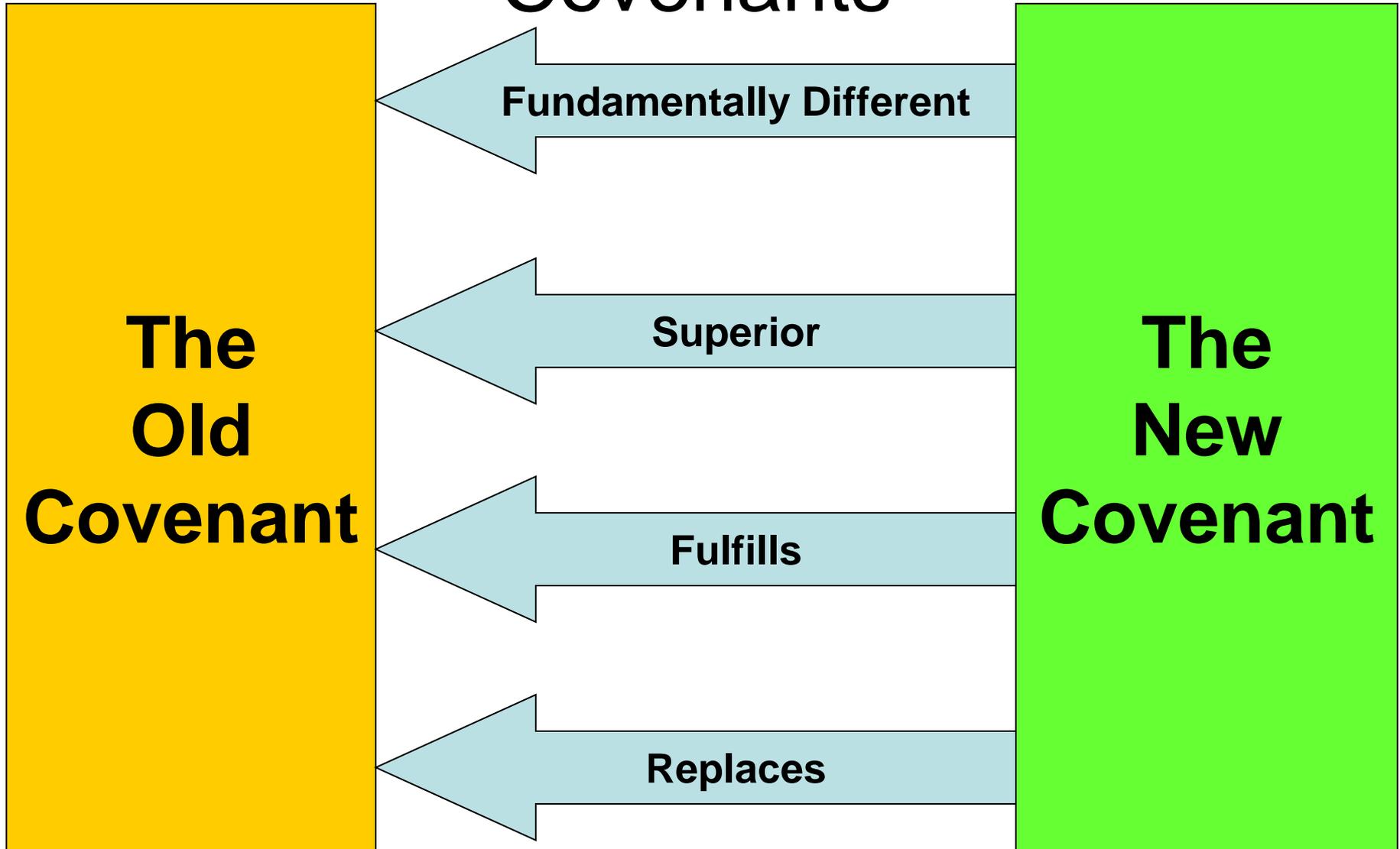


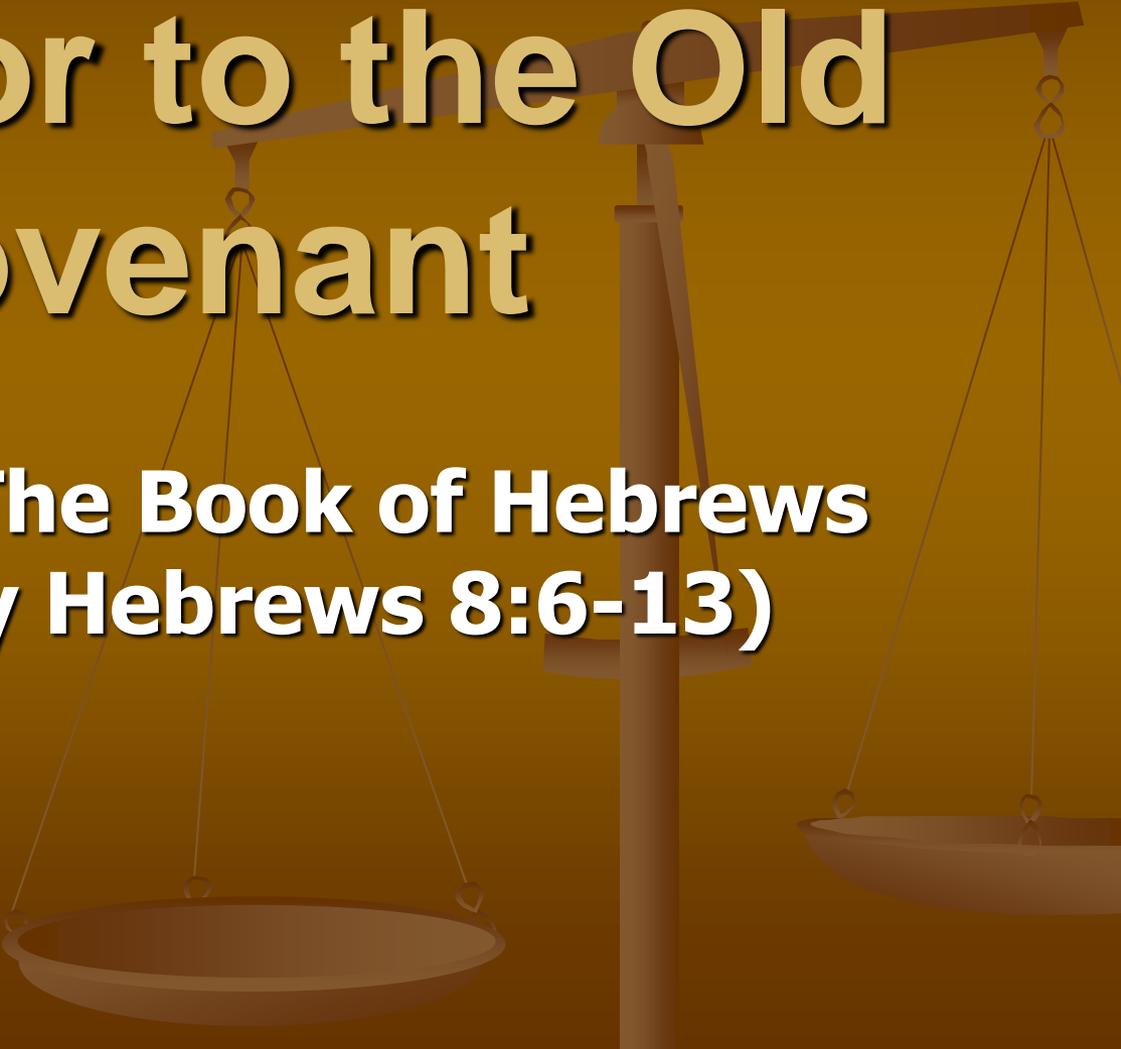
New Covenant Theology



A Comparison of the Old and New Covenants

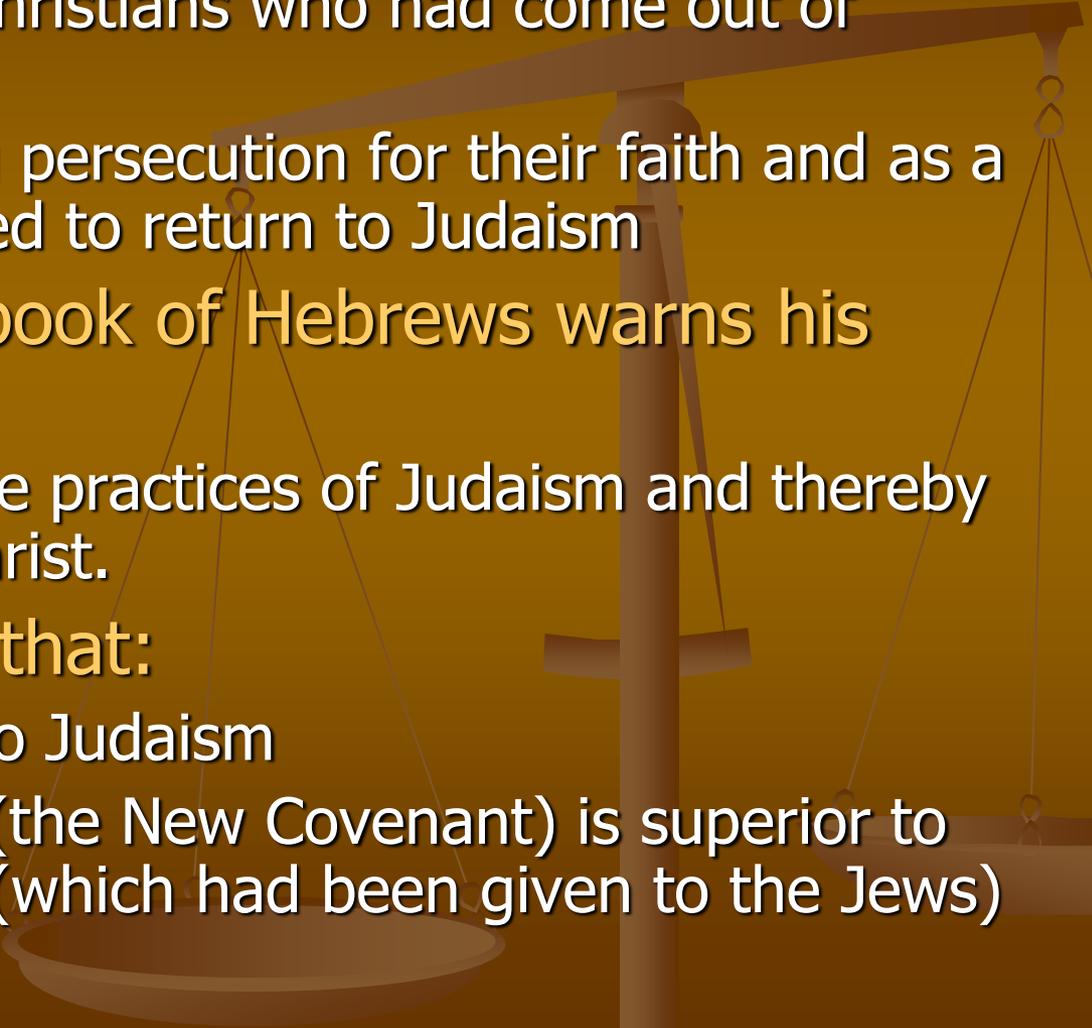


