

A Guide Through Hebrews

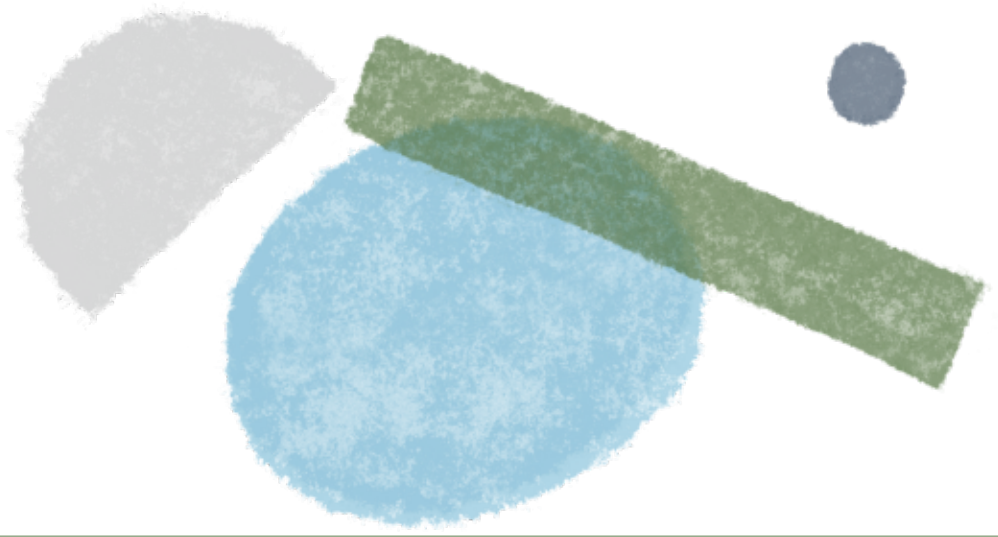
PART 2: CHAPTERS 5 - 8



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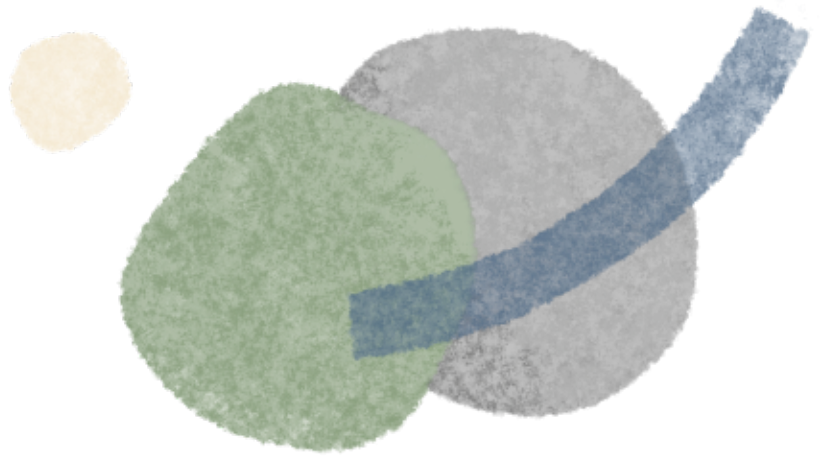


RECAP - PART 1

In Part 1 of this study, we looked at Hebrews 1-4. In these chapters, we are introduced to a description of Jesus as our eternal high priest. Because He was tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin, He can sympathize with and mediate on our behalf. We are reminded that Jesus is the expression of God, as He is God in the flesh. Jesus holds us together and sustains us. We are to persevere and hope in Jesus, and to encourage one another to remain faithful. We are instructed to keep the Sabbath and rest and delight ourselves in Jesus, rejecting society's need to hustle and strive. We can boldly approach God's throne of grace with confidence and pray God-sized prayers to the One who hears and loves us. And we can fully expect to receive mercy and grace in our time of need.

INTRODUCTION - PART 2

In Chapters 5-8, we learn about the priesthood and its general requirements. We also learn about Melchizedek, who was both a high priest and a king, just like Jesus. However, Jesus is the superior priest because His priesthood is eternal. He is alive and He always intercedes for us. Because Jesus lives and His blood covers us, the old covenant is no longer in effect. The writer urges us on towards spiritual maturity, reminding us that God is faithful to deliver His promises and will give us the strength to stay alert.



