

## **The Promise of the New Covenant**

Jeremiah 31

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**In chapter 31 we reach the pinnacle of the prophecies given to Jeremiah as God promises**

**His people the New Covenant.**

**I. God promises a reunified Israel that will give all His people reason for joyful worship.**

**(v. 1-14)**

“Now then, your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine.” (Genesis 48:5)

... Israel reached out his right hand and put it on Ephraim’s head, though he was the younger, and crossing his arms, he put his left hand on Manasseh’s head, even though Manasseh was the firstborn. (Genesis 48:14)

But his father refused and said, “I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will become a group of nations.” He blessed them that day and said,

“In your name will Israel pronounce this blessing:

‘May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.’”

So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh. (Genesis 48:18-20)

**II. In the midst of comforting words, a tragic prophesy related to the birth of the Messiah is given. (v. 15)**

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” (Matthew 2:13)

When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

“A voice is heard in Ramah,

weeping and great mourning,

Rachel weeping for her children

and refusing to be comforted,

because they are no more.” (Matthew 2:16-18)

### **III. Because of His fatherly love for Israel, God promises a return to the promised land.**

**(v. 21-30)**

‘The Lord is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation.’ (Numbers 14:18)

God looks down from heaven

on all mankind

to see if there are any who understand,

any who seek God.

Everyone has turned away, all have become corrupt;

there is no one who does good,

not even one. (Psalm 53:2-3)

... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God... (Romans 3:23)

### **IV. God promises a restored relationship with His people that will include transformed hearts and minds. (v. 31-34)**

Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. (Romans 3:20)

I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. (Romans 7:10-13)

...will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts!

Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. (2 Corinthians 3:8-16)

Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their

transgression means riches for the world, and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their full inclusion bring!

I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I take pride in my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them. For if their rejection brought reconciliation to the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? (Romans 11:11-15)

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, and in this way all Israel will be saved. As it is written:

“The deliverer will come from Zion;  
he will turn godlessness away from Jacob.  
And this is my covenant with them  
when I take away their sins.”

As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies for your sake; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, for God’s gifts and his call are irrevocable. Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God’s mercy to you. For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all. (Romans 11:25-32)

**V. God firmly promises that Israel will never stop being His chosen nation. (v. 35-40)**