

The Problem with Hebrews

By Scott Nelson

The following article demonstrates that there are two doctrines commonly held by Christians that cannot be reconciled with each other. Only one position can possibly be true. It is written for the sake of those who like myself believe Yeshua (Jesus) is going to physically return to earth to rule and reign from Jerusalem for a thousand years as prophesied in Revelation 20:1-6, and will at that time fulfill the many glorious kingly prophecies concerning the Messiah as recorded in Moses and the Prophets. Those of us who hold to this picture are commonly referred to as “premillennialists”. This is the first of the two doctrines. This article is not for those for whom these prophecies need no literal fulfillment.

The problem at hand is that the second doctrine is also clearly taught in the Bible, most particularly in the book of Hebrews. The author of Hebrews uses a number of Messianic prophecies to paint a very different picture. It is important to bear in mind that the book of Hebrews was written at a time not long after Yeshua had ascended to heaven. Many Messianic believers at that time were confused as to how Yeshua had or would fulfill the glorious prophecies of the Messianic Kingdom. They didn't know that it would be many hundreds of years before Yeshua would return to complete the fulfillment of these prophecies. The book of Hebrews was written largely for the purpose of trying to address this problem. It does so with an eloquent, lofty, and authoritative sounding discourse promoting the idea that Yeshua had indeed completely fulfilled these prophecies in a heavenly mystical sense. It is of profound significance that nowhere in the book can there be found the picture of Yeshua literally physically returning to fulfill these prophecies here on earth. This is in stark contrast to the Messianic pictures painted by the Prophets, Yeshua himself in the Gospels, and the book of Revelation.

So here is the dilemma. Has Yeshua already fulfilled these prophecies in a heavenly sense, or will he literally physically return to fulfill them here on earth in the future? The author of Hebrews himself borrows from some of these well known Messianic prophecies and gives them a new spin to promote his doctrine of a *new-priesthood*, *new-law*, and *new-covenant*, all of which have supposedly been inaugurated and fulfilled. Here is his logic.

Like Melchizedek... how?!

In the 5th chapter of the book of Hebrews, the author uses a Messianic prophecy from Psalm 110 to begin comparing Yeshua to Melchizedek.

So also Christ did not glorify himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to him: “You are My son, today I have begotten you.” As He also says in another place: “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek”,... And having been perfected, he became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him, called by God as High Priest

“according to the order of Melchizedek,” of whom we have much to say, and **hard to explain**, since you have become dull of hearing. Hebrews 5:5-6,9-11

Then in the 7th chapter, the author begins his *new priesthood* argument by stating that Yeshua is like Melchizedek in some rather strange and abstract ways. For instance, Yeshua and Melchizedek supposedly had neither genealogical record, nor beginning or end of days!

“For this Melchizedek, king of Salem,... without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, **but made like the Son of God**, remains a priest continually.” Hebrews 7:1-3

This certainly qualifies as “hard to explain”! The author is correct in determining from Psalm 110:1-4 that Messiah is like Melchizedek, but the connections he draws are bizarre and extremely weak arguments from silence. Does he seriously want us to believe that because we **don’t** have Melchizedek’s genealogical records, parent’s names, date of birth, or date of death written there in the book of Genesis for us... he had none?! This is the weakest form of argument there is. To illustrate: Maybe, because there is nothing said about Melchizedek being married or having any children, we must conclude he was celibate! On the off-chance some might actually consider this a good argument, here is another example. Maybe, because nothing is said about Melchizedek’s apparel, we must conclude he had none and was a nudist! Our author’s style of logic is just this non-sensical. How absurd is the notion that Melchizedek had no father or mother? What’s more, on an interesting side-note, there is good reason to believe that Melchizedek was in fact Shem, the son of Noah! This record is found in Jasher 16:11-12, a book that is credibly mentioned by both Joshua and Samuel. But if Yeshua is like Melchizedek, would it not be better to compare him to Melchizedek based on information we *do* have on him as opposed to drawing conclusions from nothing?

