

## **Dr. Allan MacRae: Jeremiah: Lecture 11**

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### **The New Covenant (Jer 30-31)**

#### **Schaeffer and R. Laird Harris Book Recommendations [0:0]**

Sometime ago I mentioned to you Dr. Schaeffer's book, *Death in the City*. The book has very interesting discussions of certain parts of Jeremiah. It would not add to your preparation in this particular course, but I think it's very helpful, especially some of the lessons he draws from it. They have a few copies left of it in the bookstore, so I thought I'd mention it. And also, I might mention that the bookstores also has some copies of a much larger work, *The Theological Handbook of the Old Testament*, a two volume work that was published last year, in which my former colleagues, Dr. R. Laird Harris, was one of the editors. I contributed a certain section to it, although there were many contributors, I only handled maybe one third of the book, but he and two others were the editors of it, and they have been working on it off and on for the last seven or eight years. In fact, the portion of it that I sent to them was perhaps five years ago, but it's a discussion of various Hebrew words and their theological significance. I think that sometime, whether now or later, you would find it well worth to have it in your library.

#### **Assignment: Predictions in Jer 32 [1:29]**

Now our assignment for today was the predictions in chapter 32, and I've made a list of them which I'm going to rapidly read. I mentioned Jeremiah said in verses 3 and 28-29 the city would be handed over to the King of Babylon. In verse 3 that Zedekiah would not escape and would be taken to Babylon. Of course, these three were

predictions that were fulfilled within a few years after Jeremiah wrote. In verse 7 he predicted that his uncle would come to him with a specific request. In verses 15, 43 and 44 he predicted that business would again be done in the land there. The land was under siege then and it soon would become an utter ruin. So that was a marvelous prediction that Jeremiah made in chapter 32. In verse 37 there are two predictions: that the people would be re-gathered, that God would enable them to live safely, that they would be God's people. In verse 39 God said that He would give them singleness of heart. In verse 40 He would make an everlasting covenant with them. In verse 41 He would plant them in the land and in verse 42 that He would give prosperity to them. Thus we see that chapter 32 is, to quite a large extent, a repetition of promises made in chapters 30 and 31. To a very large extent, except for the fact that it adds this specific prediction that business will be conducted again in that place, which was a definite prediction of rebuilding of the civilization there.

### **Object Lesson: Jeremiah buys land [3:12]**

Do you remember, there was an object lesson? Jeremiah was told to buy a piece of land, which was in the hands of the enemy right then. And with the enemy having seized that land, and in the very near future being about to capture Jerusalem and destroy it all, you might say what a waste of money, to buy a piece of land. Why didn't he bury his money and hope that after the siege was over he could find it again. What good did it do anybody for him to purchase it, but he purchased it and had that purchase deed carefully recorded. He was verified as an evidence that the business would again be done in that land.

I believe that this is the prediction that is referred to in the book of Daniel where it says that from the going forth of the commandment--or of the edict, different translations--to rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah the Prince will be seven weeks (Dan. 9:25). And the word that is translated in all our translations as “command” or “edict” there is actually the Hebrew word for “word”, which is actually in the same chapter used three times to mean a prophetic message. And so, it seems to me, this is the prophetic message is referred to in Daniel. The message that God gave Jeremiah, that there would be business again, and this was done just exactly forty nine years later. The one whom God called his anointed was Cyrus who conquered Babylon and allowed the Jews to go back in business and was again established in the land. This discussion belongs more in the book of Daniel than in here, but it’s interesting in chapter 32 that we have this specific promise given. The word came from the Lord to Jeremiah with such emphasis that he actually drew up title deeds and purchased this land. It was fulfilled just forty-nine years later.

I thought it would be good to look forward to chapter 32 just a little bit because I think it helps to throw a light back onto chapters 30 and 31, which along with 32 and 33 form a very definite unit in the book.

Now, as we mentioned at the end of the last hour, I mentioned at the last lesson for next time, I would like a complete outline of the book of Jeremiah, written out and handed in next Friday.

### **Discussion of Jer 30:1-7; Summary of Chapters 30-33—Restoration [5:49]**

Now we’ve, noticed that this section, this third main section of the book, chapters 30-33, involves four chapters which have a few similarities to small sections elsewhere in

Jeremiah that promise God's future blessing on Israel and on Judea, but this particular section is almost entirely devoted to God's future blessing. And we notice that it begins with a brief introduction, verses 1-3 of chapter 30, and those three verses summarize the whole of the four chapters. "‘The days are coming’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will bring my people Israel and Judea back from captivity and restore them to the land I gave their forefathers to possess.’" This notes the return from captivity and restoring to that particular land is repeated over and over as you've noticed in these four chapters.

