

Hebrews 8-10

Recap:

- Danger of drifting away / losing faith and not making it to the promised land
- What is going to keep them is knowing about the great High Priest (4:14)
- This is the solid food for the mature (5:11-6:3)
- Argument: 2 priesthoods – Melchizedek and Levi – Melchizedek comes first (Gen. 14) and promised after (Ps. 110) so shows the insufficiency of the Levitical priesthood (Heb. 7:11)
- We need a priest who is a) not a sinner; b) lives forever (Heb. 7:23-28). Priests were bridges – crumbly and fell down every few years.

Jesus' priesthood versus the Levitical priesthood

Heb. 8:1-2 – the whole point of the letter

Once for all sacrifice – 1:3; 9:12, 25-28; 10:5-10 [sacrifices versus one body]; 10:11-14

- How many people know this?
- What are the applications of this? (ch. 10)
 1. No more sacrifice for sins (v18)¹
 2. Draw near to God with assurance (v22)
 3. Hold onto the hope² – future focused faith (v23, 35-39)
 4. Encourage one another's faith and godliness (v24-25 cf. ch. 3-4)
 5. Do not despise this sacrifice – how much more dangerous (v26-31)
 6. Glad suffering and generosity (v32-34)

Jeremiah and the benefits of the New Covenant

Heb. 8:7-13

- What are the two covenants being compared?
- What are the differences?
- What are the similarities?

¹ At time of the European Reformation the reformers realised that there was no re-sacrificing of Christ in the Lord's Supper and so moved away from language of 'priest' and 'altar' and expressed the finished sacrifice of Christ very forcefully in their liturgies – e.g. "God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the Cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death, until his coming again" (BCP 1662 Communion Order).

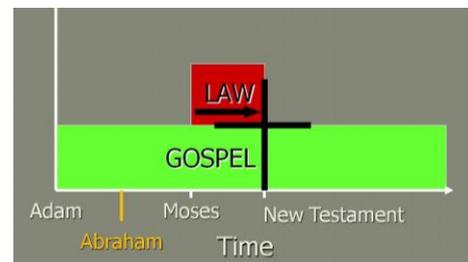
² This hope is the Return of Christ / New Jerusalem / New Creation / Resurrection / Seeing God / Fullness of Adoption / Surpassing Glory / Joy of the Master / Rest – which is secured by Christ's atonement (Heb. 6:18-19).

Martin Luther: Very important distinction – Law / Gospel
 Conviction of Sin / Forgiveness of Sin
 Showing our deadness and powerlessness / Giving spiritual life and power

Law cannot save and Mosaic administration has passed away but Gospel living is keeping the Law – it is the Law which is written on our hearts (v10)

Priesthood of all believers (v11)

New Covenant versus *Mosaic Law* – but not necessarily completely New – there was already forgiveness and friendship with God from time of Abraham – so here in Jer. 31//Heb. 8 is the covenant of Abraham reworked / reloaded / expanded / underwritten / fully-activated – in particular the new thing at the coming of Christ is that covenant is *paid for* and *enacted* through the death of Christ.



Covenant as Testament

Heb. 9:16-17

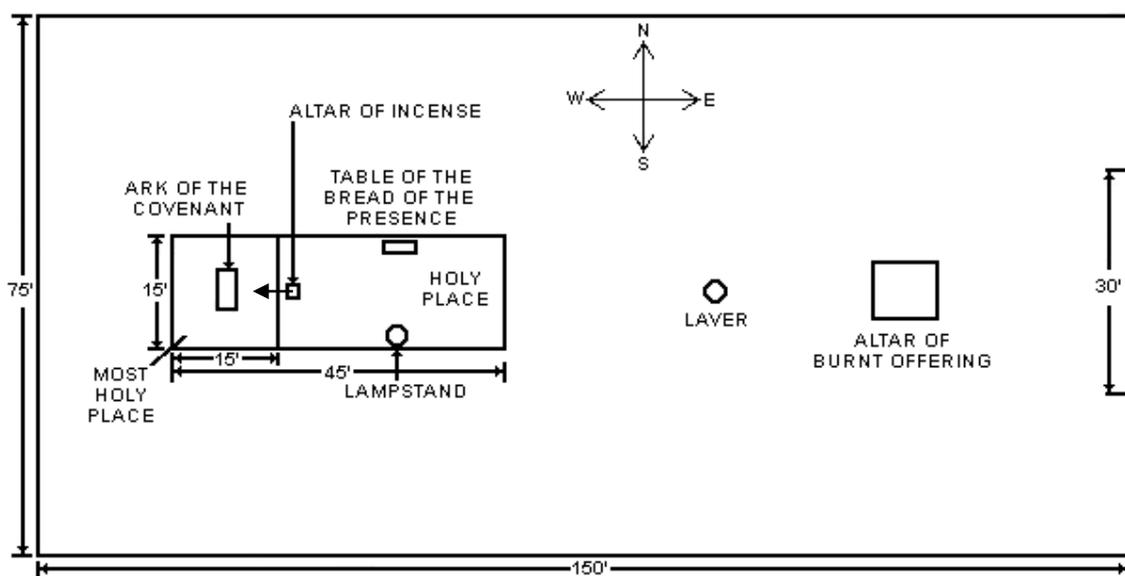
Martin Luther (Babylonian Captivity of the Church): A testament is certainly a promise made by a man about to die, by which he assigns his inheritance and appoints heirs. Thus the idea of a testament implies, first, the death of the testator, and secondly, the promise of the inheritance, and the appointment of an heir...

