

Lesson Text

Jeremiah 31:27-34 (NIV)

²⁷ “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will plant the kingdoms of Israel and Judah with the offspring of people and of animals. ²⁸ Just as I watched over them to uproot and tear down, and to overthrow, destroy and bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant,” declares the LORD. ²⁹ “In those days people will no longer say, ‘The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge.’

³⁰ Instead, everyone will die for their own sin; whoever eats sour grapes—their own teeth will be set on edge.

³¹ “The days are coming,” declares the LORD,

“when I will make a new covenant
with the people of Israel
and with the people of Judah.

³² It will not be like the covenant

I made with their ancestors
when I took them by the hand
to lead them out of Egypt,
because they broke my covenant,
though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD.

³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel
after that time,” declares the LORD.

“I will put my law in their minds
and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbor,
or say to one another, ‘Know the LORD,’

because they will all know me,
from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD.

“For I will forgive their wickedness
and will remember their sins no more.”

Today’s Lesson Aims

- **Learning Fact:** To list the most important features of the new covenant.
- **Biblical Principle:** To explain the significance of the new covenant being written on the heart rather than on tablets of stone.
- **Daily Application:** To fully embrace God’s way so that His law is written on our hearts.

Power Hour Lesson
Summary for
November 12, 2017

“Promise of a New Covenant”

Lesson Text:
Jeremiah 31:27-34

Background Scripture:
Jeremiah 31

Devotional Reading:
Psalm 86

INTRODUCTION

In Need of a Do-Over

Ancient Israel was given a do-over by God. Israel had to suffer exile for her sins, but God reversed the exile, restored the Israelites to their land, and granted the promise of a new covenant. There would be a new people of God in a day to come. They would know Him in the fullest sense, would have His law written on their hearts, and would experience complete and total forgiveness for sin.

“Any plan for the betterment of human society that ignores the sin problem is destined to failure. It isn’t enough to change the environment, for the heart of every problem is the problem of the heart. God must change the hearts of people so that they want to love Him and do His will. That’s why He announced a New Covenant to replace the Old Covenant...” (Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Cook)

LESSON BACKGROUND

Time: 587 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

Jeremiah’s ministry may have begun about 627 B.C.; many scholars believe he influenced the law reforms enacted by King Josiah (640-609 B.C.). Jeremiah lived to see the death of Josiah and the collapse of his reforms.

The book of Jeremiah contains many oracles and judgments against the Judeans, the people of the southern kingdom of divided Israel (the tribes of the northern kingdom having been taken into exile by the Assyrians decades before). Those oracles lament the apostasy of the people. The only hope Jeremiah gives is found in a section known as the Book of Consolation, which is Jeremiah 30:1-33:26.

But what a hope it is! God promised to make the exiles His people once again (Jeremiah 30:22), to “make a new covenant” with them (31:31-34), to return them to their land (32:41), and to establish once and for all time the Davidic dynasty as originally promised (33:15-26; 30:9). The theme of the Book of Consolation is restated often: “I will restore their fortunes” (32:44; see 30:3, 18; 31:23; 33:7, 26). The covenant theme of “You will be my people, and I will be your God” is also repeated (30:22; also 31:1, 33; 32:38).

Power Hour Lesson
Summary for
November 12, 2017

**“Promise of a New
Covenant”**

Lesson Text:
Jeremiah 31:27-34

Background Scripture:
Jeremiah 31

Devotional Reading:
Psalm 86

What Do You Think?

- How would you counsel a fellow believer who blames distressing circumstances on the actions of others?
- How does covenant faithfulness toward God compare and contrast with other types of covenant keeping?
- How can you make your heart more receptive to having God's Word written on it?
- In what ways should forgiveness change one's behavior?

POINTS TO PONDER

- Planting God's Word in our hearts brings blessings and restoration (Jeremiah 31:27-28).
- We all are personally accountable to God for our own actions (vs. 29-30).
- Our historical perspective affirms that the new covenant is founded on the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ (v. 31).
- God in His graciousness, replaced the old covenant written on stones with a new covenant written on hearts (vs. 32-33).
- All who place their faith in the finished work of Christ are welcome! (v. 34)

CONCLUSION

The Power of the New Covenant

The restoration promised in the lesson text began with the return of exiles and the rebuilding of the temple. But the promised restoration was not fully inaugurated until the coming of Jesus in the first century A.D. Hebrews 8 establishes that the promises of Jeremiah 31:31-34 are fulfilled in Jesus, our High Priest.

When we put the current text alongside Romans 4:16; 9:6-8, we see the old covenant being replaced by a new one—a covenant based not on law and physical ancestry but on faith in the one whose death paid the price for our sins: Jesus Christ. This expands the covenant people to include potentially every person regardless of ancestry, nationality, etc. It was possible for "a stranger" to be included under the old covenant (Exodus 12:48, 49; Numbers 15:13-16; etc.), but the division between Israelite and non-Israelite was still there. A power of the new covenant is to tear down that barrier (Ephesians 2:14). All are welcome!

Power Hour Lesson
Summary for
November 12, 2017

"Promise of a New Covenant"

Lesson Text:
Jeremiah 31:27-34

Background Scripture:
Jeremiah 31

Devotional Reading:
Psalm 86

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You for the new covenant we have in Christ! By His sacrifice we experience daily forgiveness. You have transformed our wills and minds to Yours, and we are grateful. May we love You with the entirety of our being. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.

THOUGHT TO REMEMBER

- May God's law be written on our hearts.

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

- Next week's lesson is **"Mediator of the New Covenant,"** and explains Jesus' role as mediator and how the Christians can approach God without fear. Study Hebrews 12:14, 15, 18-29 and Psalm 66.

Power Hour Lesson
Summary for
November 12, 2017

"Promise of a New Covenant"

Lesson Text:
Jeremiah 31:27-34

Background Scripture:
Jeremiah 31

Devotional Reading:
Psalm 86