

The New Covenant

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[0 : 00] God, we come before you this morning and ask that you might still our hearts, might still our thoughts. That God, we might avail ourselves to you. Let your spirits be truth to us. God, may you convict us. May you turn us towards you.

May us, let us have a greater understanding of who you are. God, let us be people who love you more and love those around us more. We ask this in your name. Amen. We're looking today at Jeremiah 30-31.

I'm specifically focusing on the New Covenant when the Scripture reading was taking place. That was just from Jeremiah 31, but we'll be looking at both chapters today.

As we begin today, I want to give you an illustration. I want you to draw a picture in your mind.

Imagine that there is a mother and her child are walking towards a busy intersection.

And as they move towards the busy intersection, the cars are going by. And the mother says to the child, stop. Stop. Stop. And the child just keeps wandering into the road.

[1 : 03] And then the mother grabs the child and she pulls the child back. And then she says, what are you doing? You need to listen to me. When I tell you to stop, you need to stop.

I love you so much. I just don't want you to get hurt. You need to stop when I tell you to stop. If we were to think of the book of Jeremiah, as we look at chapters 30-34 and that illustration, today we are looking at the kiss on the forehead.

The I love you so much. Chapters 30-34 in Jeremiah are called the book of consolation. It's because the book of Jeremiah takes a respite from the message that it has been provided to move towards a message of hope.

A message that God says, I'm with you. There may be judgment coming, but I am still with you. I will rescue you. And we're going to be looking at that today.

One of the first things we see out of Jeremiah 30, in the first three verses, is that restoration is going to be for all God's people.

[2 : 12] Let me read the first part of Jeremiah 30 for us. The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord. Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel. Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you.

For behold, days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will restore my fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, says the Lord. This message is to Israel and Judah.

And what is important about that is that this is a message for the entire nation. The Israel to whom this message is provided, they were previously destroyed.

They were part of the northern tribes that were destroyed before this. At the time of Jeremiah's writing, only two of the 12 tribes remain, Judah and Benjamin.

But when Jeremiah comes and says this is a message for Israel, he's saying it's for all of them.

Even those who have been sent away. God says to Israel and Judah, I will bring them back to the land that I gave their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.

[3 : 26] God promises restoration for his people. He promises a return to their land. As we go through the message today, what we're going to see is we have three things that we're looking at.

The first is we're going to be looking at discipline. A tool for training. The second will be hope. Love with an everlasting love. And the third will be a new covenant.

A fulfillment of the old. First, let's look at discipline. A tool for training. It begins with God acknowledging the woes of his people.

In verse 5 it says, We have heard a cry of panic, of terror, and no peace. The following verses provide imagery for their condition.

The people are described as showing the anguish of childbirth. They're described as having a yoke on their neck. They're being guided like a farm animal. They are experiencing fear.

[4 : 31] And discipline will come. Verse 11 says, For I am with you to save you, declares the Lord. I will make a full end of all the nations, among whom I scattered you.

But of you I will not make a full end. I will discipline you in just measure. And I will by no means leave you unpunished.

There's two promises that come out of this passage. The first promise is that I am with you. God is saying to his people, I am with you. The second promise, I, that is God, I will discipline you in just measure.

Discipline is coming. Before we talk about that, let me just make a difference between discipline and vengeance. Discipline and vengeance can sometimes look the same.

Something's done wrong and someone else does something back. Someone responds to the wrong that has been done. The difference is this, is that discipline seeks the betterment of the person.

[5 : 35] Discipline is a tool for training. It's a tool for building people up. Vengeance, however, seeks harm towards the other person. Vengeance is a tool of retribution.

God to his people is saying, I am sending punishment to you. But I am with you to save you. God seeks the betterment of his people.

God disciplines his people. But God seeks vengeance on his enemy. So in today's message, if you are part of God's people, this message is very hopeful.

If you are not part of God's people, this message might be quite discouraging. It might feel quite hopeless. If you are not part of God's people, you are his enemy.

But if you are the enemy of God, there is hope. The door to God's house is always open. And Jesus stands ready to welcome all who would come.

[6 : 48] The reason for the discipline. And we know that discipline is always warranted when it comes from God. The reason for the discipline is that their guilt is great. And their sins are flagrant.

