

Malachi 2:10-16

The Bible often speaks of “covenant.” It means that there is a promise connecting God and us (Gen. 9; Gen. 12, 15, 17; 2 Sam. 7). Among all covenants in the Old Testament, the most important one is the Sinai Covenant given through Moses. The whole passage from Exodus 19 to 24 contains the Sinai Covenant. God gave Israel the Law, and if they kept it, they would become God’s treasured possession and His people (Ex. 19:5-6; Ex. 20:1-6). This Sinai Covenant was written on stone tablets. The heart of the covenant—including the Ten Commandments—can be summarized as: “Love the Lord your God” and “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

But how did the people of Israel in Malachi’s time keep this covenant? They did not. In their relationship with God, with their spouses, and with their neighbors, they failed to remain faithful (vv. 10-11). Today’s passage repeatedly mentions that they “dealt treacherously.” The Hebrew word used here is *bagad*, which originally means “to cover with a garment,” but came to mean “to cover up, to deceive, to betray.”

The Israelites in Malachi’s time easily deceived and betrayed others for their own gain. Even in marriage, they selfishly used one another, and when they were no longer pleased, they abandoned their spouses without hesitation.

The problem was that they still continued offering sacrifices (v. 12). Their tears, weeping, and groaning covered the altar (v. 13), but God did not accept their offerings. Instead, He declared that He would cut them off from among His people. He even said that He hated what they were doing (v. 16).

One of the key problems of Israel in Malachi’s time was this *bagad*—deception and betrayal. At the heart of all this sin was self-centeredness. This treachery is our sinful nature. That is why families are destroyed, and human relationships break down. Ultimately, under the old covenant—the Sinai Covenant—the Israelites could not remain with God and inevitably were cut off from being His people.

But Scripture also speaks of another, greater covenant: the New Covenant, distinct from the Sinai Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-12; Heb. 9:15; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). The New Covenant was established through Jesus Christ, replacing the Old Covenant. It was fulfilled through His cross and resurrection. Whereas the old covenant required the blood of animals for sacrifices, the New Covenant was accomplished through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, bringing forgiveness of sins and eternal redemption. Unlike the law written on stone tablets, the New Covenant writes God’s law on our hearts through the Holy Spirit. This is the gospel, and this is power.

In the New Covenant, the gospel removes our hardened hearts and gives us new ones (Ezek. 36:26-27; John 13:34). We must know how the Lord has loved us, and with that love we are able to love others. That is the secret of the New Covenant.

Though weak, under the power of this gospel and the New Covenant, we can draw near to God again, experience restoration in our families, and live according to His Word in our daily lives. Standing before the cross each day, looking to Christ, the grace of the cross will overflow in us and flow into our families, workplaces, and relationships. In the power of the gospel and the New Covenant, we are restored to a right relationship with God, and by His grace our families and relationships are also restored. We must remain in the gospel. We must stand before the cross every day.

**Bible
Memorization**

A VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.” (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

**Bible
Reading**

8/18(Mon)	8/19(Tue)	8/20(Wed)	8/21(Thur)	8/22(Fri)	8/23(Sat)	8/24(Sun)
Jeremiah 1-3	Jeremiah 4-5	Jeremiah 6-8	Jeremiah 9-11	Jeremiah 12-14	Jeremiah 15-17	Jeremiah 18-20

QT

Quiet Time Passage

8/18(Mon)	8/19(Tue)	8/20(Wed)	8/21(Thur)	8/22(Fri)	8/23(Sat)	8/24(Sun)
Ezekiel 19:1-14	Ezekiel 20:1-9	Ezekiel 20:10-26	Ezekiel 20:27-32	Ezekiel 20:33-49	Ezekiel 21:1-17	Ezekiel 21:18-32

**Sharing
Questions**

1. Share the grace you have experienced in your life through last week's message or your personal devotional (QT) time.

2. What new insights or grace did you receive through today's message?

3. In the New Covenant, how should we live in faith within our families and daily lives? Share and pray for one another.