

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### First Quarter 2022: *In These Last Days: The Message of Hebrews*

### Lesson 2 “The Message of Hebrews”

#### Read for this week’s study

Hebrews 1:5–14; Luke 1:30–33; Psalm 132:1–5; Hebrews 2:14–16; Hebrews 5:1–4; 1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 8:8–12.

#### Memory Text

“This is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Hebrews 8:1, NKJV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Jesus Is Our King
- III. Jesus Is Our Mediator
- IV. Jesus Is Our Champion
- V. Jesus Is Our High Priest
- VI. Jesus Mediates a Better Covenant
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. The title of this week’s lesson immediately raises the question: “What IS the message of Hebrews?” The biblical author seems to be trying to answer that question in the memory text for this week: Hebrews 8:1. “Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven”. . . (ESV). The main point of Hebrews, at least in the writer’s mind while writing the above, is that Jesus is our High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary. As we will see in this lesson, Jesus is not just a High Priest in Hebrews, he is a mediator and a king. So the broadest answer to the question regarding the message of Hebrews is, ***Jesus is everything you need***. Hebrew Christians may have wondered why God’s chosen people continued to be marginalized in a society centered in Rome. Hebrews responds by clarifying the true mission of the Messiah. (Sabbath afternoon’s lesson)

2. What role did or should the Hebrew sanctuary play in the lives of Christians? Was the Sanctuary central to God's plans from the beginning? *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 364: "If man had kept the law of God, as given to Adam after his fall . . . there would have been no necessity for the ordinance of circumcision. And if the descendants of Abraham had kept the covenant, of which circumcision was a sign . . . there would have been no necessity for it to be proclaimed from Sinai or engraved upon the tables of stone. And had the people practiced the principles of the Ten Commandments, there would have been no need of the additional directions given to Moses." What role did the Hebrew sanctuary play in the lives of Christians? Matthew 18:20; 12:6; John 2:21-23; 1 Corinthians 3:17; 6:19-20; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Hebrews 8:1-6. (Wednesday's Lesson)
3. What is the point of emphasizing that Jesus is a High Priest? What is it that priests actually do? Read Leviticus 1:1-9; 10:8-11; Numbers 6:22-26; Malachi 2:7; Hebrews 5:1-4; Hebrews 2:3-4. When the Reformers talked about the priesthood of all believers, what were they talking about? Read Exodus 19:5-6 and 1 Peter 2:9. How does one play such a priestly role in the world today? (Wednesday's Lesson)
4. Hebrews 8-10 focuses on the work of Jesus as the mediator of a new covenant. The old covenant was the national covenant between God and Israel. That covenant was centered in the temple, the nation, the priesthood and kingship. What impact did the coming of Jesus have on each of those aspects of the covenant? Read Hebrews 8:1-12. How was the new covenant different from the old? (Thursday's Lesson)
5. Jesus was more than just a priest, He was also a king. When Adam and Eve sinned, Satan became the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). But Jesus defeated Satan in His life and death, recovering the right to rule this earth. Read Hebrews 1:3-14. Then read Hebrews 1:3-4 more intently. How do you "become" something that you already are by right? Re-read Hebrews 1:5-6. What was the author of Hebrew's trying to communicate here? What is going on in Hebrews 1:7-14? What aspects of Hebrews 1 tell us that Jesus is more than just king of this world? (Sunday's Lesson)
6. One of the important themes of Hebrews is that in Jesus, God was fulfilling His promises to David. To understand the background of this concept, read Exodus 4:22-23 and then 2 Samuel 7:12-14. How was the kingship of Israel supposed to relate to the mission of Israel (Exodus 19:5-6)? Read Deuteronomy 12:8-10; 2 Samuel 7:9-11; and then Deuteronomy 12:13-14. What role did David play in preparing the way for the temple? On what realities were the promises of God to David based? Read Psalm 132:1-5, 11-14. How did Jesus relate to those realities? What is it that brought about the change? (Monday's Lesson)
7. Compare 1 Samuel 8:19-20 with Hebrews 2:14-16. What did the Israelites look for in a king, and how were these expectations fulfilled in Jesus? How does this insight affect the way one reads a passage like Ephesians 6:10-17? What does it really mean to put on the armor of God? (Tuesday's Lesson)

8. In what ways can a local church serve as a “kingdom of priests” in the secular world today? How does one offer up “spiritual sacrifices”? How does one’s body become a “living sacrifice”? (Friday’s Lesson)
9. In what ways is the situation we face today similar to that of Israel at the borders of the Promised Land? What lessons can we learn from the similarities? (Friday’s Lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

As friends of a friendly God, the disciples were encouraged to present their own requests directly to the Father. It was not necessary for Jesus to do this for them.

They were, however, to “ask in my name,” Jesus said. This was not to suggest that if God did not hear the name of his Son, he would be less willing to grant requests. The mention of the name of Jesus expresses grateful recognition that if the Son of God had not shown us the truth about his Father, we would not know how we could approach him. We might not even want to.

