

**Jeremiah 33: 14-26; “My Covenant with Day and Night”, Sermon # 39 in the series –
“Heart Lessons Learned for a Prophet and the People of God”, Delivered
By Pastor Paul Rendall on March 24th, 2019,
in the Morning Worship Service.**

Often, when God’s judgments are abroad in the land, questions come to men’s minds as to God’s faithfulness. If God is faithful to His promises then why do I suffer under the judgments which God brings upon my country for sins which were not my fault; sins if I did have them, I have repented of them. And so, it is very important, both to God and to ourselves, what conclusions are drawn. I believe that much more would be said in praise of God, if it would be considered how patiently He bears with sinful people, and how thorough He is in faithfully fulfilling His covenant obligations. Isaiah 25: 1 says – “For You (God) have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.” The New American Standard translation says – “For You have worked wonders, plans formed long ago with perfect faithfulness.”

What we want to consider this morning is the fact that God’s covenants are faithfully kept by Him because they are made, based upon His glorious Attributes and Perfections. In our worship and praise of God we must always remember to ascribe greatness to our God.” “He is the Rock, His work is perfect” as it says in Deuteronomy 32: 3 and 4. What our God is, He is in Perfection of Being, and that, perpetually displayed. He is the covenant-making God. And He is the covenant-keeping God. He displays His glorious Attributes and Perfections in keeping His everlasting covenant in force and unbroken. At this hour, then, we will look at 3 Attributes of God which He displays in keeping His covenants unbroken.

1st of all – Let’s look at His glorious Attribute and Perfection of Righteousness.

(verses 14-16)

Verse 14 says – “Behold, the days are coming...” God prefaces all that He is going to say about the good things that He will do in the New Covenant with a “Behold”. He is saying, ‘Look at what I will do for you O house of Israel; you who have sinned so greatly against Me and have been unfaithful. Pay attention, He says. For I will demonstrate My righteousness in making and giving a New Covenant. I have looked for your righteousness, He says; I have searched for your faithfulness to do what I have commanded you in relation to the Old Covenant which I gave to you, and I find it to be severely lacking. In order to expand upon God’s thoughts towards Israel in this regard, I want you to turn over with me to Hosea chapter 6, and verse 4.

“Oh Ephraim, what shall I do to you, O Judah what shall I do to you?” “For your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew it goes away.” “Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of My mouth; and your judgments are like light that goes forth.” “For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.” “But like men”, (or as it says it can be translated in the margin – Adam); like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt treacherously with Me.” So, let us think back to the beginning of the world, when God created man. When God created Adam He created him in Original Righteousness. That’s the way that God made him; He created Adam upright in the thoughts of his mind, in every reflection which he made in his heart upon any subject that he thought about, or contemplated. But more – His inclination, the bent of his heart was toward God, to listen to God, to heed his Maker, to do the right thing because he was created in the image and likeness of God. He was created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. He had God’s express image impressed upon his nature. But then Satan, who had fallen from his original righteousness as an angel, came into the garden of God which he was supposed to guard and seduced Eve by his false reasoning over whether she should eat the forbidden fruit.

And he told her a lie; that she surely would not die if she ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but she would instead become wise and be like God, knowing the

difference between good and evil. And so, she decided to act on her own. She reasoned to herself in this way: This fruit of this tree is designed to make one wise, and why shouldn't I be wise? Indeed, I should be able to make up my own mind as to whether I should eat of it. God must have withheld this from me so that I can discover it on my own. And so, being convinced of the wisdom of her own reasoning, and letting go of the actual word of God to her, she took and ate the fruit, and immediately died spiritually. Now, she didn't die physically immediately. That would take many hundreds of years, but the process of death in her body began from that moment. And what was worse, being deceived about what she had done and what had happened to her in her allowing sin to enter her being, she now was convinced that Adam should also know of the "wisdom" that she had found on her own, independent from God and His word. And so, the text in Genesis says that she gave some to Adam, and he unthinkingly ate of it, having listened to her voice telling him that it was right.

Now, what had happened to Adam that day when he ate the forbidden fruit was that he broke the covenant which God had placed him in, in relation to his having been created by God. You could almost think of it as a covenant of creation; a covenant of loving loyalty. This covenant which is mentioned here in verse 7 is what theologians call, and appropriately so – The covenant of works. It was a covenant which stated God's expectation; that Adam would hold fast his original righteousness by his obeying this one command which he was given. If Adam did not disobey God in this particular matter, over the probationary time of this test, then God would confirm Adam in having eternal life. God expected Adam, as the representative federal head of our race to keep covenant with him by maintaining his original righteousness; by his not letting his whole being be defiled by the entrance of sin by his eating of this fruit. His obedience was a matter of covenant faithfulness to God and to His word. God knew that that guilt and defilement of sin could only come in one way which was by eating of the fruit of the tree which God had commanded him not to eat of. And if Adam did that, he would be transgressing this covenant. He would be dealing treacherously with Him if he broke it.

