

Hebrews Part Two

Lesson #4, Chapter 8:6-9

Read Chapter 8 before beginning your lesson. Take the time to ask the Lord to prepare your heart to see and understand the treasures of His Word.

1. Summarize what you learned in last week's lesson. Start with this statement, *Now the main point from 8:1-5 is this:*
2. What has Jesus obtained according to verse 6?
3. Verse 6 begins with the contrasting word *but*. It is also helpful to note that *now* as used here is not a time reference but is used in a logical sense. The opening phrase could also be translated, *But as the case now stands*. What is being compared with Jesus' more excellent ministry? See verses 3-5.
4. It has already been established that Jesus is a greater high priest than the earthly high priests. Now the author reveals that even how He serves as high priest is better. What is a crucial element of Jesus' more excellent ministry? See the rest of verse 6.
5. Define *mediator* [Strong's #3316]. To gain a more complete picture of this term look up the following verses: Gal 3:19-20; 1Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24.

6. Who does Jesus need to mediate between? Why did those parties need a mediator? See Rom. 3:10, 23; 5:12; 6:23; 5:8-9.

7. As mediator what is He bringing to the table, so to speak, according to verse 6?

8. What other names does the author of Hebrews use to describe the “better covenant”? See verses 7-8.

9. The same argument used in Hebrews 7:11 is also used by the author in Hebrews 8:7. What point does he make in both 7:11 and 8:7?

10. What are the components of the first covenant? See Deut. 26:16-19; 27:9-10; 28:2, 58-63; 30:15-20.

11. Hebrews 8:8-12 is a direct quote of Jer. 31:31-34. Before he begins to quote from Jeremiah, the author states in verse 8, “For finding fault with them” which helps us understand the context from which God begins to speak. The Israelites had entered into a covenant relationship with God who promised He would be their God and take care of them if they kept their promise to be faithful to love and obey Him. Did Israel keep their part of the covenant and what were the results? See Judges 2:1-3; 6:10; 2 Kings 18:11-12; Ps. 81:6-14.

12. Consider what you learned about the covenant God made with the Israelites from Questions 10 and 11. Now answer, “Why did God find fault with Israel?”

13. Yet even though Israel had broken their covenant with God, what was He still willing to do according to verse 8?

14. What does the word *effect* [KJV, NIV *make* (Strong’s #4931)] mean from verse 8?

15. Eager Beaver: In verse 8, why does God speak of the nation of Israel as if it were two different groups? See 1 Kings 11:9-13, 31-36; 12:16-21.

16. God says the new covenant will be different from the one He made with the Israelites. When was that old covenant put into effect according to verse 9?

17. Look up the following verses to get more information on when the old covenant was made with Israel. See Ex. 19:1-2; 34:27-29; Deut. 4:32-38.

18. What else do you learn about what God intended to do for Israel in this covenant relationship according to Ex. 3:8; 19:3-6; Deut. 28:1-14?

19. What did God expect Israel to do to keep their part of the covenant? See Deut. 6:1-25.
20. After almost 850 years of God upholding His part of the covenant, even though Israel had continually broken their part, what does He finally do according to verse 9?

When Israel failed to be true to the covenant, God's solicitude and concern for His chosen people gave place to one of righteous indignation, which attitude culminated with the captivities.¹

~Kenneth Wuest

21. When did the new covenant go into effect? See Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:20; Heb. 9:15; 12:24.
22. John MacArthur in his commentary on Hebrews writes, "Under the law, His [God's] care depended on her [Israel's] continuance. Her [Israel's] disobedience did not abrogate [nullify, void] the covenant, but it forfeited all the blessings of it. It was a covenant of law. Not so the New Covenant."² *Not so the New Covenant*. What hope those words bring! Those words take us back to where we began in verse 6. Jesus Christ has a more excellent ministry as a mediator of an immensely superior covenant to that covenant which the Israelites had previously known. In fact, it even had better promises! What are the better promises of the New Covenant? See Gen. 12:3; Heb. 6:12-20; 7:21-25, 28; 8:10-12.

¹Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997, c1984), Heb 8:9.

²John MacArthur, *Hebrews*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996, c1983), 215.

23. Complete these sentences.
- a. Jesus Christ is _____.
 - b. Jesus Christ has _____.
 - c. I am amazed _____.
 - d. It encourages me _____.

Understanding the Different Covenants of the Old Testament

Abrahamic Covenant – Gen. 12:2, 15:5. The covenant made with Abraham. The covenant would stand regardless of the behavior of the recipient. Abraham's offspring would become a great nation. Through him God would bless all the families of the earth. Promised the land as an eternal possession.

Sinaitic Covenant – Ex. 19:5-6. The covenant made at Mt. Sinai. To be God's special nation required obedience to God who had freed them from slavery. Obedience results in blessings; disobedience results in chastisement.

Deuteronomic Covenant – The covenant made before the Israelites entered the land of Canaan. Deuteronomy is a covenant renewal document. The covenant text itself is greatly expanded and more detailed than the covenant document given at Sinai. It follows a pattern known as a suzerain-vassal treaty in which God is the covenant initiator—the great king; while Israel is the covenant recipient—the vassal. Because God is the covenant initiator, He determined the parameters of acceptable behavior for the recipients—Israel. As recipients, they are called to accept the covenant as God offers it, to keep it as God demands, and to receive what God decrees in accordance with their adhering to the covenant treaty.

“The unilateral promise and covenant commitment made to the patriarchs was that they would sire a nation that would be a servant to the Sovereign God, a servant charged with the privilege and responsibility of bridging the gap between that transcendent Lord of creation and the creatures in His image whom He proposed to restore to the purposes for which He had brought them into existence.”

Roy B. Zuck, editor, *Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*