before God.

So to get them to see this point, that Jesus is superior to the Levitical priesthood, Paul has his work cut out for him.

Paul starts out in Hebrews chapters 5-7 showing them that Jesus is from a better priestly order, not from Aaron but from Melchizedek.

We are told in Hebrews 7:14-17 of the superiority of Jesus over the Aaronic priesthood, as Paul wrote, **“For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. For He testifies: ‘You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.’”**

Now as we move into Hebrews chapter 8 Paul is going to take them even farther down this path showing them the superiority of Jesus, that He has a better covenant than the covenant that was made in the Old Testament, the covenant made on Mount Sinai.

Let me share this with you, which will lead us into our study here in Hebrews chapter 8 this evening. We are told,

I once spoke at a meeting of religious broadcasters at which a friend of mine was to provide the ministry of music.

He is a superb pianist with a gift for interpreting Christian music, and I have always enjoyed listening to him.

But that day my heart went out to him in sympathy, because the motel had given the most deteriorated and derelict piano I have ever seen. It must have been donated by a local wrecking company.

My friend did his best, but it would have been much better had he been playing a decent instrument.

Jesus Christ is God's superior Priest, but is there anything that can minimize this superiority?

Nothing! For He ministers on the basis of a better covenant (Heb. 8), in a better sanctuary (Heb. 9), and because of a better sacrifice (Heb.10).

It is the better covenant that is the theme of this chapter.

- Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary - NT*, p. 823

And again, this is so important for us even today. The reason being is that so many want to go back to the Law, back to the Jewish practices, which are a shadow of what was to come. You see, the substance is Jesus, and many are holding onto a shadow thinking that will help, when, as we will see, it can do nothing for us in regard to our salvation! Only Jesus can save us!

So with that as our background, let's begin reading in Hebrews chapter 8, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

**HEBREWS 8****VERSES 1-2**

When Paul speaks of the “**main point,**” KEPHALAION, (kef-al’-ah-yon) in the Greek, he is speaking of the chief point, the principle thing – this is the thrust of this letter - the High Priesthood of Jesus Christ and all that it entails!

In other words, Paul is saying, “*In light of everything I have been saying here’s the bottom line*”

Keep in mind that Paul is writing to Jewish believers who were struggling with their faith, being drawn back into Judaism.

And in their minds, they might be thinking, “*Wait a minute. We have a better tabernacle. We have a better priesthood. We have better offerings. We have better ceremonies.*”

Thus, Paul is trying to show them the reality here, they don’t!

Paul’s point is simple, and I spoke of this in our introduction, but I think it is important we understand this. Paul is making this point, “*You have the shadow of what was to come, we have the substance. You may have the ceremonies, but we have Christ. You may have the picture, but we have the person!*”

You see, he is trying to get them to consider Jesus, not to lose sight of all they have in Him and not to move away from the substance and embrace the shadow, which is empty!

Keep in mind that the Tabernacle and the Temple were only a picture of what heaven is like, the throne of God. It is not that the Tabernacle was false, but it was a type, a shadow, a picture of the throne of God in heaven.

And Paul makes this very important point here. He tells them that Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest, **“is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.”**

Hebrews 8:1.

Why is our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ seated? Because He has completed the work, and since the work was finished, He sat down at the right hand of the Father, the place of honor, power and mercy.

For the Levitical priesthood, they never sat down in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple because there was no place for them to sit.

Why was that? Did they forget to put in benches, chairs?

Not at all. The answer is really very simple. It was because the work was never completed.

We will see this as we get to Hebrews 10:11, where we are told, **“And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.”**

You see, the sacrifices never ended because they could never take away a person’s sins but only cover them for a time.

And yet, when Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins He cried out, **“It is finished!”** or **“Paid in full!”** **“TETELESTAI”** in the Greek.

And because the work was finished, He was able to sit down at the right hand of the Father.

Again in Hebrews chapter 10 Paul makes this point, **“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”** Hebrews 10:12-14.

In saying that, what happens when we try to earn our way into heaven, work our way to heaven?

It cheapens grace and it says that Jesus is a liar, that He really didn't complete the work!

