

Jeremiah 30-31 • Behold, I will make a new covenant

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As we get into chapter 30 of Jeremiah, there's a couple of things I need to let you know of just kind of to put this into a timeframe context and so that we have a better understanding of what we're about to read. First of all, these chapters are being given, or I should say, the prophecies that are recorded in these chapters are being given to Jeremiah while the Babylonian army was outside the city walls laying siege to Jerusalem.

By the way, that final, that siege of Jerusalem lasted 18 months, okay. Can you imagine being completely shut up in your city, you have walls around your city, you've closed them so the enemy can't get in, but there's only one problem with that, that means you can't get out. And so they would do that back in those days when they wanted to take a city, basically to starve the city out because they knew that it was only a matter of time before they would run out of food.

A lot of cities and Jerusalem was one of them that did have water, but only because Hezekiah had the foresight to kind of redirect some water springs into the city and under the walls. But eventually you were going to run out of food and that would, of course, weaken your army so significantly that usually after a period of time, the army that was laying siege to your city would be able just to kind of waltz in and take the place, without much of a fight at all.

Anyway, this is during that 18-month siege, probably, well, we don't know exactly where. When we get into chapters 32 and 33, we're going to see that's going to be at the very end of that siege, right before the city fell.

The other thing I want you to know before we get into these chapters, is that there are many times in the Bible when we read about an event that is taking place in the history or in the timeframe of Israel, but that event for us becomes a picture of a larger event that is going to take place down the road in their history much later on. For example, because the fall of Jerusalem that did take place in this context and the destruction of the temple that went along with it, was an expression of God's wrath upon Israel or in this case, Judah, for her sin of idolatry, that picture of God's wrath can easily be seen as a small picture of a larger expression of God's wrath that is going to take place during the Great

Tribulation, you get it? So in other words, the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, is a snapshot of a bigger event that's going to come later.

In fact, hasn't happened yet, but we know he's going to happen, all right. And in the same way, the regathering of Israel, which God is going to speak about in these chapters right here, you know, Judah is going to be taken off into exile by the Babylonians and they're going to be there for 70 years. But after 70 years are up, God's going to bring them back to their homeland. We call that the regathering after the exile or the post exilic period of Israel, okay? Well, that is a picture of a greater event still to come, which is the Millennial Kingdom, which has also not happened yet and which comes directly on the heels of the Great Tribulation.

The next events, let me just tell you this in God's prophetic calendar, the very next event that is going to take place is the catching away of the church. Then, the world is going to be plunged into a 7-year period called the Great Tribulation. Remember, that applies, or that connects to a 70-year period of time of exile for the nation of Israel, 70 years, 7 years.

And after the Great Tribulation, upon the earth, we have the second coming of Jesus Christ physically to the earth to fight on behalf of Israel against her enemies. God is going to prophetically speak about that in these chapters and then we have the beginning of the Millennial or Messianic Kingdom, which goes on for 1,000 years, which is why we call it the Millennial Kingdom.

And then of course after that 1,000 year period, Satan is going to be released from his incarceration in the abyss. He will be allowed to deceive the people, the nations, one final time to bring one final rebellion against the throne of God. He will be put down quickly, cast into the lake of fire, and we will begin that period of time we call no time at all, eternity, alright, when there will be a new heaven and a new earth that will be merged together, God will dwell with mankind.

So that's kind of the time frame that we're looking at of events, but the events that we're looking at here in Jeremiah chapters 30 and 31, which is the fall of Jerusalem and then the prophetic regathering of Judah/Israel back to her homeland are pictures of greater events: the Great Tribulation and the Millennial Kingdom. We'll see how it goes as we go through here, all right. By the way, as we go through these chapters, you're going to see a particular phrase that's that will be repeated several times and it's the phrase, "the days are coming." So we're going to be looking at a lot of prophecy of things to come tonight.