Then we noticed that as you read through these three chapters you find certain things that are predicted and predicted again. I made a list of the each of the number of predictions with the verses that refer to them at the end of chapters 30 and 31. And they are the same notes over and over. And the person can simply read the section through and think it sort of a hodgepodge, a few things repeated and repeated in a different order. And it was not really until I was working on this section, in the last month, that I noticed what I think is a very concise arrangement of it. An arrangement of which Jeremiah follows his common practice, that practice quite common in many of the prophets, but from Jeremiah one of giving first to some reference, some sorrow, some difficulty, some problem or perhaps a rebuke of sin and the declaration of God's punishment for it, and looking on beyond it, to God's blessing.

### **Jer 30:4-7 Israelites Plight [7:44]**

So we have here in chapter 30 verses 4-7 a situation described. This is what the Lord says, "Cries of fear are heard; terror, not peace. I see every strong man with his hands on his stomach like a woman in labor. How awful that day will be. It will be a

time of trouble for Jacob, but he will be saved out of it.” Is he here describing the condition of the Jews as they are surrounded by the enemy and very soon the city will be taken, and many of them killed, the others bound up as prisoners and carried off to Babylon? Is he looking to Zedekiah himself having his eyes put out and then being led off in chains to Babylon? Is he looking ahead a short distance to that situation, or is he looking further ahead to some other time of sorrow and difficulty for the people of Israel? The answer to that question may not be something in the past. Some may say that Jeremiah is definitely looking forward to a terrible time for Israel in the future. I would not be ready to give a definite decision myself regarding whether it looks forward to a situation in the distant future, or if he looks at a situation fairly near his own time. That would take a careful study of this passage and a look at other passages, and I believe we need to go first more carefully to the conclusion of more similar prophecies before we should draw a fine conclusion like that.

### **Interpreting the Bible: Importance of Context [9:32]**

This brings our attention to a very important point in the study of the Bible and particularly the prophetic books. I believe that a very great deal is done in Bible studies where the Bible is approached with a definite idea as to what it ought to teach. And then we look for verses about what we think we ought to find there. I believe that in doing that we often miss very important truths that the Lord wants us to have, particularly in prophecy. I believe that it is very important that we take a passage by itself and see just what we can draw from it alone. And then we should look at other things in the context of the same book before we bring in material from other books. And I believe that when

we shorten or cut this process that we're apt to be misled.

When I was in seminary, I was very much disturbed when in the course of systematic theology, the professor was giving truth that I believe is very clearly taught in the Scripture--the great sovereignty of God. But he based his arguments largely on the verses in Romans, words in Romans 9, verse 19: "Who has resisted his will?" And I objected in the class and I said when he quoted, "Thou wilt say, 'who has resisted his will,'" Paul was drawing a statement that a man gave as an objection, but the teacher was using it as a foundation verse to support his point. "Oh yes," he said, "but doesn't it summarize the meaning of the passage as a whole?" Well, if you summarize it in those words, it's not right to take those particular words there as your basis for your preaching whether they're true or false because they're entered as an objection to be considered. And I believe that it is very important that we don't simply take great truths that we know, and then draw them out of other places where they are not contained. And the Professor also would proceed to interpret contrary verses in such a way that made them say nothing at all. They just might not as well be in the Bible, for he would explain the verses away.

Now, I believe that the great truths are taught, like the sovereignty of God, over and over in different passages in the Bible. This doctrine is very important, and we stand on it and hang on to it firmly. But when we find verses that seem to contradict others, if we make an argument that the second set of verses do not deny the first set, we reduce the doctrine to absolutely nothing. I do think we should take the verses and examine them and see how they fit together. And there may be an aspect of our understanding of the

truth, or there may be in it some other truth that may be very important for God's people, that we overlook when we simply try to explain away verses. And so I think it is very important that we look and see what is directly important--what is there with certainty--and then go on to the points where we may have certain questions.

