

# Jesus Makes a New Way to God for Us



## SABBATH—FEBRUARY 12

**READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON:** Hebrews 7:11–19; Hebrews 8:10–12; Deuteronomy 6:4–6; Hebrews 10:5–10; Jeremiah 31:33.

**MEMORY VERSE:** “But Christ [Jesus] has a more perfect work. He is the One Who goes between God and man in this new and better way. The New Way of Worship promises better things” (Hebrews 8:6, NLV).

**JESUS LIVED A PERFECT LIFE.** Then Jesus died in our place on the cross and paid the penalty for our sins. By His death and perfect life, Jesus made a new way possible for us to come to God. This new way is named the New Agreement.

In Hebrews 10:5–10, Paul teaches us that Jesus offered to God the life of perfect obedience that the New Agreement asks from us. Paul talks about Psalm 40, too. Psalm 40 shows that David wanted to be obedient to God in every way. Psalm 40 is a special message about Jesus. This psalm shows us the time when Jesus becomes Human: “So I said, ‘Here I am, ready to do what was written about me in the book. My God, I am happy to do whatever you want. I never stop thinking about your teachings’ ” (Psalm 40:7, 8, ERV). This psalm also shows us the plan that God had for His people under the New Agreement. God wanted His people to feel that obeying Him was a joyful experience. He wanted to “write” His law in their hearts (Deuteronomy 6:4–6).

When Jesus came to this earth, He lived a life of joyful obedience. He is our Example. He saves us by His death and by His life of perfect obedience.



God wanted His people to feel that obeying Him was a joyful experience.

**THE NEED FOR A NEW AGREEMENT (Hebrews 7:11–19)**

**Read Hebrews 7:11–19. Why did we need a New Agreement?**

The problem with the Old Agreement is that it can't make us perfect (Hebrews 7:11). The animal offerings that were part of the Old Agreement can't make us clean from guilt or sin. These animal offerings also can't make a way for us to go to God (Hebrews 10:1–4; Hebrews 9:13, 14; Hebrews 10:19–23).

So, we needed a New Agreement. A New Agreement does not show us that something was wrong with the Old Agreement. The work of the Levites and animal offerings under the Old Agreement was important. The animal offerings taught the Israelites not to worship false gods. The animal offerings also showed the Israelites the future work of Jesus for His people. Paul wants us to see that the law that Moses gave Israel about the animal offerings “can show only a little about the good things that are coming. This law can't show the good things themselves [what those things really are]” (Hebrews 10:1, WE).

For sure, the animal offerings showed Jesus and His future work. The offerings helped the people put their hope and faith in Jesus. Jesus is “the Lamb of God. He takes away the sins of [from] the world [the people on the earth]!” (John 1:29, ERV; compare with Isaiah 53). So, the law about the animal offerings can't save us. Only Jesus can save us. But what about the Ten Commandments? Paul says, “The Law was used to lead us to Christ. It was our teacher, and so we were made right with God by putting our trust in Christ” (Galatians 3:24, NIV). Paul also says, “Christ [Jesus] has fulfilled [done] everything the law was meant to do. So now everyone who believes can be right [accepted] with God” (Romans 10:4, NIV).

What do these verses show us? As good and perfect as the Ten Commandments are, they can't save us (Romans 3:20–28; Romans 7:12–14). The Ten Commandments show us how we should live and love other people. But the Ten Commandments can't make us clean and holy. For that, we need Jesus.

**Why can't we be saved by our obedience to the law and good behavior? Why is Jesus the only way we can be saved?**



**“Christ [Jesus] has fulfilled [done] everything the law was meant to do” (Romans 10:4, NIV).**

**BRAND NEW AND MADE NEW AGAIN (Hebrews 8:10–12)**

**Compare Hebrews 8:10–12 with Deuteronomy 6:4–6; Deuteronomy 30:11–14; and Jeremiah 31:31–34.**



**The New Agreement is really the Old Agreement that God makes with His people again.**

The promise of a New Agreement comes from the book of Jeremiah. Jeremiah shows us that the New Agreement is really about the agreement God first made with Israel after Moses led the people out of Egypt (Jeremiah 31:31–34). So, the promise of a New Agreement is really about how God makes the first agreement new again with His people. The Hebrew word for “new” is “**hadashah**.” “**Hadashah**” can be written as “make new” and “brand [special] new.”

