

"The Better Covenant"

Part 4

Hebrews 8:6-13

Introduction: Tonight as we come back to the book of Hebrews we are stepping back into chapter 8. We have been looking at 8:6-13 for the past 3 weeks and in this section the writer has been focusing upon the New Covenant and why it is so much better than the Old Covenant.

Notice Hebrews 8:6

Here in this verse the writer tells his readers that the New Covenant was established upon BETTER promises as compared to the Old Covenant.

The Old Covenant's promises were predicated upon Israel's ability and willingness to walk in obedience to the Commandments which God had given to them.

Exodus 19:5-6

⁵ Now therefore, ***if ye will*** obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, ***then ye shall*** be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:

⁶ And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

In the Old Covenant God said, "If ye will be obedient, then ye shall be blessed." The people agreed to walk in obedience but fell far short. They deliberately walked away from God and strait into lawlessness and idolatry.

The New Covenant is much different than the Old Covenant for it is built upon the FAITHFULNESS OF GOD. In Hebrews 8:6-13 it is recorded 6 times that God says, "I WILL."

So the New Covenant is better because it is predicated upon the faithfulness of God and not on man. We saw this in the word "COVENANT" here in this text. The word means "will or testament". It is NOT an agreement between 2 people but it is the will of God for all mankind. Therefore it is every person's responsibility to **accept** the FREE GIFT of eternal life that comes through Jesus Christ.

When we accept Jesus Christ and the FREE GIFT of eternal life our salvation rests completely in the redemptive work and the intercessory work of Jesus Christ. It is not

based upon our faithfulness to keep the Law, although; out of love every true believer will desire to walk in obedience to God's Word.

So in Hebrews 8:6-13 so far we have seen 3 reasons why the New Covenant is better:

1. **The Old Covenant was based upon works but the New Covenant is based upon grace.**
2. **The Old Covenant was external for it was written on stone. The New Covenant is internal for it is written on the heart.**
3. **The Old Covenant had to be taught to the people. The New Covenant will one day be fully known by all who know Christ.**

Tonight in our study of these verses we have come to the pinnacle of the New Covenant.

I. The Better Covenant

Part 3

1. **It is better because it is of forgiveness.**

Notice Hebrews 8:12

This verse speaks of the pinnacle of the New Covenant and to help us to see this I want to take some time and look into the verse in detail. Let us first of all consider the first part of the verse.

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,"...

Now we **MUST** keep this in the proper context in order to understand what the writer is saying here. Let us remember that this passage before us is from Jeremiah 31 and it pertains to the Nation of Israel. So when God says that He will be merciful to their unrighteousness He is speaking about the Nation of Israel.

Notice Hebrews 8:10-11

We looked at these verses last week and when we did we saw that the fulfillment of these verses will take place in the Millennial Kingdom. In the Age in which we live today God is working with the church. He is gathering a bride for His Son. This Age started at Pentecost and it will cease with the Rapture for when the Rapture happen then we who are the bride of Christ will be caught up to heaven with the Lord.

When the Rapture happens God will turn back to the Nation of Israel and during the tribulation He will work with them again. Israel will be saved during the tribulation and that is where Hebrews 8:12 comes in.

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness,"...

Now let me remind you about some of the iniquities of Israel so as to help us to see the impact of this verse.

Israel had been given the prophecies concerning their Messiah.

Isaiah 7:14

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Micah 5:2

² But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Isaiah 53:4-6

⁴ Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

God had even sent the wise men when Jesus was born to announce His birth.

Matthew 2:

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

² Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

³ When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴ *And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.*

⁵ *And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,*
The religious leaders even knew where He would be born but they were not willing to make the journey to meet their Messiah. Jesus grew up and walked among His people teaching and performing miracles. But they attributed His work to Satan.

Mark 3:22

²² *And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.*

So Israel rejected her Messiah. But not only did they reject Him but they also crucified Him. Notice Peter's words in Acts 2.

Acts 2:36

³⁶ *Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*

But the iniquities did not end there. Israel also persecuted the church in an attempt to silence the Gospel.

So this is just some of the unrighteous deeds of the Nation of Israel. But God has good news.

