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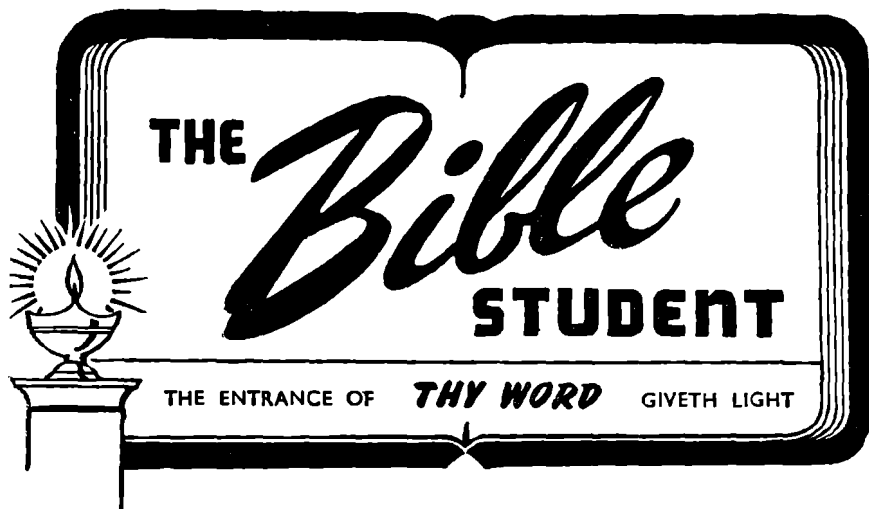
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Editor: A. McDONALD REDWOOD

quotation by the writer of the Epistle. The point of the repetition of the passage is the emphasis laid upon the 'new covenant', which is shown to be the end of all the sacrifices enjoined under the Old Covenant. This he proceeds to declare.

Verse 18. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.—That is to say, where there is absolute forgiveness of sins, there is neither need nor room for any further sin-offering or atonement, and therefore no need of a continuation of those sacrifices appointed under the law, which could not meet the need of the sinner.

Here the writer draws his argument to a conclusion, and begins to translate into the language of actual experience the figures and symbols of the ancient tabernacle and its sacrifices, by which he had set forth all that Christ is to the believer in virtue of His Person and work. This great work of redeeming grace finds its source in the will of God, its accomplishment in the death of Christ His Son (verse 10), its ratification in His session at God's right hand (verse 12), and its assurance to us in the witness of the Holy Spirit (verse 14).

THE HEBREW PSALTER

By E. W. ROGERS

The N.T. usage of the Psalms (*contd.*)

Psalm 32

This is the first *Maschil* Psalm, dealing with that matter which is of prime importance to any, namely the forgiveness of sins. This must be known before all else. As we have observed earlier, chronologically it comes before Psalm 51 but for reasons there stated it comes before it in the Psalter.

Its divisions are indicated by the word *Selah* and, when the phrase to which this word is appended is considered, its force will be understood.

After verses 1 and 2, describing the superlative 'happiness' of the forgiven sinner (and the student should examine the various words used to describe sin), vv. 3 and 4 describe the bitterness involved by keeping silence and refraining from confession.

'Moisture turned into the drought of summer—think of that'. How descriptive of a soul shrivelled up because of the conscience of unconfessed sin.

But verse 5 ought to be written in letters of gold. 'Sin', 'iniquity' and 'transgressions', all describe David's dual crime. He became informant to the Judge against himself; he details his crimes (note the plural—transgressions). Yet, notwithstanding the self-confessed guilt, for he pleads guilty with no plea of extenuation, the Lord forgave him the iniquity of his sin; or as it might alternatively be read, the Judge 'took away the punishment of his sin. Think of that!' Unless there were some satisfactory ground so to act, this was legally unsound and a menace to the rights of the divine Throne. But the student should study Romans 3:25 as to God's 'passing over the sins that were past', committed by people who lived prior to the death of Christ. He will then discover that God forgave them anticipatively of the death of Christ, whereas now He forgives us because of it. The death of Christ covers the whole of the human race from Adam downwards. Its occurrence at a point in history was for other reasons which we cannot here stay to discuss, but its benefits reach backward to all who feared Jehovah, and forward to all who believe.

Vv. 6 and 7 furnish a logical deduction. If God can forgive sins then He is able to control circumstances. If He can save the sinner from his just recompense, then He can deliver him from the perils which are met in the course of life's journey. If He can do the greater then, indubitably He can do the less.

