

JESUS BRINGS A **BETTER RELATIONSHIP (COVENANT)**

(Hebrews 8:1 – 9:14)

Although this sounds like the set up for the punchline of a joke, it's a real question:

*What's the difference between the Pope, Aaron the OT High Priest, and Luke Thomson?*

**ONLY** Luke Thomson can have a perfectly clear conscience before God!

Complete security in his relationship as a child of our Heavenly Father! Priceless!

Why only Luke? I mean this sincerely, the **Pope** does not understand the gospel of grace. This is the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, men who *initially* tried to purify & course-correct the grave errors & heresies of the Roman Catholic church. In their hostile (lethal!) response to the Reformers, the Catholic Church documented proof that they deny salvation by unmerited favour through trusting in Jesus alone.

So any Catholic who holds *consistently* to the official dogmas of the Catholic Church, *should live in fear* between weekends, that is, between weekly visits to the confessional for absolution of his or her sins.

Here's why: according to Catholic theology, she might be 'absolved/pardoned' of sin at the Saturday confessional, but if on *Tuesday*, she commits one of the *many* so-called "mortal sins" of Catholicism, and is then hit by a bus *Wednesday* before her next weekend confessional/absolution . . . she's a goner!

Mortal sin, by definition, kills spiritual life; cuts off one's relationship with God!

(That's Catholicism. The Bible does not teach the 'mortal' sin vs. 'venial' sin categories)

But note well: there are *dozens, stacks* of "mortal sins" in Catholicism:

pornography, skipping mass, breaking a promise, gluttony.

Gluttony, promise breaking – these can be *daily* occurrences for many people.

And Jesus defined *everyday lust* as adultery of the heart. Porn is 'advanced' lust!

Listen: If Catholic theology is true, Catholics truly **ought** to live in *abject fear, daily!*

**Aaron**, brother of Moses, was the *founding* High Priest of the OT.

- Aaron confronted Pharaoh, saw God bring the 10 plagues
- Aaron experienced deliverance from the death on the night of the Passover
- He personally crossed the Red Sea, witnessed God's powerful guidance & provision in the wilderness . . .

But Aaron never had a *faultless* conscience before God, a *perfectly secure* relationship with God.

Why not?

Because sin after sin after sin, required sacrifice after sacrifice after sacrifice.

Further still, the blood of bulls & goats ultimately cannot atone for sin.

As today's text says, the old covenant priesthood & sacrifices were, *faulty, shadowy*.

**Luke Thomson** – our humble, still *sinful* GBC elder and pastoral associate – in knowing Jesus, trusting in His blood of the new covenant – the once for all sacrifice – Luke has what the Pope and Aaron don't:

a *faultless* conscience before God, a *secure* relationship as His child!

The main idea of our passage this morning is just that: **{DPa}**

In God's sight, we can have a *faultless conscience* because of Jesus' *faultless covenant*.

When people today, even religious people, hear the word "covenant", they either think "*What's that?*", or they simply equate it with a "*business contract*." Both are inadequate.

A covenant is a very **meaningful, personal** relationship that is binding.

That's why marriage is called a "covenant" in both Scripture and in society:

Marriage is an intensely personal relationship that is intensely binding, for life

God use that marriage covenant analogy to describe the covenant He made with a nation, His people Israel.

That 'old covenant' looks forward to the *final* covenant Jesus brings, the *New Covenant*.

Our Title this morning: **{DPb}** Jesus brings a *Better Relationship (Covenant) with God*

God wants His children secure, drawing near to know Him & serve Him with the joy of a clear conscience.

Our Outline: **{DPc}**

- A Better Security (8:1-13)                      thanks to
- A Better Sanctuary/Temple (9:1-14)

Chapters 8-10 brings us to a New Section in Hebrews.

Let's recap the Big Blocks, building the constant theme **{DPa}** that Jesus is Better.

