

I. Review

- A. The author is currently showing how and why Jesus was made the high priest of the new covenant by the Father's oath. He looks at 3 distinct categories of the need for and role of a high priest and lists all the various details of the surpassing perfection of Jesus' high priestly identity and work as high priest of the new covenant.

1. Personal Qualities (Unchanging Character Traits)

- a. Holy - Without fault in His actions and plans.
- b. Harmless - Without guile or fraud.
- c. undefiled - Incorruptible.
- d. Separate from Sinners - Fully human yet without sin nature.

2. Ministry Qualities (Authority and Effectiveness)

- a. Become Higher than the Heavens - Full acceptance and validation of His substitutionary death and resurrection.
- b. Seated at the right hand of God in His throne room.
- c. Minister of the temple in heaven built by God.
- d. Offers intercession continually in the very presence of God (Holy of Holies).

3. Sacrificial Qualities (Power and Scope of His Ministry)

- a. Offered Himself - Highest and holiest possible sacrifice.
- b. Once for all - His sacrifice only had to be offered once for all time.

- B. The author is currently expanding upon the surpassing perfection of the ministry and sacrifice of Jesus. He will now explain in more detail the weakness or faultiness of the old covenant and why God has brought about the new.

II. Verse-by-Verse (Heb. 8:7-13)

- A. Finding Fault - God was the one who found fault in the first covenant and desired to institute the new covenant. Man comes up with new things all the time for the sake of boredom or thinking that something is better. God makes new things because it's necessary in light of the lack of the old. The context of "them" is the covenant and the promises that are connected to the covenant from verse 6.

There are two Greek words that describe the concept of “new” used in the new testament. Neos described newness in regard to time. Something may be a copy of something old; but if it is recently made, it can be called neos. The ancient Greek word kainos (the word used here) described something that is not only new in reference to time, but is truly new in its quality. It isn’t simply a new reproduction of something old. - David Guzik

- B. Because they did not continue - God found fault in the old covenant because humanity could not continue in it. The weakness of the old covenant was not in the covenant itself but in the weakness and inability of man to walk it out. Man failed God's requirements of righteousness, requirements that He could not lessen or they would no longer be righteous.
- C. Four Distinct Promises - The writer is purposely reciting the prophecy of the coming new covenant from Jeremiah in order to demonstrate that this covenant had not come yet in Jeremiah’s day, and to list the four corresponding better promises (vs. 6) that will accompany it when it comes. It is important to point out that these promises, though experienced now, will not be fully realized or experienced apart from the return of Jesus. (Ez. 36:22-37:28)
 - 1. I will write my law on their minds and hearts - This first “better” promise that is distinct--according to God--to the new covenant is the supernatural transformation of the inward parts of man through the work of the Holy Spirit. Very clearly, the reality of the necessity of this newness is that this reality is unavailable in the old covenant. In other words, the writing of the law upon the heart and mind of the believer is impossible under the old covenant. If it was possible, then there would be nothing new under this new covenant.
 - a. Notice “I will” rather than “you will” The Lord makes it plain that this covenant originates with God, not with man. At Sinai, under the old covenant, the key words were “if you”, but in the new covenant, the key words are “I will”. (Ex. 19:5)
 - 2. I will be their God and they will be my people - The second “better” promise is that the new covenant would usher in a reality of uninterrupted intimacy and nearness not known before. This exact phrase is only used by God to describe the relationship He will have with His people in the context of the new covenant and never used under the old. (Gen. 17:8; Jer. 24:7, 31:33, 32:38; Eze. 11:20, 37:23, 37:27, Zec. 8:8, 2 Cor. 6:16; Heb. 11:16)

3. I will remember their sins no more - The third “better” promise of the new covenant is the complete forgiveness of all sins past, present, and future through the better sacrifice and ministry of Jesus, the great high priest of the new covenant. The author will go into the power and beauty of the sacrifice of Jesus in the chapters to come. (Acts 13:38-39; 1 Jhn 1:7-9)
4. They will all know me - The fourth “better” promise of the new covenant is that all humanity would have equal and unending access to the knowledge of God, regardless of age, gender, social standing, class, race, seniority, or any other element of human inequality. In its context, this promise rests upon the truth that we will all be taught by God about God. No longer will someone else teach you about God but He will personally teach everyone individually about Himself. (Gal. 3:19-29; Is. 2:3, 11:9, 54:13; Jn 6:45; 1 Jhn 2:27)

D. He has made the first obsolete - The writer's logic is simple and unmistakably clear. If God called the covenant established through the priesthood of Jesus a “new” covenant then the Mosaic covenant is “old”. In other words, man did not call the Mosaic covenant the old covenant, God did. In calling it the new covenant, He made the Mosaic covenant old and obsolete. The Greek word translated “obsolete” means “to declare a thing old and therefore revoked”. The writer tells us that the Mosaic covenant has aged out and is ready or positioned to vanish away or disappear. (Heb. 7:11-12; Rom. 7:1-6; Gal. 3:23-25)

1. This reality does not mean that the Mosaic or old covenant is irrelevant to those who are in the new covenant. The types and shadows of the beauties of Jesus revealed through it are endless and the Holy Spirit longs to reveal them to us through our intentional study and knowledge of them. I have personally experienced great increases of love and adoration for Jesus through studying the Mosaic covenant and growing in my understanding of the Hebrew roots of our faith. (Jn. 5:39-47)
2. However, we must never place any weight of salvation from keeping any part or form of it. To do so would declare to Jesus that we do not accept the new covenant that He instituted by His blood, and believe that the Mosaic covenant is not obsolete as God has declared. To do this places us in an extremely dangerous place. (Acts. 4:10-12; Jn. 14:6; Gal. 2:21, 3:2-3, 5:4-8; Rom. 10:3-5)

