

## Psalms 32-36 Chapter Study

### Psalm 32

This is David's celebration of God's forgiveness.

It's a forgiveness that came after a time of severe chastening by the Lord.

It's more than likely a companion to Psalm 51 which relates David's being convicted of his sin with Bathsheba & the conspiracy to murder his husband.

David tried to hide his sin for a year, but he couldn't do it and found relief of his spiritual agony only when he 'fessed up.

1 Blessed *is he* whose transgression is forgiven, *Whose* sin is covered.

2 Blessed *is* the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit *there is* no deceit.

One of the most difficult things to bear is when someone you love, someone dear to you, is hurt, offended, or angry at something you've done wrong. It's just an awful place to be.

I remember as a child, doing something my parents had told me not to do and getting in trouble for it.

I could see how disappointed they were in me – and that disappointment HURT!

Sometimes though, I'd pretend I hadn't done it.

I'd get all indignant when they'd accuse me; feigning anger at being falsely accused.

But they knew better & would send me to my room where I'd get a spanking, then made to sit there till I figured it out.

There were times when I would sit there for hours, determined to outlast them.

Why, I was going to stick by my claim to innocence.

I would picture them coming into my room & apologizing to ME!

But they never did. And soon I'd get bored of waiting, would then go & admit I'd done it.

I'd ask for forgiveness – and every time, they gave it – immediately.

Then it was over! There was no more guilt or anger – it was spent, having been removed by their forgiveness.

It always felt so good to be back in their good graces!

All of that is true with God too.

The worst thing we can do is to deceive ourselves into rationalizing & excusing our sin.

As long as we do that, we cut ourselves off from fellowship with God.

It's best to maintain a tender heart toward the Lord so that when conviction of sin comes, we're quickly to respond in confession & repentance so that we can be forgiven.

3 When I kept silent, [failed to confess] my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long.

David was in spiritual pain as he resisted the conviction of his sin.

4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah

He had no spiritual energy.

We'd be wise to consider how much of depression is based in hidden & unconfessed sin.

5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

1 John 1:9 says -

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

David then turns to speak of the blessings that come to those who remain in fellowship with God.

6 For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You In a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters They shall not come near him.

7 You *are* my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah

God will protect His people. David isn't saying the godly won't ever experience trials or troubles.

On the contrary, the floods will rise. But God will deliver his people.

Then God says to the one who's attentive to Him . . .

8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.

Such a close relationship will grow between God & His people that without a word, just a glance of the eye will

be enough to provide guidance.

The picture here is a relationship of such intimacy, such closeness, the slightest gesture carries a volume of meaning. [Mike & Diane]

In **contrast** to this kind of intimate, sensitivity is v. 9 . . .

<sup>9</sup> Do not be like the horse *or* like the mule, *Which* have no understanding, *Which* must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.

Some horses & most mules are **so stubborn**, the only way to guide them is with a piece of metal in their mouth attached to reins you haul on to get them to turn.

David says, don't be mule-headed with God; be tender & sensitive, **quick** to respond to eh leading of the Spirit.

<sup>10</sup> Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked; But he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him.

<sup>11</sup> Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous; And shout for joy, all *you* upright in heart!

One of the things we see time & again in the Psalms is the call to exuberant worship & praise.

The idea that true religion is always somber & subdued just isn't Bible.

Of course there's a time for quiet meditation & adoration of God.

But there's also time for loud praise.

Psalm 33

Though there's nothing in the scripture to indicate the author of this Psalm because of it's placement among other songs of David, it's assumed he wrote this one too.

It's a confident expression of praise in the faithfulness of God.

<sup>1</sup> **Rejoice** in the Lord, O you righteous! *For* praise from the upright is beautiful.

To Whom? To God!

<sup>2</sup> Praise the Lord with the harp; Make melody to Him with an instrument of ten strings.

<sup>3</sup> Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy.

Here's our instruction to write new songs of praise & to give God our best.

Look at this carefully – "Sing to Him a new song."

In Ephesians 5:18–19 we find this –

<sup>18</sup> Do not be drunk with wine, which is a waste; but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

We want to encourage you when we're worshipping, to feel free to compose your own melody as the band sometimes will just play their instruments.

That's a time to just go ahead and let loose with a new melody.

Maybe after humming some note, you can add words of praise, or quietly worship in a tongue.

One of the most beautiful things you will ever hear this side of heaven is when a large group of people sing in the Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> For the word of the Lord *is* right, And all His work *is done* in truth.

