



3

God's New Covenant

Key Theme

- God's plan of redemption was in place before time.

Key Passages

- Jeremiah 31:31–34; Hebrews 9:11–12

Objective

Students will be able to:

- Contrast the Old and the New Covenants.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 5

Students will practice the memory verse by working on a crossword puzzle and reciting the verse to a friend.



Activity 1: God's New Covenant Class Notes

page 5

Students will fill out the God's New Covenant Class Notes as you study the lesson.



Studying God's Word

page 5

God's prophet Jeremiah told the people about the New Covenant God would one day establish. It would be very different and much better than the Old Covenant in several ways.



Activity 2: Lamb of God

page 10

Students will watch video clips that compare the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print one Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



GOD'S NEW COVENANT CLASS NOTES

- Print one God's New Covenant Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- God's New Covenant Class Notes for each student
- God's New Covenant Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.
- Print one set of 15 Lesson Mini-Posters. Cut apart and organize according to the Lesson Board Work Outline. Color the blood red on posters 9, 10, 11, 14.
- Print one Lesson Board Work Outline.

- Student Take Home Sheets
- 15 Lesson Mini-Posters
- Lesson Board Work Outline



LAMB OF GOD

- Bring in DVD player/monitor or computer to show Lamb of God Video Clips from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Resource DVD-ROM
- DVD Player/monitor or computer



Memory Verse

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passages along with this background.

God made a covenant with the children of Israel, under the leadership of Moses, at the foot of Mount Sinai. The Ten Commandments, the tablets of stone, were the very essence of that covenant—the Old Covenant (Exodus 34:27–29; Deuteronomy 9:9–11). And the Sabbath was the sign of the covenant (Exodus 31:12–17), just as circumcision was the sign of the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 17:9–14). This Old Covenant is also referred to as the Mosaic Covenant (because of Moses’s involvement).

The Old Covenant was meant to instruct the people how to live to the honor and glory of God. It included many laws the people were commanded to keep—not only the Ten Commandments but also specific laws on how to live with one another and with the nations around them. It included the exacting laws of worshipping God through Sabbaths, tithes, offerings, and sacrifices. God promised to make Israel a nation that He would treasure if they would obey His commands (Exodus 19:4–8). They failed . . . miserably. For this failure to keep God’s commands and worship Him alone, He had sent them into captivity.

As the time of the Messiah was drawing near, God revealed through Jeremiah a glimpse of the New Covenant that would be established between God and His people (Jeremiah 31:31). Jeremiah revealed that in this New Covenant, God’s law would be written in the minds and on the hearts of the people. The people would know God, and God would forgive them and no longer remember their sin (Jeremiah 31:32–34). This New Covenant, written not on stone but on the hearts of believers, was made possible only by Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the Old Covenant through His perfect obedience and introduced the New Covenant by the shedding of His own blood so that sinners could be forgiven.

God made connections between the Old and New Covenants in the book of Hebrews. For example, the New Covenant is described as “better.” Jesus is a *better* deliverer than Moses (Hebrews 3:5–6); Jesus is a *better* High Priest (Hebrews 4:15, 5:1–3); Jesus is a *better* sacrifice (Hebrews 10:12–14); and the New Covenant is made with *better* promises (Hebrews 8:6).

More contrasts between these covenants can be found in the Scriptures. They include: the Tabernacle—earthly Tabernacle versus heavenly Tabernacle; the sacrificial system—many sacrifices versus the perfect

and final sacrifice; the mediator—temporary mediator high priest versus the eternal Mediator and perfect High Priest.

Covenant Contrasts in Hebrews Chapters 9 and 10

Old Covenant	New Covenant
High priests who sinned and had to offer sacrifices for their own sins (Hebrews 9:7)	Jesus, the perfect, sinless, eternal High Priest (Hebrews 9:11)
An earthly Tabernacle made with hands (Hebrews 9:11)	A perfect heavenly Tabernacle not made with hands (Hebrews 9:11)
Offered the blood of bulls and goats to temporarily cover sin (Hebrews 10:3–4)	A spotless, perfect sacrifice to fully redeem people from their sin (Hebrews 10:12)
Sacrifices that had to be constantly offered (Hebrews 10:11)	Jesus’s perfect sacrifice offered once for all (Hebrews 10:12–13)
High priests as the temporary mediator (Hebrews 9:7)	Jesus Christ as the eternal Mediator (Hebrews 9:15)

