

MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

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A Study for Judaism • Christianity • Islam

DOCUMENT 284

A HEART OF FLESH

A Covenant Deep Dive into Ezekiel 11:19 and 36:26–27: the *lev ha-even* (heart of stone) and the *lev basar* (heart of flesh)

What Is the Heart of Stone, Did Those Who Stood at Sinai Have It, How Does the Torah Stand in a Heart of Flesh, and Do These Passages Teach a New Covenant Made at the Cross?
— A Three-Religion Covenant Response

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The Message is Sent to the World

REACHING JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM

☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	✞ ISLAM
Rabbinic tradition reads the <i>lev ha-even</i> (heart of stone) as the <i>yetzer ha-ra</i> (evil inclination): among its seven names, “ Ezekiel called it stone ” (Talmud Sukkah 52a). Rashi explains the new heart as “ an inclination that has been renewed for the better, ” and David Kimchi as a heart that hears and a spirit ready to receive His words in love (Rashi and Radak on Ezekiel 36:26). Nachmanides reads the promise with Deuteronomy 30:6 : in the days of the Messiah the heart will not desire what is improper. The oracle is read aloud each year on	The New Testament takes up Ezekiel’s words more than once: a letter written “ not on tablets of stone but on tablets of hearts of flesh ” (2 Corinthians 3:3), and a birth “ of water and the Spirit ” (John 3:5). Most churches teach that the promise was fulfilled when the Spirit was given after the death of Yeshua, under a new covenant in his blood (Luke 22:20; Acts 2:16–18; Hebrews 8:6–13). The Westminster Confession uses Ezekiel’s words for the conversion of each believer (10.1), and the Catholic Catechism says the Spirit	The Qur’an uses the same picture of the same people. Of the Children of Israel it says, “ Then your hearts hardened after that, so that they were like stones, or even harder ” (Q. 2:74), and it ties the hardening to the breaking of the covenant (Q. 5:13). It records the saying “ Our hearts are wrapped ” (Q. 2:88; 4:155), close to the Tanakh’s uncircumcised heart, and it says of the faithful that God “ has written faith upon their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Him ” (Q. 58:22). It does not repeat Ezekiel’s promise

☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☩ ISLAM
the Sabbath of the Red Heifer (Ezekiel 36:16–38).	engraves “ <i>a new law</i> ” in the heart (715). The Tanakh speaks first: whose heart is changed, by what means, and to what end.	that the heart of stone will be taken out of Israel.

DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY — STANDING RULE OF MIQDASH BETHEL COVENANT INSTITUTION

The sole binding authority of Miqdash Bethel Covenant Institution is the *Tanakh* — the written covenant of **Yahweh**. No Talmudic tractate, Church council decree, papal encyclical, hadith collection, or extra-biblical tradition carries doctrinal weight equal to or greater than the written Torah. Where any tradition conflicts with the written covenant, the written covenant governs without exception. The Talmud, New Testament, and Qur’an are cited as historical reference and comparative witness — never as superseding authority. Miqdash Bethel uses the Written Tanakh as its sole source for four reasons: it is the only text Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all recognize as originally given by **Yahweh**; it predates and underlies the Talmud, New Testament, and Qur’an, so testing those traditions against it follows the evidentiary direction of **Deuteronomy 19:15** — the earlier witness governs the later commentary; every later tradition that departs from the Tanakh does so by addition or reinterpretation, never by overturning the text itself, so the text remains the fixed standard; and **Yahweh**’s own words declare the covenant unchanging (Malachi 3:6; Psalms 119:89), making the written covenant — not evolving institutional interpretation — the only stable ground for doctrine. All three great covenant traditions — Judaism, Christianity, and Islam — are addressed simultaneously and equally in every Miqdash Bethel document, because **Yahweh**’s covenant belongs to every nation that will receive it. The **Deuteronomy 19:15** two-or-three-witness evidentiary standard governs all textual claims in this document.

HOW TO READ THIS DOCUMENT

This document applies the sole authority of the written *Tanakh* to four questions about the heart of stone and the heart of flesh: what the heart of stone is, whether those who stood at Sinai had it, how the Torah stands in a heart of flesh, and whether these passages teach a new covenant that replaced the covenant of Sinai. **Yahweh** (יהוה) and **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים) appear in bold throughout. Tanakh books and personal names are given in English. Hebrew transliterations appear in ***bold italic*** with the English meaning in parentheses at every occurrence. Scripture references are bold. Verse numbers follow the English version; where the Hebrew numbering differs, it is given in brackets on first citation. Scripture

is rendered in a literal working translation from the Hebrew. Each finding is graded under the two-or-three-witness standard as **Corroborated** (two or more independent Tanakh witnesses), **Single witness**, or **Not in the text**. Three audiences are addressed simultaneously: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Rabbinic commentary, the Aramaic Targum, ancient manuscripts and translations, the Dead Sea Scrolls, New Testament texts, church teaching, and the Qur'an are cited as historical and comparative reference — not as binding authority. The Written Tanakh governs all conclusions.

TANAKH BOOKS CITED IN THIS DOCUMENT

DIVISION	BOOKS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Torah	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	The tablets of stone; the stiff neck at the calf; the heart Moses says was not yet given; the water of purification; the statutes and the covenant sentence; the circumcised heart
Nevi'im (Prophets)	Joshua, 1 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	The two oracles of the heart of stone; the vocabulary of the hard heart; the wilderness remembered; the tender heart of Josiah; the spirit promised; the restored order
Ketuvim (Writings)	Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Nehemiah, 2 Chronicles	The warning of Meribah; the clean heart David asks for; the Torah as delight; the spirit given in the wilderness; the one heart

COMPARATIVE TEXTS CITED — HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCE ONLY

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
New Testament	Matthew 5:17–19; Luke 22:20; John 3:5; Acts 2:16–18; 7:51; Romans 2:29; 3:31; 7:6; 8:3–4; 2 Corinthians 3:3, 6–7; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 3:7–8; 8:6–13; 10:15–18	Where the New Testament takes up Ezekiel's words; the texts from which a new covenant at the cross is taught; and the texts inside the New Testament that keep the Tanakh's own position

CATEGORY	TEXTS CITED	PURPOSE IN THIS STUDY
Ancient manuscripts and translations	The Ezekiel scroll from Masada (MasEzek); Greek Papyrus 967; Septuagint (Greek) Ezekiel 11:19 ; Aramaic Targum Jonathan on Ezekiel 36:26	The oldest Hebrew and Greek copies of the second oracle; where the Greek reads <i>“another heart”</i> for the Hebrew <i>“one heart”</i> ; the Targum’s plain rendering of the stone and the flesh
Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple writings	Community Rule (1QS) 4:20–22; Jubilees 1:22–24	Jewish readers before the church who expected a cleansing by the spirit <i>“like waters of purification”</i> and a heart that holds fast to the commandments
Rabbinic literature	Mishnah Yoma 8:9; Talmud Sukkah 52a; Berakhot 32a; Niddah 61b; Rashi and Radak (David Kimchi) on Ezekiel 36:26 ; Nachmanides on Deuteronomy 30:6	The heart of stone as the evil inclination; the cleansing of Ezekiel 36:25 as the act of the Father in heaven; the new heart in the days of the Messiah
Church teaching	Augustine, On Grace and Free Will 29; Westminster Confession 10.1; 19.3–5; Catechism of the Catholic Church 715; 1432	The heart of stone as the will hardened against God; Ezekiel’s words used for conversion; <i>“a new law”</i> engraved in the heart; the division of the Torah into moral and ceremonial law
Qur’an	Q. 2:74; 2:88; 2:106; 4:155; 5:13; 39:22–23; 57:16; 58:22	Hearts hardened like stones; the hardening tied to the broken covenant; hearts softened and written upon by God; abrogation

I. FRAMING THE QUESTION — TWO VERSES AND THREE CLAIMS

I-A. The Questions as They Are Usually Asked

Twice in the book of Ezekiel, Yahweh says that He will take a heart of stone out of His people and give them a heart of flesh. The two verses are among the best known in the Prophets. They are quoted in synagogues and churches alike, and a great deal has been built on them. The questions put to this Institution are direct:

First: what is a heart of stone, and is it the heart of the people who stood at Sinai?

Second: how is the Torah different in a people who have a heart of flesh from what it was in a people who had a heart of stone?

Third: most churches teach that these passages speak of a new covenant made at the death of Yeshua. Do they?

Fourth: has the promise come, and who has the heart of flesh today?

This study builds on earlier work in the Library and does not repeat it. Doc 281 (*On Their Heart I Will Write It*) read the new covenant of **Jeremiah 31:31–34** word by word and set it beside the covenant of Sinai. Doc 264 (*As the Sin of Divination*) gathered the Hebrew vocabulary of rebellion and the stiff neck. Doc 259 (*Two Sticks in One Hand*) examined the regathering of the twelve tribes. The April 2026 study *Transformation: The Way of Yahweh* took **Ezekiel 36:26** as its center, and the May 2026 *Covenant Letter to the Churches* applied it. The present document reads the two oracles of the heart of stone word by word, follows the vocabulary of the hard heart back to the wilderness, sets the same Torah in the two hearts, tests the teaching of the churches against the text, and refines six points in the earlier material (Section XI).

I-B. The Questions in the Tanakh's Own Terms

Three facts about the text come before any answer.

The phrase is rare. *Lev ha-even (the heart of stone)*, לֵב הָאֶבֶן, occurs twice in the whole Tanakh, and *lev basar (a heart of flesh)*, לֵב בָּשָׂר, occurs twice. All four are in **Ezekiel 11:19** and **Ezekiel 36:26**. No other book uses either phrase.

The word “covenant” is absent. *Berit (covenant)*, בְּרִית, does not occur in either oracle (**Ezekiel 11:14–21**; **Ezekiel 36:16–38**). Neither oracle says “*new covenant*,” and neither says that a covenant has ended.

Sinai is not named. Neither oracle mentions Sinai, Horeb, Moses, or the tablets. The people addressed are the exiles of Ezekiel's own day.

The questions therefore become:

1. What does each oracle say, to whom, and when?
2. What does the Tanakh mean when it is called a heart stone, and what other words does it use for the same condition?
3. Does the Tanakh say this of the generation that stood at Sinai?
4. What does the heart of flesh do with the statutes of **Yahweh**?
5. By what marks does the text itself allow a claim of fulfilment to be tested?