Verse 1, *“The word that came to Jeremiah from (YAHWEH) the LORD: ² ‘Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write in a book all the words that I have spoken to you. ³ For behold, days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah, ...’* (ESV) Note that, we're no longer talking about just Judah, in this case, He says Israel and Judah, okay? There's no lost 10 tribes of Israel.

“²... says the LORD, and I will bring them back to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall take possession of it.” So what's going on in these first few verses? Jeremiah is told from the Lord to write down these special prophecies that He's about to give him and that's what we're going to read about in these chapters.

Now, Jeremiah wrote down all the prophecies that the Lord gave him, but God is telling Jeremiah specifically to write down these prophecies that He's about to give them, because the ones that we're going to talk about are dealing with events that go way beyond Israel's history in the current day and they're going on to speak of the world's history related to the Great Tribulation and the Millennial Kingdom, that's why these are so enormous. These prophecies that we're about to read about transcend Israel's history, all right.

Verse 4, *“These are the words that the LORD spoke concerning Israel and Judah: ⁵ ‘Thus says the LORD: We have heard a cry of panic, of terror, and no peace. ⁶ Ask now, and see, (He says) can a man bear a child? Why then do I see every man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor? Why has every face turned pale? ⁷ Alas! That day is so great there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be saved out of it.’”*

Now, guys pay attention, these are very important verses, I want you to notice what the Lord calls this time of difficulty that He makes reference to. Did you catch it? He says, well, here in the ESV anyway, He says, it's called *“a time of distress for Jacob,”* did you catch that? Well, in the New King James version (NKJV), if you read this same verse, it is referred to as, *“the time of Jacob's trouble.”* And while this is certainly referring to the impending trouble that Judah is about to go through related to the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and many people dying in the Babylonian invasion, and then exportation of these people to their land, it is also a this term: *“the time of Jacob's trouble,”* a reference, a broader reference to the Great Tribulation.

Bible teachers and Bible scholars will refer to the Great Tribulation as the time of Jacob's trouble, although it is going to come upon the whole land. And you'll notice the language in verse 7, did you catch the language where He says,

the “...*day is so great*” and that word great, it just means big. In this case, it really means, terrible. He says, “*That day is so great* (and look at this) *there is none like it;*” in other words, this terrible day that is coming, which is called the day of Jacob's trouble, is unique, there's none like it.

Well, that's what the Bible also talks about related to the Great Tribulation, that's the language of the Great Tribulation. That the difficulty that the Great Tribulation is going to bring upon the earth is going to be like no other time of difficulty in man's history, it will exceed all other times of difficulty. But there's another key element about this terrible day of wrath and judgment that we need to see here at the end of verse 7, look at the very end of the verse, it says, “*yet he* (and that's referring to Israel) *shall be saved out of it.*”

Now, that's interesting, because this also applies both to Israel in the current context which Jeremiah is living through but it also refers to the 7-year Great Tribulation. In both situations, God is going to divinely guide the nation of Israel supernaturally through those events to preserve them, they are not going to go away.

Guys, do you understand how unique that is in the history of people? Do you know how many times Israel has been conquered and you know how many times they've come back as a nation? Every time, that's unheard of historically, people don't come back after being dispersed and just losing their national identity. Israel did and it is a testimony to God's preserving power of this nation, it is absolutely incredible. You don't see it happen with any other country. Countries usually spring up, they're cool for a while, they might even be, you know, the tough guy for a while, and then they lose their power, they lose their ability, their staying power, and then they're conquered, and you never hear from them again. Not with Israel.

God says here that she shall be, or “*he* (in this case) *shall be saved out of it.*” Well, that is also what's going to happen at the end of the Great Tribulation. God is going to save Israel out of the Great Tribulation and it's going to be, it's going to be very intense though for Israel. Because we know from other prophecies in the Bible that all of the nations of the world are going to come against Israel at the conclusion of the Great Tribulation and they are going to appear to be winning.

In fact, it will look like Jerusalem is about to be completely decimated by her enemies and prior to that, many people are going to die, we're told that it's going to be terrible times. Jesus even said, as He was speaking to the people of Israel during the Olivet discourse in Matthew 24, He said, these will be terrible times,

pray it's not during the winter, pray that your escape, pray that you don't have to run on the Sabbath. It'll be a terrible time for women with small children, it's going to be a terrible time.

