

# ***In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews***

## ***The Message of Hebrews***

Lesson #2 for January 8, 2022

Scriptures: Hebrews 1:5-14; 2:14-16; 5:1-4; 8:1,8-12; Luke 1:30-33; Psalm 132:1-5; 1 Peter 2:9.

1. Why was the book of Hebrews written?

A Jewish document written a few decades after Hebrews, around A.D. 100, contains a prayer: "All this I have spoken before you, O Lord, because you have said that it was for us that you created this world. . . . And now, O Lord, behold, these nations, which are reputed as nothing, domineer over us and devour us. But we your people, whom you have called your first-born, only begotten, zealous for you, and most dear, have been given into their hands."—James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, vol. 1* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1983), p. 536.—[as quoted in *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** for Sabbath, January 1].<sup>‡§</sup>

2. It is very likely that the people to whom Paul was writing felt much the same way. Paul was making the point that Jesus fulfilled all the predictions of the future King and High Priest predicted in the Old Testament. Thus, Jesus has become our Savior, the One who makes it possible for God's blessings to include all of us.
3. Hebrews 8:1 tells us that Jesus is now seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. **The main point of Hebrews is to show that by His life and His death, Jesus successfully answered all of Satan's accusations and questions against the government of God, thus, once and for all, winning the great controversy over God's character and government.** As a result, all heaven is celebrating His victory.

**Philippians 2:10-11:** <sup>10</sup>And so, in honour of the name of Jesus  
**all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below  
will fall on their knees,**

<sup>11</sup>and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.—American Bible Society. (1992). *The Holy Bible: The Good News Translation\** (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Philippians 2:10-11). New York: American Bible Society [abbreviated as *Good News Bible*].<sup>†‡</sup> [That will include Satan himself falling on his knees! **God will not bring the great controversy to an end until every single being in the universe has acknowledged that God has done everything He could do to save as many people as possible.**]<sup>‡</sup>

4. Paul reminded us that while living in this sinful world, we are still under the rule of Satan and have been since the time when Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden.
5. Satan still claims to be the ruler of this world, and the apostle John recognized that role. See John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11.
6. What happened in heaven when Jesus returned following His victory in His battle with Satan here on this earth?

**Hebrews 1:5-14:** <sup>5</sup>For God never said to any of his angels:

"You are my Son;  
today I have become your Father."  
Nor did God say about any angel,

“I will be his Father,  
and he will be my Son.” [Contrast Romans 1:20-28.]

<sup>6</sup>But when God was about to send his firstborn Son into the world, he said:

**“All God’s angels must worship him.”**

<sup>7</sup>But about the angels God said,

“God makes his angels winds,  
and his servants flames of fire.”

<sup>8</sup>About the Son, however, God said:

“Your kingdom, O God, will last for ever and ever!  
You rule over your people with justice.

<sup>9</sup>You love what is right and hate what is wrong.  
That is why God, your God, has chosen you  
and has given you the joy of an honour far greater  
than he gave to your companions.”

<sup>10</sup>He also said:

“You, Lord, in the beginning created the earth,  
and with your own hands you made the heavens.

<sup>11</sup>They will disappear, but you will remain;  
they will all wear out like clothes.

<sup>12</sup>You will fold them up like a coat,  
and they will be changed like clothes.

But you are always the same,  
and your life never ends.”

<sup>13</sup>God never said to any of his angels:

“Sit here on my right  
until I put your enemies as a footstool under your feet.”

**<sup>14</sup>What are the angels, then? They are spirits who serve God and are sent by him to help those who are to receive salvation.—*Good News Bible*.<sup>\*†‡</sup>**

7. Notice that there are three steps pictured in these verses as God established His Son as the Victor in the great controversy.
  - (1) God received His Son, Jesus, recognizing Him as His divine Son. (Hebrews 1:5)
  - (2) God introduced His Son to the heavenly court who in turn worship Him, recognizing that He was the original Creator of everything and has returned to heaven to rule. (Hebrews 1:6-12)
  - (3) God placed His Son in the seat of power over the universe. (Hebrews 1:13-14)
8. Satan started his rebellion in heaven because he wanted to take the place of Christ—or at least be considered equal with Him. By demonstrating that Jesus was fully God, Creator of the universe, and superior to any angel—including Lucifer/Satan—Hebrews states that Christ must be worshiped. Thus, God demonstrated the right of Jesus Christ to be seated at the right hand of the Father as Ruler of the entire universe including this earth which for a while has been under the control of Satan!
9. In our previous lesson, we suggested that Paul was the author of Hebrews.