That is the perspective you must have if you believe in a work's salvation and it won't happen for you or anyone else who has this theology, it is not Scriptural!

You see, the work is finished because our Great High Priest, from the order of Melchizedek, finished it!

### VERSE 3a

Keep in mind that it was the responsibility for the High Priest and the priests to offer the sacrifices.

If you were not a priest all you could do is give the sacrifice to the priest and then he would present it before God for you. You could not do this yourself.

We see a good example of this in II Chronicles chapter 26, beginning in verse 16 with King Uzziah, a godly King, but he tried to fulfill a priestly duty, which he was not qualified for.

We are told, **“But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the LORD his God by entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense. So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the LORD - valiant men. And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, ‘It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed! You shall have no honor from the LORD God.’ Then Uzziah became furious; and he had a censer in his hand to burn incense. And while he was angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead, before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and there, on his forehead, he was leprous; so they thrust him out of that place. Indeed he also hurried to get out, because the LORD had struck him. King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death. He dwelt in an isolated house, because he was a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the LORD. Then Jotham his son was over the king’s house, judging the people of the land.”** II Chronicles 26:16-21.

So, as you can see, not everyone or anyone could offer a sacrifice to God!

Now the gifts spoke of the grain offerings while the sacrifices spoke of the blood or animal sacrifices.

These are the things that the priests would do. Now, in saying that, I am sure Paul is trying to think of how these Jewish believers would respond to what he just said, maybe the question that they might have in regard to this.

Their response to Paul may be something like this, ***“Okay, the High Priest offers sacrifices and gifts to God, so what is Jesus offering?”***

Now Paul is going to contrast what the earthly High Priest does to what our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ has done!

VERSES 3b-5

I want you to see what a powerful statement that this is in regard to the sacrifice that Jesus has made.

You see, the word “**something**” is singular in the Greek. And what that means is that Jesus, as the High Priest of the New Covenant, didn’t offer many sacrifices like Aaron but only needed to offer one sacrifice. And that sacrifice was – **HIMSELF!**

Wow, that is a powerful point!

But there is more. You see, the phrase “**to offer**” is a tense in the Greek which conveys the idea of the sacrifice of Jesus being once for everyone and for all time.

That is exactly what Jesus has done for us. Peter wrote in I Peter 3:18, “**For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.**”

Make no mistake about it, it was a better sacrifice because it was complete!

Please understand that Jesus was not from the tribe of Levi. He was not a descendent of Aaron. And what that means is this. He could not be a priest according to the Mosaic Law; He could not offer any sacrifices in the Temple.

But Jesus is from a superior order, as Paul has already shown us, the order of Melchizedek and He is not only a High Priest but also a King!

Because Jesus was not from the tribe of Levi, He never offered any sacrifices, not even one like I have said, He couldn’t!



Then what did Jesus offer?

Like we have seen, He offered His life for the forgiveness of our sins.

So he answered the first question, that Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice, once for all.

And now the second question he answers starting in verse 4.

And the question may have went something like this, *“If Jesus is a High Priest where is He ministering since He isn’t ministering in the Temple in Jerusalem?”*

And Paul’s answer nails it. You see, Jesus isn’t conducting His ministry as High Priest in the Temple in Jerusalem because that would be in violation of the law of Moses which clearly mandates that only the sons of Aaron could be High Priests in the Temple on earth.

But he goes on to say that Jesus, as the Great High Priest after the order of Melchizedek, has ascended into heaven where the true Temple of God is and conducts His ministry in the actual Holy Holies. (*right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens*)

You see, the Tabernacle and the Temple were just a copy of the Heavenly Temple.

It is as Paul said in Hebrews 9:23-24, **“Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”**

Again, why would anyone want to hold onto a copy when you have the substance? You see, that is the question Paul wants them to think about!

Now here is the thing.

Just as no Jew could offer God any gift or sacrifice without going through the priest, neither can we without going through Jesus Christ!

Jesus said in John 15:5, **“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.”**

You see, our praise, our worship, our service, anything we do must be done through Jesus or the Father does not accept it.

Paul makes that point in Ephesians 5:20, **“giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

And in Colossians 3:17 Paul once again tells us, **“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”**

You see, apart from Him we can do nothing!

