

April 29

Scriptures: Read Psalms 31 & 32

Key Verse: “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.”
(Psalm 32:1)

Overview

Once again in Psalm 31, David complains about the wicked who are slandering him. The occasion for writing was likely when David was forced to flee because of Absalom’s revolt. He was both grieved and humiliated, yet he had confidence in God’s deliverance and took refuge in God, whom he expressed as being his Rock and fortress of defense. His total dependence and consecration to God was evident in his words which were made sacred and given a fuller meaning by Jesus’ use of them while on the cross: “Into Your hand I commit my spirit” (31:5a; Luke 23:46). At the time, David was not thinking about his death and the final committal of his soul to God, but rather a daily committal of his life and a trust in the Lord for deliverance, based upon his personal experience of God’s redemption and truth (31:5b). In every situation of life, especially when near death, the believer must be certain that his spirit is indeed wholly committed to the Lord.

With an intensified appeal to the Lord, David described his grim situation (31:9-18). He knew that God was aware of all his sorrows (31:7) and had already mercifully freed him from the hand of the enemy and brought him to a wide and safe place (31:8 possibly refers to his escape from Absalom by leaving Jerusalem, and the refuge and sustenance God provided in the plains east of the Jordan at the fortified city of Mahanaim, 31:21; 2 Samuel 15:14; 17:24, 27-29). Though he was “cut off” from praying in the House of God at Jerusalem, David was confident that God still heard his supplications (31:22). As an ousted king, he felt like a “broken vessel” (31:12b)—useless and thrown away. Years of grief over the misconduct of his children and his past sins had taken its toll, and he felt wasted away (31:10); yet he knew God was in control, and his time of deliverance, as well as his time of death, were in God’s hands (31:15). By recalling the Lord’s past mercies and present help, David was filled with gratitude and faith that God would continue to preserve him (31:23). His trust in God’s goodness prompted him to encourage others to also love the Lord and put their hope in Him (31:24).

Psalm 32 brings comfort to the penitent and the assurance of God’s forgiveness, restoration, and a renewed joy. The occasion for writing this psalm was most likely after David had experienced the forgiveness of God after repenting of his sin with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband (2 Samuel 11). He had learned from his experience and had important advice to pass on to others. He taught that the truly happy (blessed) person is the one who is forgiven by God.

The three-fold blessing God initiates for the penitent is: (1) forgiveness of transgression (a deliberate trespass in willful rebellion against God and His laws); (2) covering of sin (missing the mark or target, falling short); and, (3) not being charged with iniquity (perversity) but rather being justified, as though no sin had been committed. The blessed result is freedom from the burden of sin and guilt, which David so vividly described. The one whose “sin is covered” has

received the atoning work of God by the spilt blood of the Sacrifice upon the Mercy Seat. Jesus shed His blood so that our sins may be covered (Romans 3:24; 1 John 2:2).

Sin is a horrible and frightening thing. It is against God's person, holiness, perfection, and attributes. It is the heaviest burden upon mankind, for it leads to an eternity in hell. While David "kept silent" before confessing his sin and repenting, he was constantly in a state of suffering, both in body and mind, because of his guilt. His conscience would not let him rest, and he felt the wrath of God upon him (32:3-5).

What tremendous relief, cleansing, and comfort David experienced when he confessed his sin openly before God (note 1 John 1:9). Once again, he could say that God was his safe hiding place. Because God's forgiveness is available to all, David also encouraged others to call upon Him while He may be found (cf. Isaiah 55:6; Hebrews 3:13). There will come a day when it will be too late to make a confession of sin. While there is still time, God desires all to come to repentance, that He might have fellowship with them. To further exhort the people to confess their sin before God, David spoke the words of his Great Deliverer who promised to instruct, teach, and guide His children in the way they should go (32:8). David urged them to come to God willingly and submissively, not like a stubborn animal, for fellowship with God brings great joy and inward peace, about which we should sing and shout!

Prayer

Lord God, we confess any sin in our lives which can never be hidden from "You. Thank "You for "Your forgiveness, provided through Jesus, which brings relief from guilt and the comfort of a restored relationship with "You.