



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V27 N15

April 13, 2025

PSALMS: CELEBRATING CHRIST IN GOD'S HYMNBOOK

"Psalm 32"

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Prayer

I pray to God to know him, to lay my request before him, and to find direction for my daily life.

"Come and hear, all you who fear God; let me tell you what he has done for me. 17 I cried out to him with my mouth; his praise was on my tongue.

18 If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; 19 but God has surely listened and has heard my prayer. 20 Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me!"

Psalm 66:16-20



Q?

How does the LORD respond to those who turn to him for forgiveness?



Psalm 32 is one of seven *penitential* psalms; the others being Pss 6, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143. In the penitential psalms, the psalmist expresses sorrow for sin and asks for God's mercy. Psalm 32 is often linked to David's adultery with Bathsheba and his murder of her husband Uriah (2 Sa 11:2-27), which is likely—although not indisputable—given the content of the psalm.. Here's how the story goes as told in *The Message*.

2-5 One late afternoon, David got up from taking his nap and was strolling on the roof of the palace. From his vantage point on the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was stunningly beautiful. David sent to ask about her, and was told, "Isn't this Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite?" David sent his agents to get her. After she arrived, he went to bed with her. (This occurred during the time of "purification" following her period.) Then she returned home. Before long she realized she was pregnant.

Later she sent word to David: "I'm pregnant."

6 David then got in touch with Joab: "Send Uriah the Hittite to me." Joab sent him.

7-8 When he arrived, David . . . said to Uriah, "Go home. Have a refreshing bath and a good night's rest."

8-9 After Uriah left the palace, an informant of the king was sent after him. But Uriah didn't go home. He slept that night at the palace entrance, along with the king's servants.

10 David was told that Uriah had not gone home. He asked Uriah, "Didn't you just come off a hard trip? So why didn't you go home?"

11 Uriah replied to David, "The Chest is out there with the fighting men of Israel and Judah—in tents. My master Joab and his servants are roughing it out in the fields. So, how can I go home and eat and drink and enjoy my wife? On your life, I'll not do it!"

12-13 "All right," said David, "have it your way. Stay for the day and I'll send you back tomorrow." So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem the rest of the day.

The next day David invited him to eat and drink with him, and David got him drunk. But in the evening Uriah again went out and slept with his master's

servants. He didn't go home.

14-15 In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In the letter he wrote, "Put Uriah in the front lines where the fighting is the fiercest. Then pull back and leave him exposed so that he's sure to be killed."

16-17 So Joab, holding the city under siege, put Uriah in a place where he knew there were fierce enemy fighters. When the city's defenders came out to fight Joab, some of David's soldiers were killed, including Uriah the Hittite.

18-21 Joab sent David a full report on the battle. He instructed the messenger, "After you have given to the king a detailed report on the battle, if he flares in anger, say, 'And by the way, your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.'"

22-24 Joab's messenger arrived in Jerusalem and gave the king a full report. He said, "The enemy was too much for us. They advanced on us in the open field, and we pushed them back to the city gate. But then arrows came hot and heavy on us from the city wall, and eighteen of the king's soldiers died."

25 When the messenger completed his report of the battle, David got angry at Joab. He vented it on the messenger: "Why did you get so close to the city? Didn't you know you'd be attacked from the wall? Didn't you remember how Abimelech son of Jerub-Besheth got killed? Wasn't it a woman who dropped a millstone on him from the wall and crushed him at Thebez? Why did you go close to the wall!"

"By the way," said Joab's messenger, "your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead."

Then David told the messenger, "Oh. I see. Tell Joab, 'Don't trouble yourself over this. War kills—sometimes one, sometimes another—you never know who's next. Redouble your assault on the city and destroy it.' Encourage Joab."

26-27 When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she grieved for her husband. When the time of mourning was over, David sent someone to bring her to his house. She became his wife and bore him a son.

Read Psalm 32:1-11

Of David. A *maskil*.

