

# Jeremiah 31:31-34

## ***“GOD IS FAITHFUL”***

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### Welcome

- **Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July Wknd**
  - This is the time of year where we as citizens of the US celebrate the adoption of the Declaration of Independence...the 13 colonies declared them as a new nation, free from British rule...
  - And as disciples of Jesus Christ & citizens of the Kingdom of GOD, we get the opportunity of celebrating our freedom every day...
    - Scripture informs in John 8: <sup>36</sup> ***Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.***
    - Therefore, **This is the day the Lord has made;** We will rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)
- We're continuing on in our series, **“The Whole Story”** ...So if you have your Bibles, whether your eBibles or “Tree” Bibles...turn with me to **Jeremiah, Chapter 31**...

### Intro:

In 1986, a song by a British pop group, named “The Human League” came to prominence and scored a #1 Hit with a song entitled, **“Human”**...this song spoke specifically about **infidelity**...the lyrics of the chorus are:

***I'm only human  
Of flesh and blood I'm made  
Human  
Born to make mistakes***

More recently, a well-known insurance company re-introduced this song to the world by using it in a commercial to promote its services...In this commercial we see people dealing with things in their life that break or that they break...they open the commercial by saying:

***“Humans, we mean well  
but we are imperfect creatures,  
living in a beautifully imperfect world...”***

*and they go as far as to say:*

***“It’s amazing we have made it this far...”<sup>1</sup>***

This insurance company promises to be there to help when things break and get messed up in your life...if only, you had this insurance company covering you, you would have minimal, if not, any worries at all, when life goes in the wrong direction for you...

This song became a hit because it points to a very real reality...***We are imperfect people, living in an imperfect world filled with pain & suffering...This is our reality*** and we all can identify with truth (***e.g. look at the news, if not...***)

***So here’s a question for you:*** Who is your insurance company or “go-to” person when you “break or “destroy” things in your life or someone else’s life?

Your car for example; I’m quite sure a few of us have that “go-to” mechanic that we trust beyond all measure...

Sick? There’s always mom with your favorite soup...any chicken noodle lovers in the house?

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<sup>1</sup> Liberty Mutual, Humans Commercial, 2012

When your eyeglasses, remote control, or even your favorite chair break, we all call on the master handyman “Mr. Duct Tape”...

*Well, here’s another question:*

***Who did GOD call on when HIS creation, HIS prized possession chose to break away from HIM? When man willingly disobeyed HIS commands and did not honor the terms of the covenant HE made with them? Who did HE have to call on when mankind was unfaithful and committed adultery?***

When the love of HIS life broke HIS heart, did HE have a best friend to call to vent & get prayed for or a marriage counselor to speak with?

Did GOD have an insurance policy to refer to & agent to call to fix the problem?

Pick me up in verse 31 (of Jeremiah Chapter 31) and let’s see the answer to these questions of how GOD dealt with and continues to deal with mankind’s infidelity as recorded in HIS Word...

### **Jeremiah 31: 31-34 (Scripture Slides)**

**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,*

- *Who made this covenant? **GOD***

**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.*

- *Who made the original covenant? **GOD***
- *Who broke the original covenant? **man***

**33** *For this 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. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.***

**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. For **I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.**”*

### **Context**

#### **Quick Recap – “Whole Story”**

We’ve been reading through The Bible as a church, and we called this series “TWS”, we’re seeing TWS of Scripture and how every page of The Bible points us to one person: JESUS CHRIST...

And if you have been following along with us through the OT so far, you have noticed the love GOD has for HIS Creation...GOD loves the children of Israel deeply but they are **consistently & willfully** unfaithful to HIM...They outright disobey HIS commands and worship idols/false gods repeatedly...

Sin entered the world, when our foremother/father, Adam & Eve disobeyed and b/c of that disobedience, GOD cast them out of the Garden and out of HIS Presence...

Ever since then, man’s sinful nature is getting worse from generation to generation and GOD’s anger is getting more & more inflamed...

