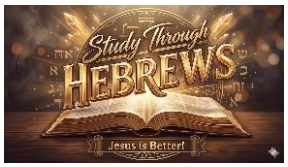
A Closer Look at the Covenants
(Hebrews 8:1-13)
(Lesson #15)



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8:1-2 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, 2 a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.

When the writer says, ***"Now the point in what we are saying is this,"*** he uses a **present tense participle** to bring together and culminate all that he has said up to this point—as well as everything he plans to say next. His recent exposition of Melchizedek and how he prefigured the ultimate priest-king, the Lord Jesus Christ, brings us directly to this main point.

Everything he has stated about Jesus, our Great High Priest, demonstrates that through His ministry we are perfected in the sight of God and granted direct access into His very presence. This highlights the absolute superiority of our Great High Priest by openly displaying the frailty and impotence of the former high priests.

The writer now brings all of this to a working climax:

- **"We"**—those who have placed their faith in Jesus.
- **"Have"**—we are not waiting for, or hoping to someday get; we possess Him currently and presently.
- **"Such a high priest"**—an amazing, incredible High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice the five distinct ways our Great High Priest is described:

1. He is **seated**.
2. He is seated at the **right hand of the throne of the Majesty**.
3. He is **in heaven**.
4. He is a minister of the **true holy places** in the tent in heaven.
5. This tent is the one the Lord erected, it is **not a tent erected by men**.

The writer is bringing all that he has been teaching from Psalm 110 together:

> *1 The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool." 2 The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! 3 Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments; from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. 4 The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." 5 The Lord is at your right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. 6 He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. (Ps 110:1-6, ESV)*

As we consider his points, let's **contrast** the Levitical (Aaronic) priesthood with the priesthood of Jesus:

Jesus	Aaronic Priests
Seated	Never sat down
Seated at the Right Hand of God	Never sat down, much less at God's right hand
In heaven	On earth
Minister in the heavenly tabernacle	Minister in the earthly tabernacle
The tabernacle erected by God	The tabernacle erected by men

The author wants to make sure we see and understand that Jesus, in **every imaginable way**, is the **Greater High Priest**. He is seated at the right hand of the Father, having finished His work, and from that lofty position in the heavenlies, He ever lives to make intercession for you and me!

This also serves as a brilliant response to a Jewish objector who might ask, *"We have a high priest who is currently offering physical sacrifices in Jerusalem; where is your High Priest, you Jewish Christian?"*

The answer is: **Oh, we have one, and He is seated in the heavens at the right hand of God!**

The Significance of no chair in the Tabernacle. Think back to our study through the book of Exodus and the layout of the Tabernacle:

- The Bronze Altar
- The Bronze Laver
- Inside the tent: The Golden Lampstand, the Golden Table of Showbread, and the Golden Incense Altar.
- Behind the veil: The ark and the Mercy Seat

Notice what was **not** there: a seat. No priest ever sat down in the Tabernacle. In the earthly system, they constantly served, indicating that their work was never completed. Day after day, year after year, the blood of bulls and goats had to be offered.

Not so with our High Priest! Our High Priest is seated in the heavens because His sacrifice was once-for-all sufficient.

Verse 2: Jesus, seated at the right hand of God, is here called by the author ***"a minister of the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up."***

The word used for ***"minister"*** here is ***leitourgos***, which refers to a public servant or a minister engaged in holy service. Unlike the earthly priests who labored standing up, Jesus serves in the ultimate heavenly sanctuary as the **true minister** of God.

Reading this text, one might question: How and when did the Lord ***"set up"*** this heavenly sanctuary? The author doesn't give us a blueprint of heaven, but he draws a clear comparison: one sanctuary is on **earth**, while the other is in **heaven**; one is an **earthly shadow**, while the other is the **heavenly "true" reality**; one was constructed by **Moses**, while the other was set up directly by the **Lord**.

