

Hebrews: Chapter 8

Heb 8:1 Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a High Priest, one Who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in Heaven,

- To sum it all up (*Thayer: “the chief or main point, the principle thing”*) from what has been said previously, the focus of what the writer was getting to, has to do with a change in the religious system and all that pertains to it; from the Law, the priesthood and even to the office of High Priest.

- With the conclusion of what has been said, we (Christians) have such a High Priest (as has been alluded to in what was previously said concerning His role in bringing salvation to mankind) Who is seated (reigns) at the right hand (place of authority- Act 7:56; Rom 8:34; 1 Pet 3:22) of the throne (denoting the type of authority- royal) of the Majesty (Gk.3172- divinity [often God Himself]) in Heaven (denotes origin). No authority is higher than that.

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Heb 8:2 a Minister in the Holy Places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

- Minister- Gk.3011- a public servant, that is, a *functionary* in the Temple. Thayer: “one busied with holy things”.

- Holy Places- Gk.39- holiest (of all). Thayer: “the most hallowed portion of the temple, ‘the holy of holies’, fig. of Heaven”.

- true (Gk.228 from 227- as in not concealing) tent- The Mosaic tabernacle had two rooms built within “after the pattern” that was shown to Moses on Mt. Sinai (*Ex 25:40*); the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The Holy Places (*sanctuary, a.k.a., Holy of Holies; here spiritually referring to Heaven*) was the room where only the high priest entered on the Day of Atonement (*Lev 23:27*), while the Holy Place (true tent, a.k.a., the church revealed) was for the daily ministration of the priests (*Ex 29:44*). (*The O.T. is considered the N.T. concealed; the N.T. is considered the O.T. revealed.*) They were separate rooms but under the same tent, divided only by a curtain (*representing Christ as mediator between the two- 10:20*).

tent- Gk.4633- Thayer: “with a reference to this use of the word, it is declared that (,) when the kingdom of God is perfectly established”.

Once Christ ascended back to Heaven to “prepare” (*Gk.2090- make ready*) the place (*Gk.38- spot*) He promised in Jn 14:2-3, that place (*a.k.a., the church, His bride- Rev 12*) was perfectly established and sent “down out of Heaven from God” (*Rev 21:2*) on the first Pentecost after Christ’s ascension, thus her origin. Christ told His disciples that He would return for them, those who made up His bride the church, but she first must be prepared for His return (*2 Cor 11:2; 1 Pet 2:11; Rev 12:14*). As Jesus said when He gave the Great Commission in Mat 28, “I am with you always, to the end of the age”, He therefore continues His work as *functionary (interceding on our behalf)* from His position “at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities and powers having been subjected to Him” (*1 Pet 3:22*).

- the Lord set up- Upon hearing Peter’s confession that Jesus is “the Christ, the Son of the living God”, he was told that Christ would build His church on that confession (*Mat*

16:16-18). If Jesus wasn't the Christ, then there could be no "foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 3:11). Anything originating from uninspired man is denominational. See also Dan 2:45.

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Heb 8:3 For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus, it is necessary for this Priest also to have something to offer.

- appointed- Gk.2525- to *designate*. Jesus was separated for this ministry by the ordinance contained in the Mosaic Law even though He wasn't, by Law, of the tribe of Levi. His appointment was of the Divine nature according to the scheme of redemption.
- gifts- Gk.1435- A *present*; specifically, a *sacrifice*.
- sacrifices- Gk.2378- *sacrifice* (the act or the victim, literally or figuratively).
- For Christ to "fulfill every righteous ordinance" (Mat 3:15) once He was ordained as N.T. High Priest, He was also to have something to offer. Which He did "through the blood of the everlasting Covenant" (13:20).

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Heb 8:4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the Law.

- By the Law of Moses, Christ could not serve as High Priest since He was not from the tribe of Levi. On earth Christ was of the tribe of "Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests" (7:14). God had already set the tribe of Levi aside (Ex 29:9; Num 18:1-7) to be the priestly tribe who (at the time in which this letter was written which was before 70 AD) offer gifts according to the Law.

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Heb 8:5 They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain."

- They- the priesthood of the O.T. served- (Gk.3000- Thayer- "to officiate, to discharge the sacred office") as a foreshadowing (i.e., imitation) of what God had planned for the N.T. priesthood of the church from which she rules with Christ (Eph 2:6); copy- Gk.5262- an exhibit for imitation: - pattern, and shadow- Gk.4639- Thayer: "an image cast by an object and representing the form of that object; a sketch, outline, adumbration [Webster: 1. to outline vaguely, 2. to foreshadow]".
- according to the pattern- From Ex 25:40, where Moses was instructed to build the tabernacle according to specific instructions which would later be the pattern of the N.T. church in her worship (Jn 4:23), sacrifice (13:15) and praise (Col 3:16) to God.

