

Changes Promised

Jer 31:29-34; John 1:17
SS Lesson for 10/26/2025

Devotional Scriptures: Heb 7:11-28

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
Key Verse: Jer 31:33

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

CHANGE IN JUDGMENT UNDERSTANDING (JER 31:29-30)

Judgment for ancestry (29)

- Ancestry does affect consequences (Lev 26:39)
- Ancestry is not used because it was just a proverb (Ezek 18:2-3)
- Ancestry is not used because children are judged for their own sins (Deut 24:16)
- Ancestry is not used because the guilt does not pass from parents to the child (Ezek 18:20)

Judgment of the individual (30)

- Judgment of the individual because the soul who sins will die (Ezek 18:4)
- Judgment of the individual because we reap what we sow (Gal 6:7)
- Judgment of the individual because of the individual's wickedness (Isa 3:11)
- Judgment of the individual because it is the Law (2 Chron 25:4)

CHANGE THROUGH A NEW COVENANT (JER 31:31-34)

Covenant of a new relationship (31-32)

- A new relationship that deals with the mind and heart (Heb 8:7-10)
- A new relationship that is written with the Holy Spirit on our heart (2 Cor 3:3)
- A new relationship through faith (Gal 3:26-29)
- A new relationship in which we are called a Child of God (Rom 8:16-17)
- A new relationship that makes us an heir of God (Titus 3:3-7)

Covenant of a new spirit (33)

- A new covenant that is a ministry of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3:7-8)
- A new Spirit that is the Spirit of truth (John 14:16-17)
- A new Spirit that makes our spirit alive (Rom 8:10-11)
- A new Spirit that allows us to call God our Father (Gal 4:6-7)
- A new Spirit that seals us until the redemption (Eph 1:13-14)

Covenant of a new knowledge of God (34)

- Knowledge that only comes through Jesus (Matt 11:27)
- A knowledge of God that comes from Christians being a shining light (2 Cor 4:6)
- Knowledge that comes from the anointing of the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:20)
- A knowledge that gives us an understanding that God is the "true" God (1 John 5:20)
- Knowledge that is eternal life (John 17:3)

CHANGE IN MEDIATOR (JOHN 1:17)

The Law (17)

- The Law is for those who live under the Law (Rom 3:19)
- The Law was added to identify trespasses (Rom 5:20)
- The Law can not justify (Gal 3:10-11)

Jesus Christ (17)

- Jesus Christ came to redeem His people (Luke 1:68)
- Jesus Christ is our eternal righteousness (Rom 3:21-22)
- Jesus Christ brought our eternal life (Rom 5:21)
- Jesus Christ took away our sins and provides salvation (Heb 9:28)

CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

COMMENTARY THOUGHTS FROM THOMAS CONSTABLE

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The book of Jeremiah serves more as a collection of episodes rather than a linear chronology of his ministry. For example, the episode that begins in Jeremiah 32:1 occurs after the one that begins in chapter 36. Therefore we should not be surprised when tone and content change abruptly as the book moves from topic to topic. We see such an abrupt change as chapter 30 begins. The way Jeremiah organized his material has led some to call Jeremiah 30-33 the “Book of Consolation” because its theme gives hope that the Babylonian captivity is not the final word. Today’s text takes us into the vital heart of this Book. As we consider our text, we keep in mind how it fits within the larger context: God promised to make the exiles his people once again (Jeremiah 30:22), to return them to their land (32:41), and to establish once and for all time the Davidic dynasty as originally promised (30:9; 33:15-26). The overall theme of the Book of Consolation is: “I will restore their fortunes” (Jeremiah 32:44; see also 30:3, 18; 33:7, 26). The covenant theme of “You will be my people, and I will be your God” is also repeated (30:22; see also 31:1; 32:38). The seemingly incurable wound (30:12, 15) could be healed only by the Lord (30:17). Chapter 31 depicts the coming restoration as a time of great blessing, when mourning would be turned into joy (31:13).

Key Verse: Jer 31:33

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.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Change in Judgment Understanding (Jer 31:29-30)

29 In those days they shall say no more: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.'
30 But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.

Judgment for ancestry (29)

Ancestry does affect consequences (Lev 26:39)

39 Those of you who are left will waste away in the lands of their enemies because of their sins; also because of their fathers' sins they will waste away.

Ancestry is not used because it was just a proverb (Ezek 18:2-3)

2 "What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel: "The fathers eat sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? 3 "As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel.

Ancestry is not used because children are judged for their own sins (Deut 24:16)

16 Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sin.