And their disobedience is significant. Let me read from verse 14, starting part of the way through that. I have dealt you the blow of an enemy.

The punishment of a merciless foe. Because your guilt is great. Because your sins are flagrant. Why do you cry out over your hurt?

Your pain is incurable. Because your guilt is great. Because your sins are flagrant. I have done these things to you. There is a purpose for this discipline.

It is a training tool. It shows the consequences of flagrant sin. And as a result of their flagrant sin and their disobedience, the people will be sent into exile.

[7 : 51] One of the things that we see from that is that sin destroys God's relationship with his people. Through discipline, God reveals that truth.

When people sin, they are separated from God's goodness. The goal that God has for us is that we would be in a perfect relationship with him.

That there would be a perfect relationship between God and his people. Verse 22 says, You shall be my people. And I will be your God.

And the purpose of discipline is to restore that relationship. Through punishment, God seeks to restore the relationship.

The betterment of his people. We see that once again from verse 11 when he says, I am with you to save you. Now, question of reflection for us.

[8 : 51] Have you experienced the discipline that comes from God? Have your personal sins resulted in harm? More harm perhaps than seemed warranted?

More harm than it seems came to others who did the same things? Be reminded that God disciplines those who he loves.

Sometimes we are like that foolish child who wanders into danger. God is there to protect us. God says to us, I am with you to save you.

One of the things that we see here in Jeremiah 30 is also the destruction of the neighboring nations. God has used these neighboring nations to Judah to punish his people.

To that end, these nations have experienced victory. They have experienced the spoils that come from victories. As for these victorious nations, God proclaims in verse 11, I will make a full end of all the nations among whom I scattered you.

[10 : 00] These prospering nations will face judgment after their temporary victory. Their victory did result from God's intervention.

Their victory did not result from God's approval of them. So while they have experienced victory, it wasn't because God said that they were righteous or they had done the right thing.

God was simply using them for his greater purposes. As we reflect upon this with ourselves, my encouragement for all of us is that we would be people who avoid situational theology.

And what I mean by that is that we would be people who avoid looking at the circumstances of our life to see what that tells us about God. Life's success does not mean you are blessed by God, nor does life's difficulty mean that you are cursed by God.

Our circumstances, our present situation does not necessitate a response from God. A fundamental problem with situational theology is it puts the individual at the center of our relationship with God.

[11:13] Our behavior becomes the determining action for God's favor. From this passage, an important point is iterated. God's plans are beyond our understanding.

That's a good thing. What might situational theology look like in our life? It's like when you have a big exam coming up, or you have a big job interview, or you have that project to do at work, and you want it to go well.

And you say to yourself, I haven't read my Bible so much today. I haven't read it yesterday.

Actually, this week has been bad. Well, before I go to that job interview, I'm reading my Bible this morning.

Not because you want to spend time with God, but because you want that job interview to go better.

God is not there to be manipulated by our decisions.

God is not there to be manipulated by our decisions. Next big thing that we see, our second point that we are looking at is hope. And that is that we are loved with an everlasting love.

[12:24] We're going to be in chapter 31 now. Chapter 31 begins with the repeated goal. In verse 1 it says, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel.

They shall be my people. The goal of the promise provides the theme for the following verses. It begins with the assurance of deliverance.

Let me read that for us in verse 2. The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness. When Israel sought for rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away.

The passage uses the imagery of the wilderness as a place of rescue. We've seen that before in the scripture. In the fleeing from Egypt, where wilderness is a place of respite.

We'll see that in Revelation, where the wilderness once again is described as a place of rest. And God's motivation through all of that is love.

[13:22] His love for his people. We know God's goal. That's perfect relationship with us. I am your God. You are my people. We now know God's motivation.

Everlasting love for us. The second part of verse 3 says, I have loved you with an everlasting love. And because of that love, the passage continues on.

Therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you. God is faithful to us because of his love. No other reason. I want us to reflect on that for a moment.

That we are the recipients of God's unconditional love. Many people think God's love is conditional. Much like that situational theology of which I spoke.

