

LG | LeaderGuide

[Primary Text: Hebrews 7-8]

PRAY

Pause. Acknowledge that you are about to open God's word.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate His word.

WARM-UP

Prepare our minds to receive God's word.

- When reflecting on the message this past Sunday, what most resonated with you?

ILLUMINATE

Open your Bibles to the primary text. If you do not have a Bible, your leader can provide one.

- Let's read together our primary text. What major themes do you see here?

The law lacks the power to save, Jesus is the better, eternal high priest, Jesus is the guarantor of a better covenant, etc.

- Verse 11 of Chapter 7 refers to "the Levitical priesthood". What was the Levitical priesthood? What function did priests serve in the Old Testament?

The Levitical priesthood was the order of priests in the Old Testament. In Numbers 18, the Lord told Aaron that his tribe (the Levites), would serve the Lord as priests. The priestly role was to make offerings and sacrifices to atone for the sins of the people. Essentially, they served as mediators of the law between God and his people.

- What was the basis of the Levitical priesthood, and how does it differ from the basis of Jesus' priesthood? Why is this important?

The Levitical priesthood was based on "legal requirement concerning bodily descent", but the priesthood of Jesus is based on "an indestructible life" (7:16). The Levitical priests were so because of their physical heredity, being born in the line of Aaron. However, the priesthood of Jesus is a spiritual one; namely by God's divine appointment. This was foreshadowed in the encounter between Abraham and the mysterious Priest/King Melchizedek in Genesis 14; where Abraham paid homage and gave a tenth of his portion to Melchizedek. Hebrews 7 makes the connection that in that moment, the Levitical priesthood symbolically bowed (showing inferiority to) the Priesthood of Melchizedek, being in the loins of Abraham. So in every way, Jesus is the new and greater high priest. This is of great importance! In order for the law to change, the priesthood must change (v. 12). Jesus is not a priest in the order of Aaron, but in the order of Melchizedek. This means his priesthood is perfect and eternal.

- Why was the law unable to make anything perfect? What was God's solution to the "weakness and uselessness" of the law to save?

According to Romans 8:3, the law was weakened by the flesh. Though the law might be perfect because it was instituted by God, no human could ever keep it perfectly because of their sinful nature. No matter how hard we try, we will always fall short of the perfection that the law requires and be reminded of our sinfulness (Romans 3:20). So God sent Jesus to fulfill the law; living a perfect life and to be a once-and-for-all sacrifice for sin so that we might be made righteous through his atoning sacrifice.

- In what ways are we still tempted to live by the law rather than by grace? Why do we have this tendency?

Though we've been set free from the law, we still live with a sinful flesh. We live a life in the Spirit, but battle the temptations of our flesh. Paul expresses this struggle clearly in Romans 7:15-23. It's human nature to try to earn our way to God. Adam and Eve ate the fruit, thinking it would make them "like God". We have this struggle because though we live in the Spirit, we still fight the temptations of our flesh.

- Last week, we talked about oaths and what they meant in the Old Testament. Can someone give us a refresher on what they were? What oath is the New Covenant based on? What's the significance of this?

According to Hebrews 7:20-22, Jesus has been made priest forever, the guarantor of a better covenant. This means that the New Covenant is based on the character of Jesus! This gives us assurance, because our hope is based on the righteousness of Jesus and his ability to keep the law and intercede for us, rather than our own.

- What does Hebrews 7:23-28 teach us about the nature and character of Jesus' priesthood? What do we learn about our access to God because of Jesus? How should we respond to our sin in light of this?

Jesus' priesthood is a permanent one because he is eternal. Jesus does not need to offer sacrifices daily, since he offered himself up once and for all. Because of this, we have immediate, unhindered access to God through the intercession and righteousness of Jesus. This should cause us to take our sins to him, knowing that he is faithful and just to forgive (John 1:9).

PRAY

Use this time to pray specifically. What does tonight's conversation lead you to pray for?