

Restoration

Key Verse: *“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.”*
—*Jeremiah 31:31*

Selected Scripture:
Jeremiah 31:31-37
of by “the mouth of all [God’s] holy prophets since the world began.”—Acts 3:21

IT IS GOD’S PLAN FOR mankind that each be given an opportunity for restoration to all that was lost when our first parents sinned—perfection of health and life, dominion over the earth, and communion and favor with God. The Apostle Peter spoke of this promised time as a period of the “restitution [restoration] of all things,” saying that it had been spoken

One of God’s faithful prophets, Jeremiah, speaks of this coming time of restoration in the verses of today’s lesson. These words focus particularly on Israel and Judah. However, as we have previously noted (see lesson of September 7), they are in many ways “typical” of all mankind. The Jewish nation was a people under covenant relationship to God. They had placed themselves in that position when they agreed and promised to keep God’s law after it was presented to them. Speaking through Moses, God had said, “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.” Responding to this, “all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.”—Exod. 19:5,8

Due to the fact that God's law is perfect, and none in Israel could measure up to such a high standard, the Jewish nation was not able to keep the terms of their covenant with God. The Prophet Jeremiah wrote concerning this, saying, "my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD." (Jer. 31:32) Only Jesus, "made of a woman, made under the law" covenant, was able to keep the terms of Israel's agreement with God perfectly. (Gal. 4:4) By so doing, and by the further all-important step of dying as man's redeemer, Jesus blotted out "the handwriting of ordinances that was against" Israel, and "took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."—Col. 2:14

This work of our Lord at his First Advent made possible the events which will soon come to pass during Messiah's kingdom. Having redeemed Israel from "the curse of the law," and all mankind from the "curse" pronounced in Eden, the stage was set for a "new covenant" to be made with God's people—Israel and Judah—and by extension, to all "in Adam."—Gal. 3:13; Gen. 3:17; Rev. 22:1-3; I Cor. 15:22

Our Key Verse speaks prophetically of this New Covenant, and the verses which follow add these important words, "This shall be the [new] covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. 31:33,34

The New Covenant, testified to also by Paul (see Heb. 8:6-12), will be the law of Messiah's kingdom, under which Israel and all the families of the earth will be restored back to what was lost in Eden. Indeed, Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost."—Luke 19:10 ■