

Title: *The Mediator of a better Covenant*

Text: Hebrews 8:3-6

Open your Bibles to the book of Hebrews. Hebrews chapter 8, beginning with verse 3 and reading through verse 6. There are notes in your bulletin. Please take them out and use them as we study God's Word this morning.

Last Sunday, we began the second major section of the book of Hebrews. This second section which begins with verse 1 of chapter 8 and goes through verse 18 of chapter 10, deals with the New Covenant upon which our faith rest. We are talking about the ATONEMENT OF JESUS CHRIST. His atonement, or New Covenant was based upon the PATTERN of the Old Covenant. And concerning the PATTERN we were looking at a summary of Jesus as our High Priest. This is where we left off last Sunday morning.....

(Hebrews 8:3-6)

Prayer

Now, as we consider THE PREDICTION OF A NEW COVEANT, we find that it is, first of all, based on the pattern of the Old Testament. In other words the Old Testament predicted the coming of the Messiah who would die for all of our sins. We saw this first of all in a summary of our high ~~Pr~~ Priest.

(2D) Secondly, in Verse 3 to 5, I want you to notice the significance of the old priesthood. The writer is outlining to us the significance of the Old Testament priesthood. And there are several things that I want you to see.

(1E) First of all, as to the sacrifices, Vs 3.

What was the significance of the Old Testament Priesthood as it relates to Christ in terms of the sacrifices that they did?

Vs 3 says: "For every high priest is appointed" or ordained or selected just like Christ was, "to offer both gifts and sacrifices; hence it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer."

Now, there is something here I think is very important and I don't want you to miss it. The first word "offer"....draw a little line under it or mark it. The first word "offer" is in the present tense. Meaning: "a continuous habit of life"....."~~repetition~~ "repetition"

~~The~~ But, the second word "offer" at the end of the verse is not in the present tense. But it is in the Aorist Tense. This means at a moment of time, once for all....

In other words there is a important point being made. The Old Testament priesthood ^{is a} "repetition" of sacrifices was teaching one thing. And that is the finality, the one timeness of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Jesus is not offering sacrifices in a heavenly sanctuary as some people teach. NO.....He offered it when he died on the cross. It is one sacrifice. He is the lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world(John 1:29).... He does not offer sacrifices for us. He has already offered himself... It is over....

So, we see a tremendous contrast between Christ and the Priest as well as a comparison in the fact that they both had to offer a sacrific. If you were a Priest, you sacrificed. And Christ did also. But it was only one time.

(2E) Secondly, in Vs 4, we see the significance of this Priesthood as it relates to Christ dealing with the situation on earth at the time that the writer was writing.

Vs 4 says "Now if He" meaning: Christ. "Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the law."

Do you remember that we said earlier in our study of this book that the temple in Jersuelem was still standing. Therefore, the book was written before 70 A.D. Sacrifices were still going on. The Old Testament Priesthood as far as the Jews continuing it, was still going on at the time this book was written to Jewish believers.

And so they were confused. Did the death of the Messiah con-
cancel out the old covenant? And if so, did that cancel out the Priesthood? If it
did, then what are these guys doing here in the Temple?

The point is that if Jesus was here on earth, he couldn't be a priest.
He is not even from the tribe of the Priest. He is not from the tribe of
Levy. He is from the tribe of Judah.

So, dealing with the situation on earth, ~~the point~~ Paul's point is:
that what has transpired through the death of Christ is now situated in
heaven. And not on the earth. And that there is no reason to continue the
practice on earth of the Old Testament priesthood. Christ has now entered
the heavenly sanctuary, namely heaven. He sat down at the right hand of
throne of God. He finished the atonement. It is done. He now intercedes
for us in heaven. Not on the earth.

So, where should you put your attention as a believer. Not on the earth.
But in heaven. Colossians 3 says: "set your mind on things above where Christ
sits at the right hand of God."

Do you know why you must keep thinking about that?....Do you know why
the Bible challenges you and me to think about Christ seated at the right
hand of the Father? Because the Old Testament Priest never sat down.....
That is right...they never sat down. They were always working on behalf of
the people...

I like what one writer said. And neither do Christians, frustrated
over their sins. We never sit down either. We run around trying to ~~solve~~
solve it, trying to get rid of our problems and all that...

Christ sat down. It is finished. And the Bible challenges Christians
in Colossians 3 to keep thinking and setting your mind on Christ and where
He is.....Meaning: it is over...Praise God it is over. It is done. It is
finished. All of my sin which ~~is~~ I have committed or could ever commit has
been paid for. It is all over. And God asks you to believe what Jesus has
already done. It is complete. It is final. He sat down...

No Priest ever sat down in the O.T. No chairs for him. Because it was a constant reminder that they had to continue to offer those sacrifices. But, christ has finished the work.....Tremendous principle.....

3E.) In Vs 5, we see the significance of the old priesthood as it relates to the symbolism that was involved when it was given.