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Heb 8:6 But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the Old as the Covenant He mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.

- obtained- Gk.5177- to *make ready* or *bring to pass*. Through His sacrifice, Christ introduced a spiritual priesthood that is far *surpassing* that of the O.T. by coming in the flesh to become the final atonement for sin (7:27).

- mediates- Gk.3316- a *go between*, or (by implication) a *reconciler (intercessor)*. The Mosaic Covenant was mediated by mere men whereby the high priest went into the Holy of Holies once every year to make atonement (*Lev 23:27*) for his own sins as well as for those of the children of Israel. Jesus knew no sin (*2 Cor 5:21*) and therefore could enter the Holiest of all to make intercession for sinners in the very presence of God (*Gal 3:19-20*).

- better (*Gk.2909- stronger*) promises- The Old Covenant with its many ritualistic practices was inferior in that it did not produce the result that the sacrifices for sin were supposed to hypothetically deliver; redemption. As a result of their obedience under it, Israel was blessed with prosperity (*offspring, life, peace from their enemies, etc.*) but it was not the final means by which to obtain eternal life (*11:40*). The promises under the New Covenant produced spiritual blessings, both in the here and now, “and in the age to come eternal life” (*Mk 10:29-30*).

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Heb 8:7 For if that first Covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

- faultless- Gk.273- *irreproachable*. Under it there were no provisions for total or complete forgiveness of sin, the result of which would grant man the ability to see God and live (*Ex 33:20*). If there were, then Jesus would not have had to become the atoning sacrifice that would end all sacrifices. Thus, the New Covenant.

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Heb 8:8 For He finds fault with them when He says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,

- Interlinear: “For finding fault, to them He says...” The fault wasn’t in man since man wasn’t responsible for the Law which was “put in place through angels by an Intermediary” (*Gal 3:19*). And, the fault wasn’t with God since we understand that “the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” (*Rom 7:12*). In comparison, the Old Covenant (*via a sacrificial system that could not save thus its fault*) is considered inferior to the New (*under which it took only one sacrifice to save “to the uttermost”- 7:25*). In Romans 8:3 Paul wrote that the Law was “weakened by the flesh”, i.e., man could not keep it completely because of his propensity to sin; only Jesus could. There is a big difference between being “weak” (*Gk.770-to be feeble*) and finding “fault” (*Gk.3201- to blame*).

- Quoted from Jer 31:31-34 the writer here revealed the fulfillment of the prophecy having been fulfilled via N.T. spiritual Israel. The Old was not abolished (*Mat 5:17; Rev 11:11-12*), only replaced. The faithful (*spiritual Israel*) who lived under it “died in faith, not having received the promise” (*Heb 11:13*). Between Pentecost and 70 AD, these each received their “white robe” (*Rev 6:11*) as the 144,000 who were “grafted” into the Vine (*Rom 11:24*). The house of Israel along with the house of Judah together equal the body of Christ, the church through which “all Israel (*consisting of both Jew and Gentile- Jas 1:1*) will be saved” (*Rom 11:26*).

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Heb 8:9 not like the Covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in My Covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord.

- not like the Covenant- The New Covenant was not like the Old in that the Old contained only temporal promises, whereas the New, eternal. Even as God was leading Israel out of Egypt they murmured and complained, suggesting that things would have been better had they stayed after wining about their conditions under Egyptian slavery (*Ex 14:12; Num 14:3*) for over three centuries (*430 minus the time of prosperity in Goshen while Joseph was alive- Ex 12:40*). Witnessing the miraculous events during the Exodus, they continued their lawless behavior even after God gave them the Law of Moses.

- so- as a result, God in turn showed no concern for them- As spoiled disobedient children, God as Father had to deal with Israel, His children. Under the New Covenant, although Israel prided herself in being God's only "set-apart" people, God would include those not of Israel to be grafted into spiritual Israel via the Vine (*Rom 11*) with the desire to provoke them to jealousy (*Rom 10:19; 11:11*).

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Heb 8:10 For this is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put My Laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

- Again, quoting Jer 31, "this ... Covenant" concerns the last dispensation, the 'Christian' age which will end at the final "coming of the Righteous One" (*Act 7:52- speaking of His first arrival*).