Every finding below is graded. A finding is **Corroborated** when two or more independent Tanakh witnesses carry it (**Deuteronomy 19:15**). It is **Single witness** when only one text or one book carries it. It is **Not in the text** when it is taught but the Tanakh does not say it.

II. THE TEXT — TWO ORACLES, ONE PROMISE

II-A. The Hebrew and a Working Translation

וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם לֵב אֶחָד וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְהִסְרֹתִי לֵב הָאֶבֶן מִבְּשָׂרָם וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם לֵב בָּשָׂר
“And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh,” (Ezekiel 11:19)

לְמַעַן בְּחַקֵּתִי יֵלְכוּ וְאֶת־מִשְׁפָּטִי יִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ אֹתָם וְהָיוּ־לִי לְעָם וְאֲנִי אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים
“so that they may walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their Elohim.” (Ezekiel 11:20)

וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב חֲדָשׁ וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְהִסְרֹתִי אֶת־לֵב הָאֶבֶן מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב בָּשָׂר
“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26)

וְאֶת־רוּחִי אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם וְעָשִׂיתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־בְּחַקֵּי תֵלְכוּ וּמִשְׁפָּטִי תִשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשִׂיתֶם
“And My spirit I will put within you, and I will bring it about that you walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:27)

II-B. The Two Oracles Side by Side

ELEMENT	EZEKIEL 11:17-21	EZEKIEL 36:24-31
Before the gift	Gathered from the peoples; the soil of Israel given; all its detestable things removed (11:17–18)	Taken from the nations and brought to their own soil; sprinkled with clean water; cleansed from all idols (36:24–25)
The heart given	<i>lev echad (one heart)</i>	<i>lev chadash (a new heart)</i>
The spirit given	A new spirit	A new spirit, and then “My spirit”
What is removed	The heart of stone, “ <i>from their flesh</i> ”	The heart of stone, “ <i>from your flesh</i> ”

ELEMENT	EZEKIEL 11:17-21	EZEKIEL 36:24-31
What is given in its place	A heart of flesh	A heart of flesh
The purpose	<i>“so that they may walk in My statutes, and keep My judgments and do them”</i> (11:20)	<i>“I will bring it about that you walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments and do them”</i> (36:27)
The covenant sentence	<i>“they shall be My people, and I will be their Elohim”</i> (11:20)	<i>“you shall be My people, and I will be your Elohim”</i> (36:28)
After the gift	Those whose heart still goes after detestable things bear their own way (11:21)	They dwell in the land given to the fathers, remember their evil ways, and loathe themselves (36:28, 31)

Three features of the two sentences govern everything that follows.

First, every verb of giving and removing belongs to **Yahweh**: *“I will give,” “I will put,” “I will remove,” “I will bring it about.”* The people are acted upon. What they do comes afterward, and it is named: they walk, they keep, they do.

Second, the purpose is written into the sentence. In the first oracle it stands behind the word *lema’an* (*so that*), לְמַעַן. In the second it is stronger: *ve’asiti et asher bechuqqai telekhu* (*and I will bring it about that you walk in My statutes*), וְעָשִׂיתִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-בְּחֻקֵּי תֵלְכּוּ. The heart of flesh is given for the statutes.

Third, the stone is taken *mibbesarkhem* (*from your flesh*), מִבְּשָׂרְכֶם. The people are flesh. The stone is the thing that does not belong in them. A heart of flesh in a body of flesh is not a strange new organ; it is the heart that fits the creature.

II-C. Where Each Oracle Stands

The first oracle closes the vision of **Ezekiel 8–11**, dated to the sixth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin (**Ezekiel 8:1**; compare **Ezekiel 1:2**), about 592 BCE. Jerusalem is still standing. Its inhabitants say of the exiles, *“Go far from Yahweh; to us this land is given for a possession”* (**Ezekiel 11:15**). **Yahweh** answers that He Himself has been to the exiles a *miqdash me’at* (*a sanctuary for a little while*), מִקְדָּשׁ קָטָן, or *“a little sanctuary,”* in the lands where they have come (**Ezekiel 11:16**), and that the future lies with them: He will gather them, give them the soil of Israel, and give them one heart (**Ezekiel 11:17–20**).

The second oracle stands after the fugitive has come with the word, *“The city is struck”* (Ezekiel 33:21), about 585 BCE. The Temple is burned and the nation is scattered. The oracle has an exact order, and the new heart is one step in it.

#	VERSES	WHAT IS SAID
1	36:17–19	The house of Israel defiled its own soil by its way and its deeds, by blood and by idols, and Yahweh scattered them among the nations.
2	36:20–21	Among the nations they profaned His holy name, because it was said of them, <i>“These are the people of Yahweh, and they have gone out of His land.”</i>
3	36:22–23	<i>“Not for your sake do I act, house of Israel, but for My holy name.”</i> He will sanctify His great name, and the nations shall know that He is Yahweh .
4	36:24	He takes them from the nations, gathers them from all the lands, and brings them to their own soil.
5	36:25	He sprinkles clean water on them and cleanses them from all their uncleannesses and from all their idols.
6	36:26–27	A new heart, a new spirit, His own spirit; the heart of stone removed; the statutes walked in.
7	36:28	They dwell in the land He gave their fathers. <i>“You shall be My people, and I will be your Elohim.”</i>
8	36:29–30	He saves them from their uncleannesses, calls for the grain, and takes away the reproach of famine.
9	36:31–32	They remember their evil ways and loathe themselves. <i>“Not for your sake do I act ... be ashamed and confounded for your ways.”</i>
10	36:33–36	The cities are inhabited and the ruins rebuilt. The desolate land becomes <i>“like the garden of Eden,”</i> and the nations round about know that Yahweh has done it.
11	36:37–38	He lets the house of Israel ask this of Him, and He multiplies them like a flock.

The new heart is not a private experience set loose from history. In both oracles it is given to a people, in a land, after a regathering, with the nations looking on.

II-D. The Witness of the Manuscripts

Because this Institution holds to the oldest text available, the manuscript record of the second oracle should be stated plainly. The oldest surviving Greek copy of this part of Ezekiel (Papyrus 967, of the late second or early third century CE) does not contain **Ezekiel 36:23b–38**, and it sets the chapters in a different order. Some scholars conclude that these verses were added to the book late; others conclude that a leaf was lost or a copyist’s eye skipped. The oldest surviving Hebrew copy is older than that papyrus: the Ezekiel scroll from Masada, buried before the fortress fell in 73 or 74 CE, preserves much of **Ezekiel 36:17–35** in the order of the standard Hebrew text. The oldest Hebrew witness therefore has the passage.

In the first oracle the standard Hebrew reads “*one heart.*” The Greek reads “*another heart,*” and a few Hebrew manuscripts and the Syriac reads “*a new heart,*” as in the second oracle. In Hebrew the words *echad* (*one*) and *acher* (*another*) differ by a single letter. None of these readings changes what is removed, what is given, or why. And the promise does not hang on one passage: both oracles carry it, and the Torah and Jeremiah carry it in other words (Section VI).

Finding — the phrases: “*the heart of stone*” and “*a heart of flesh*” are carried by Ezekiel alone, in two oracles: **Single witness** (**Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26**). The promise the phrases express — a heart changed by **Yahweh** so that His commandments are kept — is **Corroborated** (**Deuteronomy 30:6–8; Jeremiah 24:7; 32:39–40**). That either oracle names a covenant, new or old, is **Not in the text**.

III. THE WORD STUDY — WHAT THE HEBREW SAYS

The vocabulary of the two oracles is exact. The table sets out the terms this study relies on.

HEBREW TERM	STRONG’S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>lev</i> (<i>heart</i>), לֵב	H3820 (H3824)	The seat of thought, will, and decision; the inner person	Genesis 6:5; Deuteronomy 29:4; Ezekiel 36:26
<i>even</i> (<i>stone</i>), אֶבֶן	H68	Stone: of tablets, altars, witnesses, and idols	Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 4:28; Ezekiel 36:26
<i>basar</i> (<i>flesh</i>), בָּשָׂר	H1320	Flesh; the living body. Here the soft and living thing set against stone	Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26; 44:9

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>chadash (new)</i> , חָדָשׁ	H2319	New, fresh	Ezekiel 18:31; 36:26; Jeremiah 31:31
<i>echad (one)</i> , אֶחָד	H259	One, single, undivided	Ezekiel 11:19; Jeremiah 32:39; 2 Chronicles 30:12
<i>ruach (spirit)</i> , רוּחַ	H7307	Breath, wind, spirit: the disposition that moves a person, and the spirit of Yahweh	Numbers 14:24; Ezekiel 36:26–27; Psalms 51:10–11
<i>besir (to remove)</i> , הִסִּיר	H5493	From <i>sur (to turn aside)</i> : to take away, to put off	Ezekiel 11:18–19; 36:26; Jeremiah 4:4
<i>qerev (inward part / midst)</i> , קָרֵב	H7130	The inside; within a person, or among a people	Ezekiel 36:26–27; Isaiah 63:11; Psalms 51:10
<i>choq / chuqqah (statute)</i> , חֻקַּ / חֻקָּה	H2706 / H2708	A thing engraved or prescribed; a standing law	Leviticus 26:3; Ezekiel 11:20; 36:27
<i>mishpat (judgment)</i> , מִשְׁפָּט	H4941	A ruling; a just ordinance	Leviticus 18:5; Ezekiel 20:11; 36:27
<i>zaraq (to sprinkle)</i> , זָרַק	H2236	To dash or sprinkle: of blood on the altar, and of the water of purification	Numbers 19:13; Ezekiel 36:25
<i>tahor (clean)</i> , טָהוֹר	H2889	Clean, pure	Ezekiel 36:25; Psalms 51:10
<i>gillulim (idols)</i> , גִּלּוּלִים	H1544	Ezekiel's word of contempt for idols	Ezekiel 14:3; 20:16; 36:25
<i>qesbeh oref (stiff of neck)</i> , קִשְׁיָה עֹרֵף	H7186 + H6203	The neck that will not bend to the yoke	Exodus 32:9; Deuteronomy 9:6
<i>biqsbab (to harden)</i> , הִקְשִׁיבָה	H7185	To make hard or stiff: of the neck and of the heart	Exodus 7:3; Deuteronomy 10:16; Psalms 95:8
<i>chazaq (strong / hard)</i> , חֲזָק	H2389 (verb H2388)	Strong, firm; of a heart, unyielding	Exodus 7:13; Ezekiel 2:4; 3:7