The author of Hebrews then continues with another weak argument stating Yeshua was like Melchizedek in that Melchizedek was **not** of the tribe of Levi.

“Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron?... For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood. Hebrews 7:11, 13-14

There is a question that begs to be asked here. If Yeshua is like Melchizedek in that he has no genealogical record, how can the author even state that Yeshua is from the tribe of Judah?! He completely undoes his own silly argument! Of particular interest in this passage is the notion that the author of Hebrews wants us to believe it logically flows, that since there has been a change in the priesthood, there must therefore also be a change of the Law.

“For the priesthood being changed, of **necessity** there is also a change of the Law.” Hebrews 7:12

Question: Where is this supposed axiom written? Why **must** the Law change if the priesthood changes? Is it the priests who determine the Law, or is it God? Maybe amongst the

pagans, their priests had to write the laws because their gods were dead! But if there *were* a new priesthood to serve the same God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, reason would dictate that the new priests would continue to abide by the established Laws of God. But if *any* priesthood, old or new, served a **new** god, *then* it would logically flow that the new god would dictate a new law... if of course he could speak. The author's logic simply does not flow, yet it should be evident that this presupposition is fundamental to his ongoing argument. And again, all this is assuming his assertion that Yeshua is **not** of the tribe of Levi is correct in the first place. I will address that issue in a moment.

Yeshua is indeed like Melchizedek as Psalm 110:1-4 prophesied, but he is like Melchizedek in ways based on information we **do** have on him. Very little is said about him, but everything we need to know about Melchizedek can be found in one single verse.

Then Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. Genesis 14:18

There it is. He was **king** of Salem **and** **priest** of The Most High God.

King and Priest in One

A King who is also a Priest has never existed in Israel's history. The kingdom and the priesthood were always separate. The **kingdom** was established *forever* in the descendants of David of the tribe of Judah, and the **priesthood** was established in the descendants of Aaron of the tribe of Levi *forever* as well.

Here are some of God's promises to David.

"My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David; **His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; It shall be established forever** like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky." Psalm 89:34-37

"For thus says the Lord; **David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne** of the house of Israel;" Jeremiah 33:17

"David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them. Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt: and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever; **and My servant David shall be their prince forever.**" Ezekiel 37:24-25

"He (Yeshua) will be great, and will be called the son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give him the throne **of his father David. And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.**" Luke 1:32-33

And here are some of God's promises to the Levitical priesthood.

And you “shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and put the hats on them. **The priesthood shall be theirs for a perpetual statute**, So you shall consecrate Aaron and his sons.” Exodus 29:9

“You shall put the holy garments on Aaron, and anoint him and sanctify him, that he may minister to Me as priest. And you shall bring his sons and clothe them with tunics. You shall anoint them, as you anointed their father, that they may minister to Me as priests; **for their anointing shall surely be and everlasting priesthood throughout their generations.**” Exodus 40:13-15

Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying; “Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was zealous with My zeal among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My zeal. Therefore say, ‘Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; **and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood**, because he was zealous for his God, and made atonement for the children of Israel.’” Numbers 25:10-13

This is just the beginning of the story. Remember, God promised the Messiah would be both king and priest like Melchizedek in Psalm 110:4. God also spoke through other prophets on numerous occasions that He would indeed bring both offices into one in the Messiah.

“Behold, the days are coming”, says the Lord, “that I will perform that good thing which I have promised to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah; In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David a **Branch** of righteousness; He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely. And this is the name by which she will be called; ‘THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS’. **For thus says the Lord; David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; nor shall the priests, the Levites, lack a man to offer burnt offerings before Me, to kindle grain offerings, and to sacrifice continually.**” Jeremiah 33:14-18

“Behold, the man whose name is the **BRANCH!** From his place he shall branch out, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; Yes, he shall build the temple of the Lord. He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on his throne; So he shall be a **priest on his throne**, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.” (both offices) Zechariah 6:12-13

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without **king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim**. Afterward the children of Israel shall return, seek the Lord their God and **David their king**, and fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days. Hosea 3:4-5