When we act one way, we think God's love is abounding. When we act another, we think God's love is waning. People who especially struggle with this unconditional love that we have from God are those who have experienced friends or families using love as a tool of manipulation.

[14:36] Knowing only conditional love. These people struggle to believe that God's love might be boundless. The problem is that when we view God's love as conditional, as something to be earned, is that it leads to guilt.

We can never live up to God's standard. When we are constantly failing, we are left feeling guilty for being a failure.

It's especially troubling. When we act like God's love is conditional. We act like God is a vending machine. We put in the right combination of coins and push the right buttons and then we will receive the desired product.

God says to us, go and experience the fullness of that unfaltering love that I have for you. Live with the freedom of knowing you are loved by a perfect love, no matter how you act.

Experience the overwhelming abundance of love that I have. Stop spending your life searching for loose change. God's saying to us, stop searching for the love that I've already given you.

[15 : 47] Stop believing the lies. Start living in the freedom of God's everlasting love. Maybe you're asking, I don't know where to start. We're going to get there.

We're going to get there. The next thing we see out of the chapter 31 is that God intervenes for his people. He builds, he saves, and he restores.

We see God building. Verse 4. He says, Again, I will build you and you shall be built, O virgin Israel. With building comes much favor.

They dance the dance of merrymakers. They plant fruitful vineyards. The people of Ephraim, Ephraim is a reference to the ten tribes that had previously been lost.

Ephraim was the largest of those ten tribes. And so sometimes those ten tribes are called Israel.

Sometimes they're called Ephraim. Ephraim, the people of Ephraim, will go down to Zion, which is Jerusalem, to worship God.

[16 : 46] Next we see that God saves. The people are instructed in verse 7 to implore, O Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel.

And God will save them. God will send them home. Verse 9, it says, I will make them walk by brooks of water in a straight path in which they shall not stumble.

For anyone who has ever hiked a lengthy trail, you know the value of a path that is along a stream, straight, and smooth.

We also see that God restores. He brings His people back. Not by their power, but by God's power. Let me read verse 10 for us. Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away.

Say, He who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock. For the Lord has ransomed Jacob.

[17 : 50] He has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. And the coming exile, God will scatter His people. But the promise is given. God will also gather them, ransom them, and redeem them.

We also see that the people will return. We have a section here which might be described as Rachel's lament.

And to understand that section, we need to know that Jacob is the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. And his beloved wife and mother of two of the sons who would become those tribes is Rachel.

Rachel, as such, is considered here the de facto mother of the tribes. And verse 15 says, Thus says the Lord, A voice is heard in Ramah, which is near the location of Rachel's burial site.

Lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted for her children because they are no more.

[19 : 02] The image that is being drawn here is that Rachel is weeping from her grave over the exile of her descendants. Verse 16 continues, Thus says the Lord, Keep your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the Lord.

And they shall come back from the land of the enemy. There is hope for your future, declares the Lord. And your children shall come back to their own country.

The message here is of hope. This is a message to Rachel saying, Stop weeping. Your children are coming home. It's a powerful image of her mother thinking her children have been lost forever.

that God declares otherwise. Can you imagine a mother grieving the death of her children? And God intervenes and says, Stop weeping.

Your children are saved. That is the image that is being drawn here as God reflects upon His people eventually returning from exile and reestablishing themselves.

[20 : 18] And reestablishing themselves. This verse out of Jeremiah is also used in the book of Matthew.

But not in a happy sense. In a sense of understanding the loss of life. There is a part of Matthew in the story of Jesus' birth that is referred to as the massacre of the innocents.

What takes place is that Herod, who is the ruler of the land, learns of Jesus' birth. And he seeks to have Him killed.

So he sends the wise men on his behalf to ascertain the location of Jesus. And these wise men do ascertain Jesus' location.

But being warned not to return to Herod, they do not. Herod, upon realizing he has been tricked by these wise men, begins the execution of the children in the land in an effort to wipe out the true

king.

[21 : 32] The king who he knew would eventually take his place. Let me read for you from Matthew chapter 6. Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious.

And he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that had been ascertained from the wise men.

This was fulfilled with what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah. A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation.

Rachel, weeping for her children. She refused to be comforted because they are no more. In Matthew, it only quotes this part, the prophecy, because those children were indeed lost.

