

thee, thee only, have I sinned. All sin, as such, is opposition to God, and that is the profoundest conception of its exceeding sinfulness which discerns it in this relation clearly. In David's lips, as a confession of his great sin, these words would not mean that he had not sinned against Uriah and Bathsheba, for sin carries mischief and misery to thousands; but for the moment the whole vision of the psalmist's soul is filled with the overwhelming thought of what his sin must be in the eyes of God.

3. Note still further that the truly penitent soul forgets not his guilt. This is shown in verse 3, which we should render, **for I know** [the Hebrew imperfect tense here implies continued knowing, "I keep knowing," know more and more] **my transgressions and my sin is ever before me.** Such continued knowledge of sin tends to drive one the more earnestly to Him who alone can purge it away.

Aspects of salvation.—No less striking and instructive are the lessons touching salvation:

1. The **SOURCE** of redemption is pointed out in the three words of verse 1 translated **mercy, loving-kindness, and tender mercies.** Let the student compare the first of these words with the "grace" described in Eph. 2. 8, the second with God's love as set forth in John 3. 16, and the third with both text and margin of Luke 1. 78. All these glowing thoughts overwhelmed Paul and caused the outburst of rapture at the beginning of Rom. 11. 33.

2. The **FULLNESS** of the salvation is indicated by the three verbs of verses 1 and 2, which are translated **blot out, wash, and cleanse.** But to these words with their rich suggestions add also the images of the **hyssop and snow** in verse 7, and the **hiding** of God's face from the sin in verse 9.

3. The **RESULTS** of this salvation appear not only in the **clean heart and right spirit** (verse 10), but in **joy and gladness** (verse 8), a **free** or willing **spirit** (verse 12), and ability to teach transgressors (verse 13).

One may also contrast the **mercy** of verse 1 with the justification suggested in the latter part of verse 4. Also the two **beholds** which begin verses 5 and 6, and the **clean heart and right spirit** of verse 10 with the **broken and contrite spirit and heart** of verse 17.

The Lesson Council.

Question 1. *How far was the conception of the Holy Spirit as we now know him known to the pre-Christian Church?*

1. The office, work, and nature of the Holy Spirit are recognized by the Old Testament Church in all its dispensations; that his nature was divine and personal, that his office was to give life, to

convince of sin, to renew the heart, to impart joy, to confer special endowments, etc. 2. The conception of these was progressively developed; vague, dim, partial; an energy, a manifestation, a presence consciously felt, a personality. Held with varying clearness and strength, at times with singular vividness, it reached its complete development at Pentecost. 3. The difference of conception between the Old Testament Church and the New is one of measure and degree and not of nature and kind. 4. Gen. 1. 2; Rom. 8. 11; Gen. 6. 3; Eph. 4. 30; Num. 11. 25; 1 Cor. 12. 10; Isa. 61. 1, etc.; Luke 4. 18, etc.; Joel 2. 28; Acts 2. 16, etc.—*Rev. Jabez Brooks, Minneapolis, Minn.*

In the pre-Christian Church the Holy Spirit was known vaguely and by very few. 1. He had part in creation (Gen. 1. 2), "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." 2. He was the Author of inspired address, man being the agent of communication (1 Sam. 10. 10), "The Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied." 3. He was connected with religious life and experience (Psa. 56. 12), "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." Since Pentecost the Holy Spirit is fully known by the Christian Church in all his offices. These are clearly taught in the New Testament.—*Rev. F. H. Cumming, Ph.D., Galva, Ill.*

The Bible shows that the Holy Spirit was known to the Old Testament Church. He was then, as he is now, the inspirer of all gracious aspirations, affections, and works in men. To lose his presence and grace was then, as it is now, the greatest of calamities. Hence the psalmist prayed, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." The Holy Spirit is now more fully known in his office and work than he was in pre-Christian times, because he is more completely revealed. He was more fully manifested to the Church on the day of Pentecost than ever before.—*John Atkinson, D.D.*

Analytical and Biblical Outline.

The Upward Steps of a Sinner.

I. PRAYER.

Have mercy.... O God. v. 1.

"Let us return unto the Lord." Hos. 6. 1.

"Call ye upon him." Isa. 55. 6.

II. PENITENCE.

I acknowledge.... transgression. v. 3.

"Acknowledge my sin." Psa. 32. 5.

"If we confess our sins." 1 John 1. 9.

III. PARDON.

Hide thy face from my sins. v. 9.

"Redemption.... forgiveness of sins." Col.

1. 14.

"Will not remember thy sins." Isa. 43. 25

IV. PURITY.

Create in me a clean heart. v. 10.

"Ye shall be clean." Ezek. 36. 25.

"Ye are washed." 1 Cor. 6. 11.