

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Hebrews 08: 10-13

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. We will continue to read Hebrews Chapter 8, and today we will read verses 10 to 13.

The author of Hebrews quotes the prophecy of the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 31:31-34, first recalling the covenant that God made with the Israelites at Mount Sinai when their ancestors came out of Egypt. The content of this covenant was that God, through Moses, gave the law to the Israelites.

By the end of the southern kingdom of Judah, when the prophet Jeremiah began his ministry, the Israelites had already forsaken the covenant they had made with God. Therefore, God said, "Because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them". Yet, God still loved the Israelites. Although they were unable to keep the covenant, this also indicated that the covenant had a flaw. Therefore, through the prophecy of Jeremiah, God declared that a new era would come, at which time He would establish a new covenant with all the Israelites, and the previous covenant would be called the Old Covenant.

In the fulfillment of history, this new era began when God sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth. During His ministry on earth, Jesus first appointed twelve disciples, and in Matthew 10:6, He sent them to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Later, He Himself, along with His disciples, came to the region of Tyre and Sidon. There, a Canaanite woman pleaded with Jesus to cast out a demon from her daughter. At first, Jesus responded, as recorded in Matthew 15:24, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Here we see that when Jesus Christ came to the earth, He preached the Gospel of the acceptable year of the Lord, beginning with the Israelites. The twelve disciples He appointed were also all Israelites. Before going to the cross, at the Last Supper, He instituted the Lord's Table in advance. In Luke 22:19-20, it says, "And He took

bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.'" Here, it is clearly stated that He established the new covenant with His blood, and those present at that time were all Israelites. This is precisely the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy that God would establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. However, this new covenant was not only for the Israelites but also for all nations.

Before His ascension, Jesus commanded His disciples, as recorded in Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." On the Day of Pentecost, in Peter's first sermon, three thousand Jews were saved, opening the door of the Gospel to the Jews. Later, when Peter preached in the house of Cornelius, the door of the Gospel was opened to the Gentiles. After this, the apostle Paul was raised up to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles and establish churches.

Paul also established the Lord's Table in the churches among the Gentiles. In 1 Corinthians 11:25, he repeated the words of Jesus at the Last Supper: "In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.'" Therefore, the new covenant is also for the Gentile churches. However, what is remarkable is that as the number of saved Gentiles increased, the Israelites, in contrast, began to fall behind.

However, the new covenant is different from the old covenant; the new covenant is better than the old. The new covenant does not become incomplete or flawed due to the failure of those who entered into it. Although the Israelites remain stiff-necked to this day and refuse to believe the Gospel, Paul already foretold this in Romans 11:25-26, saying, "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved." Paul prophesied that although the Israelites are now lagging behind

in accepting the Gospel, at the end of the age, when the full number of the Gentiles has come in, all Israel will be saved. Here we see that the new covenant is indeed better than the old, because the new covenant is not established based on the law, but on the salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ—it is established through His blood.

Verse 10: “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

This is a direct quotation from Jeremiah 31:33. "After those days" refers to the time when Jesus Christ came to the earth and was crucified for the sins of humanity. Jesus established the new covenant with His blood, a covenant that God made with the house of Israel to replace the old covenant that God had made with the house of Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai. Although this new covenant was established with the house of Israel, it is also for all nations.

This new covenant is described as following: "I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts." The Chinese Union Version translates this phrase as "put in them," but the KJV translates it as "put into their mind." The Chinese Union Version does not explicitly include the word "mind," so a more accurate translation would be "put into their minds." The Greek word for "mind" here is composed of two Greek words. The first is *dia*, which means "from side to side," indicating movement from one side to another. The second word is *noieo*, which means "to use the mind" or "to engage the intellect."

So, the meaning of this word is to use the mind, to think carefully, reasoning from one side to the other until reaching a balanced conclusion. In other words, it refers to the conclusion a person arrives at after careful reasoning and logical examination. Not only must the mind go through reasoning, but the law must also be written on their hearts. The heart's function includes not only the mind but also emotions and will. This means that after the mind understands, there must also be the affection

of delight and the determination of the will. In this way, the Lord's law is engraved on a person's heart, never to be forgotten again.

The Old Testament is about writing the Law of Moses on tablets of stone, while the New Testament is about writing the Lord's law on the tablets of people's hearts. This is the most fundamental difference between the Old and New Testaments. The Law of Moses regulates human behavior, which is external; it is written on stone tablets, which is also external. The letter of the law is meant to regulate human behavior from the outside, and when a person's actions fall short of the law's requirements, they are judged as guilty; and the wages of sin is death. The Law of Moses was given by God and was originally meant to testify to God's nature, but because of human weakness, it became a law that condemns people and brings them to death.

