

The Blessing of the New Covenant

Jeremiah 31.31–34

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • April 10, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2022

Scripture Reader and Reading: Dominic Meyer – Hebrews 10.15–18

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Phil Joseph – Songs on Jesus or Forgiveness or the Bible

Prelude:

I. The kingdom of Judah had entangled itself in idolatry,

- A. which is committing adultery against God.
- B. Out of love, the God of heaven kept sending prophets to them,
 - 1. that he might turn them from their sin.
 - 2. However, they refused to repent.

II. Even after sending the promised consequences of their sin,

- A. he still sought to bring them back and
- B. spoke of the hope awaiting them.

Persuasion:

I. Jeremiah 31.31–34 • A New Covenant

- A. By the time you come to Jeremiah 30,
 - 1. Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans have already made war with Judah.
 - 2. They were slowly destroying Jerusalem and
 - a) the city would fall,
 - b) the temple would come down, and
 - c) Nebuchadnezzar would take many Jews to Babylon for 70 long years.
- B. However, when the Lord sent his prophets
 - 1. to declare a message of doom,
 - 2. even if his people did not repent,
 - a) he also had the prophets show the hope
 - b) that the Lord offered to them,
 - (1) if they repented of their sins.

(2) Jeremiah 30 begins to show that hope.

C. God was going to rescue Israel:

**17 “For I will restore health to you
And heal you of your wounds,” says the LORD.**

– Jeremiah 30.17

D. He would restore Israel:

**18 Thus says the LORD:
“Behold, I will bring back the captivity of Jacob’s tents,
And have mercy on his dwelling places;
The city shall be built upon its own mound,
And the palace shall remain according to its own plan.”**

– Jeremiah 30.18

E. The result?

**22 “You shall be My people,
And I will be your God.”**

– Jeremiah 30.22

F. He said further in chapter 31:

**1 “At the same time,” says the LORD, “I will be the God of all the families
of Israel, and they shall be My people.”**

– Jeremiah 31.1

G. He showed the beauties of the restoration:

31.7 For thus says the LORD:

**“Sing with gladness for Jacob,
And shout among the chief of the nations...”**

– **Jeremiah 31.7**

H. Although they wept for the dead during the war with Babylon, he promised:

15 Thus says the LORD:

**“A voice was heard in Ramah,
Lamentation and bitter weeping,
Rachel weeping for her children,
Refusing to be comforted for her children,
Because they are no more.”**

16 Thus says the LORD:

**“Refrain your voice from weeping,
And your eyes from tears;
For your work shall be rewarded,” says the LORD,
“And they shall come back from the land of the enemy.”**

– **Jeremiah 31.15–16**

I. God would bless them again:

23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “They shall again use this speech in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I bring back their captivity: ‘The LORD bless you, O home of justice, and mountain of holiness!’”

– **Jeremiah 31.23**

J. They would have better days:

**27 “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast.
28 And it shall come to pass, that as I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,” says the LORD.**

– **Jeremiah 31.27–28**

K. Then he announced something special on its way:

31 “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— 32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. 33 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 minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 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

1. Israel and Judah had broken the Lord’s covenant with him repeatedly.
2. Here he spoke specifically of the covenant
 - a) that he made with Israel
 - b) when he led them out of Egypt.
 - (1) He led them to Mount Sinai
 - (2) where he gave them the covenant by through Moses:

27 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Write these words, for according to the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.” 28 So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he neither ate bread nor drank water. And He wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

– Exodus 34.27–28

3. The covenant was similar to a marriage covenant, for
 - a) he said that was when he was a husband to them, but
 - b) through their endless idolatry,

- (1) they committed spiritual adultery,
- (2) they kept breaking that covenant, for
 - (a) the Ten Commandments began:

1 And God spoke all these words, saying:

2 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 “You shall have no other gods before Me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God....”

– Exodus 20.1–6

L. Then he revealed characteristics of the new covenant:

1. First, he would put his law in their minds,
 - a) writing it on their hearts, that is
 - b) rather than merely writing it upon tablets of stone.
 - (1) Having it in the heart would produce something different.
 - (2) Truly, many of the children of Israel
 - (a) did have God’s law in their hearts (as Psalm 119 shows), but
 - (b) it would be different this time, and
 - (c) the prophecy shows why in just a few moments.
2. Second, he would then be
 - a) their God and
 - b) they would be his people.
 - (1) They would experience what I call, The Family Promise of God,
 - (2) which he has promised throughout the Scriptures,

- (a) both Old and New Testaments.
- (b) The Lord spoke earlier through Jeremiah:

7 “Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the LORD; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.”