Chapter 5

READING

In this chapter, the author of Hebrews unpacks further what it means for Christ to be our great high priest. In the Old Testament, it was necessary for God's people to have a priest who acted as a mediator between them and God. He would offer sacrifices to atone for their sin, amongst other duties. The priest didn't volunteer to become the mediator, it was a calling from God. In the same way, Christ did not exalt Himself. He was called by God. In verse 6 we see that Christ was not appointed to the priesthood order of Aaron, but of Melchizedek. Keep this in mind, as we will discuss this in a later chapter. The author continues by highlighting the necessity of obedience, even from Christ Himself. On earth, He experienced suffering and through that process He learned obedience and was perfected. The author then exhorts the readers to become spiritually mature. An adult should not be drinking milk and eating pureed baby food. Think about your own spiritual journey. How long have you been walking with Jesus? Are you still needing milk, or have you moved on to steak and potatoes? Spiritual maturity is essential to experiencing abundant life and it all starts with obedience.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

UPWARD

Read **Genesis 14:18**. What does it say about Melchizedek? Since Jesus is part of the order of Melchizedek, what does this passage say about Christ?

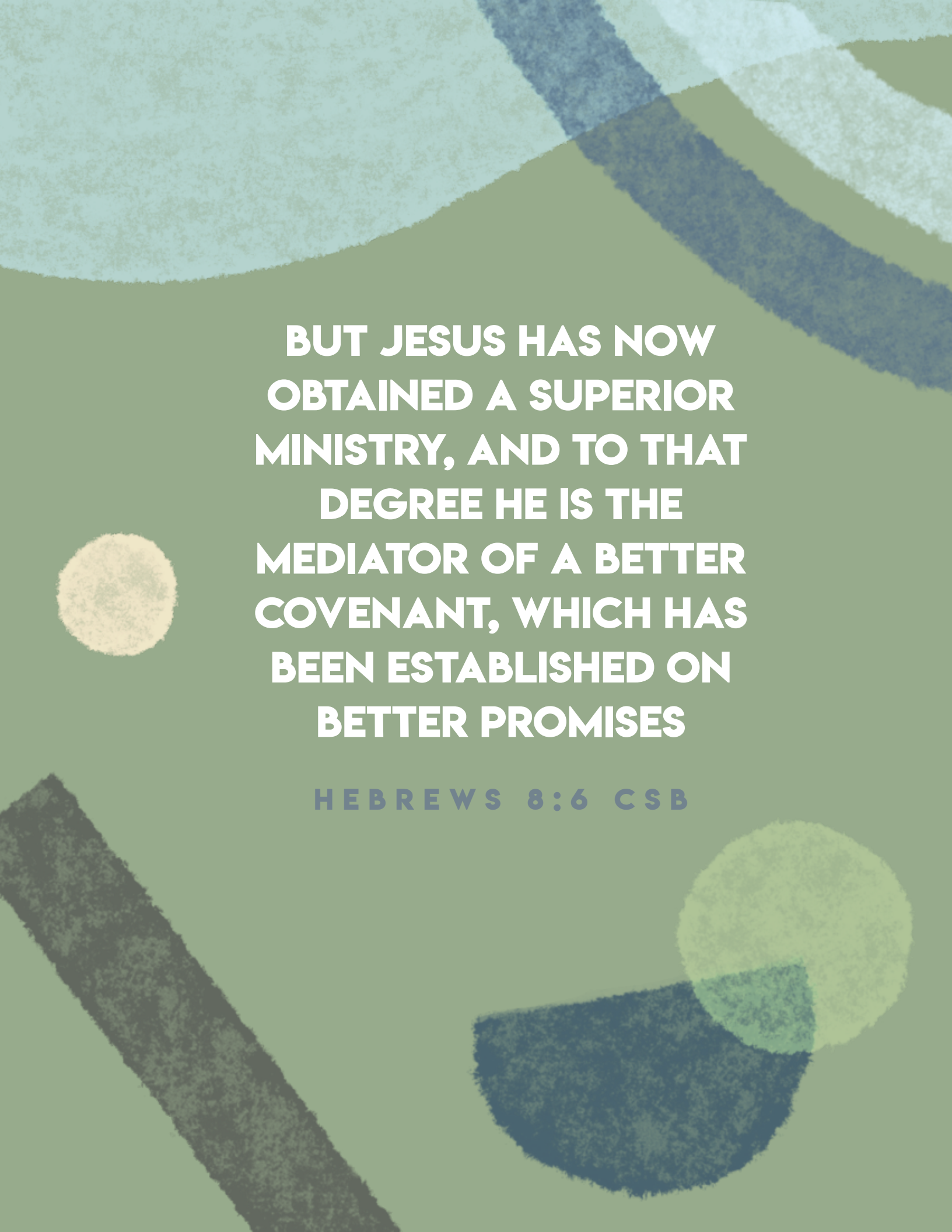
INWARD

Read **Hebrews 5:8-10**. Jesus, although being the Son of God, had to learn obedience. He sets this example for us. How have you had to learn obedience?

Is there an area in your life in which you have struggled to obey God? Why is obedience the first step towards spiritual maturity?

OUTWARD

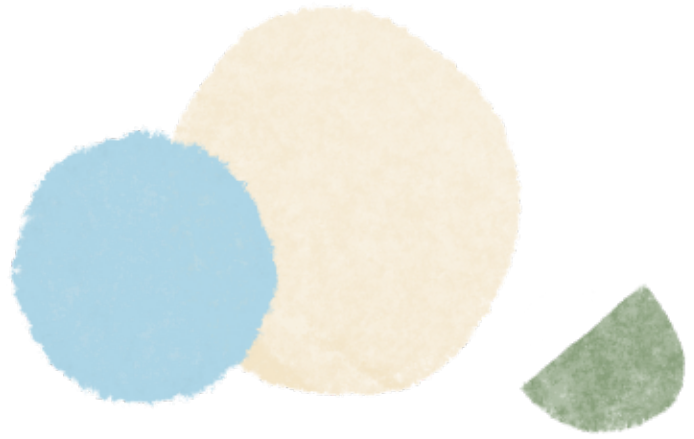
Part of obedience is switching your perspective from “*have to*” to “*get to*.” You don’t have to be obedient to grow in spiritual maturity, you get to be obedient to grow in spiritual maturity! Through this you will experience deliverance and abundant life. How will you living in abundant life affect those around you?



