

(18) For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

(20) And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, but this One was made a priest with an oath by the One who said to Him:

“The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, ‘You are a priest forever.’”

(22) This makes Jesus the guarantor of a **better** covenant.

(23) The former priests were many in number because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but He holds His priesthood permanently because He continues forever. Consequently, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

(26) For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest: holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need --- like those high priests --- to offer sacrifices daily for His own sins, and then for those of the people --- since He did this once for all when He offered up Himself. For the Law appoints men in their weaknesses as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the Law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

Think on these things:

- 1) The old covenant is described in Exodus 24-30, and the sacrificial offerings and priestly roles are explained in Leviticus 1-9. We don't have time to cover this much content in class. What do you recall about the former commandment regarding how a person deals with sin (skim Leviticus 4).

The sin offerings were a bull for either a priest or the nation, a male goat for a leader, and a female goat (or lamb) for common folks. For leaders and common folks, they were required to put their hands on the head of their animal and perform the killing with a knife. Blood was sprinkled by the priest and then poured out at the altar. Bull carcasses were removed and burned outside the camp; goat/lamb “fats” were burned “for a pleasing aroma for the Lord.”

- 2) Hebrews 7:18 says this old system has been set aside? Why? If you do a good job of keeping the Ten Commandments will you be perfect before God (see Romans 7:7-14 and Galatians 3:10-13)?

Why set aside? **The former commandment was weak and useless, making nothing perfect.**

Law makes perfect? **The Holy Law awakens sin in people, producing death (Rom.). No one can be justified before God by “trying” to keep the whole Law. To fail in one aspect is to fail in all aspects. No one is justified before God by the Law, and all so trying are under a curse (Gal.).**

- 3) Jesus introduced a “better” hope. What is better about it (v.19)? See Romans 8:14-16 and Hebrews 10:19-22.

We are able to draw near to God in the better covenant. Believers become “God’s children” through adoption by the Holy Spirit (Rom.). We can have confidence to approach God in His holy place in heaven through the curtain-opening work of Jesus. Our hearts are cleansed, and our consciences and bodies are washed (Heb.).

- 4) Do you recall what the requirement was to be a Jewish priest? He had to be from whose family? If Jesus is not from this family, on what basis has He become a High Priest (v.21)?

Jewish priests are to be from the tribe of Levi, and direct descendants of Aaron. Jesus, from the tribe of Judah, was declared to be a High Priest by the Father's oath (Psalm 110:4).

- 5) What is the assurance that we have a better covenant (v.22)?

Our assurance of this better covenant is Jesus Himself. He guarantees it for us!

- 6) Why were the men of the Jewish High Priesthood incapable of continuing in office (v.23)? How long is Jesus expected to serve as our High Priest (v.24)?

They were people like us and subject to death. Jesus, however, is expected to be our High Priest forever (permanently).

- 7) We have learned that God replaced the Law of the Old Covenant since it could not make us perfect – it only covered our sins. God promised a New Covenant that could save us completely (Jeremiah 31:31-34), promising to never hold our sins against us anymore. Who is capable of giving us this “complete” salvation? What does Jesus always live to do (vs. 24-25)?

Who gives complete salvation? **Jesus “saves to the uttermost” those who draw near to God through Him.**

Jesus always lives to do what? **Jesus always lives to make intercession for us.**

- 8) Does Jesus need to offer daily sacrifices, or sacrifices for Himself before He helps others (v.27)? What sacrifice did Jesus offer?

Jesus made a once-and-for-all-time sacrifice of “Himself.” The need for any and all further sacrifices has ended.

- 9) What is the problem with human High Priests (v.28)? **They serve in their own human weakness.**

People and situations I want to pray for this week: