

21. Law And Grace

We want to continue our study in trying to see the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; between law and grace. This is so important, because if we don't know the difference, we will live at the low level that many Old Testament people lived in. God wants to lift us higher.

Let us look at a verse from Romans 6, which, I think puts it in a nutshell, in a very brief sentence, the essential difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant: "Sin shall not be master over you when you are not under law but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). The word 'Law' there symbolizes the Old Covenant, God's agreement with Israel, and all the terms and conditions of that Covenant are all included in that one word, 'Law'. And grace, in one word, sums up God's new agreement through the Lord Jesus Christ, and all the terms and conditions of that new agreement.

And here, it says, you can be either under law or under grace. And the proof is this: when you are not under law but under grace, sin cannot be master over you. We could put it another way that, if you are not under grace but under law, then sin will have the mastery over you.

So, ultimately, the way we discover whether we are under the law or under grace is not by testing whether we are legalistic in relation to a lot of rules and regulations, but on the other hand, by a far more deeper test: does sin have the mastery over you? Or, do you have the mastery over sin?

This is a very, very important question, because a lot of people do not understand the difference between what Jesus has come to give and what

21. 律法与恩典

下面我们想继续学习旧约与新约的不同，就是律法与恩典之间的不同。了解这不同是如此的重要，因为如若不然，我们会生活得如同旧约时代的人一样在低水平上。然而神想要拉我们到更高的水平。

请看罗马书第 6 章，我觉得这一章可以概括为，旧约与新约的区别，核心在于：“不该让罪来作你们的主，因为你们不在律法之下，乃在恩典之下”（罗马书 6 章 14 节）。“律法”，是旧约的标志，是神与以色列人所立的约，它的全部条款都包括在“律法”这个词里面。而“恩典”这个词，总结了神通过主耶稣基督与人类所立的新约的全部条款。

这里也指出，你要么活在律法之下，要么活在在恩典之下。证据是这个：你若不是在律法之下，而是在恩典之下，那么罪是无法奴役你的。你也可以换个角度来看，假若你不在恩典之下，而是活在律法之下，那么罪仍然会作你的主。

因此基本上，想知道自己到底是活在律法之下还是在恩典之下，只需要观察我们是否被一大堆戒律和规定所捆绑。另一方面，还可以进一步观察，自己是否仍然被罪奴役。抑或是，你已将罪征服？

这是非常非常重要的问题，因为很多人都没有真正的理解，主耶稣来世上给我们的，和旧约时代摩西给人的，究竟有何区别。如果我问你一个简单的问题，摩

Moses came to give under the Old Covenant. Now if I were to ask you a simple question: who is greater - Moses or our Lord Jesus Christ? That is clear, Moses is a servant and the Lord Jesus is the Master. It is so clear that Jesus is far greater than Moses. Now let me tell you, since you understand that clearly, that the covenant or agreement that God mediated with Israel, through Moses, is as inferior to the New Covenant that God mediated through Jesus, as Moses is inferior to Jesus. The implication is that, if Moses and the law could bring people in the Old Testament to a certain standard of life, Jesus and the New Covenant should be able to bring them to what - to a higher standard or an equal standard? Of course, you will say it has to be a higher standard.

It would be something comparable to walking and flying or to a bicycle and an aeroplane. I mean, there is a lot of difference between the bicycle and the aeroplane, with the speed and the ability to move from place to place. If you can compare a bicycle with an aeroplane, there you see the difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. The Old Covenant can take you from one place to another, like a bicycle can. And the New Covenant also can take you from one place to another, like an aeroplane can. There is a world of difference between the two. The Old Covenant could bring a man to a certain point of fellowship with God, but not beyond that.

In the Old Testament tabernacle, God illustrated this by putting a thick curtain between the Holy place and the Most Holy place, called the veil, and told the Israelites, "Nobody can come into this Most Holy place, this veil blocks you. You can come so far, but no further." You know, beyond that veil, God Himself lived in that temple - Old Testament temple. Nobody could go there. Even the High Priest could go only

西和我们的主耶稣，哪个更伟大？答案很清楚，摩西是仆人，而主耶稣是我们的主。主耶稣要比摩西伟大的多得多。那么既然你清楚这一点，就该明白，神通过摩西与以色列人建立的旧约，与神通过主耶稣建立的新约相比，也是天差地别，如同摩西与主耶稣的天差地别一样。那么既然如此，若神借着摩西和律法使人的道德生活达到一定水平，那么借着主耶稣与新约，人应该实现远远更高水平的生活。

