

Robert Baral\*\*sermon GOD'S LAW WRITTEN UPON OUR HEARTS\*\*3/28/2006 AD\*\*1

a sermon:

IS GOD'S LAW WRITTEN UPON OUR HEARTS?

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## I. AN OPENING PRAYER

“GOD, in Whom mercy is needless, and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us, and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments, we might not despair, nor become despondent, but with great confidence, submit ourselves to Your holy will, Which is Love and Mercy Itself [, our blessed Lord JESUS CHRIST]. AMEN!”<sup>1</sup>

## I. A PROPOSITION

Friends, is The Law of GOD written upon our hearts and in our inward parts?

## II. A TRUE AND TRAGIC STORY

When I was a much younger man, my wife and I moved to a major Eastern U.S. city so that I could take a job as a paramedic at a large urban teaching hospital. Two blocks away from our 3rd floor walkup flat was a young man who was often my patient. We would be routinely called there for an "unconscious diabetic" and find him not uncommonly deeply unresponsive and sometimes barely breathing. His blood sugar level was routinely as close to zero as one can get and not be clinically dead.

We developed a routine with this young man: having started our intravenous (IV) line and drawing a blood sample, we found that one syringe of IV sugar or Dextrose would arouse him to a combative stupor, while a second dose would bring him to full consciousness. Invariably when fully awakened, he refused transport to the hospital emergency room (ER), signing out from our care against medical advice (AMA). Our concern was that, if we left him at home after such episodes, he might well slip back into severe hypoglycemia and die.

So out of concern for his welfare, we conspired to assure that he would at least be evaluated at a local hospital ER. Finding him in his frequent unresponsive state, we would secure him tightly in what is called a "Reeves' Stretcher" - a half body wrap

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<sup>1</sup> Chaplet of Divine Mercy, from Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska (950). “A Closing Prayer” from “Prayers of The chaplet of The Divine Mercy.”

around devise into which you strap a patient, designed to allow carry downs around stairways and other obstacles. We would then give him only one syringe of IV Dextrose and carry him to the ambulance. Only after we were en route to the ER would we fully awaken him with the second dose of IV Dextrose. Thus our fait accompli of making it impossible for him to refuse transport AMA to the local ER!

Now I became casual friends with this young man, though I don't recall his name or even his face. His dingy, dirty, bare apartment was next door to a family member's apartment. After a few of these episodes and talking with both him and his family, I discovered he was intentionally taking large doses of his insulin without eating anything. And so I confronted him asking him face to face with firm eye contact, "Are you trying to kill yourself?" To my horror he answered, "Yes. I don't want to live anymore!" I reported this to the ER staff. Sadly, not long after, I learned that he had died in a local ER from a lethal irregular heart rhythm, presumably from coronary disease, which unfortunately is a common complication of long-term diabetes - especially so when there are frequent wide swings of highs and lows in blood sugar levels.

Now this young man had a covenant with his Doctor: to take his insulin when and in the amounts ordered; to eat before taking his insulin; to check his sugar levels daily; to stick to the prescribed diet. Sadly, in spite of his Doctor's no doubt sincere and increasingly alarmed concerns for his health and very life, he did not respect that covenant. Though the laws of that covenant were clear, he refused to follow them, for his heart was - as it were - made of the stone of an overwhelming desire to embrace death through suicide.

Had I, or some other Christian at that time reached out to him to show him the love of GOD and draw him into The Church, the laws of his covenant with his Doctors might have become written -as it were - "on his heart and in his inward parts." To this day I repent before The LORD that I did not reach out to this young man with the New Covenant of CHRIST, that his soul might desire to live and that the laws of his Doctors might have been "written on his heart and in his inward parts."

### III. THE PROPOSITION AGAIN

Friends, is The Law of GOD written upon our hearts and in our inward parts?

### IV. A SCRIPTURE – JEREMIAH 31:31-34

31: 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:

32: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith The LORD:

33: But this shall be the 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.

34: 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.<sup>2</sup>

### V. THE BURDEN OF JEREMIAH THE PROPHET OF GOD

In the last dark days of Judah when Jeremiah the prophet of GOD was sent to speak the Word of The LORD to apostate Jerusalem, he carried a heavy burden. A century earlier Isaiah had called the people to be steadfast in their faith of The LORD for deliverance from Assyria. But “a century later, in the face of the Babylonian threat, Jeremiah counsels the opposite” - surrender to the invading gentile hordes and submission to exile for 70 years. Jeremiah’s burden to GOD’s people was that “exile must be endured until The LORD is pleased to act” to redeem them.<sup>3</sup>

But for the present, Jeremiah was to tell them that “GOD’s judgement on [the] covenant breakers ” could not be turned back from Judah. Yet at the same time, the wayward Children of Israel were assured of the amazing grace of GOD that “would sustain a remnant of the faithful [in Babylon] until the right time should come for their restoration!”<sup>4</sup> That restoration would eventually lead to a time when The Law of GOD would be “written upon the hearts of men and in their inward parts.”