It is a reminder to us that Jesus is contentious. Even as an infant, people realized he is powerful.

[22 : 42] He is the one who God said inherit, tried to put an end to Jesus' life before it could even get started. But God's plans would go for it.

Jesus and his family would escape away before Herod's wrath was felt upon the innocent children.

As we move back into Jeremiah 31, the next thing that we see is Ephraim's repentance.

And this section is written like Ephraim, the Tim tribes, is speaking. And in verse 19, it says, For I have turned away. I relented after I was instructed.

I struck my thigh. I was ashamed. And I was confounded. The use here of I struck my thigh that is translated by the New Living Translation as I kicked myself for my stupidity.

Which is a good feel of what that striking of the thigh is supposed to mean. It's kicking yourself for your own stupidity. It is Ephraim's repentance.

[23 : 57] And we see that restoration will take place. God promises to restore the nations. And he tells them, he says, Make road signs so that you can remember the way back.

In this message of restoration, an unusual expression is used. There in verse 22, it says, For the Lord has created a new thing on earth, a woman encircles a man.

The imagery that is being used here is that the women will guard the men. That idea is novel and unprecedented. For God, the establishment, the reestablishment of Judah and Israel is novel and unprecedented.

In verse 28, God promises to Israel and Judah. He says, I will watch over them to build and to plant. This is followed perhaps by an unknown expression to us.

In verse 29, it says, In those days, they shall no longer say, The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge.

[25 : 07] So the expression of children's, of teeth being set on edge is an expression to convey the physical reaction to a sour taste. I don't actually know the English word for that other than squinty face.

But we can imagine a sour taste and then the physical response that you have to that, that is what this passage is speaking to. And the proverb that was presented here is the idea that children receive the punishment for their parents' actions.

And it's actually mentioned again in Ezekiel 18. So this expression is something that the people of that day knew. So what would happen is the father would eat the sour grapes, but the children experience the unpleasant taste.

The idea for Israel and Judah, they are both being punished for generational disobedience. They are being punished not for their sins, but the sins that their predecessors committed.

A good example for us might come from financial debt. Imagine someone has inherited significant financial debt. And they are experiencing the burden and the consequences that go with that debt.

[26 : 20] Someday, they would be unburdened by another's debt. They would experience debt forgiveness. This idea of debt forgiveness is a great segue into our final section.

As we look at the new covenant, a fulfillment of the old. In verse 31, it begins, Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

Once again, this is for all tribes of Israel. Not like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt.

My covenant, so God is speaking here of the Mosaic covenant, which is given in the first five books of the Bible, also known as the law. My covenant that they broke.

So the people broke covenant with God. God did not break covenant with them. The people broke covenant with God. Though I was their husband, declares the Lord.

[27 : 32] And the imagery that's being used is the imagery of adultery, of breaking the covenant. like breaking the marriage vow. Now we need to stop for a moment and understand a little bit about this Mosaic covenant.

This covenant that is being replaced here in the prophecy of Jeremiah 31. To give us an understanding on the Mosaic covenant, we're going to look in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy chapter 6 beginning in verse 1. This is a section of scripture that is an introduction to the Ten Commandments. So what would follow this passage in Deuteronomy would be the Ten Commandments.

And one of the things I want you to see in this introduction to the Ten Commandments is that the connection that is made. The connection is that the people need to keep the commands of God and then they will live long in the land.

They will be prosperous. This is a repeated theme through the old scripture. That in being faithful to God, in being obedient to God, the people then would experience the blessings that comes from God.

[28 : 41] Jeremiah, as a prophet thus far in the book, would say there's been a lack of obedience. There's been a lack of obedience for an extended period of time.

In fact, there's been such a lack of obedience that their land has been whittled down. That the number of tribes, once, twelve, has been reduced to two. And now they are going to be losing the very final, last remnants of their nation because of their lack of obedience.

As we look at this Mosaic covenant, I want you to see two things that come from that. First, I want you to see the importance of obedience. And as I read through it, and you'll see it on the screen, you're going to see words that have to do with obedience in blue.

And I want you to see their connection to the land. And as I read that, you'll see connections to the land. And there's three of those. And they are going to be in bold italicized.