First, we saw Jesus is a Better *Messenger* than angels, bringing a Better *Message* than the Torah, that *law* the angels brought. Jesus brings *good news* of grace & hope!

Moving from chapters 1 & 2 to the next section in chapters 3 & 4, we saw Jesus is **{DPb}** a Better *Deliverer* than Moses, bringing a Better *Rest* than Joshua.

Jesus delivers God's people from sin's condemnation & leads us into an untainted & eternal promised land. Trusting & following Jesus *guarantees* our entrance into His better rest.

Finally, in chapters 5-7, we saw Jesus has a **{DPa}** a Better High Priesthood than the lineage of Aaron, because it's in the order of Melchizedek. Jesus' priesthood is permanent because Jesus is *eternal*, and His priesthood is perfect because He's *sinless*. Even so...

Jesus can fully *sympathise* with us because He, the Creator, took on flesh & entered creation! So He's a **{DPb}** better priestly *Encourager* for us to draw near to God.

And because of Jesus' perfection & permanent position at the Father's right hand, Jesus is a **{DPb}** better priestly *Advocate*, interceding for us & pleading our case to the Father.

Now in chapters 8-10, the High Priest theme continues, but with a **different emphasis**.

Chapters 5-7 focus on the more personal: Jesus' Better **Nature**, which *qualifies* Him for a better High Priestly Order.

Chapters 8-10 focus on the functional: Jesus' Better *Ministry*: **{DP} Sacrifice & Covenant**.  
It's *fulfilment & finality*. There is no One else to wait for, no other sacrifice.

First, Jesus brings a *Better Relationship (Covenant) with God* because Jesus brings . . .

**A BETTER SECURITY (8:1-13) {DP}**

To help us understand interaction of old & new covenant, I'll ask you a *question*:

What do the following **movie lines** have in common:

"Go ahead, make my day!"

"Hasta la vista, baby."

"My precious!"

"I am your father!" **{DPa – the lines}**

They're all from **sequels!**

The lines are *built upon* previous instalments.

You *miss the impact* of the lines, if you have not seen "Part 1".

A story line develops in sections called "acts": Act 1, Act 2, Act 3

From our high school English days, we recall language like "Act 2, Scene 3" from Shakespeare and other stage plays.

The Bible, a true story, has a storyline that can be described as a play with 2 "acts" – Act 1 and Act 2 **{DPb}**

Act 1 – The Old Testament with its Old Covenant

Acts 2 – The New Testament with its New Covenant

Key: **{DPC}**

➤ Without Act 2, the play is incomplete!

➤ Without Act 1, the play is incoherent!

For instance, in 'Act 2' – the NT – at the start of John's Gospel, Jesus first appears on the scene and John the baptiser points at Him, saying:

"Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world!" (John 1:29)

Without Act 1 (the OT), you'd be scratching your head. . .

"Lamb of God? What does a lamb have to do with taking away sin?"

And by the way, what exactly is 'sin'?"

Act 1, the OT, tells us of our rebellion of against God/Fall into sin, our need for a Saviour, law defining sin and telling us without sacrificial blood, our sin cannot be atoned for.

So reading 'Act 1', hearing Abraham's only son, Isaac, asking Dad, "*Behold the wood & fire for the sacrifice, but where is the lamb?*", and hearing Abraham answer, "**God Himself will provide the lamb!**" (Gen 22:7-8)

with that 'Act 1' truth 'echoing' in our ears, now in 'Act 2' when we hear John say, "Behold the Lamb of God"

we connect the dots!:

**"God will provide Himself AS the Lamb!"**

We get it! For we read in John 1 that this Lamb is *divine, the eternal Word become flesh.*

Act 1 also tells us without a priest to reconcile us to God, we are without hope, and that reconciliation through sacrifice happened at the Tabernacle, the mobile Tent where God's special presence dwelled, until a more permanent Temple was built in Jerusalem.

Act 1 has made this coherent. Now we can see why we *need* Act 2 to make it complete.

