

Psalm 32

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[0:00] The Psalter is one of the pinnacles of the Old Testament. So when we read the Psalter, it's like seeing different photos of the majestic picture of God's glory. The majestic collage of God's glory.

So Psalm 1 and 2 is a singular song in the Hebrew. It serves as an introduction to the Psalter, an interpretive lens on how we read the rest of the Psalms.

Psalm 1 depicts this ideal man, this representative. And Psalm 2 puts a face to the ideal man, applying Psalm 1 to Psalm 2. So read verse 1 with me.

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers. The word blessed is the man, the word for man there, Adam, is in the singular and portrays a representative.

It could be interpreted the blessed man or the blessings of the man. So Psalm 1 can be understood as that way. The blessed man in Psalm 1 thinks on God's word day and night, as we read in verse 2.

[1:06] He thinks it in such a way that it affects his thoughts, his affections, and his actions, so that they would be in line with God's. This man knows God, and he will stand in the congregation of the righteous.

Now the second man in Psalm 1 is the wicked man who turns away from God and revels in his own counsel. Those who do not heed his counsel, scorn.

Those who do not heed the counsel of the wicked, he scorns and scoffs at. This man will be like the chaff that gets blown away. And he will not know God, and he will fall on the day of judgment and perish.

The blessed man of Psalm 1 is revealed as the righteous king of Psalm 2, as we go into Psalm 2. The righteous king takes counsel with Yahweh himself. The wicked of Psalm 1 are identified as the wicked rulers of Psalm 2.

The wicked rulers take counsel together, and they scoff at the blessed man. Therefore, there is a warning to the wicked kings that they should not take counsel together and scoff the authority of the righteous king.

[2:15] And the warning is that if they do not submit to them, they will be crushed. Read Psalm 2.12 with me. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way.

For his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. In Psalm 1.2, we see the blessed man of Psalm 1 as the messianic king of Psalm 2.

The audience of Psalm 1 who are listening and reading and seeing this are being warned that unless they take refuge in the messianic king, they will be crushed like the wicked rulers of Psalm 2.

And we see his point further in Psalm 3.8. It says, Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing be on your people. Do you see the connection that blessed the man of Psalm 1 as the royal son?

And that all who take refuge in him are blessed and will be blessed. And then in Psalm 3, it says that salvation belongs to the Lord. Blessing be on your people. Those who are finding refuge in the son. So, as we come to the Psalm 32, this understanding of Psalm 1 and 2 sets up an interpretive paradigm, a way for us to understand the rest of the Psalms.

[3:29] This understanding of Psalm 1 and 2 shows that those who submit to the blessed king find forgiveness, refuge, comfort, loving kindness, faithfulness, and eternal life.

But those who do not submit to the righteous king will receive justice, the righteousness of God, recompense, cursing, and everlasting sorrow.

With this understanding, turn with me to Psalm 32. Before we begin the Psalm, I'd like to introduce it briefly by discussing a central theme of verses 1-5.

David is describing his experience of wrestling with guilt and unrepentant sin. He explicitly describes the effect that this has on the state of his heart and how that is affecting his physical condition.

While he loved God and desired him deeply, he wrestled with sin in this body of death. He was lured by lust. He was murdered. He murdered a man.

[4 : 50] He committed adultery. When his children sinned, he had been passive. He got angry. He manipulated circumstances in his favor. He is one who has experienced the consequences of his sin, as we see through the narrative.

David was familiar with the grief of his own sin. What about you today? Are there sins you've committed that you feel the weight of upon your shoulders?

Are there things that you are shameful for? I'm not sure if any one of you that are in here today are currently experiencing shame or guilt, or experiencing regarding things you've done in the past. But Psalm 32 is a passage of scripture that is like a wonderful salve for our soul, and rich food for the needy. It's a passage that provides relief from this massive burden of guilt and helps rid our stains of sin.

So today, in Psalm 32, we will see the godly should be the happiest of people because they have been forgiven and received the blessings of forgiveness. We will also see that the one who is unrepentant, bearing his guilt, should heed the lesson of the psalm, do not be a mule.

[6 : 06] We'll see this through four points. The first point we'll see this through is point number one, the happy state of the forgiven. Second point, the divine blessings of the forgiven.

The third point, do not be a mule. Seek God in prayer. And the fourth point, sorrow for the wicked and joy for the righteous.

