

# THE GUIDANCE OF GOD

**BIBLE TEXT** : Psalm 32:1-11

LESSON 239 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about" (Psalm 32:10).

## **BIBLE TEXT in King James Version**

### **Psalm 32:1-11 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Blessed *is he whose* transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered.

<sup>2</sup> Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

<sup>3</sup> When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

<sup>4</sup> For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

<sup>5</sup> I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

<sup>6</sup> For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

<sup>7</sup> Thou *art* my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

<sup>8</sup> I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

<sup>9</sup> Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

<sup>10</sup> Many sorrows *shall be* to the

## **BIBLE REFERENCES:**

### **I The Blessed, Happy State of the Godly**

- 1 Forgiveness for transgressions (To transgress means, literally, doing that which is prohibited.) brings genuine happiness, Psalm 32:1;

#### **Psalm 1:1-6 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

<sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

<sup>3</sup> And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

<sup>4</sup> The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

<sup>5</sup> Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

#### **Isaiah 43:25 (KJV)**

<sup>25</sup> I, *even* I, *am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

#### **Isaiah 44:22 (KJV)**

<sup>22</sup> I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.

#### **Isaiah 55:1-3 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

<sup>2</sup> Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which* is not bread? and your labour for *that which* satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which* is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, *even* the sure mercies of David.

#### **Isaiah 55:6-7 (KJV)**

<sup>6</sup> Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

<sup>7</sup> Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

#### **Jeremiah 31:34 (KJV)**

<sup>34</sup> And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

#### **Jeremiah 50:20 (KJV)**

<sup>20</sup> In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and *there shall be* none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.

#### **1 John 1:9 (KJV)**

<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

#### **Romans 8:1 (KJV)**

wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

<sup>11</sup> Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all *ye that are* upright in heart.

<sup>1</sup> *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

- 2 The covering of sin (To sin means, literally, missing the mark, or, not doing what is commanded.) also brings genuine happiness, Psalm 32:1;

**1 John 1:7 (KJV)**

<sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

**1 John 2:1-2 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

<sup>2</sup> And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.

**1 John 3:5 (KJV)**

<sup>5</sup> And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

**1 John 3:8 (KJV)**

<sup>8</sup> He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

**Leviticus 17:11 (KJV)**

<sup>11</sup> For the life of the flesh *is* in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it *is* the blood *that* maketh an atonement for the soul.

**Hebrews 8:12 (KJV)**

<sup>12</sup> For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

- 3 When iniquity (literally, perversion, or, turned out of its proper course or situation) is not imputed to a man he is genuinely happy, Psalm 32:2;

**Micah 7:18-20 (KJV)**

<sup>18</sup> Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy.

<sup>19</sup> He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

<sup>20</sup> Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, *and* the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

**Hebrews 8:12 (KJV)**

<sup>12</sup> For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

- 4 Freedom from guile (Guile means, literally, deceit or fraud.) brings genuine happiness, Psalm 32:2;

**Psalms 101:7 (KJV)**

<sup>7</sup> He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.

**John 1:47 (KJV)**

<sup>47</sup> Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

**1 Peter 2:22 (KJV)**

<sup>22</sup> Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

**Revelation 14:5 (KJV)**

<sup>5</sup> And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

- 5 Remorse that was beyond tears, and strong conviction for sin, brought contrition and full pardon to David, Psalm 32:3-5;

**Psalms 51:1-19 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

<sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

<sup>3</sup> For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.

<sup>4</sup> Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

<sup>5</sup> Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

<sup>6</sup> Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

<sup>7</sup> Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

<sup>8</sup> Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.

<sup>9</sup> Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

<sup>10</sup> Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

<sup>11</sup> Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup> Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me *with thy* free spirit.

<sup>13</sup> *Then* will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

<sup>14</sup> Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: *and* my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

<sup>15</sup> O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

<sup>16</sup> For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

<sup>17</sup> The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

<sup>18</sup> Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

<sup>19</sup> Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

## II Present, and Eternal Blessings Accruing to the Godly

- 1 The godly will seek for God's blessings and for His divine provision and protection, Psalm 32:6;

### **Habakkuk 2:4 (KJV)**

<sup>4</sup> Behold, his soul *which* is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.

### **Hebrews 10:38 (KJV)**

<sup>38</sup> Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

- 2 God will protect His own, Psalm 32:6, 7;

### **Psalm 91:1-16 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

<sup>2</sup> I will say of the LORD, *He is* my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.

<sup>3</sup> Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, *and* from the noisome pestilence.

<sup>4</sup> He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth *shall be thy* shield and buckler.

<sup>5</sup> Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; *nor* for the arrow *that* flieth by day;

<sup>6</sup> *Nor* for the pestilence *that* walketh in darkness; *nor* for the destruction *that* wasteth at noonday.