这两者的区别可以用走路与飞翔，或自行车与飞机的区别来形容。自行车与飞机，无论在速度还是在能触及的区域，都有着巨大的区别。旧约与新约的区别也是类似。旧约可以像自行车般，带你从一个地方到另一个地方。而新约也可以带你从一个地方到另一个地方，但是却如同飞机。两者有着天壤之别。旧约带给人一定程度与神的亲近，然而却无法再超越了。

旧约的会幕，神用圣所与至圣所之间的厚帘子，被称作幔子的，来为以色列人阐明，“没有人可以到至圣所，因为这幔子阻隔着你。你可以来到我的近前，但却不能继续靠近了。”你知道吗？在那幔子的另一边，神亲自住在圣殿里——旧约的圣殿。没有人可以到那里。即使是大祭司，也只能象征性的每年近前一次。人们不可说进去就进去。

once a year, and that was only as a token. But nobody could go there whenever they liked.

But when Jesus died on Calvary, that veil was rent, torn from top to bottom, showing that the way into God's presence was open now. So, let me ask you, now that the veil is torn and the way into the most holy place, into God's presence, is open, should our standard of life be higher or lower than people in the Old Testament? The answer is clear. If without personal fellowship with God, with just the law, people could come to a certain standard of life, how much higher our standard of life should be, once we come into fellowship with God Himself, inside that torn veil? And yet, many, many Christians don't seem to have understood this.

For example, why do we find or hear of sometimes Christians falling into some terrible sins? Can you imagine Elijah or John the Baptist running after women or running after money? No, and yet they did not have grace; they did not have that open access into the Most Holy place like we have; and without it, they came to such a life. How much more we can come to it if only we would have faith and rise up to our privileges under the New Covenant?

That is what Paul is saying here: "Sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace." Jesus once said that John the Baptist was the greatest human being born until that day (Mt. 11:11). Of course apart from himself; He was not born of a human father, so Jesus Himself is excluded. But among all others, John the Baptist was the greatest. Then Jesus went on to say, 'But, the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven - in God's kingdom - is greater even than John the Baptist.' What He was trying to say was that the highest that the law could take a man was still inferior or less than where grace could take the

然而当主耶稣死在十字架上以后，那幔子被从上而下撕开了，表明了神的同在向世人敞开了。那么我想问你，现在通往至圣所，进入神的同在之路已经敞开了，我们生命的标准应该比旧约时代的人更高还是更低？答案再清楚不过了。若没有与神亲身建立的关系，仅仅依靠律法，人的生命已经可以达到一定的水准，那么进入已经撕开了幔子的至圣所里面，与神亲身相交，会将我们的生命带到多么高的程度啊？然而仍然有很多很多的基督徒，似乎并不明白这一点。

比如，为什么有些基督徒会陷在极可怕的罪恶里？你能想象以利亚或是施洗约翰，追逐金钱和美女吗？我们没法想象。而那时的他们还没有恩典临到呢，他们还不像我们现在，拥有完全敞开的至圣所，可以随时进入里面。然而在那样的情况下，他们的人生是让我们如此叹服。那么如果我们肯存信心，去拥抱这新约下的特权，我们将会实现怎样丰富的人生啊！

这就是保罗所说的，“不该让罪来作你们的主，因为你们不在律法之下，乃在恩典之下。”耶稣曾经说过，在那之前，没有人比施洗约翰更伟大（马太福音 11 章 11 节）。当然祂说的并不包括祂自己的，因为祂不是由人类父亲使母亲受孕而成的。而在世人中，再没有比施洗约翰更伟大的了。尔后耶稣继续说，“然而天国里最小的，比施洗约翰还大。”主耶稣在这里说的意思是，律法所能成就的极限，仍比不过恩典在哪怕是神最软弱的孩子身上所能成就的。

weakest of God's children.

So it is not going to be just an occasional believer who raises to a higher standard of life than John the Baptist. God's will is that every single one of His children, who come under grace, should raise to a higher level than John the Baptist. But whether they will actually live that life is quite another thing. But the possibility is there, if they understand and receive grace as God offers it to us, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, when we compare the word 'mercy', as we read, for example, in Hebrews 4:16, we are told there that, "We are to come with confidence to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." As I mentioned in a previous study, there is a difference between 'mercy' and 'grace'. Mercy is essentially an Old Testament word. It is a word which you find very frequently in the Old Testament - the Lord whose mercy endures forever. David often speaks about it.

As a result of that mercy people in the Old Testament had their sins covered and forgiven. They could not be cleansed. David could only say, "Blessed is the man whose sins are covered." Nobody's sins could be cleansed until Jesus died on Calvary's cross. But they could be covered until Christ came. They were forgiven. In the well-known psalm, Psalm 103, David said, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquity." That was mercy, and all of us need it too; we need mercy; we need our sins to be forgiven.