Strictly speaking, however, the writer of the book of Hebrews appears to be anonymous. Speculation has given rise to at least 13 possible authorial

candidates, such as Luke, Barnabas, Jude, Stephen, Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos, or even Mary, the mother of Jesus. What we safely can infer about the authorship from the epistle itself are four facts:

**First**, the author must have been **well educated**. Hebrews has, by far, the best Greek of the New Testament. [It is very much like the Greek used by Luke in the Gospel of Luke and in Acts.]

**Second**, the author was **acquainted with Jewish methods of interpreting Scripture**, such as *gezerah shavah* (argument by analogy), and other such techniques.

**Third**, the author is **steeped in the Jewish Scriptures**. Hebrews has the most extensive use of Old Testament quotes.

**Fourth**, the author knew Timothy (*Heb. 13:23*). **All of these facts speak in favor of, rather than against, Pauline authorship**. Certainly, the author chose to remain anonymous for undisclosed reasons. **His anonymity may even suggest that his message is more important than his identity**. At the same time, we would be remiss if we failed to acknowledge that **Ellen G. White attests to Pauline authorship of the book of Hebrews. Moving forward in faith in that divine disclosure, we shall refer throughout the lessons with confidence to the author as Paul.**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** 26.†‡§ [Since Paul and Luke worked together and traveled together for years, is it possible that with Paul's poor eyesight, the two of them worked together to produce Hebrews?}]‡

10. One of the most important messages that Jesus needed to convey to His Hebrew associates and the people of Israel were the many ways in which His life and His death fulfilled many prophecies from the Old Testament. A number of those prophecies were given in the form describing a future Son of David. (Compare 2 Samuel 7:8-16 and Luke 1:30-33.) Jesus was born in the line of David and in the city of David. (Matthew 1:1-16; Luke 2:10-11) He was called *the Son of David*, and even when He was crucified, the sign over His head read *the King of the Jews*. (Matthew 27:37, *GNB\**) Many of the apostles, especially Peter and Paul, taught that Jesus had risen from the dead in fulfillment of promises made to David. (See Acts 2:22-36; Acts 13:22-37.)
11. These passages demonstrate that Jesus Christ was no ordinary human being, but rather, He was the true Son of God and truly the Son of Man who had been predicted in Scripture hundreds of years before His birth. No created being, no angel—including Satan—or any human being, could have arranged such a plan; and, thus, Christ proved Himself to be the promised Messiah.
12. Paul was anxious for us to recognize that Jesus is the true Ruler of the universe, and He only temporarily lost His rulership of this earth to Satan. Now God/Jesus Christ has already won the great controversy through the life and death of Jesus. There is no way God can lose!
13. In what sense is Jesus our Mediator? The Old Testament seems to suggest that the promised Davidic King would somehow represent the Israelite nation before God. This, however, presents a problem. Contrary to Jewish tradition, Jesus became not only King, but also High Priest. **A king was supposed to be from the tribe of Judah, which Jesus was. However, priests were supposed to be from the tribe of Levi, which Jesus was not.** That is why He is described as **Priest in the order of Melchizedek**. See Exodus 4:22-23 and 2 Samuel 7:12-14 in which God claimed Israel as His Son; but, He predicted a future King whose dynasty will last forever.

14. Furthermore, in Deuteronomy 12:8-10 and 2 Samuel 7:9-11, God promised the children of Israel that He would fight their battles for them so they could live in peace.
15. More than that, God promised to dwell among them, even in the tabernacle or tent through those 40 years in the wilderness. Then, in Deuteronomy 12:13-14 and Psalm 132:1-5,11-14, He told them that a specific site would be given them in the land to which they were going. That was the only place where they were to go and offer their animal sacrifices.
16. God's first covenant with the children of Israel established at Sinai failed because Israel very quickly turned away from fulfilling their responsibilities. And so, God could not continue to bless them.
17. Why couldn't God bless the Israelites when they were disobedient? In effect, hadn't they chosen another master? After all, He took them into Canaan because of the faithfulness of their ancestors. But, following that failure, God established a new covenant, a new relationship, with all human beings who are faithful. Thus, our only hope of salvation is found in Jesus.
18. By successfully dealing with Satan and all of his accusations and questions, Jesus Christ has made it possible for sin to be eliminated and for harmony and peace to be re-established throughout the entire universe including on this one rebellious planet. If Jesus had failed in any way during His mission to this earth, the entire universe would have been in peril, and the great controversy would not have been won. But, **Jesus came with a very specific purpose: To do away with sin!**