The New Covenant is Superior to the Old Covenant

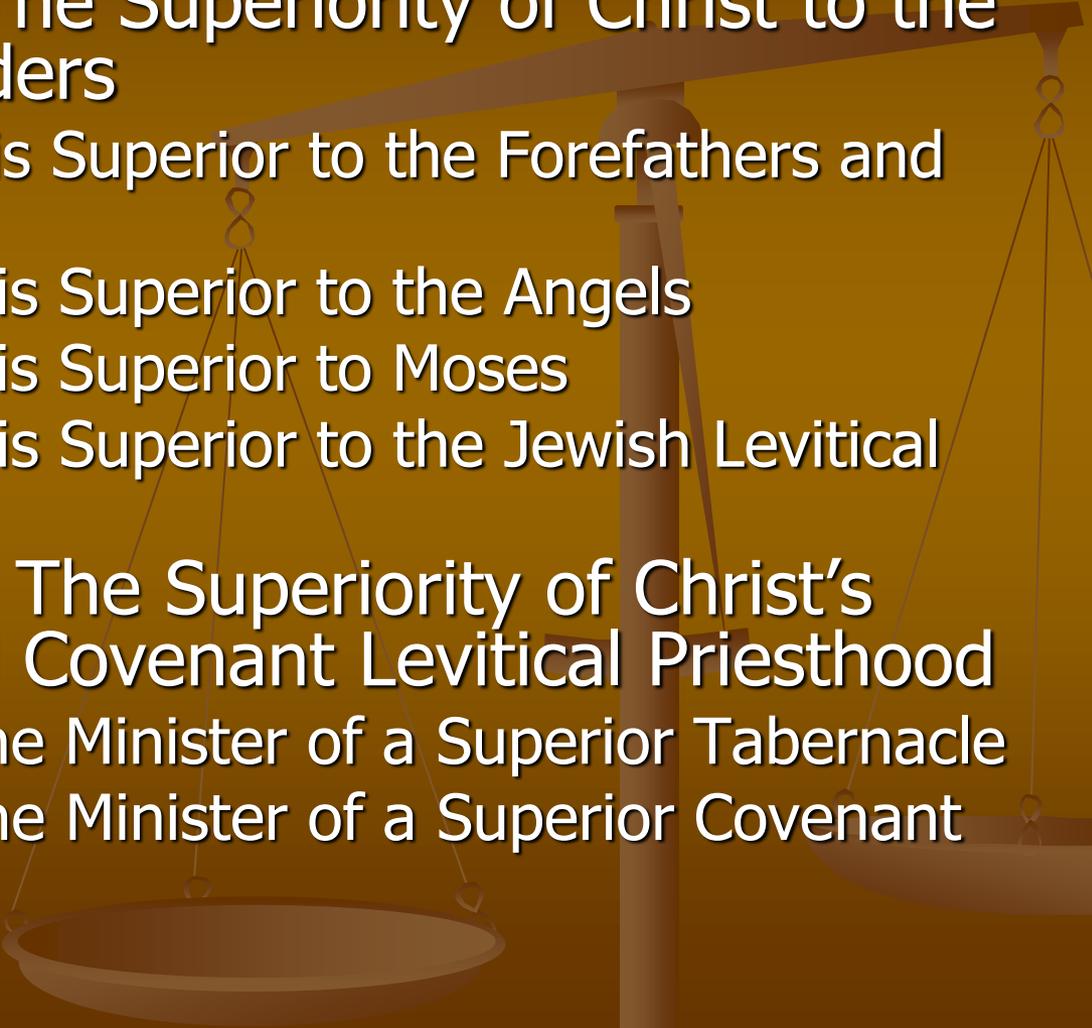


**Exhibit A – The Book of Hebrews
(especially Hebrews 8:6-13)**

Background to the Book of Hebrews

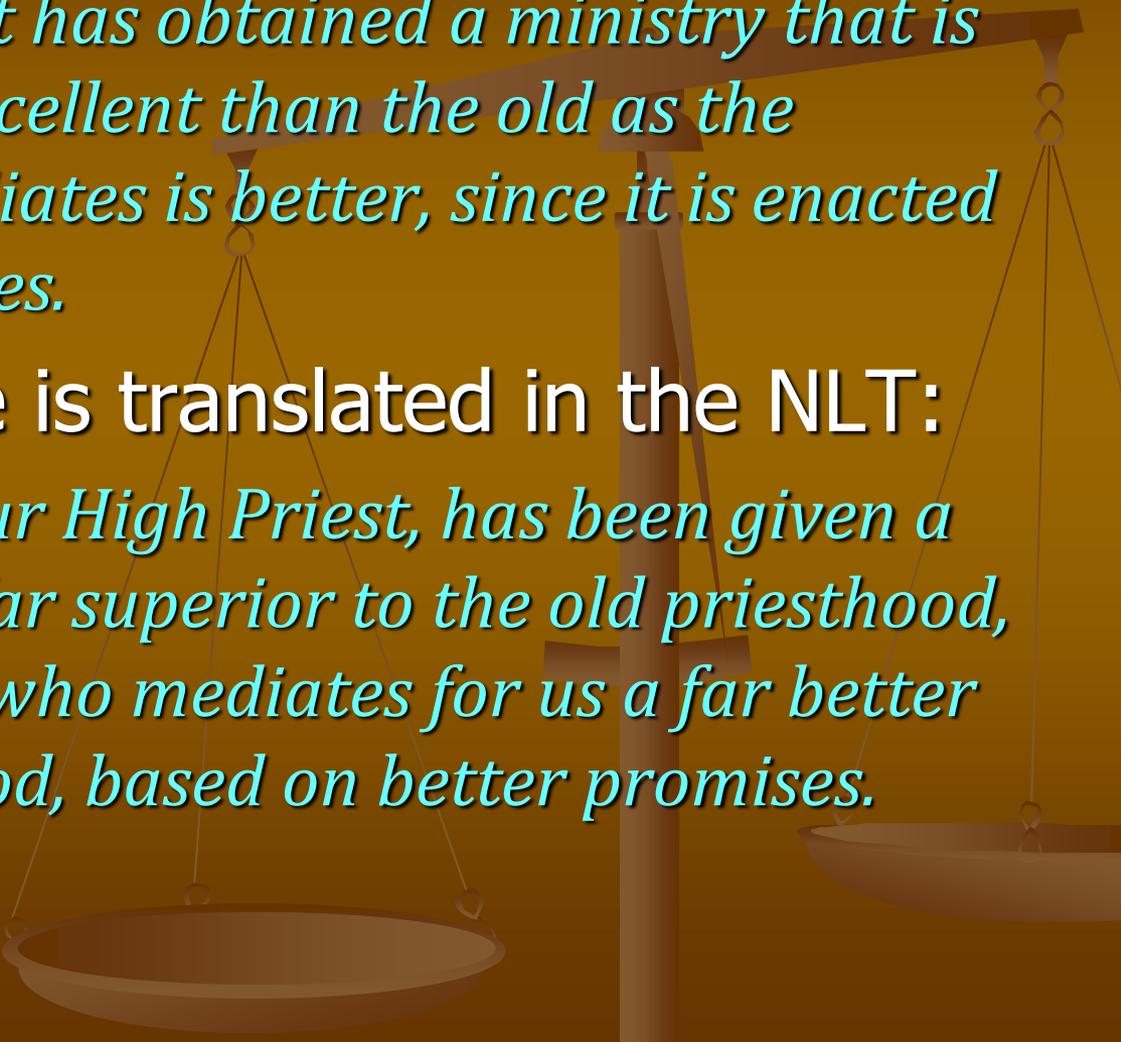
