

Hebrews 8

I've always loved music. Back in the day, I could not always afford to buy all of the albums that seemed to be pouring out each week during the 60's, and 70's. So, I'd listen to whatever songs were on the radio or, if a friend of mine had the album, we would listen to it over and over until it nearly wore out.

One of the issues with record albums was that I had to pick up the arm and put the needle back down if I wanted to skip a song. Then inevitably, I would drop the arm and the record was scratched right where my favorite song was or worse, the needle would break. So, until technology caught up, I would often save up for those "**Best of...**" albums where all the songs were my favorites and I wouldn't have to fool around trying to search for a song I liked.

My point is...wait a sec.

As I was writing this intro, it dawned on me that this wasn't the best way to describe the Book of Hebrews. I began to realize that it was a lousy illustration. You see, I loved the "Best of" albums because somehow they picked all of the songs I liked and so I could, in effect, ignore all songs I didn't like. Hmm...perhaps I can use this illustration after all...

The "best of..." albums worked for music...but, we can't pick and choose what we like to read when it comes to Scripture. And, we can't pick and choose how to understand what we are reading. When you do that, then 144,000 young Jewish celibates suddenly become every believer of a specific denomination who alone go to heaven.

But, then again, in this Book we are studying, we **are** seeing the "Best of...".

The Book of Hebrews is like a "Best of Compilation Album". We have a book that might have chapters entitled "The "Best of Salvation", or, "The Best High Priest", or, "the Best Covenant", or, "the Best Tabernacle", or, "the Best Sacrificial Lamb"; How about, "the Best Faith Ever" and, of course, the final chapter, "the Best Eternal Life Now"!

So, how did the author of Hebrews know "the Best"? He had to compare it to something similar. He had to see what was considered the "best" by some set of people and compare it to what he thought was better. He could then make a determination that his "Best of..." was truly the best!

So, while we can't pick and choose through God's Word – that's dangerous and even deadly in some cases! - We must understand the old to appreciate the new.

In the first century, there was much confusion because people saw that two covenants seemed to be in effect at the same time. On top of that, there was a lot of vicious persecution from the "established religion" and the pagan cultures as well.

The issues for believers in the first century were the same as they are for us today.

- 1) Is what I believe TRUTH? Unadulterated, Unabridged, Undiluted, Uncompromisingly TRUE?
Is there a TRUTH that transcends individual truth, "my" truth?

- 2) For the Jewish believers, "Is this **newer** covenant better than the existing one that God gave our people thousands of years before AND is still in effect?"
- 3) Or, the cry of countless believers: "If I am loved by God, why am I suffering so?"
- 4) Today, one might ask, is all this freedom a good thing? Wasn't it easier to know plainly what was allowed and what wasn't? Fences protect! Boxes make good security devices".
- 5) And finally, if Christianity is SO TRUE, why is there so much fragmentation, distrust, and even HATE at times between various "Christian" denominations? Even our beloved CC has seen some of this since Pastor Chuck went home.

In order to provide sound New Covenant doctrine, in order to correct misunderstandings, in order to understand what is expected of us by God, we must examine ALL Biblical revelation given to us by His prophets of old and certainly by His Son today.

Last week the author talked about a different priesthood whose High Priest was ordained by His Father not just through the death of the last High Priest of the order of Aaron. This High Priest's Father was God and his ordination was by an OATH sworn by Himself when He said, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU." As well as, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK"; (Psalm 2:7; Psalm 110:4)

Therefore, the eternal Son is the eternal High Priest. Whereas Aaron and his sons mediated the covenant given to the people by God through his brother Moses, this BETTER High Priest, Jesus, lives forever and mediates a BETTER Covenant He Himself gave to all people. Whereas Aaron and his sons were like those for whom he officiated (his people Israel who were all sinners, rebellious and deeply stained), our High Priest is the perfect GOD:MAN. **"For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin."** [Hebrews 4:15 NKJV](#)

And therefore, chapter 7 clearly states:

(15) And it is yet far more evident if, in the likeness of Melchizedek, there arises another priest (16) who has come, not according to the law of a fleshly commandment, but according to the power of an endless life. [Hebrews 7:15-16 NKJV](#)

And starting in verse 25 of Chapter 7:

(25) Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (26) For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; (27) who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. (28) For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. ([Hebrews 7:25-28 NKJV](#))

Therefore, we have the context for chapter 8.

(Hebrews 8:1 NKJV) Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: **We have such** a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

such – the Greek comes from a couple of other words that translate into “truly this”. Like “boy, this was such a great meal, Pastor Stu”.

This High Priest is “seated” at the right hand of the Throne. Being seated implies completion of work, unlike the Aaronic priests who continually had to provide sacrifices to God for remission of sins.

And being at the Throne of the Majesty, He **is** exalted above every priest.

(Hebrews 8:2 NKJV) a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

The author reveals that there is a “true tabernacle” which the LORD built, not man. This one is in heaven and not on earth. Our High Priest is its Minister, the One who is its “public servant” as the Greek word indicates.

(Hebrews 8:3 NKJV) For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore *it is* necessary that this One also have something to offer. (Hebrews 8:4 NKJV) For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law;

As we saw last week, earthly priests bring sacrifices and offerings to the altar to be dedicated to God. Our High Priest must also. But what did our High Priest bring?

But our High Priest would not be a priest because they offer gifts and sacrifices according to the law which also specified that only the sons of Aaron could be priests.