HEBREW TERM	STRONG'S	CORE MEANING	KEY TEXT
<i>kaved (to be heavy)</i> , כָּבֵד	H3513	Heavy, dull; of a heart or an ear that will not respond	Exodus 8:15; 1 Samuel 6:6; Zechariah 7:11
<i>arel (uncircumcised)</i> , עָרֵל	H6189 (H6190)	Having a foreskin; of a heart, closed over	Leviticus 26:41; Jeremiah 9:26 [Hebrew 9:25]; Ezekiel 44:9
<i>shamir (adamant)</i> , שָׁמִיר	H8068	The hardest stone; used for an engraving point	Jeremiah 17:1; Ezekiel 3:9; Zechariah 7:12
<i>sherirut lev (stubbornness of heart)</i> , שְׁרִירוּת לֵב	H8307	The heart that walks by its own counsel	Deuteronomy 29:19; Jeremiah 7:24; Psalms 81:12
<i>rakh (tender)</i> , רַךְ	H7401	Soft, tender; of a heart that yields	2 Kings 22:19; 2 Chronicles 34:27
<i>miqdash me'at (a sanctuary for a little while)</i> , מִקְדָּשׁ מְעַט	H4720 + H4592	What Yahweh says He has been to the exiles in the lands of their scattering	Ezekiel 11:16

Five lexical observations govern what follows.

First, the *lev (heart)* in the Tanakh is not the seat of feeling only. The heart thinks, plans, knows, and chooses: “*every inclination of the thoughts of his heart*” (Genesis 6:5); “*a heart to know*” (Deuteronomy 29:4 [Hebrew 29:3]); and Solomon asks for *lev shomea (a hearing heart)*, לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ (1 Kings 3:9). A heart of stone is therefore not a lack of emotion. It is a mind and a will that do not hear.

Second, *even (stone)* is not a bad word. The tablets written by the finger of **Elohim** were stone (Exodus 31:18). The altar was built of whole stones (Deuteronomy 27:6). Joshua set up a stone as a witness (Joshua 24:26–27). What stone cannot do is hear, feel, or turn. The gods of the nations are “*wood and stone, which do not see, and do not hear*” (Deuteronomy 4:28), and the idol is “*a silent stone*” (Habakkuk 2:19). Stone is right for a tablet and wrong for a heart.

Third, *basar (flesh)* is a good word here. Elsewhere it can stand for weakness: “*their horses are flesh, and not spirit*” (Isaiah 31:3). In Ezekiel the contrast is not flesh against spirit. It is flesh against stone, the living against the dead. The heart of flesh and the new spirit are given together, in one sentence, by the same hand.

Fourth, the first oracle says *lev echad (one heart)* and the second says *lev chadash (a new heart)*. One heart is an undivided heart:

“I will give them one heart and one way, to fear Me all the days” (Jeremiah 32:39);

“unite my heart to fear Your name” (Psalms 86:11).

Its opposite is the heart of **Psalms 12:2** [Hebrew 12:3], which speaks *belev valev (with a heart and a heart)*, and of **Hosea 10:2**: *“their heart is divided.”* The phrase *lev chadash (a new heart)* occurs only twice in the Tanakh, and both are in Ezekiel: once as a promise (**Ezekiel 36:26**) and once as a command (**Ezekiel 18:31**).

Fifth, *chuqqai (My statutes)*, חֻקִּים, and *mishpatai (My judgments)*, מִשְׁפָּטִים, are the standing words for the laws given through Moses (**Leviticus 18:4–5; 26:3; Malachi 4:4** [Hebrew 3:22]). Ezekiel uses the same pair for the law given in the wilderness:

“I gave them My statutes, and My judgments I made known to them, which if a man does, he shall live by them” (Ezekiel 20:11).

The possessive is **Yahweh’s**. No other body of law is in view.

IV. WHAT IS A HEART OF STONE?

IV-A. What a Stone Does Not Do

Ezekiel does not stop to define the phrase, so the Tanakh’s own use of the picture must define it. Three texts set a heart beside a stone, or a person beside a stone.

“And his heart died within him, and he became a stone.” (1 Samuel 25:37)

This is said of Nabal, the man who would not listen to anyone (**1 Samuel 25:17**). He was still breathing; he lived ten days more. But nothing reached him.

“His heart is cast hard as a stone, cast hard as the lower millstone.” (Job 41:24 [Hebrew 41:16])

This is said of Leviathan, whom no weapon moves and no plea softens. And at the sea Moses sings that the peoples *“are still as a stone”* while Israel passes over (**Exodus 15:16**). In each case the stone stands for the same thing. A stone does not hear what is said to it, does not feel what touches it, and does not turn. A heart of stone is a heart that is alive in the body and dead to the word.

IV-B. The Heart Ezekiel Was Sent To

Ezekiel was told what kind of heart he would meet before he spoke his first oracle.

“And the sons are hard of face and strong of heart; I am sending you to them.” (Ezekiel 2:4)

“But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to Me; for all the house of Israel are strong of forehead and hard of heart.” (Ezekiel 3:7)

The Hebrew is *chizqei lev* (*strong of heart*), חֲזִקֵי־לֵב, and *qeshei lev* (*hard of heart*), קִשְׁי־לֵב. The mark of this heart is stated in the same breath: it is not willing to listen. The rest of the book fills in the picture.

They are a house of rebellion, ***“who have eyes to see and do not see, who have ears to hear and do not hear”*** (Ezekiel 12:2).

They come and sit before the prophet as a people comes, ***“and they hear your words, and they do not do them ... their heart goes after their gain”*** (Ezekiel 33:31).

And the thing the heart goes after is named again and again:

“Son of man, these men have set up their idols upon their heart.” (Ezekiel 14:3)

Ezekiel speaks of ***“their whoring heart, which has turned aside from Me”*** (Ezekiel 6:9), and of the wilderness generation he says, ***“their heart went after their idols”*** (Ezekiel 20:16).

In this book the heart that will not hear and the heart that has an idol set upon it are the same heart.

IV-C. Like What It Serves

The exiles said what they wanted to become:

“We will be like the nations, like the families of the lands, to serve wood and stone.” (Ezekiel 20:32)

The Torah had warned that in the lands of their scattering they would serve ***“the work of man’s hands, wood and stone, which do not see, and do not hear, and do not eat, and do not smell”*** (Deuteronomy 4:28).

And the Psalms state the rule that joins the idol to the worshiper:

“Those who make them shall be like them, everyone who trusts in them.” (Psalms 115:8; 135:18)

A person that serves stone becomes like stone: it has ears and does not hear. That is why both oracles deal with the idols first. In the first, the returning exiles ***“shall remove all its detestable things and all its abominations”*** from the land, and then the heart of stone is removed (Ezekiel 11:18–19). In the second, ***“from all your idols I will cleanse you,”*** and then the heart of stone is removed (Ezekiel

36:25–26). The same verb is used for both removals in the first oracle: *besiru* (*they shall remove*) the abominations, and *hasiroti* (*I will remove*) the stone.

IV-D. One Condition, Many Names

The phrase “*heart of stone*” belongs to Ezekiel. The condition does not. The Tanakh names it with a whole family of pictures, and each of them is a hardness.

THE PICTURE	HEBREW	SAID OF	TEXT
A stiff neck	<i>qesheh oref</i> (<i>stiff of neck</i>)	Israel at the calf, and after	Exodus 32:9; 33:3, 5; Deuteronomy 9:6
A hardened heart	<i>biqshab</i> (<i>to harden</i>)	Pharaoh; Israel at Meribah; King Zedekiah	Exodus 7:3; Psalms 95:8; 2 Chronicles 36:13
A strong heart	<i>chazaq</i> (<i>strong / hard</i>)	Pharaoh; the house of Israel in Ezekiel’s day	Exodus 7:13; Ezekiel 2:4
A heavy heart, heavy ears	<i>kaved</i> (<i>to be heavy</i>)	Pharaoh; the fathers before the exile	Exodus 8:15 [Hebrew 8:11]; 1 Samuel 6:6; Zechariah 7:11
A fat heart	<i>hashmen</i> (<i>make fat</i>)	“ <i>This people</i> ,” in Isaiah’s commission; the arrogant	Isaiah 6:10; Psalms 119:70
An uncircumcised heart	<i>arel lev</i> (<i>uncircumcised of heart</i>)	Israel in the land of its enemies; all the house of Israel	Leviticus 26:41; Jeremiah 9:26
A stubborn heart	<i>sherirut lev</i> (<i>stubbornness of heart</i>)	The man who blesses himself; the fathers	Deuteronomy 29:19 [Hebrew 29:18]; Jeremiah 7:24
A heart of adamant	<i>lev shamir</i> (<i>a heart of adamant</i>)	The fathers who would not hear the Torah	Zechariah 7:12
A heart of stone	<i>lev ha-even</i> (<i>the heart of stone</i>)	The house of Israel in exile	Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26

The nearest text to Ezekiel’s phrase was spoken after the exile, looking back at the fathers:

“But they refused to pay attention, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and made their ears heavy so as not to hear. And they made their heart adamant, so as not to hear the Torah and the words which Yahweh of hosts sent by His spirit through the former prophets.” (Zechariah 7:11–12)

Shamir (adamant) is the hardest stone the Tanakh knows; it is the point that engraves (Jeremiah 17:1). Zechariah says three things about the heart made of it. It was made hard against one thing: hearing the Torah. The people made it so: *samu (they made)*, שָׁמוּ. And the word they shut out had come *“by His spirit.”* The stone is not the Torah. The stone is what the heart became in order not to hear the Torah.

IV-E. Who Makes the Heart Hard?

