

## Psalm 32 – When Sins Are Forgiven! (Part 2 of 2)

- II. **Holy Living the Result (vv 6-11)** – Genuine repentance from a believer will result in a transformed life whereby he is truly sorry for his sins and will resolve by God's enabling not to sin that sin again. He takes serious steps to stop sinning. He is drawn closer to the LORD in the process of this transformation. Repentance that does not result in a real transformed life is not true repentance but self-pity sorrow. Such a false repentance toward God is similar to the sorrow that Judas Iscariot felt when he regretted selling Jesus Christ for 30 pieces of silver. The self-pity kind of repentance will likely result in suicide! **Matthew 27:3-5 (KJV)**, "*Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, 4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. 5 And he [Judas Iscariot] cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.*" [Emphasis added]

The believer will repent and not delay one second longer knowing that it was his sins that caused Christ to die on the cross. Now that he is born again in Christ, he will not want to have any known unrepented sin in his life. He truly wants God to help him get rid of it as soon as possible. Thus David shares with us, "For this shall every one that is godly pray . . ." David was referring to the preceding five verses. The child of God will not keep silence and let the dry bones within him rob him of the joy and peace of the LORD. He will surely repent of his sins and make right his relationship with God which will result in the fruits of repentance. He is a child of God who is godly! He will want to be like God who hates sin. Therefore, he must also hate sin like his God. He cries to his heavenly Father in a time when He may be found. What this means is that he must do so the moment he has transgressed or his transgression is made known to him, or else there will come a time when the LORD will no longer be found for him to repent. The only time God can no longer be found by a sinner on earth is when he has passed the point of repentance. He continuously refuses to repent and judicial hardening will set in, as was the case of Pharaoh when he refused to repent after the plagues were inflicted upon him and Egypt. He kept on hardening his heart until the LORD hardened his heart. That was when the LORD was no longer to be found by him. Another instance when the LORD will no longer be found by the sinner is when he dies in his sin and he finds himself in hell, a state that is beyond salvation. In the case of the child of God, there is no judicial hardening since the Holy Spirit dwells in him. If he refuses to repent, then the LORD might take him home to heaven so that he will no longer stumble others by his bad testimony of not repenting of his sin. When that happens, his time to repent on earth is over and his testimony and service unto the LORD is ended. In short, the true child of God will

surely go to his God in humble repentance whereas the sinner will not until it is all over for him.

Using synonymous parallelism, David restates the necessity and surety of the believer to draw nigh unto the LORD in times of need. The sovereign design of trials and testings in the believer's life is to draw him back unto God - when in sin as well as in times of persecution for the faith. This was David's personal experience all his life. When it was a transgression against God with Bathsheba, David learned his lesson of humility and the consequence of sin even as he returned back to the LORD, as Psalm 51 reveals. When he was hunted by King Saul like a fugitive, David was not in sin but was persecuted for his faith. He was called by the LORD to replace King Saul as the next king of Israel. He drew closer to the LORD during those years and prayed more than ever before as recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel. The times of "floods of great waters" will surely come as the believer fights the good fight of faith. Then his head knowledge will be turned into experiential knowledge and his life in Christ will become more abundant than ever before.

**Verse 7** (synthetic parallelism) – The believer will say from his heart with the deepest conviction that the LORD is his "hiding place." The LORD has "preserved me [him] from trouble." The word "trouble" means "a tight or narrow place." This is not sin per se but a very difficult situation of persecution. How he reacts and responds in moments like this will determine whether he will or will not sin. He has not sinned by being in a tight place; but he sins if he responds by murmuring and complaining. That is why David declared that the LORD was his hiding place. No matter how tightly he might be squeezed by the situation at hand, the LORD would continue to be his only solace and safety. The "hiding place" is a place of concealment. It is a place where David's enemy could not get to. How can a believer hide in such a way where the enemies cannot get to him? I am sure the apostle Paul also considered the LORD as his hiding place in safety when he was languishing in the dark damp dingy rat infested dungeon of Rome, and then later on when he was martyred for his faith! The apostle Paul was not alone in this because there must have been hundreds if not thousands of God's people who died by crucifixion, by being burned at the stake like John Hus and William Tyndale, or being eaten by lions, or burned in the fiery furnace, or by any other means for holding on to their faith! What David meant when he said that the LORD was his hiding place was that he could always trust in the LORD to take care of him even unto eternity. He meant that even if he had to die on earth for the cause of Christ, he knew the LORD would not forsake him, for to be absent in the body was to be present with the LORD! The safety is in not sinning against God which is a spiritual safety rather than a physical one. In some instances, it could refer to both physical and spiritual, as in the case of David when he was kept safe from King

