

Sunday, June 7, 2026- Written On the Heart: Part Two- The Promise of God's Law in Us Pastor John Henry Raskin

THE PROBLEM

- God's Law is holy, just, and good—but we are not.
- The Law reveals sin, but it cannot fix the human heart.
- Israel had God's Word all around them, yet still disobeyed.
- Why? Because the Law was external, not internal.

"The heart is deceitful above all things..." — Jeremiah 17:9

GOD'S PROMISE (Jeremiah 31:31–34)

God promised a New Covenant with four powerful truths:

1. A New Location

"I will put My law in their minds..." → From stone tablets to internal understanding

2. A New Desire

"I will write it on their hearts..." - Not forced obedience, but willing obedience from within

3. A New Relationship

I will be their God... → Not religion, but personal relationship

4. A New Foundation

"I will forgive their iniquity..." → Total and complete forgiveness

HOW GOD FULFILLS THIS PROMISE

"I will put My Spirit within you..." — Ezekiel 36:26–27

- God gives us a new heart
- God places His Holy Spirit within us
- God Himself becomes the source of obedience

➡ The Spirit doesn't just instruct us—He transforms us.

JESUS AND THE NEW COVENANT

At the Last Supper, Jesus declared: "This is My blood of the new covenant..." — Matthew 26:28

- Jesus' death secured:
 - Forgiveness of sins
 - Fulfillment of God's promise
 - Access to new life in the Spirit

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US TODAY

- Christianity is not about external rule-keeping
- It is about internal transformation
- Obedience flows from a changed heart
- The Holy Spirit empowers us to live for God

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Am I trying to obey God outwardly without inward transformation?
- Do I see my relationship with God as rule-following or heart-changing?
- Am I relying on the Holy Spirit to guide and transform me

**Jesus didn't come just to show us what to do.
He came to change who we are.**

WRITTEN ON THE HEART, PART TWO THE PROMISE OF GOD'S LAW IN US

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Last week we saw the problem. The Law of God is holy, just, and good — but we human beings simply are not.

The Law holds up a perfect standard, and like a mirror, it shows us exactly how far we fall short.

The Law was never designed to fix us. It was only ever designed to show us our need to be fixed.

But God is not only perfect in holiness and justice but also rich in mercy and loyal love for His beloved creation.

He is not a God who simply points out our problems and walks away. He is a God who makes promises and His promises are good and true. Right in the middle of the Old Testament — centuries before Christ — God made an astonishing promise.

A promise that didn't abolish the Law, but reimaged where it would be written, and how it would be kept.

In Jeremiah's 31st chapter the Lord says through the Prophet:

Jeremiah 31:33b

I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Today we look at that promise.

We are going to find that the Holy Spirit — who lives inside every born-again believer — is the fulfillment of what God promised centuries before Jesus was born.

By the time the prophet Jeremiah was writing, in the 7th century before Christ, Israel already had a long and painful history of covenant breaking.

God had made a covenant with Israel centuries before at Mount Sinai, saying 'You will be My people, and I will be your God, but here are My terms.'

Exodus 19:5

Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.

We are used to calling the people of Israel God's chosen people but notice the if/then language in this scripture.

That choosing by God was conditional upon their obedience to the law that was written on tablets of stone.

In the centuries before the Prophet Jeremiah, Israel had broken that covenant time and time again.

And it wasn't that they didn't know what they were doing.

They had the Law AND they had the prophets.

The prophets were sent to Israel not just to forecast events that would happen in the future,

but to diagnose the present condition of the covenant from God's viewpoint and call the people back to God.

And what the Prophet Jeremiah diagnosed was this: the problem wasn't God's Law.

The problem was where the Law was located.

Israel's problem was not that they didn't know what God required.

They had the tablets. They had the scrolls.

The Law was read publicly. The priests taught it. The rabbis debated it.

The words of God were written on the doorposts of their houses, bound on their wrists, placed in boxes on their foreheads.

In any case, the Law was all around them.

And still they disobeyed.

Still, they turned to idols.

Still, they treated the poor unjustly.

