

Letter to the **Hebrews**



Lesson 8-The Sanctuary and God's New Covenant

Focus: Hebrews 8:1-13

➤ **The Real Thing Verses the Copy and Shadow (v.1-5)**

- *The Bible tells us that Jesus Christ is our High Priest in heaven! He is a minister of the Sanctuary of Heaven. He ministers at the "right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (v.1). He is a minister of the Sanctuary, "the true tabernacle" which the Lord built, and not man. That is, He is in Heaven's temple, the real dwelling place of God, which was created by God.*
- *(v.3,4) The earthly priests offered gifts, sacrifices and offerings in the earthly sanctuary. Christ would not have to do that if he were here on the earth—there were men here on earth who were doing that according to the law of Moses. But, Christ now ministers for us in Heaven. He is doing the ultimate and real work that should be done for our souls! **Jesus Christ is our mediator and advocate in the Heavenly Sanctuary where the presence of God is (See 1 John 2:1,2; 1 Timothy 2:5).** There is no other one who can truly lead us to heaven, and bring us there, besides Jesus Christ Himself! (ref. John 14:6).*
- *(v.5) The things here on the earth were only "...**a copy and a shadow of the heavenly things,**" which means **that the pattern and design of the earthly sanctuary was going to teach us many valuable lessons about the work of God for us** in Heaven! Here the Apostle is quoting to us from **Exodus 25:8,9**. God was very specific about the design of this earthly Sanctuary because it was going to teach us about Heavenly realities.*
- *Some people have contested about whether or not there was a real Sanctuary in Heaven or what it would look like or how it would function. While we may not have every single exact detail, the Bible still makes it very clear that there is a Sanctuary in heaven, a dwelling place for the presence of God, and the function of God's work in this heavenly Sanctuary bears some resemblance to the pattern that was shown through Moses' tabernacle. We must realize that it is real and it is superior! Revelation tells us that in the new Earth, the New Jerusalem will have no temple in it because God and the Lamb are the temple of it (Rev. 21:22). However, today, we do see a temple being described in Heaven. The Bible is very clear! **Besides these texts in Hebrews ch.8, please look at all the others which describe this Heavenly Sanctuary and God's work there for us (Revelation 11:19, "temple of God, opened in heaven"; Revelation 13:6; 14:15,17; 15:5-8; 16:1,17; Isaiah 6:1-4, 6, even mentions an alter there; See also Rev. 8:2-5 on this).***
- ***Daniel 7:9,10,13,14** pictures a Heavenly Judgment scene before this very throne of God which was even to precede the return of Jesus Christ. Christ is brought before the presence of God the Father, along with all the angels, just like it was pictured in the earthly Sanctuary by the High priest going before God's Holy presence in the holy of holies on the Day of Atonement.(ref. Rev. 3:5; 5:11).*

➤ **Christ's Better Ministry for us and God's New Covenant (v.6-10)**

- *With the old covenant, fault was found with the people, not the covenant. "Finding fault with them..." (v.8) it says. "They did not continue in my covenant" (v.9). These texts here (v.8-10) are actually quoted from the Old Testament Prophet Jeremiah! (**Jeremiah 31:31-34**). God had promised from a long time ago that He was going to make a "New Covenant" with His people!*

Some people had misunderstood God's first covenant and had entered into it wrongly—on wrong assumptions. The people promised to do all that God had said, but they also failed miserably to do all that God had said. They were weak, as all humans have been. We should be depending more upon God's power and strength than upon our own (See John 15:4,5). The Old Covenant was in a number of ways imposed and interpreted by many as **An External Covenant**. That is, it focused a lot on the outside. The **New Covenant** is more of an **Internal Covenant**. God wants His Laws to be written upon our hearts and minds so that we know them well and love to do them! (It was never to just be written merely upon the Tables of Stone and kept on the outside, but it was to be put on the inside). **Under the Old Covenant people could truly enter into a heart experience with God, and many did! (Psalm 119:9-16)**. That was God's intent for everyone! However, there were a number who, although they knew the laws and the truth of God, still chose to forget them or not do them, and they did not internalize these heavenly truths...but even as a number of people today too.

- **Some of the major comparisons and differences between the Old and New are these:**
 - The Old talked about the Holy Spirit and the unpardonable sin just like the New also does (Exodus 23:20,21)
 - The Old had blood to ratify it, but that was of animals, not Jesus like in the New. (Exodus 24:4-8).
 - The Old had a Sanctuary, but it was an earthly one and there were earthly priests (Exodus 25:8, etc.). Jesus is our Lamb and High priest in the new, and the Sanctuary in the New is in Heaven, not on the earth.
 - **We will see this explained more in the coming chapters of Hebrews.**
- **See also how this New Covenant was promised in Daniel 9:25-27 and how Christ fulfilled it!** Christ showed us that His blood was going to ratify or begin this New Covenant! (**Luke 22:19,20**). No longer was the blood of animals going to be used. No longer would the earthly sanctuary be used. No longer would the earthly priests be used. Now only Christ Jesus was to be our help and our strength!

➤ **The Beauty of the New Covenant Fulfilled (v.11-13)**

- Christ was pointing us forward to the times of Heaven! We should experience the true joy, purity, happiness of Heaven in our hearts! We should reach that place where God desires for us to be. Finally also when we enter the gates of heaven it will be this way, but we are to begin experiencing this as much as possible now! These verses look down to the time when the great gospel work in Christ is finished and accomplished! A time when we shall no longer have to tell others to know the Lord for all shall know Him! But for now, we must tell and share the truth of God so that many would be converted! (ref. Matthew 28:19,20—we are commissioned to do so now). On verse 13, the Old was about to vanish away, and soon, even the earthly temple in Jerusalem would face it's end—that happened in AD 70 by the Roman armies under General Titus. Though the Jews still tried to use the earthly temple for a while, yet God had already said that such would be finished! Even as the temple curtain had torn at Christ's crucifixion thus signifying that the earthly was no longer needed.

Question (s) for the Heart:

Is it your desire, choice, and prayer to have God's Commandments written upon your heart and mind so that you know, love, and follow them fully? _____