### **Jer 30—Condition of Misery and God's Answer [13:14]**

And so here we have this introduction in chapter 30, and then we have this picture of a condition of misery. And then it is followed in chapter 30, verses 8-11, with God's answer. He declares that God is going, sometime in the future, to break the yokes off their necks and tear off their bonds...." 'Do not fear Jacob, my servant, do not be dismayed. I will surely save you out of a place, your descendants from the land of their exile, Jacob will again have peace and security and no one will be afraid. I am with you and will save you,' declares the Lord, 'though I completely destroy all the nations among which I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you. I will discipline you, but only with justice. I will not let you go entirely unpunished.'" So we have first this brief description of extreme measures, whether it describes the condition of their going into exile then, or whether it looks forward to a future position of time of great misery and difficulty. In either case, he looks beyond it to God's blessing, particularly bringing them back to their land, and giving them great prosperity and great protection there. And though God says, "Though I completely destroy all the nations among which I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you."

Of course, when we look at all the nations among whom the Jews were scattered in ancient times--not merely in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, but on after the time of the

Roman destruction of Jerusalem--we find that all those nations have disappeared. For a long time, for instance, they were under the control of Persia; well, the Persians of that time. Well, they were completely overrun several times during the middle ages. The Arabs overran the land and then the Mongols came from the other direction and held the land for about three centuries. And the civilization of Persia, or Iran, today is utterly different from the civilization of ancient times. And that is true for all the nations into which the Jews were scattered. The Jews are the only people who remain to this day, and is one of the great evidences of the truth of the Scripture; that God has carried out the promise he gave to continue this nation as a definite, recognizable unit, even though till quite recently they had no flag, they had no land, they had no capital, but they continued their national existence all through these centuries.

### **Jer 30:12-13 Return to Misery Motif [15:51]**

And then in verse 12 we begin another similar section. Chapter 30, verses 12-13, immediately go back to look at a condition of misery. "Your wound is incurable, you injury beyond healing." And of course, He doesn't mean that it actually can never be cured, He means that it seems to be incurable, or it means that it's so bad that no human means could cure it. "There is no one to plead your cause; all your allies have forgotten you." Chapter 30, verses 23-24, show a terrible situation again, and then that continues all the rest of that in this chapter.

### **Jer 31 Promise of Blessing [16:32]**

But then starting in chapter 31, the beginning of it--which should not be the beginning of a new chapter--is the continuation of that second part of blessing. "'At that



time,' declares the Lord, 'I will be the God of all the clans of Israel and they will be my people.' This is what the Lord says, 'The people who survive the sword will find favor in the desert. I will come to give grace to Israel.'" And so on through verses 1-14 here, he continues to promise blessing after this view of misery was given just before. And the blessing includes bringing them back to the land. In verse 4 and following, "You will be rebuilt; you will go out to dance as the joyful; you will plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria. There will be a day when the watchmen cry out on the hills of Ephraim, 'Come let us go up to Zion, to the Lord, our God.'" And he continues with these verses of great promises through verses 1-14.

### **Jer 31:15 Misery and Matthew 2:18 Rachel Weeping [17:38]**

Then in chapter 31, verse 15, he again looks back at a period of misery. "A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping. Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted because her children are no more." Now, is this a description of the misery that occurred in Israel when the Northern Kingdom was taken off into exile and the descendants of Rachel, that is the people of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, were taken on into exile, or is it a description of a future type of misery? And this verse is quoted in the New Testament (Matt. 2:18), and in this particular case I would not wish to make an immediate judgment of whether the quotation is an analogy, or is he saying that this is exactly the one event that was predicted at that time by Jeremiah. But it is quoted there after the children, after Herod had the children of Bethlehem up to two years of age killed when he was seeking to destroy the new king that had been promised, as you remember. And this verse is there for closure. But whether it was there as a definite

fulfillment of the prediction or whether it was put there as an analogy is a matter for which at the moment we must leave open.

### **Jer 31:16-17 Return to Blessings [19:00]**

So in chapter 31, verse 15, we then return to look briefly at a time of misery but then in 31:16-17 he goes on from there to look at the blessings. "'Free your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears. For your work will be rewarded,' declares the Lord. 'They will return from the land of the enemy. So there is hope for the future,' declares the Lord. 'Your children will return to their own land.'" So here there is a prediction of a return to the land immediately following this account. Now, is this a prediction of the return after the exile when both people from the Northern Kingdom and from the Southern Kingdom return and settle around Jerusalem, or does it look forward to some return at a later time than that? There's no hint in this particular passage that it looks forward later. Some of the other predictions that we turn and look at, like tremendous prosperity, go beyond anything that anyone could really say was fulfilled in the return right after the Babylon captivity.