Our High Priest offered something better! Our High Priest offered **Himself**, not by law, but freely by Grace.

(Hebrews 8:5 NKJV) 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."

And the tabernacle was just a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. There exists a true tabernacle and the true High Priest, ministering in it.

Related to this is Paul’s admonition in [Colossians 2:16-17 NKJV \(16\)](#) *So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, (17) which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

The specifics of Paul’s teaching are related to “things” of the Law just as those of the tabernacle are “things” of the Law – both are shadows and copies made from the original in heaven.

The earthly things were sufficient for a season but not forever!

(Hebrews 8:6 NKJV) 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.

Our “Best” High Priest, has the “Best” ministry. He is the “Best” Mediator of the “Best Covenant” because it was built on the “Best Promises”.

If nothing would found these better things, then obviously they are the BEST!

Well, how can the author say such thing?

(Hebrews 8:7 NKJV) For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

All unconditional covenants have only God’s Name on them. Conditional covenants were between God and Man; The “fault” of the Mosaic Covenant is because of one of the parties involved....and it’s NOT God. He kept His promises!

There are 8 different covenants in the Scriptures. Two of them (the Edenic and the Mosaic) are conditional; Six of them are unconditional (Noahic, Abrahamic, Land, Davidic and the New).

The conditional covenants are bi-lateral, meaning that both parties have a part in the covenant. You can think of God saying, “If you will, then I will”. If man will fulfill the agreed-upon conditions, then God will provide blessings. If man does not fulfill the agreement. God will respond with punishments or cursings.

The unconditional covenants are unilateral, made by God alone whereby He unconditionally obligates Himself to bring to fulfillment the blessings for the “covenanted people”. These covenants are, in essence, God saying, “I will...,” and then He does.

Five of the eight covenants were made with Israel (Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New are all unconditional. The Mosaic is the only conditional one).

While I cannot go into detail of each of the eight covenants, I have put the scripture references in these notes. I’ll try to give, if possible, a one or two line summation:

1. Edemic (conditional) – Genesis 1:28-30 (expectations); Genesis 2:15-17 (the Tree issue); Hosea 6:7 (how God viewed Adam’s sin which broke the covenant)
2. Adamic (unconditional) – Genesis 3:14-19; Results of the Fall but includes prophesy of the Seed of the women.
 - a. In the first 2, Adam, as the first man, represented everyone who came after him. Therefore, the judgment on Adam is the judgment on all humanity.
3. Noahic (unconditional) – Genesis 9:1-17
 - a. Similar to the Edemic but this also includes prohibitions on eating blood or spilling blood (murder); a life-for-a-life was instituted.
 - b. The promise to never destroy the world by a flood and the sign of the rainbow;
4. Abrahamic (unconditional) – Genesis 12:1-3; 12:7; 13:14-17; Genesis 15:1-21; 17:1-21; Genesis 22:15-18;

- a. A great nation would come from him (Israel);
- b. Land was promised
- c. All nations would be blessed by him
- d. You can think of this covenant as being the basis of three other covenants:
 - i. Land – land covenant
 - ii. Seed – Davidic covenant
 - iii. Blessings – New covenant
- 5. Land Covenant (unconditional) – Deuteronomy 29:1 – 30:20 (2 chapters).
 - a. While written as part of the Mosaic covenant, it is considered separately:
 - b. [Deuteronomy 29:1 NKJV](#) These *are* the words of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which He made with them in Horeb.
 - c. Blessings and Cursings are given for obedience and disobedience;
 - d. Their living in the land was contingent on their obedience which Moses said that they would not do. There would be scattering's and regathering's of the people.
 - e. Included in these verses are prophesies concerning the Messiah's return and reign.
- 6. Davidic (unconditional) – 2 Samuel 7:11b-16; 1 Chronicles 17:10b-14;
 - a. Establishment of the Kingdom FOREVER ruled by King Messiah!
 - b. This will be through the Davidic line of descent.

I will have to wait until next week to discuss the last two covenants: the Mosaic and the New.

For now, we need to understand that God used covenants since the beginning of creation. Why?

It was through these covenants that God revealed His nature, His Mind, His Will and Heart. It was through these covenants that these same things were revealed about us.

Once the revelations were understood (who God is and who we are), the basis of a real and abiding relationship between the Creator and His created beings could be realized.

As God and Creator, He had every right to voice all His expectations of us:

1. Obedience
2. Loyalty
3. Love
4. Gratitude
5. And More...

And He even voiced what we could expect from Him

1. Mercy
2. Grace
3. Faithfulness
4. Love
5. Justice
6. And So Much More...

If we look at the covenants in a relational way, we will not look at them as a way that God gets us to

behave; we will not look at them as a cold contract we were forced to sign and then live out our days regretting it.

And while we can NEVER think that these are agreements between equals, we can rest in them because He loves us so much that He chose to reveal Himself to us in a way that even we could understand: He's God and we are not.

The one that got us in trouble since day 6 is "obedience". God said do not eat the fruit of this certain tree and He even gave grave consequences for not obeying Him. Adam and his wife Eve disobeyed and it's been hell on earth ever since. [Hosea 6:7 ASV](#) But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant: there have they dealt treacherously against me.

But, often God would make unconditional promises; Since He only had to depend upon Himself, the covenants stood in effect from the day that they were made or when were fulfilled.

Relationship,

(don't tell me what to do...)

Expectations, right and wrong. Actions/Inactions and consequences.