<sup>5</sup> He loves righteousness and justice; The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

<sup>6</sup> By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.

<sup>7</sup> He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; He lays up the deep in storehouses.

<sup>8</sup> Let all the earth fear the Lord; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

<sup>9</sup> For He spoke, and it was *done*; He commanded, and it stood fast.

The Psalmist contemplates the surpassing greatness & power of God.

His spoken Word is enough to do anything & everything.

<sup>10</sup> The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He makes the plans of the peoples of no effect.

<sup>11</sup> The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.

I like the way one man said this – Man **proposes**, but God **disposes**.

<sup>12</sup> Blessed *is* the nation whose God *is* the Lord, The people He has chosen as His own inheritance.

Of course, the Psalmist is thinking **specifically** of Israel.

But this is true of any nation who looks to God as their Master.

Conversely, any nation who rejects God is doomed to a curse.

13 The Lord looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men.

14 From the place of His dwelling He looks On all the inhabitants of the earth;

15 He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works.

Each & every person is a unique creation of God, meant to play their own role in His eternal plan.

This is the great potential of each man & woman.

It's only those who **surrender to God** who discover that potential.

16 No king *is* saved by the multitude of an army; A mighty man is not delivered by great strength.

17 A horse *is* a vain hope for safety; Neither shall it deliver *any* by its great strength.

18 Behold, the eye of the Lord *is* on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy,

19 To deliver their soul from death, And to keep them alive in famine.

If anyone knew that truth of this, it was David!

He was a little shepherd boy who went toe to toe with a massive killing machine named Goliath one day in the Valley of Elah.

Goliath was 9 ft. tall & decked out in the latest & greatest of military hardware.

He'd been trained as a warrior since he was just a child.

David on the other hand, was all of about 5'7", was equipped with his shepherd's tools.

There was never before nor since a more one-sided contest.

Goliath never had a chance! Because David had a secret weapon – God!

Listen, it's not wrong for a nation to field a well-manned & equipped military for defense.

What's wrong is when that nation forgets God & thinks its military is enough.

God has a way of humbling the arrogant who boast in their military prowess.

Think about the US & the War on Terror.

We're fielding a massive deployment of soldiers & equipment at great cost, yet a pack of ragged mountain men in Afghanistan & Pakistan continue to give us fits!

A lone 19 year old Nigerian can bring our entire airline industry to its knees for weeks.

The real reason for this is because our nation has **forsaken** God!

The quickest way to win the War in Terror is to repent & turn back to the Lord.

20 Our soul waits for the Lord; He *is* our help and our shield.

21 For our heart shall rejoice in Him, Because we have trusted in His holy name.

22 Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us, Just as we hope in You.

Psalm 34

A Psalm of David when he pretended madness before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.

We read in Samuel about one time when David was on the run from Saul he went to stay in one of the cities of the Philistines, Israel's ancient enemy.

The king of the City, Abimelech, knew that that King of Israel was trying to kill David & Abimelech figured, the enemy of my enemy is my friend.

But after being there for a while – Abimelech began to wonder if maybe David was a spy.

David saw his suspicion and began to fear for his life, so he began to act as though he was insane.

He let himself go appearance-wise, hunched over & began to act really bizarre; scratching on doors & drooling.

The Philistines had a belief that crazy people were being visited by the gods, so they left David alone.

This went on for a while until David's behavior just became embarrassing, then they sent him away.

That's how he escaped & made his way back to Israel, after Saul's campaign to catch him was off.

1 I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

2 My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear *of it* and be glad.

David's testimony of God's protection would be an encouragement to others who were facing difficult times.

3 Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together.

4 I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.

5 They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed.

6 This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard *him*, And saved him out of all his troubles.

7 The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.

Hebrews speaks of angels as spiritual beings who provide assistance to the people of God.

It's going to be fun meeting our angels in heaven, & asking them to tell us about all the times they protected us from stuff we never knew about. [Anaheim Lake]

8 Oh, taste and see that the Lord *is* good; Blessed *is* the man *who* trusts in Him!

There was an add years ago that said, "Try it, You'll like it." Try Him, You'll like Him!

9 Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! *There is* no want to those who fear Him.

The psalmist reminds God's people of the importance of keeping God as their reference point for all things.

10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good *thing*.

Young lions are the **epitome** of competent self-reliance.

But during a time of severe drought, even they can know famine.

But those who trust in God rather than themselves have a secret supply that never runs dry.

11 Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.

