

deSilva, Hebrews, Session 7b, Resources from Notebooklm

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of deSilva, Hebrews, Session 7b, Hebrews 7:1-8:13: Better Priesthood, Better Covenant (Part 2), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. deSilva's lecture analyzes Hebrews 7:1-8:13, focusing on the superiority of Jesus' priesthood and covenant. **The argument centers on Jesus' heavenly ministry** in a superior, divinely-created sanctuary, contrasting it with the earthly, human-made temple. **This contrast highlights the new covenant's permanence and efficacy**, supported by Jeremiah's prophecy of a new covenant replacing the old. **The lecture emphasizes the significance of this new covenant** and its implications for believers, urging them to prioritize their faith despite external pressures. Finally, it underscores the enduring value of Jesus' sacrifice and the privilege of access to God through him.

2. 27-minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. deSilva's, Hebrews, Session 7b – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → General Epistles → Hebrews).



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3. Briefing Document

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. David A. deSilva's "Hebrews, Session 7b":

Briefing Document: Dr. David A. deSilva on Hebrews 7:1-8:13

Document Overview: This briefing summarizes Dr. deSilva's analysis of Hebrews 7:1-8:13, focusing on the author's arguments for the superiority of Jesus' priesthood and the new covenant over the Levitical priesthood and the old covenant. DeSilva highlights the author's use of scripture, especially Psalm 110 and Jeremiah 31, to support these claims, and also notes the importance of the heavenly sanctuary as the true location of Jesus' priestly ministry.

Main Themes:

1. Superiority of Jesus' Priesthood:

- **Central Claim:** The author of Hebrews makes the explicit claim that Jesus is a "great high priest, one who sat at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens" (8:1). This central point is established from the beginning of chapter 8.
- **Heavenly Ministry:** Jesus' priesthood is not exercised in an earthly temple, but in the "true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not a human being" (8:2). This heavenly sanctuary is superior to any earthly structure.
- **Order of Melchizedek:** Jesus' priesthood is not based on the Levitical line, but on the order of Melchizedek, which transcends the limitations of the old covenant.
- **Unique Qualifications:** Jesus is a priest who "possesses better qualifications as a reliable mediator, who will never die, who is not liable to sin" (deSilva, p.7).

1. The Heavenly Sanctuary:

- **True Location:** The author argues that Jesus' ministry is performed in a heavenly sanctuary, which is the true tabernacle, contrasting it with the earthly tabernacle, which was made by human hands. This reflects a common view in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. where earthly temples were seen as inferior.
- **Model & Shadow:** The earthly tabernacle was a "pattern and a shadow of the heavenly things" (8:5), a model based on the design shown to Moses on the mountain. This emphasizes the derivative nature of earthly religious practices.

- **Reality of Heavenly Realm:** The author tries to convey that the heavenly realm is just as real and tangible as the material one, despite being invisible. He uses the idea of a "geography and architecture" in God's realm to help his audience visualize this reality.

1. **The Better Covenant:**

- **Mediator:** Jesus is not just a better priest; he is also the mediator of a "better covenant, which was legislated on the basis of better promises" (8:6).
- **Old Covenant's Shortcomings:** The old covenant was not "faultless" and therefore God sought to establish a new one (8:7). The old covenant, along with the Levitical priesthood, was considered obsolete and passing away.
- **Jeremiah 31:** The author quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34 to support the idea of a new covenant where God's laws are internalized and forgiveness of sins is a reality.
- **Internalization of Law:** This new covenant involves God's laws being written on people's hearts (8:10), leading to an intimate knowledge of God.
- **Complete Forgiveness:** The promise of complete forgiveness is crucial: "I will be merciful in regard to their misdeeds and their sins, I will certainly remember no more" (8:12).

1. **Old Covenant as Obsolete:**

- **Annulled:** The term "new" used to describe the new covenant automatically renders the old one "old," which implies annulled or out of date.
- **Passing Away:** The author claims that the old covenant is not only out of date but also "close to disappearing." He connects the old covenant with the material, visible creation that is passing away.
- **Rejection of Two-Covenant Theology:** The author rejects a "two-covenant theology," which posits that the old covenant is still valid for Jewish people. The author's view is consistent with that of Paul, who was deeply grieved by the rejection of Jesus by many of his people.

