

July 25

Scriptures: Read Hebrews 8

Key Verse: “But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which He is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded in better promises” (Hebrews 8:6) (NIV).

Overview

In verse seven, the writer say, “if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another.” The covenant he refers to is the “expanded” version — that is, it refers not only to God’s promise to Abraham, but to the Ten Commandments given to Moses and the Law that resulted. It’s the covenant that was to “perfect” Israel through the mediation of the Levitical priesthood (7:11). And the writer has the effrontery to suggest that something God initiated was imperfect.

The problem was not with God. The problem was with the other signatories, the people — “But God found fault with the people.. .” (v.8a). He was faithful, but they were unfaithful. He was keeping His part of the contract, but they were defaulting on theirs.

So what does God do? Instead of satisfying His justice by destroying the defaulters, He chooses instead to send His Son to suffer the “wages of sin” and give the faithless ones a second chance for redemption. He kills Jesus as a penalty for our sin, and then He raises Him up again and seats Him at “the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven” (v.1), in order that Jesus be not only the “Lamb that was slain” but also the Priest who “always lives to intercede” for us (7:25).

What’s more, God then extends the parameters of His grace by writing His “laws in their minds and... on their hearts” (v. 10b). He makes “a new covenant” that depends not on the faithfulness of man but on the faithfulness of the Son.

Suddenly, legalism gives way to liberty. Law gives way to Grace. Our new High Priest transcends “copies” and “shadows” (v.5) and serves us where only he can serve us best — “in the sanctuary” (v.2).

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that Your ministry is the best. We open our hearts and minds to You. We bow in awe before You and worship You for who You are.