

Lesson IV.

THE JOY OF FORGIVENESS

October 25, 1908

Psalms 32. Commit to memory vs. 1, 2. Read Psalm 51; Romans, chs. 4, 5.

GOLDEN TEXT—Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.—Psalm 32: 1.

1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. *Se'lah.*

5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. *Se'lah.*

6 For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely

Revised Version—¹ was changed as with the drought of; ² let; ³ when the great waters overflow; ⁴ reach unto; ⁵ wilt; ⁶ counsel thee with mine eye upon thee; ⁷ trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in, else they will not.

LESSON PLAN

- I. The Blessedness of Forgiveness, 1, 2.
- II. The Condition of Forgiveness, 3-5.
- III. The Freeness of Forgiveness, 6-11.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I.B.R. Association)

M.—The joy of forgiveness, Ps. 32. T.—Trouble of the wicked, Isa. 57: 13-21. W.—Sowing and reaping, Gal. 6: 1-8. Th.—Hope for penitents, Joel 2: 12-19. F.—A penitent's prayer, Ps. 51. S.—Plea for mercy, Luke 18: 9-14. S.—Forgiveness,

³ in the floods of great waters they shall not ⁴ come nigh unto him.

7 Thou art my hiding place; thou ⁵ shalt preserve me from trouble; thou ⁶ shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. *Se'lah.*

8 I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will ⁶ guide thee with mine eye.

9 Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose ⁷ mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

10 Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

² let; ³ when the great waters overflow; ⁴ reach unto; ⁵ wilt; ⁶ counsel thee with mine eye upon thee; ⁷ trappings must be bit and bridle to hold them in, else they will not.

Ps. 103: 1-18.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 101-103.

The Question on Missions—4. What are the qualifications required of an ordinary native teacher? He must bear a good character, be able to read his own language, to conduct public religious services, and to act as leader generally in good works.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 320 (Supplemental Lesson); 152; 161; 23 (Ps. Sel.); 167 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 151.

Special Scripture Reading—Luke 15: 11-24. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

EXPOSITION

Lesson Setting—Seven Psalms are known as the Penitential Psalms. They are Psalms 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143. Their winged words of sorrow have been thought by the church best fitted to bear up to God the musings of the penitent heart. The 51st and 32nd are the gems of the seven. Psalm 32 is generally thought to have been composed by David after his great sin against Bathsheba and Uriah (see 2 Sam., chs. 11, 12).

I. The Blessedness of Forgiveness, 1, 2.

Vs. 1, 2. *Blessed.* The word in Hebrew is plural. "O the happinesses!" it may be translated: so many are the joys of pardon. *Transgression*; the violation of God's will, as if crossing a forbidden boundary. *Forgiven.* The transgression is taken up and carried away (compare John 1: 29). *Sin*; the failure to fulfil the purpose of life, missing the mark God sets before us. *Covered.* It is covered over and obliterated; as the blood of the sin offering covered the sin that was regarded as staining the altar, Lev. 4: 27-31. *Imputeth not.* It is never again thought of in connection with the sinner. *No guile.* Experience has taught the psalmist that he must be straightforward with God. One

cannot deceive God. *Iniquity*; the crooked, twisted action of him who turns aside from the path of life. Just as there are three words for sin, so there are three words for its removal. God's grace is sufficient to make up for all shortcomings; there is threefold grace for threefold sin.

II. The Condition of Forgiveness, 3-5.

Vs. 3, 4. *When I kept silence*; refusing to confess his sin to himself and to God (see the story in 2 Sam., chs. 11, 12). But God was not deceived; the harvest of suffering followed the sowing of sin. *Bones waxed old*; literally, "rotted away". It was as if the solid framework of the body had been wasted with distressing sickness. *Through my roaring.* He groaned with so much noise and so little self-control that he seemed unmanned, more like a beast than one of God's children. *Thy hand was heavy.* God struck him with heavy strokes. So sternly did God deal with the sinner; and yet it was all done in love, to bring him to a better mind. The suffering sent upon the psalmist was partly remorse of conscience, partly, perhaps, actual sickness. *Moisture...drought of summer.* Fever scorched the body like the summer sun.