APPLICATION: Because Jesus is **seated** at the right hand of the Father, He declares to us that our redemption is completely finished. We do not need to scramble to add our own works to His completed sacrifice. Instead, we are invited to rest in His finished work, knowing we have a living, heavenly High Priest who represents us perfectly in the very presence of God every single moment of our lives.

Vs 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.

Here, the author highlights a fundamental rule of the Aaronic priesthood and the Mosaic Covenant: **every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices.**

Keep in mind—though he doesn't dwell on it here, having already established it earlier—the constant repetition of **"gifts"** (plural) and **"sacrifices"** (plural) **quietly** underscores the inherent **ineffectiveness** and **repetitive** nature of the Levitical system, which could **never permanently cleanse the conscience**.

In chapter 10 the author will say this:

> *1 For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. 2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? 3 But in these*

sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (Heb 10:1–4, ESV)

But in the Old Covenant, it was absolutely necessary for the priest to have something to offer because sacrifices are the **absolute core** of the priestly office, therefore it was **necessary** for *this* priest—the Lord Jesus—to **also** have something to offer.

Catch the shift in grammar here: while earthly priests offered *gifts and sacrifices* (plural) over and over again, Jesus has **"something"** (singular) to offer.

The "***something***" that He offers is, of course, **Himself**, but the writer is masterfully building his argument and isn't quite ready to fully develop that specific point just yet.

Therefore, it was necessary, indispensable, and a strict requirement of His office that this Great High Priest have a singular, ultimate offering to present to God.

The writer of Hebrews actually made a related point back in Chapter 5:

1 For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. 3 Because of this he is obligated to offer sacrifice for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. 4 And no one takes this honor for himself, but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. 5 So also Christ did not exalt himself to be made a high priest, but was appointed by him who said to him, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"; (Heb 5:1–5, ESV)

In Chapter 5, the focus of the author's argument was that serving as a high priest was not an honor one could simply take upon oneself; rather, an earthly priest had to be born into the proper lineage (the family of Aaron) and called by God.

The writer then built the case that Jesus was called of God in an even greater and more profound way.

Here in Chapter 8, however, **the writer is making a different point.** Just as every earthly high priest had to have various gifts and blood offerings at his disposal, it was a **logical** and **spiritual necessity** that ***"this priest,"*** the Lord Jesus Christ, must also have **something supreme to offer.**

APPLICATION: Because Jesus' singular offering was completely sufficient, our striving is over. We do not come to God trying to offer a multitude of our own fragmented sacrifices to earn His favor; we simply come trusting in the once-for-all sacrifice of our glorious High Priest.

Vs 4 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.

Here, the writer circles back to the earthly genealogy and legal boundaries of Jesus. He openly admits a profound legal truth: if Jesus were here on earth, operating under the earthly Levitical priesthood and the strict confines of the Mosaic Law, **He could not be a priest at all.**

That is completely true because Jesus descended from the tribe of Judah, not Levi (as the author noted back in Hebrews 7:14). **But the opposite, unstated fact is also gloriously true:** Jesus is not bound to an earthly system because **He is serving in the true sanctuary in heaven itself!** He is not bound by the Old Covenant since He has inaugurated the New.

The writer explains that ***"since"***—or because—the Mosaic Covenant established a legally ordained group of men to handle the daily operations, ***"there are priests who offer gifts according to the law."***

Notice the grammar here: the writer uses the **present tense**—there *are* priests who offer gifts.

- This verse gives us a powerful historical footprint. When the book of Hebrews was written, the second Temple in Jerusalem was still standing, and Jewish priests were still actively performing daily rituals and animal sacrifices on the altar.
- If the Roman army had already destroyed Jerusalem and burned the Temple in **70 AD**, an astute writer like this would have undoubtedly shouted, *"The Temple is gone! God has already wiped out the physical system!"*
- The fact that he speaks in the present tense **("there *are* priests who offer...")** strongly indicates that Hebrews was written **before 70 AD**.