### A Better Security (8:1-13) {DPb}

- *Forged in a Better Place (8:1-5)*
- *Founded on Better Promises (8:6-13)*

#### • **Forged in a Better Place (8:1-5)**

On the heels of chapters 5-7 describing the better high priest we truly need,

The author of Hebrews gets really clear, verses 1-3,

*Now the point in what we are saying is this:*

*we have such a high priest, One who is **seated** at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.*

*For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.*

And He did have something to offer, and some great place to offer it.

Unlike the ongoing work of Advocacy in chapters 5-7, which is accomplished **STANDING**,

like a defence advocate or barrister approaches the bench/jury,

instead in ch 8-10 we see the Jesus the high priest **SITTING** – resting, His offering is *finished!*

Did you know the **OT** priests are never described as being 'seated.'

They are always standing up, in action, sacrificing, interceding in prayer, because sins keep being heaped upon sins! Their work is *never finished*.

One reason: the author notes that sacrifices in the *differing covenants* (old & new) are offered in different tabernacles /tents.

Verse 2 says Jesus' one-time offering is presented in the **true tabernacle in heaven**.

Verses 4-5 says by contrast

*Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. [Jesus is not from the tribe of Levi, as we've discussed. Verse 5:] {DP}*

*They [Levites] serve a copy and shadow of the HEAVENLY things.*

*For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, "See that you make everything according to the PATTERN that was shown you on the mountain."*

He's quoting Exodus 25 (v. 40), beginning the *long* section in Exodus giving *detailed* instructions for precise construction the Tabernacle and its offerings.

God takes *sin seriously*, so we can only approach Him *the way He stipulates*.

The old covenant was chockers with stipulations of ceremonial law – which are just a "shadow & copy" of the true temple in heaven.

Moses lived a full 1000 years before Plato, the Greek philosopher.

But in using this language of 'shadow' & 'copy', it's possible the author and readers of Hebrews were familiar with *Plato's parable of the Cave*. {DPa}

Plato described people chained to one wall, facing another wall, seeing shadows on it. Enslaved their whole life, knowing nothing different, they merely assume what they see is all there is.

Plato taught, the "ideal" or "perfect" realities are in heaven; and that earthly things are "imperfect" copies, mere shadows.

Only when one looks behind the wall can they see **{DPb}** the man-made objects that made the shadows by the light from the little fire.

Only when the slave is freed **{DPC}** can he exit and see the true light, true reality.

Whether they were familiar with Plato or not:

*The earthly tabernacle was a **SHADOW** (Heb 8:5)*

*The heavenly temple is His "true sanctuary." (Heb 8:1-2)*

Old Testament revelation was still God's speaking to humanity (Hebrews 1:1-2)!

But the old covenant is the moon in relationship to the new covenant sun.<sup>1</sup>

Older light has now been *eclipsed* by the full intensity of revelation in God's Son, Jesus.

### • **Founded on Better Promises (8:6-13) {DPa}**

*verse 6 – Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant He mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.*

Verses 8-12 are the *longest quote* from the OT recorded in the NT. (quoting Jeremiah)

These verses make it clear that God does not "*compromise*" His holiness.

He does not lower His standards so His pathetic people can meet pathetic standards.

#### 8:7-9 **{DPb}**

*If that first covenant had been **FAULTLESS**, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. For God finds fault with them when he says:*

*"Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord,  
when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel & the house of Judah,  
not like the covenant that I made with their fathers  
on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.  
For they did not continue in My covenant,  
and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord.*

"Showing no concern" is a very humble way for God to put it!:

after *centuries* of God's long-suffering grace heaped upon grace,  
and forgiveness upon forgiveness shown to His *adulterous* people, Israel,  
God finally says: Jerusalem will be judged, the temple destroyed, people exiled.

#### KEY: **{DPC}**

The old covenant was *faulty* (v.7) because it continued *finding fault* with the people (v.8)

The old covenant did NOT *finally* **DEAL** with our faults, with our sins.

