

Hebrews

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September 27, 2023



Hebrews 8:7-13

Vs. 7

- The Greek word used here for “covenant” is a bit unusual. Typically another word is used because typically a covenant is a negotiated agreement reached to the mutual satisfaction of equal parties. But that is not the case here. We are not on equal footing with God, nor is this a negotiated agreement. No, the word used here is “*diatheke*”, which is typically used in reference to a will. A will is not typically negotiated, nor do the parties involved stand on equal terms. The will is set by one party, the testator, and cannot be altered by the other party, who can only accept or reject the conditions and the inheritance. In this Biblical case, this covenant is likewise one-sided. All of the conditions are laid down by God and we cannot contest His conditions. We can only accept or reject them.
- Thus, as we shall see, our relationship with God is a “*diatheke*” kind of covenant relationship because it comes to us out of God’s initiative and His grace. This is a new covenant, the new covenant in Christ’s blood.

Vss. 8-9

- The *idea* of a new covenant was not new. What the preacher does here is he quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 in total. “Behold, days are coming’ says the Lord, ‘when I will effect a new covenant...’”. This is one of the many things about the Pharisees and the scribes that frustrated Jesus so much. The truth had been staring them in the face from the beginning and they refused to see it. It was always right there in God’s word. But as is so often the case, even with us, we often don’t want to see the parts of God’s word that makes us uncomfortable. Why would the Pharisees and scribes even want to look at Jeremiah 31 when their mastery of the old covenant gave them total control over Israel and made them rich? Likewise today, a rabbi will never read Isaiah 53 and the description of the messiah as the suffering servant because it so clearly points to Jesus. Every good Baptist knows what the Bible says about tithing, giving 10% of your gross income to God, but the average Baptist nationwide only gives about 3%. We close our eyes on what we don’t want to see and our actions follow accordingly.

- We are told the new covenant will not be like the old one given to God's people when He led them out of Egypt, because the people did not continue in the covenant and resultingly, God stopped shepherding them. He is a good Father who will not force His blessings on those who do not want them and He will give us over to our own desires if that is what we choose and let us bear the consequences as well.

Vss. 10-12

- This new covenant that Jeremiah speaks of will not be written on stone or paper, but into the minds and hearts of God's people. Nor will this be held in the hands of the few, (as it was previously in the hands of the Pharisees and scribes), but will be for all people to know. It will not need to be taught so much as will be lived. People will keep this covenant not out of fear of punishment, but because it intellectually makes sense and because of the love relationship between God and His children.
- And the tangible benefit and greatest improvement in the new covenant is Grace. God will be merciful towards our sins and once they are forgiven, He will remember them no more. Whatever perceived judgmental-ness we may have believed God had towards us, all of that is now swallowed up in His Grace and Love. The covenant we have with God is no longer based on our ability to keep multitudes of laws, but on God's Grace and Love.

Vs. 13

- Whatever is new makes the old obsolete. Anybody still have a rotary phone that you are dependent on? Just so, the new covenant in Christ's blood and based on God's Grace and Love makes the old covenant obsolete. With the coming of Christ, it was time for the old covenant to disappear.