

APPLICATION

- Do you believe that God has forgiven us from all sin for all time because of Christ? How may your life reflect this truth? What will change in the way you live?
- Knowing that Jesus is the guarantor of the new covenant, how may you rely on Him as you seek to obey God and live a life of holiness?
- Identify two people whom you can encourage to know Jesus and His better covenant. How may you encourage them to follow Him and live like Him?

PRAYER

- Thank God for His Son, Jesus, through whom we can experience a better covenant and for always being faithful to His promises.
- Ask God to help you understand and live in faith, knowing that His covenant in Christ is permanent and complete. Pray for grace and strength to live according to His word.
- Pray for the boldness to share Christ with those around you. May you be able to encourage them to look to Christ and the sureness of His salvation and promises for us.

JESUS >

Better Covenant

WEEK 7

WARM-UP

- Think of a time when you fulfilled a promise you made to someone. How did the other person respond? What did it take for you to fulfill that promise?
- Has someone ever made a promise to you and did not fulfill it? Share what happened.
- Recall a time when you made a commitment but were unable to fulfill it. What did you do after? How did the people affected by your actions respond?

WORD ²⁰And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, ²¹but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind, 'You are a priest forever.'" ²²This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. **HEBREWS 7:20-22**

(Read also **HEBREWS 7:23-28.**)

A covenant is a binding agreement where two parties who are not part of the same family become family. A covenant shares some features similar to that of a contract, where two parties agree to fulfill what they have committed to do. In ancient times, it was held in high regard, to the point that whoever did not fulfill their part was met with a punishment or consequence. In the Old Testament, God made a covenant with His chosen people, Israel. However, time and time again, Israel would break their part of the covenant by sinning against God. Priests had to make offerings and sacrifices to God for God's people to be spared and forgiven. So God sent Jesus and appointed Him as the ultimate high priest and *guarantor* of a new, better covenant. Today, we will look at what makes this covenant better.



1 | The better covenant is guaranteed by Christ.

This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. HEBREWS 7:22

In the old covenant between God and Israel, people experienced blessings or curses depending on how well they had lived up to the terms of the covenant. Sadly, Israel, more often than not, kept failing to live up to the covenant, so they were repeatedly disciplined by God. However, because of Jesus Christ, we who believe in Him become partakers of the new and better covenant, of which He Himself is the guarantor. Jesus bore all the curses and punishment for our sins and failures. Moreover, His perfect and sinless life has been credited to us, thus fulfilling the terms of the covenant. What does a guarantee mean, and how does this bring security?

2 | The better covenant is permanent.

. . . ²⁴but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. ²⁵Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. . . . ²⁷He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. HEBREWS 7:24-25, 27

We have a better covenant because Jesus, our high priest, is forever. His eternal nature seals the permanence of this covenant. After sacrificing His own life for us and dying for our sins, He resurrected and continues to live forever. Death has no power over Him, nor can it stop Him from upholding the covenant for us. As our forever high priest, Jesus ensures

we have access to God's throne of grace. Through Him, we can go to the Father and enjoy the relationship that the covenant made available to us. How has knowing this shaped your view of your present and future?

3 | The better covenant is complete.

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As our high priest, Jesus did not need to purify Himself and offer atoning sacrifices for Himself first before appealing to God on our behalf. He is already pure, the only perfect one without sin. Unlike the sacrifices made by the old covenant high priests, Jesus' sacrifice is able to save to the uttermost. His one sacrifice is sufficient for all people, not just for Israel. It is sufficient for all kinds of sins, including those not covered by the old covenant sacrifices. It is sufficient for all time, covering past, present, and future sins. His sacrifice is sufficient to accomplish all aspects of salvation, including our forgiveness, transformation, and glorification. What kind of posture should we have, knowing that our salvation is complete in Christ?