12 Who *is* the man *who* desires life, And loves *many* days, that he may see good?

What does the God-approved life look like? Here it is . . .

13 Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit.

Watch your words; speak truth!

14 Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.

Watch your actions; aim at harmony with others.

Over & over in the Bible we find an emphasis placed on God's delight in harmony & His anger with conflict among people.

Proverbs 6:16–19 says -

16 These six *things* the Lord hates, Yes, seven *are* an abomination to Him:

17 A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood,

18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil,

19 A false witness *who* speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.

Heb. 12:14 tells us to be at peace with all people.

Jesus **repeatedly** called His followers to forgive those who hurt them.

Paul warns against bitterness & the strife it engenders time & again.

In light of all this emphasis on relational harmony we need to stop & take stock about how we're doing in this.

Are we the kind of people who facilitate & advance harmony among others, or do we stir up strife, tension, problems?

Every so often you meet someone who seems to see it as their mission to create drama.

They gossip about others, tell stories that embarrass someone, or make **hurtful** comments.

Their goal is to get people stirred up emotionally, because it's a form of control; they're manipulating them.

Many **arsonists** light fires because of their desire for power.

They light a fire, then stand back and watch the fire trucks show up.

They feel powerful knowing all this effort came at their instigation.

There's a lot of emotion & fear in the face of a fire, and it gratifies the arson to think he's so powerful.

Well, some people are **relational arsons**.

They spark some gossip, then watch it start a blaze of trouble and emotion as people get upset.

All the talk & drama makes them feel powerful.

God hates it!

V. 14 makes it clear the godly person pursues the things that make for peace.

15 The eyes of the Lord *are* on the righteous, And His ears *are open* to their cry.

16 The face of the Lord *is against* those who do evil, To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

17 *The righteous* cry out, and the Lord hears, And delivers them out of all their troubles.

- 18 The Lord *is* near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.  
This is contrary to the way of the world which places such value on having it all together.  
God is with the broken-hearted, with those who know where they fail & make no attempt to pretend they are anything but needy of God.
- 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.  
The psalmist is realistic; the godly aren't exempt from suffering.  
On the contrary, besides the effects of living in a fallen world were sickness & distress is abundant, the one who follows God is going to face the hostility of a world that rejects Him.  
Despite that, God has promised **ultimate victory** to His people.
- 20 He guards all his bones; Not one of them is broken.  
Much of what this psalm says applies with special relevance to the Messiah.  
v. 20 is **specifically** prophetic of Jesus, Who suffered no broken bones, though it came close when He was crucified.  
When the Roman guard came to break His knees to hasten death, he refrained because Jesus had already died.
- 21 Evil shall slay the wicked, And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.  
One of the primary ways God judges the wicked is by **letting them** suffer the consequences of their own evil choices.
- 22 The Lord redeems the soul of His servants, And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.  
That's a precious promise to believers – repeated by Paul in Romans 8 –  
*There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.

### Psalm 35

A Psalm of David.

This is a lament over bitter enemies who've set themselves to do David in.

- 1 Plead *my cause*, O Lord, with those who strive with me; Fight against those who fight against me.
- 2 Take hold of shield and buckler, And stand up for my help.
- 3 Also draw out the spear, And stop those who pursue me. Say to my soul, "I *am* your salvation."
- David asks God to be his **champion**; to enter into battle with his enemies.
- 4 Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor Who seek after my life; Let those be turned back and brought to confusion Who plot my hurt.
- 5 Let them be like chaff before the wind, And let the angel of the Lord chase *them*.
- 6 Let their way be dark and slippery, And let the angel of the Lord pursue them.
- 7 For without cause they have hidden their net for me *in* a pit, *Which* they have dug without cause for my life.
- They've been laying clever traps, trying to ensnare David.  
But he's done nothing to deserve this opposition.
- 8 Let destruction come upon him unexpectedly, And let his net that he has hidden catch himself; Into that very destruction let him fall.
- 9 And my soul shall be joyful in the Lord; It shall rejoice in His salvation.
- 10 All my bones shall say, "Lord, who *is* like You, Delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, Yes, the poor and the needy from him who plunders him?"
- 11 Fierce witnesses rise up; They ask me *things* that I do not know.

It's embarrassing when you're a leader of a lot of people, and enemies put a question before you, you don't have a clue how to answer.

It makes you look incompetent & unfit to rule, which is of course the enemy's goal.

- 12 They reward me evil for good, *To* the sorrow of my soul.
- 13 But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing *was* sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; And my

prayer would return to my own heart.