Vs 5 mentions the state of Moses on the mount. It says that the Priest "serve as a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the tabernacle."

(1F) First of all, I want you to notice in this verse that the symbolism involved is based upon the purpose of Old Testament priesthood.

The O.T. priesthood was not designed to save anybody. It was designed to do two things:

One, an example ...Two, a shadow.....Now what does that mean? The Old Testament Priesthood was not designed to save anyone. It's purpose was an example and a shadow of that which really does save.....

So, what is the meaning of "example" and "shadow"?

If you will turn over and notice chapter 10 of Hebrews verse 1. Here we have a summary statement of the law. Look at it carefully....

Vs 1, "for the law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near."

You see, the O.T. priesthood and its system could not do the job of salvation. It was only a type or a shadow.

Turn, please, to Colossians chapter 2. Colossians chapter 2. The same idea is shared here. And this is a very, very important point. Because a lot of people want to put Christians, today, under the law. And under its restrictions and requirements and regulations. The Bible does not teach that. ~~//~~ In fact, the Bible warns against that practice....

(Read Colossians 2:16-17)

Notice the word "shadow" again.....Now, all that the law did was to give us a type, a shadow, of what was really coming.

The word "example" in Hebrews 8 also translated "copy" is used a lot of times in the Bible. The word literally means "to show something under something".....

We might even use the word "transparency"....

So, the O.T. system, all of its priest and its tabernacle was showing us something of the reality ~~what~~ was underneath of it.

Example: when Jesus in John 13 washed the disciples feet, he said to them: "I have given you an example that you should do as I have done."

What does the example mean? Does the example mean: Jesus, himself, does it?.....NO.....JESUS DID IT....NOW, IT IS AN EXAMPLE TO US....

Or, Paul who wrote in I Thessalions 1:7 that the believers in that church were examples to all the believers in Macedonia and in Greece.

Does it mean that the people who saw the example are one and the same with the people who gave the example?.....no.....

Or, like in James 5:10 when it says that the prophets of old who suffered were examples unto us in patience during sufferings. Does it mean that we, who received their example, are one and the same as the prophet who is the example?.....NO.....He merely is the example of that which is ~~the~~ to follow.....

So, the O.T. Priesthood, according to God, all the instruction that Moses gave on the mountain, was all for an example. Does that mean it was the real thing?.....NO.....It is not one and the same.....It was only pointing the way.....

I like what Galations 3:24 says: "the law was a school master to lead us to christ, that we may be justified by faith."

All of the law simply pointed out the beauty of Christ and what he has already done for us.....

Now, let's come back to Hebrews chapter 8.....Hebrews 8 verse 5.... This symbolism is based on the purpose of the O.T. priesthood which was not to save us, but merely to be an example and shadow of things to come.....

(2F) And it is also based upon a pattern that Moses was shown

Here is a little problem. I want you to think with me. In Exodus 25 verse 40 God said to Moses after telling him about this tabernacle and all the details. I mean the whole blue print was explained.....He said to Moses: "show it unto them after the pattern that I have showed you."

Now, that presents a little problem in my mind. What exactly did God show him?.....Did God actually produce a model in his presence? That he could then take down the mount and show to the people?.....

No, I don't think he did that.....WHY?.....well, because, just think of the size of the model. It would be tremendous....Even if you reduced it in scale, it would be tremendous to include everything.....

So, I don't think that is what happened. Well, how in the world, then, did Moses, according to Vs 5, know all those details....WHAT WAS THE PATTERN HE WAS SHOWING THEM?.....HOW DID HE ARRANGE THE FUTURE?.....HOW DID HE KNOW THE FUTURE? WHAT IS IT ALL SYMBOLIZING?

I think there is only one answer.....I don't believe that it is possible to ~~include~~ conclude that thing that is real behind what Moses designed, namely the tabernacle, the thing that was real was simply poles and curtains and bars and everything else....

Other wise, just from a mental point of view, I don't know ~~why~~ how he did it?.....OTHER THAN SUPERNATURAL INTERVENTION.....

Oh, no...the ~~thing~~ ^{thing} that it was pictureing, the real thing is what God told him. And do you know what it was?.....ONE WORD....."JESUS"..... It must be that...Because that is what Hebrews says.....That JESUS is what that whole thing was symbolizing.....

Don't you wish, then, that you could have been with Moses to hear that divine instruction about the tabernacle as to ~~why~~ what each of those things really meant.....

Now, you and I study that tabernacle and we do our best to see Jesus in it. But, I tell you. I would like to have been with Moses. ~~Because Moses was~~

Because Moses was shown that all that he built and constructed was based after the real thing which was Jesus according to Hebrews 8 and 9.

Now, wouldn't you really like to know how all those things really teach Jesus? I know some of them....

Like the show bread....He is the bread of life.....

Like the seven golden candle sticks: He is the light of the world... I notice that even the future is arranged in the form of a cross....~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ beautifully.....