These people in Jeremiah's day, the people of our text this morning, were like Adam. They had dealt treacherously with God and transgressed His covenant which He gave them at Sinai as a people. They did not listen to God's voice telling them to repent. Their faithfulness was like the morning cloud, and like the early dew which leaves so quickly. Perhaps you have seen this yourself as well? There are times when you resolve to obey God and then you find reasons not to. It is inconvenient, it does not seem pleasing to you. There is so much to love in the world, so much to satisfy your flesh. How can you possibly be consistent in godliness? You know that it is consistent righteousness in your life that is lacking, but where will you find it? The answer was, and still is today, that you cannot do it except by the grace of the New Covenant. God's Son had to become your surety and take your place in righteousness, to fulfill the law, and then suffer to pay the penalty for your sins so that you could be forgiven and have everlasting life.

Turn with me over to Romans chapter 5, verses 12-19. "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned – for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law." "Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come." "But the free gift is not like the trespass." "For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many." "And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin." "For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification." "For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ." "Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."

Now you can see here by the way that the apostle Paul has written these verses that Adam became our Federal head in sin; Christ became our Federal Head in righteousness. Adam was a type of Christ in terms of his headship. But Christ's free gift of righteousness is not like Adam's offense. Adam fell by failing to continue in his own original righteousness, and so all of his descendants fell with him. And when he fell, all mankind were thus constituted sinners. But now, the free gift is not like the transgression. The free gift of salvation is not based upon keeping the law but upon finding grace. And grace is found by believing upon Christ's work of redemption and His righteousness being imputed to you the sinner. It is not based upon the law and your good works, but upon grace and Christ's work. God promised here in verses 15 and 16 of our text that Judah and Jerusalem would dwell safely and that this was the name by which she would be called: The Lord our Righteousness.

God is here promising a New Covenant of righteousness which would be wrought by Christ. Now, the Father and the Son covenanted together to provide this new and living way in order that fallen men would become righteous. It would be by their believing in the promise of what Christ Jesus would undertake to do in obedience to the law and by sufferings on the cross. "In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to David – A Branch of righteousness." "He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. Christ would come and would deal in judgment against all self-righteousness by those who were trying to merit favor with God based upon their own working to keep the law. You see this in Christ condemning this very thing in the Pharisees of His time. And He pities it in the rich young ruler; He preaches its condemnation in the sermon on the mount. He executes righteousness in a loving obedience with all of His heart to fulfill God's Holy law and the Covenant of works which Adam broke, and then His righteousness is imputed to all the chosen race – God's elect, upon their exercise of saving faith in Him.

When you believe in Jesus not only is Adam's one trespass in all of its imputed condemnation dealt with, but all of your actual sins are forgiven as well. You receive an abundance of grace and a gift of perfect righteousness. You receive an immediate title to eternal life. You then stand, perfect and complete in Him as you walk through this life because you are covered by His atoning blood and righteousness. You are accepted by God in the Beloved. You can now love God and practice good works from a thankful heart, realizing that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Because of Christ's perfect satisfaction for sin and for elect sinners God can be known as He is; that He is just and the justifier of the one believing in Jesus. He is pleased to accept you for Jesus' sake, and to see you as perfectly righteous in His sight, even though He knows that there is much work in your heart that He will need to do to sanctify you unto holiness in your heart.

This New Covenant is described for us in verse 16 as "saving Judah and Israel" in those days. The gospel of Christ was being preached to Old Testament Israel in those days of the captivity by means of this promise of the New Covenant. This meant that the elect of God among the Jews in those Old Testament times were not all saved by the Old Covenant, or by the law, but grace. This grace would cause them to become true Jews inwardly as well as outwardly and physically. Those who believed were trusting in the promise that was given to them which was referring to the Christ who would come; the One who would fulfill all righteousness. But let us also see that this promise also looked ahead to the New Testament times. For the Jews were not the only ones included in this New Covenant. For in the initial promises that were given to Abraham it was said to him that "all the nations of the earth would be blessed". Christ would come and build His Church. And this is the name which she will be called, it says – "The Lord our Righteousness", Jehovah Tsidkenu – Because we are by faith united to Jesus Christ, we are one with Him, married to Him, spiritually, married to our risen, living Head. Thus we have the 1st of God's glorious attributes and Perfections displayed in keeping His covenant unbroken.

