

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

3rd - 5th Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 13

The New Covenant

The New Covenant

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To review the covenants between God and Israel and present the New Covenant.

Key Verses

Hebrews 8:6-13—Main Teaching Passage
Jeremiah 31:31-34

Memory Verse - Jeremiah 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."

Hook

Review last week's memory verse, 2 Timothy 2:8.

Ask the class, "When the Israelites in the Old Testament committed sins, they offered animal sacrifices to receive forgiveness. Why don't we make animal sacrifices today?" Also ask, "Can you think of any other ways the Israelites worshipped God differently from us?" (E.g. They worshipped God at the temple, worshipped on Saturday (the Sabbath), celebrated feasts, followed restricted dietary laws, etc.)

Why does the way that we worship God look so different to the way the Israelites worshipped God? Isn't He the same God?

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

BOOK

The New Covenant is given to us first in Jeremiah 31, but is expounded upon in Hebrews 8. Please read the provided commentary by David Guzik for a comparison of Old and New Covenants. Pay particular attention to the 17 points provided at the end of the commentary.

LOOK

Over the course of this year, we have been looking at the promises that God made to His people in the Old Testament. He promised Adam that He would send a Redeemer who restore the relationship between God and man (Genesis 3). He promised Noah that He would never again destroy the earth as He did in the flood (Genesis 9:8-17). Abraham was promised that he would be the father of many nations and that the world would be blessed by his descendants (Genesis 15). Moses was given the law and promised that if the Israelites obeyed it they would be blessed, but if they failed to keep it they would be cursed (Exodus 19). Joshua was promised that God would give the people victory as they entered the Promised Land, and that God would be with them wherever they went (Joshua 1). Finally, God promised David that the Messiah promised to Adam would come from his family tree (2 Samuel 7). God was faithful to all of these promises. The problem was that pesky “if” statement in God’s promise to Moses. The Israelites did NOT keep God’s commandments. They turned their back on God and His Word. That promise to Moses, the Old Covenant, through the fault of man, did not create harmony between God and man. God needed to do something different.

Hebrews 8 quotes from Jeremiah 31:31 and speaks about something wonderful, a New Covenant given to us through Jesus Christ. Verse 7 tells us that this promise is better than all the promises that God had given His people up to this point because this covenant would not be dependent on sacrifices, Sabbaths, tithing, or any other work of man. It would be completely dependent on the completed work of Jesus Christ. We don’t worship God the way the Israelites used to, because the way that the Israelites worshipped God was imperfect. They needed to keep bringing sacrifices to God, they needed to keep striving and working to make themselves right with Him. In the New Covenant, the work is done. Jesus looks at us and says “It is finished” (John 19:30). We don’t have to sacrifice animals for forgiveness because Jesus is the great “once for all”

LOOK (Continued)

sacrifice. 1 Peter 3:18 tells us, “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.”

We don’t need to go and worship God at the temple because God has given us the Holy Spirit to live inside us. Our bodies have become the Temple of God, and we can worship Him wherever we are. God signed His promise to Noah with a rainbow, He walked toward Abraham as floating fire, He appeared before the Moses in lightning and thunder. We will see how He instituted the New Covenant next week.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Jeremiah 31:33.

Review the initial questions you asked the kids, “Why don’t we offer sacrifices to God for the forgiveness of sin? Why do our religious practices look different from that of the Israelites in the Old Testament?”

Pray: Thank the Lord that we live under the New Covenant of liberty and grace. Thank Him that His perfect law points us Christ as our only means of salvation. Ask Him to help us live in obedience to His word as a response of love toward Him.

Parent Question: What is the New Covenant?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Hebrews 8 by David Guzik

Hebrews 8 - A New, Better Covenant

A. Jesus, our heavenly priest.

1. (1-2) A summary of points previously made regarding Jesus as our High Priest.

Now *this is* the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

- a. **This is the main point of the things we are saying:** The writer of Hebrews brings together the **main point** of the previous chapter. We have a **High Priest** - Jesus Christ - who ministers for us from a position of all authority in heaven (**seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty**).
 - b. **Who is seated at the right hand of the throne:** Additionally, Jesus is **seated** in heaven, in contrast to the continual service of the priesthood under the Law of Moses.
 - i. The tabernacle and the temple of the Old Covenant had beautiful furnishings, but no place for the priests to *sit down* because their work was never finished. The work of Jesus is finished - He **is seated** in heaven.
 - c. **A Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle:** Jesus doesn't serve as a priest in an earthly tabernacle or temple. He serves in the **true tabernacle which the Lord erected**, the **original** made by God. The tabernacle of Moses was a *copy* of this **original**, and it was made by man (Exodus 25:8-9).
 - i. Some suppose the **true tabernacle** is the Church or Jesus' earthly body. But it is best to understand it as the heavenly reality that the earthly tabernacle imitated.
2. (3) Jesus' priesthood had a sacrifice - and a better sacrifice.

For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore *it is necessary* that this One also have something to offer.

