



A Brief Overview of Salvation in the Old Testament.

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A Brief Overview of Salvation in the Old Testament.

Topics.

- Humble yourself, pray and God will forgive.
- Acknowledge God's name and turn from sin.
- Confess and acknowledge sin to God and he will forgive.
- Lord, hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

INTRODUCTION: though God is speaking to the nation of Israel the following Old Testament verses show that the steps to salvation as laid out in the Old Testament are the same principals as Jesus teaches salvation in the New Testament.

2 CHRONICLES 6:25-27

Acknowledge God's Name and Turn from Sin.

Solomon asks the LORD if Israel sins against Him and they pray: -

- **2 Chronicles 6:25-27** ²⁵ then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them again to the land that you gave to them and to their fathers. ²⁶ "When heaven is shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against you, if they pray toward this place and acknowledge your name and turn from their sin, when you afflict them, ²⁷ then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk, and grant rain upon your land, which you have given to your people as an inheritance.

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Solomon on behalf of the nation of Israel prays:

- That Israel has sinned against God.
- God would bless them and bring them back to their land.
- They would turn toward God, and confess His Name and turn from their sin.
- God would forgive their sin.
- They would learn the good way in which they should walk before God.
- God would bless them (i.e., send rain on God's Land).
- They would believe God's promise to give them an inheritance.

From this prayer of Solomon's, we see that salvation in the Old Testament required:

- Believing the promise of God and confessing God's Name.
- Turning from sin and asking forgiveness.
- Desiring to walk God's way.

2 CHRONICLES 7:14

Humble Yourself, Pray and God will Forgive.

The LORD said:

- **2 Chronicles 7:14** ¹⁴ if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

These words of the LORD shine a spotlight on the truth that salvation and God's forgiveness in the Old Testament required: -

- Seeking after God.
- Humility before God.
- A prayer of repentance.
- Turning from wicked ways (the outward evidence of inward repentance).

PSALM 32:1-6

Confess and Acknowledge Sin to God and He will Forgive.

David wrote:

- **Psalm 32:1-6:** ¹ Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. ² Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. ³ For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah ⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah ⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.

Since hiding our sin from God is impossible because God's eternal eyes see everything including the motives and intents of the heart, the idea is that by refusing to admit and acknowledge to ourselves and to God that we are sinning we are deceiving ourselves and living a life of hypocrisy before God. This is why David said, when he kept silent about his sin and refused to acknowledge his iniquity, he not only lacked energy and found no inner joy, but also suffered despair and depression, this is because he was living a lie before God. David fully aware that God is without fault and therefore has good reason to judge him makes a conscious decision not to cover his iniquity or his transgressions from the LORD any longer and humbles himself before the LORD and confessed all his sin and his wrongdoing.

The LORD forgave him and his relationship to God was restored because no longer was David living with deceit and deception in his spirit before the LORD. Confessing our sin not only carries the idea of acknowledging to ourselves and to God that we are sinning, but also means being our true authentic self before God it means being honest with ourselves and with God in contrast to living a spiritual life of deception and denial. The reason David was able to say, "Those who confess and acknowledge their sin have no deceit in their spirit" is because they are being honest before God and to themselves. David encourages everyone who is seeking after God and desires to have intimate communion with him never to deny their sin before God, but rather be humble and honest and live their life as an open book before the LORD. Everyone who is godly is praying and talking to God in their mind and their thoughts as they go about their everyday life, but just as in a friendships and human relationships to grow there has to be moments of honest and deep heartfelt sharing, likewise it is with God this is why

David wrote:

- Let everyone pray at a time when God may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him (v6).

The rush of great waters means the business of life, just as a husband and wife need to take some intimate time alone together with each other to enjoy the intimacy of marriage and the joy of their love likewise those who are godly need take some time alone to meditate, pray and commune with God.

NOTE: clearly those who confess to believe in God, but are indifferent to how their life impacts on God's holy name will not feel this deep heartfelt regret as David did because of his sin. This is no doubt one of the reasons why David said:

- Let everyone who is godly offer prayer (v6).

Because it is only those who care about how their life reflects on God and the good name of the Lord Jesus Christ that are going to feel the deep heartfelt regret as David did over his sin and be greatly affected in sorrow at the loss of joyful communion with God. In this Psalm David is sharing his own failings and intimate relationship with God so that every godly man and woman can have the confidence that spiritual joy floods the heart after a prayer of honest heartfelt repentance and confession to God and have the assurance that after humbling themselves before God in such a prayer they can rise in the wonder of God's forgiveness and grace. The steps to salvation and forgiveness of sin expressed in this Psalm:

- Seek after God with an honest and humble heart.
- Confess our sin and acknowledged our iniquity to God.
- Accept God's forgiveness.
- Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered whom the LORD counts no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit (Psalm 32:1-6).

PSALM 51:1-13

LORD Hide Your Face from my Sins, and Blot Out all my Iniquities.