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BETTER PROMISES**

HEBREWS 8:6 CSB

Chapter 6



READING

This chapter centers on maturity and hope (confident expectation). As in the previous chapter, the writer emphasizes the need to leave “childish” things behind and move towards maturity. This process is called sanctification. Simply put, it’s the process of looking more like Jesus. The truth is that sanctification is not an easy process. It takes effort on our part and trust that God will permit the growth to happen. We will experience difficulties along the way. Many have gone before us who have grown lazy and settled for a mundane faith rather than abundant life. Sadly, they missed the fullness and beauty found in the Christian life. Perseverance is key. We see an example of a life of perseverance in Abraham. After waiting patiently, he obtained the promise. And in Christ, we have the confident expectation that God will fulfill His promise to us. As we are sanctified, God is preparing us for the promise. That’s why it’s important to lean into spiritual maturity, God is preparing you for something amazing to come.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

UPWARD

Read **Hebrews 6:19**. What is the hope that we have?

What is the promise to which we are looking forward?

Why can we confidently know and trust that God will fulfill His promise?

INWARD

Do you view hope as a confident expectation? If not, what is holding you back from fully believing that God will come through? How can you wait patiently as Abraham did?

OUTWARD

The author of Hebrews is speaking to a group of Jewish Christians who are struggling to persevere. Who in your life is struggling to persevere? In love, how can you encourage them to keep growing in their faith? Reach out to them this week.