But there is something more than that we have in the New Covenant, and that is grace; something more than mercy; something to help us in the future; something to help us overcome the passions in our

因此，这里说的意思，不是随随便便一个所谓的信徒，生命标准都高过施洗约翰。神的本意，是在祂的恩典之下，每个祂的孩子都该活出比施洗约翰更高水准的生命。然而，一个人是否真的活出这样的生命，就另当别论了。只是这个可能是真的存在的，但是你需要明白，并且通过主耶稣基督去接受神所赐的恩典。

现在我们需要比较一下“怜悯”这个词。例如在希伯来书 4 章 16 节，我们读到，“所以我们只管坦然无惧地来到施恩的宝座前，为要得怜恤，并随时得到恩典的帮助。”我在之前提到过，“怜悯”与“恩典”是有区别的。怜悯，基本上可以说是一个旧约时代的词。这个词你在旧约里随处可见——主的慈爱怜悯永远长存。大卫经常提到主的怜悯。

旧约时代，神对人怜悯的结果就是，神把他们的罪遮盖并宽恕了。然而他们却并不能得到净化。大卫只能说，“罪被遮盖的，是有福的。”在主耶稣死在十字架上以前，是没有任何人的罪可以得到洁净的。在基督来临之前，他们的罪只能被遮盖。神赦免了他们。在著名的诗篇 103 篇，大卫说，“我的心哪，你要称颂耶和华，不可忘记他的一切恩惠和你罪恶的赦免。”这是神的怜悯，每个人都需要。我们的确需要神的怜悯，这样罪才能得赦。

然而在新约里我们得到了超出于此的，那就是恩典，它胜过怜悯，能在未来一直帮助我们，克服我们天然的欲望。希伯来书 4 章 16 节说，我们在施恩的宝座前得怜恤，在需要时，我们也总在那里得到恩典的帮

nature. It says here in Hebrews 4:16 that we can come to the throne of grace and in the place where we receive mercy, we can find grace to help us in our time of need.

Now what is our time of need? Our time of need is when we are under tremendous pressure from the lusts in our flesh; tremendous pressure from the devil to sin. In that moment, when we are tempted to sin and to fall, God says grace can help me. Grace is help; help for my need, whatever it is. If my need right now is that I need help to overcome a particular sin, it says, grace can help me in my time of need.

It is like, if I were climbing a mountain, and I am about to slip and fall, then if I ask for help, God can lift me up and make me stand so that I don't fall. But if I don't ask for help and I struggle on my own, I slip and fall and break my bones, and then I ask God for help, and an ambulance comes and picks me up. Well, that is help too. But that is mercy; that is after I have fallen, that God picks me up, forgives me, takes me to a hospital, patches me up, and restores me. That is how it is with the experience of many Christians. They fall, and they ask God for help. But isn't there a better way? There is - grace to help me in my time of need.

Now why don't you do this next time when you find the pressure of temptation, so strong that you are about to fall, try this out and see if it doesn't work. You ask God at that moment and say, 'Lord, I am not able to overcome this; I want you to help me. Give me grace to overcome this.' And you will see in that moment, grace coming to carry you through.

助。

那么什么时候是“需要时”？我们的“需要时”，就是当肉体面对来自欲望的巨大压力时，面对来自魔鬼的巨大压力想要犯罪的时候。在这时，当犯罪与沉沦让我们觉得非常受诱惑的时候，神说，恩典可以帮助我。恩典是帮助，是对我需求的帮助，无论那需求是什么。假如此刻我需要的是克服专门的某个罪，恩典就可以在这一刻帮助我。

这就如同当我在爬一座山，突然将要滑倒，这时我立刻向神求救，神立刻拉住我，使我不会跌倒。但假如这时我不求救，只依赖自己苦苦挣扎，结果就是我会跌倒摔断骨头，尔后我若呼求神，神会派救护车把我带走。当然，这也是很有帮助的。然而这是怜悯，是在我跌倒之后，神将我扶起，原谅了我，送我去医院，为我包裹，使我恢复。很多基督徒的经历都是这样的，他们跌倒，然后再求神帮助。可是就没有更好的方式了吗？答案是有的，那就是在我们需要时来帮助我们的“恩典”。

好，现在我要问你，在下次面对诱惑的巨大压力时，在你马上就要跌倒时，试着求问神的恩典，看看结果怎样？在你需要的那一刻说，“我的主，我自己无法战胜这个诱惑，我要你的帮助。求你赐我恩典，来克服它。”然后就在那一刻，你就会发现，恩典带着你脱离了那跌倒的危险。