- a. **Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices:** Sacrifice for sin is essential to the concept of priesthood. Jesus represented a superior priesthood and offered a superior sacrifice. He laid down His own life to atone for sin.
- b. **It is necessary that this One also have something to offer:** Though Jesus never offered a sacrifice according to the Law of Moses He did offer a better sacrifice - the sacrifice of Himself.

3. (4-5) Jesus' priesthood had a temple - and a better temple.

For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See *that* you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

a. **If He were on earth, He would not be a priest:** Jesus is not qualified to serve in the inferior earthly priesthood. **There are priests** - plenty of them - qualified to serve in the priesthood according to the Law of Moses.

b. **Who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things:** There were plenty of priests who could serve in **the copy and shadow** on earth. But Jesus is the only One qualified to serve in the superior heavenly priesthood. The earthly service, though it was glorious in the eyes of man, was really only a **copy and shadow** of the superior heavenly service.

c. **Copy and shadow of the heavenly things:** Exodus 25:40 tells us that Moses' tabernacle built on earth was made according to a *pattern* that existed in heaven. This was the *pattern which was shown to you* [Moses] *on the mountain* (Exodus 25:40). Therefore, there is a **heavenly** temple that served as a pattern for the earthly tabernacle and temple. Jesus' ministry as our High Priest takes place in this **heavenly** temple, not in **the copy and shadow** built on earth.

i. First century Jews took tremendous pride in the temple and did so for good reason: it was a spectacular architectural achievement. However glorious the Jerusalem temple was, it was of man (and mostly built by Herod the Great, a corrupt and ungodly man). Therefore it is *nothing* compared to the glory of the heavenly temple that Jesus serves in.

4. (6) The result: Jesus presides over a superior priesthood with a better covenant and better promises.

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

a. **He has obtained a more excellent ministry:** No earthly priest could take away sin the way Jesus did. Therefore Jesus' **ministry** is far better than the ministry of the priesthood under the Law of Moses.

b. **Mediator of a better covenant:** Jesus has mediated for us a **better covenant**, a covenant of grace and not of works, guaranteed for us by a cosigner (Hebrews 7:22). It is a **covenant** marked by believing and receiving instead of by earning and deserving.

i. Jesus is our **Mediator** for this greater covenant. **Mediator** is the ancient Greek word *mesites*, which means "one who stands in the middle between two people and brings them together." (Barclay)

ii. Moses was the mediator of the Old Covenant because he "brought the two parties together." Jesus is the **Mediator** of the New Covenant, a **better covenant**, bringing us to God the Father.

iii. Jesus' covenant is a **better covenant**, better than any of the previous covenants God made with men. The covenant of Jesus fulfills the other covenants described in the Bible.

- There is an *eternal covenant* between the members of the Godhead that made possible the salvation of man (Hebrews 13:20).
- God's redemptive plan was continued through the covenant He made with *Abraham* (Genesis 12:1-3).
- The *Mosaic covenant* was another step in God's redemptive plan (Exodus 24:3-8).
- The *Davidic covenant* was yet another step in God's redemptive plan (2 Samuel 7:1-16).

· The redemptive plan of God was fulfilled in the *New Covenant* (Luke 22:14-20).

c. **Which was established on better promises:** Jesus has for us **better promises**. These are **promises** to see us through the most desperate and dark times. These are **promises** that become alive to us through the Spirit of God. These are **promises** of blessing and undeserved favor instead of promises of cursing.

B. The superiority of the New Covenant.

1. (7) The fact that God mentions another covenant proves that there is something lacking in the Old Covenant.

For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

a. **If that first covenant had been faultless:** It is in the nature of man to come up with things that are "new" but not needed. God isn't like that. If God established a New Covenant, it means that there was something lacking in the Old Covenant.

2. (8-12) The New Covenant as it is presented in the Old Testament (quoting from Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Because finding fault with them, He says: "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; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. For this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

a. **Finding fault:** In Jeremiah 31 God showed that something was lacking in the Old Covenant - because a *New Covenant* was promised. In the days of Jeremiah the New Covenant was still in the future, because he wrote "**Behold the days are coming.**"

i. In its context, Jeremiah's prophecy probably comes from the days of Josiah's renewal of the covenant after finding the law (2 Kings 23:3). This renewal was good, but it wasn't enough because Jeremiah looks forward to **a new covenant**.

b. **I will make:** The Lord makes it plain that this covenant originates with God, not with man. At Sinai under the Old Covenant the key words were *if you* (Exodus 19:5), but in the New Covenant, the key words are **I will**.

c. **A new covenant:** This means truly **new**, not merely "new and improved" in the way products are marketed. Today, products are said to be "new and improved" when there is no substantial difference in the product. But when God says "**new**," He means **new**.

i. There are two ancient Greek words that describe the concept of "new." *Neos* described newness in regard to *time*. Something may be a copy of something old; but if it is recently made, it can be called *neos*. The ancient Greek word *kainos* (the word used here) described something that is not only **new** in reference to time, but is truly **new** in its quality. It isn't simply a new reproduction of something old.