Saul. This was because God's work and will in David's life was not completed yet. David had to the next king of Israel for the next 40 years before the LORD took him home. Safety in the LORD means that the believer will be kept from sinning against God in the midst of the most wicked and heinous injustices and persecution. The LORD will preserve, i.e. guard by keeping out of sight. David testified that the LORD would preserve him from sinning against Him in times of great distress when he was badly "squeezed" on all sides. He would not sin against his LORD no matter what!

David knew that the LORD: "shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Songs of deliverance were normally sung after the deliverance had occurred. This was the case of Moses and Miriam after they crossed the Red Sea in the time of the exodus. Likewise, David knew that the LORD would compass, i.e. surround, him from all sides with songs of deliverance regardless of which direction the attack might come. Whether the attack comes from home or church or work or school, the LORD will be there to take care of all His children. The deliverance from the LORD will come through the knowledge of the Word of God. The believer must trust in the LORD's promises which will give him the inner strength to stand firm in obedience to God's truth. This implies that the believer must study the Word of God and know the Word of God well before the trials and persecutions come. The Holy Spirit will bring to remembrance the Word of God that he has learned so that he will be able to trust in the promises of God that he has already learned. This is what it means to trust in the LORD who will surely deliver. Then the child of God will see or experience the LORD's deliverance when it actually takes place. We know that it is through the Word of God that the deliverance will come and not from thin air because of the next verse.

**Verse 8** (synonymous parallelism) –"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go." The word "instruct" means "to make one wise." The word "teach" literally means "to point out as if aiming the finger." The Bible is filled with so much wisdom and truth that there is no experience in life that the Bible does not cover. The LORD promises all believers that they need to look to Him and He will surely make them wise. To have "wisdom" is to know what to do and to say the right thing in all circumstances and to know God is pleased and glorified by what is said and done. The Word of God will make this a daily reality in every believer's life. All the believer has to do is to study and understand and obey the Word of God. It is as simple as this! Note that the LORD says that HE will do the instructing and the pointing. The believer just needs to follow and obey. However, he cannot understand God's Word on his own. He must never forget this truth or else he will become filled with pride thinking that he can understand God's truth without God's enabling. This has been the fall of many pastors and preachers at the end of their ministry. When the ministry was at its infancy, there was much dependence on God.

However, when the ministry grew and blossomed, pride set in because the pastor thought that he was the one who brought the people, who praised him for his "great preaching." It is always the LORD who does the instructing and teaching in the preacher's life as well as through his life, thus making him to be a blessing to others. The LORD will guide the believer in the right pathway through the Word of God.

The LORD says that He will guide the believer with His eye. This means that the LORD will always keep an eye on the believer. He will never let him out of His omniscient sight. Not only will the LORD instruct and teach the believer, He will also protect and watch over him, even in times of his waywardness, i.e. when he falls into sin. The LORD will never desert the believer no matter how far he has strayed away from the LORD. This does not mean that the believer should tempt the LORD by sinning and straying. He must never do that. If he is straying he must return to the LORD immediately. This means that even when the believer is unfaithful, the LORD will always remain faithful, for He cannot deny Himself! He will always be a faithful trustworthy God.

**Verse 9** (emblematic parallelism) – Therefore, the believer must not be stubborn and remain in sin, if he is truly born again in Christ. The emblem of a horse and mule that have no understanding was used. They require a bit and bridle to move and guide them from place to place. The LORD says that the child of God must not be like these animals. These beasts of burden were very popular in biblical times. They could carry heavy loads and were used frequently for transportation, and in the case of the horse, for battle too. However, they did not move unless they were told to do so. They are very powerful animals with great strength but they had to be guided. John Gill explained the nature of these animals well when he wrote, "not as brutes, which have no rational faculties, but as men; that they should not show themselves thoughtless, stupid, and unteachable, as these animals, or worse than they; nor stubborn and obstinate, refractory and intractable, resolving not to be taught, stopping the ear, and pulling away the shoulder; nor ill natured and mischievous; not only hating instruction, casting away the law of the Lord, but kicking and spurning at, and persecuting such who undertake to instruct them; as these creatures sometimes attempt to throw their riders, and, when down, kick at them." [Swordsearcher 6.0]