### **Jer 31:18 Northern Kingdom's Misery [20:13]**

Then in Jeremiah 31:18 again we have one verse expressing the Northern Kingdom's misery. "I have surely heard Ephraim's moaning, 'You discipline me like an unruly calf has been disciplined. Restore me and I will return because you are the Lord, my God.'" And it continues showing many people from the Northern Kingdom returning to God in their captivity, and doubtless many of them were included when the Jews came back after the Babylonian exile. The talk about a lost ten tribes is complete nonsense, for

the ten tribes were mixed with Judah during the Babylonian exile. And the distinction between them has been lost ever since. God says 31:18-19: "I have surely heard Ephraim's moaning. 'You discipline me like an unruly calf and I've been disciplined. Restore me and I will return. After I strayed, I repented. After I came to understand, I beat my breast. I was ashamed and humiliated because I bore the trace of my youth.'" Then the Lord speaks after quoting Ephraim in Jer. 31:20 and following, "Is not Ephraim my dear son, the child in whom I delight. Though I often speak against him, I still remember him. Therefore my heart yearns for him. I have great compassion for him, declares the Lord." And he continues in the rest of the chapter, continues with the blessing that God will give in the future.

### **Jer 31:22 "A Woman Will Surround a Man" [21:51]**

In Jeremiah 31:21 he says, "Set up road signs. Put up guide posts; take note of the highway, the road that you take. Return, O virgin Israel, return to your towns. How long will you wander along, O faithless daughter. The Lord will create a new thing on Earth. A woman will surround the man." Now that is a very interesting word. "The Lord will create a new thing on earth. A woman will surround the man." What's new about the woman surrounding a man? What does that mean? The Revised Standard Version translates it, "A woman will protect a man." Well, that's a new thing in the earth, a tremendously new thing, a new creation that God has made, that there will be cases where a woman will protect a man [sarcasm].

The word used here, *sabab*, is a word which is used a great many times in Old Testament, meaning "to go around." It is used less in this particular form than the *piel*

form, but precise meaning is hard to get, "to go around." This particular one, *sabab*, is used twice in the book of Jonah, to tell how, when he was in the depths the ocean, to tell how the waves were "around him," they went "around him." They closed him in. And that certainly is a possible meaning for it.

### **Options for Jer 31:22: "A Woman Will Surround a Man"**

As I said, the Revised Standard Version translates it "will protect," and one way of protecting is surround. But the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, which is by a large extent written by modernists say if the RSV is correct here, "it means that conditions will become so safe in the land of Israel that a woman will be able to protect a man." What the author there says, if the conditions are so safe that a woman can protect a man, then why does a man need protection? So that really doesn't make much sense.

One commentary I looked at says that it is probably in reference to an ancient proverb which is unknown to us. So we can't tell what it means. Most recent translations say that it mean that Israel, the unfaithful daughter, which wandered away from God, will turn around and begin to embrace God and to seek him. Well, as you read the Old Testament time and again, people of Israel sought the Lord. This would not be a wonderful new thing in the earth.

I think one of the cleverest interpretations I ever saw was in a German translation. It's a German commentary in which a professor of the University of Pennsylvania makes one of the most suggestive comments on Jeremiah I have ever seen. And this commentary said the scribe who was coping this had just been reading about the virgin daughter of Israel, and then he found here it speaks of Ephraim, my dear son. So, he

says, the Lord has created a new thing: "the woman is changed into a man; he is turned into a man." Well, that's a possible rendering, but I think a very foolish interpretation.

### **Early Church Fathers: Virgin Birth [25:19]**

Now, I do not think we can be dogmatic about the interpretation I'm about to advance, but only one interpretation seems to make sense to me. And that interpretation was advanced by some of the early church fathers, though I don't think they gave very full evidence for it. And I never realized just till lately how strong an evidence can be made for it. That suggestion is that this is prediction of the virgin birth of Christ. "A woman will surround a man." A woman will do this without the intervention of a human father. As I said, I cannot be dogmatic about that. I say I do not know any other interpretation that makes sense. For that one, I don't think it's clear enough to be dogmatic on, but I do think that there are some strong evidences that can be given for it.