The New Testament is the covenant established through the blood of Jesus, writing the Lord's law on the tablets of people's hearts. According to Romans 8:2, the Lord's law is the law of the Spirit of life. This law of the Spirit of life is able to set us free from the law of sin and death. Not only is this law of the Spirit of life filled with the great power of life, but it is also written on the tablets of people's hearts to strengthen them from within, enabling them to understand the Lord's law, delight in the Lord's law, and willingly obey the Lord's law.

The Old Testament had flaws because of human shortcomings and the lack of a way to help people overcome them. The New Testament shifts from the external to the internal. Although people may still experience weakness and failure, the law of the Spirit of life is within them, supplying life from within and helping them to set their minds on the Spirit and walk according to the Spirit. In this way, the Lord can be our God, and we can be His people.

The saints in the New Testament have God's life within them, the status of God's children outwardly, and through the Holy Spirit, they can establish an intimate relationship with God, enabling them to submit to God's arrangements in their circumstances. In this way, God has sovereignty over man, and man, in all things, can magnify the Lord, thus becoming God's people.

Verse 11: "None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them."

In this verse, there are two kinds of knowing: "None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord.'" This is the first kind of knowing. The Greek word used here is *ginosko*, which refers to objective knowledge—something that can be acquired through teaching and learning. The people of Israel in the Old Testament did not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit nor the life of God; therefore, in order to know God, they had to rely on human teaching and their own learning, coming to know God through personal experience. Thus, the priests in the Old Testament bore the responsibility of teaching the people the law so that they could come to know God through external learning.

The second kind of knowing is in the latter part of the verse: "For all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them." The Greek word here is *eido*, which refers to subjective knowing. In English, it is translated as *perceive*, meaning an inner seeing and recognition. New Testament saints, having the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, are able to know God from within. This is a knowing of life, which does not require human teaching, as all saints can directly come to know God.

Jesus said in John 16:13, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth." This indwelling Holy Spirit is able to guide the saints into all truth, so from the least to the greatest, all shall know the Lord. This is a significant characteristic of the New Testament. The saints can have direct fellowship with God and directly know Him without needing an intermediary class, a select group of special teachers, or certain arbitrators to help them know God.

When the saints receive the life that comes from God, the innate capacity of this life enables them to know God and understand His will. Nevertheless, because the measure of maturity in life differs among saints, their level of knowing God also varies. Thus, among the saints, there are distinctions between the young, the mature, and the elders. Therefore, every saint must pursue growth in life to know God more deeply. In principle, the degree to which one knows God is directly

proportional to one's obedience to His will. Only when a person submits to God's will can they truly come to know Him in those matters.

Verse 12: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

Righteousness is God's attribute, and any unrighteousness is an offense to Him. God forgives their unrighteousness because the precious blood of Jesus Christ has already paid the price for sin. This completely resolves the problem of sin and the difficulties and barriers it brings, allowing man to be restored to fellowship with God, and He will remember their sins no more. The sins they have committed are not only forgiven but also no longer remembered by God, nor does He recall the evil they have done—this is complete forgiveness.

The author of Hebrews specifically quotes Jeremiah 31:33-34 to demonstrate that the New Covenant surpasses the Old. In this passage, there are three "I wills" from God: "I will put My law in their hearts," "I will be their God," and "I will forgive their unrighteousness." These are all actions that God takes proactively—He is the one extending grace, and He has already prepared the way. The responsibility of New Testament saints is simply to receive, obey, and follow.

Verse 13: "In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away."

This is the conclusion of the author's argument, returning to the statement in verse 6 that the New Covenant is better than the Old. Since the New Covenant has come, it indicates that the former covenant has become old, and it is gradually aging and fading away, soon to disappear completely. This served as a reminder to the Hebrew saints not to cling to the Old Covenant, for it has been replaced by the better New Covenant. As for New Covenant believers, we were never bound by the Old Covenant, and we should all the more live according to the New Covenant—where

the Lord has written the law of the Spirit of life on our hearts, He is to be our God, and we do not need others to teach us, for we can directly know the Lord. In our journey of following the Lord, we will make mistakes and experience weakness, but the Lord has already forgiven our unrighteousness and remembers our sins no more. What a glorious gospel this is!

Let us pray together: Lord, how blessed we are as Your people. Through simply believing in Jesus Christ, we are included in the New Covenant established by His blood. We have received eternal life from God, we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and we can follow the leading of the Spirit; by the instinct of life, we come to know and experience You. Help us to treasure this New Covenant and be willing to run after You with all our strength. May the reality of the New Covenant be lived out through us. Bless my daily life. In the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I pray. Amen!