Thus, under the earthly system, Jesus had no legal standing to touch the earthly altar. But His ministry was never meant for a tent made by human hands; it belonged to the throne room of the universe.

Vs 5 They 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."

The writer continues to develop his argument: the Levitical priests ***"serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things."***

Here, the writer emphasizes that these earthly priests are not serving in the ultimate substance, but rather in a type, a pattern, a copy, and a shadow.

While they "serve" (again using the present tense to highlight their ongoing, repetitive work), it is only a copy of that which is heavenly.

Stating that these earthly priests serve within a copy and a shadow highlights their **fundamental inferiority** when compared to the **true reality**—the **heavenly original** from which the copy was patterned.

As New Testament scholar Gareth Lee Cockerill observes: ***"Thus "pattern and shadow" underscore both the insufficiency of the old as a means of salvation and its typological character as anticipation of the new."***

The author is telling his Jewish Christian audience that the entire Levitical system is **merely serving a shadow of heavenly things**.

There is an unstated **critical warning** here that we must not miss: **to desire to turn backward and continue worshiping via the "old tent" is essentially to reject Christ and His all-sufficient sacrifice.** You cannot cling to the shadow once reality has arrived.

The author then points us back to the moment the original tabernacle was erected: when Moses was about to build it, God instructed him to make everything (the structure and all its furnishings) according to the exact pattern shown to him on the mountain. This is a direct quotation from Exodus 25:40:

> *40 And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain. (Ex 25:40, ESV)*

The writer highlights that Yahweh was exceptionally clear, and Moses was strictly commanded to follow the pattern provided. The Greek word used for "**pattern**" here is ***tupos,*** which can mean a model, mold, or type.

To the unsuspecting Hebrew mind, this commandment was simply a reminder that the tabernacle should not be a product of human ingenuity, but rather built according to divine specifications.

While that is certainly true, the writer of Hebrews takes it a step further: **by pointing out that the earthly tabernacle was patterned after a heavenly archetype, he proves that the earthly version is, by absolute necessity, inferior to the heavenly reality from which it was copied.**

An architectural blueprint or a model is wonderful and helpful, **but nobody chooses to live inside the cardboard blueprint when the actual house has been built!**

APPLICATION: It is easy to become enamored with the "shadows" of religious tradition, beautiful architecture, emotional rituals, or outward forms of worship. While these things have their place, Hebrews reminds us that they are never meant to be the final destination.

True fulfillment, peace, and reconciliation with God are found not in religious shadows, but in Jesus Christ—the glorious, heavenly reality to whom all those old shadows always pointed.

Vs 6 But as it is, 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.

Here, the author brings his argument to its obvious and undeniable conclusion.

He shifts from the shadows and copies of the earthly system to reality: ***"But as it is"***—or literally, ***"But now"***—Jesus has obtained a ministry that is **vastly superior** and **more excellent** than anything that existed under the Old Covenant.

The word translated as **"has obtained"** (***tynchanō***) implies **achievement**, **success**, or **winning** a prize through accomplishment.

Jesus has successfully secured and now enjoys a ministry that is **"much more excellent"** (***diaphoros***) than that of the Levitical priests who served under the temporary Mosaic system.

One might ask: ***In what ways is the ministry that Christ obtained so much more excellent?***

The answer is two-fold and lies in the second half of the verse: ***"as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises."***

The author uses his signature word—**"better"**—which he employs throughout Hebrews in a binary, black-and-white sense. The superiority of Jesus' ministry is directly tied to the superiority of the New Covenant He mediates, that is based upon better promises.