1. **Pastoral Goal:**

- **Encouraging Perseverance:** The author's goal is to encourage his audience to persevere in their Christian faith, despite persecution and hardship, by showing them the superiority of Jesus' priesthood and the new covenant.

- **Privileged Position:** The author argues that although the hearers' circumstances might seem dire, they are in a position of remarkable privilege within God's plan, a point of view where they stand at the fulfillment of promises from the past.
- **Challenging Materialism:** The author challenges the audience's commitment to empiricism and materialism, urging them to trust the invisible realm of God over the visible world.
- **Value of Access to God:** The author reminds the audience that the ability to draw near to God was unprecedented before Jesus, a privilege not to be taken for granted.

Key Ideas & Quotes:

- "We have so great a high priest, one who sat at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens..." (8:1)
- "...a minister of the holy places, and the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not a human being." (8:2)
- "...those who offer gifts according to the law serve a pattern and a shadow of the heavenly things." (8:5)
- "But now, he has received a correspondingly more distinguished ministry as he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was legislated on the basis of better promises." (8:6)
- "In saying new, he renders the first old, and that which is growing old and obsolete is close to disappearing." (8:13)
- "Things have gotten rather worse than better, but if they take this longer view that the author is laying out from the point of view of God's dealing with humanity to form a people for himself, they stand at a point of remarkable privilege..." (deSilva, p.7)
- "Christian worship coming before the almighty together is, therefore, not a chore, not an obligation that eats into our Sundays, but an astonishing privilege." (deSilva, p.8)
- "The visible material world is the unreliable one, while Jesus is the reliable foundation on which to build a genuinely secure life." (deSilva, p.8)

Conclusion:

Dr. deSilva's analysis of Hebrews 7:1-8:13 reveals the author's sophisticated use of scripture and theological arguments to demonstrate the superiority of Jesus as a high priest, the reality of the heavenly sanctuary, and the profound significance of the new covenant. The author's primary purpose is to reassure and encourage his audience by placing their current hardships within the context of God's overarching plan of salvation, ultimately promoting perseverance by highlighting the superior privileges they have in Christ. The analysis also serves to challenge contemporary Christians to appreciate the radical implications of Christ's work and avoid complacency in their access to God.

4. Hebrews Study Guide: 7b, Hebrews 7:1-8:13, Better Priesthood, Better Covenant (Part 2)

Hebrews Chapters 7-8 Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is the main point the author of Hebrews makes at the beginning of chapter 8 regarding Jesus' priestly ministry?
2. How does the author of Hebrews contrast the earthly and heavenly tabernacles in chapter 8?
3. According to the text, why is it necessary for Jesus to have something to offer as a priest?
4. What is the significance of Jesus not being descended from the tribe of Levi, according to Hebrews?
5. How does the author of Hebrews use Exodus 25:40 to support the existence of a heavenly temple?
6. In the text, how does the author of Hebrews challenge the Platonic view of reality when discussing the earthly and heavenly realms?
7. What does it mean that Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant?
8. How does the author use Jeremiah 31:31-34 to demonstrate the need for a new covenant?
9. According to the text, what is significant about God's promise of writing his laws on the hearts of his people in Jeremiah 31:33?
10. How does the author of Hebrews interpret Jeremiah's use of the word "new" regarding the covenant?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The main point is that we have a great high priest, Jesus, who is seated at the right hand of God's throne in heaven and ministers in the true tabernacle made by the Lord, not by human hands.

