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The
Songs
32

PSALMS - The SONGS

Thirty-two

Instruction on Confessing Sin

READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **Psalm 32** and mark every reference to the LORD, including pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through **Psalm 32** and mark every reference to the psalmist or the righteous, including all pronouns and synonyms, with a blue capital "R+".

Read through **Psalm 32** and mark every reference to sin, along with all pronouns and synonyms, with an orange "do not" sign (a circle with a diagonal line through it).

Read through **Psalm 32** and mark every reference to time with a blue box.

Read through **Psalm 32** and mark every contrast with a pink diagonal line.

Read through **Psalm 32** and mark every comparison with a pink equal sign.

Read through **Psalm 32** and mark every term of conclusion with a pink capital "T".

Read through **Psalm 32** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. Result of confessing my sin (my state after I confessed)
2. When I didn't confess my sin (my state after I sinned)
3. When I confessed my sin (my state after I didn't confess)
4. Counsel for my future (my state can be like this in the future if I do not sin)

READ AND ANSWER

Psalm 32:1-2

Who wrote this **Psalm** according to the title?

What does it mean to be blessed?



Point of Depth

The Hebrew word for “blessed” is *escher* and means happy or blessed.

Who is blessed or happy?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

I don't like to jump ahead, but in this case I want to ask you a question that **verse 5** answers. (We, of course, will observe the verse fully when we get there!) In general, does David have any responsibility in the forgiveness of his sins?



Point of Reference

**Even though all men must confess their sins to God,
(because all sin is ultimately against God)
there is nothing anyone can do to earn forgiveness.**

**Even with the differences between the Old and New Covenants,
God has always (and will always)
credited righteousness apart from any works of man.**

**What then shall we say that Abraham,
our forefather according to the flesh, has found?
For if Abraham was justified by works,
he has something to boast about, but not before God.**

**For what does the Scripture say?
“ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD,
AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.”**

**Now to the one who works,
his wage is not credited as a favor,
but as what is due.**

**But to the one who does not work,
but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly,
his faith is credited as righteousness,**

**just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man
to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:**

**“BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN,
AND WHO SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.”**

“BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT.”

Romans 4:1-8

**Then he believed in the LORD;
and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.**

Genesis 15:6

Why is the man happy, or blessed, whose transgression is forgiven?



**The Hebrew word for “transgression” is *pesha*
and means a revolt.**

**The Hebrew word for “forgiven” is *nasa*
and means to lift.**

Why is the man happy, or blessed, whose sin is covered?



The Hebrew word for “sin” is *chata'ah*

and means an offense.

The Hebrew word for “covered” is *kasah* and means to plump, to fill up hollows (by implication—to cover).

Why is the man happy, or blessed, to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity?



The Hebrew word for “impute” is *chashab* and means to plait or interpenetrate—literally to weave. It has the idea of thinking, regarding, making a judgment, or computing.

The Hebrew word for “iniquity” is *awon* and means evil.

Why is the man happy, or blessed, in whose spirit there is no deceit?



The Hebrew word for “spirit” is *ruwach* and means wind. Figuratively it has the idea of life.

The Hebrew word for “deceit” is *rmiyah* and means remissness or treachery.

Psalm 32:3-7

What word begins **verse 3**?

“When” is a time phrase and draws our attention to a specific unit of time. In this case, when is the “when”?

What did the man do *before* he kept silent about his sin? (Hint: This is not a trick question. The answer is as simple as it seems it is.)

What did the man do *after* he sinned?

What happened to him after he sinned, but before he confessed his sin?

What was he doing while his body was wasting away?

Why was his body wasting away? Why was he moaning and groaning all day long?



The phrase “heavy hand” is an idiom. It means that the LORD’s actions upon David were severe and unrelenting.

Why was the LORD’s hand heavy upon him? (What had he done?)

Did the LORD’s heavy hand ever let up?

Why not?

What was happening to him?

The language is very poetic, but try to picture the graphic picture David is painting for us. What is it?



***Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;
My eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body also.
For my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing;
My strength has failed because of my iniquity,
and my body has wasted away.
Psalm 31:9-10***

For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself

*if he does not judge the body rightly.
For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.
But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged.*
1 Corinthians 11:29-30

Verses 3 and 4 tell us what it was like after David sinned, but before he confessed his sin to the LORD. What does David finally do in **verse 5**?

1.

2.

3.

To Whom did David acknowledge his sin?

From Whom did David hide his iniquity?

To Whom did David confess his transgressions?

Get ready, this is important and marvelous—what was the LORD’s response to David’s confession of his sin?

The LORD lifted the evil of David’s offense! What a gracious God! Go back (in this Observation Bible Study Guide) and review the meanings of these three words and write them out below.

Forgave—*nasa*

Guilt—*awon*

Sin—*chata'ah*

The word “therefore” is a term of conclusion. What is the “therefore” there for? What is David exhorting everyone who is godly to do?

What is David suggesting a godly to pray to God about (specifically)? (Hint: Context!)

When are the godly to pray to God and confess their sins to Him?

When is the “time when He may be found”?

What is the “time when He may be found”?



***Seek the LORD while He may be found;
Call upon Him while He is near.
Isaiah 55:6***

***for He says, “AT THE ACCEPTABLE TIME I LISTENED TO YOU,
AND ON THE DAY OF SALVATION I HELPED YOU.”
Behold, now is “THE ACCEPTABLE TIME,”
behold, now is “THE DAY OF SALVATION”
2 Corinthians 6:2***

***But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “today,”
so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
Hebrews 3:13***

***...while it is said,
“today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts,
as when they provoked Me.”
Hebrews 3:15***

David is exhorting those who are godly to turn to God from sin while the opportunity still remains. Opportunity for what? (Hint: Context!)

