

# Ponderings in Hebrews

---

The following is a Messianic Study on

## Hebrews 8

By Paul Cohen, Messianic Bible Teacher.

Brit Chadashah (Sydney)

[www.BCSydney.com](http://www.BCSydney.com)



**Brit Chadashah**

ברית חדשה

The following *Pondering* studies were published in the Brit Chadashah Newsletter.

Brit Chadashah (*the New Covenant*) is a Messianic Fellowship in Sydney. We meet together fortnightly for Bible studies from a Messianic Jewish Perspective. We are a unique fellowship made up of Jewish and Gentile people who are believers in Yeshua as the promised Messiah of Israel. Brit Chadashah is part of a worldwide Messianic Jewish movement of hundreds of fellowships.

Brit Chadashah is committed to building the Messianic Community of Jews and Gentiles who are a living testimony for Yeshua the Messiah. By donating to Brit Chadashah, you are partnering with us to do the work of “Reaching the Original Messengers”. The funds will be used in outreach to Jewish people as well as in educating Christians in effective ways to reach out.

If you don't know Yeshua as your Messiah, we encourage you to search out the Scriptures for yourself. God promised in the book of Jeremiah, “*You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.*” (Jeremiah 29:13)

Brit Chadashah is part of Celebrate Messiah, an interdenominational, evangelistic society dedicated to raising the banner of Messiah amongst God's ancient people in Australia and abroad through our partnership with Chosen People Global Ministries.

Celebrate Messiah has been sharing the love of Messiah with Jewish people in Australia since it was founded in 1995 by Lawrence and Louise Hirsch. Lawrence is a Jewish believer in Yeshua (Jesus) and the current Executive Director of Celebrate Messiah.  
<http://www.CelebrateMessiah.com.au>.

All “Scripture quotations taken from the (NASB®) New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2020 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. All rights reserved. [www.lockman.org](http://www.lockman.org)” unless otherwise indicated.

For more information on Brit Chadashah, the Sydney Messianic Fellowship:  
Please visit us on the Web [www.BCSydney.com](http://www.BCSydney.com)  
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/BritChadashah.Sydney>  
YouTube <https://tinyurl.com/BC-Video>

To Support the Ministry

<https://www.celebratemessiah.com.au/donate/donation-paulcohen/>

© 2020 Brit Chadashah / Paul Cohen  
Brit Chadashah; P.O. Box 304; Caulfield South, VIC 3162, Australia  
Email: [bc@celebratemessiah.com.au](mailto:bc@celebratemessiah.com.au)

# Hebrews 8 Yeshua, High Priest of a Better Covenant

---

## Hebrews 8:1-6.

<sup>1</sup> Now the main point in what has been said *is this*: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, <sup>2</sup> a minister in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man. <sup>3</sup> For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer. <sup>4</sup> Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; <sup>5</sup> who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned *by God* when he was about to erect the tabernacle; for, “See,” He says, “that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.” <sup>6</sup> But now He has obtained a **more excellent ministry**, by as much as He is also the mediator of a **better covenant**, which has been enacted on **better promises**.

The author of Hebrews reminds the readers of the main point of chapter 7, namely that Yeshua is a priest forever, in the order of a better priesthood, that of Melchizedek.

This is followed by a quote of Psalm 110:1 “*The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand, ...’*” This is fascinating as this verse (Psalm) is quoted or alluded to in Matthew 22:44; Mark 12:36; Luke 20:42-43; Acts 2:34-35; 1 Peter 3:21-22 and four more times in Hebrews 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2. This verse is interesting because Matthew, Mark, Luke, Peter and the author of Hebrews use this verse to show that Yeshua is proven to be the Son of God, that He is Lord, that all authority and power has been given to Him and that He is the Better High Priest, who has done His ministry once for all.

Psalm 110 was written by King David who describes 3 of the 4 offices of the Messianic program; Yeshua the King in verses 1-3, Priest in verse 4 and the coming Judge in verses 5-7. The focus of verse 1 in Hebrews 8 is that Yeshua is the High Priest, who has finished that ministry and has now sat down. The Levitical priest could not sit down in the Tabernacle next to God in the Holy of Holies. It would have been unthinkable, but we have such a High Priest who brought a sacrifice that is sufficient once for all.

It is interesting to note that he refers back to the Tabernacle - Greek: *Skene* – this was not a classical Greek word, but was a loanword from the Hebrew word *Shechinah*, that is the visible glorious (localised) presence of God. He ministered in God’s very presence, not on earth, but in the heavenly tabernacle. There is a rabbinic legend that the true tabernacle was made of fire (Bavli Menachot 29a; §12). This makes sense in the light of scripture, “*our God is a consuming fire*” (Deuteronomy 4:24; 9:3; Isaiah 33:14 & Hebrews 12:29) and He “*dwells in unapproachable light*” (1 Timothy 6:16).

The author does not refer to the Temple which was still standing, but to the first erected sanctuary, the Tabernacle, and to Moses the founder of Judaism, and to Aaron the first Levitical High Priest.