“Then it shall be the **prince’s part** to give burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths, and at all the appointed seasons of the house of Israel. He shall prepare the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.” Ezekiel 45:17

The author of Hebrews argues that because Yeshua is supposedly **not** from the tribe of Levi, there is therefore a change of priesthoods and subsequent change of the law. But God had said the Levites had an “**everlasting**” priesthood. The only way God could fulfill these promises that He made to

David and Aaron is if the Messiah somehow descended from both of them. What our author obviously did not know is that Yeshua is exactly as God had prophesied the Messiah would be. Yeshua is descendant of **both** David **and** Aaron! He is simply wrong on a number of levels. Both in the logic that a change of the priesthood demands a change of the law, and that there had been any change of the priesthood in the first place!

I have yet to find where all the pieces of the following picture have been put together by anyone else. One can't help but wonder if the very reason for this doesn't stem from the teachings of the book of Hebrews. It's almost as if Christianity instinctively knows that if Yeshua is in fact a descendant of Aaron as well as David, the book of Hebrews would lose *all* credibility. Yeshua *not* being of Levi is a fundamental cornerstone of the doctrine of the book of Hebrews.

Yeshua, descendant of both David and Levi

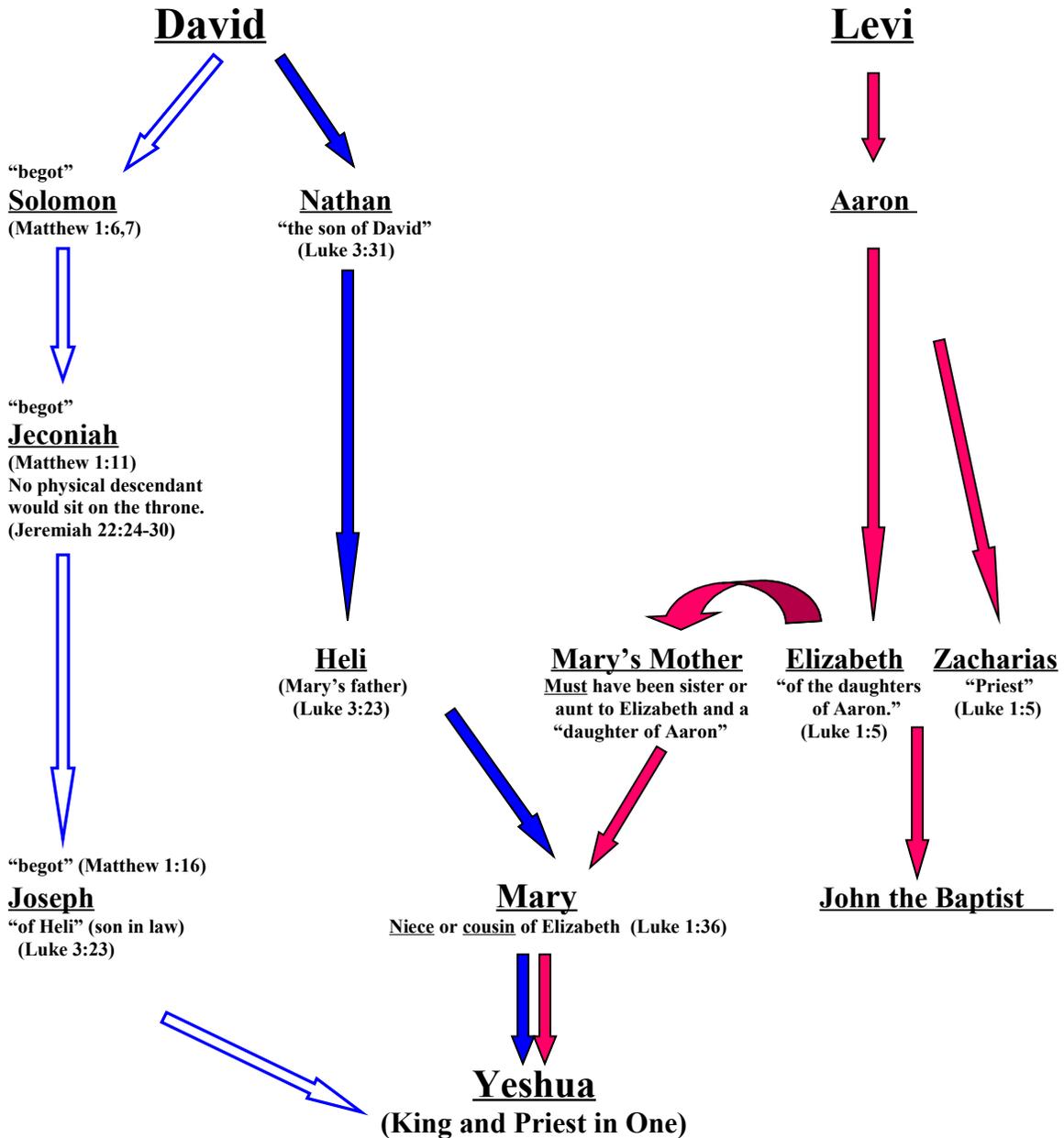
In the book of Luke it is recorded that Yeshua's mother Mary was a "cousin" (KJV) to Elizabeth who was "of the daughters of Aaron". (Luke 1:5,36) The Greek word translated "cousin" literally means *close blood* (genetic) *relative*. The genetic connection can easily be seen by English speaking people in the Greek word itself "sungenes". This literally means *close kin* (See Strongs 4773) This word could just as easily mean Elisabeth was Mary's *aunt*. Considering Elisabeth was much older than Mary, this would appear to be more likely the case. But this is a moot point in light of the fact that doesn't make a difference either way as you will see.