The altar.....Christ is our altar..... Our sacrifice

The laver of water...I know that Jesus washes us daily from our sins..

But, I don't know all that is there.....But Moses did.....That lucky guy. Just wait till I get to heaven.....I am going to find out all that he found out.....

But, isn't it great to know that every last thing that God gave to the Jews as a symbol all point ~~to~~ to Jesus?.....

And isn't it fascinating to read in Luke 24 as two disciples walked along the road with Jesus after his resurrection. The Bible says that He opened up their minds and explained to them the scriptures. And told them that all the laws and the prophets and the writings were concerning me.... If you don't see Jesus in the Old Covenant, you are not reading it right... Everything that was in the O.T. was pointing to Jesus. And that is the pattern of what Moses was shown on the mount.

(3D) Vs 6...We come to the scope of the New Covenant. And the scope is described in three simple phrases in Vs 6.....This is a beautiful verse....

(1E) The first phrase deals with the ministry that Christ now has. Vs 6:
"But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry"

I like the meaning of the phrase "more excellent ~~ministry~~" in its root form. It means "to carry or to bear through"....And I think that is wonderful.....Christ carried or bore through all the symbolism and everything it talked about, and he literally within himself bore through the sufferings of the cross. And made the New Covenant. It is now in force because of his own death.....

Christ as obtained a more excellent ministry as our High Priest. It is totally different from the O.T.

(2E) And secondly, I look at the mediation He does now in our behalf.

It says in Vs 6 "by as much as He is also the mediator of a better Covenant. So, Christ is the mediator of a better covenant. Better than the O.T. The O.T. priest was mediating between God and man. Jesus is also a mediator between God and man. But the difference is that he is also the mediation.....You see the O.T. priest was only a representative . Whatever God told him, he then told the people.

But, in the case of Jesus, He is not only mediating between God and man. That is the reconciliation between God and man, because we are sinners. And thus we are separated from God. Thus we need to be reconciled to God. Reconciliation means "to restore back to a former condition," that existed in the Garden before Adam fell. When Adam walked and fellowshiped with God in perfect harmony.

Reconciliation means "to restore man back to a former condition which he had in the garden before the Fall"...

How can you be reconciled?.....You must have mediation between two parties that are against one another.....WHAT A BEAUTIFUL THING..... Christ is not only mediating like an umpire. Christ is actually the mediation which accomplish it. It was his death and his sacrifice that solved the problem of sin and brought about the reconciliation....

In Ephesian chapter 2, the Bible says "by the blood of His cross, He has made both Jew and Gentile one.".....The barrier that separated us from God has been broken down. And this was accomplished by the blood of the cross....The new covenant is now in force...

(3E) And the third thing in Vs 6 deals with the manner in which the terms of the New Covenant are now experienced.

" We are told that they are enacted on better promises."

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

First of all, the word "established" or "enacted". It is the word "law". And with the word "to put or place". It deals with "law" "established".... The same way God established the law of the first covenant. The second one has been established by his law, also.....

Literally, "it has been enacted or established"....It was enacted at a point in history. And it now continues with results that will effect our lives.....WHEN WAS THIS NEW COVENANT ESTABLISHED?.....Again at the cross.. It now has results for you and for me.

BUT WHY IS IT ENACTED UPON BETTER PROMISES?.....ANSWER:...Under the O.T. covenant, it was all conditional....All conditional.....God's// said: IF YOU OBEY MY LAW THEN I WILL.....AND SO FORTH.....

And if they did not....the old covenant could not be put into force... But, the new covenant was enacted with better promises.....WHY?.....

BECAUSE IT IS NOT CONDITIONAL.....ISN'T THAT GREAT?.....

Isn't it tremendous that God ~~says to you today~~ doesn't say to you today, "IF YOU WILL DO THESE 36 THINGS, THEN MAYBE YOU CAN GET INTO HEAVEN?"

OH, NO.....IT IS AN UNCONDITIONAL COVENANT. The testator has already died. It is already in force. And guess who the beneficiaries are?.....

YOU AND ME WHO BELIEVE IT.....It is already in force, the new covenant. WHAT IS THE NEW COVENANT?.....The day when God will take away your sins and mine. Take it away completely.....Pay for them completely. Give us complete forgiveness. A guarantee that we will be in heaven with eternal life. It is unconditional in the sense that the moment you believe in Jesus Christ it is done.....settled.....

God isn't waiting for you to perform your goodness in order to get into heaven. Or, he is not waiting for you to prove that you are not so bad, and thus you deserve to go to heaven....NO.....SALVATION? IS? BASED? UPON? AND LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS BASED UPON WHAT JESUS HAS ALREADY DONE. If you believe it, you will be saved, you will be in heaven, you will have ~~eternal~~ eternal life.....

Christ is truly the mediator of a better covenant. And it is enacted upon better promises..... (Let us close in prayer)