God does not lower His standards so His pathetic people can meet pathetic standards.

**God glorious standards are met in His glorious Son** – who completely satisfied God's righteous standards/laws, and formed a the **new covenant** by His blood.

Because of Jesus – God stops "*finding fault with us*"!

This is why the New Covenant is a better covenant, bringing a better **forgiveness**, a, and what God calls a better "**forgetfulness**" of sins (not passive spiritual amnesia!, but a *pro-active choice* not to recall our sins). We see this in verses 10-12: **{DPC}**

*For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord:*

<sup>1</sup> Helpful language of George Guthrie, *Hebrews* (NIVAC series), 284.

*I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts,  
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.  
And they shall not teach, each one his neighbour  
and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all **KNOW** me,  
from the least of them to the greatest.  
For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."*

God stops finding fault with us! A few

First, we notice that the new covenant is on OT promise made to the house of **Israel**.

Us Gentiles enter the covenant through Jesus, the Messiah who is *Jewish*.

Biblical Christianity has no room for anti-Semitism, anti-Jewishness.

Yes, the Israel *rejected and crucified* Jesus.

But we still need to love them and proclaim Jesus *as Messiah* to them, as Paul wrote,  
"my heart's desire and prayer for them is that they may be saved." (Rom 10:1)

We're never to hate Jews, as sadly some Christians in church history have & do. Even some Reformers, at times, spoke scathingly anti-Semitic comments, like Martin Luther. Since Luther wrote in German, it's tragic that *Adolph Hitler* re-published portions of *Luther's* writings for Hitler's agenda: trying to justify the holocaust and get the approval from the German state Church. No!  
*Biblical Christianity has no room for anti-Semitism, anti-Jewishness!*

Second, this passage reveals the new covenant is not lawless, anti-law (anti-nomian).

God's grace does not mean we are 'a law unto ourselves.'

Quite the opposite, in the new covenant, instead of writing His law on stone tablets, God writes His law on our hearts! So Christianity is not some *vague mystical experience* similar to those of other religions. It's not some *subjective psychological 'technique'* to simply rid ourselves of guilt.

God writes His law on our hearts.

But to keep the balance & not swing from libertinism to legalism, let me say this *twice*:

God writes His **law** on our hearts! God writes His law on our **hearts**.

We are to *love* His law, *living it* from the "inside out".

John Newton put it this way in a hymn:

*"Our pleasure and our duty,  
Though opposite before;  
Since we have seen His beauty,  
Are joined to part no more!"*

So Christianity is not "moralism"/external activities, neglecting dynamics of the inner life.

Richard Foster writes,

*"The contrast between God's way of doing things & our [typical] way . . . we focus on specific actions; God focuses on us. We work from the outside in; God works from the inside out. We try; God transforms."*

According to Hebrews 8, Biblical Christianity – at a minimum – involves:

*the forgiveness of sins, a transformation of the inner life in accordance with the laws of God, and an intimate relationship with the living God.*

Any definition of Christianity that neglects these realities is counterfeit!<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Paraphrase of George Guthrie, *Hebrews* (NIVAC series), 293.

Third: We see **Relationship** over *Religion & Ritual* (v. 11) {DP}

“they shall all KNOW Me” (8:11)

What did Jesus pray in His high priestly prayer?

“This is eternal life, that they may KNOW You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (John 17:3)

People don't talk about “when they came to know Buddha” – they say they came to know Buddha's teachings, since he is simply a pointer, a sign post (and a *false* one, at that).

No one says, “When I came into a personal relationship with Allah”

Allah, the god of Islam, is only distant, transcendent . . . not immanent/near, not taking on flesh, sympathetic, suffering, tabernacling with us, dying for us!