- 1 *Blessed is the one
whose transgressions are forgiven,
whose sins are covered.*
- 2 *Blessed is the one
whose sin the LORD does not count against them
and in whose spirit is no deceit.*
- 3 *When I kept silent,
my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.*
- 4 *For day and night
your hand was heavy on me;
my strength was sapped
as in the heat of summer.*
- 5 *Then I acknowledged my sin to you
and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess
my transgressions to the LORD."
And you forgave
the guilt of my sin.*
- 6 *Therefore let all the faithful pray to you
while you may be found;
surely the rising of the mighty waters
will not reach them.*
- 7 *You are my hiding place;
you will protect me from trouble
and surround me with songs of deliverance.*
- 8 *I will instruct you and teach you in the way you
should go;
I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.*
- 9 *Do not be like the horse or the mule,
which have no understanding
but must be controlled by bit and bridle
or they will not come to you.*
- 10 *Many are the woes of the wicked,
but the LORD's unfailing love
surrounds the one who trusts in him.*
- 11 *Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous;
sing, all you who are upright in heart!*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Highlight "Blessed is the one" in vv. 1-2.
- Underline "transgressions," "sins," and "sin" in vv. 1-2.
- Double underline "forgiven," "covered," and "does not count against them" in vv. 1-2.
- Circle "no deceit" in v. 2.
- Box "When" and "Then" *temporal connecting words* in vv. 3 and 5 respectively.
- Bracket "bones wasted away" in v. 3.
- Box "for" indicating *reason* and "as" indicating *comparison* in v. 4.
- Bracket "day and night" in v. 4.
- Box "Therefore" indicating *result* in v. 6.
- Bracket "rising of the mighty waters" in v. 6.
- Circle "hiding place" in v. 7.
- Circle "I" (2x) in v. 8.
- Box "like" indicating *comparison* in v. 9.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 9-10.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. After reading verses 1 and 2, explain how you would define “Blessed.”

2. The psalmist uses *three* different words to refer to *sin* and *three* different words to refer to *forgiveness*. Explain why. (Put differently, explain whether he is referring to *six* different things or *two* different things.)

3. The psalmist writes, “When I kept silent.” How so?

4. The psalmist experienced firsthand the results of *keeping silent*. Summarize them.

5. Does your personal experience of *keeping silent* ring true to the psalmist’s? Explain.

6. How does the LORD respond to one who confesses their sins?

7. The psalmist instructs his readers to pray to the LORD “while he may be found.” What do you think he means by that?

8. Who is speaking in verse 8? Explain.

9. Explain the use of *comparison* and *contrast* in verse 9.

10. **Discussion:** Talk about why our thoughts following sin turn *first* to excusing or covering up rather than confessing.

Commentary On The Text

Psalms 32 is one of the *penitential* psalms, but it shares traits with other psalm types. It includes elements of *thanksgiving* (vv. 3-8) and *wisdom* (vv. 1-2, 9-11), too. On the meaning of the psalm, one commentator writes: "David, having experienced divine chastening and forgiveness (possibly for the sin of adultery and murder recorded in 2 Sam. 11), encouraged others to seek the LORD who deals graciously with sinners. If they refuse submission they will endure chastening. The psalm may be a companion to Psalm 51, referring to David's sin with Bathsheba. At that time David refused for a year to acknowledge his sin. Psalm 51 was his prayer for pardon; Psalm 32 would then follow it, stressing God's forgiveness and the lesson David learned" (Allen P. Ross, "Psalms" in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 818).

While the psalm is divided into six stanzas in the NIV, it can be divided into three broader movements. *First*, following the psalmist's thesis (vv. 1-2), David recalls the agony he experienced when he refused to confess his sin (vv. 3-4) and the happiness he experienced when he confessed his sin, and it was forgiven (v. 5). *Second*, he urges others not to be stubborn like he was but to turn to God for forgiveness while forgiveness is available, for God extends his mercy *now* to those who repent (v. 6a); furthermore, he protects and delivers them from trouble (vv. 6b-7). *Third*, he instructs the righteous to follow the ways of the LORD, for the wicked face many troubles, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds those who trust him.