Remember, that was a word given to Israel about the day of their trouble in the Great Tribulation and yet, just as it seems the darkest, Jesus is going to return. We're actually coming back with Him, I know, it's pretty cool, huh? And the Lord is going to fight on behalf of Israel against her enemies in that incredible battle called Armageddon. And the Lord is going to win of course, and Israel is going to recognize not only her Savior, but she is going to realize for the very first time, this is the one who came before and we missed Him. And that's why it's going to be a time of both rejoicing and a time of sorrow.

And the Bible says concerning Israel, that as a nation, Israel will mourn for Him as for an only child, the death of an only child. (Zechariah 12:10) And yet, all Israel will be saved on that day, there will be a national return, a national coming to the Lord, and as Paul says in Romans, all Israel will be saved on that day. (Romans 11:26) And it's amazing, it's going to be incredible, but she is going to be saved, Israel is going to be saved out of this terrible tribulation.

Now, I want you to notice in verse 8 how the Lord speaks of the benefit of this time of trouble; both the Babylonian invasion and the Great Tribulation. And you'll notice that this speaks even more of, I think, the Great Tribulation. It says, *"And it shall come to pass in that day, declares the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off your neck, and I will burst your bonds, and foreigners shall no more make a servant of him."* Now, that word right there was fulfilled temporarily, when God regathered Israel, Judah, and brought them back to their homeland, okay, after the Babylonian invasion.

Temporarily, it was fulfilled, but it wasn't fulfilled in a permanent way, was it? Because we know that when Jesus came, Israel was under Roman occupation, so there were still enemies that had made a servant of Israel, right, that were still yet to come. But this also is going to be fulfilled after the Great Tribulation in an eternal sense, when Jesus comes and restores Israel and defeats all of her enemies. At that time, foreigners will no more make a servant of Israel in any way, shape, or form and that is when this word will be finally and fully, fulfilled. That's kind of hard to say, fully fulfilled. Anyway, that's what I meant to say and that's exactly what's going to happen.

Now, notice this next word that is given related to Israel. *"⁹ But they shall serve the LORD their God (speaking, you know, this is Israel and look at this) and David their king, whom I will raise up for them."* They're not just going to

serve their God, they're going to serve David. Now, David's been dead for hundreds of years when this prophecy was given so what is He talking about? Well remember, these prophecies don't just refer to the regathering after the Babylonian invasion, they're also looking ahead to the Millennial Kingdom, all right, you with me. We got this dual sort of a understanding of this prophecy related to this and this passage very specifically says, "*David their king.*"

Now, I'm going to tell you right now that there are Bible teachers, Bible scholars that believe that this reference to "*David their king*" refers to Jesus, who is the Son of David, if you will, who will reign on the throne in Jerusalem over the world. But I believe He's talking literally about David ruling over the Jews. I believe that during the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus is going to reign over the world, but I believe God is going to raise up David again, to rule again, in Jerusalem again, over the people of Israel. Because, you know, we're told in the scripture that when Jesus comes back, we're going to rule and reign with Him.

That means believers are going to rule and reign with the Lord during the Millennial Kingdom. Why can't David be the one who's going to rule and reign over Jerusalem? Why not? There's no reason in the world not to take this literally, you know. It doesn't say here that the offspring of David will rule and reign, it says David will rule and reign and that's exactly, I believe, that's exactly what's going to happen. And again, like I said, Jesus is going to reign too, but He's going to reign over the world, but the person of David is coming back to the throne. That is exciting to me, I just think that is such a trip.

All right, we continue on, verse 10. "*Then fear not, O Jacob my servant, declares the LORD, nor be dismayed, O Israel; for behold, I will save you from far away, and your offspring from the land of their captivity. Jacob shall return and have quiet and ease, and none shall make him afraid.*" Guys, can you imagine how much of a blessing it was for Jeremiah to receive this word?