So GOD destroys some of them for their disobedience; but promises to still love & provide for them.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Andrusko, *The Problem, Promise, Plan*

Israel repents but only for a short period of time and then it happens all over again...and that cycle repeats...  
GOD has sent Israel into exile for their disobedience...and HE will no longer hold back HIS anger & judgment....

So HE calls Jeremiah, as a prophet, and sends him to the children of Israel to relay a very important message:

I'll translate that message through the words of my grandmother that she prophetically spoke in my life: **"Baby! A hard head makes a soft behind..."**

- In like manner, Jeremiah is informing the COI that their "hardheaded-ness" (rebellion), their infidelity, has brought forth GOD's judgment...
- Some of you may be thinking: **was it really that bad? Yes it was!!**

Let's zoom out of Jeremiah for a sec...

**Imagine the pain you would feel if a spouse chose to find joy in the arms of another lover?**

Anyone who has ever been the victim of infidelity or betrayal knows how deep that cuts. When your spouse walks out on you...or you find out about a secret affair...when your very best friend betrays you...when a close family member stabs you in the back...IT HURTS!!!!

It messes you up. It makes you say, 'All these years I've been faithful to you. I've been pouring myself out for you. And for what?' ~~But that's not what God says. He could. He has the right. But it's not what he says..."~~

Let's zoom back into Jeremiah...  
Summarize these verses:

- **Jeremiah 2:13** = "For My people have committed two evils: They have **forsaken Me**, the fountain of living waters, **And hewn themselves cisterns**—broken cisterns that can hold no water.
  - *They rejected him...and they chose other things to satisfy & sustain them (cisterns reference)*
- **Jeremiah 5:3** = **O Lord, are not Your eyes on the truth? You have stricken them, But they have not grieved; You have consumed them, But they have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than rock; They have refused to return.**
  - *They now despise instruction and refuse to repent*
- **Jeremiah 6:10** = <sup>10</sup>**To whom shall I speak and give warning, That they may hear? Indeed their ear is uncircumcised, And they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the Lord is a reproach to them; They have no delight in it. <sup>11</sup>Therefore I am full of the fury of the Lord. I am weary of holding it in.**
  - *They can't even hear the Word of GOD anymore!*

They had become so sinful and GOD was so angry that HE told Jeremiah "not to pray for them" and in Chapter 15, HE would say **"even if Moses & Samuel stood before HIM and pleaded with HIM, HE would not turn HIS heart toward HIS people..."**

Imagine "your anger" in those situations (x) "the biggest number you can think of" and it still pales in comparison to the anger GOD felt from HIS children's choice of rebellion & idol worship over their relationship with HIM...and this was not the first time they cheated on GOD...

They had been unfaithful time after time after time after time...

And like any good parent, at some point, you get tired of communicating the same things to your children over and over again, when they are being disobedient/hard-headed...

- If you grew up in my house, judgment was spoken this way, ***“I brought you in this world, I’ll take you out!”***
- That was my mom’s way of saying ***“REPENT FOR THE KINGDOM OF THE ROD IS IN MY HAND!!!”***

GOD, The HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, became utterly disgusted and fed up with their **faithfulness to rebellion** when they should have been **faithful to HIS Redemption**...especially, since HE had fulfilled every promise and did everything for them as HE said HE would do...

In Joshua, all that HE had promised them originally was fulfilled...

***“Thus the Lord gave to Israel all the land that he swore to give to their fathers. And they took possession of it, and they settled there. And the Lord gave them rest on every side just as he had sworn to their fathers. Not one of all their enemies had withstood them, for the Lord had given all their enemies into their hands.***

***<sup>45</sup>Not one word of all the good promises that the Lord had made to the house of Israel had failed; all came to pass.”*** Joshua 21:43-45 ESV

**Question:** Shouldn’t all the proof they had of GOD’s fulfilled promises warrant commitment to HIM by the COI?

- If somebody pays for my meal, I instantly feel some type of indebtedness to them...

