

What's so Much Better About the New?

[Hebrews 7:18-28](#)

Hebrews, Day 24

Audio Version

For on the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect); but on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.

And it was not without an oath. For those who formerly became priests were made such without an oath, but 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.’”*

This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant.

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, 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.

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He 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. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

-Hebrews 7:18-28, ESV

I love reading magazine articles about old cars. American Pickers is one of my favorite TV shows, especially when they're looking at and talking about old cars and motorcycles. We have a family membership to the Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA) Museum. Yet, if I'm honest, I have to admit - [along with Jay Leno](#) - that the newer cars of today really are better in every way. They have better performance, better handling, better safety features and pollution controls, so they're better for people and the environment. But I do still love those old cars.

What about the Old Testament? The people who first received the Book of Hebrews as a letter were being tempted to think the old was better and to go back to it. They were tempted to think that the sacrifices, ceremonies, dietary laws, holy days and regulations of the old covenant age were good enough, certainly better than being persecuted for their Christian faith.

But was it better? No. Not at all. In fact, Hebrews 7:18 says the Mosaic Law and the Levitical priesthood were weak and useless, for they made nothing perfect. So, it was set aside and a better hope was introduced in Jesus. But how is the hope we have in Jesus now better? What's so much better about the new?

I. A Better Hope: The first better introduced in today's passage is "a better hope." The better hope comes in part because of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. He lives forever as our high priest because His life is indestructible in His resurrection glory. So our hope is better, a hope stronger than death.

2. A Better Oath: God has made a better oath to the high priest of the new covenant, Jesus. He has sworn to make Him a priest forever, not just for a few years. Under the old covenant, a change of high priest brought uncertainty, because the new high priest could be unfaithful and unreliable. We never need to fear such an event, for God has sworn a better oath to keep Jesus as high priest forever.

3. A Better Intercession: One of the key roles of a priest is to make intercession for the people. The priest pleads before God for mercy for the people of God, Because Jesus lives forever, He is able to never stop praying for us. *"Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him."*

4. A Better High Priest: Our high priest not only makes better intercession because He lives forever, but He is also better because He is *"holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens."*

5. A Better Sacrifice: Jesus is not only a better high priest, but He offered a better sacrifice. He does not offer a daily sacrifice. He offered Himself once-for-all, accomplishing all that was needed for our salvation in one supreme act.

And so, the new is indeed better than the old, and our salvation is as complete and perfect as our Savior! Does that make the Old Testament useless? Of course not! In fact, it's impossible to properly understand the new without the foundation provided by the old. But the fulfillment of the old covenant brought by Jesus brings a better salvation to God's people forever.