#### VERSE 6

Now here is a question I have for you and maybe these Jewish believers were thinking about this as well.

***Why is the New Covenant better than the Old Covenant?***

That is a great question and people still struggle with this.

Paul tells us that there are two main reasons.

First of all, it was built upon a better Mediator, Jesus Christ. Yes, Aaron and his descendants were to bring God to the people and people to God, but they could never, as a mediator, take away your sins. But Jesus has done that very thing, He has brought us to God!

Remember what we read in I Peter 3:18, **“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.”**

Let’s look at this a little closer, this idea of a mediator.

The word “**mediator**” comes from the Greek word MESITES, (mes-ee’-tace) and it speaks of someone who stands between two people and brings them together. He represents both parties.

That was the cry of Job in Job 9:30-33, that there was no mediator, no one to bridge that gap between God and man. He cried out, “**If I wash myself with snow water, And cleanse my hands with soap, Yet You will plunge me into the pit, And my own clothes will abhor me. For He is not a man, as I am, That I may answer Him, And that we should go to court together. Nor is there any mediator between us, Who may lay his hand on us both.**”

Then as God established the Old Covenant with Israel through Moses and the priests, they became the mediator between God and the children of Israel and the children of Israel and God.

But now Jesus has come, and He is the Mediator of a new and better covenant.

It is in this New Covenant that was established by Christ and His sacrifice that we now have access to the Father and the Father to us for Jesus is the mediator!

It is as Paul said in I Timothy 2:4-6, “**who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.**”

How many mediators are there between us and God?

Only *ONE – Jesus!*

That means Mary is not a mediator. The Pope is not a mediator. No priest or pastor is a mediator. It is only Jesus who is the mediator! Never forget that and never compromise what the Scriptures are saying to believe what man is saying!

Now, the second reason is that it is built upon better promises. In other words, the promise of eternal life to all who believe and not built upon the keeping of the Law or working your way into heaven!

I think Griffith Thomas hits the nail on the head when he says, ***“The covenant is ‘better’ because it is absolute not conditional, spiritual not carnal, universal not local, eternal not temporal, individual not national, internal not external.”***

That is a better promise to us! The Law could never do that.

And here is the thing; a covenant is based on a promise, right?

Thus, we see here the promise of God and thus, this covenant is based upon the faithfulness of God and not man to keep it, it is His promise to us, and thus, it can’t be broken!

You see, this is a better covenant than the old and it is established upon better promises – ones that won’t fail because God is the initiator and sustainer of those promises to us!

And listen to Paul’s next point, it just makes sense after what He has said about the New Covenant, the better Covenant!

#### VERSE 7

Paul is showing us that God knew the Old Covenant was flawed. He knew that it could never make us righteous in His eyes, nor did He ever intend it to.

That’s why He prophesied through the prophet Jeremiah, way back in the Old Covenant period, that He would eventually replace it with a new covenant.

In fact, as we read on here in Hebrews chapter 8, Paul is going to quote out of Jeremiah to show them that the Scriptures foretold of a better covenant that was coming.

But look at what Jeremiah 31:31-34 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 - not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”**

We will deal more with this as we continue on, and Paul speaks of what Jeremiah said. But I want you to clearly see that this was spoken of in the Old Testament, it is not a New Testament idea!

And this is a powerful point. If the Old Covenant was able to save us, then why would there need to be a New Covenant?

That would make no sense.

And, as I have said, the Old Covenant was inadequate because it was based upon man’s faithfulness to keep it and he couldn’t, and we can’t!

In the Old Testament the word for **“covenant”** in Hebrew was BERIYTH, (ber-eeth’) and it is derived from a root word meaning ***“to cut.”***

We see this played out in Genesis chapter 15 as God makes a covenant with Abraham and he cuts in half some animal sacrifices and the idea is that both parties would pass through the center of them to ratify the covenant.

But here only God passed through indicating that this was a unilateral covenant with Abraham, not based on the faithfulness of Abraham and his descendants but on the faithfulness of God.

Then came the legal covenant on Mount Sinai that came between the promises that were given to Abraham and the fulfillment in his promised Seed, Jesus Christ.