Now I'll repeat these points again. Point number one, the happy state of the forgiven. Point number two, the divine blessings of the forgiven. Point number three, do not be a mule.

Seek God in prayer. And point number four, sorrow for the wicked and joy for the righteous. Read Psalm 32 with me. A masculine of David, blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept quiet, my bones wasted away, through my groaning all day long.

[7 : 17] For day and night your hand was heavy upon me. My strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah. I acknowledge my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity.

I said I'll confess my transgression to the Lord, and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

Therefore, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found.

Surely, in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him. You are a hiding place for me. You preserve me from trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance.

Selah. Selah. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Be not like the horse or a mule without understanding.

You must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you. Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

[8 : 22] Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart. Psalm 32 offers a remark under the heading.

It does not have a verse number. So if you look into the text, you see the heading says, Blessed are the forgiven. Under it, there is a phrase that has no number one. It's a masculine of David.

This is what we call the superscription. It does not appear in every psalm, but when it does, it helps us understand the context of the psalm. Oftentimes, this will give you an understanding of what the meaning of the psalm is.

So often this provides an author, an event, a genre. The heading of the psalm is not in the Hebrew-inspired. The superscription is in the Hebrew, and it is inspired. So it's wise for us to see what it says and to understand how that influences the text.

Here it is a genre. We see that's a masculine of David. A masculine is a word in the Hebrew that means to instruct or to consider. So this psalm is a piece of poetic wisdom.

[9 : 27] It helps provide us understanding and wisdom in our relationship with God. So with this in mind, let us learn from God's eternal word in Psalm 32 and apply it to our hearts. Number one, the happy state of the forgiven.

As we begin to explore Psalm 32, keep in mind that Psalm 1 and 2 are lens by which we see the psalms. So in this passage, the blessed are those who find refuge in the royal son for his forgiveness.

This makes us, so as we see that, we'll see that the blessed are those who find refuge in the son for his forgiveness, his protection, and his instruction. The wicked are those who do not heed the counsel of the Lord and follow the way of the mule, the way of the foolish.

So Psalm 31, 2. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. The one whose experience forgiven is blessed in the text.

We will come back to what it means to be blessed after we survey this text. But let's talk about why they are blessed. Here we see that they are blessed because they are forgiven.

[10:35] So it makes me ask, what does it mean to be forgiven? And the way that I've found helpful to break this down is, what is one forgiven from? And what does it mean to be forgiven?

So we're going to survey that in two points. What is one forgiven from in the text? And what does it mean to be forgiven? So in the text, there's this blessed individual who's forgiven from their transgressions.

To transgress is one who has decisively rebelled against the authority of God. Their trespass is against God who created the heavens and the earth.

He is the creator and we are the creatures. He has every right to establish what is right and what is wrong. When one transgresses, they reject his authority. So this person in Psalm 32 is forgiven from the countless times they have rejected God's authority over them and decided their understanding, their counsel, their feelings are superior to God.

The text also says that their sin is covered. Sin is missing the mark. You're aiming at a target and the mark that's missed is what God has commanded. But sin is also disobedience against God when they do not do what God has said.

[11:47] But sin is more than that. Sin is not just one disobedience. It's a condition. Before one is saved and experiences the healing salve of forgiveness, they have a heart issue.

A sin issue in which they delight in their sin and transgressions against God. In fact, they hate God before they are saved. This heart condition of one before they are forgiven is one of the wicked who will not stand in the judgment of God.

So with that said, one is forgiven from their transgressions. What does it mean to be forgiven? The Hebrew root here for forgiven in the text is to lift or carry.

To forgive someone from their transgressions, for their transgressions to be lifted and carried away. We see this language used throughout Scripture and it gives us an understanding of the liberating and precious doctrine of forgiveness.

Bear with me while I belabor this point for a second. In Leviticus, when one would sin, they would bear the weight of their sin. As if having it on their back. Instead of their sin being carried, they're carrying it.

[12:55] Therefore, when one sins, they have to deal with it. And to deal with it, they would have to go and sacrifice a female goat. And they would bring this female goat before the priest. They would put their hand on the head and kill the goat.

And then the priest would take it and make propitiation for that individual. But this act was like an act of transferring one's sin, one's iniquity to this goat. And then it would provide forgiveness.