One thing is the way that it is introduced. "The Lord will create a new thing on earth." The word "create" is used comparably few times in the Bible. It is practically always referring to God's creating the universe, creating the stars, creating the earth. It is the great works of God, and it is never used in the Bible, that is, the Hebrew word, referring to human creation. And none of the other interpretations I've known of would suggest the intervention of the wonderful, creative powers of God. Also, the word "a new thing of the earth" suggests that what God would create would not be something that you would have found over and over again in the past. One cannot say that "a woman will protect a man" as something that never happened on earth. Why, David's life was saved by his wife Michal once, when she put something in the bed to make it look like he

was lying there and told people he was there. So they waited for him to get up and in the meantime he had fled. And while it is not common for a woman to protect a man, it does happen. But Jeremiah's prediction is something that seems to be new, or seems to be tremendous.

Then it says a woman will "surround a man" and the word here that's translated "woman" is a Hebrew word which is only translated "woman," I believe, only three times in the entire Old Testament. It is usually translated "female." It is used a number of times where it is used of the animals--male and female; He created them "male and female," he created them not "man and woman." The two words "male" and "female" are words with seed, in their etiology, that seem to have a sexual relation of man and woman. That suggests that it has something to do with procreation. It does not prove it, but it does point in that direction.

### **Geber: Mighty Man [28:17]**

Then it says "a woman will surround a man," and it is not the ordinary word for "man" that is used here. The word that is used here is the word *geber* and that word is translated usually "a mighty man." It is a word that shows one who is strong or great; it is not an ordinary man. It is the word which is used in Isaiah, in the ninth chapter, in verses that we all read at Christmas time. When we read that "unto us a child is born, to us a son is given. The government will be on his shoulders and he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God"(verse 6). Some of those who made translations recently want to change that phrase "Mighty God" to "the God of a hero" because the word "God" comes first, and then the word that is translated "mighty" in our translation

is not an adjective, but is a noun. It is this word *geber* or *gibor* which is used as "mighty man" or "hero". And so in a way you could say this verse means he will be called "Mighty Counselor, the God, the mighty man." In other words, the prediction of "the God man." I don't think you can change that translation in Isaiah there into that, but there certainly can be thought to be a suggestion there of the nature of Christ, his humanity and divinity and *geber*. That is the word which is used here, "a woman will surround a mighty man."

Now, those are the reasons that, I think, point rather strongly in the direction of the prediction of the *geber*, but I don't think the evidence is strong enough to be dogmatic. Incidentally, I should mention that in the new *Scofield Reference Bible*, at this point, there is a note which Dr. Charles Feinberg wrote, which says that this is usually interpreted, by recent interpreters, as Israel turning back towards God. But the earlier interpreters almost all, without exception, took it towards "the virgin birth." And the reason for that might be some of the reasons I have just projected, but Feinberg simply says the word "woman" and the word "man," but does not mention what these words meant to the Hebrews. I must have overlooked that when we adopted that note, when we put that in, although I don't even recall that that note had been put in. He refers to that verse in Isaiah, but the ordinary reader looking up that verse just finds it says "the mighty God" and would never realize that was the same word. But those are the evidences regarding this interpretation, that he looks forward to the wonderful great thing that God is going to do. As I say, we can't be dogmatic on this, but I don't know any other translation that could mean that and make sense at all.

### **Jer 31:26-27 Re-Planting [31:46]**

Well, I didn't expect that to take that long, but very difficult and interesting things immediately follow. Jeremiah goes on, "When I see them and bring them back from captivity people will rejoice. " It shows how people will live in prosperity there. And this is such a beautiful picture such that the prophet says in chapter 31, verse 26, "I woke and looked around. My sleep had been pleasant to me." "My sleep had been pleasant to me," I wouldn't be dogmatic on that either, but that's the best translation I've ever heard.

Continuing, "'The days are coming,' says the Lord, 'when I will plant the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the offspring of men and animals'" (verse 27), evidently meaning He will increase their number greatly in men and also in animals. "Just as I watched them uproot, tear down, to overthrow and bring disaster, so I watch over them, to build them back finally" (verse 28).

### **Jer 31:31 New Covenant [32:59]**

And in chapter 31, verse 31, God says, "'The time is coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt but they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,' declares the Lord." Though God had protected them and had been very good to them, they had broken his covenant. They had been, as the New Testament translates it, they had not been faithfully following his covenant.

Then in chapter 31, verse 33, "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time. I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts." Well,



what's new about that, having God's law in your minds and in your hearts? The Old Testament over and over makes it very, very clear that no one is saved through eternity though keeping certain regulations, or through carrying out certain precise instructions. It is clear that there is no salvation except to those who have God's law in their minds and written on their hearts. David said, "Create in me a new spirit." This he prayed, after his sin, when he repented and turned to the Lord (Psalm 51:10).