You know, I, when we first started the book of Jeremiah, I was telling you how I was going into this book with a little bit of emotional trepidation of my own just because I feel like a little bit like Jeremiah from the standpoint that I'm seeing the downfall of my nation. And I wasn't even sure how I felt about doing that and Jeremiah didn't just experience a little bit of downfall, he experienced the overthrow of his nation by a pagan nation. But while the Babylonian army is literally camped outside the walls of Jerusalem, Jeremiah is getting a word from the Lord saying, fear not, "*fear not, O Jacob*" for I will bring you back, I will bring you home, I will establish you back. Can you imagine what a blessing that was for Jeremiah to hear those words? Can you even imagine?

Look what He says in verse 11. *“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.”* Oh no, you know, I am a just God and you're going to get yours.

But, He says, ¹²*“For thus says the LORD: Your hurt is incurable, and your wound is grievous. ¹³There is none to uphold your cause, no medicine for your wound, no healing for you. ¹⁴All your lovers have forgotten you; (that refers to the pagan idolatry they engaged in) they care nothing for you; for 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.*

¹⁵*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.*

¹⁶*Therefore all who devour you shall be devoured, and all your foes, every one of them, shall go into captivity; those who plunder you shall be plundered, and all who prey on you I will make a prey.*

¹⁷*For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, declares the LORD, because they have called you an outcast: ‘It is Zion, for whom no one cares!’”* Apparently that was a refrain people were using.

¹⁸*“Thus says the LORD: Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob and have compassion on his dwellings; the city shall be rebuilt on its mound, and the palace shall stand where it used to be. ¹⁹Out of them shall come songs of thanksgiving, and the voices of those who celebrate. I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will make them honored, and they shall not be small.*

²⁰*Their children shall be as they were of old, and their congregation shall be established before me, and I will punish all who oppress them. ²¹Their prince shall be one of themselves; their ruler shall come out from their midst; I will make him draw near, and he shall approach me, for who would dare of himself to approach me? declares the LORD.*

²²*And you shall be my people, and I will be your God.” ²³Behold the storm of the LORD! Wrath has gone forth, a whirling tempest; it will burst upon the head of the wicked. ²⁴The fierce anger of the LORD will not turn back until he has executed and accomplished the intentions of his mind. In the latter days you will understand this.”* In other words, God says at the end of that chapter, at the end, you're going to look back, you're going to see my words, you're going to

see everything that came to pass, and you're going to get it, and you're going to understand.

Chapter 31 is a flat out amazing chapter in so many ways because it includes such powerful prophecies, not only of the regathering of Israel, the rebirth, if you will, of Israel, but also it foretells the coming of a new covenant, which of course, we studied in our study of Hebrews, and we'll get into that here in just a moment.

But in verse 1, it says, *“At that time, declares the LORD, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people.”* ² *Thus says the LORD: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest,* ³ *the LORD appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.*

⁴ *Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with tambourines and shall go forth in the dance of the merry-makers.* ⁵ *Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant and shall enjoy the fruit.”* Again, people, I want to emphasize to you, these are prophecies coming to Jeremiah during the siege of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army.

It was imminent that the city would fall, that the horrors of the siege would be opened and exposed to everyone, and that the temple will be completely and utterly decimated. And yet God is speaking here of the future when He will return them to the land and make them fruitful once again in the land. What an encouragement that must have been for Jeremiah.

Verse 6, *“For there shall be a day when watchmen will call in the hill country of Ephraim: ‘Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God.’”* ⁷ *For thus says the LORD: “Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O LORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel.’”* ⁸ *Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here.*

⁹ *With weeping they shall come, and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back, I will make them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.”* Now, I want you to notice again, how many times He's making reference to Israel here,

not just Judah. And He even says here in the latter part of verse 9, He refers to Ephraim, my firstborn, which is a common name given for Israel, in particularly the northern kingdom. So God is talking about regathering and rebirthing, if you will, this whole land of Israel.

