

The Power of Understanding II

The New Living Translation of: "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven;" "the secret of the Kingdom of God;" and "the secrets of the Kingdom of God;"¹ gives a richer view of what is in the other four main translations of OKJV, AMP, NASB and the NIV where the word 'know' and 'knowledge' are used instead. It is once they come to know the secrets of the Kingdoms of Heaven and of God that it is then a different matter to understand them. Knowledge allows you to apply them, but understanding allows you to manipulate and come up with newer and better secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven and of God. To illustrate the point; in medicine, a drug is often developed for a specific purpose, but as our understanding of the drug in its actions and interactions increases, often other uses are found for the drug for which it was not intentionally intended.

By wisdom the Lord laid the Earth's foundations, by understanding He set the Heavens in place; by His knowledge the deeps were divided, and the clouds let drop the dew.² "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."³

Satan has wisdom and knowledge, for indeed, in Ezekiel the Lord said, "You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty..."⁴ and indeed, he has knowledge so that members of the church of Thyatira were enticed and "learned Satan's so-called deep secrets."⁵ And since he is an immortal and has been around longer than any of us alive, he has more knowledge than us.

However, to help us appreciate the Power of Understanding, Proverbs 3:19 compares wisdom, understanding and knowledge and shows us what God used as He laid the Earth's foundations; set the Heavens in place; divided the deeps and caused rain to fall. When you see what God used for which, the Earth, the waters and the Heavens, you will see how much more superior and greater than knowledge and wisdom understanding is. Understanding was used to set the sun, all the stars and the galaxies in their place; wisdom was used for the Earth; and knowledge gave the division of the springs of the deep and brought about the rain. It took His wisdom to lay the foundation of the Earth, a small planet orbiting a small star in a Universe of countless stars. So knowledge is less than wisdom, for the clouds and the dew are but part of the Earth and wisdom is less than understanding, for the Earth is only a part of the Heavens. Yet, when you look at the scale, the waters of the deep, and the clouds, which may form about 10% of the total world, but the world forms less than 10⁻¹⁵ parts of the Universe, or less. Understanding is immeasurably superior to wisdom as wisdom is measurably superior to knowledge.

To Satan, no understanding was given; so he may know the secrets of the Kingdoms, but he does not and is not permitted to understand them, and as such, he can apply the secrets but he cannot manipulate the secrets. Satan can apply the Law and use the Law to give power to sin as Paul wrote, the power of sin is the Law,⁶ and please note; therefore, the power of God is not the law, for God and sin have nothing in common. Thus, by his knowledge of the Law and the fullness of his wisdom that he was given by God, the devil uses the Law to empower sin against us to make us slaves to sin if we do not listen to Jesus in our lives and have ourselves cut off from God according to the Law by eating His flesh and drinking His blood and so remain in Him who fulfilled the Law.

However, Satan cannot manipulate the Law as God does with understanding, and used the very Law that condemns us to set us free. He, the Father, told Jesus that unless we ate His flesh and drank His blood, we would have no life in us, which caused us to be cut off by the Law that empowers sin to bring us death, and so we no longer have anything to do with death or sin, but because Jesus spoke the word of truth, we who ate and drank were condemned to be in Him only, who is Life. We were no longer part of the rest of creation for we were cut off according to the Law, but existed in Christ who held all creation together by His powerful word.

And when Jesus kept His silence when false witnesses spoke against Him, God deftly used His Law to transfer the sin to His Son without His Son sinning, for the silence of the Lamb of God broke the Law in that instance for it is written: "If a person sins because he does not speak up when he hears a public charge to testify regarding something he has seen or learned about, he will be held responsible."⁷ The silence of Jesus made Him responsible for the sin, even though He was innocent and so He who was without sin was made sin so that He might become the righteousness of God.

¹ Matthew 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:9 (NLT)

² Proverbs 3:19-20 (NIV)

³ Proverbs 9:10

⁴ Ezekiel 28:12

⁵ Revelation 2:24

⁶ 1 Corinthians 15:56

⁷ Leviticus 5:1

The incredible mind of God locked Satan into a fixed and obsolete set of rules, which having been written, can no longer be changed. For only the words spoken by God are the absolute truth and therefore have any absolute power and foundation and can never be proven false, which is why Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, until Heaven and Earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."⁸

However, the Law is fixed, it is finished and nothing more can be added to it, just like the foundations of the Earth are fixed and nothing more can be added to them. And like the orbit of the Earth, so all who are under the Law can only run a predictable, fixed, unchanging, unpliant course with no surprises and nothing new to be added. Season after season, orbit after orbit, time after time, all those who are under the Law will always reap the blessings or curses of the Law according to their ability to fulfil the Law completely. The rich young man who said to Jesus that he had kept all the commandments that Jesus listed - " 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honour your father and mother' and 'love your neighbour as yourself' "⁹ – did not realise he was under the curse of the Law for he had not fulfilled the first five of the Ten Commandments.

Through knowledge, the Law can define for you where sin begins. With wisdom, the Law can teach you where and how to avoid sin. But **to master sin it takes understanding**, and to master and manipulate the Law, so that in the breaking of it we were released into Jesus completely, takes the understanding that God reserved for Himself and kept away from the devil. When we broke the Law by eating His flesh and drinking His blood, we were placed under the responsibility of He who told us to do so to have life. Just as Satan enticed Eve to eat of the flesh and drink of the juice of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in disobedience to God's command, so likewise Jesus commanded us, not enticed or tricked us, but commanded us plainly, saying, "I tell you the truth. Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you."¹⁰ ...to eat the fruit of the Tree of Life, eat its flesh and drink its juice.