Ancestry is not used because the guilt does not pass from parents to the child (Ezek 18:20)

20 The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.

Judgment of the individual (30)

Judgment of the individual because the soul who sins will die (Ezek 18:4)

4 For every living soul belongs to me, the father as well as the son — both alike belong to me. The soul who sins is the one who will die.

Judgment of the individual because we reap what we sow (Gal 6:7)

7 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Judgment of the individual because of the individual's wickedness (Isa 3:11)

11 Woe to the wicked! Disaster is upon them! They will be paid back for what their hands have done.

Judgment of the individual because it is the Law (2 Chron 25:4)

4 Yet he did not put their sons to death, but acted in accordance with what is written in the Law, in the Book of Moses, where the Lord commanded: "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor children put to death for their fathers; each is to die for his own sins."

Change through a New Covenant (Jer 31:31-34)

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."

Covenant of a new relationship (31-32)

A new relationship that deals with the mind and heart (Heb 8:7-10)

7 For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. 8 But God found fault with the people and said: "The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 9 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. 10 This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

A new relationship that is written with the Holy Spirit on our heart (2 Cor 3:3)

3 You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

A new relationship through faith (Gal 3:26-29)

26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

A new relationship in which we are called a Child of God (Rom 8:16-17)

16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

A new relationship that makes us an heir of God (Titus 3:3-7)

4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Covenant of a new spirit (33)

A new covenant that is a ministry of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3:7-8)

7 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?

A new Spirit that is the Spirit of truth (John 14:16-17)

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever- 17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

A new Spirit that makes our spirit alive (Rom 8:10-11)

10 But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

A new Spirit that allows us to call God our Father (Gal 4:6-7)

6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

A new Spirit that seals us until the redemption (Eph 1:13-14)

13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession-to the praise of his glory.

Covenant of a new knowledge of God (34)

Knowledge that only comes through Jesus (Matt 11:27)

27 "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

A knowledge of God that comes from Christians being a shining light (2 Cor 4:6)

6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Knowledge that comes from the anointing of the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:20)

20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.

A knowledge that gives us an understanding that God is the "true" God (1 John 5:20)

20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true-even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Knowledge that is eternal life (John 17:3)

3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

Change in Mediator (John 1:17)

17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The Law (17)

The Law is for those who live under the Law (Rom 3:19)

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God.

The Law was added to identify trespasses (Rom 5:20)

20 The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more,

The Law can not justify (Gal 3:10-11)

10 All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law." 11 Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, "The righteous will live by faith."

Jesus Christ (17)

Jesus Christ came to redeem His people (Luke 1:68)

68 "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because He has come and has redeemed His people.

Jesus Christ is our eternal righteousness (Rom 3:21-22)

21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference,

Jesus Christ brought our eternal life (Rom 5:21)

21 so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus Christ took away our sins and provides salvation (Heb 9:28)

28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Thomas Constable

Verse 27

Days would come when the Lord would fill the Promised Land with people and animals once again. The land had become desolate because of the exiles.

Verse 28

As Yahweh directed the breaking down of His nation, so He would oversee its building up.

Verses 29-30

In that time of future blessing, people would no longer repeat a popular proverb that said that the children were suffering because of their fathers' sins. This proverb expressed a popular misconception (cf. Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:2-4). It blamed present trouble on past ancestors inordinately. In that day, everyone would bear the consequences of his own actions. Justice would be obvious then, even though at present it did not seem to be operating. Whereas people do suffer consequences for the sins of their ancestors to a limited extent (corporate responsibility), they much more consistently suffer for their own sins (individual responsibility).

Verse 31

In the future, the Lord will make a new covenant with all the Israelites, specifically the Israelites who had inhabited the Northern Kingdom and those who had inhabited the Southern Kingdom (cf. Jeremiah 32:40; Isaiah 24:5; Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:8; Isaiah 55:3; Isaiah 59:21; Isaiah 61:8; Ezekiel 16:60; Ezekiel 37:26; Hosea 2:18-20; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8 to Hebrews 9:28; Hebrews 12:24). This is the only place in the Old Testament where the term "new covenant" appears, though there are many references to this covenant elsewhere.

"The short passage which develops from the simple announcement in this verse is one of the most important in the book of Jeremiah. Indeed it represents one of the deepest insights in the whole OT." [Note: Thompson, pp. 579-80.]

"The heart of OT theology and of the message of Jeremiah was his teaching on the New covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34." [Note: Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, p. 231.]

