

God Promised a New Covenant

Jeremiah 17; 31

What is God like?

God is holy, good, and loving.

The Lord is good to all;
he has compassion on all he
has made.
Psalm 145:9

Story Point:

God promised His people a new covenant and forgiveness of sin forever



PREPARE HEARTS

- ☐ Welcome - A Great Promise
- ☐ Starter Activity - Can You Be Tricked?



ACTIVATE HEARTS

- ☐ 9:20 - Bible Lesson in LG2
- ☐ Review and discuss the Bible Story
- ☐ Reflection and Prayer
- ☐ Questions from Kids Video



ENGAGE HEARTS

- ☐ Key Passage Activity - Balloon Bonanza
- ☐ Group Craft - Written on my Heart
- ☐ Group Activity - Promise Pass

SHEPHERD GUIDE

The prophet Jeremiah was a priest sent to speak the word of the Lord to His people. Jeremiah taught plainly about sin and how our disobedient hearts cannot be trusted. Jeremiah predicted God's judgment on Judah's sins through the nation of Babylon. Yet, Jeremiah also declared how God would make a new covenant with His people.

The people of Judah faced the same problem we face today: sin. Their failure to abide by and uphold the law was a constant reminder that they were sinful and fell short of God's standards. Jeremiah told the people that those who put their trust in mankind are cursed because men are sinful and imperfect. He also said that people cannot save themselves. But Jeremiah shared good news. He told the people that the person who trusts in the Lord will be strong and healthy, like a tree planted by water (Jeremiah 17:8).

Through Jeremiah, the Lord spoke of His everlasting love toward His people. He shared the promise of gathering His people, watching over them, and turning their mourning into joy. God promised His people a new covenant and eternal forgiveness of sin.

The old covenant required complete obedience to the law; yet no one can be justified by the law (Galatians 2:16). In His grace, God did what we cannot do. He promised a new covenant which would be accomplished by Him. Jesus is the fulfillment of the new covenant; He fulfilled the requirements of the law on our behalf. As Paul wrote, "For what the law could not do since it was weakened by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh as a sin offering" (Romans 8:3).

Forgiveness that lasts forever only comes through faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:11). As you prepare to teach on God's promise of a new covenant, take time to thank Him for His forgiveness in your life. Remind boys and girls of how God changes believers' hearts to hearts that love and obey Him.

REMINDER: Our VIP meeting is from 8:30-8:40 in C1. Your supply bin will be in your classroom.

MAIN TAKEAWAYS: We want our kids to:

- *KNOW that God can change their heart to love and obey Him.
- *ASK God for forgiveness and a new heart.
- *RELY on God instead of their own power.



As children arrive - Welcome them by name and invite them to play with you and the other children. Use this time to get to know your kids - ask them about their week, about their likes and dislikes and about their school, family and friends.

Ways to connect - Play a game from the closet, color or draw together, build with legos/blocks, etc.

When most kids have arrived for first service (by 9:05ish), ask them to clean up the toys and find a seat at one of the tables to begin the class.

**Pen Pal Kit!!*



PREPARE HEARTS

OPENING QUESTIONS:

Have you ever made a promise you couldn't keep? What happened?

Invite kids to complete the "A Great Promise" activity page.

Today, we will learn about a wonderful promise God made and how God always keeps His promises.

WELCOME

A Great Promise

activity page,
pencils,
markers



STARTER

Can You Be Tricked?

- Solo cups
- Cotton balls

Display three cups on a table. Place a small object, like a cotton ball, under one of the cups while the kids watch.

Shuffle the cups around slowly at first, then increase the speed as the game progresses.

Ask a kid to guess which cup has the object.

Play several rounds, inviting different kids to guess where the object is.

Another option would be to give each table group their own set of cups and have multiple groups try it on one another.

SAY: The Bible says in Jeremiah 17:9 that our hearts can trick us. We might think we're doing right, but we can't always trust our hearts. Just like this game tricked our eyes, our hearts can fool us. Today, we'll learn how we need God to change our hearts so we can follow His ways.



ACTIVE MINDS

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE STORY

(Quick 1-2 minute review!)

9:20 – 9:35

K – 4th Grade in LG2

BIBLE STORY:

God Promised a New Covenant

Bibles, Powerpoint slides

Taught by the Bible Teacher:

Quick Review of where we are in the Big Story of the Bible and Big Picture Question:

What is God like? God is holy, good, and loving.

Open your Bible to Jeremiah 17 and 31.

STORYTELLING OPTIONS / TIPS:

Show it: Show a small stone as you describe how the sin of people's hearts is like words carved into a stone.

List it: On a dry erase board, write a list of God's promises through the new covenant: God's teaching on people's hearts, He will be their God, His people will know Him, He will forgive their sin.

Review it: Review the old covenant God made with His people at Mount Sinai. Tell kids that under the old covenant God's people were commanded to obey all of God's laws. Share how the old covenant displayed guilt because no one could perfectly obey God's laws.

Recite it: Invite kids to recite Jeremiah 31:34 with you.

Before Babylon came and attacked Judah, God sent a prophet named Jeremiah to speak His words to God's people. Jeremiah said, "The sin of the people of Judah is like words carved into a stone—it can't be simply wiped away."

Jeremiah shared more of God's words, saying, "The person who trusts in other people is cursed, because people are sinful and imperfect. People cannot save themselves. The person who trusts in the Lord, however, will be strong and healthy, like a tree planted by water."