But sin in a child of God always occurs as the result of independence or of self-will. Against each of these, vv. 8 and 9 respectively warn us.

The student should study Romans 4, wherein Paul argues the matter of justification by faith. He cites two cases—Abraham and David, with the view of establishing the fact that justification of the guilty by faith in Christ is a principle recognized in the 'Law and the Prophets', and is applicable both to the uncircumcised, in which state Abraham was justified, and to the circumcised, in which state David was. These are but suggestive studies, and the student should not count it waste of time to endeavour to grasp the force of Paul's argument.

One further observation should be made. It must not be assumed that anticipative forgiveness of sin was of a different

quality from that known by the believer today. God never does a thing by halves, nor indeed does He ever do a thing which is, in fact, not real. 'Sin covered' is sin removed. The force of the word 'forgive' is, both in Hebrew and Greek, *to remove*. Therefore in the one verse (Ps. 32:1) we have the two ideas—it is removed, and therefore, being out of sight, it is 'covered'. It is not 'covered' and yet in fact there all the time: This impinges on the doctrine of atonement. Some teach that 'atonement' is an old Testament doctrine not to be found in the New Testament. We cannot stay to show the fallacy of this theory, save merely to remark that the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word 'atonement' *is* found several times in the New Testament. Let the student study the use of the Hebrew word *kaphar* and the Greek word *hilaskesthai*, and undoubtedly, he will be able to satisfy himself that what in the Old Testament was taught by the Levitical sacrifices, is taught also and more fully by the death of Christ in the New Testament. In each case it was the *removal* of sin. What security, it may be asked, would David have had were he to have thought his sin was still there, only he could not see it?

Nathaniel had doubtless had a similar experience to David's, and of this the Lord was aware (see John 1:47). Transactions between the soul and God in respect of sin are, of course, secret. It was because of this that Nathaniel said, 'Whence knowest thou me?'. How did He know of what had gone on between Nathaniel and God? Surely, he rightly concluded, this *is* 'the Son of God'.

Psalm 40

This Psalm relates exclusively to the Lord Jesus. The student may find difficulty in applying verse 12 to Him, but if it be borne in mind that the word 'iniquities' may legitimately read 'punishments' (see J.N.D.'s N.T.), his difficulties will disappear. 'Evils' in that verse refer to the wicked actions of man: 'punishments' speak of the judicial action of God. Each are concentrated in the Cross.

Verses 1 to 5 of this Psalm may be called 'the journey's end', and the rest of the Psalm to v. 13 'the road thither'. Vv. 14 to the end is the effect that all this has on others.

Verse 2 has often been applied to the believer and no doubt the application is legitimate. But it should be borne in mind that it is first the resurrection experience of the Lord Jesus, and

then of the believer as identified with Him. Verse 1 is Gethsemane and Calvary. Verse 2 is Resurrection, which ensured for Him Security and Progress. Satan's manifested determination to prevent His first advent and failing that, His goings, are now altogether defeated. Resurrection has ensured His unhindered progress. For the Lord this was an altogether 'new' experience. Hence He is the chief musician, singing the 'new song', although others join Him in the singing. The student should note the change in the pronoun from singular to plural, in verse 3. These additional singers are those described at the end of verse 3 and the beginning of verse 4. Their incorporation into that company was not unforeseen, for verse 5 touches upon the eternal counsels of God.

Vv. 6 to 8 deal with the Incarnation. The student should examine these verses in the light of Hebrews, chapter 10. When reading that chapter he should carefully note the time and place marks. 'Then' (vv. 7 and 9); 'when' (v. 5); 'above' or 'higher up' (v. 8). He should also consider the difference in reading between 'ears hast thou opened', (v. 6) and in Heb. 10:5, 'a body hast thou prepared'. This has nothing to do with the boring of the ear. In that case it is 'boring': here 'digging'. There 'ear' in the singular: here 'ears' in the plural. Doubtless the Hebrew writer had the idea of preparing a body, and the sculptor had reached the head and was digging out the ears. Hence the Greek reading speaks of the 'preparing of a body'. The sense is the same: the words are different. Although, no doubt the Spirit of God had special reason for mentioning the 'ears', He is speaking of One whose ear was ever opened to His Father.

Vv. 9 to 11 speak of His public ministry. He becomes the declarant of the heart and will of God for man. His ministry was so faithful that He can petition reciprocal treatment from God. In His ministry He had not withheld anything: now He asks God not to withhold His tender mercies from Him. He has declared His God: now He desires to prove Him.

