

1st. Mercy..... Verse 1
2nd. Praise and free pardon " 1, 9, 11
3rd. Effects of pardon " 2, 7
He asks for 4th. Restoration of what
he has lost..... " 10, 12
5th. Removal of the
effects of his sin..... " 8

He promises—To teach transgressors.... Verse 13

1st.—*Acknowledges.*

Verse 3. **Transgressions**,—that is, he owned to them all; did not try to cover them up or make them less; and God forgive them. Read Psalm 32: 5. Is it any wonder that David says, "Oh give thanks unto the Lord for He is good?"

Verse 4. **Against These—THREE ONLY.** "But," some one will say, "surely David's sin was not all against God?—was it not also against Uriah and against society?" David's sin was against God, for it was God's law he had violated; his wrong was against Uriah and society, for it was them he had injured. He had broken the 10th, 8th, 7th, 6th commandments, and the spirit of at least one more. Is not that a black list?

Verse 5. Here David confesses the humiliating truth that his very nature is debased—this is what his words fully imply.

Verse 6. **Thou desirest, &c.** But God had not found David true. Oh, how false, how dark, how dreadful were the things God found in David's heart! "Thou shalt make me," &c. He believed God would do this for him;—had faith that God would hear his prayer notwithstanding the folly and madness of his conduct.

2nd.—*Asks for.*

Verse 1. **Mercy.** Mercy is only for those who *deserve* wrath. In asking for mercy David virtually confesses he does not deserve it. **Blot out;** that is, grant full and free pardon; so that not one line in God's book of remembrance should stand against him. **According to, &c.** How great a multitude are the tender mercies of God to you think? Just as great a multitude, dear children, as the sin He blots out.

Verse 1. **Hide Thy face from;** that is, do not even see them. **Blot out,** &c. See remark on verse 1.

Verse 11. **Cast me not away, &c.** They who are pardoned shall never be cast away;—hence this is just another way of asking for pardon. **Take not away, &c.** This is still another way of asking for the same thing. God does not *take away*, but *gives* His Spirit to him whom He forgives. Read Ezek. 36: 26, 27.

Verse 2. **Wash me.** Those who are forgiven are washed. 1 Cor. 6: 11; Rev. 1: 5. **Purge with hyssop.** This is the plant used in the sprinkling of the blood of the paschal lamb, in the cleansing of lepers, &c. The idea here is, that of *atonement*—of *purifying*. **Whiter than snow!** Dear children, think how white, how clean they are whom God has cleansed!—clean, not in their own sight, but God's. Read Psalm 68: 13.

Verse 10. **Create, &c.** In defining himself with sin, David had lost the evidence of having ever been cleansed in heart and renewed in spirit. It seemed to him he could never, never have been God's dear child. Hence this prayer.

Verse 12. **Restore—give me back.** But it was not enough to get back the joy, the peace of mind; but God must hold him up or he might again fall into sin. Read Psalm 119: 117.

Verse 8. **Let me hear, &c.** That the grief of those who mourned on account of his sin was turned into joy and gladness on account of his repentance.

3rd.—*Promises.*

Verse 13. **Then will I teach, &c.** Those who have God's forgiveness love to teach others who have God—love to tell of His willingness to forgive, so that they too may be converted.

From this lesson we may learn that the greatest

and best people will fall into sin when they grow careless and self-satisfied, and forget to watch and pray;—that great sins may grow from very small beginnings, like the bit of a snow-ball which a little boy rolls and rolls till it grows into a huge mass; and thus the wicked desire, if it is not driven quite away out of the mind, may become a terrible crime;—that sin, to be forgiven, must be *repented of and confessed*, and that both are very hard and bitter things;—that God forgives all who truly repent and cry to Him for mercy;—that forgiveness brings joy and peace, and that forgiven people like to tell others of God's goodness, that they too may be forgiven.

March 9.—The Joy of Forgiveness.—Psalm 32: 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Verse 1.

LESSON BASIS.

This Psalm was probably written

1033 B.C. When?—After the 51st Psalm, or not far from it.

Where?—At Jerusalem.

Why?—In fulfillment of David's promise: that is, to "teach transgressors," &c. (See the meaning of Maschil.)

By—Whom?—David, king of Israel.

It teaches—What?—The blessedness of being forgiven.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

King David is, doubtless, the author of this Psalm. He had sinned; had repented, and cried to God for mercy; had been forgiven; had realized that his prayer was answered; and now, in fulfillment of the promise recorded in the 51st Psalm, undertakes to teach others about God—His loving kindness and His tender mercy.

LESSON TABLE.

