

Sunday November 13th 2011
The Letter to the Hebrews
Part Twenty Five

1). Heb 8:1 ¶ *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, 2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. 4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 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." 6 ¶ 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. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 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 did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. 10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 "None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.*

a). We had seen last week that Chapter 8 continued to demonstrate the contrasts between Christ's Priesthood in the heavenly tabernacle according to the order of Melchizedek and the Levitical priesthood on the earth, according to the order of Aaron.

b). We had seen at the beginning of our Chapter that Christ, as High Priest, is 'seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens' showing us that His provision for sin was completed and did not therefore have to be repeated,

whereas the Levitical priests could never ‘sit’ with respect to their ministry on behalf of sin, because that ministry brought nothing to completion and was therefore continuous.

c). Nor could the Levitical priests ever attain to sit at God’s right hand as they were men with weakness unlike Christ who had been perfected forever – Heb 7:26 *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.*

d). The Levitical priests in their ministry served only ‘the copy and shadow of the heavenly things’ whereas Christ serves amongst the heavenly things themselves in the true Tabernacle, the very things that are responsible for casting the shadow that was on the earth.

e). And we had seen in v3 that ‘every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices’ – the Levitical priests dealt in the death and shed blood of animals, Christ on the other hand was Himself the sacrifice – the death and shed blood of God being infinitely superior to that of bulls and goats - Heb 9:12 *Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

f). Not only does our Chapter present the contrast between the earthly and the heavenly ministry and the earthly and heavenly tabernacle, but v6-7 also present the contrast between the first covenant, the Law of Moses, and the new covenant that Christ has brought into being - 6 ¶ *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. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.*

g). And we had seen how this new covenant had been prophetically spoken of even while the first covenant remained in effect - Jer 31:31 *"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah- 32 "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of*

Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

h). And it is likely, that historically, this particular Chapter from the Book of Jeremiah was written during the siege of Jerusalem just before Judah was taken into captivity. An incredible message of hope that looked forward to a captivity that still remains yet future to which this historical captivity pointed.

i). But we would note that even at this time it was clearly evident, by the very fact of the impending captivity itself, that the Law of Moses had come to the end of its shelf life, so to speak.

j). The use of the word 'new' by Jeremiah must automatically make the first covenant 'old' - *13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.*

k). It was always God's intention that the Law of Moses should be superseded by the new covenant; the shadow would of necessity be replaced by the reality - Heb 10:1 ¶ *For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.*

2). *8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- 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 did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD.*

a). The fault here, as we see in v8, is with the character of the people of Israel who were unable to keep the intricacies of the Law of Moses and were always in need of and dependent upon an earthly priest to explain and interpret the Law for them – And so, because of this, there is to be a new covenant which will be unlike the first covenant made with the nation whom God led by the hand from Egypt. This covenant will be made with a nation that has come to the completion of its time of child training and will now be ready to embrace the role of firstborn son - Zec 13:8 *And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one -third shall be left in it: 9 I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test*

them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; And each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

b). The 'laws' of this new covenant will not be written on tablets of stone, but on 'their minds and on their hearts' – that which was purely external, which was to be intellectually understood and legalistically adhered to and administered through a third party, will now become an integral and internal part of their character and nature.

c). There will be no need for the ministration of an earthly priest, no need of another man's interpretation – just as God Himself wrote with His own hand upon the tablets of stone, so will that same hand write upon each individual's heart and mind.

d). And under this new covenant the remnant of the nation of Israel will occupy the land of promise at the head of nations, fulfilling God's purpose of rulership for them, fulfilling that which God had promised to Abraham and his descendants and that which Israel through unbelief had failed to do at Kadesh Barnea - Eze 28:25 *"Thus says the Lord GOD: "When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. 26 "And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the LORD their God.""*

e). This is something that the first covenant could never accomplish.

3). And so as we came to a close last week we were left with the question as to why our writer, and therefore the Lord, is so intent on presenting this new covenant to those to whom it does not directly apply – the new covenant, as we will remember, is to be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah – it is not made with Christians – Christians are neither bound by it or under it. In this respect it has nothing to do with us and yet it is mentioned often in the scriptures.

a). In Hebrews Chapter 7 this was said about the new covenant – Heb 7:22 *by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant.*

b). And in Chapter 9 this - Heb 9:5 ¶ *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant,*

c). And Chapter 12 - Heb 12:24 *to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.*

d). And then of course we will remember Jesus speaking to His disciples about it on the night of the last supper - Mr 14:23 *Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 And He said*

to them, *"This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. 25
"Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day
when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."*

e). What does this have to do with Christians if the new covenant is to be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah at a time that remains for us and them yet future?

f). Well, in order to answer our question we need to start with 2 scriptures which really say it all, but will I hope provide the foundation for our understanding.

4). Jon 2:9 *But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. **Salvation is of the LORD.**"*

a). Joh 4:22 *"You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for **salvation is of the Jews.**"*

b). In these two scriptures are the most simple and most profound statements we can find regarding salvation.

c). In the Book of Jonah we see a statement of the obvious – ‘Salvation is of the Lord’ – God alone is the One who can provide salvation. From the foundation in Genesis onwards it is abundantly clear that we can never provide salvation for ourselves – it is solely in the providence of God.

