

Jesus Is Our Surety

"This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant." (Heb. 7:22, ESV)

Indeed, Jesus is the guarantor, or surety, of a better covenant than the Law of Moses. And, yes, Jesus acts as on our behalf in this role and is our surety. But, what does this mean? In any agreement, a surety is what is pledged to ensure that both parties will keep the terms they agreed to. For example, if you and I make a covenant that I will mow your lawn for \$20.00 and later I refuse, I lose the \$10.00 I put up as surety that I would do the work. Think of a surety like you would money you post as bond or bail for a friend who is in jail. If your friend flees and doesn't return to face justice, you lose what you have posted.

Some contend that the HW teaches the doctrine of Once Saved Always Saved in this surety verse. Also known as the doctrine of Eternal Security, this doctrine teaches that a child of God can never fall away once he or she is in Christ. This doctrine is not valid and the HW does not teach it.

In context, the HW argues that Jesus is better than the types found in the Old Testament. On the one hand, the priests were a surety for the people of Israel under the Old Covenant. Human, Levitical priests made sacrifices for the people, but they died! So, they were an imperfect surety. On the other hand, Jesus is the perfect surety because he can never die again: he has an indestructible life. (7:16) The dead human priests went to the grave, but Jesus went to the Father in Heaven to minister. He is still there now, having perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. (10:14) Jesus always lives to sanctify us because he is the better surety of the better covenant.

This doesn't mean I can't fall away! I must continue to draw near to God through Christ for Christ to make intercession for me. (7:25) Again, consider the bail illustration above. If I post surety and the prisoner friend flees, what good does the surety do him? He is still on the run from the court, and Justice will eventually find him! If I choose to withdraw myself from God and Christ, the HW doesn't teach that Jesus's surety will cover my profane choices. Yes, I have been sanctified once for all by Christ. (10:10) Yes, if I continue in Christ I will continue to be sanctified. (10:14) But, I will receive my due punishment if I profane the blood of the covenant which sanctified me. (10:29) The fact that I can profane the blood of the covenant implies that I can resist being sanctified. As a Christian, I must not rest on laurels! I must accept the sanctification of my Lord, but I must also strive for holiness, sanctification, without which I will not see my Lord. (12:14)