In Leviticus, God commanded that Levite men were to marry **only** Levite women. (Leviticus 21:1,13-14, 22:12-13) Levite women on the other hand were permitted to marry outside the tribe. We know that Mary's father Heli was a descendant of David of the tribe of Judah (Luke 3:23. Many scholars agree that Joseph was Heli's son-*in-law*.) So if Mary was either a cousin, or a niece to Elisabeth, it must mean that Mary's **mother** had to have been either a *sister* or *aunt* to Elisabeth, which means that Mary's mother had to have been a "daughter of Aaron" as well! Here is the breakdown. If Mary and Elisabeth were *cousins*, as it says in the KJV, then Mary's mother was a sister to one of Elisabeth's parents, **both** of whom had to have been full-blooded Levites for Elisabeth to be called a "daughter of Aaron" and be legitimately married to Zacharias the priest. If Elisabeth was Mary's *aunt*, as is more likely the case, then Mary's mother was a sister to Elisabeth. No matter how one works it, it comes out the same. Mary's mother was a full-blooded Levite. She was then one of those who married outside the tribe when she married Heli of the tribe of Judah. Now it also logically flows that if Yeshua had no earthly father, no new genetic material was introduced at his conception. He would have essentially been a genetic clone of his mother. The only change would have been to turn one X sex chromosome to a Y chromosome for Yeshua to have a male body. And considering the fact that God made the first woman from the same genetic material of the first man it has been established by precedent that changing the gender this way is no big deal for God. Other than this simple change, Yeshua's physical bloodlines were **identical** to his mother's bloodlines. **Mary was a perfect blend of both tribes Judah and Levi!**

There is also another likelihood that makes this even better. Since God commanded the Levite men to marry only Levite women, it stands to reason that the genetic markers **He** recognizes as the Levitical priestly markers were passed down by the mothers, thus making the tribe *matrilineal*. These genetic matrilineal markers are located in what is called the mitochondria DNA. The genetic markers of the other tribes were passed down by the fathers in the DNA of the main 23 pair of chromosomes. As it is in all humans, half of Mary's chromosomes came from her father. It is also a fact of science that the father's genetic markers and the mother's *mitochondria* genetic markers do not compete with each other during the process of recombination, so neither of them is diluted by the other. This would mean that Mary, and subsequently Yeshua, carried **all** the genetic markers of **both** tribes! It would stand to reason that God intended for Levi's genetic markers to be *matrilineal* for the very purpose of being able to bring all of Judah and all of Levi together into one man. (See chart below)