The Tanakh speaks in two voices here, and it does not flatten them. Pharaoh made his own heart heavy (Exodus 8:15, 32 [Hebrew 8:11, 28]; 9:34), and Yahweh made Pharaoh’s heart strong (Exodus 9:12). Israel hardened its own heart (Psalms 95:8; Zechariah 7:12; 2 Chronicles 36:13), and Isaiah lets the people cry,

“Why, Yahweh, do You make us stray from Your ways, and harden our heart from fearing You?” (Isaiah 63:17).

Of the one who would not listen, the Psalm says, *“So I sent them away in the stubbornness of their heart, to walk in their own counsels”* (Psalms 81:12 [Hebrew 81:13]).

In no case is the hard heart treated as an excuse: Pharaoh *“sinned yet more, and made his heart heavy”* (Exodus 9:34).

And in Pharaoh’s case the account shows him making his own heart heavy before it says that Yahweh made it strong.

Finding — the heart of stone: in the Tanakh a heart like stone is a heart that will not hear the word of Yahweh and will not turn. Corroborated (Ezekiel 2:4; 3:7; Zechariah 7:11–12; Psalms 95:8). That it is bound up with the idols the heart has taken to itself is Corroborated (Ezekiel 14:3; 20:16; 36:25–26; Psalms 115:8). That the *“stone”* of these oracles is the Torah, the tablets, or the commandments is **Not in the text.**

V. DID THOSE WHO STOOD AT SINAI HAVE A HEART OF STONE?

V-A. What the Torah Says of That Generation

Ezekiel's phrase is spoken to the exiles, not to the generation of the wilderness. But the Torah has its own words for the heart of the people who came out of Egypt, and it uses them from the first weeks at the mountain to the last day of Moses.

At the giving of the words. The people said to Moses, *“we will hear, and we will do”* (Deuteronomy 5:27 [Hebrew 5:24]). **Yahweh** said of those words:

“Oh that there were such a heart in them, to fear Me and to keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!” (Deuteronomy 5:29 [Hebrew 5:26])

At the calf. Within forty days: *“I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people”* (Exodus 32:9). The charge is repeated three times in the chapters that follow (Exodus 33:3, 5; 34:9).

At the end of forty years. Moses says it without softening:

“But Yahweh has not given you a heart to know, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, to this day.” (Deuteronomy 29:4 [Hebrew 29:3])

He tells them, *“You have been rebellious against Yahweh from the day I knew you”* (Deuteronomy 9:24), and *“I know your rebellion and your stiff neck”* (Deuteronomy 31:27).

He tells them what the forty years were for: *“to humble you, to test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not”* (Deuteronomy 8:2).

And he gives the command that names the cure:

“Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and stiffen your neck no more.” (Deuteronomy 10:16)

V-B. What the Prophets and the Psalms Say, Looking Back

Later generations were taught to see their own danger in the wilderness.

“Today, if you would hear His voice, do not harden your heart as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers tested Me ... Forty years I loathed that generation, and I said, ‘They are a people who stray in heart, and they have not known My ways.’” (Psalms 95:7–10)

The verb is *taqshu* (*harden*), תַּקַּשׁ, the verb of the stiff neck, here used of the heart. **Psalms 78:8** calls the fathers *“a generation that did not set its heart aright, and whose spirit was not faithful to El.”*

Nehemiah’s prayer says, *“they and our fathers acted presumptuously, and stiffened their neck, and did not listen to Your commandments”* (Nehemiah 9:16).

Jeremiah says that from the day the fathers came out of Egypt *“they did not listen ... and they walked in the stubbornness of their evil heart”* (Jeremiah 7:24–26).

Ezekiel himself draws the line from the exiles back to the wilderness. In the history he recites to the elders he says:

“But the house of Israel rebelled against Me in the wilderness. They did not walk in My statutes, and they rejected My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them, and My Sabbaths they greatly profaned ... for their heart went after their idols.” (Ezekiel 20:13, 16)

These are the words of the two oracles: heart, idols, statutes, judgments. The heart Ezekiel is sent to in Babylon is, by his own account, the heart of the wilderness carried forward. The prophet who alone says *“heart of stone”* is also the prophet who says that this heart began at the foot of the mountain.

V-C. Not the Whole Generation

The Torah does not say that every person who stood at Sinai had such a heart, and it takes care to name those who did not.

“But My servant Caleb, because there was another spirit with him, and he followed Me fully — him I will bring into the land.” (Numbers 14:24)

The words are *ruach acheret* (*another spirit*), רוּחַ אַחֵרֶת. Joshua is *“a man in whom is spirit”* (Numbers 27:18), and of Caleb and Joshua together it is said that *“they followed Yahweh fully”* (Numbers 32:12). The spirit rested on seventy elders, and they prophesied (Numbers 11:25). When the offering for the tabernacle was called for, it was brought by *“everyone whose heart lifted him, and everyone whose spirit made him willing”* (Exodus 35:21; compare Exodus 35:5, 22, 29).

Nor does the Tanakh say that the spirit of **Yahweh** was withheld from that generation. Nehemiah’s prayer says of the wilderness, *“You gave Your good spirit to instruct them”* (Nehemiah 9:20).

Isaiah asks, *“Where is He who put His holy spirit within him?”* and says of the same people, *“they rebelled and grieved His holy spirit”* (Isaiah 63:10–11).

Haggai recalls *“the word which I cut with you when you came out of Egypt, and My spirit stands in your midst”* (Haggai 2:5).

The hard heart, then, was not built into the people by their Maker, and it was not a feature of the covenant they were given. In the same camp, under the same covenant, with the same words in their ears, one man had a stiff neck and another had another spirit.

V-D. Two Kinds of Stone at Sinai

There was stone at Sinai that **Yahweh** Himself provided:

“And the tablets were the work of Elohim, and the writing was the writing of Elohim, engraved on the tablets.” (Exodus 32:16)

He called them *“the tablets of stone, and the Torah and the commandment, which I have written to teach them”* (Exodus 24:12).

When the first were broken He wrote the same words again (Deuteronomy 10:2–4), and they were laid in the ark (Deuteronomy 10:5). Stone was chosen for the tablets for the reason it is wrong for a heart: it does not change. Nothing in the Tanakh treats the stone of the tablets as a fault.

Joshua later set up a great stone under the oak at Shechem and said, *“Behold, this stone shall be a witness against us, for it has heard all the words of Yahweh which He spoke with us”* (Joshua 24:27).

The book can speak of a stone that was heard. The prophets speak of a people that did not. And Jeremiah says what had been written on the people instead: “The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with a point of adamant it is engraved on the tablet of their heart” (Jeremiah 17:1). Doc 281 (Section V-E) treated that verse.

So there were two kinds of stone at Sinai. One was the tablet, the work of Elohim, and it was good. The other was the heart, the work of the people, and it was the trouble. Ezekiel’s promise removes the second. It does not touch the first.

Finding — Sinai: the phrase “heart of stone” is not used of the generation at Sinai; as a phrase said of them it is Not in the text.

The condition it names — a stiff neck, a hardened and uncircumcised heart, a heart that does not know — is charged to that generation by the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings: **Corroborated** (Exodus 32:9; Deuteronomy 10:16; 29:4; Psalms 95:8–10; Ezekiel 20:13–16).

That every person of that generation had such a heart is **Not in the text** (Numbers 14:24; Exodus 35:21).

That the fault lay in the covenant, in the tablets, or in the statutes is **Not in the text**: the tablets are the work of Elohim (Exodus 32:16), and the statutes are those *“which if a man does, he shall live by them”* (Ezekiel 20:11; Leviticus 18:5).

VI. THE HEART OF FLESH — WHAT YAHWEH SAYS HE WILL DO

VI-A. Clean Water First

The second oracle does not begin with the heart. It begins with water: *“And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean”* (Ezekiel 36:25). The verb is *zaraq* (to sprinkle), and it is the Torah’s own word for the water that cleanses a person who has touched death: he remains unclean *“because the water of impurity was not sprinkled upon him”* (Numbers 19:13, 20). Ezekiel had already named the people’s condition in those terms: *“their way before Me was like the uncleanness of a woman in her impurity”* (Ezekiel 36:17). Ezekiel was a priest (Ezekiel 1:3), and he describes Yahweh doing for the whole nation what the Torah’s water does for one unclean person. No new rite is introduced. The cleansing is *“from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols.”*

VI-B. Commanded, and Promised

Before Ezekiel ever spoke the promise, he spoke the same words as a command, to exiles then living:

“Cast away from you all your transgressions by which you have transgressed, and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, house of Israel?” (Ezekiel 18:31)

The words are the same: *lev chadash* (a new heart) and *ruach chadashah* (a new spirit). In chapter 18 the people are told to make them. In chapter 36 Yahweh says He will give them. The Tanakh does this more than once.

COMMANDED	PROMISED
<i>“Make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit”</i> (Ezekiel 18:31)	<i>“I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you”</i> (Ezekiel 36:26)
<i>“Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart”</i> (Deuteronomy 10:16)	<i>“Yahweh your Elohim will circumcise your heart”</i> (Deuteronomy 30:6)
<i>“Remove the foreskins of your heart”</i> (Jeremiah 4:4)	<i>“I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh”</i> (Ezekiel 36:26)

COMMANDED	PROMISED
<i>“They shall remove all its detestable things”</i> (Ezekiel 11:18)	<i>“From all your idols I will cleanse you”</i> (Ezekiel 36:25)
<i>“Return, and turn from all your transgressions”</i> (Ezekiel 18:30)	<i>“Turn me, and I shall be turned”</i> (Jeremiah 31:18)

In the third row the verb is the same on both sides: *basiru* (*remove*) in Jeremiah’s command, and *hasiroti* (*I will remove*) in Ezekiel’s promise. The command is not withdrawn when the promise is given, and the promise is not earned by keeping the command: *“Not for your sake do I act”* (Ezekiel 36:22, 32). Doc 281 (Section X-B) set out the two voices and declined to reduce them to a formula. This study follows it.

VI-C. A New Spirit, and My Spirit

The second oracle names two spirits.

The first is *ruach chadashah* (a new spirit): the person’s own spirit, the disposition that moves him, made new.

It is what Caleb had when the rest did not (Numbers 14:24), and what David asks for: *“renew a steadfast spirit within me”* (Psalms 51:10 [Hebrew 51:12]).

