

Tuesday March 20th

Today's Practice: Give thanks for the Spring Equinox in a way that makes sense to you.

Jeremiah 31:31-34:

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, 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 within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Meditation: Walter Breuggemann, "The Gift of a New Chance." *A Way Other Than Our Own* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2017], pp. 70-71

What God has forgotten we no longer need remember. Our guilt, of course, lingers and haunts us and slowly cripples us. Our sin is so serious because it violates God. Now, however, God will no longer notice or credit, and the sin will not linger or haunt or cripple. We shall be free. . . The power of guilt, fear, and resentment evaporates, and we are free. What God has unloaded, we no longer need carry as burden. . .

Jeremiah makes a pause for a moment before the prospect of a new innocence. Things need not go on and on. The cycle can be broken. A new chance is offered. Notice well, the new chance is demanding. It takes a broken heart, an end to self-sufficiency, abandoning a pretense of being right. This invitation, however, is not just advice on acting differently. This gospel is not advice but assurance. The assurance is that what we cannot do for ourselves is given us.

Forgiving God, we fall to our knees at the thought of a truly new beginning, a fresh start. Our hearts are broken, and we offer them to you in the assurance of your undeserved grace—the power that creates in us new hearts capable of love. Amen.

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