Many commentators believe that Jeremiah's revelation of the New Covenant was his greatest theological contribution. They view it as the high point of the book, the climax of the prophet's teaching.

"The prophecy of Jeremiah marks a watershed in Hebrew religious and cultic life. From this point onwards there is a significant divergence between what has obtained in the past and what will characterize the future religious observances of Israel." [Note: Harrison, *Jeremiah and . . .*, p. 138.]

Verse 32

This New Covenant would be different from the Mosaic Covenant, which the Israelites consistently and inevitably broke in spite of Yahweh's faithful commitment to them. They had worshipped Baal (Heb. ba'al) even though Yahweh had been a faithful husband (Heb. ba'al) to them.

Verse 33

Instead of God's law being external to them, the Lord would write it on their heart (i.e., mind and will; cf. Jeremiah 17:1). He will do something for them that they cannot do for themselves (cf. Deuteronomy 30:5-6). "Writing on the heart" suggests the removal of written documents and merely human mediators. Having the Lord's Word in the heart prevents sin and fosters obedience (cf. Deuteronomy 11:18; Psalms 119:11). [Note: See Femi Adeyemi, "What Is the New Covenant 'Law' in Jeremiah 31:33?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163:651 (July-September 2006):312-21, who concluded that this refers not to the Mosaic Law but to a law yet to be given to Israel by Christ. Ibid., "The New Covenant Law and the Law of Christ," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 163:652 (October-December 2006):438-52, equated this new law with the Law of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:21; Galatians 6:2).] David equated having the law written on his heart with desiring to do God's will (Psalms 40:8)

"It will become part of the nature of God's people; it will be instinctive. The core of the new covenant is God's gift of a new heart (cf. Ezekiel 36:25-27). Herein lies the sufficient motivation for obeying God's law." [Note: Feinberg, "Jeremiah," p. 576. Italics mine. Cf. 32:39 [LXX]; Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31; and Wiersbe, p. 123.]

". . . there is no further need of any external means like mutual teaching about God . . ." [Note: Keil, 2:36.]

God would also enter into an intimate relationship with His people as His covenant partners (cf. Jeremiah 7:23; Jeremiah 11:4; Jeremiah 24:7; Jeremiah 30:22; Jeremiah 31:1; Jeremiah 32:38; Deuteronomy 31; Ezekiel 11:20; Ezekiel 36:28). The old Mosaic Covenant being broken, a new relationship would begin.

"If the sheer grace of God's election of Israel as covenant partner was apparent in the first covenant making, how much more so in this promise following their history of unfaithfulness and rebellion (Jeremiah 31:32)." [Note: Scalise, p. 133.]

Notice that Jeremiah revealed nothing about human responsibility under the New Covenant. That would come later with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

Verse 34

All the Israelites, from the least to the greatest, would also know the Lord intimately, without having to be exhorted to do so.

"The verb know here probably carries its most profound connotation, the intimate personal knowledge which arises between two persons who are committed wholly to one another in a relationship that touches mind, emotion, and will. In such a relationship the past is forgiven and forgotten." [Note: Thompson, p. 581.]

They would know Him in this intimate way because He would forgive their sins and not bring them to memory or judgment any more. True forgiveness, in contrast to the covering of sin that the Old Covenant sacrifices provided, would make intimacy with God possible (cf. Isaiah 54:10; Ezekiel 34:25; Ezekiel 37:26).

"The old covenant spoke of a great physical deliverance from Egypt through the blood of lambs and the power of God; the new covenant proclaims a great spiritual deliverance from sin and death through the efficacious blood of the Lamb of God and the power of God. The Passover Feast memorialized the first; the Lord's Supper memorializes the second." [Note: Feinberg, "Jeremiah," p. 575.]

"In the old covenant, the law with its requirements is the impelling force; in the new covenant, the grace shown in the forgiveness of sins is the aiding power by which man attains that common life with God which the law sets before him as the great problem of life. It is in this that the qualitative difference between the old and the new covenants consists. The object which both set before men for attainment is the same, but the means of attaining it are different in each. In the old covenant are found commandment and requirement; in the new, grace and giving." [Note: Keil, 2:39.]

