

Studies in Hebrews



Lesson XI

Text: Heb. 7:23—8:13

^{7:23} Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; ²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. ²⁵ Therefore he is able to save completely ^[a] those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

²⁶ Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. ²⁷ Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. ²⁸ For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever.

^{8:1} The 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, ² and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by man.

³ Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. ⁴ If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already men who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. ⁵ They 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." ^[b] ⁶ But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

⁷ For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. ⁸ But God found fault with the people and said ^[c]: "The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ⁹ It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers 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. ¹⁰ This is the covenant I will make with the house 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. ¹¹ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. ¹² For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." ^[d] ¹³ By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

Footnotes: a. Psalm 110:4; b. Exodus 25:40; c. Some manuscripts: *fault and said to the people*; d. Jer. 31:31-34

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Identify the key differences between Jesus Christ and the priests and high priests (“chief priests”) of the Old Covenant. (7:23-28)
2. What is Jesus able to do that no one else can? (vv. 25, 27)
3. What qualifies Jesus to take on this role for humanity? (8:1-2)
4. Why did Jesus need to ascend to heaven after his resurrection? (vv. 3-4)
5. Verse 5 uses the words “copy” (“example,” KJV), “shadow,” and “pattern” to describe the eternal plan of God. This means that the ceremonial law of M_____s was highly symbolic, foreshadowing the coming of J_____s the M_____h.
6. Why is God’s new agreement (covenant) with us “superior” to his old covenant with biblical Israel? (vs. 6)
7. What was wrong with the old agreement? (vv 7-9)
8. Describe the characteristics of the new covenant (vv. 10-12)
9. What happened to the old covenant? (vs. 13) Are we bound to follow the laws spelled out in the Pentateuch (the five books that traditionally make up the Law of Moses)? (see Romans 10:4) What use are they to us today? (see Romans 15:4)