- house of Israel- This is 'spiritual Israel' and refers to both congregations, of the Old (*Act 7:38*) and also of the church under the New Covenant. The house of Israel in the O.T. consisted only of Jacob's (*Israel's*) physical seed. Here, it consists of every "one who shares the faith of Abraham" (*Rom 4:16; 11:26*). The New was offered to them first but was always intended to include the Gentiles (*Rom 1:16*).

- after- In succession to those (*Gk.1565 from 1563- that; thither*) days- (*Gk.2250- figuratively a period [always defined more or less clearly by the context]*). In the context of what was just stated, after those days here is with reference to verse 9. After God had redeemed Israel from their Egyptian bondage and had given them the Mosaic Covenant, of which they disregarded, He would usher in this fresh Covenant.

- For God to bestow His Laws (*Gk.3551- regulation*) into their minds (*Gk.1271- deep thought, [mind or its disposition]*) and write (*Gk.1924- to inscribe*) them on their hearts (*Gk.2588- the thoughts and feelings [mind]- see also Ex 34:1 as it correlates to 2 Cor 3:3*) shows that no longer would the children of Israel come through a physical lineage but via "the faith of Abraham" which is spiritual.

Rom 8:3 For God has done what the Law, weakened by the flesh (*because of human nature and thus the propensity to sin*), could not do. By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the **righteous requirement of the Law** might be fulfilled in us, who walk **not according to the flesh (Mosaic) but according to the Spirit (Gospel)**.

- shall be My people- Referencing Hosea (*1:10; 2:23*) the writer here shows the fulfilment of that prophecy. Hosea was prophesying the addition of the Gentiles into 'spiritual' Israel. Here, just after mentioning the end of the Mosaic age by crediting it to Israel's disobedience, he shows that God had always included Gentiles in His ultimate plan to redeem His creation back to Himself.

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Heb 8:11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest.

- This refers to once the perfect came (*1 Cor 13:10*); the final revelation and canonization of the word of God. Through the New Testament writings there would be no need to look for further instructions concerning spiritual things after “the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (*Jude 3*) was underway.

The “letter” of the Law, from which Israel was delivered, was replaced by the “Spirit” of the Law (*Rom 7:6*), in which she, as the church, serves. One is not automatically born into this Covenant as the Jew was under the Old. Under the Mosaic a child was physically born into the Covenant (*via circumcision- Gen 17:11*) but had to be taught the Law (*Deu 6:6-9*). In order to be born into a New Covenant relationship with God, one must already know what is demanded to enter it; as Jesus said to Nicodemus in *Jn 3:5-6*, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is spirit.” (*See also Titus 3:5 and Rom 2:28-29 via circumcision of the heart.*)

After those present at Pentecost were “cut to the heart” upon hearing that they were responsible for delivering up to death the Messiah they had been waiting for, Peter told them to “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name (*Gk. 3686- authority*) of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (*Act 2:37-38*), “Who is the guarantee (*Gk.728- a pledge, that is, part of the purchase money or property given in advance as a security for the rest*) of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of His glory”. (*Eph 1:14*).

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Heb 8:12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

- As God is merciful (*Gk.2436- gracious*) concerning our iniquities (*Gk.93- moral wrongfulness [of character, life or act]*) His omniscience goes against His being able to totally forget anything. This brings to mind the fact that He will not forget (*Gk.1950- to lose out of mind*) our sins as much as He will not remember (*Gk.3415- recollect*) them. How can we not be thankful for the knowledge of His grace being so powerful? It will be recognized at the judgment when all our sins and iniquities will not be recalled and held against us as long as we remain faithful to the Lord Who saved us.

Once a sinner puts Christ on (*Gal 3:27*) in obedience to the ordinance of baptism (*Matt 3:15*), God sees only the garment and not the sins of the person who wears it (*as the garment of skins He made for Adam and Eve in covering their nakedness, "all are naked and exposed to the eyes of Him to Whom we must give an account"- 4:13*). Only Christ, as “a lamb without blemish or spot” (*1 Pet 1:19*), is able to cover such exposure once we are “in Him” (*Eph 1:7*).

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Heb 8:13 In speaking of a New Covenant, He makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

- Thus said, God made the Old Covenant with Israel obsolete (*Gk.3822- to make worn out*). Not that it was abolished (*Gk.2647- demolish*) as was Christ’s defense of it (*Mat 5:17*), but it was replaced with what was New (*Gk.2537- [especially in freshness]*). This was written between Pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem, which included the end

of the sacrificial system, and thus was in the process of being fulfilled (*growing old is ready to vanish away*). All things were “written for our instruction” (*Rom 15:4*) and are thus to be studied and read in order to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (*2 Pet 3:18*); because all the Law and the prophets were written concerning Him (*Lk 24:44*).

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