Chapter 7

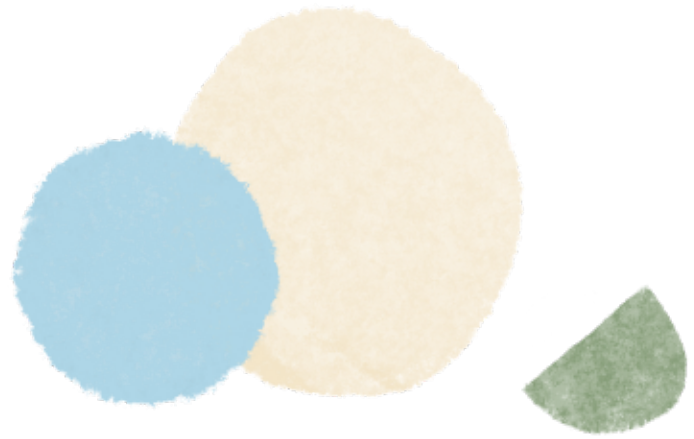
READING:

The author has mentioned Melchizedek a few times throughout the letter. Now it's time to get the full picture of what it means for Jesus to be in the priestly order of Melchizedek. We first meet Melchizedek in Genesis. Turn to **Genesis 14:17-24** to see how we are introduced to him. In these verses we see that he is both a king and a priest. Dr. Tony Evans says, "When Abraham experienced God's provision and deliverance in a battle with several kings, Melchizedek met Abraham and blessed him. He also renewed Abraham's strength with bread and wine." Are you beginning to see the parallels between Melchizedek and Jesus? As a result of receiving this blessing, Abraham tithed out of gratitude. He did not tithe to receive a blessing, but rather because he had already received it. There's more! Melchizedek's name means "king of righteousness" and "king of peace." These are titles that are also attributed to Jesus. We see that Melchizedek is referred to as an eternal priest (7:3) because the Old Testament does not record Melchizedek's birth or death. This doesn't mean that Melchizedek never died; it simply shows a parallel between Melchizedek and the real eternal priest, Jesus, who overcame death.

Focus on verses 11 and 12 of this chapter, which speak of another order of priests. The Levitical priesthood began with Aaron, the brother of Moses. They acted as mediators between God and the Jews, and they carried out the temple responsibilities, including offering sacrifices required by the Mosaic Law. These sacrifices atoned for the sins of the people. It's important to remember that the Levitical priesthood was never intended to be permanent. Jesus' sacrifice made the Old Testament sacrificial system obsolete. When He sacrificed Himself on the cross, He atoned for our sins forever.

The change of the priesthood, from Levitical to Melchizedekian, also called for a change of law. The Jewish Christians being addressed in this letter did not have an old system to return to! No matter how much persecution they experienced, causing them to want to abandon Christianity, they could not return to the old way of doing things. That old system is no longer accepted, because it could not and did not perfect us; it merely informed us of our sin. The new covenant is superior to the old covenant because it covers us under grace and gives us eternal life through faith in Christ.

Chapter 7



HOW DO MELCHIZEDEK AND JESUS COMPARE?

Melchizedek

- He was a priest outside of the Levitical priesthood. He was not a minister of the Law of Moses.
- A “king of righteousness.” This was the translation of his name.
- A “king of peace.” He was from Salem, which means peace.
- There is no record of his parents (beginning) or his death (end) recorded in Scripture.

Jesus

- The ultimate priest outside of the Levitical priesthood. Not a minister of the Law of Moses, which He fulfilled.
- The “King of righteousness.” He purchased our righteousness for us on the cross.
- The Prince of Peace, who will one day bring eternal peace in the new heavens and the new earth.
- The eternal Son of God, having neither beginning nor end, eternally one with the Father and the Holy Spirit as God the Son.

Chapter 7

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

UPWARD

Per Levitical law, a king could not be a priest and king. Melchizedek, however, is both a king and a priest. How is this a signpost of Jesus?