Still, they broke their promises to God. Why?

Because the Law was on the outside.

It was a standard they were being held to — but it was not a desire that was operating within them.

It could tell them what to do. It simply could not make them want to do it. This was the real problem.

The rabbis would take scripture in little boxes known as “tefillin” and literally tie them onto their foreheads and wrists to fulfill the scripture that said for them to bind “God's word as a sign upon your hand and as frontlets between your eyes”.

They actually thought that by taking that word of God literally and placing scripture on their foreheads and on their hands, they would be in obedience to the command.

The people would put little containers called mezuzahs with scripture on their doorposts but the scriptures themselves, they disobeyed.

This is an example of why an outward show of religion is not what God wants, but rather a personal relationship with Him.

It is not the outward letter of the law that God requires to be kept but that the spirit of the law be honored and obeyed.

Jeremiah is sometimes called 'the weeping prophet' because of how deeply he grieved over Israel's sin.

Jeremiah 17:9

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

He wrote these words during one of the darkest periods in Israel's history — just before Jerusalem fell to Babylon, just before Solomon's Temple was destroyed and the people were carried into exile:

That is a devastating diagnosis.

The heart... the very center of a person, the place from which all desires spring and all decisions are made, is deceitful and desperately wicked.

Not slightly broken. Desperately dysfunctional.

Corrupted at the source. No external law can fix a polluted heart.

You can put all the rules in the world in front of a person with a corrupt heart, and the heart will find a way around them, or the person will simply pretend to obey while secretly rebelling.

So, if the Law can't fix the heart... what can?

In Jeremiah chapter 31, in the middle of all this darkness and exile, God suddenly speaks one of the most radically hopeful passages in the entire Old Testament.

He announces something entirely new — the promise of a covenant unlike anything that had come before:

Jeremiah 31:31–34

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 — not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Take a moment to let that sink in. This is extraordinary.

Notice four things God says in this New Covenant promise:

1. 'I will put My law in their minds.'

God is not scrapping the Law. He is not saying, 'That didn't work, so I'm throwing it away.'

He is saying, 'I am going to take the same Law and relocate it.' From stone tablets to the human mind.

From an external demand to an internal understanding.

2. I will write it on their hearts.'

Not only in the mind — but on the heart.

This is the deepest part of a person: the seat of our desires, our loves, our motivations.

God is promising to place His law not just where people can read it and think about it, but where they will want to know it, love it, and desire to live by it.

It's like the difference between a child who makes their bed every morning because they know their parent is watching them and doesn't want to be punished,

and a child who makes their bed because they genuinely love order and neatness and want their room to look nice because they are grateful to their parents and want to please them.

Same action. Entirely different motivation.

The Law written on the heart produces the second kind of obedience — willing obedience, from the inside out.

3. 'I will be their God, and they shall be My people.'

This is the great covenant refrain... the heartbeat of everything God has ever been trying to accomplish in mankind throughout human history.

Not just obedient people. Not just forgiven people.

People who are truly, intimately, personally His.

People who desire a relationship with Him and to know Him, spending time in His Presence, not just playing religion.

4. 'I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.'

This is the foundation of that relationship from God's side.

Before God could write His law on human hearts, the sin that had defiled those hearts had to be dealt with.

Forgiveness had to come first.

And this forgiveness would be total — not partial, not conditional on future performance, but complete and final.

Writing around the same time as Jeremiah, the prophet Ezekiel, gives us additional detail about exactly how God planned to accomplish this heart-transformation:

Ezekiel 36:26–27

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them."

Now we see the mechanism.

How will God write His law on the heart? By putting His own Spirit inside a person.

This is the key that unlocks everything.

The indwelling Holy Spirit is God's answer to the problem that the Law revealed.

Notice the language: 'I will cause you to walk in My statutes.'

Not 'I will require you to walk in My statutes.'

Not 'I will give you better instructions so you can walk in My statutes.'

I will cause you.

God Himself, through His Spirit, will be the engine of obedience in the lives of His people.