To understand why, we must ask: ***How much better are the promises of the New Covenant compared to the Old?*** A great place to get a sense of the promises is Deuteronomy 28:

> *1 "And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. 2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God. 3 Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. 4 Blessed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground and the fruit of your cattle, the increase*

of your herds and the young of your flock. 5 Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 6 Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. (Deut 28:1–6, ESV)

Now, contrast that with hat we read next:

15 "But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today, then all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you. 16 Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field. 17 Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 18 Cursed shall be the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, the increase of your herds and the young of your flock. 19 Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. 20 "The Lord will send on you curses, confusion, and frustration in all that you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and perish quickly on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken me. 21 The Lord will make the pestilence stick to you until he has consumed you off the land that you are entering to take possession of it. 22 The Lord will strike you with wasting disease and with fever, inflammation and fiery heat, and with drought and with blight and with mildew. They shall pursue you until you perish. 23 And the heavens over your head shall be bronze, and the earth under you shall be iron. 24 The Lord will make the rain of your land powder. From heaven dust shall come down on you until you are destroyed. (Deut 28:15–24, ESV)

Notice two defining characteristics of the Old Covenant promises:

1. They were strictly **connected to human obedience** (if you obey, you get blessed; if you disobey, you get cursed).
2. They were primarily **tangible, physical, and earthly** (crops, health, weather, military victory, and land).

Tuck those observations away. As the author is about to show us that the **New Covenant operates on an entirely different plane** with **infinitely better promises**.

But first, he has more to say about the limitations of the Mosaic, Sinaitic Covenant.

Vs 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.

This statement would have been **shocking**—in fact, completely **unthinkable**—to the ancient Jewish audience. And if we are new to the book of Hebrews, this statement can catch us off guard as well.

The writer **boldly** and **straightforwardly** proclaims that the **launching of the New Covenant** was necessary because there was a **fundamental limitation** or "**fault**" in the first covenant.

On the surface, that statement might make us pause, but the author is setting us up to understand the deeper reality.

The word translated as **"faultless"** is ***amemptos***, which means **blameless**, **without defect**, or **entirely adequate**. By stating that the first covenant was ***not amemptos***, the writer is not saying that God made a **moral mistake** or that His **law was evil.** Remember, what Paul says in Romans 7:12:

12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. (Rom 7:12 ESV)

Rather, the "**fault**" or lack in the first covenant was its **inability to save, justify, or permanently change the human heart.** It was external, fragile, and entirely dependent on the flawed obedience of sinful people.

If the first covenant had **been completely adequate** to **solve** the **human problem** and **bring us into eternal fellowship with God**, there would have been no reason whatsoever for God to look for, promise (in the Old Testament), or introduce a second.

Modern-day legalists or those who try to bind believers back under the Torah might rebel against this point, but their objections miss the entire argument of Scripture. The very fact that God planned, promised, and inaugurated a New Covenant demands the logical conclusion that **something was lacking in the first.**

As we will see in the verses to follow, God didn't abandon the old system because it was bad; He **superseded it** because it was a **temporary shadow**, making way for a **permanent, life-transforming reality.**

APPLICATION: We often try to take our old, self-reliant, performance-driven nature and "patch it up" with a few religious rules, good habits, or moral resolutions. The old system of rules written on stone tablets could point out our sin, but it lacked the power to cure it, or the remedy when we failed. God didn't just give the Old Covenant a makeover; He replaced it entirely with something infinitely better—giving us a New Covenant where His laws are written not on stone, but on our transformed hearts by His Spirit.

Vs 8a For he finds fault with them...

The author wastes no time pointing out where the breakdown occurred. The flaw was **not** in the covenant itself:

> *7 Now if the ministry of death, carved in letters on stone, came with such glory that the Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face because of its glory, which was being brought to an end, 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit have even more glory? (2 Cor 3:7–8, ESV)*

The flaw was **not** in the law:

> *12 So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. (Rom 7:12 ESV)*

Instead, the flaw was in **"them."** But who is *them*?