2nd – Now the next Attribute which God displays in keeping His covenants unbroken is His Holiness. (verses 17-22)

"For thus says the LORD: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, and the Levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain

offerings, and to make sacrifices forever.” “The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah: “Thus says the LORD: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then also my covenant with David my servant may be broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers.” “As the host of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the offspring of David my servant, and the Levitical priests who minister to me.”

God’s holy wisdom is displayed here in covenant promises in the covenant of royalty which God made with David. It has been the wisdom of God to reveal His great salvation in steps and stages, in realities from the lesser to the greater; from the type to the anti-type, or the greater fulfillment. From the physical creation which has fixed laws, He here mentions those laws as an example of the certainty of the New Covenant. Because of His faithfulness in His keeping of literal physical covenant with day and night – His inviolable order of light and darkness in succession – we find Him assuring His people that His covenant with David would not be broken. He would have a son to reign on his throne and with the Levites and priests, as his ministers. It is this covenant which is remembered by Ethan the Ezrahite over in Psalm 89, verses 1-5 if you will turn over there with me.

“I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever; with my mouth will I make known Your faithfulness to all generations.” “For I have said, ‘Mercy shall be built up forever; Your faithfulness You shall establish in the very heavens.’” “I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David; ‘Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.’” “And the heavens will praise Your wonders, O Lord; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the saints.” Now, we have to ask ourselves the question – How will mercy be built up forever? How will God establish His faithfulness? He does so, it says here, by making a covenant with His chosen – even king David. Look down at verses 19-23. “Then You spoke in a vision to Your holy one, and said: ‘I have given help to one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen from the people.’” “I have found My servant David; with My holy oil I have anointed him, with whom My hand shall be established; also My arm shall strengthen him.” “The enemy shall not outwit him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him.” “I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague those who hate him.”

We find that these verses are speaking of king David; the literal David, king of Israel and how God had Samuel anoint him, and how God’s hand would establish him in his kingdom, and how God would strengthen him by His mighty grace. God would sustain him in all of his afflictions of evil men plotting against him and enemies who would try to destroy him. But when we get to verse 24 we see this Psalm is referring to one who is greater than David; even our Lord Jesus Christ. The type of David as king begins to transition so that we can see more of the anti-type or the greater spiritual fulfillment of Christ and His glorious spiritual kingdom. “But My faithfulness and My mercy, shall be with him, and in My name his horn shall be exalted.” “Also I will set his hand over the sea, and his right hand over the rivers.” “He shall cry to Me, ‘You are my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.’” “Also I will make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth.” “My mercy I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with him.” “His seed also I will make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven.”

Here we are looking at the promise of Christ’s dominion and His exaltation; His becoming the first born, the highest of the kings of the earth.” God’s purpose was not only to exalt David whom He had chosen from the people, but to exalt His Son whom He had covenanted with from all eternity that He, God, might have a people. Christ’s coming would be through David’s line, through David’s descendants who had as their responsibility, the duty to be good kings and to keep this promise in mind. The subsequent history shows that a number of them were not very good kings and some of them were wicked men. But this would be a covenant made by God with David and with his antitype, the King of kings, and in it He would make provision even for the spiritual discipline of the sinning, yet believing sons of king David, beginning with Solomon.

Verse 30 – “If his sons forsake My law and do not walk in My judgments, if they break My statutes and do not keep My commandments, then I will punish their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.” “Nevertheless My lovingkindness I will not utterly take from him, nor allow My faithfulness to fail.” “My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips.” “Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David; His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even like the faithful witness in the sky.” This would be God’s covenant made in Holiness. This New Covenant, building on the covenant promise to David in regard to his earthly kingdom, it would find a much broader and greater fulfillment yet, in terms of Christ’s kingdom. It would incorporate all the elect persons chosen by God to make up the spiritual Israel of God.

All of David’s sons who were of the elect of God, even if they sinned, would not be cast away. This New Covenant would make provision even the discipline of sinning kings such as Solomon and others. God would punish their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless, God would not utterly take from him His lovingkindness nor allow His faithfulness to fail. God is saying that He will be faithful to discipline every son whom He receives. God separates light from darkness, and so if you are Christ’s, you are a son of the light and of the day. Truth and grace will make you over into a holy person in time. David’s son Solomon went a great ways into sin even though God had given him so much in wisdom and riches, but God would not allow His faithfulness to fail or His covenant to be broken. He would not take His lovingkindness from him.

Solomon prays in 2nd Chronicles 6: 14-17 at the dedication of the temple – “Lord God of Israel, there is no God like You, who keep Your covenant and mercy with your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.” “You have kept what You promised Your servant David my Father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day.” “Therefore, Lord God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David, my father saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, only if your sons take heed to their way, that they may walk in My law as you have walked before Me.’” “And now, O Lord God Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David.” But did Solomon take heed as he should have? At first he did, but later he multiplied horses and wives and God disciplined him for it, but He did not take His lovingkindness from him.