The second is *ruchi* (My spirit), רוחי, the spirit of Yahweh Himself, and it is this that is tied to the statutes:

“And My spirit I will put within you, and I will bring it about that you walk in My statutes” (Ezekiel 36:27).

Ezekiel returns to it twice. In the valley of the bones:

“I will put My spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will set you on your own soil” (Ezekiel 37:14).

And at the end of the restoration oracles: *“I will no longer hide My face from them, for I will have poured out My spirit upon the house of Israel”* (Ezekiel 39:29).

Isaiah and Joel carry the same promise (Isaiah 44:3; 59:21; Joel 2:28 [Hebrew 3:1]).

The gift of the spirit is not new in kind. It was given in the wilderness (Nehemiah 9:20; Isaiah 63:11), and David had it and feared to lose it: *“do not take Your holy spirit from me”* (Psalms

51:11 [Hebrew 51:13]). What is promised is its reach and its staying; on the whole house of Israel, with His face no longer hidden.

VI-D. The Statutes: Ezekiel Quotes Leviticus

The purpose clause of the two oracles is not Ezekiel's own wording. It is the opening line of the covenant blessings of Leviticus, turned from a condition into a promise.

אם־בְּחֻקֵּי תִלְכוּ וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתֵי תִשְׁמְרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם

“If you walk in My statutes, and keep My commandments, and do them,” (Leviticus 26:3)

וַעֲשִׂיתִי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־בְּחֻקֵּי תִלְכוּ וּמִשְׁפָּטֵי תִשְׁמְרוּ וַעֲשִׂיתֶם

“and I will bring it about that you walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My judgments and do them.” (Ezekiel 36:27)

The verbs are the same and stand in the same order: walk, keep, do. Leviticus begins with *im* (*if*), אם. Ezekiel begins with *ve’asiti* (*and I will bring it about*). The blessing that follows the “*if*” in Leviticus ends with the covenant sentence: *“I will be your Elohim, and you shall be My people”* (Leviticus 26:12). Both oracles end with the same sentence (Ezekiel 11:20; 36:28).

The meaning is plain. At Sinai the covenant said: if you walk in My statutes, you will be My people in the land. The people did not, because the heart would not hear.

In the days to come **Yahweh** does not lower the “*if*.” He gives the heart that meets it. The statutes are the ones Ezekiel named in the wilderness history: *“My statutes ... My judgments ... My Sabbaths”* (Ezekiel 20:11–12).

What was refused there (Ezekiel 20:13) is done here.

VI-E. The Tender Heart Was Never Unknown

If a heart of flesh is a heart that hears and yields, the Tanakh shows such hearts long before the exile ended. Of King Josiah, when the book of the Torah was read to him:

“Because your heart was tender, and you humbled yourself before Yahweh when you heard what I spoke against this place ... and you tore your garments and wept before Me, I also have heard, says Yahweh.” (2 Kings 22:19)

The word is *rakh* (*tender*), the opposite of every word in the table of Section IV-D. David offers “*a broken and crushed heart*” and is sure it will not be despised (Psalms 51:17 [Hebrew 51:19]).

Yahweh looks “*to the one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and who trembles at My word*” (Isaiah 66:2).

And in Jerusalem itself, in the very vision that ends with the first oracle, there were *“the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations”* done in the city, and they were marked and spared (Ezekiel 9:4).

Finding — the heart of flesh: Yahweh promises to remove the heart of stone from the house of Israel and to give one heart, a new heart, a heart of flesh, with a new spirit and His own spirit. Corroborated (Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26–27; Jeremiah 32:39–40; Deuteronomy 30:6).

Its stated purpose is the keeping of His statutes and judgments: Corroborated (Ezekiel 11:20; 36:27; Deuteronomy 30:8).

That the new heart is commanded as well as promised is Corroborated (Ezekiel 18:31; Deuteronomy 10:16; Jeremiah 4:4).

That a hearing heart and the spirit of Yahweh were unknown before a later age is Not in the text (2 Kings 22:19; Numbers 14:24; Nehemiah 9:20; Psalms 51:11).

VII. THE SAME TORAH IN TWO HEARTS

VII-A. What Changes and What Does Not

The second question asks how the Torah is different in a heart of flesh. The text answers by showing what stands on each side of the change.

ELEMENT	IN A HEART OF STONE	IN A HEART OF FLESH
The Torah itself	<i>“My statutes ... My judgments”</i> (Ezekiel 20:11)	<i>“My statutes ... My judgments”</i> (Ezekiel 36:27) — the same
Hearing	Spoken and not heard: <i>“they made their heart adamant, so as not to hear the Torah”</i> (Zechariah 7:12)	Heard and done: <i>“you shall return and hear the voice of Yahweh, and do all His commandments”</i> (Deuteronomy 30:8)
Where the Torah is	On the lips and far from the heart; the heart is engraved with sin (Isaiah 29:13; Jeremiah 17:1)	<i>“The Torah of his Elohim is in his heart”</i> (Psalms 37:31; compare Psalms 40:8 [Hebrew 40:9])
What rules the heart	Idols, gain, and its own counsel (Ezekiel 14:3; 33:31; Jeremiah 7:24)	<i>“My fear in their heart, so that they shall not turn aside from Me”</i> (Jeremiah 32:40)

ELEMENT	IN A HEART OF STONE	IN A HEART OF FLESH
How the commandment is felt	<i>“What weariness!”</i> (Malachi 1:13); <i>“When will the new moon be over ... and the Sabbath?”</i> (Amos 8:5)	<i>“I delight to do Your will”</i> (Psalms 40:8); <i>“I will run the way of Your commandments, for You enlarge my heart”</i> (Psalms 119:32)
What obedience is	<i>“A commandment of men, learned by rote”</i> (Isaiah 29:13)	Love <i>“with all your heart and with all your soul”</i> (Deuteronomy 30:6)
Where it ends	The covenant broken, the land defiled, the people scattered (Ezekiel 36:17–19)	The statutes kept, the land inhabited, <i>“you shall be My people”</i> (Ezekiel 36:27–28)

The first row does not change. Every other row does. **The Torah is not different in a heart of flesh. The heart is different. What the hard heart hears as a weight laid on it from outside, the tender heart hears as the voice of the One it fears and loves. The words are the same words.**

VII-B. Why the Torah Is Not Lowered

It would have been possible to mend the breach from the other side: to keep the hard heart and lighten the statutes. **The Tanakh never takes that road.**

Of the Torah it says, *“The Torah of Yahweh is perfect, restoring the soul”* (Psalms 19:7 [Hebrew 19:8]).

Of the statutes Ezekiel says three times that a man who does them shall live by them (Ezekiel 20:11, 13, 21).

Moses forbids adding to the word or taking from it (Deuteronomy 4:2), and the last of the Prophets tells Israel to remember *“the Torah of Moses My servant ... statutes and judgments”* (Malachi 4:4 [Hebrew 3:22]).

The fault was located in the heart (Deuteronomy 5:29), and that is where the remedy is applied.

Ezekiel’s own picture of the restored people confirms it.

They have one shepherd, *“and they shall walk in My judgments, and keep My statutes and do them”* (Ezekiel 37:24).

The priests *“shall keep My laws and My statutes in all My appointed times, and they shall sanctify My Sabbaths”* (Ezekiel 44:24).

And no foreigner “uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh” enters the sanctuary (Ezekiel 44:9).

Ezekiel does not set the heart against the flesh, or the inward against the outward. He asks for both.

VII-C. Who Has the Heart of Flesh Today?

The question was put as *“in us today.”* The text requires three things to be said, and all three must be kept.

First: the oracle is a promise to a nation. It is spoken to “the house of Israel” (Ezekiel 36:22, 32, 37). It follows their gathering from all the lands and is followed by their dwelling in the land of their fathers (Ezekiel 36:24, 28). By the marks the passage gives, that work is not finished (Section IX). No assembly, this one included, may say that Ezekiel 36 has been fulfilled in itself.

Second: the call is open to every person now.

The command stands: *“make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit”* (Ezekiel 18:31).

The prayer stands: *“Create in me a clean heart, O Elobim”* (Psalms 51:10).

The Tanakh shows people who had such a heart in their own day, under the covenant of Sinai: Caleb, David, Josiah. The sojourner is not shut out (Ezekiel 47:22–23).

Third: the passage gives its own test, and it cuts both ways.

A heart of flesh walks in His statutes (Ezekiel 36:27).

Whoever says he has the new heart and sets the statutes aside is answered by that verse.

And a heart of flesh remembers its own ways and is ashamed of them: “you shall loathe yourselves for your iniquities ... be ashamed and confounded for your ways” (Ezekiel 36:31–32).

Whoever keeps the statutes and looks down on his neighbor is answered by that verse.

VII-D. Can a Softened Heart Harden Again?

For the individual, the Tanakh says yes.

Saul was given another heart (1 Samuel 10:9) and ended by rejecting the word of Yahweh (1 Samuel 15:23).

Ezekiel says that when a righteous man turns from his righteousness, “all his righteous deeds which he has done shall not be remembered” (Ezekiel 18:24; 33:13).

And Psalms 95:7–8 speaks of its warning to people who are already at worship: “Today, if you would hear His voice, do not harden your heart.”

The Proverbs say the same of any man: “Blessed is the man who fears always, but he who hardens his heart shall fall into evil” (Proverbs 28:14).

For the nation in the days to come, the promise is that it will not happen again: “I will put My fear in their heart, so that they shall not turn aside from Me” (Jeremiah 32:40); “I will no longer hide My face from them” (Ezekiel 39:29).

Finding — the Torah in two hearts: that the statutes and judgments are the same before and after the change of heart is Corroborated (Ezekiel 20:11; 36:27; 37:24; Leviticus 26:3).

That the change lies in the hearer — hearing, delight, an undivided heart, the fear of Yahweh — is Corroborated (Deuteronomy 30:6–8; Jeremiah 32:39–40; Psalms 40:8).

That the Torah is lightened, shortened, or replaced for a heart of flesh is **Not in the text.**

That a person may seek and receive a hearing heart now is Corroborated (Ezekiel 18:31; Psalms 51:10; 2 Kings 22:19).