Vv. 12 and 13 refer to the cross. They give no ground whatsoever for doubting the sinlessness of the Lord Jesus. Of that the New Testament speaks with clarity and repeatedly. Even if the word 'iniquities' be left unaltered, it may be remarked that the Lord Jesus accepted personal liability for the penalty of those numberless sins which were not His own, in such a full way that He

could call them 'Mine iniquities'. They were His by voluntary imputation: not by actual deed. The journey thus lay along the route of incarnation; public witness: and death. The journey's end is resurrection.

Vv. 14 to 17 envisage two parties. There are those who taunt, persecute, and devise evil. 'Shame' and 'desolation' can only result from such a course. But there are others who believe and trust: these disclaim all personal merit and say 'The Lord be magnified'. To this latter class belonged Paul and to the former those of whom he writes (see Phil. 1:20 and 3:19).

Psalm 46

This and Psalm 47 bring before us a great storm and the subsequent 'clear shining after rain'. Vv. 1 to 3 speak of the storm when the mountains are moved in the heart of the sea. Vv. 4 to 7 speak of the 'dawn of the morning' (see R.V.m) when the storm has ceased and the blue sky appears. Vv. 8 to 11 tell of the desolations that have been wrought by the storm. Psalm 47 recounts that which follows the storm and dawning: the full blaze of the noonday sun when 'God is King of all the earth' (see v. 7).

This Psalm is the language of the 'sons of Korah', that company which represents saved sinners. Korah's sons belonged to a stock which had rebelled against the Lord's anointed and merited the judgment that they received. (Numbers ch. 16) These sons were, in sovereign mercy, saved from it. It is 'set to Alamothe' (i.e., virgins) for it is only those who, having been saved, are walking a separate and pure path, with a single eye, that can sing this 'song'.

Stanza I calls attention to the wonder of the fact that this remnant are fearless in the midst of earth's upheavals. It is a remarkable sight! 'Selah'—think of it. Earth changing (R.V.m), mountains moved (great earthly powers overthrown) waters roaring (the masses of the people in open rebellion) and mountains shaking (existing authority trembling with fear): all this is calculated to engender fear in the stoutest heart. But faith says 'Therefore we will not fear'. It is faith founded on what God is: a 'refuge' to Whom to fly, and 'strength' to stand firm therein. 'The Lord is nigh unto all them that fear Him'. He is 'not a God afar off'. He is a 'very present help in trouble'.

Stanza II speaks of Millennial days when a river will flow out from the rebuilt temple at Jerusalem. It is a section capable of adaptation to present times, conveying much comfort to the redeemed. Vv. 4 and 5 envisage the Lord Jesus having returned to earth and being enthroned as King among His people. V. 6 has in view the prior conflict when the nations will be amassed against Jerusalem (Zech. 14:2). V. 7 is the ground of confidence. 'The Lord of hosts' is also the 'God of' the undeserving, non-meritorious individual—Jacob.

Stanza III has to do with the abolition of war to the ends of the earth. It will be utterly outlawed and peace will be enforced by a righteous autocratic ruler as the order of the day. It is He Who will make war to end wars—none else can do it. The nominative of verse 8 is 'Jehovah': observe how frequently the pronoun 'he' follows: once in v. 8., and three times in v. 9. He does it: none else. The godly should 'Be still': leave things alone and observe how God works.

Stanza I may be labelled *God is for us*: stanza II '*God is in us*' and stanza III '*God is with us*'. None is better than the other. All are alike precious.

In bringing these articles to an end the writer would emphasize that they are intended merely to be indications as to lines and methods of study.

Observe the heading: the setting: the Selahs: and the progress of thought throughout each Psalm. Listen for the various voices indicated earlier in these papers. By that means a fair understanding of their present value and their dispensational teaching will be obtained.

If one Psalm is seriously studied a day (and considering Psalm 119 to be the equivalent of 22 Psalms) only 171 days will be occupied in studying the whole Psalter—not six months. But it will be time very well spent.

One often goes through a beautiful and historic country in such a manner that the greatest amount of instruction is not obtained because of the disorderly way in which the ground is covered. With the aid of a guide, who could show the interesting features that should be examined, much greater benefit would be attained. It is hoped that the writer will have proved to be a useful guide in this tract of Holy Scripture.