**Romans 8:3:** What the Law could not do, because human nature was weak, God did. He condemned sin in human nature by sending his own Son, who came with a nature like sinful human nature, **to do away with sin.**—*Good News Bible*.\*†

**Hebrews 9:26:** For then he would have had to suffer many times ever since the creation of the world. Instead, now when all ages of time are nearing the end, **he has appeared once and for all, to remove sin through the sacrifice of himself.**—*Good News Bible*.\*† [There are two very different ways of explaining how that happened!]\*‡

19. So, what should we learn from all of that? Are we perpetually faithful? Contrary to the children of Israel? Our only hope is by committing ourselves to be followers of Jesus Christ in every possible way and in every step of our lives.
20. One of the very interesting things to observe from the Old Testament is that whenever the children of Israel went to battle following God's instructions, they experienced resounding victories, often without losing a single Israelite soldier. But, whenever they went to battle without consulting God, they experienced disastrous defeats. Why do you think it was that they did not seem to get that message? There were times when there were magnificent victories on behalf of God's people that are recorded in the Old Testament. Think of the case of David's battle with Goliath. (1 Samuel 17) Did David really have a good aim? Or, did God guide that stone? Or, both?
21. God had told the Israelites that He was to be their King. But, the day came following the rebellious behavior of Samuel's sons when the children of Israel demanded a king like the nations around them. (1 Samuel 8:10-20)
22. In our day, we are not asked to go out and fight in physical battles. But, we do have a serious enemy, our greatest enemy, Satan! And King Jesus will help us defeat him.

23. We know that Jesus defeated Satan every time they met in conflict, starting with the war in heaven (Revelation 12:7-12) down through the temptations in the wilderness and His entire life, ministry, death, and resurrection on this earth. But, even in the Old Testament, God promised to fight for the weak and oppressed. See Isaiah 42:13; 59:15-20.
24. It is very significant to notice God's original plan for the children of Israel after He led them out of Egypt following the 10 plagues and the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea. It was given to Moses at Mount Sinai as recorded in **Exodus 23:20-33**. **God promised them that He would take them into the land and do all the fighting for them.** How could any sensible person turn down an offer like that? But, they did. **They wanted to conquer with their swords and their own spears so they would get the credit, instead of relying completely on God!**
25. We are in mortal combat with the Devil every day. That is spelled out in Ephesians 6:10-18. However, we are not asked to fight alone. God is our Champion, and He goes to battle with us. It is important to note that in those verses, the subject pronouns are all plural. We are not to fight alone.
26. So, how do we go about putting on the "whole armor" of God?
27. Hebrews 5-7 talks about Jesus being *our High Priest*. As we have already noted, He did not come from the tribe of Levi; and therefore, He should not have been recognized as a priest. But, Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews 5:5-6 say:
- Psalm 110:4:** The LORD made a solemn promise and will not take it back:  
 "You will be a priest for ever  
 in the priestly order of Melchizedek."—*Good News Bible*.\*
- Hebrews 5:5-6:** <sup>5</sup> In the same way, Christ did not take upon himself the honour of being a high priest. Instead, God said to him:  
 "You are my Son;  
 today I have become your Father."  
<sup>6</sup> He also said in another place,  
 "You will be a priest for ever, [*sic*]  
**in the priestly order of Melchizedek.**"—*Good News Bible*.\*††
28. So, what did Christ do that signified that He was an officiating Priest? What is supposed to be the role of a priest? In every system of priesthood, whether Jewish, Greek, Roman, or any other, including modern priests, their role is to help us to relate to God or their god.
29. In order for us to have a right relationship with God, we must know Him. That task of teaching us about the Father was done infinitely well by God Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. One of the main functions of the priest was to teach the people the truth about God; no one could do that better than Jesus. So, let us summarize that priests did several things: (1) They instructed the people how to correctly offer their sacrifices to God. (2) They spent a great deal of time teaching the people how to obey the laws of God. Furthermore, (3) They were expected to bless the people.
30. Then, we discover something surprising in 1 Peter 2:9.
- 1 Peter 2:9:** But you are the chosen race, the King's priests, the holy nation, God's own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his own marvelous light.—*Good News Bible*.\*
31. We—all believers in Jesus—are called "a royal priesthood," the "King's priests"!