Now this is the commandment, the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son's sons, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I commanded you all the days of your life.

[29 : 59] And that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

Milk and honey is a reference to fertile land. The people, however, God's people, have broke covenant. covenant. Verse 32, a reminder, it says, my covenant that they broke.

That covenant, that they would keep the commands of God, live long in the land. It's perhaps an oversimplification of that covenant, but it's somewhat accurate, I think an accurate representation of that.

The people broke covenant with God through their generational disobedience. But there is a new covenant coming. This is going to be God's solution to this problem.

The breaking of the covenant, God says, I've got a solution. In verse 31, he says, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

[31 : 07] This is an unprecedented idea. The Mosaic covenant has been in place for a thousand years. This new covenant idea of which Jeremiah is speaking, does not appear in scripture until the time of Jesus.

Actually, though, after Jesus, about 650 years later, Jeremiah's proclamation of a new covenant, his prophecy of things to come.

The two focal points of this new covenant is that the law will be written on people's hearts and that there will be the permanent forgiveness of sin.

Let me read for us from verses beginning in verse 33. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord.

I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts and I shall be their God and they shall be my people and no longer shall each teach his neighbor and each his brother saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord.

[32 : 18] For I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more. So the two significant aspects of this new covenant.

first, God saying, I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts. No longer is the law written on stone tablets.

Rather, the law is written on people's hearts. The implication being that their hearts are no longer stained by sin. This implication is asserted as the verse continues.

It says, I will remember their sins no more. The Mosaic covenant brought forgiveness. But forgiveness was continually needed.

There was no lasting forgiveness. Permanent forgetting that is mentioned here in Jeremiah 31 is a new thing. This new covenant addresses the fundamental problem.

[33 : 27] And that is that sin, that sin is the barrier to God. So this new covenant will address that fundamental problem of sin. And one person finally resolves that sin barrier.

That person is Jesus Christ. And he is able to do that because he lives a sinful life. He dies a substitutionary death, meaning that Jesus died for other people and took their punishment.

This new covenant promised here in Jeremiah 31 is explained more in the book of Hebrews. The book of Hebrews is a New Testament book written about 30 years after Jesus' resurrection.

This book is written about 650 years after Jeremiah. Let's take a look at Hebrews so we can get an idea of how this new covenant idea mentioned in Jeremiah centuries before the time of Jesus is then applied to him.

We're going to be in Hebrews chapter 10 beginning in verse 11. What we're going to see is that Jesus, or Christ as he is called in this passage, that Jesus' sacrifices once for all time.

[34 : 45] And every priest stands daily at his service offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. So the Mosaic covenant required many sacrifices which were continually repeated.

These sacrifices acknowledged but did not resolve the problem of sin. They were like bailing water out of a leaking boat. The sacrifices help but they don't solve the fundamental problem.

But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, so Jesus gave himself as a sacrifice, dying on the cross for our sin, his sacrifice was for all time, having eternal efficacy.

He, that being Jesus, he sat down at the right hand of God waiting for that time until his enemy should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

So through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus, the permanent dismantling of sin occurs. We're going to continue on in the book of Hebrews.

[36 : 01] This section quotes exactly from Jeremiah 31. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us for after saying this is the covenant that I will make with them and after those days declares the Lord, I will put my law on their hearts and write them on their minds.

And then he adds, I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more. We continue on in the book of Hebrews as now looks at the issue of people's hearts.

This brings clarity from the first aspect of the new covenant that the law will be written on people's hearts with the sin barrier removed through the work of Jesus Christ.

New hearts unstained by sin. are available. Where there is forgiveness of these, that being sins, there is no longer any offering for sin.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is his flesh.

[37 : 14] So the passage speaks about the temple area, which was restricted to everyone but the high priest. But through the work of Jesus, this restricted area is now accessible.

So the idea of being opened for us through a curtain, this is a physical example that provides a figurative illustration to play, to explain this new reality, that God and his people are no longer separated.

we continue on. And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts cleansed clean from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

True hearts, clean hearts, washed with pure water. one of the things I want us to think about is that many people struggle with accepting the reality of sin.