In this sense, we have indeed needed someone to “mediate,” to “intercede,” to “intervene,” all Latin-based words meaning respectively “to be in the middle,” “to go between,” “to come between.” Every time we pray in Jesus’ name, we thank God for Christ our Mediator, who came to bridge the gap between us and God and bring us the truth about our loving heavenly Father.

Because of Jesus, we know that we can talk with our heavenly Father “as one speaks with a friend.” There is no need for some other friend between, for God himself is our Friend.

{Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends? Another Look at God*, 76-77. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.} <http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter6.html>

It is most significant to know that the word “salvation” means, essentially, healing. To be saved is to be healed. In one very legal understanding of the plan of salvation, to be saved is more to be forgiven; almost to have your fire insurance paid up, so you can be admitted. In the trust-healing model, salvation means healing the damage done. This is made plain in many places in scripture.

Look at the next two examples on the list, of Luke 18:42, in two different versions. Jesus said to the blind man: “Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.” That’s the *King James Version*. But the *New International Version*, right underneath: “Receive your sight; your faith has healed you.” {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *Conversations About God*, #14, “God

Can Completely Heal the Damage Done” recorded May 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/14MMCAG>

The purpose of the plan of salvation is to restore that trust, to bring the rebellion to an end, and thus to establish at-one-ment once again in the whole universe. All of God’s children are unavoidably involved.

Some seem to find it disappointing, even offensive, to learn that Christ did not die primarily for them. But unless God wins this war and reestablishes peace in his family, our salvation is meaningless. Who would want to live for eternity in a warring universe?

Without this larger understanding of a conflict that has involved the universe, it’s hard to understand Paul’s explanation that Jesus shed his blood to bring peace, reconciliation, and unity to God’s children in heaven as well as on earth. But recognition of the war and its issues helps one to take a larger view of the cross and of the plan of salvation and atonement.

The kind of unity God desires cannot be commanded or produced by force or fear. In the course of human history, many tyrants have tried to maintain unity by terror and brutality. But that kind of at-one-ment does not last. Look at what has happened in a number of countries just in recent years.

The kind of at-one-ment God desires is described in the New Testament as a unity that is “inherent in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God.” (Ephesians 4:13, REB) People who love and trust the same Jesus and the same God are naturally attracted to each other. The same truth about God that sets them free from tyranny and fear binds them together in the firmest kind of unity. Friends of a friendly God enjoy at-one-ment with each other.

This is where the meaning of the cross is so important. There can be no friendship and at-one-ment where there is fear. Calvary says there is no need to be afraid of God. When God says, “Be my friend,” he’s not saying, “Be my friend or I’ll punish you severely; I’ll even put you to death.” You don’t talk that way to friends—especially if you want to keep their friendship. And friendship is the whole purpose and meaning of atonement. {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends? Another Look at God*, 164-165. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.}

<http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter12.html>

The evidence of the new covenant as explained in Hebrews, it's not new. It's in Jeremiah. It's in other places, but how clearly spelled out twice in Hebrews that God really wants to write his law in our minds so that our obedience may be intelligent and not rote and mechanical. Now, knowing that God does not just want the service of unwilling slaves—think what that says about the trustworthiness of our heavenly Father. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series Hebrews, #16, recorded December 1978, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/23MMHEBREWS66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/24MMHEBREWS66> (Part 2)

You remember the new covenant? It'll all be written in our hearts, and we'll do what's right because it is right. God will not have to lecture us a million years down the line and say, "I want all the murdering up here in heaven to stop." We won't have hated a soul for a million years. We'll be doing what's right because it is right. Now if you heard your children behind the door saying, "Let's do what our folks want. I mean, you'll have to admit that everything they've asked us to do makes such good sense, we ought to want to do it anyway." And you get the impression that even after you're dead and gone, your children will go on doing what's right because it is right, because now they're maturing, and they've come to see.

We're not that perfect as parents, so this doesn't quite work. But let's imagine it, for the moment. With God it does. When we say, God, the longer I live the more I find that everything you've ever asked me to do makes such good sense, I ought to want to do it anyway. And now I tell you I do want to do it." Leading to the day when, sometime, we'll stand in the presence of God and say, "God, I agree with you. And I am pleased to do all these things that I used to do just because you told me to. I agree with you." And God can say, "At last you're free. You've learned the truth, and the truth set you free." And now the law is written in our hearts and we do what's right because it is right, and not because we're told to." But until we've reached that point, we need the law, and we need reward, and we need threats. We need all those things, don't we? But isn't that a condescension to our lawlessness and our immaturity and our ignorance?