The disciples of Yeshua took enormous pride in the Second Temple, and for good reason: “As He was going out of the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, “Teacher, behold what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!” (Mark 13:1). Luke adds more details and writes that “it was adorned with beautiful stones and votive gifts” (Luke 21:5). The Temple and surrounding buildings were indeed an architectural achievement. It is in that light the author of Hebrews says this was good, but nothing compared to the glory of the heavenly Tabernacle where Yeshua served. And unlike the earthy priesthood, which was run by Annas and Caiaphas, this was far superior.

Annas, who did serve as High Priest for ten years (6-15CE), was removed by the Roman procurator Valerius Gratus. However, for the Jewish people he remained the High Priest. Through his wheeling and dealing Annas successfully enabled his five sons and his son-in-law Caiaphas to serve as High Priests (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 20.9.1).

And so the author has good reason not to refer to the Second Temple, nor to the priesthood that served there, but he refers back to a much better time, that of the Tabernacle. But even the ministry of Moses and Aaron pale in comparison to the Son and the Tabernacle He served in and the Sacrifice He brought.

<sup>6</sup> But now He has obtained a **more excellent ministry**, by as much as He is also the mediator of a **better covenant**, which has been enacted on **better promises**.

In our earlier Newsletter (Pondering Hebrews 2:1-4) I mentioned that the author employs a rabbinic method of teaching, called קל וחומר “*kal v’chomer*,” meaning from “light to heavy.” The purpose of this method was to show that *if that was true, how much more is this true*. If the revelation by angels was true, how much more the revelation of Yeshua, the Son of God. Both are true, but the former was light in comparison to this. By using this method the author brings us to the inescapable conclusion that Yeshua is the better high priest, that he brought the better offering and brought in the superior covenant.

Here in the one verse he talks about the more excellent ministry, better covenant and better promises. Not that the former were not good, no, they were good, but this is better. How is it better? Because of its eternal priesthood, with the more effective sacrifice (His own blood Hebrews 13:20), and it was brought in a better place; the heavenly sanctuary.

The Older Covenant which is the *Mosaic covenant* was a conditional Covenant (Exodus 24:3-8). While it shows a part of God’s redemptive plan, the New Covenant shows the fullness of God’s redemptive plan (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8, 13). It was no longer dependant on our faithfulness but on the faithfulness of our High Priest, Yeshua.

### **The problematic verse Hebrews 8:13**

*“When He said, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.*

Sadly, some in the Hebrew roots movement try to teach the rabbinic doctrine<sup>1</sup>, that *the Torah* (Law of Moses) *IS eternal*. This is not the case, as the New Covenant replaces the Mosaic

---

<sup>1</sup> The Rambam in Hilchot Yesodei Hatorah 9:1: “It is clear and explicit in the Torah, that the Torah is an eternal commandment; it is not subject to change nor subtraction nor addition.”  
[https://www.sefaria.org/Mishneh\\_Torah%2C\\_Foundations\\_of\\_the\\_Torah.9.1?lang=bi](https://www.sefaria.org/Mishneh_Torah%2C_Foundations_of_the_Torah.9.1?lang=bi)

Covenant. God made that clear in Jeremiah 31:31-34, which was written six centuries before Yeshua, and is quoted again in Hebrews 8:13. Now the Mosaic Law is still good (Romans 7:12, 16), and is still informative. It is still useful, it is still weighty; however it is not a legally binding contract between God and Israel. When all Israel is saved and walks in the light of Messiah, the Mosaic Covenant will not be remembered.

Now we are still under a Law, a Torah, but not the Torah of Moses but the Torah of Messiah. In the Torah of Messiah:

1. **Some commandments are the same**, for example we are still not allowed to steal Exodus 20:15 & Ephesians 4:28 etc.
2. **Some commandments are new** as in Ephesians 5:18: “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Romans 13:13. Or in Matthew 6:6-8 Yeshua tells us to also pray in secret, and to fast without being noticed Matthew 6:16-25.
3. **Some commandments are repealed.** Under the New Covenant law, we cannot bring a physical animal sacrifice to please God; Leviticus 1:2-3 compare to Hebrews 10:1-18.
4. **Some commandments are strengthened** as in Matthew 5:21 “You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘*you shall not commit murder*’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ 22 But I say to you that ‘everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother’, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.”

We have a new Torah-code, a new law-code. We have not become lawless, but as a covenant, as a legally binding agreement, the Law of Moses has been replaced with the New Covenant, which is better than! How? Because it is based on a better ministry of the pure High Priest who has finished His work and is seated now on High, who brings in a better Covenant with better promises, namely Hebrews 8:10-12: the New Torah written on our hearts, the LORD will be our God, and we shall be His people and ALL shall know Him. And above all Hebrews 8:12 “*For I will be merciful to their iniquities, And I will remember their sins no more.*”

And that is the better than promise, for we who are in Messiah are forgiven, cleansed by God who knows you and me, because of who Yeshua is and what He has done.

*Selah*

*I hope this illuminates your understanding of the Newer Covenant*

*Blessings in Messiah Yeshua*

*Paul & Sue Cohen*