Nothing was wrong with the Old Agreement itself. The people were the problem. The people broke the Old Agreement (Hebrews 8:8, 9). The people did not obey the law of God. What if the Israelites believed that the animal offerings showed them the coming Savior? What if they put their faith in Him? What if they obeyed God’s law? Then the Israelites never would have broken the agreement. True, there were some Israelites in Bible times who kept the Old Agreement. They loved the law of God and followed it (Psalm 37:31; Psalm 40:8; Psalm 119:11; Isaiah 51:7).

So, the New Agreement is really the Old Agreement that God makes with His people again. At the same time, there are some things about the New Agreement that really are new. Jeremiah tells us that God promised to do “ ‘something new’ ” (Jeremiah 31:22, ERV). So, the New Agreement will not be the exact same agreement that God made with Israel in the past (Jeremiah 31:32). The people had not obeyed God under the Old Agreement. So, God did not do all the things He promised in the agreement that He gave Moses. Now, Jesus makes all those promises possible (Hebrews 7:22). God can keep all the promises of His New Agreement. God does not change His law to keep His promises. God sends us Jesus, His Son, who kept the law. Jesus is proof that God will keep the promises in the New Agreement (Hebrews 7:22; Hebrews 6:18–20).

**Read about how much we can trust God in 2 Timothy 2:13. In this verse to Timothy, Paul shows us how much we can trust God to always keep His promises. Think about how God kept His promises to Israel in the past. How does this thought help us keep the promises we make to each other?**

## SOMEONE BETTER (Hebrews 8:1–6)

**Jesus goes to God for us to make a better agreement. Why is the work that Jesus does for us much better than the work done by the Old Testament priests, or spiritual leaders? For the answer, read Hebrews 8:1–6.**

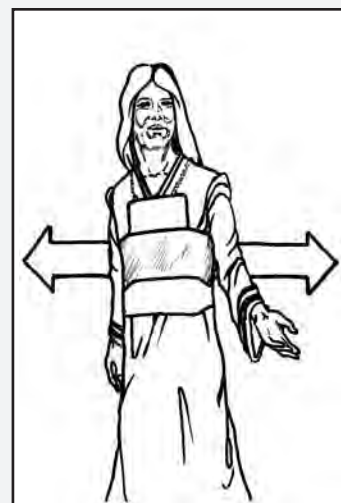
Read Hebrews 8:6, NLV. Do you see the words written as “the One Who **goes between** God and man”? The words “goes between” come from the Greek word “**mesitēs**.” “**Mesitēs**” comes from the Greek word “**mesos**,” which means “middle.” So, “**mesitēs**” shows us someone who walks or stands in the middle. Someone who was a “**mesitēs**” did one or more jobs. The jobs were to be (1) a problem solver; (2) a peacemaker; (3) a witness in a court of law; or (4) someone who promises to be responsible for an agreement.

Jesus is the One who goes between God and man. Which of the four jobs in the list above does Jesus do as our “middle man”? Hebrews shows us that Jesus is more than a problem solver, a peacemaker, or a witness to a business contract. Jesus is the One who promises to be responsible for the New Agreement (Hebrews 7:22). Jesus makes sure that the promises of the New Agreement will be kept.

Jesus’ death makes the New Agreement possible. His death meets the needs of the first agreement with Israel (Hebrews 9:15–22). Israel broke the first agreement. Jesus agreed to be responsible for everything Israel owed to God when they broke the agreement. We can trust that God will keep His agreement promises to us because Jesus went to heaven and was given glory (Hebrews 6:19, 20). Jesus shows us that God’s promises are true. How? God woke Jesus from the dead and told Him to sit at His right side in heaven. This act shows us that the Father will wake us from the dead and bring us to Him.

Jesus is a better spiritual leader than Moses. Why? Jesus works in the temple in heaven. He gave Himself as a perfect offering for our sins (Hebrews 8:1–5; Hebrews 10:5–10). The face of Moses shows us God’s glory (Exodus 34:29–35). But Jesus **is** God’s glory (Hebrews 1:3; John 1:14). Moses talked with God face to face (Exodus 33:11). But Jesus is God (John 1:1–3, 14).

**The New Agreement shows us that we must obey God. Why does obedience continue to be so important to us today?**



“**Mesitēs**” shows us someone who walks or stands in the middle.

## THE NEW AGREEMENT HAS BETTER PROMISES (Hebrews 10:5–10)



The blood showed that God and His people accepted the agreement.

Paul says that the New Agreement has “better promises” (Hebrews 8:6, ERV). What does Paul mean by better promises? You may think the answer is that the New Agreement has better rewards. But that idea is not correct. God offered the same rewards to Israel that He offers to us (read Hebrews 11:10, 13–16). God offered Israel the same home in heaven and the same gift of everlasting life that He offers us. Hebrews 8:6 helps us understand what Paul really means when he says “better promises.” Better promises show us **different** types of promises.