**This role implies incredible privileges.** Priests could approach God in the sanctuary. Today, we can approach God through prayer with confidence (*Heb. 4:14-16; Heb. 10:19-23*). **There are, as well, important responsibilities.** We must collaborate with God in His work of saving the world. **He wants us to teach and explain God's laws and precepts to others.** He also wants us to offer sacrifices of praise and good works, which are pleasing to Him. What a privilege and what a responsibility!—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** for Wednesday, January 5.<sup>†§</sup>

32. Jesus Himself made that very clear.

**John 16:25-27:** <sup>25</sup> “I [Jesus] have used figures of speech to tell you these things. But the time will come when I will not use figures of speech, **but will speak to you plainly about the Father.** <sup>26</sup>When that day comes, you will ask him in my name; and **I do not say [Notice that word *not* which so many ignore.] that I will ask him on your behalf,** <sup>27</sup>**for the Father himself loves you.** He loves you because you love me and have believed that I came from God.”—*Good News Bible.*<sup>\*†‡</sup>

33. Paul also recognized that in Hebrews.

**Hebrews 4:14-16:** <sup>14</sup> Let us, then, hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we have a great High Priest who has gone into the very presence of God—Jesus, the Son of God. <sup>15</sup>Our High Priest is not one who cannot feel sympathy for our weaknesses. On the contrary, **we have a High Priest who was tempted in every way that we are, but did not sin.** <sup>16</sup>Let us have confidence, then, and approach God's throne, where there is grace. There we will receive mercy and find grace to help us just when we need it.—*Good News Bible.*<sup>\*†</sup>

34. How should that impact our relationship to God?

**Hebrews 10:19-23:** <sup>19</sup>We have, then, my brothers and sisters, complete freedom to go into the Most Holy Place by means of the death of Jesus. <sup>20</sup>He opened for us a new way, a living way, through the curtain—that is, through his own body. <sup>21</sup>We have a great priest in charge of the house of God. <sup>22</sup>So let us come near to God with a sincere heart and a sure faith, with hearts that have been purified from a guilty conscience and with bodies washed with clean water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess, because we can trust God to keep his promise.—*Good News Bible.*<sup>\*</sup>

35. However, in Hebrews 8-10, we discover a problem. **Why does the death—and life—of Jesus give us “complete freedom to go into the Most Holy Place”?** God's friends no longer fear Him; they now fear sin because **they have come to know the truth about sin and its consequences as first described by God Himself in Genesis 2:17.**

**Genesis 2:16-17:** <sup>16</sup> “You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden, <sup>17</sup>except the tree that gives knowledge of what is good and what is bad. **You must not eat the fruit of that tree; if you do, you will die the same day.**”—*Good News Bible.*<sup>\*†</sup>

**Romans 6:23:** For **sin pays its wage—death;** but God's free gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our Lord.—*Good News Bible.*<sup>\*†</sup>

36. Twice in the book of Hebrews, Paul repeated the new covenant promise from Jeremiah 31:31-34.

**Hebrews 8:8-12:** <sup>8</sup>But God finds fault with his people when he says:

“The days are coming, says the Lord,  
when I will draw up a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people  
of Judah.

<sup>9</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors  
on the day I took them by the hand and led them out of Egypt.  
They were not faithful to the covenant I made with them,  
and so I paid no attention to them.

<sup>10</sup>Now, this is the covenant that I will make with the people of Israel  
in the days to come, says the Lord:

I will put my laws in their minds  
and write them on their hearts.

I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.

<sup>11</sup>None of them will have to teach their fellow-citizens  
or say to their fellow-citizens,  
‘Know the Lord.’