The Mosaic covenant was a legal covenant that was based upon the faithfulness of man, do this and you are blessed, disobey God and you are cursed.

In Deuteronomy chapter 4 we are told, **“Now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I teach you to observe, that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you . . . . Therefore know this day, and consider it in your heart, that the LORD Himself is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other. You shall therefore keep His statutes and His commandments which I command you today, that it may go well with you and with your children after you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time.”** Deuteronomy 4:1, 39-40.

Thus, as Moses spoke forth the Words of God to the people, they responded back by saying, **“Then all the people answered together and said, ‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do.’ So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD.”** Exodus 19:8.

And in Exodus 24:7-8 we are told, **“Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, ‘All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.’ And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words.’”**

They were bound to the covenant by the blood!

But man failed to keep it and God knew he couldn't.

Then what was the Law all about? It seems like a cruel joke by God!

The Law was to show man his sinful condition and his weakness to do anything to rectify that problem through his own efforts.

Paul, in Romans 5:20 says, "**Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more.**"

And in Galatians 3:23-25 we are told, "**But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.**"

You see, the Law showed them their weakness and pointed them to the Messiah, to Jesus Christ.

It does the same for us today if we are trying to live by the Law; it's what draws us to Christ because we see how far short we come in keeping it! God demands perfection and we miss it by a million miles. But even if we came close, which we don't, it still wouldn't matter, because if you miss perfection, what God requires by a million miles or an inch, you still missed it!

Now Paul is going to show them how their own prophets were looking forward to the New Covenant that is not based upon the faithfulness of man to keep but the faithfulness of God! It is truly a unilateral covenant that God has established with us.

VERSES 8-12

As I read this it seems to me that Paul is kind of rebuking them here. Why is he doing that?

The reason is simple. These Jewish believers should have known the Old Testament Scriptures; they should have known what the Lord said through the prophet Jeremiah. This was no surprise, no shock, even the unbelieving Jews saw this and yet, even today millions of Jews hold onto the Old Covenant, which can't save them.

The problem with the Old Covenant is that it had no remedy for sin, but the New Covenant does have the remedy, Jesus Christ, our Great High Priest.

And as you see, as Paul points out, the Old Covenant, under Moses, was flawed and doomed to fail as a mechanism for making us righteous before God because it was built on man's faithfulness.

Now some may be upset with that, but let's look at the facts,

Man's faithfulness was so fragile and flawed that while Moses was still up on Mount Sinai getting the Law from God the people had already broken it by making themselves a golden calf to worship.

And I think if we are honest with ourselves, we would clearly see we miss that mark of perfection, not by a little, but by a lot!

Now, as we see here, Paul quotes out of Jeremiah to make his point.

Keep in mind that Jeremiah wrote his book or letter prior to and then into the Babylonian captivity.



The reason the Southern Kingdom of Judah went into captivity was because of their sin, they didn't learn the lesson from their sister to the north, the Northern Kingdom of Israel who were taken into captivity by the Assyrians a little over 100 years earlier for their sins.

Judah followed right along and was taken into captivity by the Babylonians.

It is possible that Jeremiah wrote these words of the coming New Covenant during the reign of Josiah. He was a godly King and during his reign a copy of the Law was found, and they read it and Josiah led a national renewing of their covenant before God.

We see this in II Kings 23:3, **“Then the king stood by a pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to follow the LORD and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes, with all his heart and all his soul, to perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people took a stand for the covenant.”**

But it was a downhill spiral from there with new Kings coming on the scene and they were wicked, evil and led the nation away from God and they moved quickly towards captivity because of their sin!

Thus, God's promise is that there is coming a day when God is going to make a **“new covenant”** with the Jewish people, both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.

The word **“new”** is KAINOS, (kahee-nos') in the Greek, and it speaks of being new in quality, not just a reproduction or a fixing up of something that was old.

Thus, this New Covenant is God's appointed vehicle for fulfilling the Abrahamic blessings that was not only for Israel but also for all who believe!

Let me take a few minutes and let's look at some of the aspects of this covenant a little closer and keep in mind this was spoken by the Lord in the Old Testament, in Jeremiah, and we can find it in Jeremiah 31:31-34.

