



[Hebrews 8:6-13](#)

(6) But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. (7) For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. (8) Because finding fault with them, He says: "*Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—(9) not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. (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. (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. (12) For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.*" (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.*

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In verses 8-12, Paul quotes from [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#). The writer begins by telling us that [God](#) found fault with the men of old, and this leads to the quotation from Jeremiah 31 in [Hebrews 8:8](#).

From the failures of the past, Jeremiah turned his vision to the future. There are four significant things prophesied by Jeremiah and quoted by Paul about the new covenant in verses 10-12:

First, the New Covenant is inward and dynamic: It is written on the hearts and minds of the people. A shortcoming of the Old had been its outwardness. It had divinely given laws, but it was written on tablets of stone. Jeremiah looked for a time when people would not simply obey an external code but would be so transformed that God's own

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Second, there is a close relationship between the God who will be "their God" and the people, he says, who will be "My people." The change from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant is that while the formula of the covenant remains the same from age to age, it is capable of being filled with fresh meaning to a point where it can be described as a "new" covenant. "I will be your God" acquires fuller meaning with every further revelation of the character of God.

Third, all who enter it will have knowledge of God. There will be no need for a person to instruct his neighbor. The word rendered *neighbor* in verse 11 means "citizen," and thus a "fellow-citizen." Jeremiah moves from the wider relationship in the community to the narrower relationship in the family, saying that in neither case will there be a need to exhort anyone to know God because everyone will know Him.

This does not mean that under the conditions of the New Covenant there will be no place for a teacher. There will always be the need for those who have advanced in the Christian way to pass on to others the benefit of their knowledge. Rather, the meaning is that the knowledge of God will not be confined to a privileged few (as with the [priesthood](#) of ancient Israel). All those under the New Covenant will have their own intimate and personal knowledge of their God.

Fourth, under the New Covenant, sins are forgiven. Following [repentance](#) of sins and acceptance of the sacrifice of [Jesus Christ](#), sins are forgiven. The superior sacrifice of Christ is offered once and for all, paying the penalty of [sin](#) for those who repent.

— Martin G. Collins

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