Hence the words, “agreement, covenant, testament of the Lord,” are constantly employed in the Scriptures; and by these it was implied that God was about to die. “For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.” (Heb. ix. 16.) God having made a testament, it was necessary that He should die. Now He could not die, unless He became a man; and thus in this one word “testament” the incarnation and the death of Christ are both comprehended.

The Tabernacle

Heb. 8:2, 5; 9:1-8, 11-12, 23-24

- What do you learn about the Tabernacle?

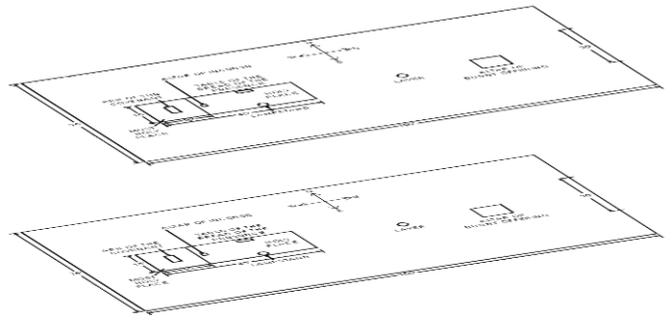


Pre-existing heavenly tabernacle --- Copy

God the Father --- Shekinah Glory / Presence

God the Son --- High Priest

Angels --- Priests (Rev. 8:3, 6; 14:15-18; 15:5-6)



Day of Atonement – Leviticus 16

- bull and goat burnt on altar, blood of bull and goat taken into most holy place, carcass of bull and goat burnt outside the camp (Heb. 13:11-12)
- the one day when the altar of incense (or at least some of its coals and fire along with incense) moved within the most holy place (Lev. 16:12-13//Heb. 9:4)
- the one day when the priest enters the most holy place (with blood)

Ascension is key – this is analogous to the high priest on the day of atonement, having offered the sacrifice on the altar, taking the blood into the Most Holy Place

Heb. 4:14 [entered heaven]; 6:19 [secures our hope]; 7:23-25 [pleading for us in God’s presence by his blood];³ 8:1-2; 9:11, 24

“Jesus ascended into heaven ‘to appear for us in God’s presence’. Atonement was not complete until Jesus stood before God on our behalf...

Jesus, our priest and mediator, appears in the presence of God, bearing our names, as a memorial to God. He is the sign, the reminder, the pledge, the guarantee that we belong in the presence of God. Our presence before God is as certain as Christ’s presence before God. Our salvation is safe and secure as long as Christ is in heaven.

This is why the ascension is such good news.” (Tim Chester & Jonny Woodrow, *The Ascension: Humanity in the Presence of God*, Christian Focus, p.22)

Preaching the gospel from 9:22-28

- What is the argument here?
- How does verse 28 correspond to Leviticus 16?
- What is the Big Point of this passage? (10-15 words)
- How would you preach this evangelistically?

Resources:

- [Francis Turretin on the Intercession of Christ](#)
- [Glen Scrivener on the pastoral importance of the High Priesthood of Jesus](#)
- [Dev Menon sermon on the ascension](#) – a rich feast of ascension theology
- [Before the Throne of God Above](#) – hymn on Youtube

³ Notice the logic here: For our salvation to be secure we need not only Christ to die in our place but also for him to take the propitiating blood into the presence of God to show the Father that justice has been done and then we need him to *stay there* before the throne continually interceding for us, continually representing us. And that is what has happened and is happening. The reason we can have assurance of our salvation is Jesus has risen *and lives forever* interceding. Your salvation is as secure as Jesus’ indestructible life. If he could die then maybe you could lose your salvation but he lives forever; he is in the most holy place showing the Father his hands and feet and saying, “I died for him, I died for her” – and he will never ever stop doing that.