The agreement between God and Israel was an exchange between God and man. God promised to give Israel many blessings, and Israel promised to obey. God took the lead in the agreement. He freed Israel from Egypt and promised to lead them into the Promised Land.

**Compare the promises in Exodus 24:1–8 and Hebrews 10:5–10. What is the same and different about these two promises?**

Moses poured blood on the altar and sprinkled blood on the people. The blood showed that God and His people accepted the agreement. The people promised to obey everything God said. We must promise the same thing when we enter the New Agreement with God.

The New Agreement asks for perfect obedience from us. Jesus meets this need. God gave His own Son to come to this earth and live a perfect life. Now God can keep all the promises of the New Agreement because of the life that Jesus lived. We can have this life as ours by our faith in Jesus. Because Jesus was obedient, we can trust in the promises of the New Agreement. Jesus makes God’s promises sure for us (Hebrews 7:22). Because Jesus was obedient, God gives Jesus the blessings of the New Agreement to give to us. Everyone who belongs to Jesus will enjoy these promises with Him. Also, God gives us His Holy Spirit to help us obey His law.

**Jesus met the needs of the New Agreement. So, God’s promises to us are sure. How does this Bible truth help you understand 2 Corinthians 1:20–22? What wonderful hope do we find for ourselves in these verses?**



## THE NEW AGREEMENT SOLVES OUR “HEART” PROBLEM (Jeremiah 31:33)

**Compare the New Agreement promises in Jeremiah 31:33 with the ones in Ezekiel 36:26, 27. How are the promises the same?**

God wrote the first agreement on stone. Moses put these pieces of stone in the ark, or holy box, of the agreement (Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 10:1–45). Stone can be broken. Paper can be cut up and burned (Jeremiah 36:23).

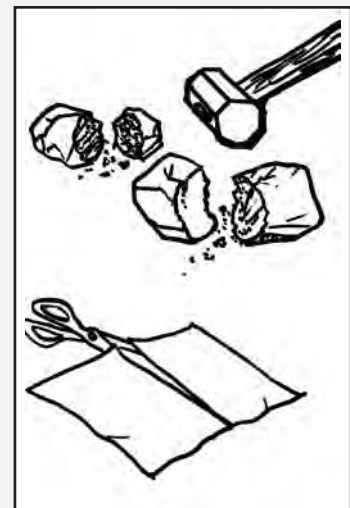
But God now writes His law in the hearts of His people. The heart is a word picture for the mind. The mind is the part of our body that knows and remembers (Jeremiah 3:15, NLV; Deuteronomy 29:4, NLV). We make important decisions with our minds. Our minds make free choice possible.

The promise that God made to write His law in our hearts shows that God wants everyone to know and understand His law. God also wants to change the hearts of His people for the better. The problem with Israel was that their sins were a deep part of them. Jeremiah explains, “The sin of Judah is written down with pen of iron and with a sharp diamond. It [the sin] is written on their hearts and on the horns [the parts that stick up from the corners] of their altars” (Jeremiah 17:1, NLV). Israel had a stubborn heart (Jeremiah 13:10; Jeremiah 23:17). So, it was not possible for Judah to do the right thing (Jeremiah 13:23).

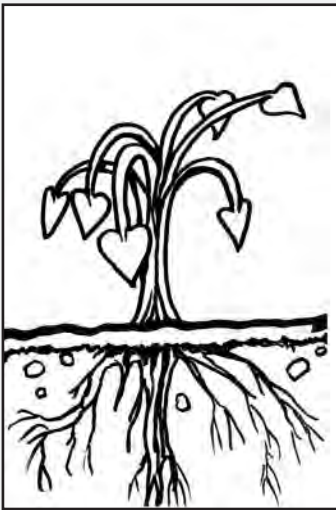
So, how was their “heart” problem solved? The answer was not a new law. Why? Because the problem Israel had was not the law but their hearts. God wanted Israel to be obedient because they were thankful to God for everything He did for them. That is why God told Israel how much He loved them before He gave them the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1, 2). God wanted Israel to obey His laws to show that they understood how much God wanted the best for them. God showed the love in His heart for His people when He freed them from Egypt.

God asks from us the same obedience and thankfulness today. The New Agreement starts with the love Jesus showed for us on the cross. Real obedience comes from the heart that loves God (Matthew 22:34–40). This love shows that the Holy Spirit lives in our hearts. God pours His love on us by His Spirit (Romans 5:5; Galatians 5:22).