In Leviticus 16, on the National Festival Day of Atonement, people of Israel would gather before the priest and they would bring two goats. And the priest would take one goat and offer it as a sin offering before God and make propitiation.

Then the priest would take the other goat, this goat called the scapegoat. And he would confess over it all the iniquities of the people, all their transgressions, all their sins. And this scapegoat we sent away from the camp, bearing the weight of iniquity and sins, and it would be no more.

These practices were important for the people of Israel to seek forgiveness. When they sinned, they looked to God by faith in the sacrifices. And the prophets made clear that sacrifices themselves do not save.

[14:05] There is no works that will save us. But it is the faith itself is what is accounted to them as righteous, as we see in Genesis 15. For the audience of this psalm, they would understand that salvation belongs to the Lord.

And for them to be saved would be for them to sacrifice and by faith look to God and look to his promises. So after David passed away, during the reign of King Uzziah, Isaiah began his prophetic ministry.

He began prophesying and ministering to the people. Isaiah picks up on the language of Leviticus and the imagery we see in Leviticus in Isaiah 53. And he applies this to the servant of the Lord. So if you will, take your copy of God's Word and turn with me to Isaiah 53. Actually, I want to remind you, when they would bring the animal, the idea was you're taking your iniquity and your sin and you're putting it on the scapegoat and the scapegoat would go into the wilderness.

So now we have the same language used in Isaiah 53, prophesying of the Messiah who would come. Starting in verse 4, we see, Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

[15:24] Yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. He was pierced for our transgressions. He was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace.

And with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

So as the goats would bear the sins of the people, this servant of the Lord will come one day, in this context, and bear the weight and iniquities and sins of God's people.

So the later Jews have this to look forward to. They're looking to this blessed king who they can find refuge in. And they're looking to this servant who would bear the weight of all their sins and iniquities. And this bearing, this weight that would be bore, would not be a constant sacrifice they'd have to bring.

It would not be an annual day of atonement that they would have to bring two goats, one to be killed as a sin offering, one to be sent away as a scapegoat. This one will do one work in which all sin will be forgiven for those who believe.

[16:30] So as we read Isaiah 53 and Psalm 32, we see a greater and grander picture. As they had faith in God's promises to come, we have faith in the God-man who came.

Jesus Christ is the servant of the Lord, prophesied in Isaiah 53. He is the blessed son of Psalm 2. He is the son of Abraham and the son of David, of Matthew 1.

He is the Lamb of God who bore the weight of the sins of the world, and the Lion of Judah who will make a quick end to his enemies. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

And it is in him that the Hebrew believers and us today place our faith. But just like the Hebrew believers of Psalm 32, we are in the same boat. We have sinned.

And when we sin, we bear the weight of our sin. If you are here today and you do not believe in Jesus Christ, know that you are bearing the weight of your sin.

[17:29] There is a record of debt over you for all the wrongs you have committed. Good works and happy attitude and forgetfulness will not save you.

Romans 6.23 says, For the wages of sin is death. This death is not just an end of life, but an everlasting pain and suffering in hell. Therefore, as the Hebrews would look to the royal son and serve the Lord, today, while you can look, look to Jesus Christ.

Romans 5.8 says, God shows his love for us and that while we're sinned, Christ died for us. Christ has taken every sin, every treacherous trespass, the load of iniquity, which we should be bearing, and bore it before the wrath of God.

He is the high priest and the scapegoat, the Lamb of God, who took away our sins. Therefore, today, turn from your sins and believe in Jesus Christ. Romans 6.23 says that the gift of God is eternal life.

For those who have been saved and forgiven, there is something that awaits them, something beautiful, something wonderful, an eternal inheritance of everlasting joy awaits those who have been forgiven, those who find refuge in the Messianic King.

[18:48] Turn back with me to Psalm 32, please. Great.

Let's read verses 1 and 2 together. A masculine of David, blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and whose spirit there is no deceit.

So in Psalm 1 and 2, we see this blessed man is blessed because they have no transgressions held against them. Their transgressions have been cast as far as the east is from the west and is no more.

They've been cast away and are gone. This verse goes on to explain two other ways in which our sin has been dealt with. In verse 1, we see that our sin has been covered. Sin brings shame and exposes us.