➤ **INSTITUTED BY GOD**

Notice that the Lord said, “**I will make a new covenant.**” Hebrews 8:8. This is not man’s doing, but God’s. Thus, this covenant, like a will, is written by God and the beneficiaries of this will are those who believe, specifically here it speaks of the Jews and we will deal with this more in a minute.

➤ **A NEW COVENANT**

As I said earlier, this is not just a revision of the Old Covenant but a new one. The Lord even says this, that it is “**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.**” Hebrews 8:9.

➤ **GIVEN TO ISRAEL**

The Lord specifically said that He will make this New Covenant “**with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.**” Hebrews 8:8.

But keep in mind what Paul said in Galatians 3:6-9, “**just as Abraham ‘believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, ‘In you all the nations shall be blessed.’ So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.**” You see, we were grafted in, (Romans 11:17-24) by faith and thus, we can receive the blessings promised to Abraham!

Yes, right now many of the Jews are missing out on the blessings that are found in the grace of God in this New Covenant. In fact, they are still breaking the Old Covenant laws and are losing out on the covenant blessings that God has for the Jewish people.

But this will not last forever. Paul tells us in Romans 11:25-27, **“For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.’”**

They will be grafted back in as they receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior during the Tribulation Period. That is not to say that Jews today are not getting saved, they are, but not as a nation, that is coming!

➤ **NOT ACCORDING TO THE LAW**

The Old Covenant was based on the Law, thus, blessings for obedience and cursings for disobedience. That is not what we see in the New Covenant. Again, it was **“not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers,”** the Law!

➤ **INTERNAL NOT EXTERNAL**

In Hebrews 8:10 the Lord said, **“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.”**

The Old Covenant was external, written on tablets of stone and obedience to it was based on fear.

The cleansing was ceremonial, it was never complete.

The New Covenant is internal; it is a heart transplant that the Lord gives to us where He writes on our hearts His Laws, not on tablets of stone. Thus, as we go forth in our daily lives, God guides us as His Spirit dwells in us, and we are obedient out of love not the Law.

Now, in speaking of heart transplants, let me share this with you.

Did you know that the first man ever to perform a successful heart transplant was Christiaan Barnard on December 3, 1967 in a hospital in Johannesburg, South Africa?

The patient was Louis Washkansky, a 54-year-old grocer, suffering from diabetes and incurable heart disease.

After the surgery Dr. Barnard came to Washkansky and asked him if he'd like to see his old heart. The patient was a little reluctant to take the doctor up on his offer. However, Barnard brought the old heart over to him in a glass jar.

When Mr. Washkansky saw it, he said, ***“Is this the thing that was giving me all the trouble? Away with it!”***

That's what the Lord does in the New Covenant at the moment we're born again. He takes out our old heart, the thing that was giving us all the trouble and He transplants a new one in its place.

And we really don't want to ever see that old heart again!

➤ **A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP**

In Hebrews 8:11 the Lord said, “**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.**”

Not only do we have God’s Word in us but the Holy Spirit. We can have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. For the Jew, this is speaking of the Kingdom Age for they have rejected Jesus as their Lord and Savior at this point, for the most, some are saved.

➤ **FORGIVENESS OF SINS – IT IS FINISHED**

Look at Hebrews 8:12, the Lord said, “**For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.**”

What does man need more than anything else in this world?

I’m sure there are a flood of answers out there but only one that is correct, the forgiveness of our sins through Jesus Christ - it is the capstone of the New Covenant!

No longer is there the ceremonial cleansing but our sins are completely removed, cast as far as the east is from the west to be remembered no more!

Let me show you how this plays out.

In Psalm 103:12 David tells us, “**As far as the east is from the west, So far ha He removed our transgressions from us.**”

Keep in mind that the east and the west never meet. The north and south do. As you go over the top of the north pole and start heading down, you are going south. But you can start out going east and keep going and going and going, and the east and the west will never meet. That is how far He has cast our sins from us, they are gone!

In Isaiah 38:17 we are told, “**Indeed it was for my own peace That I had great bitterness; But You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption, For You have cast all my sins behind Your back.**”

In other words, keep your eyes on God, don't look back, because those sins are behind us and we are walking in the newness of life that He has given to us.

