

Sunday May 7th sermon: "A New Covenant with Better Promises -- The God of All Comforts (Pt 15)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,  
by John Pittman Hey

Hebrews 8:1-6; Exodus 24

God comforts us by the oath He made to Christ, appointing Him our high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Because He is perfect, Christ is so far superior to all other priests, who sin and die in their sins.

That is why Jesus could offer Himself as the perfect sacrifice that takes away our sin.

Christ has offered up Himself as our sin offering, and intercedes to God for us forever.

How dare anyone assign to sinful men, men with infirmities, the duties and powers and prerogatives of the Lord Jesus, Who is our only high priest after the order of Melchizedek!

Christ intercedes in the majesty of Heaven for us, not in the shabby earthly tabernacles constructed by men. He fulfills the types and shadows of the Mosaic / Aaronic system.

Fundamental to the duties of a priest, are the gifts and sacrifices they offer to God for the people.

Under the law, Christ was not allowed to offer up animal sacrifices, as those had already been assigned to Aaron.

Therefore, in order to fulfill God's oath to Christ, promising His eternal priesthood, it was necessary that Christ have a better offering to bring unto God. That He did, when He offered up Himself as our sacrifice!

Because Christ has obtained a better priesthood, He is the mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises.

The old Mosaic covenant was based upon the promise, obey the law, and live. But nobody could ever obey the law, and thus they all died.

But the better, New covenant is based upon the promise of God to His people, to write His law in their hearts, to conform them to Himself, to forgive their crimes, and to refuse to remember their sins against them anymore!

Covenants in Scripture are often sealed with blood sacrifices. The Mosaic covenant was sealed with animal sacrifices at the foot of Mount Sinai. The people promised God they would obey all His commandments, and Moses sprinkled the people and the book with animal blood, calling it the "blood of the covenant."

They promptly broke that covenant in the incident of the golden calf, just over a month later.

But the better, New covenant that Christ mediates, was sealed by His blood at Calvary! Jesus told His disciples at the Lord's Supper, that His was the blood of the New covenant, shed for many for the forgiveness of sin.

In the Mosaic covenant, the people promised God they would obey the law, and then they broke their promise. In the better New covenant, God promises His people He will cause us to keep His commandments, He will forgive our sins, and remember them against us no more.

What did the blood of the Mosaic covenant work? Nothing but condemnation. It witnessed against the people their disobedience and breaking of that covenant, and the promise of death for their transgressions was sealed.

But Christ's blood of the New covenant actually executes, and empowers, its better promises!

Christ's blood forgives our sins! Christ's shed blood works upon God's people to sanctify and cleanse them from all unrighteousness! It is the means by which we "know the Lord" and are brought little by little to keep His commandments!

Thus, the "blood of the new covenant" carries out, not our condemnation, but rather our justification and sanctification by God.

Christ's shed blood is no mere memorial of the better covenant, it is the power, the driver, the executor of the covenant!

No wonder, by God's oath to Christ, we have a strong consolation, a great comfort, in the perpetual priesthood promised to Him.

All the glory of our salvation is wrapped up in that oath, and in Christ's unique priesthood. It is our deliverance from the judgment of sin, and from sin itself.

All this is carried out by our great high priest, Who shed His precious blood for the forgiveness of our sins.

No wonder Charitie Lees Bancroft wrote these precious words:

Before the throne of God above  
I have a strong, a perfect plea,  
A great High Priest, whose name is love,  
Who ever lives and pleads for me.

My name is graven in His hands,  
My name is written on His heart;  
I know that, while in heav'n He stands,  
No tongue can bid me thence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair,  
And tells me of the guilt within, I look  
Upward above and see Him there  
Who made an end of all my sin.

Because the sinless Saviour died,  
My sinful soul is counted free;  
For God the Just is satisfied  
To look on Him, and pardon me.

Behold Him there! the risen Lamb!  
My perfect, spotless righteousness,  
The great unchangeable I Am,  
The King of glory and of grace!