– Jeremiah 24.7

- (c) In this section from 30–33 on hope, he said:

**22 “You shall be My people,
And I will be your God.”**

– Jeremiah 30.22

- c) They would be children of God,
 - (1) not just because they were born into the family of Israel, but
 - (2) because something had happened in their hearts.
 - (a) Being born in Israel,
 - (b) they had no choice, but
 - i) with the New Covenant,
 - ii) they would choose to be one of his children.
- 3. Third, everyone would already know the Lord (v. 34).
 - a) This is why they would have a new kind of relationship with God.
 - b) During the time that Israel lived under the covenant made at Sinai,
 - (1) everyone was born into a covenant relationship with God.
 - (2) Even as babies, toddlers, and young children need to be taught,
 - (a) so it was in regard to knowing the Lord.
 - (b) They were children of Israel, hence children of God, but
 - i) they had not made that choice, because

- ii) they did not yet know him.
- c) However, with the new covenant,
 - (1) they would come to know the Lord and then
 - (2) make the decision to be in a covenant relationship with the Lord.
- d) Old Covenant: Born first, then know the Lord.
- e) New Covenant: Know the Lord, then be born again.
 - (1) This would hold true for everyone,
 - (2) the least of them to the greatest of them.
- 4. Fourth, God would forgive their iniquities and not remember their sins.
 - a) This is the sweetest of blessings, the forgiveness of sins.
 - (1) Notice carefully that last sentence in verse 34.
 - (2) He would not only forgive their sins and iniquities, but
 - (a) he would remember them no more.
 - (b) God truly forgives and forgets!
 - b) Did they not have this under the old covenant?
 - (1) Yes, but let us go to what the Hebrew writer said, and
 - (2) give attention to what he said about the remembrance of sins.

II. Hebrews 8.6–13; 10.11–18 • The New Covenant

6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. 8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "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— 9 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none

his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. 12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 13 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 8:6–13

1 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year.

– Hebrews 10.1–3

11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. 12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. 14 For by *one* offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. 15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, 16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," 17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." 18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

– Hebrews 10.11–18

A. First, in 8.6–7,

1. he revealed that the problem was man.
2. The law was perfect, but
 - a) man could not keep it perfectly, and
 - b) God wanted to show man
 - (1) that he could not keep it,
 - (2) that he had sinned, but
 - (3) that God shows mercy.

B. Second, in 8.13,

1. he explained that a new covenant meant
2. that the old covenant has become obsolete,
 - a) otherwise, there would not have been a new covenant.
 - b) The point of the prophecy is that the new would replace the old.
 - (1) The Lord did not promise an *additional* covenant, but
 - (2) a new covenant that would be different from the old one.

C. Third, 10.3,

1. he spelled out that sins were remembered every year, because
2. the Day of Atonement had to be done every year.

D. Fourth, in 10.11–18,

1. the writer showed that by making those sacrifices repeatedly,
2. they showed that those sacrifices were inadequate,
 - a) although they were adequate in the lessons that they taught, and
 - b) they were adequate in bringing to God's mind the promise to forgive.
 - (1) However, by one sacrifice Jesus stopped the need for continual sacrifices.
 - (2) Therefore, the need for all those sacrifices has stopped, and
 - (a) God removed the temple,
 - (b) the sacrificial system,
 - i) even the ability for the Jews to know who is of Aaron,
 - ii) to insure that those sacrifices would stop.

E. From the start,

1. the Lord has wanted to bring in the rest of the world, the Gentiles,
2. that we too might have part in the one sacrifice of the Christ.

III. What Does This Mean for Us?

19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of

Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

– Hebrews 10.19–25

A. We can now enter the Holiest,

1. we can have a good conscience,
2. we can encourage one another.

B. Most important of all it means forgiveness of sins.

1. Forgiveness of sins is the ultimate blessing because

- a) we avoid eternal condemnation,
- b) we gain eternal life,
- c) we find freedom from guilt,
- d) we root out of our lives the thing

(1) that devastates our lives more than anything else, because

(2) sin affects every part of our lives.

(a) Think of the power of sin.

(b) Adam's sin brought all other sins into the world and

i) death, and everything that goes with death.

ii) Sin affects

(1) our outward health,

(2) our inward health,

(3) our thinking,

- (4) our mental health,
- (5) our relationships, etc.

Exhortation:

I. Forgiveness takes place in the mind of God.

- A. He forgave people before the cross, because
- B. of the cross:

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

– Hebrews 9.15

- 1. We are forgiven by the same thing,
- 2. the cross of Christ.

II. Whatever you have done,

- A. God in heaven will forgive you of all your sins,
- B. provided you accept Jesus of Nazareth as his Son.