14 I paced about as though *he were* my friend *or* brother; I bowed down heavily, as one who mourns *for his* mother.

15 But in my adversity they rejoiced And gathered together; Attackers gathered against me, And I did not know *it*; They tore *at me* and did not cease;

16 With ungodly mockers at feasts They gnashed at me with their teeth.

What made the opposition of these guys so difficult for David to bear was that earlier in their relationship, when they were suffering, David had tried to console them and had mourned alongside them.

Now, his distress is their doing, and they are HAPPY, **celebrating** his pain.

17 Lord, how long will You look on? Rescue me from their destructions, My precious *life* from the lions. Then David turns from desperate pleading to confident praise.

He trusts God had heard him & will rescue him.

18 I will give You thanks in the great assembly; I will praise You among many people.

19 Let them not rejoice over me who are wrongfully my enemies; Nor let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause.

There were a couple little things David's enemies did that just drove him crazy.

They would give each other a smug little wink as though they were getting away with their lies.

The other thing they'd do is to say, "Aha!" as though they had just discovered some terrible things about David.

These 2 things drove David to distraction.

20 For they do not speak peace, But they devise deceitful matters Against *the* quiet ones in the land.

See – David had **his** drama-causers too.

21 They also opened their mouth wide against me, *And* said, "Aha, aha! Our eyes have seen *it*."

22 *This* You have seen, O Lord; Do not keep silence. O Lord, do not be far from me.

23 Stir up Yourself, and awake to my vindication, To my cause, my God and my Lord.

24 Vindicate me, O Lord my God, according to Your righteousness; And let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not say in their hearts, "Ah, so we would have it!" Let them not say, "We have swallowed him up."

26 Let them be ashamed and brought to mutual confusion Who rejoice at my hurt; Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor Who exalt themselves against me.

27 Let them shout for joy and be glad, Who favor my righteous cause; And let them say continually, "Let the Lord be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

28 And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness *And* of Your praise all the day long.

Psalm 36

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David the Servant of the Lord.

David describes this song as having come from some deep & profound insights God had given him about his enemies.

David was a thoughtful guy. He took the time to ponder why things were the way they were.

He's had a lot of opposition and doesn't understand why.

So he's asked God to show him what makes his enemies tick.

Why do the ungodly think the way they do?

This psalm is what God showed him.

1 An oracle within my heart concerning the transgression of the wicked: *There is* no fear of God before his eyes.

The root problem driving the ungodly is a rejection of God.

They just don't factor Him into their lives or thinking.

2 For he flatters himself in his own eyes, When he finds out his iniquity *and* when he hates.

Whenever the sinner realizes his sin, instead of admitting it for the evil it is, he rationalizes & justifies it.

3 The words of his mouth *are* wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise *and* to do good.

4 He devises wickedness on his bed; He sets himself in a way *that is* not good; He does not abhor evil.

When someone rejects God, they can only go from bad to worse.

If instead of repenting of sin, they rationalize it, they will keep going and begin to actively plot *more* sin. He begins to redefine evil as good.

5 Your mercy, O Lord, *is* in the heavens; Your faithfulness *reaches* to the clouds.

6 Your righteousness *is* like the great mountains; Your judgments *are* a great deep; O Lord, You preserve man and beast.

7 How precious *is* Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

8 They are abundantly satisfied with the fullness of Your house, And You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures.

9 For with You *is* the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.

With You *is* the fountain of life.

This is one of those descriptions or pictures we don't see for the glorious thing it was to the people of David's time.

Fountains were ultra rare but highly treasured.

Remember that water was the key to life in the ancient world.

Being an agricultural community, they depended on the rains which would fill up the water table & wells so they had water to drink.

They depended on the rains for their fields & crops. Water was life!

Some towns were located near a stream or spring.

Engineers would build a set of pipes to the spring & bring the water right in to the center of town, ending the pipe in a decorative nozzle, making a fountain.

So instead of women having to walk a long distance to a well & lower a bucket a long distance, then haul it back up, they could just go to the center of the village and take water that was spouting into it.

These fountains were a picture of life gushing out at you!

David used this idea to say that God is the source of life – and not a trickle! He is a gushing source of LIFE.

10 Oh, continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart.

11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, And let not the hand of the wicked drive me away.

12 There the workers of iniquity have fallen; They have been cast down and are not able to rise.

David is confident in the Lord's righteous judgment of the wicked.