

HEBREWS 8: 7-12 – New priest, new covenant

INTRO – Old Covenant – Gen 12: - Abrahamic cov – Land, descendants, relationship. Mosaic Covenant – Exodus 19:5 ‘ If you obey me fully and keep my covenant then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession’. V 6 ‘you will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation’, then 10 C’s, (EX 20), further laws in Exodus, and Levitical laws in Leviticus.

Even whilst Moses was on the mountain receiving the tablets the people were breaking the covenant – Golden Calf in Ex 32.

Throughout the OT God’s people continued to struggle to keep the covenant. The book of Judges is a classic example. The people would disobey God and become enslaved to other nations. He would raise up a judge to deliver them, they would return to obedience for a time, and then the next generation would fall away. The cycle would then continue.

Application - Sadly, we can experience the same thing when we try to do good in our strength.

God had to send so many prophets because of their continual breaches of the Old Covenant.

Jeremiah 31 v 31 to 34 foretells a new covenant, which is confirmed in Hebrews 8:8-12. So what’s new?

1/HELP TO OBEY - Through our new high priest and his spirit – *Heb 8 v 10 ‘ I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts’*. Very new!

We will always fall short in our own strength. John 8 v 34 tells us that everyone who sins is a slave to sin. People think the church restricts them from doing what they want, they don’t realise that they are actually slaves to their sin, and the gospel sets them free. Matthew 1v21 tells us that Jesus will save his people from their sin.

Jesus the great high priest - A priest intercedes for his people, he mediates between God and the people. (A prophet is bringing a message from God to the people). A priest offers sacrifices to reconcile people to God (other direction, from people to God on their behalf). Futility they did it again and again (like mowing lawns) J did it once for all.

Jesus is the perfect high priest - ascended to heaven, empathizes with our weakness, but no sin - Fully God and fully man.

Heb 4 v 14 -15 *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,^[1] Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin*

The good news is when we accept Jesus' sacrifice he sends us his Spirit to help us – Jn 14v6 says ‘*I will ask the father and he will give you another counsellor... the spirit*’.

Jn 16v13-14 tells us ‘when the spirit comes he will guide you into all truth.

Rm 8v13 tells if by the spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body you will live.

God, by his spirit is able to transform us, over time, into the people he wants us to be, if we earnestly seek him. This process, called sanctification, takes time, but it can be done.

Illustration Rachel – Dwarfs at shopping centre (pointing ‘what are they?’) Told her ‘little people’ or used to say ‘dwarfs’. **Rach ‘ I didn’t know they were real’.**

This assistance to obey seems too good to be true, but it is true. That doesn’t mean we become robots, there is still much work to do, and we will sometimes fail, but it is possible with God’s help to become more obedient to him, if we earnestly seek this.

2/A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP with our high priest and our God -

Heb 8v11 ‘*they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest*’

Heb 9 v1-7 Under the Old covenant, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies once a year on the day of Atonement. Even then he had to enter with blood, and they tied a rope around his ankles so they could drag him out if God struck him down.

This place housed the ark of the covenant and was where G’s presence was considered to reside.

In Jesus time the women could only go in an outer court, and the Gentiles were in the outermost court. For most God was very distant.

At Jesus death, this heavy veil/curtain separating the holy of holies was torn apart. Jesus' death destroyed that barrier. As great high priest he gives us access to God.

1 Peter 2 v 9-10 tells us that all who are believers are a royal priesthood.

Illustration – Audience with the president, Regan and advisors on ag subsidies, only advisors spoke, v JFKs son playing in oval office.

3/COMPLETE FORGIVENESS OF SINS - via the great High Priest –

Heb 8v12 “*I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more*’

Papua - buying forgiveness and salvation.

Under the old covenant the believers had to make regular sacrifices.

Heb 10v 11-12 ‘day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties, again and again he offers the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. But when this priest (Jesus) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins he sat down at the right hand of God.’

The sacrifices of the priests had to be repeated for the individual constantly but Jesus can sit down as his sacrifices were 'once for all'.

The believer is given a clear conscience – under the old covenant we were still left with guilt

Heb 9v9 'the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshipper'.

In *Hebrews 10* we are told Jesus' sacrifice '*cleanses us from a guilty conscience*'.

Finally God 'remembers our sins no more' in C8v12.

Illustration Rachel re – roast lamb 'you eat animals' – reality hit, shock. The reality for us is we can obtain complete forgiveness for our sins in Jesus.

Illustration Chedi Kiew Chiang Mai - **“Lung Piang”** - CM legend.

s.1 Chedi or Stupa. Mainly Chedi in Thailand, a spherical structure where artifacts are kept. Often bones/ashes of famous people.

s.2 (Lana Kingdom, later part of Siamese kingdom) Burmese king challenged Lana King, instead of fighting hold breath in the Ping river.

s.3 (Ping river) 2 poles hold on. Young champion for Burma. Old man for La na. Down a long time then Burmese guy surfaced. Waited longer, nothing. Sent men to tell old man he won. He'd tied himself to the pole so La na couldn't lose. Sacrificed himself.

Jesus as high priest didn't just give the sacrifice, he was the sacrifice, for us, for you. He was the perfect sacrifice, paying the price once, for all.

HOW DO WE GET IN ON THE NEW COVENANT AND Be Represented by the great high priest, Jesus

Confession of our sins (1 Jn 1v9), Repentance (Acts 2v38), belief in Jesus (Acts 2v38) and

SO – If you are not a Christian, this new covenant is available to you, God can forgive you completely, he can help you to obey him, and you can have a personal relationship with him. To obtain this you need to confess your sins, repent of them, and believe in Jesus.

If you are a Christian – remember to seek God's assistance to obey his commands, don't let Satan hold you back through guilt, as you have complete forgiveness of sins (this is not a reason to keep sinning, as he has written his law on our hearts and minds). Finally we can have a personal relationship with him – this is incredible and we need to tell others about the great high priest, Jesus.

Unley Apr 22