The next few lines may seem confusing at first, but if we just let context rule, they will unfold their truth before us in a clear and plain way. There are two issues we need to overcome before we can see their plain message. The first obstacle is simply that the writer is using metaphorical language when referring to a flood of great waters. The second difficulty is that **verse 7's** familiar meaning has been taken out of context. We can overcome both obstacles by simply putting the verses back into their context. So let's take them one at a time. First, let's look at the phrase, "Surely in a flood of great water they will not reach him". What is the flood of great waters? (Flood just means to gush or overflow.)

What are the great waters?

What is "they"? What will not reach him in a flood of great waters? (Hint: The answer is not the *flood* of great waters.)

What do the great waters represent?

Who sends the flood of great waters?

Why are the great waters sent?

Why will they not reach the one who has confessed his sin to the LORD?

Let's move on to the second difficulty before we finish reasoning through this first one because, in the end, they are going to connect. What does the psalmist say the LORD is?

What does the psalmist say the LORD does for him?

1.

2.

The LORD is David's hiding place. Why does David need a hiding place? (Hint: Context!)

What does David need to be hidden from? What is coming against him?

Let me back up for a moment. Are the following things synonymous—David's body wasting away, his groaning, the LORD'S heavy hand on him, his vitality draining away, and the flood of great waters?

What is the connection between these things?

Now, let me ask the question again. What does David need to be hidden from? What is coming against him?

What trouble does the LORD preserve David from? Is it just any trouble that he might run into? Or is it trouble that comes from something specific?

In context, what is the trouble?

What does the LORD surround David with?

Deliverance from what? (Hint: It starts with "S" and have three letters.)

Psalm 32:8-11

Verse 8 seems to present a difficulty. Do you see it?

Who speaks in **verse 8**? Who are our two choices?

1.

2.

If you believe it is the LORD speaking, what makes you think so?

If you believe it is David speaking, what makes you think so?



**I have a soft opinion on who the speaker is,
but I can't really know for sure based on the text,
therefore, I need to let it drop.**

**But what I can know for sure, and what I cannot drop,
is the point of what the speaker is saying.
There is a way in which a follower of God should walk;
there are decisions he can make which are wise;
there is counsel which can help.**

**Whether that counsel and advise comes directly from God
or indirectly from God through David,
it all must still come from God...**

***Your testimonies also are my delight;
They are my counselors.***
Psalm 119:18

What does the speaker (whether the LORD or David) say He (or he) will do?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



**It is interesting that the “you”
who is to be instructed, taught, and counseled is plural.**

**So, if this is David speaking,
he is most likely speaking to “everyone who is godly” from verse 6.**

**If this is God speaking,
He is not speaking to David alone,
but rather to all who are His.**

And that includes each and every believer today...

What is the point of the instruction?

What is the purpose of the teaching?

What added help is offered for the person who truly wishes to know the way which he should go?



**Again, if this is David,
he is offering to be personally involved in the learning process of others.**

**If this is the Lord,
He is promising to watch over us and help us along the way.**

What advice is given to the would-be learner?

What do horses and mules not have?

Why do their trappings include a bit and bridle?

Why does the speaker include this information?

What had David done? (Hint: **Verse 3.**)

Had David come near to the LORD on his own?

What did the LORD have to do to cause David to come near and confess his sin?

What, from **verse 4**, is synonymous with the bit and bridle?

Does the LORD want, or desire, to use His heavy hand on those who are His?

How do you know?

What does the wicked have an abundance of?

Why does the wicked have many sorrows?

Who sends those sorrows?

Who is contrasted with the wicked?

What will surround the one who trusts in the LORD?

How can the one who trusts in the LORD ensure His lovingkindness will surround him?

What must trusting in the LORD entail—according to the context of this psalm.

What are the righteous ones told to do?

1.

2.

What are the upright in heart told to do?

Who is synonymous with the upright in heart?

Why can the righteous be glad? (Hint: **Verse 10.**)

Why can the righteous rejoice? (Hint: **Verse 10.**)

Why can the upright in heart shout for joy? (Hint: **Verse 10.**)

How can I ensure His lovingkindness will surround me?

READ AND REASON

Understanding this portion of **Psalm 32** can be a little difficult for most people to do because it is too hard to jar ourselves loose from a pre-conceived interpretation of **verse 7**.

We cannot just take **verse 7** and write a song about it while leaving its context (and meaning) behind.

We cannot apply our own warm-fuzzy meaning to **verse 7** while ignoring the import God, Himself, has given it.

While it is true that God will never, never, never leave us, nor never forsake us, this verse is not talking about God being our personal comfort blanket.

Instead, the verse is dealing with the nuts and bolts of personal sin, the need for confession and repentance, and then (and only then) the gracious promise of our LORD to help us!

The time when the LORD may be found is a time of opportunity. It is an opportunity to avert disaster and avoid danger.

The danger of the disaster comes through our own choice—the choice to sin. Averting it comes through confession and repentance.

When we do, the danger of the flood of great waters will not reach us.

He will hide us in His secret place—
helping us to turn away from sin (as we continually turn toward Him!)

He will preserve us from the trouble we send upon ourselves—
the heavy hand of God when we keep silent about our sin.

He will deliver us from our habitual life of sin
and we will be surrounded with songs of praise to such a great and gracious God.

Selah, indeed...

~ Segment by Segment

**Try titling these segments yourself.
Ask God to help you.**

Verses 1-2

Verses 3-7

Verses 8-11

~ Purpose of Psalm 32

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 32.
The purpose simply states “why the Psalmist wrote the Psalm”.**

~ Theme of Psalm 32

**Try giving Psalm 32 a title by identifying its theme.
The theme simply states “what the Psalm is about”.**
