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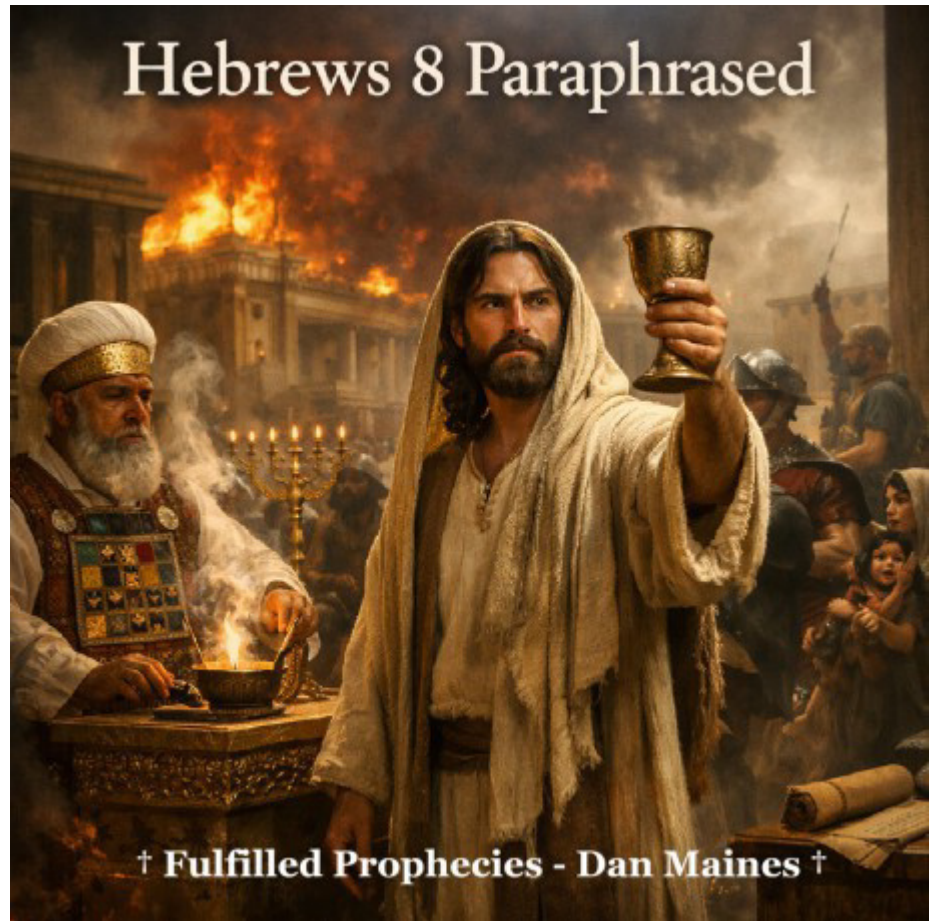
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Hebrews 8 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Hebrews 8 Paraphrased

Introduction

† The writer of Hebrews is explaining the superiority of Christ's priesthood over the old priesthood of the Law.

† The entire chapter shows that the Old Covenant system was temporary and was replaced by the better covenant established through Christ.

† This directly supports the fulfilled perspective because the covenant that was "becoming obsolete" reached its end with the

judgment of Jerusalem in AD 70.

Hebrews 8:1

Hebrews 8:1

Now here's the main point of everything we've been saying. We have a High Priest who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.

† The key point is that Christ's priesthood is already established and complete. His work isn't waiting to begin in the future.

† Sitting down shows the work of sacrifice is finished, just as Hebrews 10:12 explains when it says Christ sat down after offering one sacrifice for sins.

† Early Christian writer Eusebius recorded that the church understood Christ's priesthood as already active in heaven after His ascension.

Hebrews 8:2

Hebrews 8:2

He serves in the true sanctuary, the real tent set up by the Lord and not by human hands.

† The earthly tabernacle in Jerusalem was only a temporary structure built by men.

† The real sanctuary is God's heavenly presence where Christ ministers as High Priest.

† Philo and later early Christian writers described the earthly temple as a shadow of heavenly realities, which matches the argument here.

Hebrews 8:3

Hebrews 8:3

Every high priest is appointed to present offerings and sacrifices, so it was necessary for this High Priest to have

something to offer also.

† The priests under the Law offered animals repeatedly, but Christ offered Himself once for all.

† Hebrews 9:26 explains that Christ appeared once to remove sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

† Clement of Rome wrote that Christ fulfilled the priestly role by offering His own life as the perfect sacrifice.

Hebrews 8:4

Hebrews 8:4

If He were on earth, He wouldn't even be a priest, since there are already priests who offer the gifts required by the Law.

† Jesus wasn't from the tribe of Levi but from the tribe of Judah, so He couldn't serve as a priest under the Mosaic Law.

† Hebrews 7:14 confirms that our Lord came from Judah, a tribe Moses never connected with priesthood.

† This shows the necessity of a completely different priesthood.

Hebrews 8:5

Hebrews 8:5

These priests serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle, See that you make everything according to the pattern shown to you on the mountain.

† The earthly system wasn't the ultimate reality, it was only a shadow pointing forward.