This is why no world religions, but only Christians, write songs like,

*King of heaven now the Friend of sinners,  
Humble servant in the Father's hands,  
Filled with power and the Holy Spirit,  
Filled with mercy for the broken man.  
Yes, He walked my road and He felt my pain,  
Joys and sorrows that I know so well;  
Yet His righteous steps give me hope again -  
I will follow my Immanuel.*

Our Lord *knows us*, and we know our Lord, not just stuff *about* the Lord. Praise God!

A last detail about verse 11,

“they will not teach brother & neighbour, ‘KNOW the Lord,’ for they shall ALL know Me” (8:11)

This does not mean teaching/evangelising stops!

Instead, this is speaking of a distinctive of God's new covenant people:

members of God's house NOT by *ethnicity* (as in Israel), but by personal profession of faith.

Personally affirming faith in Christ is crucial in the church **membership** process.

And so, in the new covenant – the church – the members “shall ALL know Me”

[This is one of the reasons GBC are not *paedo*-baptists (infant-baptising).

But *credo*-baptists, that is baptizing upon *personal* profession of faith (creed).]

Now to the writers 2<sup>nd</sup> main point . . .

Jesus brings a *Better* **Relationship (Covenant)** with God thanks to . . . {DP}

### A BETTER SANCTUARY (9:1-14)

- The Earthly, Shadowy Sanctuary (9:1-10)
- The Heavenly, Superior Sanctuary (9:11-14)

#### • The Earthly, Shadowy Sanctuary (9:1-10)

Although the old covenant is a *vanishing shadow*, our writer does not dismiss it hastily. He recognizes something of its former glory, its partial worth.

So, at the beginning of this chapter, therefore, the writer turns to a description of the tabernacle or earthly sanctuary, **{DP – Pic}**

<sup>1</sup>*Now even the first covenant had regulations for worship and an earthly place of holiness.*

<sup>2</sup>*For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the Holy Place.*

<sup>3</sup>*Behind the second curtain was a second section called the Most Holy Place, having the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, <sup>4</sup>in which was a golden urn holding the manna, and Aaron's staff that budded, and the tablets of the covenant. <sup>5</sup>Above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail.*

**Hebrews** who embraced Jesus as Messiah would have been missing much of this., tempted to turn back to "Act 1", the old stuff with all its significance.

*"There's almost nothing visible/tactile in our services!"*

**Pagans** also noticed the lack of all this ritual, no "smells & bells". Consider a pretend pagan friend – 'Cornucopious' – saying he might about come to your worship service:

*Q: Where is your temple building.*

*A: We don't have a temple building.*

*Q: What? Where are your sacrifices offered for sin?*

*A: There are no sacrifices, not any longer!*

*Q: What?! I want to ask your priest?*

*A: We don't have one on earth. Our priest is seated in Heaven.*

No wonder the early pagans referred to Christians as "**atheists**"! No sacrifices, no idols.

The new covenant brings secure *Relationship over* sacramental "*Religion*"/"*Ritual*".

In verses 6-10, the writer highlights what the LIMITATIONS of the old covenant: **{DP}**

<sup>6</sup>*These preparations having thus been made, the priests go REGULARLY into the first section, performing their ritual duties,*

<sup>7</sup>*but into the second only the high priest goes, and he but ONCE A YEAR, and not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the unintentional sins of the people.*

*By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the holy places is not yet opened as long as the first section is still standing (which is symbolic for the present age). According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper, but deal only with food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation.*

4 Limitations are highlighted by the writer: **{DP}**

1. Limited Access
2. Limited Pardon
3. Limited Cleansing
4. Limited Time

Limited Access: vv. 6-7

Only *priests* can enter the tabernacle of God's presence

Limited Pardon: v.9

Ceremonial sacrifices offered cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper,

Limited Cleansing: v. 10

Sacrifices deal only with food & drink & various washings, external regulations for the body

Limited time: v.10

Until the time of reformation (the new covenant)

The OT altar always had to be running hot for people to bring new guilt offerings.

