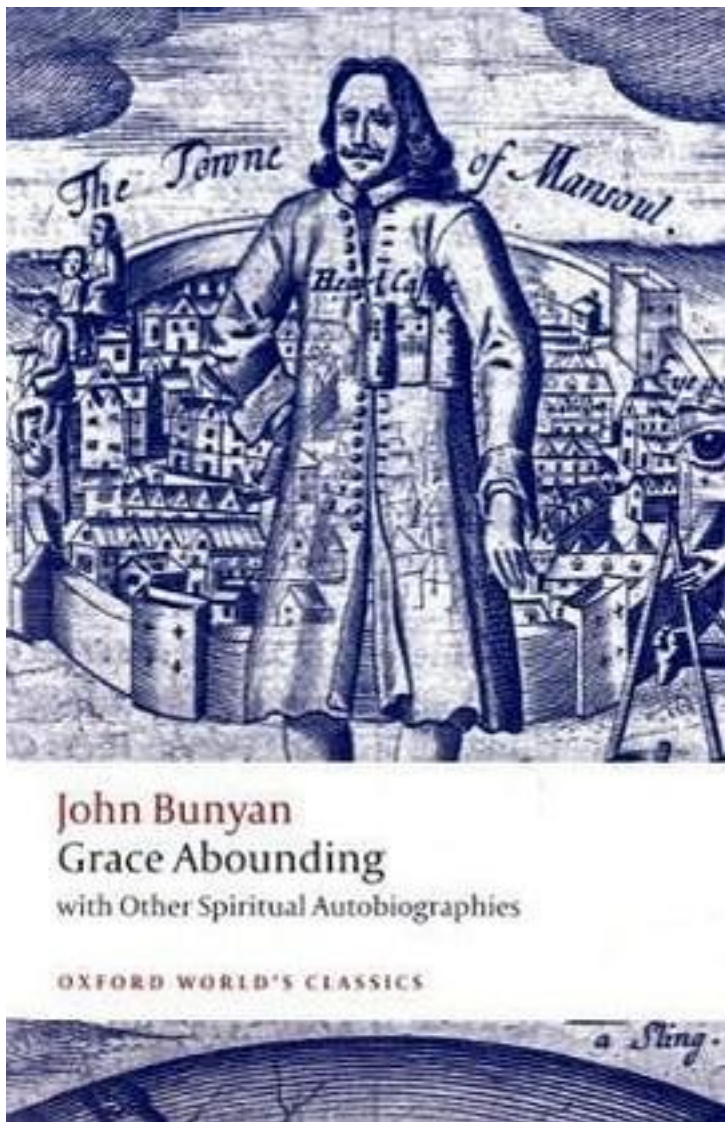


Grace Abounding



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出版者:Oxford Paperbacks

出版时间:2008-09-11

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780199554980

'I evidently saw that unless the great God of his infinite grace and bounty, had voluntarily chosen me to be a vessel of mercy, though I should desire, and long, and labour until my heart did break, no good could come of it ...How can you tell you are Elected?' (GA, 47) In seventeenth-century England, the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, with its belief in the predetermined salvation of the few and damnation of the many, led many Christians to an anguished search for evidence of God's favour. John Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* records this spiritual crisis and its gruelling fluctuations between hope and despair in all its psychological intensity. It is a classic of spiritual autobiography - a genre which flourished in seventeenth-century England, as anxiety over one's spiritual state encouraged rigorous self-scrutiny and the sharing of spiritual experiences. This edition sets *Grace Abounding* alongside four of the most interesting and varied contemporary spiritual autobiographies, making its cultural milieu more meaningful to the modern reader.

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