

Lesson Text

I. The Promise Of A New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-33)

II. The Nature Of The New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:34-37)

Lesson Text: Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: (Jeremiah 31:31, KJV).

Unifying Principle: Sometimes agreements and relationships must be revised and renewed. How can the faithful make sure all aspects of their lives encourage wholeness and spiritual growth in present circumstances? Jeremiah assures the people that God will make a new covenant with God's people that will nurture and equip them for the present and the future.

Lesson Aim: To embrace the new covenant that places God's Law within the mind and heart and to know that it is eternal and confirmed by the laws of the universe.

Life Aim: To obey God's laws by surrendering to His order and plan for humanity, to be forgiven of sin, and to dwell in God's eternal fellowship.

31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

31:32 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 of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:

31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

31:34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

31:35 Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name:

31:36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

31:37 Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.

HISTORY:

Jeremiah 31:27-30 ¹When God will restore the nation of Israel, He will also reverse the fortunes of Judah (**vv.23-26**). He promised to provide a new beginning for His covenant people. He would populate the nations of Israel and Judah with the offspring of men and animals (**vv.27-28**). The people tried to blame God's judgment on the sins of their fathers (**vv.29-30**), but each person is held accountable for their own sins. Actually, the children had surpassed their fathers in their wickedness. Under the New Covenant, there would be no misunderstanding because every individual must bear the responsibility for his own sins (Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:2, 20).

LESSON:

Jeremiah 31:31-33 The Promise Of A New Covenant

31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:— There had to be an Old Covenant and Israel had broken it. Now this prophecy states a New Covenant will be made. Paul quotes this same Old Testament prophecy in Hebrews 8:8-12. The New Covenant is what we call the New Testament of the Bible made by Christ to take the place of the Law of Moses. God's makes a Covenant between He and mankind in general, but it is exclusively by God; God's Will and Testament. God sets the terms and conditions, and man accepts the covenant, or else rejects it. It is comparable to the last will and testament of any man. The recipients cannot change the terms of the will; they can only receive or reject the inheritance. In this verse, it concerns the nation of Israel and Judah. It will provide a fresh start for them. Jeremiah is simply saying a time will come and you will see and observe Him making a New Covenant with the house of Israel and Judah. God wants to bless His people and to do that, there has to be a change! God will be God of all and the restoration of this promise will include all people who trust Him.

¹ <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/man-is-responsible-for-his-own-sins/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

31:32 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 of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord:— This is not to be the same as the old contract, but an entirely new contract. It will not be the same covenant made with the fathers when God took Israel by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. No, this isn't just another renewal of the Old Covenant that He gave long ago at Mount Sinai and they broke despite God being a loving, tender, kind and faithful husband. While the law was written outwardly, in the tables of stone, or upon the posts, and on fringes of clothing, this is a new covenant in every way. The content of this covenant differs entirely which lets us know that it would not be the same contract as made with Moses. A few differences of the Old and New Covenant are:

Old Covenant	New Covenant
Came by Moses @ Mt Sinai	Came by Christ on the cross
Ended by Christ	Came by Christ
Written on stone tablets	Written in the heart
Between God and Israel	Between God and believers
Brought death	Brought life
Demands righteousness	Gives righteousness
Powerless to save	Saves to the uttermost
Many sacrifices	One sacrifice
Temporary priest	Eternal priest
Remembers sins	Forgets sins

31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. So in the days to come God says He will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel (v.31). In this verse two things are enclosed about this Covenant: (1) After those days (*of stone tablets*), He will put His law in their inward parts (*plant His Word deep within*), and write it in their hearts (*which will cause one to see who they are compared to who Almighty God is*). For then, when they accept the terms of the New Covenant (2) He will be their God and they will be His people. This New Covenant will bring a change in the inward parts so that they will want to honor God more than self; not just for outward show on stone tablets. He will be the God of this New Covenant, just as He was for the Old Covenant. He will continue to be their God and they will continue to be His people, but in a new transformation. The foundation of the New Covenant will occur because of the coming of Christ. Our hearts will change more and more like Jesus.

Jeremiah 31:34-37 The Nature Of The New Covenant

31:34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. The law was written outwardly, upon tablets of stone, or upon the posts, and on fringes of clothing. The Law written on stone and read to the people did not bring about a change in their inward selves. They had Moses; they had priests to go between them and God, so they did not have that personal relationship to really know God and change. There will no longer be a natural or human mediator. In this verse two things will occur in this New Covenant: (1) Every man will not have to teach his neighbor or brother to know the Lord. From the least to the greatest, they will know and love God. Why? - Because of an inward change! They will no longer be under the Law but under Grace bearing the fruit of God's Spirit, and they will be able to have that relationship to personally stand before God themselves. They say if you do something consistently for 21 days, it becomes a habit. Why not take God's Word inwardly, speaking it, meditating on it, and watch change come about? (2) All shall know Him—the least to the greatest; rich or poor, etc. They shall know Him because of His Son Jesus Christ. Those who know Him can approach Him, and He will forgive their sin and remember their sin no more. It is the mercy of God. To know God is to love and follow Him, for He is love.

31:35 Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name:— These are the words of an Infinite God who gave the sun for a light by day (Gen.1:14, 16), and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night (Gen.1:14, 16), and He also divided the sea (Gen.1:6, 10) causing waves to roar. He is "*Lord of hosts*" meaning "*Yahweh, the self-existent, redemptive God*". As the "*LORD of hosts*", God is the all-powerful Ruler over the entire universe; the "*God of the armies of heaven*."

31:36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. If these fixed ordinances ever pass away, then the seed of Israel shall also cease to be a nation forever. God gives a fixed order of the natural creation (v.35), and it will be the same for the seed of Israel. As long as the sun and the moon exists, Israel will be a nation in the sight of God. ²*These ordinances cannot depart from before God;* he has all the hosts of heaven and earth continually under his eye and all the motions of both; he has established them, and they abide, *abide according to his ordinance, for all are his servants* (Ps.119:90, 91). The heavens are often clouded, and the sun and moon often eclipsed, the earth may quake and the sea be tossed, but they all keep their place, are moved, but not removed.

31:37 Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord. God's Word lets them know in this New Covenant, that if the full extent of the measurement of creation can be measured, and if the foundations of the earth below can be searched out, it is really unfathomable that God would cast off the seed of Israel. This is not a prediction, but a promise. He will not reject Israel any more than the earth being measured or the foundations below searched out. God has the power to cast off all the seed of Israel, certainly for all the sin they have done, if heaven and foundations can be measured or searched out.

SUMMARY:

God will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that He made with their fathers when He brought them out of the land of Egypt, and they broke it, even though God was patient like a husband to them. In this New Covenant God will put His law within them, and write His word on their hearts. And He will be their God, and they shall be His people (vv.31-33).

And at that time it will no longer be an issue for each one to teach his neighbor and his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know God, from the least of them to the greatest. For, He will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more. As the LORD of hosts has a fixed order for the solar system and the sea. If this fixed order departs from before the LORD, then shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation. If it were possible, the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then God will cast them away all the offspring of Israel for all their sin (vv.34-37).

APPLICATION:

Our hope stays in the hands of God who is able to restore and bring about the change for tomorrow. His New Covenant has brought about the change for eternal life with Him.

² http://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Jer/Jer_031.cfm?a=776032
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>