Jesus is the foundation of the new and eternal covenant. This covenant cannot be broken. Jeremiah and Ezekiel proclaimed this New Covenant to the Jews about 600 years before Jesus would introduce it through His perfect, sinless sacrifice. Jesus Christ is the eternal Mediator between God and man. He was the final sacrifice made once and for all for the remission of sins (2 Corinthians 5:21). The blood of bulls and goats sprinkled by the High Priest would no longer be needed as a covering for the people (Exodus 24:6–8). The blood of Jesus Christ would serve as the blood of the New Covenant for all eternity. This New Covenant was confirmed by Jesus Himself as He passed the bread and wine to His disciples in the upper room:

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the *new covenant*, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matthew 26:26–28, emphasis added)

And so Jesus established the New Covenant between God and His people, promised through Jeremiah about 600 years earlier. The Old Covenant was written in stone. The New Covenant is written on our

hearts. The Old Covenant merely covered the sins of the people, requiring yearly atonement. The New Covenant promises that God will forgive the iniquities of believers (Jeremiah 31:31–33).

The New Covenant provides the opportunity for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It ensures that all who believe in Him, His death, and His Resurrection will be sealed with the Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance and who empowers us to obey God (Ephesians 1:13–14).

Jeremiah spoke God's words to give the Jews in captivity hope of a better covenant. Today, we hope in Christ's finished work on the Cross, and we are sure of the ongoing ministry of Jesus as our High Priest and Mediator. This is the plan God ordained from eternity past. Our response, if we are in Christ, can only be praise, worship, and rejoicing to God that He has been pleased to forgive our iniquity and remember our sins no more (Jeremiah 31:34).

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The covenant God made with Israel at Sinai (Mosaic Covenant, Old Covenant) included conditions that would bring either God's blessing or His cursing upon the people (Leviticus 26). The history of the Old Testament reveals a pattern of disobedience on the part of Israel. When the people willfully rebelled and forsook the Lord, God brought upon them the curses—He remained faithful to His promises.

Leviticus 26 speaks about five stages of curses in response to Israel's disobedience, with each stage worse than the former: first, sickness and defeat by enemies (Leviticus 26:16–17); second, drought and famine (Leviticus 26:18–20); third, being overrun by wild beasts (Leviticus 26: 21–22); fourth, the sword, more pestilence, and more famine (Leviticus 26:23–26); and finally, and most severely, destruction of Israel's cities and exile from the land (Leviticus 26:27–39). All of this God promised to bring upon Israel for breaking His covenant (Leviticus 26:14–15). And throughout Israel's history, as we have been studying it, we see God being true to His promises, and punishing His people for their waywardness.

Jeremiah was the last major prophet appointed to call Israel to repentance and to covenant faithfulness—and to bring the message of judgment. The final and ultimate curse would now come upon Israel—destruction

of their cities and the Temple, and exile to a foreign land. But along with the terrible news of judgment was also good news of God's future New Covenant. That New Covenant, according to Jeremiah 31:31–34, includes writing God's law "in their minds" and "on their hearts." Every person will "know the Lord." And finally, the New Covenant includes the promise of forgiven sins. "For what the law could not do," Paul said, "God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3).

The exacting laws of the Mosaic Covenant were given to show that we can never perfectly obey God. In fact, Scripture clearly states that the Old Covenant—the laws that could not be perfectly kept—was intended to point to Christ. The Apostle Paul said that the Law was a tutor to lead us to Christ, but now that justification by faith in Christ has come, we are no longer under the Mosaic Law (Galatians 3:19–25). The Old Covenant has been replaced by a better covenant established on better promises (Hebrews 7:22, 8:6–7, 12:24). Only the Mediator of the New Covenant—Jesus—is fully sufficient to cleanse sinners from their unrighteousness, and His perfect sacrifice on the Cross is the only means to redeem a people for God's glory.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Precious Savior, what love you've shown to me, your child. Forgive me for sometimes taking what you did for me for granted. This lesson shows how your plan of redemption unfolded beautifully, step by step. I can barely imagine living as a Jew and making the journey to Jerusalem to watch as a priest sacrificed an animal for my sins. Thank you that because you came to be our sacrificial lamb, I don't have to do that. I've done nothing to deserve such love, nor could I ever earn it! Words cannot express my gratitude for the blood you shed for me. My sins are redeemed, and I have a new life! Help me express the joy of living in the New Covenant to my students, that they would desire to have their sins forgiven and believe in you as their Savior. To you be the glory.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have the students recite the verse together, to each other, or to you.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



God's New Covenant Class Notes

MATERIALS

- God's New Covenant Class Notes for each student
- God's New Covenant Class Notes Answer Key
- Pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Students will complete them during the lesson.

