

III. THE SAVED CONDITION.

1. *Blessed . . . transgression is forgiven.* v. 1.
Being justified by faith. Rom. 5. 1.
2. *The Lord imputeth not iniquity.* v. 2.
Not imputing their trespasses. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

3. *Thou shalt preserve me.* v. 7.
In his pavilion. Psalm 27. 5.
4. *Mercy shall compass him.* v. 10.
Goodness and mercy. Psalm 23. 6.
5. *Be glad in the Lord.* v. 11.
Rejoice evermore. 1 Thess. 5. 16.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

General Statement.

David was now about fifty years old, and had reigned as king nearly twenty years. The nation was highly prosperous. There were no rebellions at home. The brilliant victory of our last lesson was succeeded by the siege of Rabbah in the following spring. Then, when "all Israel" was massed at the metropolis of the Ammonites, striking deathly blows for king and country, David tarried at Jerusalem. This was one secret of his downfall. From his youth he had been a man of war. No call "to the field" needed repetition. Now when he could hear it and sleep he was morally sick, though he knew it not. Prosperity had brought sloth and self-indulgence in its train. The double crimes of adultery and murder were committed (2 Sam. 11). Some months after Uriah's death Joab sent to David the message contained in 2 Sam. 12. 27, 28. The king went to Rabbah, was successful, and returned. Bathsheba's child was born a little later, and then came Nathan's visit. By a beautiful parable Nathan got the king by condemning another to condemn himself unconsciously. The sentence pronounced by God and not posed to have been written at this time, we read the earnest pleadings of a broken and contrite heart, acknowledging terrible guilt and praying for mercy and pardon. Having obtained forgiveness, he describes in to-day's lesson the happiness of one restored to the divine favor as contrasted, in his own experience, with the misery of an impenitent concealment of sin. Like Paul (1 Tim. 1. 16) he represents his own experience of forgiveness as designed to be an example and encouragement to others. His crime must be judged from his times, his surroundings, and from the standpoint of his repentance and sorrow. If the Bible unveils the sin in bold details, it also shows how David's whole after-life was darkened by the shadow of that great eclipse. It is seen that even in the case of God's friends "sorrow tracketh wrong as echo follows song, on, on, on." The chief emphasis should be placed on repentance, pardon, and the effort to help others. Thus from the dark depths of blackest sin the way will be revealed to thorough forgiveness, fullest joy, and subsequent usefulness. By Augustine this psalm was deemed so precious that during his last illness he caused it to be written upon the wall of his chamber, opposite his couch, so that his eyes might easily rest upon its comforting sentences.

Verses 1, 2. Blessed. The word is plural, *O the blessednesses!* denoting the multitude of blessings which accompany pardon. (1) *Though ours may not be the joy of angels who have never sinned, we may possess the blessedness of the forgiven.* **Transgression** means crossing a boundary; "breaking faith;" falling away; breaking God's law by entering the forbidden fields of sin. **Sin** is, literally, missing a mark; deviation from a path. The word for **iniquity** conveys the idea of distortion, "perversion," and contrasts the crooked ways of sinners with the straight line of duty. (2) *However varied the aspect of sin, its original is the same.* To meet these aspects of sin we have a threefold description of forgiveness. **Is forgiven.** The burden of sin is taken away and the heart made to feel glad and free. When this takes place the sinner is regarded and treated as if he had never sinned. The teacher should make plain to the scholars how forgiveness is obtained for them. **Covered.** So that its foulness no longer meets the eye of the judge. "Hidden," not from memory, but from judgment. **Imputeth not.** As the canceling of a debt which

is no longer reckoned against the offender. (3) *Let us not brood over sins which God refuses longer to look at. In whose spirit there is no guile.* No deception of himself; no dissembling toward God. (4) *There can be no forgiveness without sincerity on our part.*

3. This verse and the next shed light on David's history, and show that before Nathan approached him with his pointed parable (2 Sam. 12) his conscience was active and his life wretched from remorse. **Kept silence.** Silent before God, but not silent to himself. **My bones.** His guilty secret wore away his life's foundations. Youthful spirits departed, and old age came suddenly, because of mental agony. **Roaring.** The chained lion seemed to be an apt figure of his own inward groaning because of unconfessed sin.

4. Day and night. Through the day his royal robes covered an aching heart; night brought heavier shadows to his burdened soul. **Was heavy upon me.** Partly by remorse of conscience, partly, perhaps, by actual sickness. God's chastisement is always in love. **My moisture.** Like a plant