The ***"them"*** refers to ancient Israel—and by extension, to you and me. Human beings broke the good and holy covenant of God. This is everywhere, just a few quotations to make the point:

> *16 And the Lord said to Moses, "Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers. Then this people will rise and whore after the foreign gods among them in the land that they are entering, and they will forsake me and break my covenant that I have made with them. (Deut 31:16 ESV)*
>
> *5 The earth lies defiled under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. (Is 24:5, ESV)*
>
> *10 They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words. They have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers. (Jer 11:10, ESV)*

As we discussed, that old covenant did not contain an internal mechanism or method to repair the breach when it was broken:

- It could warn about the breach.
- It could teach the importance of not creating a breach.
- It could provide severe warnings of what would happen if a breach occurred.

However, the moment the covenant was broken, the system itself contained no **spiritual remedy** or cure for Israel or mankind.

To use a modern illustrations, the Mosaic Law was never meant to be a healing mechanism; it was purely a diagnostic tool:

- **It is an X-ray machine:** It can clearly show a broken bone, but it cannot set the bone or heal the fracture.

- **It is an MRI:** It helps map out the tissue damage, but it cannot perform surgery.
- **It is a Geiger counter:** It can accurately detect radiation in the environment, but it cannot remove the radioactive threat.
- **It is a smoke detector:** It can shriek a warning that dangerous gases are present, but it has no way to put out the fire.

The fault was never in God's standard; **the fault was in us. We are sinners by nature and by choice, and we could not keep the covenant.**

You might wonder: ***If God knew we would fail, why did He establish the Old Covenant in the first place?*** At a minimum, God did it for four vital reasons:

1. **To teach us about sin** and expose the immense danger of rebelling against a holy God (Romans 3:20).
2. **To display God's absolute holiness** and His perfectly righteous standards.
3. **To restrain and "check" sin** in human society until the promised Messiah would arrive (Galatians 3:23–24).
4. **To shatter our self-righteousness** and show us our desperate, helpless need for a Savior.

The fault, my friends, was in us—which is precisely why we needed a **New Covenant rooted not in our strength, but in His grace!**

APPLICATION: The law was and is designed to bring us to the end of ourselves. God gave us the law to show us that we are completely broken, driving us away from self-reliance and straight into the arms of the Savior who doesn't just diagnose our sin—He completely heals it.

As we come to verses 8-12 we come to the longest quotation in the book of Hebrews and indeed the longest quotation in the entire New Testament.

SO YOU KNOW: The writer will quote this same text, at least a core portion of this text in Hebrews 10:16-17.

This is that amazing Old Testament promise given to the prophet Jeremiah of what Yahweh was going to do. As we have discussed this prophecy was given 650 years before Jesus came.

Vs 8b - 12 For he 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 and with the house of Judah, 9 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. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: 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. 11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

Because human beings broke the covenant with God and placed themselves in an impossible position, the author of Hebrews reaches back into the Old Testament to grab the ultimate prophetic promise—a passage originally spoken through the prophet Jeremiah (31:31–34). This promise breaks into three major parts.

1. **The Announcement of a New Covenant (Verse 8b)*:***
   - **The Announcement:** The mere fact that God had to announce a *new* covenant highlights that there was an inherent limitation in the first!

- **The Recipients:** God promised this through Jeremiah for a future day, directing it first to the recipients of the old covenant—the nation of Israel. Like the Mosaic covenant, this New Covenant is initiated and designed entirely by God; it is non-negotiable.
- **For All People:** While it went first to Israel, God's redemptive plan was always intended to extend to the ends of the earth. As the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament epistles make clear, this salvation reaches out to the nations:
  "I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (Isaiah 49:6, ESV)

  "This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." (Ephesians 3:6, ESV)

2. The Fault of the Old Covenant (Verse 9)*:*
- This is a beautiful, tender picture of a loving God who reached down into Egypt, took Israel by the hand, and led them out of bondage.
- Yet, in spite of all God had done, they did not keep His covenant.
- The old system had clear terms: blessings attached to obedience, and curses attached to disobedience. Because they chose the path of disobedience, the system itself triggered **"no concern"** (or a turning away) from God.