**GOD HAD BEEN FAITHFUL!!!** But we see that wasn’t good enough for them...after all the love that GOD had poured out on them...they still chose to follow after false gods...so GOD calls Jeremiah, to go to the people to communicate **“judgment”** is on the way...

There are **3 “Takeaways”** that I would like to for us to see from this passage: ***Our Problem (Our Sin), HIS Promise (The New Covenant), Our Hope (Salvation)***

## **1. Our Problem (Verse 32)**

***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.***

**Answer:** Sin was and is our problem...We, sinful man, are the problem...we are our own worst enemy...rotten to the core

**Let’s be honest:** For many of us that is a tough pill to swallow...nobody likes to be told that they are rotten, bad, evil...but that’s what sin has done to us...it made us enemies of GOD...left to ourselves, we are destructive...and unfortunately, whether we like it or not, this is our DNA...

This is why we have **resumes**...nothing on your resume says anything negative/destructive about you...

- I seriously doubt that any of us in here, of the working age, have ever said on your resume...
  - **1-** I love to sleep in and I’ll get to work, when I’m good & ready...
  - **2-** I need a minimum of at least 20 breaks throughout my workday and an extra computer
  - **3-** Whether I’m worth it or not, I need a raise every other month and at least a week off a month...or I start not coming to work...

But we see the opposite of how we view ourselves in Scripture...Let Psalm 53 serve as a mirror for us:

**<sup>2</sup>God looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. <sup>3</sup>They have all fallen away; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one.**

**GOD is HOLY** and HE cannot stand the sight of sin!!

You see:

- Adam & Eve were exiled from the garden because of their sin...
- Israel was exiled from the promised land because of their sin...
- And we become exiled spiritually from GOD's Presence when we sin!<sup>3</sup>

For HE said in Leviticus (11:45) = <sup>45</sup>**For I am the Lord who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.**

HE has and always will demand the same of us...**BE HOLY FOR HE IS HOLY!**

HIS Law/Commandments were to **aid** us in doing so, not **alienate** us from HIM...Holiness was the right way back then and it is still the right way today...

**Let's camp here a little longer...**

The song writer said, "I'll never know how much it costs, to see my sin upon that cross"<sup>4</sup>

...because in order to see how beautiful GOD's faithfulness is, we have to see how ugly our sin & infidelity to HIM is as well... Consider this our "black light" moment...

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<sup>3</sup> Andrusko, *The Problem, Promise, Plan*

<sup>4</sup> Chris Tomlin "Here I am to Worship"

Earlier in **Jeremiah, Chapter 5, Verses 3, 11-13** we see how blind, numb, & dumb they had become...

**<sup>3</sup>O Lord, do not your eyes look for truth? You have struck them down, but they felt no anguish; you have consumed them, but they refused to take correction. They have made their faces harder than rock; they have refused to repent.**

**<sup>11</sup>The people of Israel and the people of Judah have been utterly unfaithful to me," declares the Lord.**

**<sup>12</sup>They have lied about the Lord; they said, "He will do nothing! No harm will come to us; we will never see sword or famine.**

**<sup>13</sup>The prophets are but wind and the word is not in them; so let what they say be done to them."**

They pretty much told GOD they were HIS GOD and HE had no authority in their lives...and we do that too:

- When we choose to...
  - Have sex out of the context of marriage...
  - Harbor unforgiveness in our hearts...
  - When you want to date the church, instead of committing to membership...and the list goes on...

That's what sin does...we become desensitized to holiness, we become deaf to HIS Voice and blind to HIS Beauty...

What happened during the days of Jeremiah are still happening in our world, present day...

**The sad & painful reality is that GOD's penalty for sin is death!** That is a strong truth that we must stomach!!

...and none of us are exempt from and most importantly, none of us want to hear!!...and I couldn't go there, unless I know there!

**Sin has the devil for its father, shame for its companion, and death for its wages.** ~ Thomas Watson

And you realize even more that GOD's commandments/laws are not simply a list of right/wrong or good/bad. HIS Law communicates HIS Love and is a manifestation of his very character & nature— HE'S HOLY!!

