LIFE Bible Study: Hebrews 8:1-13

For Discussion: What is the greatest commitment you've made to someone? What sets that commitment apart from lesser promises?

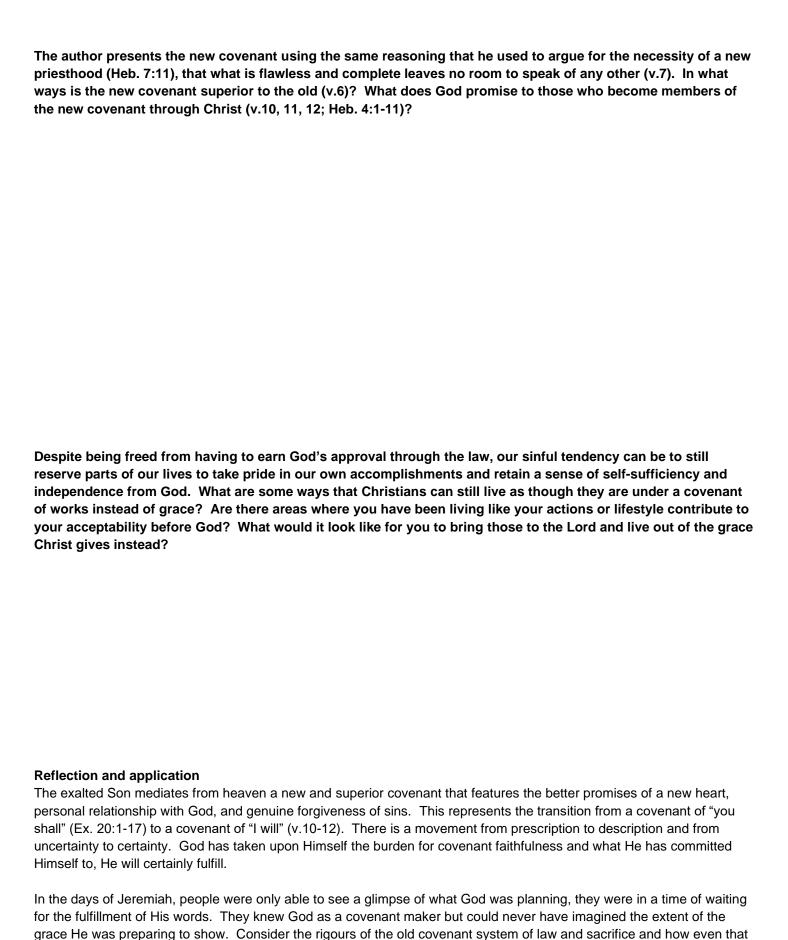
Read Hebrews 8:1-13

For review: In Hebrews 7:11-28, the author addressed a fundamental flaw of the Levitical priesthood that necessitated its replacement by the priest of the order of Melchizedek, namely its inability to perfect the worshipper of God. This new high priest would have better qualifications than the existing priests (E.g., holiness, an indestructible life, everlasting office in accordance with God's oath), and thus a better ministry. From there the author highlights a final difference between the priests of these two orders, bringing together his preceding arguments and showing his readers the point toward which he has been building: God has established a new and better covenant with His people, one whose mediator and guarantor is this priest from the greater priesthood of Melchizedek.

After addressing at length Jesus' superiority as high priest over the Levitical high priests in terms of His attributes, His service, and His character, the author highlights one final area in which Jesus surpasses those who served under the Levitical system. Where do each of these priests perform their service (v.1-5; Heb. 9:24)? Why is the place where Jesus serves better?

The new priest from the priesthood of Melchizedek is one who mediates a new covenant that is better than the one that was previously in effect (v.6). A covenant is a binding agreement between two or more parties to fulfill specific terms (E.g., performing certain actions). It is a solemn promise that joins those who are involved in a partnership with each other. Like with oaths, God was under no obligation to offer this, which makes it remarkable that He would bind Himself to sinful people with something as irrevocable as a covenant. In all covenants between God and men, God is the one who initiates and establishes its terms and people are the beneficiaries.

To demonstrate the superiority of the new covenant, the author quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 to show that God Himself recognized that the old covenant was lacking and had a plan from long ago to supersede it with a better one. What fault did God find with the old covenant (Lev. 18:4-5 & Jas. 2:10-11)?



was insufficient to restore us to God. Now that God has fulfilled in Christ the requirement to perfectly follow His law in order to live, we have the freedom to follow Him out of the love of a transformed heart rather than the need to justify

ourselves in His sight.