For they will all know me,  
from the least to the greatest.

<sup>12</sup>I will forgive their sins  
and will no longer remember their wrongs.”—*Good News Bible*.\*

**By appointing Jesus as our High Priest, the Father inaugurated a new covenant that will accomplish what the old covenant could only anticipate.**

The new covenant delivers what only a perfect, eternal, human-divine Priest can. This High Priest not only explains the law of God but also implants the law in our hearts. This Priest offers a sacrifice that brings forgiveness. This Priest cleanses and transforms us. **He transforms our hearts** from stone to flesh (*Ezek. 36:26*). He really creates us anew (*2 Cor. 5:17*). This Priest blesses us in the most incredible way, by providing us access into the very presence of the Father Himself.—*Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*\* for Thursday, January 6.<sup>†§</sup>

**Ezekiel 36:26:** [The LORD said:] **“I will give you a new heart and a new mind. I will take away your stubborn heart of stone and give you an obedient heart.”**—*Good News Bible*.\*<sup>†‡</sup>

**2 Corinthians 5:17:** Anyone who is joined to Christ is a new being; the old is gone, the new has come.—*Good News Bible*.\*

37. Paul also gave us a number of warnings found in Hebrews 10-12. These warnings are given in the following form: *First*, they all compare the “desert generation” of Israelites with the readers of Hebrews. *Second*, they exhort us to have faith which is what the Israelites in the desert lacked.
38. Think of all that God did with the children of Israel to get them out of Egypt and safely established in the land of Canaan. But, nevertheless, they rebelled against Him. They lacked faith.
39. And so, what about us? **We not only have the record of everything the Israelites did and all that God did for them, but also we have the entire record of the life and death of Jesus Christ.** Will we have faith, then? Paul concluded:

**Hebrews 10:37-39:** <sup>37</sup>For, as the scripture says:

“Just a little while longer,  
and he who is coming will come;

he will not delay.

<sup>38</sup>My righteous people, however, will believe and live;  
but if any of them turns back,  
I will not be pleased with him.”

<sup>39</sup>We are not people who turn back and are lost. Instead, we have faith and are saved.—*Good News Bible*.\*

40. If Jesus is our Champion who goes before us into the battle against the Devil, how can we cooperate together with Him and with others in the church? What things are preventing us from doing that right now? How does Satan succeed in weakening our church? How has he weakened Israel in the past?
41. Look at what the Devil was able to do through the Midianite women at Baal-Peor. (See Numbers 25:1-18.) If we allow our human passions and selfishness to overcome us, we will lose as they did. So, what should be the solution? **We need to spend more time in Bible study, prayer, and especially witnessing.** Many of us do not realize how poorly we understand our doctrinal teachings until we try to explain them to others!
42. So, in what ways is our situation similar to that of the children of Israel in the desert? **We have a much more important “Canaan” to enter! We must not allow distractions and temptations from the Devil to delay our preparations.**
43. Christ agreed to take a temporary role lower than the angels while He was on this earth. (See Hebrews 2:9.) He is now seated at the right hand of God, superior to angels. (Hebrews 1:4) So, how did He arrive at that position?

**Hebrews 1:1-2:** <sup>1</sup>God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, <sup>2</sup>**in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.**—*New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*.\* (1995). (Hebrews 1:1–2). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.†

Paul wants to tell his audience, and us, that God spoke and still speaks. God spoke in different time periods “long ago,” and He speaks “in these last days.” He speaks to different recipients: the “fathers” and “us.” He speaks through different agents: the “prophets” and the “Son.” God speaks “in many ways.”

What are some of His avenues of communication? God speaks face-to-face with Adam and Eve (*Genesis 3*). God speaks to Moses from a burning bush, something we call a theophany, a revelation of God (*Exod. 3:2–6*); to Balaam through a donkey (*Num. 22:28*); to the boy Samuel, calling him by name (*1 Sam. 3:10*); to Elijah in a still, small voice (*1 Kings 19:12*); through a vision to Isaiah in the temple (*Isa. 6:1–9*); and to Hosea through his family circumstances (*Hos. 1:2*). All these modes of communication have one thing in common: they are incomplete.

