



# UPSTATE GROUP LEADER GUIDE

## WEEK 9 – *HEBREWS 8:1-13* – OCTOBER 7-13

### LEADER NOTES

Hebrews 7 was certainly a difficult passage to unpack, but the writer of Hebrews establishes through the example of Melchizedek that Jesus' priesthood is of a better order. His priesthood is of a different type. Therefore, we can trust the covenant He ministers through is of a different type as well.

Hebrews 8 teaches that because of the cross, Jesus institutes a "New Covenant." This week we will compare how much better the New Covenant is, as well as the significance it holds, for believers today.

Please continue to complete the Gospel Connection's and Conversations form. You can find the form [HERE](#).

You can find other sermons from our Teaching Pastor's [HERE](#).

# COMMUNITY

*OPEN THE GROUP BY CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER AND ALLOWING A MOMENT FOR EVERYONE TO HAVE A PLACE TO BELONG.*

**START THE GROUP BY TAKING PRAYER REQUESTS, FINDING OUT ABOUT PEOPLE'S WEEK, AND PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER.**

## OPENING QUESTIONS:

*RECAP ALL THE THINGS THE WRITER OF HEBREWS SAID JESUS IS BETTER THAN. WHICH COMPARISON HAS BEEN MOST HELPFUL TO YOU? WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD "COVENANT?" THINK BACK TO CHAPTERS FOUR AND FIVE. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF JESUS BEING THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST?*

# SCRIPTURE

**TAKE THIS TIME TO STUDY THE BIBLE TOGETHER. REMEMBER, THE GOAL IS NOT JUST TO CONVEY INFORMATION, BUT TO HELP PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP LEARN TO READ THE BIBLE FOR THEMSELVES.**

## THE POINT

**A BETTER PRIEST GIVES A BETTER COVENANT.**

### Hebrews 8:1-13

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, 2 a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. 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. 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. 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." 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.

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

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,

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.

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.

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.

12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities,  
and I will remember their sins no more.”

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.

# STUDY NOTES

## WEEK 9 NOTES : Hebrews 8:1-13

The writer of Hebrews has made a compelling argument over the first seven chapters. He has used Old Testament Scripture and has saturated his points with other Biblical references, all to make the point that Jesus is better. Hebrews 8 makes a claim built upon the last few chapters. So, it's important to reflect and remember (at least some of) the points our writer has made. Jesus is better than Moses, meaning He offers a better deliverance. Jesus offers a better rest, meaning we'll find a better rest for our souls than the Israelites ever found in the Promised Land. Jesus is the Great High Priest, meaning the sacrifice He offers gives us full atonement for sins and access to God. Jesus also comes from the line of Melchizedek, which proves Jesus is an eternal priest for us.

All of these truths build up and lead to what we'll discuss today: Jesus establishes a better covenant. A covenant is similar to a promise in which two or more parties commit to perform certain actions. Biblically speaking, it's important to note that God is always faithful to His covenant promises. Today, many people balk at covenants or agreements, however, when God establishes a covenant, He keeps His end of the agreement. The word testament is also another word for covenant. Covenants are important Biblical concepts, so important that the format of the Bible is even broken into the Old Testament (Old Covenant) and New Testament (New Covenant). God made a covenant with Noah, Abraham, David, and the nation of Israel. But the writer of Hebrews reminds us God promised a New Covenant which would be fulfilled through His Son Jesus. What makes this New Covenant better?

### **A Better Covenant comes with a Heavenly Priest**

Of all of the High Priests of Israel, none were able to dwell in the presence of God. Think back to Hebrews 4. As the High Priest, Jesus did not just pass through the courtyard and behind the veil into the holy of holies. Hebrews 4 tells us Jesus passed through the heavens. He is now "seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven." No other high priest ever sat down in the holy of holies because the sacrifice they offered was never enough. So, what gives Jesus the right to be seated? It's all based on what Jesus offered. Jesus offered a better sacrifice because He offered Himself. Now, our Great High Priest is seated in heaven. A better covenant comes because we have a better Priest.

## **A Better Covenant comes with a Better Mediator**

The High Priest was the middleman between God's people and God Himself. The writer of Hebrews calls this role a "mediator." A mediator is someone who jumps into the middle of a conflict with the goal of bringing about a resolution. Moses had this role, as well as the high priest who came after him. The writer of Hebrews claims that this new covenant is mediated better. How? First, Jesus is the only sinless mediator. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "For our sake he made him (Jesus) to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." Jesus is also a better mediator because the sacrifice He made was once and for all. 1 John 2:1-2 teaches us that Jesus became the propitiation for us, which means, He appeased the wrath of God for us. That same passage also teaches that Jesus is serving as our advocate in heaven. This aligns with the better ministry Jesus has. He is still advocating for those He shed His blood for. Jesus is a better mediator and is the only One who can bring true resolution and peace between a sinful man and a holy God.

## **A Better Covenant Comes with Better Results**

The writer of Hebrews quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 in the last portion of our passage. The new covenant is also better because through the gospel our hearts are changed. Anyone who is changed by Christ receives a new heart that desires to be faithful to God. Does that mean we get it perfect each day? Of course not. But through Jesus, believers are now sealed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit indwells believers, empowers us, and comforts us so we might obey God. Through the better covenant, our sins are also paid for in full and we can experience forgiveness through Jesus. All of this makes the old covenant obsolete. But let's be clear, this does not mean we "unhitch" from the Old Testament. The New Covenant is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant.

For more resources, click [HERE](#).

# QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- *Do you think people take covenants seriously in nowadays?*
- *Where does this passage tell us that our Great High Priest, King Jesus, is?*
- *What makes Jesus' sacrifice so much better than the sacrifices made in the Old Testament?*
- *What is a mediator? Why is Jesus a better mediator?*
- *Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. What does God put into us and do for us?*
- *What did the new covenant do to the old covenant?*

# COMMISSION

**AS YOU WRAP UP YOUR GROUP, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS WE GO INTO THE WORLD ON MISSION FOR JESUS. USE THIS TIME TO FOCUS EVERYONE TO LIVE ON MISSION AS YOU LEAVE.**

***JESUS MADE THE OLD COVENANT OBSOLETE. THE NEW COVENANT REMINDS US OUR SINS ARE FORGOTTEN, FORGIVEN, AND PAID FOR. PEOPLE ALL AROUND US NEED TO HEAR THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS' BETTER COVENANT. WHO CAN YOU SHARE THE GOOD NEWS WITH THIS WEEK?***

Please continue to complete the Gospel Connection's and Conversations form. You can find the form [HERE](#).