On top of that, the law required regular daily offerings:

*"one lamb you shall offer in the morning, and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight;*

*It is a regular burnt offering, which was ordained at Mount Sinai."* (Exodus 27, Numbers 28)

The regularity meant there was a constant reminder of sins yet to be paid/atoned for!

A Relentless barrage on the conscience.

Since every transaction of forgiveness is followed by multiple fresh sins . . .

1 step forwards, two steps back!

Constantly accruing moral debt, an account never "wiped clean" in the old covenant.

. . . just externally "covered over", and that only *for a time*.

Sin, sin, sin; sacrifice, sacrifice, sacrifice. Just start all over again!

Reminds me of Golden Gate Bridge in San Fran: **{DP}** they *never stop painting* the thing!

By the time they finish painting it, the other end has tarnished, the covering has eroded.

Start right over again! As well, the paint does *nothing* to reverse the corrosion!

Chapter 10 verse 4 further unpacks the limited pardon,

*"It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins."*

Before Jesus, "payment" for sin's debt had merely been . . . **DELAYED!**

Delayed with ceremonial sacrifices, covering over our internal corruption.

Delayed like a **CREDIT CARD** simply delays debt!

You *wipe the card*, and take home the product, and act as if it is yours.

But until the credit card **bill** is paid at the end of the month, the debt remains!

O yeah, I forgot to mention, you've got nothing in your moral 'bank account' to pay it!

### • **The Heavenly, Superior Sanctuary (9:11-14)** {DP}

Verses 11-14 provide the GLORIOUS CONTRAST:

*But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation)*

*He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.*

*For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh,*

*how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.*

- The blood of *involuntary animals* is contrasted with the *voluntary sacrifice* of God's Son.
- Repetitive, insufficient sacrifices are contrasted w/the finality & perfection of Jesus sacrifice.

- The annual reminders of man's sin are replaced with the once-for-all *payment* of Jesus and *promise* of God to remember our sins no more!

Our course we still confess our sins to God when we stumble,  
But we rise back up with a completely clear conscience, sins paid for!

We're not to be like the husband who tells his wife,

*"When we got married, I told you I love you. If things change, I'll let you know!"*

Fellowship, to be **sweet**, must keep short accounts with God; not letting sin harden us.

All great *relationships* bless & confess & forgive to foster closeness!

Consider 'the Lord's prayer': give us this day our *daily* bread, and forgive us our debts –  
it's a prayer modelling *regular* confession and *full* cleansing & forgiveness!

Since Jesus *sits, resting* from the work of His completed redeeming sacrifice,  
so a Christian's *conscience should be at rest* in Jesus!

This is truly what every soul needs!

**John Newton** – the long-time slave trader, was haunted by the ghosts of former sins.  
How desperate the need for FULL forgiveness, for a clear conscience!  
Only Jesus and His new covenant could give Newton that!

He knew the precious value of being adopted into God's family, safe & secure as a child of God! Relationship over "Religion".

Understandably it was Newton who wrote the hymn,

*Amazing grace, how SWEET the sound that saved a wretch like me!*

But you don't need to have a diabolical past (slave trader)  
to *still need* a sweet relationship with God!

This week I was reading testimonies of in some new membership applications.

One applicant wrote about the influence of "**Miss Judy**":

*There is one person however who was especially sent by God to show me that I needed more than knowledge of God and respect for His Word. I needed relationship with God.*

*That person was Miss Judy.*

*Every Monday she would unpack her car and carry felt boards and easel, story cards, printed cards with the words of songs, boxes of props and whatever else she needed to do the CEF "Good News Club".*

*I cannot speak of Miss Judy to this day (even right now) without tears.*

*Miss Judy had Polio when she was younger and so she was unpacking the car while on crutches. I clearly remember the sight of her lifting each of her swollen pale blotchy legs out of the car one at a time and struggling to carry boxes and stuff to the house. The most vivid memory though is of her face, she literally beamed with joy. It only took a few Mondays for me to realize that the radiance was from the love she had for Jesus.*

*As a ten-year-old boy I knew about God and I had a respect & reverence for His Word but Miss Judy had something more than that, something I didn't have.*

*She had a precious relationship with a precious Saviour whom she loved.*

*That Monday night I told my mother that I needed what Miss Judy had.  
And I came to Jesus, to know Jesus, my Lord, my Saviour, my friend.*

Is that you today?