- The original recipients of the Hebrew letter:
 - Were professing Christians who had come out of Judaism
 - Were experiencing persecution for their faith and as a result were tempted to return to Judaism
 - The writer to the book of Hebrews warns his readers:
 - Not to return to the practices of Judaism and thereby turn away from Christ.
 - The writer argues that:
 - Christ is superior to Judaism
 - Christ's Covenant (the New Covenant) is superior to the Old Covenant (which had been given to the Jews)
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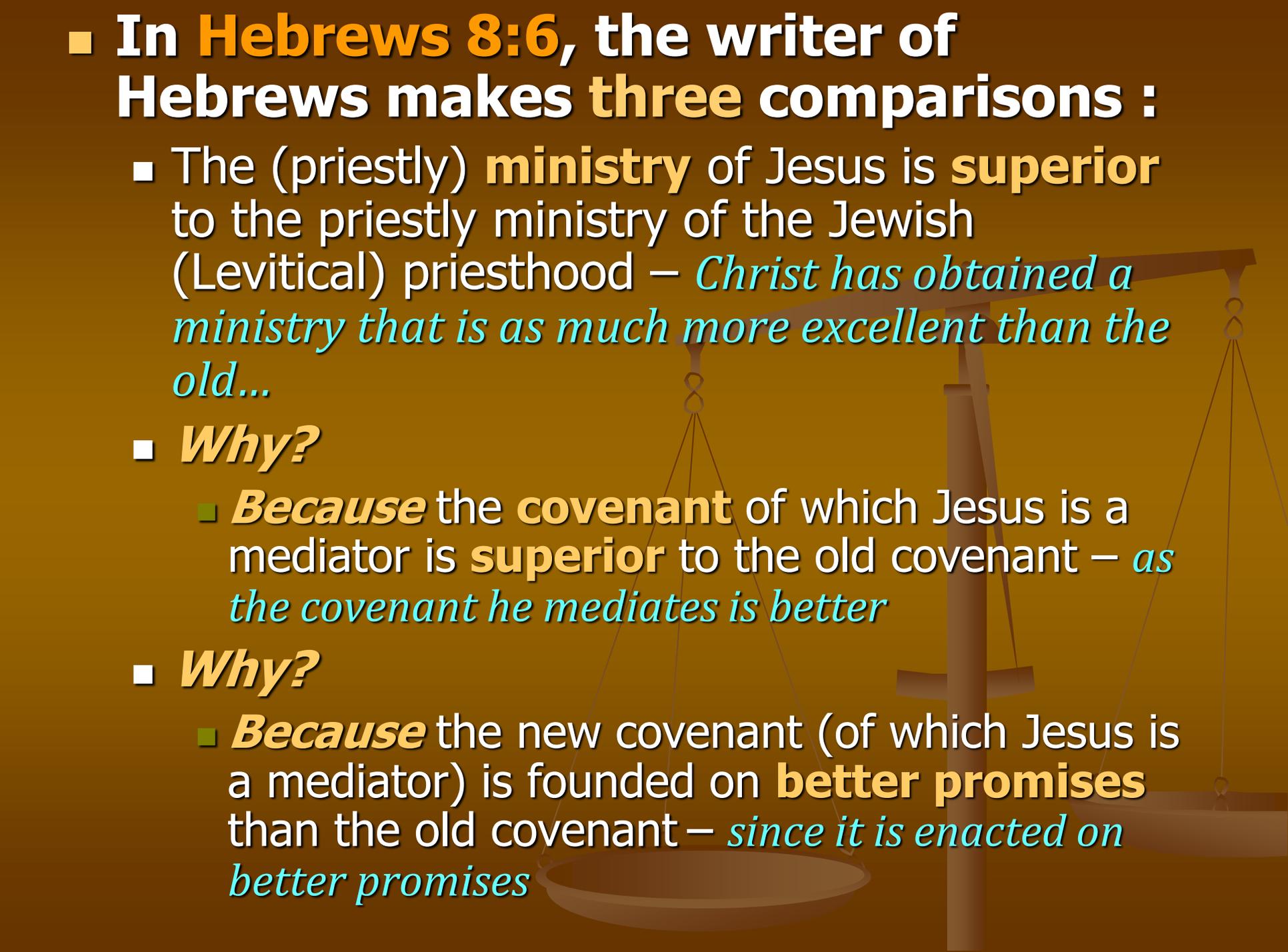
Outline of the First Eight Chapters of the Book of Hebrews