Verse 34 says, "I will forgive them their wickedness and remember their sins no more." God had promised that to many in the Old Testament. As Paul said, they are not all Israel that are of Israel. In fact, there was the people of Israel, the nation to whom God gave certain, very definite blessings, but then, there are among them those who have truly received Christ, have received God's promise into their heart, who have looked upon the sacrifices and have seen that they represented the fact that God was going to provide for deliverance from their sins, and who is saved through all eternity. I do not know of any Christian who've I've ever had contact with, who believes that anybody ever has been saved or ever will be saved, in any way, except through what Jesus Christ did through the cross. People before that looked forward to his coming, they did not understand fully what it was going to be. They knew that the sacrifices of many things, the tabernacle, temple, exemplified things that God was providing for their means of salvation.

And then, of course, we look back to these things and we don't need full detailed regulations to worship as they did in the Old Testament. Those had to be very detailed because they looked forward to what God was going to do. But we look back to what He

has done, and we have the full account of it, and so He does not give the regulations on worship in the precise way in the New Testament as He does in the Old. All that is to say, I don't know of any person who had ever held that they have ever been saved through any other way.

**Jer 31:34 New Covenant – They Will All Know Him Universally [36:08]**

The Old Testament gives God's promises of salvation. And so we have God's promise to Abraham, we have in God's promise to Adam--the fact that the seed of the woman will crush the head of the serpent. We have the promise to Abraham that he will be a blessing to all nations, that people of every nation will praise God for what God has done. We have Israel's history; we have all this to call our attention to what God is going to do, but it is only the attitude in the heart that can bring salvation. And so we read that "I will make a new covenant," that they have broken the covenant that was made when they came out of Egypt, when they were given the precise laws to perform. So when we read, "This is the covenant I will make. I will put my law in their minds and write it in their hearts," well, that was done previously. It had been done with many previously. God had put his law in their minds and written it in their hearts. He says, "I will be their God and they will be my people." And we find this same statement made a number of times to the people. God says, "I will be your God and you will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor or his brother saying 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me" (Jer 31:34).

Many have, I think, misunderstood this statement, they just take the first part. "No longer will a man teach his neighbor or a man his brother." And therefore they say

that in the new covenant nobody needs teaching; he'll know everything because the Holy Spirit reveals it directly to him. But that's not what the verse says; that's stopping in the middle of the verse. The verse says, "No longer will a man teach his neighbor or a man his brother saying, 'Know the Lord.'" In other words, no one will say to another come and believe in the Lord, come to know him personally, they won't say that anymore.

They won't be trying to reach other people for the Lord. No longer will a man need to teach his brother to know the Lord because they will all know Him, from the least of them to the greatest. The thing that is new about this covenant is its universality. It is the fact that from the least to the greatest everyone will know the Lord. He says for I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more. So the new covenant is similar to the old; it is a continuation of God's blessing. There is stress on the spiritual aspect of it which there was in the old covenant, but there is the distinction that no longer will anyone need to try to bring another man to terms with the Lord because they will all know Him, from the least to the greatest.

### **Those Beyond Israel Who Knew God in the Old Testament [38:53]**

This covenant, he says, I will make with the house of Israel. This covenant must include the house of Israel. But it is not limited to the house of Israel. We have in the ancestry of Jesus Christ several who came in from other nations and became part of the body of Israel. And in addition to that, we have Abraham giving tithes to Melchizedek and recognizing him as a true priest of God. We have in the book of Job ones who knew God, who truly know God, but there is no mention of the law of Sinai in the book of Job at all. And the world turned away from God and tried to forget him. And God

wonderfully chose Israel to be his instrument to keep alive the knowledge of God and gave them tremendous blessings, and used them. But there were also people who were not of Israel, who were certainly in God's company. And we find what Peter said to Cornelius; he said formally I thought only an Israelite could be saved, but now I see. He doesn't say, "But now I see that God has changed." He says, "Now I see that those of every land, who truly have turned to the Lord are accepted in Him." And so the covenant was never limited only to those Israelites who truly believed in the Lord and were saved for all eternity. Well, we've hit a few points, but we've missed a few. I should be stopping now.

[Student question]

So does the new covenant obviate the need for missionaries?

Exactly, yes, the thing about the new covenant is that it is going to be universal, that there will be no need of a missionary because the time is coming when no one will teach his neighbor to know the Lord because they will all know him. We certainly are not in that time today, but we will continue there next time.

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