



# 3

## God's New Covenant

### Key Theme

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

### Key Passages

- Jeremiah 31:33–34; 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 put the Memory Verse Cards into order and then practice saying the verses together and/or with a partner.



### Activity 1: God's New Covenant Class Sort

page 5

Students will add cards to the board during 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: God's New Covenant Review Toss

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Students will play beanbag toss as they answer questions from today's lesson.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### COME ON IN

- If you haven't done this, print and cut out one set of Memory Verse Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for every 2–3 students.
- If you want to do this as an individual activity, make one set per student.
- Put complete sets into envelopes or plastic bags.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Cards in envelopes or plastic bags



### GOD'S NEW COVENANT CLASS SORT

- Print and cut out the 10 God's New Covenant Class Sort Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM. Students will put them on the board during the lesson.
- Print one Lesson Board Work Outline for your use from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- God's New Covenant Class Sort Cards
- Lesson Board Work Outline
- Poster putty or tape



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



### GOD'S NEW COVENANT REVIEW TOSS

- Print one God's New Covenant Review Questions Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for your use.
- Print and cut out the Lesson Review Answer Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- Make a large square with masking tape and connect the opposite corners to make an X. Tape one Lesson Review Answer Card in each section.

- God's New Covenant Review Questions Sheet
- Lesson Review Answer Cards
- Masking Tape
- Beanbag for each team



## 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.

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will put the Memory Verse Cards in order and recite the verses together and/or to each other. They may work individually or in teams.

*This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided this activity 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 Sort

## MATERIALS

- Lesson Board Work Outline
- God's New Covenant Class Sort Cards
- Poster putty or tape

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Print and cut out the 10 cards from the Resource DVD-ROM before class. We have included a Lesson Board Work Outline to help you as you put the cards on the board during the lesson.*

*Pass the cards out at the beginning of class. Read the cards to the students as you pass them out, making sure the*

*students know what their card says. Each student should have a card. You will have duplicate cards for larger classes. As you teach the class, the students will add their cards to the board in the appropriate place.*

*After students add their cards to the board, have them repeat the point and review what is already posted.*

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we study today and add our cards to the board, we will learn what God told the people about the New Covenant through the prophet Jeremiah.



# Studying God's Word

## READ THE WORD

Today our lesson is about a New Covenant. But before we can talk about a New Covenant, let's talk about the Old Covenant. Who has the New and Old Covenant Cards? That is Card 1 and Card 2. Come and put them on the board.

*Have the students put Card 1 and Card 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.*

? Well, who has Card 3 with the 10 Commandments? That has something to do with the Old Covenant. Bring it up here and put it under Card 1, Old Covenant. *Have the student put Card 3 on the board.*

? What were the Ten Commandments written on? *Stone.*

The Ten Commandments were a big part of the Old Covenant. They were written on stone. 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.

The Old Covenant and all its laws could not be kept. The people could not keep all those laws!

? Who has Card 4? What is on that card? Can you read it for us? *Have the student describe the card and read it. The laws couldn't be kept.*

You can put Card 4 up here right under Card 3. *Have the student put Card 4 on the board.* The people of Israel could not obey God's Laws because all men are sinners. And they could never obey perfectly.

The Old Covenant wasn't working. And God was going to replace it with a New and better Covenant that promised wonderful things. God's prophet Jeremiah would tell the people that there was a wonderful New Covenant coming. We are going to read about the New Covenant now! Turn to Jeremiah 31:33. We'll start reading there. *Read Jeremiah 31:33 aloud.*

## Jeremiah 31:33

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

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

? 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 Card 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.

? Who has Card 5? It says written on man's heart and mind. Bring that up here and put it under Card 2. It is part of the New Covenant. *Have the student put Card 5 on the board.*

? Now listen as I read Jeremiah 31:34. *Read Jeremiah 31:34 emphasizing "I will forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more."*

? God gave a very important promise about the New Covenant. What did God say He would forgive? *He will forgive their iniquity. Their sins He will not remember.*

## Jeremiah 31:34

The New Covenant would bring forgiveness to sinners. *Refer to Cards 3 & 4.* Now remember in the Old Covenant it was impossible to keep all the Laws of God. When we disobey, we sin. God must punish sin that is not forgiven. But God was going to make a way for sinners to be forgiven so they could avoid His punishment.

## Discover the Truth

*Refer to the cards on the board.* 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. But they could not obey all the laws—because they were sinners just like you and me. But God promised a New Covenant—one that gave the people hope and promised them forgiveness. But how could they be forgiven if they couldn't obey God's laws?

Only Jesus could do that. And Jeremiah's prophecy was about Jesus coming. Jeremiah was saying that Jesus the Messiah—God as man—would be born. Not only would He be born, but He would also die. And when He died, He would make a way for our sins to be forgiven. Jesus brought us the New Covenant. And Jesus offers forgiveness of sins and eternal life in heaven through the New Covenant—because He lived as a man, died on the Cross, and rose from the dead. Jesus offers everyone who will believe in Him the promise of forgiveness of sins and eternal life.



## READ THE WORD

The New Covenant—God's promises through Jesus—was very different from the Old Covenant. The Old Covenant, back in the Old Testament before Jesus came, included priests—men who went to God on behalf of the people. But the priests were sinners, too, just like everyone else. 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.

? Who has Card 6? What does it say? *The priests made animal sacrifices to cover sin.*

Good! Now bring Card 6 up here and put it under Card 4. The priests made sacrifices over and over to cover sins. But the sins were not forgiven.

That is because the high priests of the Old Covenant were sinful men. 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.