Children of God are not brute beasts. They are born again with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to guide them in the paths of truth and righteousness. These animals have to be controlled so that they will not go near people to bite or hurt them. Believers ought not to behave like these animals that have to be "forced" to behave and do what is right and to stop doing what is wrong. The horse and mule are beasts of burden. Children of God are made in the image of God and after salvation in Christ

this image of God in man is restored. It is to become more like Christ who is the express image of God the Father. The cheerfulness and willingness of the child of God to repent of his sins and return back to the LORD has to characterise his life. He should not have to be threatened or browbeaten to come back to the LORD. He should go willing in humble repentance for Christ's sake.

**Verse 10** (antithetical parallelism) – The contrast between the sinner, whom God calls “wicked” here, and the child of God is emphasized by God. The one who refuses to repent is the wicked one. He does not know God. He does not know Christ. He has not really accepted Christ as his LORD and Saviour, for if he really has, he would repent of his sins and he would not want to hold on to sin. How could anyone hold on to sin after really understanding that the Son of God Jesus Christ died in order to get rid of the sins in his life? This is unthinkable, unless the person is still dead in his sins and does not actually know the Saviour. To hold on to sin without repentance is as good as saying that what Jesus Christ suffered and His death on the cross means nothing to him. What the unrepentant sinner or wicked person is saying is, "Sin is good for me and that is why I do not want to get rid of sin!" This sinner who delights in sinning and holding on to sin is filled with many sorrows. The inner turmoil in his soul knows no bounds. He is constantly trying to run away from his pain and sin-filled life by pretending he is well in his soul when in reality he is rotting within. There is no joy but only grief. He drowns his sorrow in drunkenness and other sins like living a debauchorous and wanton life. A truly born again believer will definitely repent and get rid of sin in his life.

David wrote that "he that trusteth in the LORD" shall be surrounded by mercy. Mercy is basically God's kindness. The punishment that the believer deserves will not be meted upon him because Christ had already carried his sins and borne his punishment upon His body! When the believer like David repents of his sin, God will forgive because of Christ! Mercy will not only be his to experience but will compass or surround him so that all areas of his life on this earth will be covered by God's mercy! All that the believer repents of will be forgiven by God through Christ. The child of God must trust in the LORD, which means that he must do all things according to the Bible. To trust in the LORD is the same as obeying the Bible! It is not a feeling of trust but actually living a life according to the Bible's teaching. The consequences for sins committed on this earth will still be borne by the believer but he will not be cast out of heaven because of Christ. The earthly consequences of sins are important so that children of God will not sin with compulsion. When David sinned against Bathsheba, four of his sons had to die. When Moses sinned, he was barred from entering the Promised Land. They were both forgiven and could enter

heaven but they had to bear the earthly consequences for their sins. To be forgiven does not mean that there are no consequences.

**Verse 11** (synonymous parallelism) – The result of one who repents of his sin is gladness in the LORD. The word "glad" means "to brighten up." It is in the LORD that the believer brightens up. He knows that the LORD is pleased with him when he repents of his sin. This makes him very happy within. The word "rejoice" follows immediately because this word describes a person jumping for joy to express the gladness within. He knows his sins are all forgiven in Christ and his relationship and fellowship with God are right. His conscience is clear and all is truly well with his soul! This is a very blessed and wonderful feeling. He knows that he is characterised by righteousness because God calls him "ye righteous." He stands before God justified. The righteousness of God in Christ has been imputed to him. This is evidenced by his desire to be always right with God by doing all things according to Holy Scriptures, including repentance of sins.

Using synonymous parallelism, David repeated the same truth and experience inside his soul by using different words. He shouts for joy for all to hear that the LORD is good to him. He is right with God for he is upright in his heart. He is truthful. There is no hypocrisy in his life. He walks in the path of righteousness with the Word God as His guide. He loves his life in Christ, for he has repented of all his sins and has been forgiven by God through Christ! Amen.