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HEBREWS CHAPTER 8

In Your Group Read Hebrews chapter eight (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As a Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF HEBREWS CHAPTER 8 King James Version

HEB 8: [1] Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; **[2]** A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. **[3]** For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. **[4]** For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: **[5]** Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount. (Exodus 25:40) **[6]** ¶ But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. **[7]** For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. **[8]** For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: (Jer. 31:31) **[9]** 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; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. (Jer. 31:32) **[10]** For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days,

saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (Jer. 31:33) **[11]** And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (Jer. 31:34) **[12]** For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. (Jer. 31:34) **[13]** In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 8

VERSES 1-2

Hebrews 8:[1] Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; [2] A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. (King James Version)

8 What we are saying is this: Christ, whose priesthood we have just described, is our High Priest and is in heaven at the place of greatest honor next to God himself. ²He ministers in the temple in heaven, the true place of worship built by the Lord and not by human hands. **(The Living Bible)**

Additional Information: Verse 1 – Here is the point of what has been said: We have a high priest who sits on the right side of God’s throne (in a place of honor) in heaven.

Verse 2 – Our high priest serves in the Most Holy Place (the sanctuary), the true place of worship (the true tabernacle), made by God, not by humans.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 8

VERSES 3-6

Hebrews 8:[3] For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. [4] For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: [5] Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shown to thee in the mount. (Exodus 25:40) [6] But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. (King James Version)

³Every high priest has the work of offering gifts and sacrifices to God. So our high priest must also offer something to God. ⁴If our high priest were now living on earth, he would not be a priest, because there are already priests here who follow the law by offering

gifts to God.⁵ The work they do as priests is only a copy and a shadow of what is in heaven. This is why God warned Moses when he was ready to build the Holy Tent: “Be very careful to make everything by the plan I showed you on the mountain.”⁶ But the priestly work that has been given to Jesus is much greater than the work that was given to the other priests. In the same way, the new agreement that Jesus brought from God to his people is much greater than the old one. And the new agreement is based on promises of better things. **(New Century Version)**

Additional Information: Verse 3 – The assigned task of a High Priest is to offer both gifts and sacrifices, so in the true Holy Place in heaven, Jesus must offer something also.

Verse 4 – If Jesus our High Priest were living on earth, he would not be a priest, because there are already priests who follow the law by offering gifts to God (this indicates that at this time the Jewish temple was still standing, it had not been destroyed).

Verse 5 – These earthly priests serve what is only a model or copy of the true things that exist in Heaven. The writer now quotes Exodus 25:40 and says when Moses was getting ready to build the earthly tabernacle, God warned him to follow exactly the pattern of the heavenly tabernacle, that was shown to him on Mount Sinai.

Verse 6 – Jesus High Priestly work surpasses what these earthly priests do. He mediates a better covenant, that contains better promises.

HEBREWS CHAPTER 8 VERSES 7-12

Hebrews 8: [7] For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. [8] For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: (Jer. 31:31) [9] 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; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. (Jer. 31:32) [10] For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: (Jer. 31:33) [11] And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (Jer. 31:34) [12] For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. (Jer. 31:34) (King James Version)

Additional Information: Verse 7 – If the first covenant had been faultless (without defect or flaw), then there would be no need to seek another one.

Verse 8 – For finding fault with them (i.e., the first covenant was conditional, based upon their ability to obey. Of course it failed). God now promises a new covenant.

Verses 8-12 Is quoted from Jeremiah 31:31-34 and is God's promise of the new covenant prophesied through the prophet Jeremiah. It is better in every respect and promises this: God's law will be inward upon the heart instead of outward in external ordinances (v. 10a). God will be a personal God to them, and they shall be His personal possession and people (v. 10b). There will be an intimate knowledge of God (new birth) through this covenant (v. 11). God will be merciful. The Living Bible says, “I will be merciful to them in their wrongdoings” (v. 12a). The New Covenant is a covenant of mercy. Sins and iniquities God will remember (call to His mind) no more (v. 12b).

HEBREWS CHAPTER 8

VERSE 13

Hebrews 8: [13] In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away. (King James Version)

¹³When God speaks of a new covenant, it means he has made the first one obsolete. It is now out of date and ready to be put aside. **(New Living Translation)**

Additional Information: Verse 13 – God has made the first covenant obsolete (and has now introduce a new one). Whatever decayeth (or is obsolete), or is growing old will soon disappear. By His merely saying that a new covenant was coming, God rendered the old one **obsolete**, no longer valid. In fact it would disappear. The human writer of Hebrews could not have known how literally this truth would be fulfilled within a few years of his writing. When Titus destroyed Jerusalem, he destroyed the Temple- which had been completed only for a short time. Without the Temple, there was no altar, no Holy of Holies. There could therefore be no sacrifices and no ministering priesthood. And without a priesthood and its sacrifices, there could be no Old Covenant. It was finished. When verse 13 was written, the **obsolete** covenant was **ready to disappear**. In less than five years, it had completely disappeared.

The old sacrificial system actually was over when the veil was split in two and Christ's sacrifice was complete (Matt. 27:50-51; Mark 15:37-39; Luke 23:44-46). At that time, Christ's unique, never-to-be-repeated sacrifice was finished with the result that all men in Christ had direct access to God (1 Tim. 2:5-6). The destruction of the Temple completed the closing of the Old Covenant-by removing the place of sacrifice that no longer served a purpose.

The age of the Mosaic law and the Levitical priests was over. The age of the Son was come forever. MacArthur, John F., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago: Moody Press) 1983.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

SPECIAL THANKS AND APPRECIATION FOR THE FOLLOWING TRANSLATIONS AND THEIR TRANSLATORS

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(Hebrews Chapter 8)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to Hebrews Chapter 8.**

1. **Read Hebrews 8:1-2.** Jesus the Christ, our high priest serves in the Most Holy Place, the sanctuary, the true place of worship in heaven, made by God and not by human hands. True or False.
2. **Read Hebrews 8:5-6.** The earthly priest served under a model or copy of the true things that exist in heaven. Jesus High Priestly work surpasses what these earthly priest do. He mediates a better covenant, that contains better promises. True or False.
3. **Read Hebrews 8:7.** If the first covenant had been faultless, without defect or flaw, then there would be no need to seek another one. True or False.
4. **Read Hebrews 8:8-12.** The New Covenant prophesied: a. God's law will be inward upon the heart instead of outward in external ordinances. b. God will be a personal God to people, and they shall be His personal possession and people. c. There will be an intimate knowledge of God through this covenant. d. God will be merciful to their unrighteousness. e. The worshippers sins and iniquities will be remembered no more. f. all of the above.
5. **Read Hebrews 8:13.** God has made the first covenant: a. new. b. old & obsolete. c. none of the above.
6. **Read Hebrews 8:13.** The first covenant (old covenant): a. decayeth. b. waxeth old. c. is obsolete. d. is ready to vanish away. e. is growing old and will soon disappear. f. all of the above.

Instructions for Group Leader: You may want to summarize the chapter (for the group) by reading aloud the following.

Putting the Chapter in Context: Hebrews Chapter 8.

In **verses 1-9** we see the limitations of the Old Covenant. It's promises were based upon conditions of performance ("if ye..." Ex. 19:5-7). In contrast the New Covenant is unconditional in the sense that everything rests upon Christ's finished work for all who believe. In **verses 10-13** we see the nature of the New Covenant. Notice the "I wills" of God's promise. This covenant is faultless and final. It has been based upon God's finished work through Christ.