Jesus has bore our sin and he has covered it through his sacrifice. Here, the person is blessed because their sin is covered in Christ. The third way we see that sin is discussed is that the blessed man will have no iniquity accounted against him.

[20 : 13] This word, iniquity accounted against him, is an accounting term. As if you're taking an account for everything that's ever happened. So all the sins that you've once done no longer is accounted against you if you find refuge in the Son and in Christ Jesus.

The record of debt is gone. So now let's go back to the word blessed. So in the Hebrew scriptures, the word blessing is used an abundant amount of times.

Genesis is used 76 times. In Deuteronomy, it's used 40 times. In the Psalms, it's used 76 times. The first word is in the idea of giving and receiving blessing.

And the second word is usually used in the state of being blessed. It's a state of receiving this blessing and being blessed. The word is also translated to mean happiness.

So this person who has been saved by the gospel of Jesus Christ and does not bear the weight of sin should be the happiest person alive. They have nothing to worry about in their eternal destiny because God has covered their sin for them.

[21 : 19] Their iniquities have been bore and their transgression is no more. So therefore, we should rejoice today in our Lord Jesus Christ in his life, death, and resurrection because truly, as saints of Christ, we are in a happy place.

We have a happy state. Point number two, the divine blessings of the forgiven. As we move on to verses three and four, we'll see the divine blessings David has experienced from God.

The first blessing we see in Psalm 32 is the blessing of divine forgiveness. Verses three through four say, For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me. My strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Say law. Prior to repenting of sin, sin weighed him down.

David felt the weight of his conviction and he describes this weight as his bones wasting away. He describes this as groaning all the day long.

[22 : 29] His condition is that he is grieved deeply and miserable over sin. Therefore, does David just stop thinking about it? Does he, does he, in a sense, just not tell anybody?

That, that's not what brought him healing in this text. What brought him healing is verses, verse five. I acknowledge my sin to you and I did not cover my iniquity. I said, I'll confess my transgression to the Lord and he forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Say law. For the believer, we have this beautiful truth that should cause our hearts to leap with joy. Should cause the spring of gladness when we think that the sin that we committed yesterday, maybe the sin you committed this morning, if you seek forgiveness from, has been forgiven.

And you do not have to be miserable over it. You do not have to be in shame over this sin because Jesus has covered it for you. But, the opposite truth is still there. If you do not believe in Jesus, you do not know Jesus, this weight of sin is still upon you and you will be held accountable for it.

We see that this blessing is followed up by a command in Psalm 32, 6. It says, Therefore, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found.

[23 : 44] Surely, in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him. The command is following the confession of David and then beseeching the audience of the song. It's saying, Brothers and sisters, do not conceal your iniquity.

Do not cover up your sin. Do not forget about it, but bring it to the Lord in prayer. And if you're here struggling today with sin and shame, bring the Lord in prayer and grab a brother and a sister and ask them to help you wrestle through the struggle together.

But look at the statements used in this text. It helps us understand it better. It says, Let everyone who is godly offer prayer. So, the godly in this text offer prayer to God, but it's also a command to unbelievers that they have an opportunity to offer prayer to God.

They have an opportunity to repent of their sins now as it is today. And look at the imagery here.

The command has a clear picture to it. The reference says, Seek him while he may be found.

Into many waters is a clear reference to the flood. And what happened in the flood? God was going to judge sin. And he gave his promises to Noah to build the ark.

[24 : 51] And those who entered the ark were saved from their sin. And saved from the wrath of God. And those who were not in the ark, the wrath of God was poured out and the waters crushed the people.

So here we see this clear picture that God hates sin and he will punish it. This command to seek God in prayer is an invitation to sinners to get on the ark while they can.

To get in the ark before the doors are closed and the floodwaters come pouring down. Therefore, the application is very clear. If you are not a follower of Christ, now is your chance to become one. Now is your chance to get on the ark by the blood of Jesus Christ and save yourselves. The next blessing we see, second blessing of Psalm 32 is the blessing of divine protection.

Psalm 32, 7 says, You are a hiding place for me. You preserve me from trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah.

[25 : 54] The godly did not just receive the forgiveness of sins, but the protection from God. The refuge of the messianic king is not a shack on the side of the road, but an impregnable fortress.

