

Jeremiah 31:27-34 • The New Covenant

Introduction

In the beginning, God's relationship with man in the Garden of Eden was personal. God has repeatedly demonstrated throughout history beginning with Adam and Eve that the one's best conforming to His plan for mankind are the ones that pursue a personal relationship with Him from the heart. (e.g., Enoch, Noah, Abraham, David, et al) This is the core difference articulate by God for His reasons to eventually set in place a covenant which will be embraced and obedient from the heart.

²⁷“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast.
²⁸As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,” declares the Lord.

²⁹“In those days they will not say again, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’

³⁰“But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge.

³¹“Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ³²not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.

³³“But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will

[Read 31:27-30]

Q: There are three great promises in these verses, all pointing toward a future time. What are they?

- (1) The sowing (v. 27). “The seed of man and the seed of beast” refers directly to Genesis 3:15. (“And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”) This means that a time is coming when the bruising and the crushing will take place, which is the death of Jesus on the cross.
- (2) God will “build” and “plant” based on what happens in the nation of Israel through Christ’s death (v. 28). This refers specifically to the Church, begun as Jewish only and eventually including the Gentiles, and that His work concerning Israel is yet to be completed.
- (3) Judgment will be meted out on an individual basis rather than a national basis, as happened to the nation of Israel (v.29-30). Read 29:11-13 and compare:

“For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.’”

[Read 31:31-34]

Q: What is the main subject of these verses?

A: A new covenant.

Q: Why is a new covenant needed?

A: Because God’s people were unable to maintain and fulfill the Old Covenant. Note: The Old Covenant can be found in Exodus 19:5-8:

“Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.” So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him. All the people answered together and said, ‘All that the Lord has spoken we will do!’ And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord.”

[Continued on the next page.]

remember no more.”

This was the beginning of the Old Covenant, a conditional covenant based on keeping the Law by outward acts. The sign of the Old Covenant was the Sabbath (not to be confused with circumcision, which was a sign of God's chosen people through Abraham).

Q: Was the Old Covenant a failure or was it eventually fulfilled?

A: It was eventually fulfilled through the perfect God-Man, Christ. See Matt. 5:17-19 and Hebrews 4:15.

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

—Matthew 5:17-19

“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”

—Hebrews 4:15

Q: What is the sign of the New Covenant?

A: The Lord's Supper [See Luke 22:14-20]

Q: How is Jeremiah's prophecy fulfilled that “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it...”?

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”

—Acts 2:1-4

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. “For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”

—Acts 2:37-39

Application:

- *How is God's law written in our hearts? (His Word must be put in our hearts.)*
- *What specific things do we need to do to have His law written on our hearts? (Again, the Word.)*
- *How best is this "new law" manifested (demonstrated)? That is, what is the primary "law" of the New Covenant?*

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

—John 13:34-35

"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. This I command you, that you love one another.

—John 15:12-17