They believe in the innate goodness of people. This might be especially true for parents with young children who see their innocent child before them.

[38 : 36] They can't imagine that that child might be a sinner. sinner. But one of the things that scripture teaches us is that we are all by nature children of wrath.

We are all by nature's sinner. And Jesus serves to come and take away the effect of sin upon us. He relieves us from the curse that has come through creation and has come upon us through the effects of our own sin.

When we fail to account for sin, when we fail to see the reality of sin, then we dismiss the work that Jesus Christ has done for us. We fail to see the great love that he showed and his sacrificial and substitutionary debt on our behalf.

God. As we continue looking into Jeremiah, one of the questions that may arise is this Mosaic covenant and its connection to the new covenant.

[39 : 49] A question that could come to us is, why didn't God just skip the Mosaic covenant and go right to this new covenant? Why did we have to go through that process?

And by way of analogy, I might ask this. So Apple just released their latest phone, the XS. We might ask, why didn't they just start with that one?

Why did they have to go through these previous iterations of Apple phones in order to get to this one? But one of the things we see is that those previous designs helped them reach the one that they have now.

In the same way, the Mosaic covenant sets the course towards the new covenant. The Mosaic covenant sets the course towards the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.

But unlike the 10S, this new covenant through Jesus Christ will not be replaced in 18 months. The Mosaic covenant, we're going to look at how it is a law fulfilled.

[40 : 55] So the Mosaic covenant establishes the law and the purpose is to provide the path to God. But to follow that path, we would need to be perfect.

We would need to have perfection. No one could keep this, though. No one is perfect. Each of us faces the stain of sin, the separation from God.

It affects us all, except one, that be Jesus. Jesus, the Son of God, lacks sin, so he follows the law perfectly. as such, Jesus is able to fulfill the law.

He experiences the perfect relationship with God. We see this as Jesus says, do not think I have come to abolish the law or the prophets.

I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. And since Jesus has fulfilled the law, he has followed it perfectly.

[41 : 54] He provides the way for his followers to do likewise, to experience the perfect relationship with God the Father. Jesus provides the way through his sacrificial death and resurrection.

So we must ask ourselves, have we made that decision to follow Jesus and say, Jesus, I want that perfect relationship with God the Father.

I want to follow you. I want to receive what you are offering. Well, to receive what Jesus is offering, we must accept our sinful nature.

We must accept that we are flawed and at our very best, we are still stained by sin. And we must repent, we must turn of that sin.

And we must say to Jesus, Jesus, I trust you. I believe that you are the way to God the Father. I believe that you have the solution to the sin that separates me from God.

[43 : 01] If that's a decision that you're considering, if that's a decision that you haven't made, take this day to give consideration. At the end of our time together, we always have people available here at the front to speak with you, to counsel you, to answer questions that you might have.

We continue on in Jeremiah 31. And we see that the promise is indeed assured. Verse 35 refers to the fixed order of the moon and the stars.

And just as this fixed order remains, so God's people remain his people. Verse 37 proclaims that if the heavens can be measured, which they cannot, then God will dispose of his people, which he will not.

Verse 38 through 40 continues in this idea of assuring us. It promises the rebuilding of Jerusalem. And specific places are mentioned. But no, Jerusalem is indeed going to be destroyed.

God's discipline will come. The people will experience God's wrath, but only for a season. Only for a season. It's interesting of the places that are noted there in Jeremiah, of places that would be destroyed in the city.

[44 : 25] The book of Nehemiah tells of the reconstruction of part of Jerusalem. And it includes a couple of these places, the Tower of Hanel and the Hors gate. The promise is assured.

God's plan is not changing. Destruction is coming for the people. The days of warning are Jerusalem will be destroyed.

But Jeremiah brings a message of hope. He says a new covenant is coming. This new covenant is good news for us.

Because this new covenant is about the work of Jesus. And through Jesus we have a relationship with God. God. And that each Sunday we remember Jesus' forging of this relationship.

In communion as we partake together we take from the cup of the new covenant. Let's take a moment now.

[45 : 36] Give you a chance to reflect upon the message today and the worship time today. And avail yourself to God to see how he is speaking to you. Let us take a moment now of silent reflection before God.

Thank you.