And lastly, in Isaiah 43:25 we are told, “**I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.**”

Okay, if God has cast our sins as far as the east is from the west. If God has cast our sins behind us. If God has blotted out our sins and forgotten them. Then why in the world are we holding onto them, remembering them? Let them go, you have been forgiven in Christ!

Again, this should not have been a surprise to the Jewish people for the Lord, through the prophet Jeremiah spoke of this New Covenant that was coming and all it entailed, something that the Old Covenant could not accomplish!

And today, it should not be a surprise to us because we not only have the Old Testament, the New Testament, but we have the Holy Spirit who is teaching us these things and yet, so many are taken back to the Law.

Remember what Paul said in Hebrews 6:19-20, “**This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.**”

Don't drift away, anchor your life in Christ!

As we look at Paul's last point, it is powerful and it should close the door on mixing Law and grace, going back to the Jewish religious practices for salvation. And yet, some still do!

Listen to what Paul says here in Hebrews 8:13.

### VERSE 13

Remember what Jesus said to His men a few days before He was crucified on Calvary.

In Matthew 24:1-2 we are told, "**Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.'**"

What was going to be destroyed?

The Temple!

So, as Paul wrote this letter to the Hebrews the destruction of the Temple was getting closer, maybe only some 4 to 6 years away at this point.

In 70 A. D. Titus and the Roman army came in and destroyed the city, burned the Temple to the ground, and to get the gold from the Temple they turned over the stones of the Temple just as Jesus said would take place.

Thus, when Paul wrote, "**... Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away**" he is speaking of the Temple and all that went with it, the Old Covenant, and it has been replaced with the New Covenant!

Now, for over 1900 years the Temple has been gone, there has been no grain or animal sacrifices.

There is no atonement for their sins, no covering of their sins according to the Old Covenant.

Thus, it is obsolete; it has vanished away because a better covenant with better promises has come!

And the reality is the Old Covenant with the sacrifices were done away with as Jesus died on the cross of Calvary paying in full the penalty for our sins and the veil separating the holy place from the Holy of Holies was torn in two from top to bottom by God. Now all have access to God through Jesus Christ!

For the Orthodox Jew, this is a problem for there is no Temple, no sacrifice.

Yes, they have everything together to restart the sacrifices. They have the priests and all the implements for the Temple, but they can't build the Temple because the Temple Mount was given to the Palestinians and they will not allow them to build their Temple next to their holy sites!

So how do they atone for their sins?

The Jews are very resourceful, and to rectify this problem they say, since there is no Temple, and God knows their heart, that they want a Temple so the sacrifices can resume, that now, on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, as long as their good deeds outweigh their bad deeds God will accept that until the Temple is rebuilt.

The only problem with that kind of logic is that it is unscriptural.

Notice what Leviticus 17:11 says, **“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.”**



You see, it is not that your good deeds outweigh your bad deeds but there must be the shedding of blood.

And keep in mind that the Law can never take away your sins, it could only show you that you are a sinner, it can't clean you up or make you clean.

And no sacrifice can take away your sins, except One. Remember what Paul wrote in Romans 3:20, "**Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**"

Again, the Law is like a mirror. A mirror can show us we're dirty, but it can't do anything to cleanse us of that dirt.

The Law can show us our sin, but it can't do anything to cleanse us of that sin.

Thus, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world, Jesus Christ gave His life as a sacrifice for us, once for all. He paid in full the penalty for our sins!

In this letter, Paul made that perfectly clear, that our sins cannot be atoned for by animal sacrifices.

We are told of this in Hebrews 10:4-10, **“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: ‘Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, But a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, “Behold, I have come - In the volume of the book it is written of Me - To do Your will, O God.”’ Previously saying, ‘Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them’ (which are offered according to the law), then He said, ‘Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God.’ He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”**

Jesus Christ has given to us a better covenant with better promises that are based upon His faithfulness and finished work and we can receive those blessings of God by His grace through faith in Jesus Christ!

Praise the Lord for His bountiful blessings to us, that He has given to us a – ***BETTER COVENANT!***

**PICTURES OF THE STONES FROM THE TEMPLE THROWN DOWN BY THE ROMANS**