We will complete the class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not work

ahead. I'll let you know when to fill something in.

After filling out each point on the class notes, have the students re-read the statement together or call on individual students to read it.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete the class notes today, we will see what God told the people about the New Covenant through His faithful prophet Jeremiah.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

Print and cut out the 15 Lesson Mini-Posters from the Resource DVD-ROM before class. Color the blood red on posters 9, 10, 11, and 14. We have included a Lesson Board Work Outline to help you as you put the posters on the board during the lesson.

Today our lesson is about the New Covenant. But before we can talk about the New Covenant, let's think about the Old Covenant. Post mini-posters 1 & 2 on the board according to the Lesson Board Work Outline.

- Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

? Does anyone know what I mean by the Old Covenant? *Allow discussion.*

Post mini-poster 3 on the board. The Ten Commandments were a big part of the Old Covenant. God gave laws to Moses and the people. The laws told people how to live, how to worship God, and how to get along with the nations around them. They had to obey the laws in order to get God's blessing.

Place mini-poster 4 on the board. The Old Covenant and all its laws were impossible to keep. That is because all men are sinners—even the high priests who offered the sacrifices. Because they were sinners, the people of Israel could not obey God's Laws. They kept disobeying Him. And God had to punish their sin.

But God had a plan, and He sent His prophet Jeremiah to tell of His plan. The message Jeremiah brought from God was of a new and better covenant. It included promises that would bring the people at that time, and for all ages, eternal hope! We are going to read about the New Covenant now!

Jeremiah 31:31–34

Turn to Jeremiah 31:31–34. We'll start reading there. *Choose students to read the verses aloud.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

? What was the Lord going to make? *Jeremiah 31:31. A new covenant.*

? Ok. And who was the Lord going to make this covenant with? *Jeremiah 31:31. With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.*

The Lord was speaking through Jeremiah. And the Lord was saying that He was ready to make a New Covenant with the people of Israel and Judah.

? Where was God going to put His Law in the New Covenant? *Jeremiah 31:33. In the minds and hearts of the people.*

Refer to mini-poster 3. That's right! The Old Covenant was written on stone—it included the Ten Commandments. But God promised that the New Covenant would be put on people's minds and written on their hearts. *Place mini-poster 5 on the board.*

? Now look at your class notes. Will someone read #1 for me? How will you answer that? *Assign a reader. New.*

? And #2 on your class notes. Who will read that? How will you complete it? *Assign a reader. Minds, hearts.*

? Look back at Jeremiah 31:34. God gave a very important promise about this New Covenant. You can find it at the end of Jeremiah 31:34. Can you see what God said He would do for those in the New Covenant? *He will forgive their iniquity. Their sins He will not remember.*

Refer to mini-posters 3 & 4. Now remember in the Old Covenant it was impossible to keep all the laws of God. And God demands obedience. When we disobey, we sin. God must punish sin that is not forgiven. But, in the New Covenant, God was promising forgiveness of the sins we all commit. God was going to make a way to grant forgiveness to sinners.

- ? Someone read #3 on your class notes for us. How will you answer that question? *Assign a reader. Forgive.*

Discover the Truth

Refer to the mini-posters. The Old Covenant was written on tablets of stone. But Jeremiah said a day would come when the New Covenant would be written on the hearts and minds of the people. The Old Covenant was about a lot of laws God gave Moses, including the Ten Commandments. The people had to obey the laws to get God's blessing. They could not obey all the laws—because they were sinners just like you and me. But God promised the New Covenant—one that gave the people hope and promised that there would be a way to be forgiven. How could they be forgiven if they couldn't obey God's Laws?