1st. The blessed man—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10.
2nd. What the blessed man says to God—7.
3rd. What God says to the blessed man—8.
4th. What the blessed man is *not to do*, and what he is *to do*—9, 11.

1st.

Verse 1. **Transgression**,—the doing of things forbidden. All transgression of God's law is sin; but all sin is not transgression. We sin by *desiring* to do what God has forbidden; we transgress by *doing* it. Forgiveness. Christ bears the punishment of sin, and God forgives the sinner for Christ's sake. Christ atones for sin by dying for the sinner, and God *covers* the sinner's sin by remembering it against him no more—puts it out of His sight—reuses to see it.

Verse 2. **Iniquity**,—injustice, crime. **Guilt**,—deceit.—King David had *sinned* by letting a wicked desire have place in his heart;—he had *transgressed* by doing what he desired to do;—he had practiced deceit in various ways in order to accomplish his purposes;—he had committed *unlawful iniquity* through it all.

Verse 3. **When I kept silence**,—did not confess—covered up my guilt. **My bones waxed old**,—that is, my strength departed in consequence of secret sorrow. Through my roaring—groaning and sighing in secret. All these are but faint and feeble expressions for the horrors of remorse. Thrice happy is the man whom they drive to penitence and confession, and not to despair.

Verse 4. **Day and night THY HAND was heavy.** It seemed an awful weight pressing his very life out, until he became like a plant in the burning heat of noon-day, all parched and withered in the fiery glare. Oh, if remorse for sin makes people suffer so in this world, where there is hope of God's mercy, what must it be in Hell, where hope cannot come!

Verse 5. **Acknowledged, &c.**—that is, owned to it all—confessed the whole truth to God. And then, what? God forgave the transgressions.

Covered,—looked away from—would not see—the sin; *did not impute*,—set to David's account—his iniquity; made his spirit free from *guilt*. Oh, what a happy day! Why did God do it. Was it for David's sake? No, but for Christ's sake, who died for David, and in whom David trusted. Read Eph. 4: 32.

Verse 6. **For this, &c.** What God did for David would encourage good people to pray. They would think that, if He was so good to David, He would surely hear them also; so they would have courage to ask God both for themselves and others. Nothing, not even the floods of great waters,—that is, great and sore troubles,—can come *hither*,—that is, to harm—him whom God forgives. Read Matt. 7: 25.

Verse 10. **But he that trusteth in the Lord, &c.** God's mercy will be round about him forever. Read Psalm 125: 2.

2nd.

Verse 7. The blessed man calls God his *hiding place*—read Psalm 27: 5—and then see what name God calls His people in Psalm 83: 3. Now read Col. 3: 3 and see if you ever heard of anything half so nice. Who would not be God's dear child?

3rd.

Verse 8. **I will instruct thee, teach thee, guide thee.** Read Isaiah 48: 17, and also Isaiah 58: 11. What little boy or little girl will be one of God's "*hidden ones*," whom He will stoop to *teach* and to *guide*.

4th.

Verse 9. **Be not, &c.** Do not be headstrong like the horse, or obstinate like the mule, for they are but poor unreasoning animals; but you are God's dear children—forgiven, washed, hidden with Christ in God. Now behave accordingly; be obedient, patient, gentle, loving. And then—

Verse 11. **Be glad—rejoice—shout for joy!**—but do not forget—see the first part of 10th verse—that many sorrows shall be to the wicked. God, therefore, and teach poor sinners that God loves them, and gave His Son to die for them, that they too might be happy. Dear child, what is your place to-day? Are you *blessed*?—has God washed your sins away in the blood of Jesus? or are you yet a *sinner* for whom God says *there shall be many sorrows*? Oh! if you are, go, as this great king did, and confess it all to God with a broken and contrite spirit, for— Read Psalm 34: 18, and also Psalm 51: 17.

March 16.—Delight in God's House.—Psalm 84: 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Verse 4.

LESSON BASIS.

This Psalm probably belongs to the reign of Hezekiah, and, if so, must have been written—

When?—Not far from the year 726 B.C.

Where?—At Jerusalem, or on the way to it.

Why?—In order to embody in sacred song the longing of devout souls for God's house.

By—Whom?—One of the sons (descendants) of Korah.

It is—What?—A psalm of thanksgiving and prayer.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

[NOTE FOR TEACHERS.—The date and authorship of this Psalm, as well as the events it was intended to celebrate, are involved in much obscurity. Some suppose it was written during the captivity; others in the reign of Hezekiah, and in order to perpetuate in sacred song the sentiments and emotions of those Israelites who, at Hezekiah's invitation, came up to Jerusalem to keep the Passover. The latter opinion is here adopted as the most probable. See 2 Chron. 30th chap.]