"Based on similar content and contexts, the following expressions may be equated with the New covenant: the 'everlasting covenant' in seven passages (Isaiah 24:5; Isaiah 55:3; Isaiah 61:8; Jeremiah 32:40; Jeremiah 50:5) and later in Ezekiel 16:60; Ezekiel 37:26); a 'new heart' and a 'new spirit' in three or four texts (Jeremiah 32:39 [LXX]; and later in Ezekiel 11:19; Ezekiel 18:31; Ezekiel 36:26); and 'a covenant' or 'my covenant,' which is placed in the context of 'in that day' in three passages (Isaiah 42:6; Isaiah 49:8; Isaiah 59:21; Hosea 2:18-20). That makes a total of sixteen or seventeen major passages on the 'New covenant.'

"Still, Jeremiah 31:31-34 was the locus classicus on the subject, as may be seen from several lines of evidence. It was this passage that stimulated Origen to name the last twenty-seven books of the Bible 'the New Testament.' But it was also the largest piece of text to be quoted in extenso in the NT, vis., Hebrews 8:8-12 and partially repeated a few chapters later in Hebrews 10:16-17. Furthermore, it was the subject of nine other NT texts: four dealing with the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25); two Pauline references to 'ministers of the new covenant' and the future forgiveness of Israel's sins (2 Corinthians 3:6; Romans 11:27); and three additional references in Hebrews (Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 10:16; Hebrews 12:24; cf. the two large teaching passages mentioned above)." [Note: Kaiser, *Toward an . . .*, pp. 231-32.]

There are three basic views concerning the identity of the people with whom God would make this New Covenant and when He would make it. One view is that God will make it with Israel alone when He resumes dealing with that nation as formerly, namely, in the Millennium (cf. Romans 11). A second view is that God made it with the church alone, which advocates of this view (i.e., covenant theologians) say replaces Israel in God's plans, and He made it at the Cross. A third view is that God made it with Israel at the Cross, and the church, which does not replace Israel, somehow enters into its blessings.

I hold the third of these views. It seems that God made the New Covenant with Israel when Jesus Christ died on the cross (Luke 22:20). The church now operates under this covenant (1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:1-14; Hebrews 8:8-12; Hebrews 10:16-17). [Note: The Apostle Paul pointed out seven contrasts between the Old and New Covenants in 2 Corinthians 3:6-11. See other comparisons of the two covenants in Hebrews 8:8-13; 9:15-28; 10:15-18, 28-29; and 12:18-24. E. W. Hengstenberg, "The New Covenant," in *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*, pp. 237-51, argued that the differences between the old and new covenants were only matters of degree, but this view fails to recognize the profound differences between these two covenants.] However, Israel will enter into the blessings of this covenant, which God promised her, at the time of Israel's restoration, namely, at the second coming of Christ. [Note: See John F. Walvoord, "The New Covenant," in *Integrity of Heart, Skillfulness of Hands: Biblical and Leadership Studies in Honor of Donald K. Campbell*, pp. 186-200; J. Dwight Pentecost, *Thy Kingdom Come*, pp. 164-77; Rodney J. Decker, "The Church's Relationship to the New Covenant," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 152:607 (July-September 1995):290-305; Bruce A. Ware, "The New Covenant and the People(s) of God," in *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church*, pp. 68-97; and Craig A. Blaising, "The Fulfillment of the Biblical Covenants," in *Progressive Dispensationalism*, pp. 179-211. John R. Master, "The New Covenant," in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, pp. 93-

110, argued for two new covenants, one with Israel and one with the church, as did L. S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, 4:325. See also Charles C. Ryrie, *The Basis of the Premillennial Faith*, pp. 105-25.]

This arrangement resembles one that is possible to set up in a Charitable Lead Unit Trust under the Internal Revenue Code of the United States. Suppose there was a vastly wealthy and generous philanthropist of the magnitude of a Bill Gates. As he prepared his will he bequeathed millions of dollars to various charitable causes that would benefit millions of people all over the world when he died. He also wrote into his will that when his only son reached the age of 21, he would inherit billions of dollars. When this man died, his son was only five years old, so for 16 years he did not enter into his father's inheritance. However, as soon as the philanthropist died, the millions of dollars he had bequeathed to charity went to work immediately-to help many people.

This illustration shows how the church enters into the blessings of the New Covenant. When Christ established the Lord's Supper, it was as though He notarized His will; it became official then. The will is the New Covenant. When He died, His "estate" became available to those He chose to profit from it, namely: both Jewish and Gentile believers in Jesus Christ. Soon many people around the world, Jews and Gentiles in the church, began to benefit from the blessings of His death. However, God's chosen people, His son Israel, will not enter into his unique inheritance until the appointed time, namely: the Millennium. Blessings for the church began almost immediately after Christ's death. Blessings for Israel will not begin until God's appointed time arrives: Christ's second coming.