***You see GOD wasn't trying to pay them back, HE was trying to bring them back...Back into HIS loving arms for all days...(x2)***

And in HIS infinite wisdom, in the abundance of HIS Grace and the riches of HIS Mercy, HE had a strategic plan in place, HE was HIS own insurance policy and HE knew the best way to fix what was broken...

Which leads us to our next **Takeaway #2: HIS Promise.**

## **2. HIS Promise Verse 31, 33**

**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,*

**33** *For this 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.** And **I will be their God,** and they shall be my people.*

Even in the midst of our folly, GOD is still FAITHFUL!!!...This is GOOD NEWS!!

The insurance commercial goes on to say...**"Maybe it's because when one of us messes up, someone else comes along to help out..."**

And that someone came to not only assist us but more importantly save us is **JESUS CHRIST!!!**

In Chapter 3 (Jeremiah), GOD says...

***<sup>14</sup> "Return, O backsliding children," says the Lord; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. <sup>15</sup> And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.***

In other words, GOD said "Even when you are faithless, I AM faithful b/c I cannot deny who I AM...I AM GOD and beside ME there is none other...MY Love is not superficial, it is supernatural! and MY MERCY SAYS NO!

Which is the joy that we can find in HIS creation of the new covenant with us!!

***So what is this new covenant that you speak of?*** For starters:

- A. Covenant** simply means = *a usually formal, solemn, and binding agreement*<sup>5</sup>
- i. The most commonly used word for "covenant" in the OT and its preferred meaning is **bond**; a covenant refers to two or more parties bound together.
  - ii. Few things we need to be clear about as well:
    - i. **Biblical covenants are not bonds/relationships among equals.**
    - ii. **Biblical covenants are based on grace (*Grace means we receive what we don't deserve...so that would mean "Mercy" is we don't receive what we deserve*)**
    - iii. The terms in the covenants are not requirements to get into the covenant.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Merriem-Webster

<sup>6</sup> Merkle – Hermeneutics

B. Why was the “**new covenant**” needed & how did HE make it?

- i. The answer to this is stated in **Romans 3:21-26**

**<sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—**

**<sup>22</sup> the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

**<sup>24</sup> and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup> whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.**

**<sup>26</sup> It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.**

In other words, from this passage it's clear to see that (BC Tie-In):

- i. We are not equal with GOD
- ii. We are justified by GOD's Grace and by HIS Grace alone
- iii. HE chose us to be in covenant relationship with, we did not choose HIM..., which is the point of this whole discussion,...and the way HE chose to collect payment on that is by sending HIS Son to live the life that we couldn't live and die the death that we should have died...

**This cannot be overstated:** “The wages of our sin is death” but GOD, rich in HIS MERCY, chose to pour HIS Wrath, not on us, but on JESUS, as our propitiation...that is a fancy, biblical way of saying “**JESUS IN OUR PLACE**”

This is what we know to be the Gospel of JESUS CHRIST...HE got our sin, and HE gave us HIS Righteousness...We gave HIM pain, HE gave us Promise...

**How did GOD make this new covenant possible?** through the blood of HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST!...without the shedding of blood...HE made this possible by way of a bloody cross...

**Quote:** “*The cross of Christ is first and centrally God's means of reconciling sinful people to his sinless self.*”

***The cross is the linchpin in God's plan to restore all creation. Is it any wonder, then, that the empty tomb opened out into a garden?*”<sup>7</sup>**

So the new covenant **was and still is** the plan GOD uses to forgive the sins of his people and to put his laws within us and to **write them on our hearts**...to be our God and to make us HIS people. The burden & certainty of this new covenant does not lie with man, it lies with GOD...**and the GOD I serve, can do anything but FAIL!**

And b/c of this I can join in with the Kingdom Choir and sing:

***Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine;  
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.***

***This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.***

Which brings us to our last **Takeaway #3: Our Hope**

### **3. Our Hope**

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<sup>7</sup> Chandler, Explicit Gospel (pg.142-143)

So where do we find hope in all of this? Look back at these verses again...