- **Chapters 1-7** – The Superiority of Christ to the Old Covenant Leaders
 - **1:1-1:3** Christ is Superior to the Forefathers and Prophets
 - **1:4-2:18** Christ is Superior to the Angels
 - **3:1-4:13** Christ is Superior to Moses
 - **4:14-7:28** Christ is Superior to the Jewish Levitical Priests
 - **Chapters 8-10** – The Superiority of Christ's Ministry to the Old Covenant Levitical Priesthood
 - **8:1-5** Christ is the Minister of a Superior Tabernacle
 - **8:6-13** Christ is the Minister of a Superior Covenant
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The New Covenant is Superior

■ Hebrews 8:6 –

- *But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises.*
 - Or, as this verse is translated in the NLT:
 - *But now Jesus, our High Priest, has been given a ministry that is far superior to the old priesthood, for he is the one who mediates for us a far better covenant with God, based on better promises.*
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- In **Hebrews 8:6**, the writer of **Hebrews** makes **three** comparisons :
 - The (priestly) **ministry** of Jesus is **superior** to the priestly ministry of the Jewish (Levitical) priesthood – *Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old...*
 - **Why?**
 - **Because** the **covenant** of which Jesus is a mediator is **superior** to the old covenant – *as the covenant he mediates is better*
 - **Why?**
 - **Because** the new covenant (of which Jesus is a mediator) is founded on **better promises** than the old covenant – *since it is enacted on better promises*

The New Covenant is Superior

■ Hebrews 8:7-9

- *For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second.⁸ For he finds fault with them when he says (in Jeremiah 31:31ff): “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,⁹ not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord...”*

■ Why did God promise a new covenant in Jeremiah 31?

- Because there was a **problem** with the first (old) covenant – *For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second...*
- The problem was with the **people** – they were unable to keep the old covenant – *For he finds fault with them when he says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant ... not like the covenant that I made ... when I took them ... out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant..."*

The New Covenant is Superior

■ Hebrews 8:10-12

- (Continuing his quotation of Jeremiah 31:31-34) – *For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ¹¹ And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. ¹² For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.*“

■ The elements of the New Covenant stand in **contrast** to the Old:

- The laws of old covenant were written on **stone**, the laws of the new covenant are written on the **hearts** of His people – *I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts*
- In the old covenant there were **unregenerate and** (some) **regenerate** Jews; in the new covenant **everyone** “knows the Lord” (is regenerated) – *And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest.*
- In the old covenant everyone in it is **proven guilty**, in the new covenant everyone in it is **forgiven** – *I will remember their sins no more*

The New Covenant is Superior

Hebrews 8:13 - *In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.*

- By promising a **new** covenant, God, in effect, made the old one **obsolete**.
- So once this pronouncement was made by the prophet Jeremiah, it was just a matter of time before the **old** one would **fade away**.

Questions

- After examining Hebrews 8:6-13 in its original context, are you able to see the argument that the writer of Hebrews is making?
- If you had to summarize what the writer of Hebrews is saying in verses 6-13 in just one or two sentences, what would you say?
- Is there anything that we covered today that is still a little unclear in your mind?