Verse 10, *"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.'"* ¹¹ *For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him."* I want you to take note of the fact that in verse 11, we have once again the language of the New Testament, which is that word "ransomed." Remember Jesus said, the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. And here we have this language again that we read on Sunday that also appears in the Book of Psalms and God speaks of how they will be ransomed and so forth. Beautiful, beautiful picture.

Verse 12, *"They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall languish no more."* You can see that this is language related to the Millennial Kingdom as a far off prophetic fulfillment because you see the language that these things will take place and no more shall they ever have any issues.

"¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. ¹⁴ I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares the LORD." Isn't this just, it just causes your heart to kind of swell with joy when you hear the Lord talking about how He is going to so bless His people. And we're going to be in on that blessing during the Millennial Kingdom as the bride of Christ who returns with her groom and enjoys this rich blessing that is being poured out upon God's nation of Israel.

Verse 15, *"Thus says the LORD: 'A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.'"* Now you guys are going to recognize this passage from the New Testament. It was of course used when Herod killed all the young boys in and around the region of Bethlehem after he felt betrayed by the Magi who did not come back and speak to him about having found the one whom they sought.

And they went home, it says, by a different route and when Herod realized he'd been kind of betrayed by the Magi, he went on a murderous killing spree, telling his soldiers to kill all the young boys in the region of Bethlehem. And of course, that's when Matthew allows this quotation from Jeremiah to come forth as its ultimate fulfillment of the mothers in that area who were weeping over their slain children. But in the context in which this is given, Rachel weeping for her children, is kind of a poetic image concerning the loss of the exiled people in the northern kingdom of Israel.

Remember, the northern kingdom of Israel went into exile a couple, you know, many, many years before the days or the events Jeremiah. Maybe a 100 or more years before Israel was carried off into exile by the Assyrian Empire before they got conquered by the Babylonians and they had been dispersed as well. And the reason we believe that this makes reference to the northern kingdom; Rachel weeping for her children, if you will, is because you'll remember that Rachel as the mother of Benjamin and Joseph, right? 2 of the 12 sons of Israel or of Jacob.

But Benjamin and Joseph represented the tribes that were the most prominent really among the northern kingdom of Israel and so this imagery is given to us of this weeping that's going on. But the reason this imagery is being given us, is because the Lord now has a word of comfort to say, to give to Rachel poetically, if you will.

And here's the comfort He gives, beginning in verse 16. *“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.’¹⁷ There is hope for your future, declares the LORD, and your children shall come back to their own country.”* Isn't that something? The promise that is made, even to the northern area of Israel, which many people believe those people were just lost and completely assimilated into Gentile nations. God says, no, I'm going to bring them back, I know who they are, and I'm going to bring them back, they will come back.

Verse 18, *“I have heard Ephraim grieving, (and again, I want to remind you, Ephraim is another name for the northern people. He says, here's Ephraim's grieving, his words are) ‘You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the LORD my God.’¹⁹ For after I had turned away, I relented, and after I was instructed, I struck my thigh; I was ashamed, and I was confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth.’*

²⁰ *Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, declares the LORD.* ²¹ *“Set up road markers for yourself; make yourself guideposts; consider well the highway, the road by which you went. Return, O virgin Israel, return to these your cities.”* That's a way of kind of saying, remember the path that you took when you left, because you'll need to remember it when you return, because I'm calling you home.

²² *How long will you waver, O faithless daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing on the earth: a woman encircles a man.*” Okay, I'm sure you guys all know what that means, actually, that was a proverbial statement. You know, we have proverbial statements today that we use, and we know what we mean. But if people 200 years ago heard us use some of the proverbs, and I'm not talking about biblical Proverbs, but the sayings that we say, they might go, what are you talking about?

Well, there's a lot of proverbial sayings that were said during Bible times that frankly, the meanings have been lost and sometimes we're not exactly even sure. He's going to make use of another one here a little bit later in the chapter, but this statement, *“a woman encircles, a man,”* was just one of those proverbial statements that was used back in that time. And I read some different and interesting sort of guesses, but I think the best explanation that I have ever heard and I actually believe it to be correct, I'll just tell you that, I'll go out on a limb, is because remember, what is the context of this passage? The context is, God is going to restore.