Verses 1 and 2 state the "blessed" condition of the one whose sins are forgiven. "Blessed" here likely means "happy" or "enviable." And although the psalmist uses three words to refer to sin and three words to refer to forgiveness, he probably uses them *synonymously*, referring not to six different things but two types of things—sin and forgiveness. "The purpose of the threefold repetition may be both to serve the requirement of style and to stress the totality of the themes mentioned" (A. A. Anderson, *Psalms 1-72*, NCBC, 255), i.e., the totality of sin and the totality of forgiveness. In verses 3 and 4, David describes the devastating spiritual, psychological, and physical consequences of refusing to confess one's sin. His language is figurative; his agony is nonetheless real. He was *convicted* spiritually, *tormented* emotionally, and *afflicted* physically twenty-four seven by his unresolved guilt. By way of contrast, David alludes to what followed when he stopped coving up his sin

and instead confessed it to the LORD. Forgiveness brought relief (v. 5).

As a result of the psalmist's experience, he instructs his readers to pray to God for forgiveness *now* (v. 6a), because God can be found *now*. And he adds that those who do so will find the LORD's protection and deliverance from life's threatening situations (vv. 6b-7). "If one keeps short accounts with God, discipline that God sometimes uses to bring His people to repentance will not overwhelm them . . . David paused to praise God for being a refuge for him when such a flood of trouble had overwhelmed him" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Psalms," 2025 ed., 165-66, soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf).

In verses 8-11, the psalmist gives instructions based on his personal experience. Some take the pronoun "I" (first-person sing.) to refer to the LORD, because of the words "watch over you" (NLT, CEV), cf. "with my loving eye on you" (NIV)—which is something that David clearly could not do. According to one commentator, "The personal pronoun 'I' does not come originally from the mouth of the psalmist. He quotes Yahweh, who has promised to instruct his children, give them wisdom, and watch over them" (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 315). The instruction, whether from the LORD directly or from David and indirectly from the LORD, is twofold: don't be like a stubborn animal, namely, a mulish horse, that has no understanding, and don't be like the wicked that have many woes. Instead, trust in the LORD and in his unfailing love. The psalmist ends on a note of praise.

"So David instructed Israel and summarized his own experience for his guidance after his deep fall into sin. We hold that, whereas Ps. 51 may well have been written under the impact of the forgiveness that was bestowed upon David soon after the event, our psalm gives the impression of being the fruit of longer reflection, in the course of which the more general statement of the issues involved is developed. This psalm could, therefore, be regarded as the fulfilment of the vow contained in Ps. 51:13: 'Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee'" (H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of the Psalms*, 270).

Word Studies/Notes

vv. 1-2 **Blessed** Cf. "Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) is he . . ." (AMPC). "The word often refers metonymically to the happiness that God-given security and prosperity produce (see Pss 1:1, 3; 2:12; 34:9; 41:1; 65:4; 84:12; 89:15; 106:3; 112:1; 127:5; 128:1; 144:15). Here it refers to the relief that one experiences when one's sins are forgiven" (The NET Bible, 3rd on Ps 32:1).

vv. 1-2 **transgressions** . . . "Etymologically, 'transgression' is a rebellion against the divine authority (see on 51:1), while 'sin' is a faulty action, often deliberate, with the result that one misses both God and his way (see on 51:2). The third term, 'iniquity' can mean either 'crookedness' or 'going astray'. It can also be used to denote the effects of sin or guilt (see on 51:2)" (A. A. Anderson, *Psalms 1-72*, NCBC, 255).

vv. 1-2 **forgiven** . . . "'Forgiven' is literally 'lifted up' (cf. 25:18; 85:2), as in the removal of a burden. The **sins** are also **covered** and 'not counted,' as in an accounting ledger (Lev. 25:27, 52; 1Kgs. 10:21; 2 Kgs. 12:15; 22:7)" (Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, NIBC, 161). "Two distinct pictures occupy verse 1: lifting or removing (*forgiven*), and concealing from sight (*covered*). The first of these corrects any idea that 'covered' means hiding what is still present and unresolved (a notion which the same verb alludes to in 5a, 'hide') . . . Romans 4:6-8 quotes this to show that the important word *imputes* (or 'reckons') implies that, when God treats us as righteous, it is his gift to us apart from our deserts; and the rest of that chapter uses the context of this same word in Genesis 15:6 to teach that the gift is received by faith alone" (Kidner, 151).