The hope that we have is in the “**I WILL**” declarations GOD has communicated in this passage & throughout all of Scripture...

**31 ...I will make a new covenant,**

**33 ...I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**

**34 ...For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”**

The joy, strength, and victory we find in these “**I WILL**” declarations is that apart from CHRIST we can do absolutely nothing!

**He pursued us** when their hearts were of iron and made it impossible to truly love God.

GOD told Jeremiah in **17:1**, “**The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with a point of diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart...**”

You have to know that there is real hope in a world that will try to say otherwise & aggressively try to remove you from the presence of “**THY WILL Be Done**” to the pit of “**my will be done**”...

“God, we’re unable to keep your covenant.”

- **I will** make a new covenant

“God, we’re unable to follow your law wholeheartedly.”

- **I will** put my law within them

“God, I can’t get my desires to change.”

- **I will** write it on their hearts

“God, I keep running to other things.”

- **I will** be their God, and they shall be my people

Because of this, GOD launched HIS perfect plan of redemption...through HIS Son, JESUS CHRIST!

So are you...

- **Struggling w/ loneliness?**
  - **Deut 31: 6** = “*Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.*”
- **Struggling w/ providing for your family?**
  - **Phil 4:19** = “*And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*”
- **In some type of fight (emotionally, spiritually)?**
  - **Exodus 14:14** = *The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.*”
- **At a crossroads in life, struggling with clarity/direction?**
  - **Proverbs 3:5-6**: “*In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*”
- **Are you tired?**
  - **Matt 11:28** = “*Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”
- **Wondering are you fit for the Master’s Use and what HE’s doing in your life?**
  - **Phil 1:6** = “*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*”

**Our hope is in CHRIST and in CHRIST alone! and we can do all things through CHRIST who gives us strength!**

The commercial closes by saying...“**that’s the thing about humans...when things are at their worst, we (LM referring to themselves) is at our best...**”



*The Good News is that in the good, bad, and ugly of life, whether by our fault or at the fault of others...JESUS was at HIS BEST and paid the cost to bring dead men to life and is still at HIS BEST resurrecting lives today...*

## **Closing**

We're only human born of flesh we are made...Human born to make mistakes...

GOD knows we are only human, born in sin & shaped in iniquity, and so HE became our HIGH PRIEST, wrapping HIMSELF in this sinful flesh, living the perfect, blameless life, laid HIS life down and shed HIS precious blood on Calvary's Cross, so that the broken places in our lives and make them new...take the bitterness and make it sweet...the destitute places in our lives LORD, and you give us hope...for the ashes of our lives, you give us beauty..."<sup>8</sup>

***Our infidelity is no match for HIM!!!***

***All of this was accomplished on The Cross when JESUS said, "IT IS FINISHED!!!" GOD WAS, IS, AND FOREVER WILL BE FAITHFUL!!!***

***JESUS didn't come to sell anything...HE didn't come to sell us an insurance policy, HE came to give us an eternal promise! What HE gives, HE gives it freely...***

*To get HIS promise is found in two words: Repentance & Faith – which simply means GOD is right and you are wrong; your life belongs to Him, always has.<sup>9</sup>*

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<sup>8</sup> At the Foot of the Cross – Kari Jobe

<sup>9</sup> JD Greear, "Finding the Assurance of Salvation" (PDF Transcript of sermon, The Summit Church, Durham, NC, September 21, 2014), accessed October 1, 2014, <http://www.summitrdu.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/1-Assurance-of-Salvation-John-3.pdf>.

## **Bow your heads...**

***Will you let The Master fix what is broken?***

For some of us that means saying, "not my will anymore LORD, but THY will be done...I surrender all to you?"

This covenant requires 2 signatures and you're saying today: "I'm signing my name where JESUS signed w/ HIS BLOOD!

Maybe you turned away from GOD? You've been feeling alone and thinking there's no way HE could love someone like you...

GOD said HE's married to the backslider...Come home!