Yeshua's Physical Bloodlines

By Scott Nelson 12/29/06



It logically flows that since Yeshua had no earthy father, his physical bloodlines would be identical to his mother's ... with her father's line in a Y chromosome restored as "her seed" Genesis 3:15. It also stands to reason that since God commanded the priests to marry **only of the daughters of Aaron** (Leviticus 21:1,13-14, 22:12-13) the genetic markers recognized by Him as priestly markers were passed down by the mothers in the mitochondrial DNA. All other tribes passed down their genetic markers through the father's DNA. It is of no small significance that a father's genetic markers and a mother's genetic markers do not compete with each other, and therefore are not diluted in the process of *recombination*. This would mean that Mary and Yeshua had **all** the genetic markers of **both** tribes! 100% son of David, and 100% son of Levi and Aaron, fulfilling Psalm 110:4, Jeremiah 33:14-18, Zechariah 6:12-13, Hosea 3:4-5, Ezekiel 34:23-24, 37:24-28, and 45:16-17. Joseph legally wed Mary before Yeshua was born, thus adopting him into the line of kings as his eldest son and *legal* heir to the throne of David... without the cursed blood of Jeconiah.

The fact that Yeshua is a descendant of the tribe of Levi just as God had promised the Messiah would be is enough in itself to discredit the book of Hebrews. Asserting that Yeshua was **not** of Levi is a fundamental premise of the author's ongoing argument. There is no "new" priesthood. God had established the priesthood in Aaron's descendants forever. Furthermore, since there is no "change of the Law" even if there **were** a new priesthood, how much less is there **no** "change of the Law" when there is **no new priesthood**? Nothing more really needs to be said concerning the credibility of the author of Hebrews. We have more than enough evidence to discard the book as a nice-try of purely human effort on these errors alone. But to further demonstrate the sad mistakenness of the author, consider his next argument.

The New Covenant?

Again, the author of Hebrews has completely missed the fact that Yeshua will physically return and fulfill the remaining Messianic prophecies. This becomes painfully obvious in his on-going argument. Now he reasons that his *new priesthood* and *new law* fulfill the prophecies of a "new covenant". Here, in chapter 8:8-12, he quotes the prophecy from Jeremiah. (Note: In the book of Jeremiah, whenever God says, "Behold the days are coming", He is speaking of the Messianic age yet to come.) The actual prophecy reads;

"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make **a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah** – not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out to the land of Egypt, **My covenant which they broke**, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My Law in their mind, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." Jeremiah 31:31-34

Then after quoting this prophecy, the author of Hebrews makes this statement, from which comes the concept of an *old* (obsolete) *testament*.

In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first **obsolete**. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. Hebrews 8:13

Our author has obviously come to another mistaken conclusion... that God's covenant with Israel at Mt. Sinai and His Law are one and the same. They are not. God's Law is a list of do's and don'ts. God's covenant with Israel is a contractual promise to **ble**ss them **if** they obey His Law. Of course, if they broke the Law, in so doing they broke the covenant as well, but that does not mean the Law **is** the covenant! It should be evident in this passage that God continues to speak of His Law as though it will not change. Here it is again.