v. 2 **no deceit** "God knows the 'spirit' of humankind, whether the request for forgiveness is expressive of true repentance and sorrow for sin or merely of regret for the consequence" (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 312). "The meaning of this phrase is exemplified by the confession that follows. This absence of 'deceit' is spelled out as acknowledging 'my sin to you' and by not covering up 'my iniquity' (Broyles, 162).

v. 3 **bones wasted away** Cf. "my whole body wasted away" (NET). "David's failure to confess his sin immediately resulted in internal grief and external weakness for him. God oppressed him severely

with discipline (cf. Heb. 12:6). Consequently David felt drained of energy. Evidently this is a description of how he felt in every aspect of his being: physically, emotionally, and spiritually" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Psalms," 2025 ed., 164, soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf). "Neither the sin nor the form of suffering is identified, other than that the latter was physically and psychologically devastating . . . Some affliction, perhaps illness, was most likely the instrument of God's discipline (see Ps 38)" (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ps 32:3-5).

v. 4 **day and night** A figure of speech called *merism*, i.e., a literary device where a pair of contrasting words or phrases (like "high and low") are used to represent the entirety or totality of something.

v. 6 **rising of the** . . . "Even in the greatest of adversities, likened to the rushing of water as it pushes through the narrow confines of a wadi, the Lord will protect those who have sought refuge in him. He is their 'hiding place' (v.7; 'shelter' in 31:20)" (VanGemeren, 314). "Perhaps we could paraphrase verse 6 as: 'Therefore in a time of trouble let every loyal (servant of God) pray to him, (with the result that) when the floods of many waters (i.e. trouble) (will sweep everything before them) they will not reach him'" (Anderson, 258).

v. 8 **I** "Some take the speaker in verse 8 to be God rather than David because of the words **watch over you** (cf. 25:8, 12; 73:24). But David seems to have assumed here the role of a teacher (cf. 34:11; 51:13)" (Allan P. Ross, "Psalms" in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 818; cf. J. J. Stewart Perowne, *The Book of Psalms*, vol. 1, *Psalms 1-72*, 292). To the contrary, "The personal pronoun 'I' does not come originally from the mouth of the psalmist. He quotes Yahweh, who has promised to instruct his children, give them wisdom, and watch over them" (VanGemeren, 315; cf. Anderson, 258).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THIS PASSAGE

Those who confess their sins rather than conceal them
will be blessed with God's forgiveness.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?
2. What does this passage teach me about myself?
3. What does this passage lead me to do?



PARENT CONNECTION

For my second child's sonogram, I asked my crazy Aunt Sharron to join me because my husband was sick. Though we had agreed to wait until delivery to discover the sex, I was weak and my aunt was very persuasive. I figured it would be ok; I could easily hide this little secret. No big deal! You should know I'm a terrible liar and can't keep secrets. So, there we are, eating dinner a few weeks later when I burst out crying with a full confession, "I lied to you!" My gracious husband laughed and responded with, "I knew it. What are we having?" The burden of sin is heavy, like carrying around a bag of rocks. The bummer is, you can never put it down and the load never gets lighter, only increasingly more cumbersome. Through healing confession, we release that heavy burden and experience relief and cleansing from God. There are always consequences to sin, but He is forgiving! How do we teach our kids about confession? The best way to start is to set an example by modeling confession when you make mistakes. Next time you lose your cool or act impatiently, let them know you recognize your sinful behavior. Ask their forgiveness, then ask them to pray with you as you seek God's forgiveness. Flip the scenario and help your kids understand God's nature by offering mercy and grace when they mess up. Help them find the words and encourage them to prayerfully confess their sin as they seek God. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins . . ." (1 John 1:9).

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Psalm 32.

1. What does David say about the person whose sins are forgiven?
2. What happens when David kept silent about his sin?
3. What did the Lord do when David confessed his sin?

What Do You Think?

Why is sin a burden and confession healing?

What Do You Do?

This week, hide all your dirty laundry somewhere in your room. Notice how it smells at the end of the week. How is hidden dirty laundry like hidden sin? Who washes the sin out of your life?

CORE COMPETENCY: Prayer

I talk to God so I can know Him, ask Him for things and find out what He wants me to do.

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Timothy 1:7

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- ☐ I completed my Bible Study
- ☐ I memorized this week's verse
- ☐ I brought my Bible to church
- ☐ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

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OUR MISSION

Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.