2. The earthly tabernacle is described as a human-made copy or shadow of the superior, divinely manufactured, eternal heavenly tabernacle where Jesus ministers. The text also asserts the superiority of the one who created the heavenly tabernacle over the builders of earthly temples.
3. As a priest is defined by the offering of gifts and sacrifices, Jesus, in his role as a priest, also needed something to offer to fulfill his priestly function. This was a necessary element of his priesthood.
4. Because Jesus is not a descendant of Levi, he doesn't qualify for the earthly priesthood according to the Torah. This fact serves as part of the argument that Jesus is a priest in heaven, where the rules for priesthood are different.
5. The author uses Exodus 25:40 to show that the earthly tabernacle is a copy of the heavenly model shown to Moses on the mountain, proving that a primary heavenly temple exists and that the earthly temple is secondary.
6. The author does not engage a platonic philosophy but distinguishes the visible and material with the eternal heavenly realm. He argues this concept within a Jewish cosmological framework, not as ideals but rather as realities that exist, one visible and temporal and the other invisible and eternal.
7. Jesus is described as the mediator of a better covenant because the covenant is based on better promises than the old covenant, guaranteed by God's oath, and results in a more distinguished ministry.
8. The author uses Jeremiah to demonstrate God's intention to replace the old, ineffective covenant with a new one. Jeremiah's text highlights God's dissatisfaction with the old covenant and his promise of a new covenant in the future.
9. God's promise of writing laws on people's hearts signifies an internalization of God's commandments, creating an internal commitment to living in accordance with his laws rather than relying solely on external regulations.
10. The author interprets Jeremiah's use of "new" to mean that the first covenant is rendered old, obsolete, and close to disappearing, highlighting its temporary and inferior nature compared to the new covenant.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Write a well-organized essay in response to each of the following questions. Support your answers with information from the provided text.

1. Analyze the author of Hebrews' use of Psalm 110 in developing the argument for Jesus' superior priesthood, and describe how it compares and contrasts with the Levitical priesthood.
2. Discuss the author's argument for the existence and superiority of the heavenly sanctuary, drawing on the text's use of biblical and extra-biblical sources such as Exodus 25:40, 1 Enoch, Wisdom of Solomon, and 2 Baruch.
3. Explain the significance of the "new covenant" in Hebrews 8, emphasizing its contrast with the "old covenant" and focusing on the promises made in Jeremiah 31:31-34, as described in the text.
4. How does the author of Hebrews address the potential objections and challenges his audience might face regarding the idea of a new covenant?
5. Discuss the author of Hebrews' pastoral strategy in chapters 7 and 8 and how he uses his arguments to encourage and strengthen his audience, connecting his approach to the situation of his intended readers.

Glossary of Key Terms

Cephalon: The "main point" or "leading idea," which encapsulates the primary focus of a discussion or argument. In this text, it's used to describe the author of Hebrews' central argument regarding Jesus' priesthood.

Torah: The first five books of the Hebrew Bible, also known as the Pentateuch, traditionally attributed to Moses. It includes the Law of Moses with its commandments, regulations, and narratives.

Levitical Priesthood: The priesthood in ancient Israel was established according to the Torah and reserved for male descendants of the tribe of Levi, particularly those descended from Aaron. This line of priests was responsible for conducting rituals and sacrifices in the tabernacle and temple.

Melchizedek: A priest-king in the book of Genesis 14. The author of Hebrews uses Melchizedek as a type or pattern for Jesus' priesthood, arguing that his is superior to the Levitical priesthood.

Heavenly Tabernacle: A sanctuary in the heavenly realm where God dwells, which serves as the prototype for the earthly tabernacle. In Hebrews, this is where Jesus ministers as high priest.

Anti-Type: As the author of Hebrews uses it here, the imitation of the prototype. In this case, the earthly temple is the anti-type of the heavenly temple.

New Covenant: The covenant that God established through Jesus, which is described as superior to the Mosaic covenant because it offers forgiveness of sins and an internal knowledge of and commitment to God's laws.

Old Covenant: The covenant made between God and the Israelites at Mount Sinai, mediated by Moses, based on the Mosaic Law and involving ritual sacrifices. According to Hebrews, the Old Covenant is now obsolete, having been replaced by the New Covenant.

Eschatology: A branch of theology that studies the end times or the last things. It involves concepts like death, judgment, heaven, hell, and the ultimate destiny of humanity.