<sup>7</sup> A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; *but* it shall not come nigh thee.

<sup>8</sup> Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

<sup>9</sup> Because thou hast made the LORD, *which is* my refuge, *even* the most High, thy habitation;

<sup>10</sup> There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

<sup>11</sup> For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee

in all thy ways.

<sup>12</sup> They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

<sup>13</sup> Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.

<sup>14</sup> Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.

<sup>15</sup> He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

<sup>16</sup> With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

3 Guidance is promised to all who follow God, Psalm 32:8;

**Psalm 25:9 (KJV)**

<sup>9</sup> The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.

**Psalm 48:14 (KJV)**

<sup>14</sup> For this God *is* our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide *even* unto death.

**Psalm 73:24 (KJV)**

<sup>24</sup> Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me *to* glory.

**John 14:26 (KJV)**

<sup>26</sup> But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

**John 16:13-15 (KJV)**

<sup>13</sup> Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

<sup>14</sup> He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

<sup>15</sup> All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

**Isaiah 30:21 (KJV)**

<sup>21</sup> And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This *is* the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.

4 The obstinate and self-willed person does not have the assurances given to the godly, Psalm 32:9, 10;

**Proverbs 3:32 (KJV)**

<sup>32</sup> For the froward *is* abomination to the LORD: but his secret *is* with the righteous.

**2 Peter 2:9-17 (KJV)**

<sup>9</sup> The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

<sup>10</sup> But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

<sup>11</sup> Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

<sup>12</sup> But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

<sup>13</sup> And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as they* that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

<sup>14</sup> Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

<sup>15</sup> Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of* Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

<sup>16</sup> But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

<sup>17</sup> These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

- 5 The godly will, therefore, have a full heart of gratitude for the benefits he receives, Psalm 32:11;

**Psalm 103:1-22 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his holy name.

<sup>2</sup> Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

<sup>3</sup> Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

<sup>4</sup> Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

<sup>5</sup> Who satisfieth thy mouth with good *things*; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

<sup>6</sup> The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

<sup>7</sup> He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

<sup>8</sup> The LORD *is* merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

<sup>9</sup> He will not always chide: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

<sup>10</sup> He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup> For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

<sup>12</sup> As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

<sup>13</sup> Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him.

<sup>14</sup> For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

<sup>15</sup> *As for* man, his days *are* as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

<sup>16</sup> For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

<sup>17</sup> But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

<sup>18</sup> To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

<sup>19</sup> The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

<sup>20</sup> Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

<sup>21</sup> Bless ye the LORD, all *ye* his hosts; *ye* ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

<sup>22</sup> Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

**NOTES:**

**The Righteousness Which Is of Faith**

It is recorded that Martin Luther was once asked which of the Psalms were the best, and that his answer was, "The Pauline Psalms." Amazed that an authority like Luther would attribute some of the ancient Psalms to the pen of the Apostle Paul, the questioner asked what was meant by this answer. Luther is said to have replied that he called the Penitential Psalms — Psalms 32, 51, 130, and 143 — the Pauline Psalms, because they resembled so closely the writings of the Apostle, in setting forth the truth that the forgiveness of sins comes, without the Law and without works, to the man who believes. He added that these Psalms teach, as did Paul in his New Testament writings, that no man can rightly boast of his own righteousness; the forgiveness of sin that he receives is through God's mercy and not through any personal merit of his own.

This Psalm opens with the statement that the person who has been delivered from all evil is blessed, or truly happy. The Psalmist has analyzed and summarized the evil of our natures and of our outward acts in the four classifications seen here, which are transgressions, sins, iniquity, and guile. He states that the man whose transgressions are forgiven through the unmerited favor and mercy of God; the man whose sin is covered, being cast by God into the depths of the sea — not to float there as a cork, but to sink into complete obscurity; the man who is so changed by the regenerating power of God that his former iniquity will not be imputed to him; the man whose former guile and deceit is removed and whose heart is filled with righteousness instead — that man, David states, is indeed a happy man!

Some have doubted that God could, or would, make a change in the nature, or grant an experience from sinfulness to righteousness that could be recognized and retained by a person. Unfortunately, there are many who would thus limit the power of God and who would reduce His plan to their own convenience. But God's plan remains unchanged!

God's salvation delivers from the guilt of sin, the power of sin, and the penalty for sin. This wonderful work of grace will naturally bring a state of happiness, because the remorse of sin is gone, the guilt is taken away, and the "certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation" is replaced by the "great peace" that is given those who love God's law. The world, and all that it can offer a person, cannot duplicate, or even approximate, such happiness.