Ezra, in Psalm 89, just a short time later complains in verse 49 – “Lord, where are Your former lovingkindnesses, which You swore to David in Your truth?” And by the time we come to king Zedekiah in Jeremiah 33, we find people saying this – That the Lord had cast off the two families which He had chosen; that is, Judah and Israel. But it was not so. What was going on? What was going on, was God’s covenant faithfulness to His word. David would not lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel; but God would test each king’s obedience to His word. There would be kings like Josiah who were good kings, and there would be good rulers like Zerubbabel. There would be priests like Ezra who were good and faithful men, and good and faithful Levites like the sons of Zadok who are mentioned in Ezekiel 44: 15. But there would be many failures also, and those kings who would not repent or listen to God’s word to them would be brought into judgment both earthly and eternal.

But the one and only reason that David would never lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel was because God who is holy had given Jesus Christ to be a covenant for the elect Jews; both kings and people. And as this covenant is applied to all of God’s elect in New Testament times, all people who believe in Jesus have Him who has done battle for the forgiveness of their sins, to also rule over them to make them holy. Those who believe in Jesus as Savior want Him also to be their Lord.

3rd – To crown all of these Attributes there is one final one to be considered. It is God’s Power which He displays in keeping His covenant unbroken.

It says in verses 24-26 – “Have you not observed that these people are saying, ‘The LORD has rejected the two clans that he chose?’” “Thus they have despised my people so that they are no longer a nation in their sight.” “Thus says the LORD: If I have not established my covenant with day and

night and the fixed order of heaven and earth, then I will reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant and will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. “For I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them.” Now, I want you to understand from these verses that many people in Jeremiah’s day thought that God had cast off the nation. This is what it says in verse 24. In verse 26 the descendants of Jacob and David, representing Israel and Judah are specifically mentioned. But God says in verse 27 – “I will cause their captives to return and will have mercy on them.” He declared to them, these skeptical unbelieving people, who believed that God had cast Israel off, that if His covenant with day and night and His appointment of the ordinances of heaven and earth could somehow change, which they could not, then they could rightly conclude that He would cast away the descendants of Jacob and David His servant. He was saying that He would continue to show His faithfulness to His own promise to David, even when the kings of Israel were not faithful. And so, in time, He would send forth His Son into the world to be their ultimate King. This great promise was most certainly fulfilled, in the first sense, to those who returned from the Babylonian captivity after 70 years.

But, I would like to close this sermon by once again trying to persuade you that there will be a greater fulfillment in these New Testament times for the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. I don’t think that I need to tell you that there are many Christians today who believe that when God destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D. that He cast off the nation of Israel forever. There are many today who believe that there will be no future for the nation of Israel, spiritually speaking, and that there is nothing special about modern day Jerusalem that we should pray for her peace. Even some Reformed believers believe that this is the truth. Now, I am no Dispensationalist, thinking that God has two separate programs, one for Israel and another for the Church. But I beg to differ with those who do not believe that the Jews will have a glorious future spiritually, as a nation, in Jesus Christ, their King. The Lord Jesus Himself said in Luke 21: 24 – “And they (that is the Jews as a nation) will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive into all nations.” “And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.” Are these times of the Gentiles fulfilled yet? Well, it appears not because physical Jerusalem is still being trampled down. And we cannot precisely predict when they shall end, but we must be coming much closer to that set time.

The apostle Paul says in Romans 11: 1 – “I say then, has God cast away His people?” “Certainly not!” “For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.” (Notice how he does not eliminate the distinction between Jew and Gentile and call us all Jews, but he maintains even his own recognition of the tribe of Benjamin that he belongs to?) “God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.” In other words, by His power, He will gather His elect among them down through all their generations until the Second Coming. In verse 11 he says – “I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall?” “Certainly not!” “But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.” In verse 25, he speaks of the great mystery of their partial hardening, their partial blindness that has happened to them until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

My brethren, let us therefore receive the truth of verse 26 which speaks not simply of the conversion of individual elect believers among them, down through the whole church age, but it speaks of a great act of saving power which will be displayed in their national conversion to Christ in a coming day; that day when God grafts them back into their own olive tree. “And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: ‘The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins. This national covenant which is mentioned here is part of the greater everlasting covenant, the New Covenant of grace which is found in our Lord Jesus Christ. God will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them, for Jesus’ sake. And so to close, let all in this place today who sense that they are under the covenant of works, come to Christ by faith. Come and receive all the benefits of the New Covenant and be blessed with salvation in the covenant of grace.