? Let's add the last card under the Old Covenant. Who has Card 7? Can you read it for us? *The sacrifices couldn't forgive sin. Have the student put Card 7 on the board.*

## Hebrews 9:11

Now we are going to turn to the book of Hebrews in the New Testament. It will tell us more about the New Covenant. I'm going to read Hebrews 9:11. Listen as I read. What does this tell us about Jesus Christ? *Read Hebrews 9:11 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

➤ Re-read the Scripture verses as you ask the questions so the students can hear the answers from the text.

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

- ? Who is this verse about? Who came? *Christ.*
- ? And what did Christ come as? *High Priest.*
- ? What was Jesus the High Priest of? *The good things to come.*

Jesus was going to bring something very good. Jesus came as the perfect High Priest. He obeyed perfectly and never sinned.

- ? Who has Card 8? It says "Jesus is the perfect High Priest." Come and put it up on the board under Card 5.
- ? Refer to Card 6 on the board. Now when the priests of the Old Covenant made sacrifices, what were they sacrificing? *Animals.*
- ? And do you remember how often they made those animal sacrifices? *Allow discussion.*

Refer to Card 6. They made the animal sacrifices day after day. Over and over animals had to die, and their blood would cover the sins that the people had just done.

But Jesus was different. Listen as I read Hebrews 9:12. This tells how Jesus was different from the priests and the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. *Read Hebrews 9:12.*

- ? Jesus did not need the blood of animals. Whose blood did Jesus offer? *His own blood.*
- ? How did Jesus die? *Allow discussion.*

Yes, Jesus gave His own blood. Jesus died once for all.

Jesus died a horrible death on the Cross. He was the perfect sacrifice.

## Hebrews 9:12

? Who has Card 9? Can you read it for us? *Jesus's death brought forgiveness of sins.*  
Come and put it up under Card 8 as part of the New Covenant.

Do you see? Jesus was a perfect sacrifice. He did not sin. He was a perfect High Priest. And He offered one sacrifice—His own life—for the forgiveness of sins. His one sacrifice brought forgiveness of sins to everyone who will repent and believe in Him.

? Were animal sacrifices necessary after Jesus died? *Allow discussion. No.*

The animal sacrifices were no longer necessary. Jesus, the perfect High Priest, died once for all who would believe. Jesus brought true forgiveness of sins.

? Who has the last card, Card 10? Come put it up on the board so we can complete our chart. Can you read it for us? *No more animal sacrifices. Jesus died once for the forgiveness of sins.*

### Discover the Truth

Very good! Now, Let's compare the Old Covenant with the New Covenant. The Old Covenant included lots of laws and rules written on stone that the people could not obey! But the New Covenant would be the promises of God through Jesus written on the hearts and minds of the people!

The high priests in the Old Covenant made sacrifices over and over every day to cover sin. But their sacrifices never truly forgave the sins of the people. And so more sacrifices had to be made. But when Jesus came as the perfect High Priest, He offered only one sacrifice. His sacrifice was very difficult for Him—because it was His own life. The perfect High Priest died on the Cross! His perfect, loving sacrifice brought real forgiveness of sins to everyone who would believe in Him.

After Jesus died, all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant weren't needed anymore. Now what is needed to receive forgiveness of sins is faith and trust in Jesus Christ, our perfect High Priest. All who believe in Him, turn from their sins, and receive His forgiveness will be saved.





# God's New Covenant Review Toss

## MATERIALS

- God's New Covenant Review Questions Sheet
- Masking tape
- Four Lesson Review Answer Cards
- Beanbag for each team

## INSTRUCTIONS

*Make at least a 2' square with masking tape on the floor. Divide the inside of the square into sections. An X will make 4 sections. Tape an answer card into each section.*

*Divide the class into two or more teams depending on size. Give each team a beanbag. Students will take turns answering the question and tossing the beanbags onto the appropriate answer. There are only two answers: Old Covenant or New Covenant. Students will receive one point for giving the right answer and another point for hitting the right answer with the beanbag.*

*Repeat questions, or add others according to your class and your lesson.*

**We're going to play beanbag toss.** *Point to the square on the floor and read each card. The answers*

to all of the questions will either be Old Covenant or New Covenant. Remember, you can look at the Lesson Theme Poster or ask your team for help. Your team can earn one point for getting the answer correct and another point for tossing the beanbag onto the right answer. If your team gets the answer wrong, we'll move to Team 2. I'll keep track of the points as you answer questions from today's lesson. Let's get started! *Play the game.*

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

The Bible tells us that the Old Covenant included lots of laws that could not be obeyed. The people could not be forgiven because they could not obey. They had to keep on sacrificing animals. The New Covenant is better than the Old Covenant. In the New Covenant, Jesus made a way for sinners to be forgiven when He died on the Cross.



## Applying God's Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

God's plan to forgive us from our sins 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 had many laws that the people could never obey. Animal sacrifices had to be made over and over, day after day to cover the sins of the people. But God sent His prophet

Jeremiah to tell of a New Covenant. The New Covenant promised to put God's Law in the hearts and minds of people. The New Covenant came through Jesus Christ—one perfect sacrifice—who offers forgiveness for everyone who believes and trusts 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 says 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 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 through Jesus.

We don't need to "work" to get God's love. God shows His love for us in Jesus. Jesus came to earth as a man, lived a sinless 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. He wants us to ask forgiveness and believe the truth about Jesus.

If we truly repent and trust in Jesus, our hearts will be changed, and then we can 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 children 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 wherever He wishes.



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God that His Word is true.
- Thank God for Jesus the perfect High Priest.
- Ask God to help us to understand God's love and to believe in Jesus.