"Perhaps an[other] illustration will help us better understand this dual fulfillment of the new-covenant prophecy. Standing with Jeremiah and Ezekiel at their vantage point in history, we are in a dark tunnel. As we look with them toward the light at the end of the tunnel, we see God making a new covenant with ethnic Israel. We then move through the tunnel and emerge into the light. There ahead of us we see the same scene we saw from afar-God implementing his covenant with ethnic Israel. But now that we have stepped out of the tunnel into the light, our peripheral vision is expanded. To the side of us, incapable of being seen from back in the tunnel, is another scene-God implementing this same covenant with the church of the present era, comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. The prophets were not wrong-they simply had 'tunnel vision' because their focus was on ethnic Israel." [Note: Chisholm, *Handbook on . . .*, p. 196.]

Which blessings of the New Covenant does the church enjoy now and which are for Israel in the future? There are four promises in Jeremiah 31:33-34. The promise of having God's law written on the heart has been fulfilled to a limited extent. Christians do have an innate desire to please God because of the indwelling Holy Spirit's ministry, but we do not have the innate understanding of God's will that God promised here since that was a promise for the Israelites. All people do not know the Lord, from the least to the greatest, now. Second, we have a unique covenant relationship with God as Christians, but we are not the same group that will have a unique covenant relationship with God in the future, namely, the Israelites. Third, all Christians know the Lord to some degree of intimacy now, but we do not all have the depth of relationship with God that He promised the Israelites here. We still need teaching and teachers, but apparently this will not be the case for Israel in the future. Fourth, Christians enjoy complete forgiveness of sins individually, as the Israelites will in the future, but the Israelites will also enjoy complete forgiveness of their corporate sins as the nation of Israel as well. So I would say Christians enjoy all these blessings to some extent, but not to the extent Israel will enjoy them in the future. As the return from exile was a partial fulfillment of the promises of restoration, so the church's enjoyment of these blessings is only a partial fulfillment of what God promised Israel. [Note: See also Dyer, in *The Old . . .*, p. 620.]

The New Covenant is a branch or outgrowth of the Abrahamic Covenant. In the Abrahamic Covenant, God promised Abraham a piece of real estate for his descendants, an incalculable number of descendants, and blessing for his descendants and for all people through his descendants (Genesis 12:1-7; et al.). Deuteronomy 29-30, sometimes called the Palestinian Covenant, gave more information about the land God had promised Abraham. The Davidic Covenant gave more information about God's promises regarding descendants (2 Samuel 7). The New Covenant revealed the particulars of the promised blessing (Jeremiah 31). Each of these later covenants relates to the Abrahamic Covenant organically; each is an outgrowth of it in the progress of revelation. In contrast, the Mosaic (Old) Covenant does not relate organically but "was added" (Galatians 3:19) to explain how the Israelites could maximize the benefits God had promised in the Abrahamic Covenant.

Consequently, when God terminated the Old Covenant, it did not eliminate anything He had promised in the Abrahamic, "Palestinian," Davidic, or New Covenants. [Note: I have put "Palestinian Covenant" in quotation marks because Deuteronomy 29-30 does not contain all the features of a typical ancient Near Eastern covenant, as the other covenants mentioned do. Some interpreters prefer to view these chapters as simply more information about the land promises in the Abrahamic Covenant. For a helpful distinction between which items in the New Covenant continue from the Old Covenant and which ones are new, see Kaiser, *Toward an . . .*, pp. 233-34.]

(Adapted from URL:<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dcc/jeremiah-31.html>)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Many Christians who read their Bibles faithfully struggle with understanding what to do with the commands and regulations they find in the Old Testament. Because we believe in the inspiration and value of the entire Bible, we must take these passages seriously. The prophecy in Jeremiah 31 helps us put other portions of the Old Testament into perspective. The Law of Moses revealed God's will for the people of Israel and in so doing revealed many things about his nature and character. Jeremiah's perspective shows that this initial covenant did not work for Israel. This was not because God failed, but because of the people's disobedience. Eventually, Israel was punished by the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple followed by exile. The new covenant Jeremiah speaks of is a fresh start for humanity. This new covenant defines its adherents not in terms of obedience to law, but as those who have experienced the grace of being forgiven through Jesus' atonement for our sins. As new covenant people, we have much we can learn from the old covenant, but we rejoice in the reality of the new covenant. What the prophets searched for diligently, we now experience (1 Peter 1:10-11).