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<sup>2</sup> 2, KJV, JEREMIAH 31:31-34.

<sup>3</sup> 3, Goldsworthy, Preaching The Whole Bible, p 177.

<sup>4</sup> 3, Goldsworthy, Preaching The Whole Bible, p 178.

## VI. THE BREAKING OF THE OLD COVENANT

The Ten Commandments and all their external application to every corner of men's lives were to reign supreme and bring holiness to the ancient Israelites. But alas, The Chosen People who were to be the bride of The LORD went after false gods, affronting Him with their spiritual adultery of idol worship. And so, though The LORD has saved a righteous remnant of The Chosen People in every age of man since then unto Himself, that Old Covenant was broken – not by GOD – but by the wickedness of men. “GOD had set a holy standard of conduct before His people, but because of their sinful hearts, they could not keep those standards.”<sup>5</sup> What was needed was for The Law of GOD “to be written upon men's hearts and in their inward parts!”

## VII. PROMISE OF A COMING NEW COVENANT

Here in JEREMIAH 31, the prophet reveals a coming time when the Law of GOD would not be a mere outward Covenant between The LORD and His People written on stone tablets, but a time when The Law of GOD would be inscribed “on the very hearts of men and in their inward parts!” This would be a time, not when men would seek atonement and righteousness in the sacrifice of imperfect animals, but a time when men would seek these things in the sacrifice of The Perfect One of GOD! To Jeremiah it was revealed that “The New Covenant will not be a new Law – the old Law was still good – but it will produce a new heart.” For what Israel lacked was not The Law, but the “motivation to obey The Law.”<sup>6</sup> For Jeremiah was promised an age in which the righteous would all know The LORD because of “the indwelling of The Holy Spirit in all believers” under The New Covenant!<sup>7</sup>

## VIII. THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT

St. Peter knew and confessed that JESUS is The Son of GOD. Thus did CHRIST proclaim to him in MATTHEW 16:18, “I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> 4, Bible Knowledge Commentary – Old Testament, p 1171.

<sup>6</sup> 5, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p 679.

<sup>7</sup> 4, Bible Knowledge Commentary – Old Testament, p 1711.

<sup>8</sup> 2, KJV, MATTHEW 16:18.

So here is GOD's "forgiveness of sin... under The New Covenant only because... [GOD Himself] has provided a Substitute to pay the penalty required of [sin]." <sup>9</sup> That penalty is death and that payment is CHRIST's work at The Cross! "The Old Covenant was written upon [mere] stone... Only The New Covenant, written upon the heart, can accomplish what The Old... [Covenant] sought to bring about [but failed]." <sup>10</sup> That end is in GOD's Words through Jeremiah to us, "you shall be My people, and I shall be your GOD," for My Law of GOD shall be now "written upon your hearts and in your inward parts!"

#### IX. THE BRINGING OF ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS

So when CHRIST confronted The Jewish religious leaders of His day, what did He tell them? As in JOHN 5:39, He said, "Search The Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me!" <sup>11</sup> Here was the ultimate failure of The Called Out People of GOD under The Old Covenant to be faithful! And here was He that gave them The Law by His very finger upon the tablets of stone through Moses! And yet they could not perceive The Giver of All Life standing before them because The Law of GOD was not "written upon their hearts, nor in their inward parts!" And how did The Lord confront Nicodemus? Did He not declare in JOHN 3:15-17 that if men would believe on Him, they "should not perish, but have eternal life?" For CHRIST assured him, saying, "GOD sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved!" <sup>12</sup>

#### X. THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT & PENTECOST

That writing of GOD's Law "even upon our very hearts and in our inward parts" is The Holy Spirit dwelling within us under His New Covenant! For is it not written in I CORINTHIANS 3:16, "Know ye not that ye are the Temple of GOD, and that the Spirit of GOD dwelleth in you?" <sup>13</sup> And when, on the Day of Pentecost, The Holy Spirit came to indwell the soul of every man there standing in the salvation of CHRIST.

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<sup>9</sup> 4, Bible Knowledge Commentary – Old Testament, p 1171.

<sup>10</sup> 5, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p 679.

<sup>11</sup> 2, KJV, JOHN 5:39.

<sup>12</sup> 2, KJV, JOHN 3:15-17.

