**Romans -** *The Gospel of Salvation - Session 02 Cheaper 1-2*

*Paul’s Gospel and the Universality of Sin*

*羅馬人書 - 救恩的福音 第二課 1-2 章 - 保祿的福音與罪的普遍性*

*1.God promised Abraham that all the nations would find blessing in and through his family (see Genesis 12:1-3, 22:16-18). God also promised David an everlasting dynasty (see 2 Samuel 7:16), giving him a kingdom with a clear international dimension and aspiration (see 1 Kings 4:34, 8:41-43). But this kingdom came crumbling to the ground when the Babylonians conquered and exiled Judah in 586 bc (see 2 Kings 25).*

*The crumbling of the Davidic kingdom gave rise to hope for a new and everlasting kingdom and a new and everlasting messiah, with the goal of bringing Israel and all the nations into union with God. How do the Abrahamic promise (of a worldwide blessing) and the Davidic hope (of an international kingdom) relate to Paul’s mission and proclamation of the gospel?*

*上主曾應許亞巴郎，萬民都因著他及其後裔而獲得祝福，*

*（創世紀12：1-3，22：16-18）。*

*上主又應許達味他的家和王權永存（撒下7：16），萬國萬民都要認識他的名。（列王紀上4：34(****思高5:14)****，8：41-43）。*

*但在公元前586年當猶大國被巴比倫人征服並流徙時，這王國崩潰了（列王紀下25）。*

*達味王國的崩壞，帶來了一個對新而永恆的默西亞國度的盼望，在於帶領以色列及眾民族與主契合。亞巴郎的許諾 (萬民的祝福)及達味的盼望(萬民的國度)與保祿的使命及福音宣講有什麼關係？*

*2. Read Mark 15:39 and Psalm 22:27-28 (which is in part a prophecy of Jesus’ passion). In what way do the centurion’s words point to the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham and David? Hint: Take note of the centurion’s nationality and his subtle profession of faith.*

*閱讀馬爾谷福音15：39,聖詠****思高****22：28-29 （有關耶穌受苦難的預言部分）。 百夫長說的話如何實現上主對亞巴郎及達味的應許？ 提示：注意百夫長的身份及其微妙的信仰背景。*

*3. Read Romans 1:18-32. What parallels, if any, are there between the Greco-Roman pagan context that Paul is dealing with and our modern time? What unique challenges or differences exist between engaging a pre-Christian context (as Paul did) in comparison to a post-Christian context (as some would say we now face)?*

*讀羅馬書1：18-32。保祿在應對當時希羅文明的異教背景與我們現今世代有什麽相似之處？ 與後基督宗教時代（像某些人所形容現今面臨的那樣）相比，與前基督時代（保祿當時）之間有什麽獨特挑戰或差異？*

*4. Consider the following from St. John Paul II: “By living ‘as if God did not exist,’ man not only loses sight of the mystery of God, but also of the mystery of the world and the mystery of his own being” (Gospel of Life, no. 22).*

*閱讀並思考聖若望保祿二世（《生命福音》22）。論到：”如果造物主不存在”,人活著不 僅看不到上主的奧秘，而且也 看不到這世界的奧秘和他自己(個人) 的存在奧秘。*

*a. What difference does belief in a Creator make? In what way might this alter our outlook, for example, on finances, sex, nature, family life, and our careers? If we believe in a Creator, are we the true owners of what we have, or are we stewards? What does it mean to be a steward?*

*相信有造物主的人會帶來什麼不同？這對生活取態有何影响，例如，關於錢財、性關係、大自然、家庭生活與及事業選擇等？既然我們選擇相信有造物主，我們是一切的真正擁有者，或只是一個管家？作為管家又意味著什麽呢？*

*b. Read CCC 159. How does belief in a Creator affect our understanding of the practice of science? Does belief in a Creator motivate a greater or lesser appreciation for science?*