d. **With the house of Israel and the house of Judah:** The New Covenant definitely began with Israel but it was never intended to end with Israel (Matthew 15:24 and Acts 1:8).

e. **Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers:** This covenant is *not like* the **covenant** God made with the **fathers** of ancient Israel. Again, this emphasizes that there is something substantially *different* about the New Covenant.

f. **Because they did not continue in My covenant:** The weakness of the Old Covenant was not in the Covenant itself but in the weakness and inability of man. The reason the Old Covenant didn't "work" was **because they did not continue in My covenant**.

g. **I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts:** The New Covenant features transformation from within, not regulation through external law.

i. The Old Covenant came in with such awe and terror that it should have made everyone obey out of fear. But they sinned against the Old Covenant almost immediately. The New Covenant works obedience through the law written **in their mind** and **on their hearts**.

h. **I will be their God, and they shall be My people:** The New Covenant also features a greater intimacy with God than what was available under the Old Covenant.

i. "The best way to make a man keep a law is to make him love the law-giver." (Spurgeon)

i. **Their sins and lawless deeds I will remember no more:** The New Covenant offers a true, complete cleansing from sin, different and better than the mere "covering over" of sin in the Old Covenant.

3. (13) The significance of a *New Covenant*.

In that He says, "*A new covenant*," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

a. **He has made the first obsolete:** Now that the New Covenant has been inaugurated, the Old Covenant is thereby **obsolete**.

b. **What is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away:** The message is clear to these discouraged Jewish Christians, who thought of going back to a more Jewish faith. They simply *can't* go back to an inferior covenant, which was ready to completely **vanish away**.

i. The system of sacrifice under the Law of Moses soon did **vanish away** with the coming destruction of the Temple and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem.

C. Differences Between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant

1. They were instituted at different times.

- The Old Covenant around 1446 b.c.
- The New Covenant around A.D. 33

2. They were instituted at different places.

- The Old Covenant at Mount Sinai.
- The New Covenant at Mount Zion.

3. They were spoken in different ways.

- The Old Covenant was thundered with fear and dread at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:17-24).
- Jesus Christ, God the Son, declared the New Covenant with love and grace.

4. They have different mediators.

- Moses mediated the Old Covenant.
- Jesus is the mediator of the New Covenant.

5. They are different in their subject matter.

- The Old Covenant *demand*ed a covenant of works.
- The New Covenant *fulfills* the covenant of works through the completed work of Jesus.

6. They are different in how they were dedicated.

- The Old Covenant was dedicated with the blood of animals sprinkled on the people (Exodus 24:5-8).
- The New Covenant was dedicated with Jesus' blood (signifying His sacrificial death) spiritually applied to His people.

7. They are different in their priests.

- The Old Covenant is represented by the priesthood of the Law of Moses and high priests descended from Aaron.
- The New Covenant has a priesthood of all believers and a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

8. They are different in their sacrifices.

- The Old Covenant demanded endless repetition of imperfect sacrifices.
- The New Covenant provides a once and for all, perfect sacrifice of the Son of God Himself.

9. They are different in how and where they were written.

- The Old Covenant was written by God on tablets of stone.
- The New Covenant is written by God on the hearts of His people.

10. They are different in their goals.

- The goal of the Old Covenant was to discover sin, to condemn it, and to set a "fence" around it.
- The goal of the New Covenant is to declare the love, grace, and mercy of God, and to give repentance, remission of sin, and eternal life.

11. They are different in their practical effect on living.

- The Old Covenant ends in bondage (through no fault of its own).
- The New Covenant provides true liberty.

12. They are different in their giving of the Holy Spirit.

- Under the Old Covenant the Holy Spirit was given to certain people for certain specific duties.
- Under the New Covenant the Holy Spirit is poured out freely on all who will receive Him by faith.

13. They are different in their idea of the Kingdom of God.

- Under the Old Covenant, the Kingdom of God is mainly seen as the supreme rule of Israel over the nations.
- Under the New Covenant, the Kingdom of God is both a present spiritual reality and a coming literal fact.

14. They are different in their substance.

- The Old Covenant has vivid shadows.
- The New Covenant has the reality.

15. They are different in the extent of their administration.

- The Old Covenant was confined to the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob according to the flesh.
- The New Covenant is extended to all nations and races under heaven.

16. They are different in what they actually accomplish.

- The Old Covenant made nothing perfect.
- The New Covenant can and will bring in the perfection of God's people.

17. They are different in their duration.

- The Old Covenant was designed to prepare the way for the New Covenant and then pass away as a principle of God's dealing with men.
- The New Covenant was designed to last forever

"Let us observe from these things, that the state of the gospel, or of the Church under the New Testament, being accompanied by the highest privileges and advantages that it is capable of in this world, there is a great obligation on all believers unto holiness and fruitfulness in obedience, unto the glory of God; and the heinousness of their sin, by whom this covenant is neglected or despised, is abundantly manifested." (John Owen)