David prayed:

- **Psalm 51:1-13** ¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! ³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. ⁵ Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. ⁶ Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. ⁷ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ⁸ Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice. ⁹ Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. ¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

This is a Psalm of David when Nathan the Prophet went to him, after he had gone into Bathsheba. After Nathan the prophet very masterfully shone a spotlight on David's sin with Bathsheba, David is not only deeply convicted of his wrong-doing, but also fully aware that his transgression with Bathsheba will forever be before him. He knows that God delights in truth in the inward being and therefore makes a conscious decision to confess in deep heartfelt sorrow his sin to God.

David prays that God would:

- Be gracious and merciful and show him loving-kindness.
- Blot out his transgressions and wash him thoroughly from his iniquity.

- Cleanse him from his sin and treat him according to God's steadfast love and His abundant mercy.
- Wash him whiter than snow and make him to hear joy and gladness again.
- Hide His face from his sins and blot out all his iniquities.
- Create in him a clean heart and renew a steadfast spirit in him.
- Not hide His face from him or cast him away from His presence.
- Restore to him the joy and gladness he once had.
- Not take His Holy Spirit from him, but sustain him with a willing spirit.

The words, "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight" (v4) does not mean that David has done no wrong before mankind, the idea of what David is saying is that God is without fault and therefore fully justified in judging David in contrast to all humanity who have been born into sin. It is in the sense of God's Holiness and God's righteous judgment that David is confessing that before God only he has sinned.

NOTE: the words "Being born into sin," (v) apply to all of us and not just David, this is because we are all descendants of our earthly father Adam and as such have inherited a fallen corrupted body with sin dwelling in its members (i.e., self, ego, pride, lustful thoughts, greed, jealousies, anger and such like things) it is in this sense that David says, he was born in sin.

David's deep angst, mental torment, anxiety and sorrow over the truth he has done wrong before the LORD shows his deep love for the LORD. This is because the heartfelt depth of sorrow and repentance is always going to be in equal proportion to the heartfelt love there is for God in the heart and the mind. A person who confesses to know God, but is indifferent to how their life reflects on his honour is not going to have any deep sense of sorrow that they are living a lifestyle that is offensive to Him. This prayer of David's is focused on the inward spiritual life of God in the heart and mind, David knows that simply taking an offering to the LORD is not what God delights in unless they are offered with a right heart attitude. He is fully aware that the sacrifices the LORD wants is sacrifices given from a broken (i.e., repentant) spirit and a remorseful and sorrowful heart and from those who do what is right.

NOTICE: once David had got his life right with God his desire was to teach transgressors and sinners God's ways so that they would return to the LORD. There is a great lesson in this for us all and that is that no brother or sister in Christ should let past wrong-doing stop them from sharing their faith. Once David through honest heartfelt repentance had restored his own relationship with God, he was not going to let the gross sins he had committed hinder him from proclaiming God's goodness and God's forgiveness. David did suffer in that Bathsheba's first baby died and David was deeply grieved, but then Bathsheba gave birth to Solomon who built the glorious temple of God.

The steps to salvation and forgiveness of sin expressed in this Psalm:

- Being aware that God delights in truth in the inward being and the secret heart.
- Confessing our sin and transgression before the LORD.
- Offering to God a willing spirit.

And asking God to:

- Show mercy and blot out our sin before His sight.
- Cleanse and purge our hearts and to renew a right spirit within.
- Not to cast us from His presence or take His Holy Spirit from us and to restore the joy of salvation.
- Finally, when we have made our lives right and our communion with God is restored sharing God's forgiveness and mercy with transgressors and sinners when we are able.

SUMMARY: SALVATION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Salvation in the Old Testament required:

- Seeking after God with an honest and humble heart.
- Being aware that God delights in truth in the inward being and the secret heart.
- Confessing God's name and believing his promise.
- Praying a pray of repentance and asking for forgiveness.
- Confessing sin and acknowledging iniquity to God.
- Turning from any wicked way (the outward evidence of inward repentance).
- Asking God to renew a right spirit within and restore the joy of salvation.
- Desiring to walk God's way with a willing heart.
- Accepting God's forgiveness.

FOOTNOTE

certainly under Moses Law and the Levitical Law they had to adhere to certain ceremonial rites and keep the feasts, the Holy days, the sacrifices and offerings, but if these were done from a mechanical spirit (i.e., from tradition) while they lived their lives in wickedness their religious outward actions all counted for nothing before the LORD. David in his prayer of repentance said:

- God will not delight in my sacrifice or I would have given them nor will God be pleased with a burnt offering. The only sacrifices God will accept from me are a broken spirit and a broken and contrite (remorseful and repentant) heart. Then David calls the people of God to do good and tells them that if they do what is right God will delight in their sacrifices and their burnt offerings (Psalm 51:16-19).

Micah said:

- What the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God (Micah 6:5-10).

Isaiah wrote:

- The LORD loves justice, hates robbery and wrong doing (Isaiah 61:8).

Jeremiah said:

- Those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights (Jer. 9:24).

The great prophets Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah clearly show us that the people the LORD loves are not only those who acknowledge God, but who also uphold justice, do not lie, deceive or make promises they do not intend to keep, but speak the truth, do what is right, show respect and give help to others when able and make choices that lead to peace. These are the things the LORD delights in and that bring His favour. Biblically a wicked person is primarily one who deliberately and consciously denies the existence of God and does harm to other humans.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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