Will you come to Him, pursuing Relationship over Ritual or Religion?

Any religion.

Last week I was chatting with a Muslim man and I guided our topic to life & eternity. Eventually he stated a hope that he will go to Paradise.

I asked him, "*What is your hope based upon?*"

He answered, "*I hope that I will "pass the test"*"

"*What is the pass mark? How good is good enough?*", I asked.

He was dead silent. He had *no answer* because Allah and Islam gives *no answer!*  
Nor do any "religions" or other religious leaders.

This man's conscience was not clear!

And rightly so, because the "pass mark" is 100%.

God is holy; to the unholy He is a consuming fire!

Without Jesus (the only 100%!), none of us pass!

No other name but Jesus purifies & pardons us from sin!

Discussion Questions – Next Page

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Main Idea:

In God's sight, we can have a ***faultless conscience*** because of Jesus' ***faultless covenant***.

Hebrews 8:1–9:14, "Jesus brings a ***Better Relationship (Covenant)*** with God"...

- Better SECURITY (8:1-13)                      *thanks to a*
- Better SANCTUARY (9:1-14)

### **A BETTER SECURITY – Forged in a Better Place (8:1-5)**

- 1] Did OT priest ever "sit down on the job"? What does it *mean* that Jesus is "seated"?
- 2] *Where* is Jesus seated? What's the *significance* of Him being seated there? (8:1-2 vs. 8:4-5)  
How does the "*copy & shadow*" explanation help the author's argument? (8:5)

### **• A BETTER SECURITY – Founded on Better Promises (8:6-13)**

- 3] How is a "covenant" different to an everyday business "contract" (a "mobile phone contract")?  
Why should the *most intimate* relationships be the *most binding* relationships?
- 4] Why is the New Covenant *incoherent* without the Old Covenant?  
Why is the Old Covenant *incomplete* without the New Covenant? [recall "Act 1" & "Act 2"]
- 5] More the just "incomplete", the old covenant called is "*obsolete*" and "*faulty*". (8:7,13)  
What was the **key** "*fault*" with the old covenant? (how does 8:8 begin?)  
What do *detailed instructions* about the Tabernacle communicate about the character of God?
- 6] How are the "promises" of the new covenant "better"? (8:6) . . . more specifically:
  - a] How is the *outcome* of having the law written on our hearts different/better than the *outcome* of the old covenant? (see 8:9-10 & 9:14b. Also discuss Newton's hymn lyrics beginning "*our pleasure & our duty....*")
  - b] In entering the new covenant, what are you agreeing to, now and in the future?
  - c] How does the conscience of the old covenant worshipper *compare* to the new? (8:13)  
(The "*why*" of the conscience is addressed in Chapter 9)

### **• The Earthly, Shadowy Sanctuary (9:1-10)**

- 7] Why is the result of the old covenant "fault" the *inability to perfect* a worshippers conscience?  
(i.e., What were 4 Limitations of the old covenant, as highlighted by the author in 9:6-10)
- 8] What did the blood of bulls and goats actually "do" and "not do"?  
(**'Cover'** sin: discuss the analogy of just *painting over* corrosive metal *repeatedly*.  
**'Delay'** sin's payment: discuss the analogy of a *credit card* payment)

### **• THE Heavenly, Superior Sanctuary (9:11-14)**

- 9] Jesus' blood and the sanctuary He offers it in – *what difference do they make*? (9:13-14)
- 10] How have you experienced this better conscience of a new covenant (vs. Aaron)?
- 11] How have you experienced having the law written on your heart & mind?
- 12] How have you *struggled* to experience the above?