The sin of disobeying God's one command brought death to Adam, yet the sin of disobeying the Law of Moses brought life to his sons. God used sin, which is the breaking of God's command, to annul that which gave power to sin and so made it powerless. That is why sin has no power over us, for we are sinners cut off from God by the Law and Jesus is responsible for doing that to us. In so doing, Jesus Himself made Himself least in the Kingdom of Heaven, for He said, "Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but whoever practises and teaches these commands will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven."¹¹

Jesus may have made Himself the least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but He also locked Satan out of it, for His first words were: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."¹² "...Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven,"¹³ and "the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these."¹⁴ "...the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these."¹⁵

Since Satan will neither repent nor change and be humble as pride is the treasure of his heart, for God said, "Your heart became proud on account of your beauty and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour."¹⁶ Indeed, I suspect pride is a creation of Satan; the only thing he can claim is all his. And so Satan is locked out, out of the Kingdom of Heaven and of God, cast down to Earth, which only has wisdom and knowledge in its sphere of influence, but no understanding. For to get understanding, you have to reach up to the Heavens.

But we, the slaves of Satan and his deception, having cut ourselves free from the Law that bound us by the sin it empowered, are now fixed in Jesus in whom we continue to exist, and in whom is the fullness of grace and truth.¹⁷ To us, **God gave this concession, "Listen to Him!"**¹⁸ These three words are not a command if you understand the Law. It is a concession, **the concession of His grace**, which was what Paul committed us to when he said, "Now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which can

⁸ Matthew 5:18

⁹ Matthew 19:18-19 (Exodus 20:12-16; Leviticus 19:18)

¹⁰ John 6:53

¹¹ Matthew 5:19

¹² Matthew 4:17

¹³ Matthew 18:3-4

¹⁴ Matthew 19:14

¹⁵ Luke 18:19

¹⁶ Ezekiel 28:17

¹⁷ John 1:14

¹⁸ Matthew 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35

build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”¹⁹ The word of His grace was held in the Person of His grace, Jesus Christ, and as we listen to Him who taught us to drink His blood and eat His flesh, we received the concession to break the Law and live, never to die. “Listen to Him” may be for the church the forgotten command, but for us it is God’s concession to live free of the Law of Moses to gain understanding of God through the knowledge of God.

For all who believe in Christ receive eternal life to come to know Him and therefore acquire knowledge of Him and the knowledge of Him is understanding. So much greater and superior is understanding compared to knowledge and wisdom that it is like the Heavens compared to Earth and its rain. So, if you appreciate what understanding is, you may begin to appreciate its power, and like a man standing on Earth in a rocket ship trying to reach the Heavens, you might want to use all wisdom and knowledge to direct the power of God that we have to the acquisition of understanding and its power.

We therefore, through God’s concession to listen to Jesus, are now under the Law of Jesus, a set of Laws that is even more enduring than the Law of Moses, but more importantly, a set of Laws that though it is written in part, is still being spoken, for Jesus is alive and is still speaking before the throne making intercession for us. And the Holy Spirit is still on Earth to make that which He has heard known to us. As such, the Law of Jesus has no end and is not fixed in a repetitive agenda like the Law, but is alive and moves and manoeuvres and manipulates with all flexibility, dexterity and pliability till all is renewed. This is not a teaching I have made up for the Lord’s own words are: “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on His own; He will speak only what He hears and He will tell you what is yet to come.”²⁰

But the church has not listened to the Holy Spirit for approximately 1900 years as it should have. If it had been doing so, history would have recorded the church as the vessel with which the Holy Spirit testified about Jesus with miracles, signs and wonders. We would be reading about the Spanish conquistadors turning the entire nations of South America to Jesus with the raising of the dead and the healing of their sick instead of the history that did take place—Spanish conquistadors coveting the gold of South America and killing their people, just to name one shameful example.

What has Jesus said in the last 1900 years or so that the Holy Spirit knows and needs to tell someone who would listen? Because we have not listened to the Holy Spirit, we have used the Name of Jesus and His church in unauthorised works worse than prophesying, driving out demons and doing miracles. The understanding of our grievous errors must compel us to deep and continuous repentance and to shut our ears to all voices except the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus came full of grace and truth, and knowledge of the Father, but the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Understanding as well as the Spirit of Wisdom and of Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and of Power, the Spirit of Knowledge and of the Fear of the Lord.²¹ Without Him there is no understanding. Unless a disciple listens to Jesus, he will not know the words of grace and truth, but unless the church listens to the Holy Spirit, it can have no understanding and faces only ruin for “a people without understanding will come to ruin!”²² “To those who listen to My teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.”²³

Listening to Jesus gives us the concession to receive more understanding, free from the limitations of the wisdom and knowledge afforded by the Law of Moses, into the boundless, endless realm of the Law of Jesus, which is still being spoken out to us by the Author. A Law not written on dead stone, but on living hearts. A Law that gives life and purpose to those who listen and listen more intently. It leads us into the Law of the Spirit of Life, which gives the understanding that power is manifested in its fullness, all power, only when it is used to save and not to lord it over others.

Knowledge tells us what is sin. Wisdom tells us to avoid it. Understanding tells us to master it. Cry out for understanding even though it costs everything. Get understanding, for it is the power that set the Heavens in place. If the man who believes in God is saved, and the man who knows God can live forever, so what of the man who understands God?

¹⁹ Acts 20:32

²⁰ John 16:12-13

²¹ Isaiah 11:2

²² Hosea 4:14

²³ Matthew 13:12 (NLT)