That any community may declare the oracle to the house of Israel fulfilled in itself is **Not in the text.**

VIII. THE CLAIM TESTED — A NEW COVENANT AT THE CROSS?

VIII-A. The Teaching, Stated Fairly

Most churches teach, in one form or another, that Ezekiel’s promise was fulfilled in the first century:

That Yeshua by his death established a new covenant; that the Spirit was then given to those who believe in him; that each believer receives the new heart at conversion; and that with this the covenant of Sinai, in whole or in part, came to its end. The churches do not all teach the last point in the same way. Some hold that the whole Torah of Moses has ended for believers. Some keep what they call the moral law and say the rest has ended. Some hold that Ezekiel 36 still waits to be fulfilled for Israel as a nation.

The texts and confessions from which this is taught are listed in the Comparative Texts table and weighed in Section X. They carry no authority here. In this section the teaching is tested against the two oracles themselves.

The question is narrow and fair: **is it in the text?**

VIII-B. Seven Tests

#	WHAT THE TEACHING NEEDS	WHAT THE TWO ORACLES SAY	GRADE
1	A new covenant, named in these passages	The word <i>berit (covenant)</i> does not occur in either oracle. Where Ezekiel does speak of the covenant to come, he says, <i>“I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish for you an everlasting covenant”</i> (Ezekiel 16:60), and he joins the covenant of peace to the keeping of the statutes (Ezekiel 37:24–26).	Not in the text
2	A covenant in which the statutes of Moses are set aside	The purpose of the new heart is stated twice: <i>“so that they may walk in My statutes”</i> (Ezekiel 11:20); <i>“I will bring it about that you walk in My statutes”</i> (Ezekiel 36:27). The wording is that of Leviticus 26:3.	Not in the text
3	A new people as the ones addressed	The oracle is spoken to <i>“the house of Israel”</i> (Ezekiel 36:22, 32, 37), gathered from the nations to <i>“your own soil,”</i> to dwell in <i>“the land that I gave to your fathers”</i> (Ezekiel 36:24, 28). The first oracle is spoken to <i>“all the house of Israel, all of it”</i> (Ezekiel 11:15).	Not in the text
4	A death as the means	The means named are clean water and the spirit of Yahweh, and the ground named is <i>“My holy name”</i> (Ezekiel 36:22–27). No sacrifice, no death, and no mediator is named. The same prophet says, <i>“The soul that sins, it shall die. A son shall not bear the iniquity of the father”</i> (Ezekiel 18:20; compare Deuteronomy 24:16), and when Moses offered himself for the people he was answered, <i>“Whoever has sinned against Me, him I will blot out of My book”</i> (Exodus 32:32–33).	Not in the text

#	WHAT THE TEACHING NEEDS	WHAT THE TWO ORACLES SAY	GRADE
5	A fulfilment in the first century	The order is fixed: gathered to the land, then cleansed, then the new heart, then the land inhabited and <i>“like the garden of Eden,”</i> with the nations knowing who has done it (Ezekiel 36:24–36). In the first century Judah was in its land under foreign rule, and within a generation the city was struck again and the people scattered. That is the order reversed.	Not in the text
6	An end of sanctuary, priesthood, offerings, and Sabbath	Ezekiel’s restored order has the sanctuary <i>“in their midst forever”</i> (Ezekiel 37:26–28); priests, the sons of Zadok, who keep <i>“My statutes in all My appointed times”</i> and sanctify <i>“My Sabbaths”</i> (Ezekiel 44:15, 24); a prince who provides the sin offering <i>“to make atonement for the house of Israel”</i> (Ezekiel 45:17); and the people bowing before Yahweh <i>“on the Sabbaths and on the new moons”</i> (Ezekiel 46:3).	Not in the text
7	That the new heart and the spirit were not to be had before	The new heart is commanded to the exiles then living (Ezekiel 18:31). David asks for a clean heart and has the holy spirit (Psalms 51:10–11). Josiah’s heart was tender (2 Kings 22:19). Caleb had another spirit, and the good spirit was given in the wilderness (Numbers 14:24; Nehemiah 9:20).	Not in the text

VIII-C. “Stone” Is Not the Torah

The teaching often rests on a picture: tablets of stone on one side, hearts of flesh on the other; a written law that could only condemn, and a spirit that gives life.

That picture is not Ezekiel’s. In Ezekiel the stone is the heart, and it is taken *“from your flesh.”* The tablets are not mentioned, and nothing is said against them. What was engraved on them is exactly what the new heart is given to do: “My statutes ... My judgments.”

Nor does Ezekiel set the spirit against the statutes. In his sentence the two are on the same side:

“My spirit I will put within you, and I will bring it about that you walk in My statutes” (**Ezekiel 36:27**).

The spirit is given so that the statutes are kept. Zechariah says the Torah and the words of the prophets were themselves sent *“by His spirit”* (Zechariah 7:12). In the Tanakh the contrast is never between the Torah and the spirit. It is between two hearts that hear the same Torah.

VIII-D. *“Statutes That Were Not Good”*

One verse of Ezekiel is sometimes brought to show that the law of Sinai was itself defective:

“And I also gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments by which they could not live.” (Ezekiel 20:25)

The chapter answers the reading. Of the law given in the wilderness **Yahweh** has just said,

“I gave them chuqqotai (My statutes), and My judgments I made known to them, which if a man does, he shall live by them” (Ezekiel 20:11).

To the children He said, *“Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers ... walk in My statutes”* (Ezekiel 20:18–19).

The verse in question does not say *“My statutes.”* It says *chuqqim lo tovim (statutes not good)*, חֻקִּים לֹא טוֹבִים, with no *“My,”* and the next verse says what they were: *“I defiled them by their gifts, in their making every firstborn pass over”* (Ezekiel 20:26), the offering of children that the Torah forbids (Leviticus 18:21; Deuteronomy 12:31; compare Ezekiel 20:31).

This is the judgment of **Psalms 81:12**: a people that will not have His statutes is sent away to the statutes it has chosen. It is one more picture of the heart of stone. It is not a verdict on the Torah.

VIII-E. What the Teaching Has Right

The test must be even-handed. The churches are right that Ezekiel promises a real change and not a figure of speech; right that the change is the act of **Yahweh** and is not earned (Ezekiel 36:22, 32); and right that a people can hold the Torah in its hands for centuries and still not hear it. A reader who is anxious to defend the Torah may be tempted to say that nothing is promised here that Israel did not already have. The text does not allow that either. Moses said, *“Yahweh has not given you a heart to know ... to this day”* (Deuteronomy 29:4), and Ezekiel says that He will.

Finding — the claim: that Yahweh will change the heart of His people by His own act, for His name’s sake, is Corroborated (Ezekiel 36:22–27; Deuteronomy 30:6; Jeremiah 24:7).

That these oracles announce a covenant which replaces the covenant of Sinai is Not in the text: the word is absent, and the covenant sentence and the statutes are those of Sinai (Ezekiel 11:20; 36:27–28; Leviticus 26:3, 12).

That the new heart is given by means of a death is **Not in the text**. That the oracle was fulfilled in the first century, or in a people other than the house of Israel, is **Not in the text**.

IX. HAS THE PROMISE COME?

The Tanakh tests a word by whether it comes to pass (**Deuteronomy 18:21–22**). The two oracles and their companions state their own marks, and each can be looked for.

#	MARK	TEXT	CONDITION NOW
1	The house of Israel taken from the nations and brought to its own soil	Ezekiel 11:17; 36:24	A return under Cyrus and a modern return; the whole house of Israel is not gathered (Doc 259)
2	All detestable things and idols removed; the people defiled by them no more	Ezekiel 11:18; 36:25; 37:23	Not true of any nation
3	The people walk in His statutes and keep His judgments	Ezekiel 11:20; 36:27; 37:24	Not true of any nation
4	They dwell in the land given to the fathers, without famine or reproach	Ezekiel 36:28–30	Not yet
5	They remember their own evil ways and loathe themselves for them	Ezekiel 36:31–32	Not yet seen in any nation
6	The desolate land like the garden of Eden; the nations round about know that Yahweh has done it	Ezekiel 36:35–36	Not yet
7	His spirit poured out on the house of Israel; His face no longer hidden	Ezekiel 39:29	Not yet

Doc 281 (Section X) reached the same result from the marks of **Jeremiah 31**.

The two prophets describe one restoration, and by its own terms it has not yet been established in its fullness with the house of Israel. Any claim that it has already come, made by any community, must be measured by these marks and not by the word of that community.

Finding — has it come? By the marks the oracles themselves give, the removal of the heart of stone from the house of Israel is still to come. **Corroborated** by the passages' own terms (**Ezekiel 11:17–20; 36:24–36; 39:29**). What is open now to every person is set out in Section VII-C.

X. THREE-RELIGION AUDIT — HOW EACH TRADITION READS THE HEART OF STONE

The table sets the three traditions against the Tanakh's own findings. Comparative texts are cited as historical reference only, in keeping with the standing rule of this document.

ELEMENT	✧ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	✧ ISLAM
Teaching today	Rabbinic tradition names the heart of stone as the <i>yetzer ha-ra (evil inclination)</i>: of its seven names, "Ezekiel called it stone" (Sukkah 52a). The Aramaic Targum renders the heart of stone as a wicked heart, "hard as stone," and the heart of flesh as a heart "that fears before Me, to do My will" (Targum Jonathan on Ezekiel 36:26). Rashi: "an inclination that has been renewed for the better." Radak: a heart that hears and a spirit ready to receive His words in love. Nachmanides reads it with Deuteronomy 30:6: in the days of the Messiah the choice of the good will be natural. Rabbi Akiva reads Ezekiel 36:25 as the Father in heaven purifying Israel (Mishnah Yoma 8:9). The oracle is the reading from the Prophets for the Sabbath of the Red Heifer.	The New Testament takes up the oracle in several places: "not on tablets of stone but on tablets of hearts of flesh" (2 Corinthians 3:3); birth "of water and the Spirit" (John 3:5); "the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). The promise is held to be fulfilled from the day of Pentecost, under the new covenant in the blood of Yeshua (Luke 22:20; Acts 2:16–18; Hebrews 8:6–13). Augustine wrote that the heart of stone is a will of the hardest kind, unbending toward God (On Grace and Free Will 29). The Westminster Confession uses Ezekiel's words for effectual calling (10.1). The Catechism: "The human heart is heavy and hardened. God must give man a new heart" (1432).	The Qur'an does not cite the oracle. It speaks often of hard hearts. To the Children of Israel: "Then your hearts hardened after that, so that they were like stones, or even harder" (Q. 2:74). Of the same people: "because of their breaking of their covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard" (Q. 5:13). It warns its own community not to become like those who were given the Book before, whose hearts hardened as time grew long (Q. 57:16), and it speaks of skins and hearts that "soften to the remembrance of God" (Q. 39:22–23).