Notice Hebrews 8:12 again.

God says He will be merciful to their unrighteousness and when Israel gets saved God says He will no longer remember their sins and their iniquities. They will be forgiven and their sins and iniquities will never be brought against them.

Application:

This verse is addressed to Israel but we who are saved are enjoying the blessings of the New Covenant today. No matter what sins have been committed in our past they are forgiven and they are forgotten.

So many believers walk around feeling guilt from past offences and there is no need for the guilt. The sins are gone and NONE of our sins will ever be held against us when we stand before the Lord.

How can God say this when He is a righteous and holy God? We know He cannot ignore sin so how can He make this statement?

He can make this statement because when Jesus Christ died on the cross He took upon Himself all of our sins and His death paid the FULL price which was required for our sins.

1 John 2:1-2

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

² And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

The word "propitiation" means "appeasing". God declares that all sin must be paid for. Jesus death in our place on the cross satisfied the demands of the Father and therefore Jesus death completely wiped our sin debt clean.

Colossians 2:10-14

¹⁰ And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

¹¹ In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

¹² Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

¹³ And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

¹⁴ Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross:

The verse I really want you to see here is verse 14. Jesus blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us and nailed it to His cross. Let me explain this. In Paul day when someone was placed in prison there would be a note hung on the outside of the prisoner's door and on that note would be a list of offences against the man. This is the very position all mankind was in. We all sinned against God and we had a list of offences that was attached to our account. But when Jesus died He took the list of ALL our offences and He nailed them to His cross and by doing that He was stating that on the cross the debt was paid. Now because the debt is paid our sins will never again be brought up to be held against us. As I have said many times in the past, if our sins would be brought up against us that would be double jeopardy because they were all paid for at the cross.

Psalm 103:12

¹² *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

Isaiah 43:25

²⁵ *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

Micah 7:19

¹⁹ *He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*

Before we leave this thought there is something else that needs to be said here. This verse in its context is great encouragement to anyone who thinks they have sinned to the point that they are beyond God forgiveness and grace. Israel crucified the very Son of God and yet God offers to them the forgiveness of sin. If they are willing to turn to Jesus Christ and receive Him as their Savior their sins will be forever washed away. This is also true of anyone who is alive today. There is no one beyond salvation and there is no one beyond God's grace.

Let us now notice the remaining verse in the chapter.

Notice Hebrews 8:13

When God stated that there was a New Covenant, that very statement made the first Covenant old. It is old in the sense that it is "worn out". The best way to understand this statement is that the Old Covenant is "obsolete".

The Hebrew believers who received this letter were thinking about returning back to the Old Covenant. But the writer tells them it was obsolete. There was now a better covenant with a better Mediator who is Jesus Christ so to go back would be to turn to something that would be outdated.

Application:

There are many people today who also desire to go back under to the Old Covenant. Let me give you some examples.

Years ago there was a family who attended the Bedford Bible Church and they had attended for many years. One day they left and I went with the Pastor to visit them. They

had left Bedford Bible and were attending a church that worshipped on Saturday. They said they had come to believe that anyone who did not keep the Sabbath would go to hell when they died. They even went so far as to say they believed that WE who worship on Sunday will be the people who receive the mark of the beast in the Great Tribulation. They desired to live under the Old Covenant not knowing that it was now obsolete. Not knowing that all those ceremonies and rituals were fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Ritchie told me about being at a conference one time when a group of people showed up who believed if you did not eat that which was listed in the Levitical diet then you would lose your salvation. They also desired to live under a Covenant that is now obsolete.

Conclusion:

I want to show you what happened at to the Galatians when the Judaizers convinced them that circumcision was a requirement for salvation.

Galatians 4:9-10

⁹ *But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?*

¹⁰ **Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.**

Let me leave you with the words of the Apostle Paul to the Colossians.

Colossians 2:10, 13-16

¹⁰ *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

¹³ *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;*

¹⁴ *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*

¹⁵ *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

¹⁶ **Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:**

We are complete in Christ so we are not to allow anyone to convince us we need to place ourselves under the Old Covenant which is obsolete.