Jeremiah was promising a Redeemer—someone who would die in the place of sinners and take the punishment for sin on Himself through His death—a perfect sacrifice. And we know now that only Jesus Christ, the Messiah—God as man—could do that. *Post mini-poster 6 on the board.* Jesus was without sin. He was a perfect High Priest. Jesus alone can offer forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven through the New Covenant. His life, death, and Resurrection offer everyone who will believe in Him the promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life.



READ THE WORD

The New Covenant—the promises Jesus made—was far different from the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant, back in the Old Testament before Jesus came, included lots of different priests. *Place mini-poster 7 on the board.* The high priests were men, and they were sinners. They made animal sacrifices to God to cover their own sins and the sins of the people. And they had to make the sacrifices over and over and over. *Place mini-poster 8 on the board.* But that is not how the New Covenant was.

- ? Look at your class notes. Someone read #4 to us. How would you complete that? *Assign a reader. Sinner.*
- ? And look at #6. Remember, this is under the Old Covenant. Someone read that. How will you complete it? *Assign a reader. Animal.*

Place mini-posters 9, 10, 11—the bloody knives—on the board. Yes. The high priests of the Old Covenant were sinful men who had to make animal sacrifices

- There are multiple “bloody knife” posters to emphasize that these sacrifices were made again and again and no forgiveness of sins was granted.

again and again in order to gain forgiveness. *Place mini-poster 12 on the board. But the sacrifices they made did not take the sins away—the blood of those sacrifices only covered the sins—and they had to be made over and over because the people continued to sin.*

Hebrews 9:11–12

Now turn to Hebrews 9:11–12. These verses will tell about the New Covenant. Let's read that now. *Assign a student to read.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? What is Jesus called in Hebrews 9:11? *Hebrews 9:11. High Priest.*
- ? What was Christ the High Priest of? *Hebrews 9:11. The good things to come.*
- ? Now when the priests of the Old Covenant made sacrifices, what were they sacrificing? *Animals.*
- ? And how often did they need to make those animal sacrifices? *Allow discussion.*
They made the animal sacrifices day after day. Over and over animals had to be sacrificed, and their blood would temporarily cover the people's sins. *Refer to min-posters 9, 10, 11 on the board—the bloody knives.*
- ? And in Hebrews 9:12, we see that Jesus did not come with the blood of goats and calves. What did Jesus offer? It is in that verse. *His own blood.*
- ? And what did Jesus's sacrifice obtain for sinners? *Hebrews 9:12. Eternal redemption.*
Post mini-poster 13 on the board. Jesus died only once. Jesus was and still is the only perfect High Priest. Jesus was perfect—without sin. And only He could offer a sacrifice—His own life—that would be worthy to redeem sinners and offer forgiveness of sins. Jesus's sacrifice on the Cross put an end to the animal sacrifices that were offered over and over by the sinful high priest. Post mini-poster 14 on the board. His death on the Cross offered forgiveness of sins to all who would believe. Post mini-poster 15 on the board.
- ? Let's go back to our class notes. Someone read #5. How will you complete that? *Perfect.*

- ? And #7? What is the answer to that? *Blood.*
- ? And #8? Someone read that. What is the answer? *Sin.*
- ? And #9? What word will finish that sentence? *One.*
- ? And how about #10? Someone read that. How will you complete it? *Not.*
- ? And last is #11. What will complete that sentence? *Away.*

Discover the Truth

Refer to mini-posters on the board. Let me summarize all we've just read and heard. The New Covenant was better than the Old Covenant because Jesus completed it. Jesus was the perfect High Priest. He made one sacrifice, allowing His own blood to be shed for the forgiveness of sins forever! The priests in the Old Covenant came day after day, year after year to make sacrifices.

Imagine, if you can, that every time you sinned against God—whether it's disobedience, selfishness, lying, stealing, or anything, no matter how small—an animal had to be sacrificed. What if the blood of a sheep or a bird or a lamb or a calf had to be shed every time you committed a sin? Every day you would have to bring an animal to be killed by the priest for the sins committed that day—even accidental sins!

That was how things happened in the Old Covenant. The priests had to keep killing animals to COVER their own sin and the sin of the people. But their sacrifices could NEVER take away sin or completely FORGIVE sin.