Through Jeremiah, God also said, "Our hearts are deceitful, and we cannot understand them. But God knows our hearts, and God is trustworthy. He gives each person what they deserve according to their character." Even though people have sinful, deceitful hearts, Jeremiah shared how God promised to make a new covenant with His people. Jeremiah said, "Look, the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with my people. It will be different from the old covenant I made with them when I freed them from Egypt. They broke that covenant, but they will not be able to break this one."

I will put my teaching within them and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. All my people will know me, from the least to the greatest. I will forgive them and never remember their sin."

CHRIST CONNECTION

Like God's people, we all have sinful hearts that do not obey God or love Him rightly. Through Jesus' death on the cross, God made a new covenant.

Those who trust in Jesus have their sin forgiven and have the law written on their hearts.



REVIEW AND DISCUSS

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Allow time to have the children think and process – however this works best for your class. We want our kids to feel known and heard!

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Blank paper, Bible
Story coloring
page, colored
pencils/crayons

In small groups (or as a large group), use the coloring page (on the other side of the worksheet) and have children color while you talk through these questions.

The prophet Jeremiah was sent by God to warn the people of the seriousness of sin. God's people had God's law, but they couldn't obey it perfectly. They kept sinning and turning away from God. **What did Jeremiah compare the sin of the people of Judah to?** [Allow responses.] By comparing the people's sin to words carved into stone, Jeremiah helped them understand that people cannot take away their sin. Jeremiah explained that people are not able to save themselves. We can never obey God perfectly.

Why did Jeremiah compare the person who trusts in God to a tree planted by water? [Allow responses.] Trees receive water through their roots, so a tree planted beside water will never go dry; it will always be filled with life. When we trust in God, He gives us new life and fills us with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guides us as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus.

What did Jeremiah say about people's hearts? [Allow responses.] People's hearts are untrustworthy and lead us to follow our own desires instead of God's. The people of Judah were unable to keep the old covenant because their hearts led them to sin. But God promised to make a new covenant with His people—one they could not break. Jeremiah shared that a day was coming when God would forgive sin forever. God would give people new hearts that desire to obey Him.

Jesus, God's sinless Son, came to earth, died on the cross for sin, and rose again. Jesus' death paid the price we deserve for our sin. Through Jesus' death on the cross, God made a new covenant. Those who trust in Jesus have their sin forgiven and have the law written on their hearts.



Reflection and Prayer

Have children use a blank sheet of paper. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions. Or, just talk about it together.

- **What does this story teach me about God?**

That God is faithful to keep His promises. He loves and forgives those who trust in Him. God knows our hearts, sees our sin, and loves us still. He wants to have a relationship with us, and made that possible through Jesus!

- **What does this story teach me about myself?**

That God loves me, even though He knows my sin-sick heart and sees my sin. I can trust God to love and care for me.



Questions from Kids Video

USB on TV

Show the “Unit 15, Session 3” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

- How can God be in all believer’s hearts at the same time?
- How can Christians show others that Jesus has changed their heart?



ENGAGE HEARTS

Key Passage Activity:

Balloon Bonanza

- Key Passage Poster
- Balloon

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Psalm 145:9 together.

Practice the verse together until the children can remember it. When ready, blow a balloon full of air. When finished, pinch it closed, but don’t tie it off.

Tell the children that when you release the balloon, they have to quickly recite the verse before the balloon hits the ground.

Next, let the balloon go. As it flutters around, the children must race to complete the verse.

To make it more challenging, create hand motions to the verse and require the children to do the motions too. If they need more time, give them a head start before releasing the balloon.

Pray together:

God, Your Word reminds us how much You care for us. We praise You for being greater than the power of sin. Help us turn away from our own desires and follow You. Help our hearts love You more than anything else. Amen.



Written on My Heart

- Red construction paper hearts
- “God’s Word is in my heart” heart cut-out
- Glue sticks
- Markers
- Heart stickers

Pass out a red construction paper heart to every child, explaining that it represents their hearts. Then, open your Bible and read Jeremiah 31:33-34 to the class.

“This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord.

“I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.

I will be their God,
and they will be my people.

No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord.

“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”



Next, pass out the second, smaller heart with the words “God’s Word is in my heart”. Have the children glue their smaller heart inside their larger heart. Let them decorate their heart with drawings or additional heart stickers.

ASK: What does this passage tell us about God? (He keeps His promises through his covenant, He is our God, we can know Him through His Word and His Spirit. He is forgiving, He doesn’t keep track of our sins, he chooses not to remember them.)

SAY: Apart from Jesus, our sin-sick hearts have a hard time loving God and wanting to obey Him. We love ourselves more than we love God, and we want to follow our own way. But when we trust in Jesus, God changes us. He gives us new hearts—hearts of flesh that are soft toward Him. When we trust in Jesus, God forgives our sin and changes our hearts so we love Him and want to obey Him



Promise Pass

- Ball

Lead kids to sit in a circle.

Direct kids to pass around the ball while the music plays. When the music stops, the kid holding the ball answers a question about the promises found in the Bible story or completes a phrase you say, such as:

- Who said God would make a new covenant? (Jeremiah)
- God’s new covenant means... (God loves us.)
- God will write His law on... (our hearts.)
- What did God promise to forgive? (our sin)

SAY: Jeremiah told about a day when God would forgive sin and change people’s hearts. Jesus made these words come true. Just like the people of Judah, we need a heart change so that we can obey and follow God.