He says, I love my people, I love Ephraim, I consider him my special son and I'm going to bless him. So He says, put out markers, because on the road by which you left, because you're going to come back, I'm going to call you back home. Now, what is the context of all this? Blessing, safety, security, I'm bringing you home and I'm going to bless you here in your homeland.

So when you think about this proverbial statement that, *“a woman encircles a man,”* we have to think of it in that context. It's the context of blessing, the context of stability, the context of safety. And I believe that what the Lord is saying here to Israel is that, He is going to so surround them with a hand of protection, so surround them from any, and keep them safe from any threats that might otherwise come against them and their danger, the danger is going to be so minimal toward Israel, that the nation's security could be easily left to the women.

Now, I understand that in our culture today, that sort of a statement is considered very sexist and very stereotypical, you know. But then again, you know, we can figure out a way to get offended by pretty much anything, so that really doesn't mean anything, right? I mean, we get offended, you know, when people wink or blink the wrong way or something. But, the fact of the matter is, the Bible refers to women as the weaker sex and it's true; bodybuilding females notwithstanding. It is essentially true that men are stronger than women, that's just the way God made things.

I'm sorry if you don't like it, I'm sorry if gender distinctions make you uncomfortable, that's too bad because God is the one who created gender distinctions and they are what they are. So essentially what God is simply saying is, you are going to be so safe, you are going to be so secure, that a woman is going to be able to encircle a man at that time. In other words, to protect him because the danger is going to be so minimal.

All right, verse 23, He goes on, *“Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I restore their fortunes: ‘‘The LORD bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill!’ (apparently that saying had gotten lost, He says it will be restored) ²⁴ And Judah and all its cities shall dwell there together, and the farmers and those who wander with their flocks. ²⁵ For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish.”* Now, this is wonderful, this is great, this is good stuff. Jeremiah, you know, was told to write all this down.

Look at the next comment that He makes in verse 26, it's really fascinating. He goes, *“At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.”* In other words, Jeremiah says, and then I woke up and I thought to myself, huh, that was pretty nice, I got a good night's sleep, I feel all... Have you ever felt rested? It happens less and less the older you get, but I remember, you know, waking up in the morning going, hey, wow, slept all night, I feel refreshed and that's the way Jeremiah felt.

Now what's interesting about that, about his sleep being pleasant, is that the word that he was given, obviously given during a dream or during a sleep period, was so pleasant that it actually had an effect physically on pleasing him and giving him rest. Do you understand that sometimes when prophets are given a message from the Lord, there is a physical reaction.

You remember the prophecies, when the prophets were given like a scroll to eat. John and also, I think it was Ezekiel, too. They were told, eat this scroll, which

is a way of saying, take in the Word of God, and you're going to give a message. And they would say, I ate the scroll and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I swallowed it, it made my stomach sour. In other words, it gave me a stomach ache. So there was this physical reaction, and the reason it was sour in their stomach is that the prophecy was about judgment and wrath. But this is not a prophecy about judgment and wrath, it's about restoration, it's pleasant. And so Jeremiah wakes up and he goes, my sleep has been pleasant, isn't that interesting? The connection between the prophecy and how the prophet receives it.

Verse 27, *“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast.”* In other words, he's going to make Israel very fruitful.

“²⁸ And it shall come to pass that as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring harm, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the LORD. ²⁹ In those days they shall no longer say: (and here's another one of those proverbial statements) ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.’ ³⁰ But everyone shall die for his own iniquity. Each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.” And again, this was a common proverb back in the day but it was basically the idea that the people of Judah were being punished for the sins of their fathers.

Have you guys ever heard of the modern teaching of generational curses? I actually just wrote a blog post about that you might have noticed, if you're on Calvary mail or on our Facebook page. I just recently, I think just last week, published a blog post on that to kind of answer the question: What about generational curses for believers?