Two-Covenant Theology: A theological position that asserts that God has two distinct covenants: one for the Jewish people (the Mosaic covenant) and one for non-Jews (the New Covenant). This view suggests that both covenants are equally valid and operational.

5. FAQs on DeSilva, Hebrews, Session 7b, Hebrews 7:1-8:13, Better Priesthood, Better Covenant (Part 2), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Understanding Hebrews 7-8

1. **What is the main point the author of Hebrews is making about Jesus' priesthood in chapter 8?** The author is emphasizing that Jesus is a high priest in the heavenly realm, seated at the right hand of God, ministering in the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, not a human-made one. This establishes that Jesus' priesthood is superior because it is exercised in a superior, divinely-made venue. The author is driving home the point that Jesus' ministry is conducted in the actual, heavenly sanctuary.
2. **Why does the author of Hebrews emphasize that Jesus' priesthood is not based on earthly lineage?** The author points out that Jesus is not from the priestly tribe of Levi but from the tribe of Judah. Since the Torah mandates that priests must be from the line of Levi, Jesus' priesthood cannot be earthly. Therefore, the author reasons, Jesus' priesthood must be in the heavenly realm, since he is clearly designated a priest in Psalm 110. This also underscores the superiority of Jesus' priesthood, which is not bound by earthly regulations.
3. **What is meant by the "heavenly tabernacle" and why is it important?** The heavenly tabernacle is the true, divine dwelling place of God, from which Jesus ministers as a priest. The earthly tabernacle or temple is considered a copy or shadow of this heavenly reality. The author uses this concept to highlight that Jesus ministers in the most authentic and superior location. This emphasis reflects a common belief in Hellenistic Judaism that earthly sanctuaries were inferior to their heavenly counterparts.
4. **How does the author of Hebrews use the concept of "shadows" and "copies"?** The author uses the metaphor of "shadow" and "copy" to explain the relationship between the earthly tabernacle and its heavenly counterpart. The earthly is a mere imitation of the true, heavenly one. This isn't to embrace a Platonic view of reality as mental constructs, but rather to emphasize that while the heavenly realm is invisible to the material realm, it is more real, eternal, and superior, not existing in the realm of ideas but the realm of God. It also helps in showing that the old covenant was not ultimate.

5. **What is the "better covenant" the author refers to, and how is it different from the old covenant?** The "better covenant" is the one mediated by Jesus, which is based on better promises and guaranteed by God's oath. The old covenant, established through Moses, was flawed because people were unable to remain faithful. The new covenant involves an internalization of God's laws written on the hearts of believers, with a complete forgiveness of sins, as prophesied by Jeremiah. This better covenant is far superior in its effects, access to God, and promise.
6. **How does the author use the prophecy of Jeremiah 31:31-34 to argue for the new covenant?** The author uses Jeremiah's prophecy to demonstrate that God Himself intended to set aside the old covenant and institute a new one. This prophecy foretells a covenant with internalized laws, intimate knowledge of God, and a complete forgiveness of sins. By quoting this passage, the author shows that the new covenant isn't an afterthought but part of God's plan to provide a better way for humans to relate to him.
7. **Why does the author say the old covenant is "growing old and obsolete?"** The author argues that, based on Jeremiah's prophecy of a "new" covenant, the old covenant is rendered "old" or outdated. This obsolescence implies that the old covenant is fading away because it was ultimately insufficient to meet the needs of humanity's relationship with God. In other words it was temporary, designed to point towards the new and greater covenant. This is also how the author begins to talk about the passing away of the material world itself.
8. **What is the author's ultimate goal in highlighting the superiority of Jesus and the new covenant?** The author's goal is pastoral: to encourage his audience to persevere in their faith in Jesus. He does this by demonstrating the incomparable value of Jesus as high priest, his superior venue of ministry, and the better covenant he mediates. He aims to persuade them that despite difficulties, they stand at a point of extraordinary privilege in history. The author is also cautioning the listeners about focusing too much on the material and visible world which, unlike the eternal realm, will pass away. The listeners should be fully invested in Jesus and the promises of the new covenant.