

## Dec. 26th Sermon Notes

### Text: Jeremiah 31:31-34

<sup>31</sup> *"Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, <sup>32</sup> not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which **they broke**, although **I was a husband to them**," declares the Lord.*

- The problem wasn't the commandments. The problem was the people couldn't keep them: "They broke my covenant"
- I kept my end of the covenant, "*I was a husband to them.*"

<sup>33</sup> *"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, " **I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it;** and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

- This is a reference to the work of the Holy Spirit. It is elaborated upon in other passages:
  - *Jeremiah 32:40 <sup>40</sup>I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.*
  - *Ezekiel 36:26-27 <sup>26</sup>I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.*

<sup>34</sup> *"... "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

- The Lord is saying, I will no longer be keeping track of their sins.
- The New Plan calls for Me to offer them forgiveness. The New Plan calls for me to remember their sins no more.

### But the sin debt still must be paid.

- The Lord is not changing who He is. Malachi 3:6 "*I, the Lord, do not change.*" He is a God of amazing love. But He is also a God of justice and righteousness.
  - **He loves people passionately. He loathes sin absolutely.**
  - Every sin ever committed by every person - in thought and in deed - will be accounted for and dealt with.
- In this New Plan, the Lord is not changing who He is. He is changing the arrangement and it is going to be expensive. How expensive? According to the Scriptures, it's going to be more costly than all the gold, silver and precious stones earth contains.

### Fast forward 600 years to the new arrangement.

### Luke 22:17-20

<sup>17</sup> *“This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” ... “This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.*

- The bread is broken for us to remember Jesus personally. It speaks of Jesus’ heart towards us. The bread speaks of His  *motive*  for coming. The bread is intended to symbolize that Jesus loves me no matter what.
- When we take the bread, we are acknowledging His love for us. And symbolically we are accepting that love.

**And then there is the cup.**

- “This cup is the New Covenant in My blood.”
- **One sentence:** This cup represents the beginning of the New Covenant, as prophesied in the Scriptures. My blood, poured out for you, is the purchase price.
- When we take the cup, we are acknowledging our new relationship with God. Not based on our performance but based on Jesus’ blood.
  - We are saying to **ourselves**, “I no longer trust in my performance but in the blood of Jesus.”
  - We are saying to **the evil one**, “Your accusations no longer stick because I have been coated by the blood of Jesus.”
  - We are saying to **the world**: “I am beloved and valued no matter whether you love me or hate. Whether you think I am a success or a failure.”
- When we take the cup, we are saying “Yes” to all of God’s declarations about our New Status in Christ.
  - 1 Peter 2:9 You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession.

**In Jesus’s sacrifice for us on the cross, we see God’s love, justice, and righteousness.**

- **His love!** John 3:16 – God so loved the world that He gave His only Son....
- **His justice!** Romans 3:25-26 The One who is just and the One who justifies. Justice demanded accountability for all the sins that we all abhor and lament – and that we have all been responsible for committing. Jesus made that payment.
- **His righteousness!** 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21 Jesus has become our righteousness.

**Jesus said “Yes” to the Father and made the payment. Now it is up to each person to say “Yes” to Jesus and *accept* the payment.**

- Without that acceptance our sin debt remains on us. We are choosing to say I’d rather pay for my own sins. Therefore, according to the Scriptures, the consequence is eternal separation away from the presence of God. Why? Because “I the Lord do not change.” He is loving. He is holy. He is just. Sin cannot abide in His presence. **Heaven is a sin-free environment.**

**For those who say yes to Jesus, not only does heaven await us but earth becomes A world of wonders await us in Christ.**

- Not necessarily in spectacular displays, but in the multiple miracles of His personal dealings with each of us. The way He handles us. The way He makes Himself known to us. The way He inspires us forward.
- When we are able to believe our "blessed and highly favored" status in Him and "*grow in grace and our knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (1 Peter 3:18), we find we are able to relax in Him and peacefully serve one another in love.

**[Personal examples from this week...]**

**Summary & Conclusion:** Communion represents the physical, emotional, and spiritual suffering the Lord endured for us, and for one reason: To say, "I love You!" It is the costliest "I love You" ever spoken. And communion also represents the *benefits* of a new relationship with God. A movement from God's outside in plan to His inside out plan. From God with us to God in us. From the Law being given for us to write on our hearts to the Holy Spirit taking up residence within us and giving us new hearts. So, as we take the bread together, we affirm the Lord's love for us. As we take the cup we affirm the efficacy of His work, creating a New Covenant. And in that way, we remember the Gift beyond Christmas day and all year long.