And the idea of a generational curse is that, I'm paying for the sins of my parents or grandparents or great grandparents to the third or fourth generation, you know, as it talks about. And I'm on the receiving end of the curse of God because great grandpa Daryl, you know, did a nasty and now we're all paying for it sort of a thing, right?

Well, generational curses is something that has gotten wacky, first of all, very wacky. But the idea, both with generational curses and back with this statement about the fathers have eaten sour grapes and our teeth are the ones set on edge is the idea that, they sinned, we're suffering, it's really not our fault, you see? That's the point. When people talk about generational curses, even today, they'll

say, I'm suffering because of my great grandpa. Yeah, you know, and the point in what they're kind of saying is, I didn't do anything wrong, it was him.

And it's just really a way of kind of transferring blame, you know, which is a really dumb thing to do. And God responds to this by saying, no, people are going to be judged for their own sins, right. Whoever eats sour grapes, they're the one who are going to have their teeth set on edge. I hate eating sour grapes, isn't it terrible? You look at a grape and it looks great, you pop it in your mouth and it's just nasty, yeah, spit it out quick, yuck.

Okay, now we come to prophesy that we studied back in Hebrews chapter 8, so we're not going to probably take a ton of time with it. For those of you who are following this study and maybe didn't connect with Hebrews chapter 8, you might consider going back and doing that chapter as well, because it is a, it goes hand in hand. But this is where the Lord begins to speak about the new covenant. He's been talking about restoration, bringing the nation of Israel back to their homeland, but now He tells them, oh, and by the way, I'm going to make a new covenant with you. You're under the Mosaic Covenant? There's a new one coming and we know that's the covenant we receive through Jesus.

Here we go, verse 31, *“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,”* Then He starts to talk about the character of that covenant. He says, *“³² not like the covenant that 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 that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD.”* We know He's talking about the Mosaic Covenant there, because that's the one He made with them on Mount Sinai after bringing them out of Egypt. But He says, they broke my covenant, so I'm going to make a new covenant with them.

Now He begins to talk about, that new covenant. *“For this (verse 33) 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...”* Speaking of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which took place, only takes place under the new covenant and did not take place under the old. People did not receive the indwelling Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, right?

So He says, *“I'm going to put my law within them,”* write it on their hearts. Furthermore, He says, *“³³ ...And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”* Again, He's talking about the new covenant.

“³⁴ And no longer shall each one 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...” And that is an interesting statement where He says, they're not going to need to be taught to know the Lord. It doesn't mean they're not going to be taught to understand the things of God, or to understand what the Word of God says, because even in the New Testament, the Bible says that, Jesus gave some to be pastors and teachers in the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11) So obviously we still need teachers.

He's saying, though, that they will know me in an experiential and intimate sort of a way. And this is again a reference to the Holy Spirit living inside the heart of believers, communicating the person of Jesus Christ in a way that no academic learning can accomplish. You can sit and open up all the books in the world that talk about Jesus and you'll never know Him like you would know Him if the Spirit comes in to live in your heart and begins to speak to you personally and intimately about the person of Jesus Christ. That's the best way to know Jesus, is to have His Spirit living inside of you.

And then the last thing He says there in the end of verse 34, *“...For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”* And you'll remember, we talked about this a lot when we went through Hebrews chapter 8 because this was really the critical element that the author of Hebrews wanted to convey to the Jews that he was writing to. He was telling them that, if you're going to go back under the old covenant that's a completely different situation as it relates to sin. Under the new covenant, God says, I will remember their sins no more, because why? They're under the blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ who paid the penalty of our sin.

All right, in these final verses of chapter 31, the Lord is just simply going to speak of His steadfast love toward Israel. And I want you to see these verses because they need to be taken seriously when anyone comes to you and starts talking about how God has abandoned Israel. And there's actually a teaching that goes on today, it's called replacement theology, that teaches that the church has replaced Israel as God's chosen people. Israel are no longer any really anything important to God at all, it's now all the church, and that's called replacement theology, and it's not biblical and you're going to see in these verses why it's not biblical.