ELEMENT	☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☉ ISLAM
Other voices	One teacher sets Ezekiel 36:26 beside Jeremiah 18:6 as verses without which Israel could not stand in judgment, since the heart was in His hand (Berakhot 32a). Before the church, the community of the Dead Sea Scrolls expected God to sprinkle on man <i>“the spirit of truth like waters of purification”</i> at the appointed end (Community Rule 4:20–22), and Jubilees has the circumcised heart hold fast <i>“to all My commandments”</i> (Jubilees 1:22–24). Some sayings hold that commandments lapse in the time to come (Niddah 61b).	The churches divide over the Torah. Some texts are read as ending it: <i>“released from the law”</i> (Romans 7:6); <i>“abolishing the law of commandments”</i> (Ephesians 2:15); the tablets as a <i>“ministry of death, carved in letters on stone”</i> (2 Corinthians 3:7). Reformed confessions end the ceremonial laws and keep the moral law (Westminster Confession 19.3–5). The Catechism says the Spirit engraves <i>“a new law”</i> in the heart (715). Dispensational teachers hold that Ezekiel 36–37 is a promise to national Israel that is still the future.	The Qur’an records the saying <i>“Our hearts are wrapped”</i> (Q. 2:88; 4:155), using a word also used of the uncircumcised. It says of the faithful that God <i>“has written faith upon their hearts and strengthened them with a spirit from Him”</i> (Q. 58:22). Classical teaching holds that the law given to Muhammad supersedes the earlier laws, on the principle of <i>naskh (abrogation)</i> (Q. 2:106).
Covenant strength	Keep what the text names. The promise is to Israel; the work is Yahweh’s ; and the end is the commandments kept: the Targum’s <i>“to do My will”</i> is Ezekiel 36:27 in other words. It reads the stone as hardness, never as the Torah, and it reads the oracle beside Deuteronomy 30:6 , as the Tanakh itself invites.	It is right that the change is real and is the act of God, not the reward of merit (Ezekiel 36:22, 32). Augustine’s definition of the stone matches Tanakh’s own vocabulary (Section IV). The New Testament keeps Ezekiel’s purpose clause in at least one place: <i>“that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us”</i> (Romans 8:3–4; compare Matthew 5:17–19; Romans 3:31). And its writers still warn their own hearers against the hard heart	Gives the Tanakh’s own diagnosis: the hardening follows the breaking of the covenant (Q. 5:13; compare Zechariah 7:11–12). It reads the stone as the heart of the covenant-breaker (Q. 2:74), and it turns the warning on its own community (Q. 57:16), as Psalms 95:7–8 turns it on Israel at worship.

ELEMENT	☆ JUDAISM	† CHRISTIANITY	☩ ISLAM
		in the Tanakh's words (Acts 7:51; Hebrews 3:7–8).	
Covenant departure	When the <i>yetzer ha-ra (evil inclination)</i> is treated as a power apart from the person, the stone becomes an excuse; Zechariah says <i>“they made their heart adamant”</i> (Zechariah 7:12). Sayings that the commandments lapse in the time to come go beyond <i>“walk in My statutes.”</i> And where the oracle is kept only as a distant hope, the command that goes with it is neglected: <i>“make yourselves a new heart”</i> (Ezekiel 18:31).	The oracles name no new covenant, no death, and no mediator, and their purpose is the statutes (Section VIII). <i>“A new law”</i> stands where Ezekiel says <i>“My statutes.”</i> In 2 Corinthians 3 Ezekiel's contrast is turned: in Ezekiel the stone is the heart, and in the letter the stone is the tablets of Moses. Hebrews 10:15–18 concludes that there is no longer any offering for sin; Ezekiel's restored order has one (Ezekiel 45:17). And a promise spoken to the house of Israel, with its land, is applied to another body.	The Qur'an recalls Israel's hardening but not the promise that follows it in the same prophets: that the stone will be taken out of Israel and the people returned to their land (Ezekiel 36:24–28). The teaching that a later law supersedes the Torah has no Tanakh witness and stands against Deuteronomy 4:2 and Malachi 4:4. The Name Yahweh is absent.
Covenant witness	The oldest Jewish rendering of the verse says what this study finds: a heart that fears before Him, to do His will.	Read from the Tanakh outward, the Christian longing for a new heart is Ezekiel's promise. The verse the churches love ends with the words they most often leave out: <i>“and you shall keep My judgments and do them.”</i>	A third tradition confirms that the stone is the heart of those who broke the covenant, and that God alone softens it.

XI. CORRECTIONS TO EARLIER LIBRARY MATERIAL

The Library's rule is that its own earlier work is tested by the same standard as everyone else's. Six points in earlier studies need correction or refinement.

Correction 1 — the verb in 1 Samuel 10. The April 2026 study *Transformation: The Way of Yahweh* (Section I-A, table) lists *shanah (to change)*, H8138, as the word used in **1 Samuel 10:6, 9**, where Saul is given “*another heart.*” The verb in both verses is *haphak (to turn)*, H2015, as the same study says correctly at Witness 6. The table entry should be corrected.

Correction 2 — “irreversible.” The same study says that covenant transformation is “*always irreversible,*” and that the new heart is “*not self-initiated, not self-sustained, and not reversible.*” Its own Witness 6 notes that Saul did not keep the heart he was given. The Tanakh says that a righteous man may turn (**Ezekiel 18:24; 33:13**), warns the worshiper not to harden his heart today (**Psalms 95:7–8**), and commands the new heart as well as promising it (**Ezekiel 18:31**). What will not be reversed is the promise to the nation (**Jeremiah 32:40; Ezekiel 39:29**). The wording of Sections VI-B and VII-D should be used.

Correction 3 — the wording of the verse, and “external” and “internal.” The same study quotes **Ezekiel 36:26** as “*I will remove from you your heart of stone.*” The Hebrew reads “*the heart of stone from your flesh*” (Section II-B). It also describes the Torah as moving “*from external stone to internal heart,*” and Doc 208 (Witness Five) says the Torah is “*relocated from external scroll to internal heart.*” Doc 281 (Correction 3) applies to both: the Torah of Sinai was already to be on the heart (**Deuteronomy 6:6**). In Doc 208, Declaration V speaks of “*a new spirit replacing the heart of stone.*” It is the heart of flesh that replaces the stone; the new spirit is put within.

Correction 4 — “nailed to the cross” and Nicaea. The same study (Part VI) says the Torah was held to be “*nailed to the cross*” at Nicaea and in later church councils. The phrase comes from Colossians 2:14, a letter of the first century. The Council of Nicaea (325 CE) dealt with the teaching of Arius and with the date of Easter, which it separated from the Jewish reckoning of Passover. It issued no decree on the Torah. The sentence should name Colossians 2:14 as the source of the phrase.

Correction 5 — “available right now.” The May 2026 *Covenant Letter to the Churches* says that the new heart of **Ezekiel 36:26** “*is not a future event waiting on a political calendar. It is available right now — today — to every person.*” Both halves of the matter should be stated. The oracle is a promise to the house of Israel, tied to its regathering, and its marks are not yet met (Section IX). What is open today to every person is the command of **Ezekiel 18:31** and the prayer of **Psalms 51:10** (Section VII-C).

Correction 6 — the verses cited. Doc 182 (Section XII) quotes **Ezekiel 36:24–26** and stops before verse 27, where the purpose of the new heart is stated. The passage should be cited as **Ezekiel 36:24–28**. The May 2026 study on tongues calls **Jeremiah 31:31–34** the most direct prophecy of the work of the spirit in the new covenant. **Jeremiah 31** does not name the spirit; **Ezekiel 36:27** does.

XII. SEVEN COVENANT DECLARATIONS ON THE HEART OF STONE AND THE HEART OF FLESH

Per the **Deuteronomy 19:15** standard, no doctrine may stand on a single text. Each declaration below draws on more than one witness.

#	COVENANT DECLARATION	BASIS
I	The heart of stone is the heart that will not hear the word of Yahweh and will not turn. The Tanakh also calls it the stiff neck, the hardened heart, the uncircumcised heart, and the heart of adamant.	Ezekiel 2:4; 3:7; 36:26; Zechariah 7:11–12; Psalms 95:8; Deuteronomy 10:16
II	The generation of the wilderness is charged with that heart, but not every person in it; and the fault is never laid on the covenant, the tablets, or the statutes.	Exodus 32:9, 16; Deuteronomy 29:4; Psalms 95:8–10; Ezekiel 20:11–16; Numbers 14:24
III	Yahweh promises to take the heart of stone out of the house of Israel and to give one heart, a new heart, a heart of flesh, with a new spirit and His own spirit.	Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26–27; Jeremiah 32:39; Deuteronomy 30:6
IV	The heart of flesh is given so that the same statutes and judgments are kept. The Torah is not different in a heart of flesh. The heart is.	Ezekiel 11:20; 36:27; 37:24; Leviticus 26:3; Deuteronomy 30:8
V	The two oracles name no new covenant, no new people, no death, and no mediator. The means named are clean water and the spirit of Yahweh , for the sake of His name.	Ezekiel 11:17–20; 36:22–28; 18:20; Deuteronomy 24:16
VI	The new heart is commanded as well as promised, and the hearing heart has been found in individuals under the covenant of Sinai.	Ezekiel 18:31; Deuteronomy 10:16; Psalms 51:10; 2 Kings 22:19; Numbers 14:24
VII	By its own marks the promise to the whole house of Israel is not yet established. Until then no community may claim it for itself, and every person is called to hear today.	Ezekiel 36:24–36; 39:29; Jeremiah 32:40; Psalms 95:7–8

XIII. THE COVENANT RESPONSE — WHAT THE TANAKH SAYS TO THE ONE WHO ASKS

Behind the question there is usually a person who has been told that the Torah was written on stone for a people who could not keep it and has now been replaced by something inward and easier; or a person who keeps the commandments and wonders why the heart is slow to follow the hand. The Tanakh's answer is fivefold.