**We show our love to God when we obey Him. How does our behavior help other people see our love for God?**



**Stone can be broken.  
Paper can be cut up and  
burned (Jeremiah 36:23).**



“What will happen when God changes our lives and ‘plants’ His love in our hearts?”

**ADDITIONAL THOUGHT:** “What will happen when God changes our lives and ‘plants’ His love in our hearts? Will we then show that we obey the law of God in our lives? Of course! When the love of God grows in our hearts, then the New Agreement promise becomes real. The promise is: ‘I will put my laws in their hearts. I will write my laws in their minds.’ Hebrews 10:16, [ERV]. This promise also becomes real when we are made new and start to look the same as our God. If God writes His law in our hearts, will His law guide our lives? Yes! Obedience shows that we are the followers of God. Our obedience shows that we are loyal to God and that we serve Him fully. That is why the Bible says, ‘We show that we love God when we obey his laws.’ 1 John 5:3, [WE]. ‘Anyone who says, “I know Him,” but does not obey His teaching [commands] is a liar. There is no truth in him.’ 1 John 2:4, [NLV]. God shows us mercy by our faith and only our faith. Faith does not cause us to stop obeying God. Faith helps us to obey God. . . .

“The closer you stand to Jesus, the more you will see your own sins. You will see your mistakes and problems when you compare your life to Jesus’ perfect life. When you can see yourself and your behavior, Satan can’t control you anymore. The life-giving power of the Holy Spirit helps you see yourself for who you really are.

“You cannot really love Jesus until you see that your own heart is filled with sin. When Jesus changes your life by His mercy and forgiveness, you will admire Jesus and His holy life. But if we do not see our own wrong behavior, then we can be sure that we do not see the beauty of Jesus. Everything about Jesus is excellent.”—Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, pages 60, 61, 64, 65, adapted.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① Think about the paragraphs from Ellen G. White above. Ellen G. White says that the closer we stand to Jesus, the more we will see our own sins. When we see the ugly things about ourselves, we must not lose all hope and give up our faith. Why is this advice so important for us to remember?
- ② Think more about the idea that God writes His law in our hearts. What do you understand about this Bible truth? How does this Bible truth help you obey God for the right reasons? (Read Hebrews 9:14.)

## KEEP THE SABBATH, OR GO TO SCHOOL?

**M**alevelev gets an exciting offer. She can study for free at a private non-Christian school in Taiwan. Taiwan is a country in East Asia.

Malevelev grew up in an Adventist home. Her parents taught her always to remember God in all her decisions. Malevelev plans to go to middle school at Taiwan Adventist Academy when she finishes 6th grade. But then she gets the offer to go to school for free in Taiwan.

Malevelev's parents do not have a lot of money. So, it will be hard for them to afford to send their daughter to Taiwan Adventist Academy. The education there is expensive. So, Malevelev's parents ask her to go to the non-Christian private school.

During her summer vacation, Malevelev visits the non-Christian private school in Taiwan. She learns that she will need to go to class on Sabbath. What should she do? If she goes to class on Sabbath, she cannot go to church to worship God. Should she accept the gift of money, or keep the Sabbath? Malevelev has a hard time deciding what to do. Then she remembers God. She knows that she should choose the Sabbath.

At the end of the summer, Malevelev's parents want her to go to the free private school. Malevelev feels discouraged and sad. So, she prays.

"God help me," she says. "Show me what to do."

Malevelev explains to her parents that she wants to obey God. "I want to go to Taiwan Adventist Academy," she says. "I will not go to classes on Sabbath because I want to go to church."

Malevelev says that she wants to keep all the commandments of God, including the fourth: " 'Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy' " (Exodus 20:8, NIV).

Malevelev's parents see that she wants to follow God with her whole heart. So, they let their daughter study at Taiwan Adventist Academy.

Today, Malevelev has studied for five years at the school. Now she is in the 11th grade.

"I am very happy here," Malevelev says. "I have wonderful teachers and classmates. We are the same as a big family. I have made many Christian friends. Together, we worship God every evening and morning. We pray and study together. I love being at the school. I do not know what will happen in the future. But I know that God will lead me. He has a plan for my life. When you need to make a big decision, you should believe in God. Choose what He wants for you. Then you cannot fail."

This story shows us the "I Will Go" plan of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This plan is about how we can share Jesus with everyone. Learn more about this plan at [IWillGo2020.org](http://IWillGo2020.org).

## INSIDE *Story*

by ANDREW MCCHESENEY



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