### **True Happiness, One of the Assurances of Salvation**

One cannot doubt whether his sins are forgiven but that immediately, unless his conscience is seared with a hot iron, the very thought of sin will cause a great fear to arise in him. The fear of eternal death and the horror of God's judgment will come to his remembrance. There is most certainly no happiness in such a state.

There is no true happiness but that which is enjoyed, and happiness cannot be enjoyed unless it is felt. But happiness cannot be felt unless one knows he is in possession of it. Therefore, any doubting of the remission of sins is contrary to true happiness; and the presence of true happiness is one of the assurances of the saving grace of God.

David had sinned. He had felt the weight of conviction and God's judgment upon him and had repented of his sin. We read here that God had forgiven him. In this Psalm David tells us that the joy of salvation was restored to him when the pardoning grace of God was manifested toward him once again. David had previously prayed for a restoration of that joy; and we can see from a comparison of that prayer for forgiveness (Psalm 51) and this Psalm, that the prayer for the restoration of the joy of his salvation was actually a prayer for the restoration of his salvation. Some will say that David never lost his salvation, being only temporarily deprived of its joy because of his unwise acts. But this Psalm, as well as our study of his prayer for forgiveness, proves that he was praying as a man without a present assurance or hope in God. He was lost — eternally lost — without this forgiveness for which he was praying. And he was restored to the privileges of the adoption and inheritance of the just, only when it was granted to him.

### **The Blessings That Follow Repentance**

Having been restored to God's favor, David came into the inheritance of the just. Knowing the blessings that would come to "every one that is godly," he did not hesitate to pray that God would



### **QUESTIONS**

- 1 Define the four classifications of evil mentioned in the opening verses  
of our lesson text.
- 2 Tell what provisions God has made to free us from each phase of evil  
mentioned in these verses.
- 3 How does this Psalm refute the popular doctrine of "Eternal Security"?
- 4 What blessings are promised to the godly?
- 5 What warning is given in the latter part of the Psalm?
- 6 What is promised to the wicked?
- 7 Contrast the hope of the righteous with that of the wicked.
- 8 What is the basis for praise to God?
- 9 Why did Luther call this Psalm one of the "Pauline Psalms"?
- 10 What great Gospel truth is taught here and in Psalm 51 that is common with much of the New Testament writings?

make him a partaker of those blessings. God is pleased when we trust Him. He has said that "the just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4). He wants us to depend upon Him. He wants us to lean heavily upon Him. He wants us to put our whole trust in Him.

Our blessings from God increase immeasurably as we realize more of our own insufficiency and the full sufficiency of God. Those who come to the Mercy Seat oftenest are those who are blest the most frequently. Those who place their confidence and hope in the Eternal One are those who benefit the most from His infinite wisdom and providence.

There is ample provision for our physical necessities in the Divine Storehouse. There is healing for our infirmities in the Blood that was shed and through the Body that was smitten for us. There is wisdom and guidance for the problems and perplexities of life in the blessed Comforter. The Word of God will be opened to those who seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit. There is faith to be had from the true perception of the Word of God. There is an eternal hope given to the follower of the Lowly Nazarene. There is comfort and peace for everyone who comes to the understanding Father. There is protection and safety for all who come under the protecting Wing and who are followed by the loving Eye. These and many other blessings come to those who put their confidence and trust in the One who has said that He would never leave us nor forsake us.

**"His oath, His covenant, His blood,  
Support me in the whelming flood; When  
all around my soul gives way, He then is  
all my hope and stay."**

But there is a warning note sounded in the Psalm, for God knows the frailty of human nature and the limitations of our frame of dust. The phrase, "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding," tells us that there are those who will not be led, who will not submit to the leadership and will of God. These people enjoy few, if any, of the sublime blessings that the righteous receive. "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked" is the most that can be given them in consolation for the difficulties they continually face and endure. But there is little consolation in the easily recognized fact that such sorrows are the result of self-will, stubbornness, and selfish desires. On the other hand, the righteous person has the eternal assurance and consolation that "mercy shall compass him about."

### **Praise and Gratitude**

Why should not the righteous man sing? Why should not the redeemed person praise God? Why shouldn't he be happy? The answer to these questions is plain and can be seen in the lives of Christians of all ages.

Music was born in the worship of God. The singing of songs came into being and was developed in the praise of God. True fellowship is found only where unity prevails and where hearts beat as one. The happiest family circles have been those where God has been a welcome Guest. The truest friendships are those that have been activated and prospered by God and His service. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). The "floods of great waters . . . shall not come nigh unto him" who puts his trust in God — the man or woman who knows the righteousness that is of faith.

**"Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous:  
and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart."**