The very Word of GOD indeed came to be “written on the hearts of men and in their inward parts!” For ACTS 2:2-4 records that, “suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance!”<sup>14</sup>

#### XI. THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT

The vision given to Jeremiah of a New Covenant Age in which men shall no longer say to one another, “Know ye The LORD” is upon us! Those who are sealed in the blood of CHRIST unto salvation grow daily more to know Him, “from the least of them unto the greatest!” St. Paul exhorts us in CHRIST to walk “in The Spirit,” for we are “not under The Law” of The Old Covenant, but are to be filled with The Holy Spirit. For when The Comforter has come upon us, then are we sealed with The Word of GOD “written upon our hearts and in our inward parts!” For then do the fruits of The New Covenant bud forth in us – the very qualities that make up the Divine Nature -as in GALATIANS 5:22-23, “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance.”<sup>15</sup>

#### XII. ISRAEL & JUDAH RESTORED AS ONE UNDER CHRIST

But The New Covenant is not for The Church alone. Since CHRIST's First Coming, righteous remnants of Israel and Judah have been confessing and repenting at The Cross of CHRIST through the ages. Remember that all the first Apostles were themselves Jews, that the early Church was at first mostly composed of Jews and that The Saviour Himself came to mankind as a Jew! For did not CHRIST Himself declare in JOHN 4:22, "Salvation is of The Jews?"<sup>16</sup> So The New Covenant moves through human history to “the day when [all of] Israel will acknowledge her sin and turn to The Messiah

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<sup>13</sup> 2, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 3:16.

<sup>14</sup> 2, KJV, ACTS 2:2-4.

<sup>15</sup> 2, KJV, GALATIANS 5:22-23.

<sup>16</sup> 2, KJV, JOHN 4:22.



[JESUS CHRIST] for forgiveness.”<sup>17</sup>

For throughout the ages, “the survival of the Hebrew people... [in the face of terrible trials and against all natural expectations,] is hardly explainable on any but supernatural grounds.”<sup>18</sup> So when CHRIST returns again, then "the New Covenant will find its complete fulfillment during the Millennium when Israel is restored [fully] to... GOD!"<sup>19</sup> For The Law of GOD will be “written upon their hearts and in their inward parts!”

### XIII. OUR HEAVENLY HOME

How can we envision eternal life dwelling with our Creator forever in Paradise? We can see it “only in a glass darkly” while still in this mortal life, even though we be sealed with The New Covenant in CHRIST. What man can fully describe while yet in this world a time and place in eternity before The LORD when there shall be no death, pain, sickness, sorrow, loss or tears? We do not see Heaven in full now, but because we walk with The Word of GOD “written upon our hearts and in our inward parts” in this life, we know with all certainty that, as in I PETER 1:3-4, “Blessed be the GOD and Father of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you!”<sup>20</sup>

### XIV. IN SUMMARY

We have looked into the Divine revelation received by Jeremiah of a coming New Covenant better than the Old. The Old Covenant was broken, not by GOD, but by the stone hearts of His Chosen People who went after idols in spiritual adultery. We now live in the time of Jeremiah's vision of The New Covenant, The Word of GOD being “written upon our hearts and in our inward parts!” The Jewish leaders could not see that

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<sup>17</sup> 4, Bible Knowledge Commentary – Old Testament, p 1172.

<sup>18</sup> 5, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p 679.

<sup>19</sup> 4, Bible Knowledge Commentary – Old Testament, p 1172.

<sup>20</sup> 2, KJV, I PETER 1:3-4.

The Old Testament, containing the very Words of life, was embodied before their very eyes in The One Who Gives All Life - JESUS CHRIST! But this knowledge is, by GOD's grace, revealed to us! And being saved in CHRIST, The Holy Spirit no longer dwells only among us, but within us, causing The Law of GOD to be "written upon our hearts, even in our very inward parts!"

So when the anointing of Pentecost first came upon Christian men, and the Holy Spirit's presence in The Saved of CHRIST ever since, is it any wonder that Jeremiah prophesied of a day when men "shall teach no more his neighbour saying, Know ye The LORD?" That Day is now when, "from the least of us unto the greatest of us, we as Christian men know Him!" And when our Lord returns on That Great Day of His Glory, Israel and Judah shall then be fully restored and confess their faith in JESUS CHRIST! And when our souls leave this world, we know that our Heavenly home awaits us, there to dwell with CRHIST forever, free of the burdens of this earthly life; it shall be an eternity in which The Law of GOD will forever be "written upon our hearts and in our inward parts!"

#### XV. QUESTIONS

My friends, is The Law of GOD "written upon our hearts and in our inward parts?" Or are we walking as with The Word of GOD distant from and external to our souls? Is The Holy Spirit truly dwelling in us, or is our confession in CHRIST mere intellectual ascent and haughty disputation? Do we make a mockery of GOD's grace and partake unworthily in The New Covenant with hearts of stone? Do we shame our Eternal Lord because there is no love in us? Do our lives show forth the good works of The Spirit in a renewed life under The New Covenant – "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance?"

If I could go back those many years ago to that young man who was both my patient and my neighbour, I would testify to him of the love of GOD and the saving grace of The Cross that makes life worth living, that saves our eternal souls, that reconciles us

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to our Maker, that fills our hearts with the joy of The LORD, that writes The Law of GOD on our hearts and in our inward parts! O LORD GOD Almighty, by Thy Perfect Sacrifice of Thy Son JESUS CHRIST on our behalf, may it be now and forever that Your Law be “written upon our hearts and in our inward parts!” In The Name of GOD The Father, and The Son and The Holy Spirit. AMEN.

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