**The ultimate and climactic utterance of God is “in these last days,” when He speaks through His “Son.”** Not only does God speak through the words of Jesus, but God also speaks through Jesus’ actions and character. God’s revelation is progressive. But the progression is not from true to truer, from mature to more mature. **Rather, it is a forward and onward movement in His revelation of Himself to humanity. When speaking through the words and actions of Jesus, God Himself is the speaker.**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*\* 27.†§



44. Paul made seven affirmations about Jesus Christ as the Son of God (Hebrews 1:2-4) which make Him far superior to any created being, or any angel. See *Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** pages 27-28 from which the following is summarized.

(1) Jesus Christ is “appointed heir of all things.” (Hebrews 1:2) If He is the principal Heir, His followers should be coheirs with Him and are “those who are to inherit salvation.” (Hebrews 1:14) See Revelation 21:7 and 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 which clearly state that those who conquer will inherit the kingdom of God while wrongdoers will not.

(2) Christ is superior to the angels because He was the original Creation Agent. All things were created by Him. God created us in the beginning, and He will have the power to re-create us at the second coming.

(3) Christ is “the reflection of God’s glory.” (Hebrews 1:3) The Greek term translated *exact imprint* refers to character and implies a mark impressed on an object, especially on coins. Both descriptions of Jesus as God’s “reflection” and as the “exact imprint” indicate that Jesus is the full and adequate representation of the Father. **What Paul conveyed is like what Jesus said: “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.”** (John 14:9, *NRSV\**) If we want to know what God is like, we should get acquainted with Jesus.

(4) **Christ not only created us** but also **He continually sustains us.** (See Hebrews 1:3; Acts 17:25,28; Psalm 104: 29.)

(5) **Christ managed to do away with sins.** He will purify us if we cooperate with Him. (Hebrews 1:3) **By studying the life and death of Jesus Christ, we can get a picture of the Perfect Pattern which we are to follow.** Making “purification for sins” means more than forgiveness for past sins, **it also includes help in preventing us from committing those sins again.**

(6) Having accomplished everything which He set out to do in the great controversy through His mission to this earth, He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. This was predicted long before in Psalm 110:1. (Compare Hebrews 1:13.)

(7) We see that **Christ is much superior to angels.** (Hebrews 1:4) In Hebrews 1:5-13, Paul noted some ways in which Christ is superior.

In summary, what makes Christ superior to angels? God spoke in many and various ways to the fathers in the past; but **in these last days, He speaks through the Son**, who became Heir of all things, is the **Creator of all things, is the reflection and imprint of God’s very being, sustains all things, made purification for sins, and sat down at the right hand of God. Thus, Christ is exalted above, and superior to, the angels**, who are ministering spirits in service to those who inherit salvation (*Heb. 1:14*). Moreover, Christ accepts worship on His throne at the right hand of God. **Christ is our King.**—*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide\** 28.†§

45. A second question which arises in the book of Hebrews is regarding Christ as our High Priest or Mediator. Moses was the primary mediator of the Sinai covenant in the Old Testament. But, in New Testament times, Paul told us: “For *there* is one God and one Mediator between God and man, *the Man Christ Jesus.*” (1 Timothy 2:5, *NKJV\*§*) Furthermore, Jesus mediates a better covenant (Hebrews 8:6) and “a new covenant.” (Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24)

46. Notice these interesting words of Paul:

**Hebrews 12:24: You have come to Jesus, who arranged the new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that promises much better things than does the blood of Abel.—Good News Bible.\*†**

47. Did the blood of Abel promise anything? Abel's blood was the blood of the first human death on this world. Though he was murdered, he died only the first death. **Christ's death was the second death. His death was the only second death that has ever occurred up to this point in time. It is the death that was spoken about to Adam and Eve as recorded in Genesis 2:17, the death that comes as a direct result of sin. (Romans 6:23)**
48. So, in conclusion, what was better about this new covenant? **The difference is that this priesthood was established by God's promise or vow, and the Priest Himself who is none other than Jesus Christ will be a Priest forever.**
49. He offered one sacrifice, once and for all, when He offered Himself. (Hebrews 7:27)
50. How should all of that impact us? Is God still speaking to us today? How does He do that? If we are co-heirs with Christ, how should that impact how we relate to the world around us? If Christ sustains all things with His omnipotent power, how does that impact us?

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