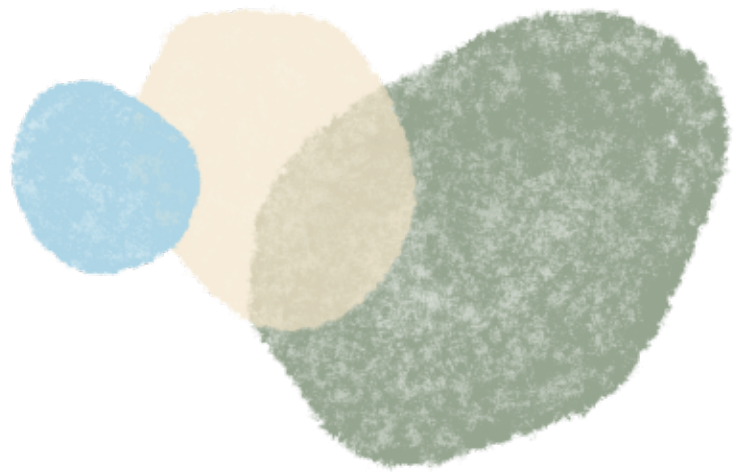
INWARD

Knowing that we are under a new covenant, how does this truth change your day-to-day walk with Jesus?

How can you leave the old covenant behind and confidently embrace the new covenant?

OUTWARD

What does the reality of the new covenant mean for those around us? Your co-worker? Your mom? Your neighbor? How can this truth change their lives? We encourage you to take the next opportunity you have to share it with them.



Chapter 8

READING

This chapter expands on the beauty of the new covenant. A covenant is a promise by which we obligate ourselves to one another in such a way that the obligation of one party is not dependent on the faithfulness of the other. In this case, God is making a covenant with Jesus as the mediator. This new covenant means that we are under grace. The fulfillment of the covenant is not dependent on us, but on the perfect work and sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Once again, we see that it has always been in God's heart to establish this new and better covenant. The author quotes from **Jeremiah 31:31-34**, when the Lord revealed to the prophet Jeremiah that He would establish a new covenant that would be superior to the old and would last forever. This new covenant would include all people so that we could all be one multiethnic family. This new covenant enables us to know God in a new depth of spiritual intimacy because now, His law is written on our hearts and minds. This new ability that we have to understand the spiritual must be exercised. We can experience God and obey Him. However, if we do not develop this new capability, we will not experience the fulness of life in Christ that is being offered. The Christian life is so much more than going to heaven after you die; it's about partnering with God to bring heaven to earth now.

Chapter 8

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

UPWARD

What is the significance of verses 1 and 2 when it comes to the place and role of Jesus?

What does it mean in verse 6 when it says Jesus is our mediator?

Why was there a need for a new covenant?

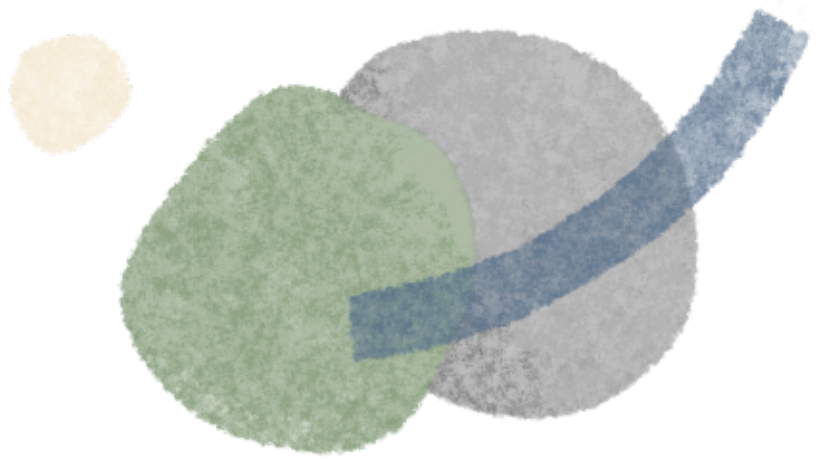
INWARD

How have you experienced God in new ways since becoming a believer?

How can you develop your ability to know God more fully?

OUTWARD

How can you partner with God to bring heaven to earth? Take some time to look around you, recognize where God has placed you, and for what purpose.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

As you study the book of Hebrews and work through the Discussion Questions, you may be interested in additional resources. Here are a few we recommend:

- *The New Testament in Its World* by N.T. Wright and Michael Bird
- The Tony Evans Study Bible or Commentary
- The Bible Project Hebrews Overview Video (<https://bibleproject.com/explore/hebrews/>)
- The Faithlife Study Bible App
- *Hebrews for Everyone* by N.T. Wright