They turned their backs on Him, and the covenant terms, which left them exposed to its consequences.

3. **The Incredible Promises of the New Covenant (Verses 10–12)*:***
Now we arrive at the breathtaking heart of the passage. Look at the seven astonishing promises of the New Covenant declared by God Almighty:

1. **Internal Transformation (Mind):** God will put His laws not on tables of stone, but right into our minds.
2. **Internal Transformation (Heart):** He will write them on our hearts (in Jewish thought, the heart is the center of the mind, will, and emotions).
3. **Relational Intimacy: *"I will be their God."***
4. **Belonging: *"And they shall be my people."***
5. **Universal Intimacy with God:** People won't need to nudge their neighbor saying, "Know the Lord," because *all* who belong to this covenant will truly know Him, from the least to the greatest.
6. **Divine Mercy:** ***"For I will be merciful toward their iniquities."***
7. **Absolute Pardon: *"And I will remember their sins no more."***

If there was ever a time, in our Sunday School class, to jump up and shout ***hallelujah***, this is it!

For roughly 600 years, the nation of Israel waited for the fulfillment of this prophecy. The author is telling his Hebrew audience: **In Jesus, God has finally done what He promised centuries ago!**

So, what happens to the Old Covenant?

Vs 13 In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

The author now brings his argument to its **shocking** yet **unmistakably clear conclusion**. By announcing a *new* covenant centuries beforehand through Jeremiah, God Himself declared the first one would one day become old, worn out, and **obsolete**.

The word translated as **"obsolete"** or **"old"** is (***palaioō)*** , which means to make something old, worn out, antique, or useless with age—like an old garment that has completely fallen apart and can no longer be patched or worn.

The New Covenant does not merely run alongside the Old Covenant as an alternative option; it completely supersedes, replaces, and displaces it.

I know this **truth** can **ruffle feathers** or **challenge traditional paradigms**, but it has been the **author's primary argument** throughout this entire book. The New Covenant and the Old Covenant are **not** running side by side as twin tracks to God.

When this letter was written around **65 AD**, the author was writing to Jewish believers—some of whom were tempted to shrink back and return to the safety of the temple rituals to escape persecution. The author's message is urgent: **You do not understand—there is no going back!**

- **The Old Covenant has fully served its pedagogical purpose.**
- **It has fulfilled its goal as a temporary tutor.**
- **It has reached its terminal point.**

It is no longer the valid way to exercise faith in God. That **old system's sun was setting**; that **old ship was taking on water**; that **physical building in Jerusalem was living on borrowed time**.

Notice the author's striking phrase: what is growing old is ***"ready to vanish away."*** Writing just a few years before the Roman general Titus marched on Jerusalem and utterly destroyed the Temple in **70 AD**, the author knew the end of the physical Levitical system was imminent.

God was about to dramatically and providentially remove the earthly temple, rendering animal sacrifice physically impossible, just as He had already rendered it spiritually obsolete through the cross.

The nation had been given almost forty years to turn from the shadows to the Son. God would not allow them to cling to shadows once the blazing light of the Son had arrived. There are not two valid ways to approach God—the old way or the new way. There is only **one** way:

> *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6, ESV)*

But How About Us? Where is our hope? What are we holding on to? What are we trusting in for our eternal security?

God promised a day through Jeremiah—roughly 650 to 700 years before the Messiah arrived—when He would make a New Covenant. Then, He sent His Son, born of a virgin, the royal Son of David, and the eternal Son of God.

Jesus is the promised Priest-King who lives forever, rules victoriously, and reigns in heaven. He lived a perfect life, died a substitutionary, sacrificial death, and now offers the complete forgiveness of sins to all who will repent, place their faith in Him, and follow Him.

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