Ge 3:7 *Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.*

Ge 3:15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

Ge 3:21 ¶ *Also for Adam and his wife the LORD God made tunics of skin, and clothed them.*

d). In v7 the Man and the Woman’s attempt at covering themselves is futile.

e). In v15 there is the promise of One who will be the Redeemer.

f). And in v21 we see that it is God alone who is able to provide the sacrifice for sins.

g). The very thing set out in type in - Ge 22:7 *But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" 8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.*

h). God then is the only One who can provide salvation for fallen Man – spirit, soul and body.

i). And then within this context we see the clear statement made in John that ‘salvation is of the Jews’.

5). Ge 22:18 *"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

a). Even though God is the only provision for salvation He has chosen to make that salvation accessible to all human beings through the lineage of one man – Abraham.

b). And then through one branch of that lineage - Ro 9:7 *nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called."*

c). And then specifically through Isaac's son Jacob and his 12 sons – those who we know as the nation of Israel.

d). And it is probably well worth stating the obvious here which is that the salvation we presently possess and the salvation to which we work are only ours through the nation of Israel – remove Israel from the equation and there is no salvation.

e). Again as we think through this logically – to whom was the word of God given? – to the Jews, exclusively, both that which we call the OT and that which we call the NT - Ro 3:1 ¶ *What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? 2 Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.*

f). From which group of people did the Messiah derive His humanity as the Son of Man? – from the Jews - Heb 7:14 *For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.*

g). Who was the focus of our Jewish Lord's earthly ministry? – the Jews – Mt 15:24 *But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*

h). And maybe most significantly of all, to whom was given the command to slay the Passover Lamb? – the Jews - Ex 12:5 *'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 6 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

i). It was to the Jews alone that the privilege was given to slay the Passover Lamb – if anyone else had killed a lamb, even if it was their lamb, at exactly the same time and even in exactly the same location, that lamb could never be the Passover Lamb. The Feast of Passover is the first of 7 Feasts that are exclusive to the House of Israel.

j). If the Jews had not slain their Messiah, their Passover Lamb – Joh 1:29 ¶ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"*

k). Then the One slain at Calvary would not have been the Messiah, and if He were not the Messiah then we are not eternally saved – and we remain in the

condition described in - Eph 2:12 *that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

1). This is a serious business that we need to take most seriously.

6). And so, let's try to tie this all together – remember the words of the Lord on the night of the last supper, which we referenced earlier - Mr 14:24 *And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.*

a). It is Christ's blood, shed at the cross as the Passover Lamb, that is the basis for the institution of the new covenant that is to be made with the house of Israel and the house of Judah - Heb 9:15 ¶ *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.*

Isa 42:6 *"I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles,*

b). If the first covenant, the Law of Moses, had not already been declared by God to be obsolete; if God had not already promised a new covenant as recorded in Jeremiah 31, then there would have been no reason for Christ to die on the cross.

c). And if Christ had not died on the cross then there would be no salvation for us, spirit, soul or body.

d). For so long Christians have always thought that the events of the cross of Calvary were the exclusive province of the Church. This is just not true.

e). Now it is true that in His death on the cross our Lord fulfills the type of Adam; and it is true that in the opening of His side the antitype of the building of the Woman is begun; and it is true that this relates exclusively to the eternally saved of the dispensation – Christians; and it is true that God had always intended for the Gentiles to be recipients of His salvation - Ac 28:28 *"Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!"*

f). But we must realize and settle in our thinking that all this comes about, all of this is made possible, only through that which was necessary to inaugurate the new covenant that God had promised to His chosen people in Jeremiah – it is the Lord's dealing with Israel alone that is responsible for all that we enjoy so bountifully today and all that we may become in that future Day.

g). Heb 9:18 *Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood. 19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, "This is the*

blood of the covenant which God has commanded you." 21 Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. 22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission. 23 ¶ Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. 24 For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; 25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another-- 26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

h). And here in all of this we find the reason why the writer of Hebrews, and therefore God, focuses so intently on the new covenant, requiring that we should fully understand its implications – without it we are lost; without it we have nothing; without it we can hope for nothing.

i). Perhaps now, in the light of all that we have just considered, we can have a fuller appreciation of that which Paul writes in - 1Co 11:23 ¶ *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

j). Perhaps now we can have a greater understanding of what it is we do when we celebrate the Lord's Supper – we remember the inauguration of the new covenant with Israel through our Lord's death – in our actions of eating and drinking we proclaim the Lord's death till He comes – we proclaim that the One who died on the cross of Calvary is the Jewish Messiah, that He is the Jewish Passover Lamb, that the new covenant is now set in place ready to be enacted upon Israel's repentance in fulfillment of the 7 Feasts and as a result of this Jesus is our Savior, that He is the One who has initiated the new and living way into the presence of God, who is able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him. In proclaiming His death we rejoice in the power of an endless life – a new priesthood, according to the order of Melchizedek, a new rule in the heavens and on the earth – the certainty of the age to come and the hastening of the Day of God.

k). Heb 9:6 *Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services. 7 But into*

the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the people's sins committed in ignorance; 8 ¶ the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. 9 It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience-- 10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. 11 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.

7). We will stop here for this week and continue next – if the Lord is willing.