By the way, to complete that obedience number 3, to balance it out, I would have to say that even though with the passing of time I'm finding more and more that everything God has asked us to do makes such good sense I agree with him; I would have to say, that being still somewhat ignorant and immature, I'm willing to obey this trustworthy God when he instructs me to do something beyond my present understanding. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Galatians, recorded April 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link:*

<http://pkp.cc/65MMPOGIA66>

## Further Study with Ellen White

God has angels whose whole work is to draw those who shall be heirs of salvation. Whenever one takes a step toward Jesus, Jesus is taking steps toward him. The angels' work is to keep back the powers of Satan (MS 17, 1893). {7BC 922.5}

Satanic agencies are always warring for the mastery over the human mind, but the angels of God are constantly at work, strengthening the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees of all who call upon God for help (RH July 4, 1899). {7BC 923.5}

Angels are ever present where they are most needed. They are with those who have the hardest battles to fight, with those who must battle against inclination and hereditary tendencies, whose home surroundings are the most discouraging. {ML 303.6}

The Teacher from heaven, no less a personage than the Son of God, came to earth to reveal the character of the Father to men, that they might worship Him in spirit and in truth. Christ revealed to men the fact that the strictest adherence to ceremony and form would not save them; for the kingdom of God was spiritual in its nature. Christ came to the world to sow it with truth. He held the keys to all the treasures of wisdom, and was able to open doors to science, and to reveal undiscovered stores of knowledge, were it essential to salvation. He presented to men that which was exactly contrary to the representations of the enemy in regard to the character of God, and sought to impress upon men the paternal love of the Father, who "so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." He urged upon men the necessity of prayer, repentance, confession, and the abandonment of sin. He taught them honesty, forbearance, mercy, and compassion, enjoining upon them to love not only those who loved them, but those who hated them, who treated them despitefully. In this He was revealing to them the character of the Father, who is long-suffering, merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and full of goodness and truth. Those who accepted His teaching were under the guardian care of angels, who were commissioned to strengthen, to enlighten, that the truth might renew and sanctify the soul. {FE 177.1}

Love to man is the earthward manifestation of the love of God. It was to implant this love, to make us children of one family, that the King of glory became one with us. {DA 641.3}

Never was there such an evangelist as Christ. He was the Majesty of heaven, but He humbled Himself to take our nature, that He might meet men where they were. To all people, rich and poor, free and bond, Christ, the Messenger of the covenant, brought the tidings of salvation. His fame as the Great Healer spread throughout Palestine. The sick came to the places through which He would pass, that they might call on Him for help. Hither, too, came many anxious to hear His words and to receive a touch of His hand. Thus He went from city to city, from town to

town, preaching the gospel and healing the sick—the King of glory in the lowly garb of humanity. {MH 22.1}

Christ’s favorite theme was the paternal character and abundant love of God. This knowledge of God was Christ’s own gift to men, and this gift He has committed to His people to be communicated by them to the world. {6T 55.1}

Christ came to reveal God to the world as a God of love, a God of mercy, tenderness, and compassion. By the world’s Redeemer the thick darkness with which Satan had enshrouded the throne of the Deity was swept away, and the Father was again manifest to men as the Light of life. . . . {HP 8.3}

In word and in deed the Messiah, during His earthly ministry, was to reveal to mankind the glory of God the Father. Every act of His life, every word spoken, every miracle wrought, was to make known to fallen humanity the infinite love of God. {PK 696.3}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ. {MH 419.1}

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. . . The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God. {5BC 1132.8}

Satan has come down with great power, knowing that his time is short. The controversy is being waged in full view of the heavenly universe, and angels stand ready to lift up for God’s hard pressed soldiers a standard against the enemy, and to put into their lips songs of victory and rejoicing (MS 38, 1905). {3BC 1143.1}

The enemy cannot overcome the humble learner of Christ, the one who walks prayerfully before the Lord. Christ interposes Himself as a shelter, a retreat, from the assaults of the wicked one. The promise is given, “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” . . . {ML 316.2}

God has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. {AG 209.2}

The children of God are cooperating with all the invisible host of light. And more than angels are in their ranks; the Holy Spirit, the representative of the Captain of the Lord's host, comes down to direct the battle. {UL 82.5}

The divine Teacher bears with the erring through all their perversity. His love does not grow cold; His efforts to win them do not cease. With outstretched arms He waits to welcome again and again the erring, the rebellious, and even the apostate. His heart is touched with the helplessness of the little child subject to rough usage. The cry of human suffering never reaches His ear in vain. Though all are precious in His sight, the rough, sullen, stubborn dispositions draw most heavily upon His sympathy and love; for He traces from cause to effect. The one who is most easily tempted, and is most inclined to err, is the special object of His solicitude. {Ed 294.2}

The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity. . . . {AG 130.2}

God's work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development and different manifestations of His power, to meet the wants of men in the different ages. Beginning with the first gospel promise, and coming down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, and even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. . . . He who proclaimed the law from Sinai, and delivered to Moses the precepts of the ritual law, is the same that spoke the sermon on the mount. . . . The Teacher is the same in both dispensations. God's claims are the same. The principles of His government are the same. {AG 130.4}

Let those who are oppressed under a sense of sin remember that there is hope for them. The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity (ST June 12, 1901). {7BC 934.25}

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are

renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new-covenant promise is fulfilled, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:16. And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship. Thus the Scripture says, “This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 5:3; 2:4. Instead of releasing man from obedience, it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience. {SC 60.2}