

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Romans 5: 13-14

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank God, it's time to read the Bible again. Let's continue to read Romans Chapter 5. We will read verses 13-14 today.

In the discourse on sanctification, Paul no longer addresses man's sinful deeds but the man's sinful nature. The source of sin, Satan, entered the world through Adam's fall; the wages of sin is death, and with sin came death. Satan, embodied as sin, dwells in the human body, transforming it into flesh. Transgressions are not inherited, but the sin nature is. Therefore, all of Adam's descendants are born with a sin nature, and driven by this sin nature, they commit sinful deeds. Thus, sin came upon all, and death followed upon all.

Verse 13: "For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law."

The law was given by God through Moses. Moses was born about 2,500 years after Adam, so from Adam to Moses, there was no law, yet sin was already in the world. When there is no law, sin is not imputed.

Let us first consider what it means that sin is not imputed. The KJV translates this as "sin is not imputed." A direct translation would be "sin is not recorded on the account." Sin remains sin; the absence of the law does not make sin cease to be sin. Sin is not imputed because it is not recorded on the account. The primary function of recording is classification; if it is not recorded, it means there is no way to classify it. Using the Ten Commandments as an example, sins can be categorized as murder, adultery, theft, bearing false witness, and so on. Without the law, there is no way to classify the sins you commit; without classification, there is no way to

execute judgment based on categories. Although sin is not recorded, this does not mean it has no consequences.

Verse 14: “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.”

From Adam to Moses, the law had not yet been given. Although sin was not imputed, sin brought death, and death reigned; that is, during the period from Adam to Moses without the law, no one could escape the power of sin.

The definition of sin is deviating from the goal set by God. What, then, is death? The true meaning of death is separation. When Adam ate the forbidden fruit, he was expelled from the Garden of Eden, separated from God; this separation meant his spirit died. We know Adam lived 930 years afterward, and then his body also died; that is, his body was separated from this world.

Dear brothers and sisters, when our loved ones die, we feel deep sorrow because they are separated from us, no longer responding or interacting. In God’s original creation, there was no death, but because Adam sinned, after sin entered, it violated God’s holiness, righteousness, and glory, causing separation between man and God, which brought spiritual death. After death reigned, all forms of separation became the destiny of humanity, and no one could escape death, even those who did not commit the same transgression as Adam, were under its power.

The word for transgression here in Greek is *parabasis*. Greek words ending in *sis* emphasize action and process; *parabasis* refers to the act of crossing a boundary. In the Garden of Eden, God set a boundary for Adam, forbidding him to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam crossed this boundary in this one act, and this transgression, as mentioned here, brought separation from God, which is death. Those after Adam could not commit the same transgression because humanity was already expelled from Eden. However, Adam’s descendants, born with a sin nature, commit other transgressions driven by this nature. Thus,

they experience the same separation, and every person is under the power of death.

Next, Paul says that Adam is a type of Him who was to come. This “Him who was to come” is Christ, and Adam is a type or figure of Christ, a significant declaration. In the following verses, Paul uses a contrast to demonstrate that Christ’s gift far surpasses Adam’s inheritance. We are all Adam’s descendants, inheriting the sin nature and the death it brings; but in Christ, we receive a gift from Christ, which far surpasses what we inherited in Adam.

Today, we will first provide an overview of the following verses, as Paul consistently uses contrast. In this passage, we see two persons. These two persons exhibit two kinds of behavior, leading to two different outcomes. Let us first look at the two persons: the first is Adam, and the second is Jesus Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15:45, it tells us: “The first man Adam became a living being. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”

The first person was created by God, while the second person, the last Adam, is God incarnate. Adam bore God’s image and likeness, but Christ is God Himself. Because Adam sinned and was expelled from Eden, he lacked God’s life and nature within. What about Jesus Christ? According to Colossians 2:9, “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Thus, in terms of typology, Adam is a type of Christ, and Eve came from Adam; likewise, the church comes from Christ. Eve was the bone of Adam’s bone; similarly, the church is to become Christ’s bride. Because of this typology, in God’s eyes, there are only two persons in the universe: the first, called Adam, the head of the old creation; the second, the last Adam or Christ, the head of the new creation. These two persons produce two kinds of behavior.

Let us first look at Adam’s transgression in the Garden of Eden. Facing the tree of knowledge and the tree of life, his single failure to choose life resulted in death. Adam’s transgression in Eden corresponds to Christ’s obedience on the cross. Facing God’s will and Satan’s temptation, Christ chose lifelong obedience, unconditional submission to the cross, and the result of the cross was death and resurrection.

In terms of typology, Eve's failure led to Adam's failure; Christ's victory will lead to the church's victory. In Eden, humanity failed because Eve took the lead; Eve failed first, leading to Adam's failure. Thus, in today's church, saints must not take the lead; they must take Christ as the head, and Christ's victory will bring the church's victory.

We see two persons with two different behaviors, leading to two different outcomes. Let us first look at the result of Adam's sin: in Romans 5:12, "through one man sin entered the world"; in 5:18, "judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation"; in 5:19, "many were made sinners"; in 5:21, "sin reigned in death." Thus, the ultimate result is that in Adam, all died.

Next, let us look at the result of Christ's obedience: in verse 15, grace came upon all; in verse 18, all were justified; in verse 19, all were made righteous; in verse 21, "grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life." The result is that in Christ, all will be made alive.

In this passage, Paul mentions four things that reign. Because of Adam's sin, sin entered humanity, dwelling in the body; sin reigned, with the law as its authority. Then, death also reigned, because death came through sin, and the sting of death is sin. The reign of sin and death brought about today's corrupt and fallen world.

Similarly, through Jesus Christ's single act of obedience, grace came through Christ and reigns through righteousness, leading to eternal life. After grace reigns, saints receive grace and can reign in life through Christ.

Paul consistently uses contrast to show that as Adam's descendants, we inherited sin and death, the outcome of the old creation. But on the other hand, through believing in Jesus Christ, we receive grace, bringing about the new creation. Grace reigns, supplying eternal life. If saints continually live in grace, they can reign in life. With this general understanding, starting tomorrow, we will delve into the details of the text, exploring deeper meanings from the Greek words Paul used. May we overcome the limitations of language to understand the truth Paul seeks to convey.

Let us pray together: Dear Lord Jesus, because of Adam's sin, we inherited his sin nature, living under the power of sin. Death also reigned, separating us from God and ultimately from the people, things, and matters we love; no one can escape death. But thank You, Lord, that through Jesus Christ's obedience on the cross, we can receive life from God through His grace. The gift we receive in Christ far surpasses what we inherited in Adam. Lord, help us overcome our limitations, allowing Christ to reign in us through abundant grace, so that grace may reign in life. Bless my daily life. I pray in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.