This was God's promise. The announcement of a new Covenant that would entirely replace the Old one.

Now let's fast forward to 33 A.D.

On the night before His crucifixion, at the Last Supper, Jesus took a cup of wine and said these words:

Matthew 26:27-28

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

The word that Matthew uses in His Gospel translated as remission is "aphesis".

In ancient legal and financial documents, "aphesis" was used to describe the total wiping out or cancellation of a debt. In this case sin, a debt we owed to God.

With those words, Jesus declared that the New Covenant Jeremiah had prophesied was arriving — and it would be established through His death.

His blood would accomplish what the Lord described through Jeremiah when He said, “For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

The heart of stone would be removed.

The Law would be written on the new heart of flesh.

What’s more, after His resurrection and ascension, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit just as He had promised the disciples and as God had promised through the prophets, centuries before.

In Acts chapter 2, on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit descended on the disciples.

Filled with God’s Spirit, Peter stood up and said this in reference to God’s promise through another Old Testament Prophet, Joel:

Acts 2:16–17

But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh.

And just so we are clear, when Peter said the last days, that was then and it is now.

The Prophet foretold it and it came to pass. Two thousand years ago.

The promise now had been and would continue to be fulfilled.

The same Spirit that Ezekiel had described. The Spirit who would be put within God's people, causing them to walk in His statutes, was now being poured out.

Not poured out on just a few prophets and kings, as in the Old Testament, not poured out on Israel alone, but on all who would believe in the Lord Jesus and become born again.

The book of Hebrews makes it unmistakably clear that the New Covenant Jeremiah prophesied is the covenant that Jesus established once and for all people who would choose to receive Him as Lord:

Hebrews 8:7,9-10

7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

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."

Here, the writer of Hebrews quotes Jeremiah 31 directly and applies it to the work of Jesus Christ.

The New Covenant — with its promise of a transformed heart, an internal law living in the mind, a personal knowledge of God — is exactly what Jesus inaugurated by His death and resurrection and the gift of His Spirit available to all who believe in Him. Hallelujah!

What Does This Mean for You?

If you are a born-again believer... if you have truly repented of your sins and trusted in Jesus Christ, then the New Covenant is yours.

The Spirit of God lives inside of you. The Law of God is written on your heart.

Not perfectly expressed yet, not without ongoing struggle, to be sure, but genuinely present as a new and living desire to please God.

Here are three things you should contemplate so that you can rest, knowing that you belong to Jesus and are living under God's Grace.

1. The desire to obey God is a sign of the Spirit, not a condition to receive the Spirit.

Sometimes Christians look at their desire to follow God and think, 'I need to have more of this desire before God will accept me.'

But the New Covenant makes it clear that the desire itself is a gift of the Spirit.

If you find yourself genuinely wanting to live for God, even imperfectly, even with failures along the way, that desire itself is the evidence of the Spirit of God working in you.

It is evidence of the New Covenant being fulfilled in you.

2. When you desire to bless others more than please yourself — you are living out the Grace of God.

The Old Covenant said: obey, and then I will bless you.

The New Covenant says: I have blessed you; now live in it.

The Law written on the heart is not a new, higher bar for you to clear.

It is a new nature... a transformed desire... that flows from the grace of God you've already received.

3. Realize that God has not lowered His standard — He has supernaturally enabled you to meet it.

The Law of God is still holy, still just, still good.

God still calls His people to walk in His ways.

But now, instead of looking at the stone tablets and feeling crushed, the Spirit-filled believer looks at the Law of God and finds, not a burden, but a description of the person the Spirit is making them into.

A person who looks like Jesus.

Next week, in Part 3, of WRITTEN IN THE HEART, we are going to get deeply practical.

We are going to look at what the indwelling Holy Spirit actually does in a believer's life,

We are going to see how He produces the obedience the Law demands in you, and what that life looks like from the inside.

We are going to look at the filling of the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit, and what a walk in the Spirit looks like.

Come back next week for Part 3: The Power the Law Could Not Give.

I hope you will come back and join us.

Bring your questions and bring your friends with questions.