

The School of Biblical Law
Introduction to Law and Grace
Lesson Twenty-Three: "Covenant Life and Mercy"

There is an inseparable connection between living in God's covenant and receiving His mercy. In giving man a covenant, God foresaw that mankind would fall short of keeping all the stipulated terms (laws) and that man would merit sanctions and forfeit the covenant. In his wisdom, God provided man with a substitute to bear the penalty or curse of the broken law.

1. The writers of the Old Testament recognized the connection between covenant and mercy:
 - Deut. 7:9: "Know therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations."
 - I Kings 8:23: "And he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their heart."
 - Ps.25:10: "All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies."
2. There is no mercy without the restraints of covenant life.
3. In many places throughout the Old Testament, God placed a testimony about His mercy.
 - In the Garden, God showed mercy to man because Christ's sacrifice was planned (Gen. 3:15; II Time. 1:9).
 - In the giving of the Law, God gave the ordinance of sacrifice, which picture the substitution of Christ (Leviticus 1-7; Hebrews 9).
 - In the Holy of Holies in Moses' tabernacle, the mercy seat (*Kaphar* – meaning to expiate, condone, cancel, appease, make atonement) was a continual picture of the provision or mercy of God.
4. Hosea 6:6 declares: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." (Parallelism of Sacrifice = Offerings and Mercy = Knowledge of God)

Heb. 10:4-10: "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

Rom. 3:21-26: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

The Old Covenant provided the grace of covenant and the mercy of a substitute. The New Covenant provides the same. Pictures turn to reality and shadows come to full light as God's mercy fully provides the substitute that "takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29).