Look at verse 35, *“Thus says the LORD, who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar—the LORD of hosts is his name:”* Here's what He says, *“³⁶ “If this fixed order departs from before me, declares the LORD, then*

shall the offspring of Israel cease from being a nation before me forever. ”” You see why Israel has always come back from all of her wanderings and all of her dispersions and all of her exiles.

Because God says, here's the deal, if you ever see the sun stop shining, or if you see the moon stop giving its light or the order of creation, having its way every 24 hour period and so forth. And if you stop seeing the waves, you know, crashing and the control and all the order that you see in creation, that's the day when I will have forgotten Israel and abandon her. And that's really God's way of saying, I'm not going to abandon Israel. He says it actually, He's going to repeat it in a completely different way.

Verse 37, He says, *“Thus says the LORD: “If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth below can be explored, then I will cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done, declares the LORD.”* Once again, if the heavens above can be measured, you know. It's interesting, scientists today are saying that the universe is constantly expanding, it's constantly stretching. So in other words, God continues to, He continues to move the goalpost, you know, for measuring the heavens, you know. It's like, so He goes, so if it can be measured, if you can measure the heavens, fine, that's the day that the offspring of Israel will be cast off from me, right?

Verse 38, *“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when the city shall be rebuilt for the LORD (and then He gives some of the dimensions) from the Tower of Hananel (which marked the north east corner of the city) to the Corner Gate. (in other words, from corner to corner) ³⁹ And the measuring line shall go out farther, straight to the hill Gareb, and shall then turn to Goah.*

⁴⁰ *The whole valley of the dead bodies and the ashes, (the place where they took their garbage and people that didn't deserve a burial) and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, (He says, that) shall be sacred to the LORD. (it was considered to be unclean, but He says, it's going to be sacred) It shall not be plucked up or overthrown anymore (look at this last word) forever.”*

And so there's important things for us to see in here. First of all, we're not talking about a symbolic Jerusalem, He's not talking about a spiritual Jerusalem because He's making very detailed statements about the names of the gates, the corner, the corner, the Kidron Valley, this and that. These places, I'm going to make them new, these places that were defiled with dead bodies and garbage, and pagan sacrifices, I'm going to make them new, they're going to be sacred to me. That's the first thing.

But the second thing that we can see from this is that, it can hardly refer to simply Jerusalem being brought back from her exile because the language is far too permanent and it's too large. Did you notice that the very end of verse 40, He says, concerning Jerusalem, "*it shall not be plucked up or overthrown any more forever.*" Did you catch that? Forever, it'll never be plucked up again.

So we're talking about something that hasn't yet happened and will happen, because God's Word says, that it will happen. And that's where we're going to close out our study of those 2 chapters, Jeremiah 30 and 31. Lord willing, we'll pick it up in verse 32 next time, so let's close in prayer.

Father, we thank you so much for giving us the opportunity tonight to dig into the scriptures, such encouraging things we've read tonight. You know, after so much in the book of Jeremiah that was so filled with foreboding, and words of wrath, it's so delightful Lord to go through these chapters where the Lord is reassuring His people and speaking to them of their future and the blessing that He has prepared for them. And then to hear and to see these prophecies, Lord, about the new covenant that is to come, the one that we are enjoying right now. The one that has this rich blessing that our sins are no longer remembered because we know that Jesus Christ has paid the full penalty of our sinning.

Thank you, Father, for these reminders, thank you for this understanding. Thank you, Lord, that you have not given up on Jerusalem and the nation of Israel, and she will have her day yet of blessing and restoration. And we look forward to that, Lord, even as the body of Christ, we rejoice for Jerusalem, for all of Israel, and the days that are to come for the Lord has prophesied a wonderful future.

We thank you for that, Father and we commit our hearts to you in this lesson in the name of Jesus, our Savior, amen.

God bless you. Have a good rest of your evening.