

## **The Fifth Sunday of Lent – Year B**

### **First Reading – Jeremiah 31:31-34**

Jeremiah was born about 650 B.C. of a priestly family from the little village of Ananath, near Jerusalem. He was called to the prophetic office during the reform of King Josiah around 628 B.C. When this reform failed, he preached about the imminent destruction that was coming from Babylon. He was eventually exiled and killed in Egypt. Shortly after the Babylonian exile (c. 515 B.C.), the Book of Jeremiah as we have it today was published in a final edition.

It was around the time of the Babylonian exile that Jeremiah uttered these famous words about the “new covenant.” This is often called “The Gospel before the Gospel.”

Is God persistent in the face of humanity breaking our end of the bargain?

What will be different about this new covenant, as opposed to the old covenant?

While humans generally cannot “forgive and forget,” what part of this passage suggests that God can?

### **Second Reading – Hebrews 5:7-9**

What event in the gospels does the first line of our second reading probably refer to?

The author of Hebrews says that “he was heard because of his reverence.” But did he get what he wanted?

Is it strange to think of Jesus as “learning” something? Maybe even stranger, the last line suggests that “he was made perfect” through suffering. Does this mean he was not perfect before?

### **John 12:20-33**

What does the word “hate” mean when Jesus says we must “hate” our life?

In a fallen world, why must death precede life?

According to Jesus, who is “the ruler of this world?” In what sense is that true? In what sense is it not true?

How does the last line of the gospel connect with last week’s gospel?