

A More Excellent Ministry

Key Verse: “Now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.” —Hebrews 8:6

Selected Scripture: Hebrews 8:1-12

sequently its Temple.—Exod. 28:1-3

Speaking of Christ as a greater high priest, Paul says, “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” (Heb. 8:1,2) The various religious ordinances and services performed by the Jewish priesthood were to “serve unto the example and shadow” of the higher reality to be manifested on behalf of all the families of the earth.—vs. 5

Our Key Verse affirms that now in the Gospel Age, a

IN THIS LESSON, REITER-ated from the preceding chapter, we note that Jesus Christ after his resurrection is a high priest according to the order of Melchisedec and occupies a position of authority in heaven. Accordingly, his ministry is superior to the Levitical priesthood which existed on earth and began with Aaron, the older brother of Moses. Aaron’s descendants served as priests who ministered in Israel’s Tabernacle and sub-

change from previous conditions has occurred. As Moses was the mediator of Israel's Law Covenant, so Christ Jesus is the mediator of a New Covenant which has been legislated with promises of better things to be accomplished during God's kingdom.

As a further expansion on this subject, we are informed that the necessity for this second covenant lay in the fact that the first one did not have a perfect mediator who could compensate for the weakness and inability of the Israelites to keep it. (vss. 7,8) Moses was a faithful servant of God, but he was only able to offer imperfect sacrifices which could not take away the sins of the people.—Heb. 11:24-28,39,40

Nevertheless, after the close of the Gospel Age, a new arrangement will be instituted as a result of Christ's having laid down his life as a ransom for all. There will be an opportunity for the nation of Israel and the entire human family to receive the blessings promised by God through the promised spiritual seed of Abraham.—I Tim. 2:5,6; Gal. 3:16,22,27-29

God's requirements for his intelligent beings are very exacting. Through his use of covenants, past, present and future, the consequences for engaging in sinful behavior are dire. We are very grateful that despite human frailties, through the faithful sacrifice of Christ Jesus, a means of reconciliation has been found for all who desire to be restored to divine favor. We can be encouraged that in addition to being just, the Heavenly Father is also merciful. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."—Heb. 8:12

As we desire to share in the process of helping the human family to attain perfect life during the glorious kingdom of Christ, let us be faithful to our vows of consecration now as part of our preparation for such an exalted position. "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."—Gal. 3:9 ■