



**Sermon, Palm Sunday, April 10, 2022**

## **“A New Covenant for Us”**

*Prepared by Pastor Paul / Presented by Bob Carl*

**SCRIPTURE: Jeremiah 31:31-34** <sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup>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 within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

### **Introduction: The Lord looks at the heart, not outward appearances**

Have you ever heard about the project, ‘Before I Die Wall’? ‘Before I Die’ is a global art project that invites people to reflect on death and share their personal aspirations in public. Originally created by Candy Chang in New Orleans after the death of a loved one, there are now over 5,000 walls around the world. Here are some of the wishes of people written on ‘Before I Die Wall’. There are many wishes, but here are just a few.

**Before I die, I want to be happy for a while.**

**Before I die, I want to live worry free!**

**Before I die, I want to fly.**

**Before I die, I want to finally get that guy!**

**Before I die, I want to see my children blossom.**

**Before I die, I want to fall in love.**

**Before I die, I want to travel around earth.**

**Before I die, I want to see no crime no war peace everywhere.**

**Before I die, I want to change the world!**

What do you want to do before you die? Before I die, I want to say “thank you” to my loved ones for being with me on the journey of my life.

This project has become a useful tool to enrich our lives. I looked at the wishes of the people on the ‘Before I Die Wall’ and thought about what the prophet Jeremiah wanted before he died. And now, ahead of Holy Week, I think about what Jesus wanted before He died.

I think before Jeremiah died, he hoped that the people of Israel would repent and return to the place of the holy people of the Lord. I also think that Jesus wished for reconciliation and restoration of the relationship between us and God the Father. Today's text describes the prophet Jeremiah and the Lord's hope. I hope that today's text will give you abundant inspiration for the Lord's love for us.



## Body: New Covenant to Israel

Today's text is about the Lord's new covenant with the people of Israel. Jeremiah 31 is the most important chapter in the book of Jeremiah. Today's text describes the new covenant the Lord gives to the people of Israel. In the Old Testament, the Lord's new covenant is mentioned only in Jeremiah chapter 31.

The first covenant of the Israelites was the Ten Commandments that the Lord gave to Moses after the Exodus. This covenant that Moses received through the Lord was written on stone tablets. However, the new covenant in today's text is not a stone, but a covenant written in the hearts of the people of Israel. What does this mean?

The early Christian community saw the fulfillment of the new covenant in connection with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. They also believed that the new covenant would be engraved on people's hearts, not on broken stone tablets, as God pours out the Holy Spirit on the churches and members who believe and follow Christ.

**Today's text Jeremiah 31:31 says: “The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah”.**

The new covenant mentioned in this verse is God's new promise to us. And that promise was ultimately fulfilled through the love of Jesus on the cross. Next, let's look at the Lord's new promise to us through the text.

### 1. The Lord promises to make a new covenant because of our sins.

**Look at Jeremiah 31:32. “It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord.”**

This verse refers to the breaking of the first covenant the Israelites made with the Lord. Because of their weakness and sinful nature, they could not continue their covenant relationship with the Lord. However, the Lord says that He will not remember the sins of the people of Israel as mentioned in verse 34 of today's text regarding these actions of the people of Israel.

The Lord forgives our sins unconditionally and acknowledges our weaknesses. This attitude of the Lord toward us is different from the attitude of life we show to our neighbors. In fact, we find it difficult to accept our shortcomings or the faults of others. More frankly, we are not tolerant of the faults of others. But the Lord promises to forgive our sins. It is a wonderful blessing to have a Lord who completely forgives our sins in this world. For that purpose, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to carry the cross. So, what is the Lord's second promise to us?

### 2. The promises of the Lord were engraved directly into our hearts.

**Let's look at verse 33 of today's text. “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 within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”**

The meaning of this verse is that the new covenant is a promise given by the Lord directly into the heart of man. Why would the Lord Himself say that He would do it?

This is because the promises we make and engrave are like the stipulations of the law, revealing our pride and righteousness. We have seen such a figure in the Jewish life in the Bible. That is why the Lord Himself writes a new promise in our hearts.



We are weak and we make mistakes and show our righteousness, but the Lord is without mistakes. That is why we can only depend on the Lord, and we can trust only the Lord. This is because perfect love cannot be reached through the law; only through the love of the cross of the Lord. So, what is the Lord's third promise to us?

### **3. The Lord says He trusts us.**

**Let's look at verse 34 in today's text. "No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more."**

What is the meaning of the phrase **"No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord" in this verse?"** Does this mean that there is no need to evangelize to the world?

**In Hosea 6:3 of the Old Testament says, "Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge Him."** But, why Jeremiah 31:34 mentioned that no longer they shall not teach one another about knowing the Lord?

The Lord does not wait for us to love and rely on Him. Because the Lord loves us first. That is why the Lord promises to come to us first. This verse seems to say that we loved first, but it means that the Lord loved first. It means that we have been able to enjoy abundance through the grace of the cross of the Lord.

The Lord's grace is not cheap, and it has power to change the world. The grace of the Lord is the most precious thing in this world.

Therefore, we must not forget that the reason we can live in the grace of the Lord is not because we went to the Lord first, but because He came to us first. The crucifixion of Jesus is a sure proof that Jesus came to us first.

### **Conclusion: Love of the cross**

Now let's summarize today's sermon. The Lord made known the riches of love to us through the new covenant and restored us from our sins. So, we should cherish the grace that the Lord has given us. The power we need to change the world comes from the Lord who loved us and bore the cross. The Lord cared for the people of Israel in the Old Testament times as well as the same love for us.

May we all see the love of the cross of the Lord engraved in our hearts. When we see the love of the cross engraved in us, we know that we have no righteousness of our own to reveal to the world, only the righteousness God puts in us. There is nothing in this world more precious than the love of the Lord Jesus on the cross. Also, we, the object of the Lord's love, are very precious beings. I hope that we will experience the Lord's love of the cross abundantly during the Holy Week that begins today. Amen!

