

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

XXXII. A Lesson In The Confession Of Sin By The Believer

(Psalm 32:1-11)

I. Introduction

- A. 1 John 1:10 claims that even we believers in Christ sin, and 1 John 1:9 calls us to confess our sins unto the Lord, for God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- B. However, we can face an artificial, false guilt that either we or others lay upon us, and we need insight into discerning true from false guilt for sin, and Psalm 32:1-11 provides a lesson on these important truths:

II. A Lesson In The Confession Of Sin By The Believer, Psalm 32:1-11.

- A. Verse 1 of this psalm comprises the first part of verse one in the English Bible (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1000), so we stay with the numbering system in the English Bible for clarity.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 32:1-11 as follows:
 1. "Blessed is he whose transgressions are taken away, forgiven (*nasa'*, Ibid., B. D. B., A Heb.-Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 669-672), whose sin is covered [put out of God's sight] (*kasah*, Ibid., p. 491-492)," Psa. 32:1.
 2. "Blessed is the common man (*'adam*, Ibid., Kittel; Robert B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 45-48) to whom Jahweh does not reckon (*hashab*, Ibid., p. 362-363) iniquity (*'avon*, Ibid., 730-731), and in whose spirit there is no deceit (*remiyah*, Ibid., p. 941)," Psalm 32:2.
 3. "Because when I caused myself to keep silent (*hareth*, Ibid., p. 361; Hiphil = causative) [from confessing my sin (in deceit)], my bones [fig. seat of emotions, Jer. 20:9; 23:9] wasted away through my roaring cry of distress (*she'agah*, Ibid., p. 980) all day long," Psalm 32:3.
 4. "Because day and night Your hand was heavy upon me [in conviction of sin]; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Selah," Psalm 32:4.
 5. "Then I acknowledged my sin unto You, and I did not cover my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgression to Jahweh,' and You (emph. pron.) forgave the perversion (*'avon* again, but slightly different meaning; H. A. W., The Wrdbk. of the O. T., 1980, v. II, p. 650-651) of my sin," Psalm 32:5.
 6. "Because of this [due to this experience, Ibid., Kittel, p. 1001; Ibid., B. D. B., p. 262], let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; surely when the waters rise [as in the Genesis Flood judgment] they will not reach him!" (Psalm 32:6)
 7. "You (emph. pron.) are my Hiding Place, Covering (*seter*, Ibid., p. 712); You will protect me from narrow straits [of judgment] and surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah," Psalm 32:7.
 8. "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel and watch over you," Psa. 32:8.
 9. "Do not be as the horse or as the mule, which have no discernment, but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you," Psalm 32:9.
 10. "Many are the woes of the wicked, but Jahweh's loyal love surrounds the man who relies upon (*batah*, Ibid., p. 105) Him, Psalm 32:10.
 11. "Rejoice in Jahweh, and be glad, you righteous ones; sing, all you who are upright in heart!" (Psalm 32:11)
- C. Accordingly, we have the following lessons:
 1. If a believer postpones confession of sin, he suffers emotional (v. 3) and physical distress (v. 4b) due to God's conviction (v. 4a) and more pain as God uses trials to get him to confess (v. 9). Delaying confession also dangerously tries God's patience Who in time disciplines (v. 6b) overwhelmingly (v. 6c; 1 John 5:16).
 2. Yet, if a believer quickly confesses his sin, God forgives the sin along with its perversity, its twistedness (v. 5), and the Lord Himself acts as the believer's Hiding Place from God's own disciplinary actions (v. 7).
 3. [Believers can suffer false guilt due to legalistic pressure from without or from within, but the defense against this problem is reliance on God-inspired Scripture to discern the truth, 2 Timothy 3:15-17.]

Lesson: David explained from his own experience how unedifying it is to postpone confession of sin versus how nurturing God becomes when we actually confess our sins, so we best quickly confess our sins when we sin. [One can suffer false guilt, but we can handle that by relying on God-inspired written Scripture for discernment.]

Application: (1) If we sin, may we confess it quickly to avoid God's discipline and gain His gracious, nurturing forgiveness. (2) May we counter false guilt by relying on written Scripture to discern whether we have sinned, letting God's Word settle the matter in our minds and hearts regardless of legalistic pressures to the contrary.