*閱讀教理159。對相信有造物主的我們，如何理解科學實踐對我們的影响呢？ 相信有造物主會否增加或減少對科學的重視？*

*a注：22. Consequently, when the sense of God is lost, the sense of man is also threatened and poisoned, as the Second Vatican Council concisely states: "Without the Creator the creature would disappear ... But when God is forgotten the creature itself grows unintelligible".17 Man is no longer able to see himself as "mysteriously different" from other earthly creatures; he regards himself merely as one more living being, as an organism which, at most, has reached a very high stage of perfection. Enclosed in the narrow horizon of his physical nature, he is somehow reduced to being "a thing", and no longer grasps the "transcendent" character of his "existence as man". He no longer considers life as a splendid gift of God, something "sacred" entrusted to his responsibility and thus also to his loving care and "veneration". Life itself becomes a mere "thing", which man claims as his exclusive property, completely subject to his control and manipulation.*

*Thus, in relation to life at birth or at death, man is no longer capable of posing the question of the truest meaning of his own existence, nor can he assimilate with genuine freedom these crucial moments of his own history. He is concerned only with "doing", and, using all kinds of technology, he busies himself with programming, controlling and dominating birth and death. Birth and death, instead of being primary experiences demanding to be "lived", become things to be merely "possessed" or "rejected".*

*Moreover, once all reference to God has been removed, it is not surprising that the meaning of everything else becomes profoundly distorted. Nature itself, from being "mater" (mother), is now reduced to being "matter", and is subjected to every kind of manipulation. This is the direction in which a certain technical and scientific way of thinking, prevalent in present-day culture, appears to be leading when it rejects the very idea that there is a truth of creation which must be ac- knowledged, or a plan of God for life which must be respected. Something similar happens when concern about the consequences of such a "freedom without law" leads some people to the opposite position of a "law without freedom", as for example in ideologies which consider it unlawful to interfere in any way with nature, practically "divinizing" it. Again, this is a misunderstanding of nature's dependence on the plan of the Creator. Thus it is clear that the loss of contact with God's wise design is the deepest root of modern man's confusion, both when this loss leads to a freedom without rules and when it leaves man in "fear" of his freedom.*

*By living "as if God did not exist", man not only loses sight of the mystery of God, but also of the mystery of the world and the mystery of his own being.*

*5. Read Colossians 3:5. What do you think Paul means by describing “covetousness” as “idolatry”?*

*閱讀歌羅森書3：5。 你認為保祿把“貪婪”描述為“偶像崇拜” 是什麽意思？*

*6. Read Romans 1:26-27.*

*閱讀羅馬書1：26-27.*

*a. Read CCC1718–1719. What is the connection between authentic human happiness and living in accordance with the moral law?*

*閱讀CCC教理 1718-1719。人類真正嘅幸福與按道德律生活，两者之間有什麽聯繫呢？*

*b. Can the “pleasure” of a sin be part of the “punishment” for it? Given that God is all-loving, what might be the underlying reason behind this? Is there anything in our experience, perhaps as parents, that might be analogous here?*

*“罪中之樂 ” 可會成為懲罰的一部分？ 既然天主之愛是至廣至大的，它背後又帶給我們什麼啟發呢？在我們經驗中，假如作為父母，當中又有什麽相似的啟發呢？*

*7. Read Deuteronomy 30:6.*

*閱讀申命記30：6。*

*a. What do you think Paul means when he says, “Real circumcision is a matter of the heart” (Romans 2:29)?*

*你如何理解保祿所講 “真正的割損是 指在心靈上割損”（羅馬書2：29）是什麼意思？*

*b. Read Deuteronomy 6:4-7. How central is the “heart”?*

*閱讀申命記6:4-7，全心全靈全力這信息有幾核心呢？*

*c. How does all of this relate to true freedom? Can one be enslaved to sin?*

*這種種都關乎到真正的自由？我等又可否會受到罪的捆綁呢？*