But the New Covenant was different. Jesus came—our perfect High Priest. Jesus sacrificed His own blood to take away sin. And He only had to make that sacrifice once for all by shedding His blood and dying on the Cross. Then He conquered death by coming back to life! That is the New Covenant—God's promise of forgiveness through Jesus.

Now, all who trust in Him, repent of their sins, and receive His forgiveness will be saved.





The Lamb of God

MATERIALS

- Lamb of God Video Clips from the Resource DVD-ROM
- DVD player/monitor or computer to show video clips

INSTRUCTIONS

We are going to watch a couple of video clips that portray the Old Covenant and the New Covenant and the sacrifices each covenant demanded. Pay attention because I'll be asking you some questions. *Play Lamb of God Video Clip #1.*

? There was a lot of blood under the Old Covenant. What was happening to the lambs in the video? *They were being killed.*

Yes. The animals had to be killed. And the people knew how serious their sins were against the holy God. God's Law required it. Because of the people's sins, God had demanded that the animals be brought as sacrifices over and over. This was the Law of God.

? Who were the sacrificed lambs pointing to? *Jesus Christ.*

? Mary, Jesus's mom, knew that Jesus would one day be called something else. What was it? *A Lamb.*

? Were the people at that time under the Old Covenant or the New Covenant? *The Old Covenant.*

Yes. Before Jesus came, the people were under the Old Covenant, and animals had to be killed over and over to cover sins. Ok. Now let's watch some more of the video to see what happened. *Play Lamb of God Video Clip #2.*

That was a powerful illustration of how God provided the New Covenant!

? What happened? Why don't we have to sacrifice lambs anymore? *Allow answers.*

Jesus, the Son of God, God made flesh, shed His blood for us once and for all. Because Jesus died on the Cross to take away our sin, all who come to Him in repentance and faith will receive forgiveness and be saved. Jesus is the perfect sacrifice and our perfect High Priest. Jesus died once for all that all who believe might be forgiven of their sins and go to heaven with Him forever.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The Bible tells us that Jesus's sacrifice in the New Covenant was far better than the Old Covenant. Jesus has made a way for sinners to be forgiven once and for all. His life, death, and Resurrection bring forgiveness, hope, joy, and eternal life to all who repent and believe.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God's plan to forgive us from our sins and bring redemption to His people was in place even before there was time. For a long time, God's people lived under the Old Covenant that God gave to Moses. The Old Covenant

included many laws that the people could never obey, and a sacrificial system that demanded that animal sacrifices be made over and over, day after day. But God sent His prophet Jeremiah to tell of the New Covenant. The New Covenant promised to put God's Law in the hearts and minds of people who were redeemed. The New Covenant offered one sacrifice—a perfect sacrifice, Jesus Christ—who would offer forgiveness for all who believed and trusted in Him.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

You know, a lot of people still believe that they need to work and be good to get to heaven. The law for those people is still written on tablets of stone—they are still living under the Old Covenant. And the Bible is very clear that we can't ever obey the law perfectly because we are all sinners.

I don't think these people know about the New Covenant we studied today. This New Covenant is about God's grace and mercy to sinners. The New Covenant is written on the hearts and minds of God's people. The New Covenant is about Jesus Christ. The New Covenant is about the gospel. The New Covenant is NOT about doing good things so that God will love us and let us into heaven. When someone believes in Jesus, his sins are forgiven, and God's Law is written on his heart and mind.

We don't need to "work" to gain God's love. God shows His love for us in Jesus. Jesus came to earth, became a man, lived life, suffered, and died for sinners. God has shown His great love for us in Jesus Christ. God wants us to turn away from our sin in sorrow because we have disobeyed Him. He wants us to ask forgiveness and believe the truth about Jesus as recorded in God's Word, the Bible. That's all that sinners can do to please God—the one who sent His only Son to die for us.

If we truly repent and trust in Jesus, our hearts will be changed, and we will want to please God, glorify Him, and honor Him with our lives. We will want to obey God because we will understand the love He showed us through Jesus.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the students to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Proverbs 21:1 The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it whenever He wishes.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God that He is holy and righteous, and that His Word is true.
- Thank God for Jesus, the perfect, final sacrifice for sins.
- Ask God to help us to understand God's love and to believe in Jesus—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