As Francis made clear last week, our security on this earth is not from our vocation, our riches, our possessions, or what we do, but it's from God and his gifts to us.

God is the one who is the Jehovah-Jireh. He is the one who has purposely provided for all our needs. So when things get hard, we do not have to be afraid of the trials that come our way, but we, like Habakkuk, could come to the Lord.

Habakkuk 3 says, Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor the fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail, and the fields yield no fruit.

The flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there be no herds in the stall. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. So his rejoicing is in all my possessions. The food I'm growing, the animals I have for security, everything is gone.

[27 : 03] I have no security. I'm wide open, and the only thing I have right now, the Lord, is to trust in you. And listen to the rest of the verse. I will take joy in God of my salvation.

God, the Lord, is my strength. He makes my feet like the deers. He makes me tread on the high places. So we see that the blessings that we receive from God are his divine forgiveness, his divine protection.

The third blessing is his divine direction. In verse 8, God now takes the pen from David and shares his instruction. It says, I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

I will counsel you with my eye upon you. There are only two ways one can go, as we've seen from Psalm 1 and 2. There is the way of the wicked, and there is the way of the righteous.

Let us take the instruction and follow the way of the blessed son of Psalm 2 and find refuge in him and learn from him. Let us follow the way and let us be those who are forgiven and meditate on the Lord day and night.

[28 : 07] Those who know and have experienced the living God. The divine blessing of Psalm 32 finishes with a lesson. So we talked about the happy state of the forgiven, the blessings of the forgiven, and now we're at point 3.

Do not be a mule. Seek God. The command of verse 9 is a negative way of saying the command of verse 6. The first command possibly commanded the people to seek God in prayer.

Verse 9 says, Be not like a horse or a mule without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you.

Here are the pictures of a farm. You have the animals that the farm person would come and call, and they would come and come to the farm be put in. But there's the one or two animals that don't come when they're called.

We see the horse and the mule as the example here. And instead of them being called and coming, the person goes and puts a bit in his mouth and has to drag him or get him over to the farm to get him in there.

[29 : 10] And what it's saying is, don't be like the donkey. Don't be foolish. But seek God now while he is found. Seek him in prayer. Be like the sheep who listen to the voice of the good shepherd who seeks to lead his people by still waters.

Do not remain in the valley of death. Do not let sin consume you, but seek the living God while he is found. He is a good shepherd and king who is kind and will lead our souls to still waters.

Truly in Jesus, there is rest for the forgiven. So, point three, do not be a meal. Finally, point four, sorrow for the wicked and joy for the righteous.

As David finishes sharing the blessings and the lesson, he summarizes the result of their lives. Verses 10 and 11 say, Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you, upright in heart. Those who do not turn to God and remain in their sin will continue to follow the way of the wicked.

[30 : 24] They will remain meal-like and they will receive great sorrow. And this sorrow is so great that it's not momentary, it's an everlasting sorrow. The result of the wicked is that they will experience the wrath of God and they will be crushed on the day of judgment.

The righteous are not so. The righteous have received divine forgiveness, divine protection, and divine direction. They have been forgiven and will not be condemned for their trespasses. They have been, and because of that, their transgressions, their sins, their iniquities are no more. According to verse 10, they are surrounded with steadfast love. They have placed their faith in the sin-bearing servant king of God and they will find refuge in him.

In conclusion, Christian, we have so much to rejoice in. Christians should be the happiest of people. We have so many reasons for joy that we have God's divine forgiveness, divine protection, divine direction in our lives.

Not only have we placed our faith in the Lamb, Jesus Christ, in the Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, and the resurrected king, but we are now co-heirs with Jesus and we'll receive a heavenly inheritance and we will be welcomed into heaven receiving this everlasting joy as co-heirs with Christ.

[31 : 46] So we're forgiven now and we have a beautiful future that awaits us. So application, go to God, seek his face, and repent of any sins you may have.

Second application is rejoice. Consider how you spend your mornings, your family time, your time in your marriage. Are you cultivating these times that you're rejoiced in?

Are you cultivating your heart religious affection for you, for your spouse, for your family, for your church? And then in preparation for the gatherings, are we preparing for joy?

Because going to church, singing songs together, and hearing God in his word should be an act of joy. It should fill us with complete joy in these moments.

So let us be a joyful people who have experienced God and praise him as he so duly deserves.

Pray with me.