But **this** is the *covenant* that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put **My Law** in their mind, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Jeremiah 31:33

It is only after the author has blurred the line between *the Law* and *the covenant*, and then drawn our attention to God speaking of a “**new covenant**”, that he can then make the leap of logic inferring that when God spoke of His “Law” in connection to a *new covenant*, He meant “My **new law**”! There is no question but that this is exactly his logic and what he wants us to see here. Read it again if necessary. Remember, the author has already told us in 7:12 that there has been a “change of the Law”. But God did *not* say “My **new law**”. He was speaking of the same Law. The only difference is, when the “*new covenant*” is finally inaugurated, this same Law of Moses will be written on the hearts of the children of Israel so they will *want* to keep it. And herein is another point that is extremely important. This prophecy concerns **only Israel**. It does not concern Gentiles in any way! The only Gentiles who might be included in this are those who have joined themselves to Israel through circumcision and obedience to God’s Law, in which case they would no longer be seen as Gentiles. The Christian church cannot claim this prophecy for itself... unless of course one is of the persuasion that God has **replaced** Israel, and the Christian church is the new true Israel of God. This repulsive teaching is a lie, and among other things has been used as justification for the deplorable anti-Semitism much of Christianity has perpetrated on the Jewish people throughout history. But I digress. The point is, you can’t have it both ways. Either Israel is Israel, or the Christian church is Israel. The prophecies concerning Israel and the new covenant have either been fulfilled, or they remain to be fulfilled.

New Covenant, “in my blood”?

Some might argue that Yeshua said the *new covenant* was established in his blood, suggesting that it took effect at the cross. Yeshua’s sacrifice certainly paid the price for the promised new covenant, but to assert that it was inaugurated at that time is reading more into Yeshua’s words than what he said. The prophecy from Jeremiah clearly indicates that the new covenant is with Israel **only**, and doesn’t take effect until the Kingdom of God comes during the Messianic age... which is still yet to come. Read again Jeremiah 31:31-40. This fact should be clearly evident when taking Yeshua’s words in the fuller context of Luke’s account of the last supper.

Then he said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it **until it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.**”

Likewise he also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the **new covenant** in my blood which is shed for you.” Luke 22:15,16,20

Yeshua certainly paid the price for the new covenant with his blood, but it will not be inaugurated or “fulfilled” until he returns... and even then it will only be with Israel!

There are numerous other parallel prophecies concerning the new covenant that prove God was not speaking of some *new law*, but speaking of His Law as given through Moses. What I have highlighted in bold print below is speaking of the same new covenant spoken of in Jeremiah 31:33. Please read this passage one more time and dare to compare it to the following prophecies. Also, please notice that these prophecies concern Israel *only*, during the Messianic age to come. Notice also that they could not possibly be fulfilled yet.

First, here is the new covenant prophecy that the author of Hebrews used.

“Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a **new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah...** ...this is the covenant that I will make with **the house of Israel** after those days, says the Lord: **I will put My Law in their mind, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.** Jeremiah 31:31,33

Now compare.

“Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone. Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”’
“And they will go there, and they will take away all its detestable things and all its abominations from there. **Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”** Ezekiel 11:16-20

“For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. **I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God.**” Ezekiel 35:24-28

“David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; **they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.** Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever. **Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people.** The nations also will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.” Ezekiel 37:24-28

What more needs to be said? The new covenant is the same Law, only God will cause Israel to **want** to walk in His ways when His Kingdom is established by Yeshua during the Messianic age.

The book of Hebrews simply cannot be reconciled with the picture that the prophets, the book of Revelation, and Yeshua himself have given us of the Messianic age and the coming Kingdom of God. One picture has to go. One must choose to follow the author of Hebrews, or follow Yeshua, Moses, and The Prophets. The “new covenant” is either already fulfilled in a heavenly mystical sense, or it is yet to be inaugurated with Israel and fulfilled when Yeshua returns, delivers Israel from all her enemies, ascends the throne of his father David... and as a

son of Levical priesthood as well, begins his high priestly ministry before God Most High as **King and Priest**... after the order of Melchizedek.

Note. The new priesthood, new law, new covenant picture does in fact dovetail well with Paul's doctrine of a new Israel... one that has *replaced* the old obsolete one! (Galatians 6:15-16) I do not say this to Paul's credit. It is an utterly repulsive lie and responsible for much evil perpetrated toward God's people.

For more on Paul and his numerous mistaken doctrines, please read *Jesus Words Only* by Douglas J. Del Tondo, Infinity Publishing. ISBN 0-7414-2965-9