First: know what the stone is. It is not the Torah and it is not the tablets. It is the heart that will not hear (**Zechariah 7:12; Ezekiel 3:7**).

Second: do not lay the fault on Sinai. The tablets were the work of **Elohim (Exodus 32:16)**, and the statutes are life to the one who does them (**Ezekiel 20:11**). The fault was in the hearer, and Moses said so on the last day of his life (**Deuteronomy 29:4**).

Third: know what the heart of flesh is for. It is given *“so that they may walk in My statutes”* (**Ezekiel 11:20**). A new heart that does not come to the statutes is not the heart Ezekiel describes.

Fourth: test every claim by the text. The oracles name no covenant, no cross, and no people but the house of Israel, and they give their own marks (**Ezekiel 36:24–36**). Whoever says the promise has come is answered by those marks.

Fifth: begin today, and begin low. *“Today, if you would hear His voice, do not harden your heart”* (**Psalms 95:7–8**). *“Make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit”* (**Ezekiel 18:31**). *“Create in me a clean heart, O Elohim”* (**Psalms 51:10**). And remember what the new heart remembers: *“Not for your sake do I act”* (**Ezekiel 36:32**).

Yahweh did not promise to change His statutes for the sake of a hard heart. He promised to change the heart for the sake of His name, so that His statutes are kept.

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REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Genesis 6:5	Every inclination of the thoughts of his heart	III
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REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
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Exodus 15:16	The peoples still as a stone	IV-A
Exodus 24:12	The tablets of stone, the Torah and the commandment	V-D
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Exodus 34:9	Moses confesses the stiff neck and asks pardon	V-A
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REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
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Deuteronomy 4:28	Gods of wood and stone that do not see or hear	III; IV-C
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Joshua 24:26–27	The stone of witness that <i>“has heard”</i>	III; V-D
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REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
1 Samuel 10:6, 9	Saul given another heart	VII-D; XI
1 Samuel 15:23	Saul rejects the word of Yahweh	VII-D
1 Samuel 25:17, 37	Nabal: his heart died within him, and he became a stone	IV-A
1 Kings 3:9	Solomon asks for a hearing heart	III
2 Kings 22:19	Josiah: <i>“because your heart was tender”</i>	III; VI-E; VII-D; VIII-B; XII
Isaiah 6:10	<i>“Make the heart of this people fat”</i>	IV-D
Isaiah 29:13	Lips that honor, a heart far away; a commandment learned by rote	VII-A
Isaiah 31:3	Flesh, and not spirit	III
Isaiah 44:3	My spirit poured on your seed	VI-C
Isaiah 59:21	My spirit and My words, forever	VI-C
Isaiah 63:10–11	The holy spirit put within him; grieved in the wilderness	III; V-C; VI-C
Isaiah 63:17	<i>“Why do You harden our heart?”</i>	IV-E
Isaiah 66:2	The one who trembles at My word	VI-E
Jeremiah 4:4	Remove the foreskins of your heart	III; VI-B; VI-E
Jeremiah 7:24–26	The stubbornness of their evil heart; the stiffened neck	III; IV-D; V-B; VII-A
Jeremiah 9:26	All the house of Israel uncircumcised of heart	III; IV-D
Jeremiah 17:1	Sin engraved on the tablet of the heart with a point of adamant	III; IV-D; V-D; VII-A
Jeremiah 18:6	Like clay in the potter’s hand	X
Jeremiah 24:7	A heart to know Me	II-D; VIII-E
Jeremiah 31:18	<i>“Turn me, and I shall be turned”</i>	VI-B

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Jeremiah 31:31–34	The new covenant	I-A; III; XI
Jeremiah 32:39–40	One heart and one way; My fear in their heart	II-D; III; VI-E; VII-A; VII-D; XI; XII
Ezekiel 1:2–3	The exile of Jehoiachin; Ezekiel the priest	II-C; VI-A
Ezekiel 2:4	Hard of face and strong of heart	III; IV-B; IV-D; IV-E; XII
Ezekiel 3:7, 9	Hard of heart; the prophet’s forehead made like adamant	III; IV-B; IV-E; XII; XIII
Ezekiel 6:9	Their whoring heart	IV-B
Ezekiel 8:1	The date of the vision	II-C
Ezekiel 9:4	Those who sigh and groan are marked	VI-E
Ezekiel 11:14–16	The exiles disowned; a sanctuary for a little while	I-B; II-C; III; VIII-B
Ezekiel 11:17–21	The first oracle: one heart, a new spirit, the heart of stone removed	Opening; I-B; II-A; II-B; II-C; II-D; III; IV-C; IV-D; VI-B; VI-D; VI-E; VIII-B; VIII-E; IX; XII; XIII
Ezekiel 12:2	Eyes that do not see, ears that do not hear	IV-B
Ezekiel 14:3	Idols set up upon the heart	III; IV-B; IV-E; VII-A
Ezekiel 16:60	The covenant of your youth remembered; an everlasting covenant	VIII-B
Ezekiel 18:20, 24	The soul that sins shall die; the righteous who turns away	VII-D; VIII-B; XI; XII
Ezekiel 18:30–31	<i>“Make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit”</i>	III; VI-B; VI-E; VII-C; VII-D; VIII-B; X; XI; XII; XIII

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Ezekiel 20:11–16, 18–19, 21	The statutes of life rejected in the wilderness; the heart after idols	III; IV-B; IV-E; V-B; V-D; VI-D; VII-A; VII-B; VII-D; VIII-D; XII; XIII
Ezekiel 20:25–26	<i>“Statutes that were not good”</i>	VIII-D
Ezekiel 20:31–32	Sons passed through the fire; <i>“to serve wood and stone”</i>	IV-C; VIII-D
Ezekiel 33:13, 21, 31	The righteous who turns; the city struck; hearers who do not do	II-C; IV-B; VII-A; VII-D; XI
Ezekiel 36:16–23	The land defiled, the name profaned; <i>“not for your sake”</i>	Opening; I-B; II-C; II-D; VI-A; VI-B; VII-A; VII-C; VIII-B; VIII-E; X; XII
Ezekiel 36:24–28	The second oracle: regathering, clean water, a new heart, My spirit, My statutes	Opening; I-A; I-B; II-A; II-B; II-C; II-D; III; IV-C; IV-D; IV-E; VI-A; VI-B; VI-C; VI-D; VI-E; VII-A; VII-C; VII-D; VIII-B; VIII-C; VIII-E; IX; X; XI; XII; XIII; Closing
Ezekiel 36:29–38	The land restored; shame for their ways; the nations know	Opening; I-B; II-B; II-C; II-D; VI-B; VII-C; VIII-B; VIII-E; IX; X; XII; XIII
Ezekiel 37:14	My spirit in you, and you shall live	VI-C
Ezekiel 37:23–28	No more idols; David; the statutes kept; the sanctuary forever	VII-B; VII-D; VIII-B; IX; XII
Ezekiel 39:29	My spirit poured out on the house of Israel	VI-C; VII-D; IX; XI; XII
Ezekiel 44:9	Uncircumcised of heart and uncircumcised of flesh	III; VII-B

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Ezekiel 44:15, 24	The sons of Zadok keep the statutes and sanctify the Sabbaths	VII-B; VIII-B
Ezekiel 45:17	The prince provides the offerings	VIII-B; X
Ezekiel 46:3	Sabbaths and new moons in the restored order	VIII-B
Ezekiel 47:22–23	The sojourner inherits among the tribes	VII-C
Hosea 10:2	<i>“Their heart is divided”</i>	III
Joel 2:28	My spirit poured out on all flesh	VI-C
Amos 8:5	<i>“When will the new moon be over ... and the Sabbath?”</i>	VII-A
Habakkuk 2:19	The silent stone	III
Haggai 2:5	The word cut at the Exodus; My spirit in your midst	V-C
Zechariah 7:11–12	The stubborn shoulder; the heart made adamant against the Torah	III; IV-D; IV-E; VII-A; VIII-C; X; XII; XIII
Malachi 1:13	<i>“What a weariness!”</i>	VII-A
Malachi 4:4	Remember the Torah of Moses	III; VII-B; X
Psalms 12:2	A heart and a heart	III
Psalms 19:7	The Torah of Yahweh is perfect	VII-B
Psalms 37:31	The Torah of his Elohim is in his heart	VII-A
Psalms 40:8	<i>“I delight to do Your will”</i>	VII-A; VII-D
Psalms 51:10–11, 17	A clean heart; a steadfast spirit; the holy spirit; the broken heart	III; VI-C; VI-E; VII-C; VII-D; VIII-B; XI; XII; XIII
Psalms 78:8	A generation that did not set its heart aright	V-B
Psalms 81:12	Sent away in the stubbornness of their heart	III; IV-E; VIII-D
Psalms 86:11	<i>“Unite my heart to fear Your name”</i>	III

REFERENCE	SUBJECT	SECTION
Psalms 95:7–10	<i>“Do not harden your heart as at Meribah”</i>	III; IV-D; IV-E; V-B; V-D; VII-D; X; XI; XII; XIII
Psalms 115:8	Those who make them shall be like them	IV-C; IV-E
Psalms 119:32, 70	The enlarged heart; the heart gross as fat	IV-D; VII-A
Psalms 135:18	Those who make them shall be like them	IV-C
Proverbs 28:14	He who hardens his heart shall fall into evil	VII-D
Job 41:24	A heart cast hard as a stone	IV-A
Nehemiah 9:16, 20	The fathers stiffened their neck; the good spirit given to instruct them	V-B; V-C; VI-C; VI-E; VIII-B
2 Chronicles 30:12	One heart given to Judah	III
2 Chronicles 34:27	Josiah’s tender heart	III
2 Chronicles 36:13	Zedekiah stiffened his neck and hardened his heart	IV-D; IV-E

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh.”

Ezekiel 36:26 — The Written Covenant of Yahweh

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