† Colossians 2:17 says the Law contained shadows of what was to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

† Justin Martyr explained that the temple system existed as a prophetic picture of the greater work Christ would accomplish.

Hebrews 8:6

Hebrews 8:6

But now Jesus has received a much greater ministry, just as the covenant He mediates is better and is established on better promises.

† The new covenant is called better because it brings complete forgiveness and internal transformation.

† Hebrews 7:22 says Jesus became the guarantee of a better covenant.

† The early church consistently taught that the new covenant replaced the old covenant system after Christ.

Hebrews 8:7

Hebrews 8:7

If that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no need to look for another.

† The problem wasn't God's Law itself but the inability of the people to keep it.

† Romans 8:3 explains that the Law was weakened through human flesh.

† This is why God promised a new covenant long before the old one ended.

Hebrews 8:8

Hebrews 8:8

But finding fault with them, God says, The days are coming, says the Lord, when I'll establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

† This is a direct quotation from Jeremiah 31:31.

† The promise shows that even during the Old Covenant period God already planned its replacement.

† The new covenant began through Christ's death and was fully manifested after the old system ended.

Hebrews 8:9

Hebrews 8:9

It won't be like the covenant I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they didn't remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, says the Lord.

† The Sinai covenant depended on Israel's obedience and repeatedly failed because of their unfaithfulness.

† The prophets repeatedly warned that covenant breaking would lead to judgment.

† Josephus records the final national judgment that came upon Jerusalem in AD 70.

Hebrews 8:10

Hebrews 8:10

This is the covenant I'll make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord. I'll put My laws into their minds and write them on their hearts, and I'll be their God, and they will be My people.

† The new covenant moves God's law from stone tablets to transformed hearts.

† This promise is echoed in Ezekiel 36:26 where God promises a new heart and new spirit.

† The church experienced this through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Hebrews 8:11

Hebrews 8:11

They won't teach each other saying Know the Lord, because

they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest.

† This describes the universal access believers now have to God through Christ.

† Under the old system only priests approached God directly, but now all believers draw near through Christ.

† Hebrews 10:19-22 describes this new bold access to God's presence.

Hebrews 8:12

Hebrews 8:12

Because I'll be merciful toward their wrongdoing, and I'll remember their sins no more.

† Complete forgiveness is the foundation of the new covenant.

† Psalm 103:12 describes this same removal of sin, as far as the east is from the west.

† Christ's sacrifice accomplished what repeated temple sacrifices never could.

Hebrews 8:13

Hebrews 8:13

When He said a new covenant, He made the first one obsolete. And whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

† At the time Hebrews was written the old covenant system was still standing but already fading away.

† The temple and sacrificial system finally disappeared when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in AD 70.

† This historical event confirmed exactly what Hebrews predicted.

Historical References

† Josephus recorded the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in AD 70 in Wars of the Jews, Book 6.

† Eusebius wrote that the church fled Jerusalem before its destruction, recognizing Christ's warnings.

† Tertullian wrote that the old covenant sacrifices ended because Christ fulfilled them.

How It Applies To Us Today

† We don't live under the Old Covenant system because Christ has already established the better covenant.

† We approach God directly through Christ instead of through temple sacrifices or priests.

† Our relationship with God is based on the finished work of Christ, not on repeated rituals.

Q And A Appendix

Q: When did the Old Covenant become obsolete?

A: Hebrews says it was already becoming obsolete and ready to disappear. That process reached its completion with the destruction of the temple in AD 70 (Hebrews 8:13; Matthew 24:2).

Q: Why is the new covenant better?

A: Because it provides full forgiveness of sins and writes God's law on the hearts of believers instead of on stone tablets (Hebrews 8:10-12; Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Q: Who is the High Priest of the new covenant?

A: Jesus Christ serves as the eternal High Priest who offered Himself once for all (Hebrews 8:1; Hebrews 7:24-27).

Q: Why did God promise a new covenant while the old one was still in place?

A: Because the people repeatedly broke the first covenant, so God promised a better one that would deal with sin permanently

and transform the heart (Jeremiah 31:31-33; Hebrews 8:7-8).

Q: What does it mean that God's law would be written on their hearts?

A: It means obedience would come from inward transformation instead of external commands written on stone tablets (Hebrews 8:10; Ezekiel 36:26-27).

Q: How do we know the Old Covenant system has ended?

A: Hebrews says it was already becoming obsolete and ready to disappear, and history confirms this when the temple and sacrificial system were destroyed in AD 70 (Hebrews 8:13; Matthew 24:2).

Q: Why are temple sacrifices no longer needed?

A: Because Christ offered one perfect sacrifice that fully removed sin, something the repeated sacrifices of the Law could never accomplish (Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 10:12-14).

Q: Who are the people included in the new covenant?

A: All who belong to Christ share in the promises, whether Jew or Gentile, because the covenant is fulfilled in Him (Galatians 3:28-29; Ephesians 2:13-16).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Hebrews 8:1-13

† Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 7:22; Hebrews 7:24-27; Hebrews 9:26; Hebrews 10:12; Romans 8:3; Ezekiel 36:26; Psalm 103:12; Hebrews 10:19-22; Matthew 24:2

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews Book 6; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Tertullian, Against Marcion.

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