

Who Is That Blessed Man?

Who is the man to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity that King David told about? He wrote, *“Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit”* (Psalms 32). God will not record his sins against him! That would be more thrilling than having a bank account where overdrafts are unlimited and never recorded.

I have a friend in Texas who likes to drive fast and he buys the cars that can burn up the road. He can speed past a patrolman and never have to pay a fine. That is because he contributes to the law enforcement fund, and they acknowledge his donation by giving him a decal indicating his support. The decal on his bumper or back window is not a license to speed, but because of it officers just don't charge his law-breaking against him. Was David indicating that God, though not licensing sin, just overlooks sin for favored persons? It is important that we understand this because Paul makes application of David's words to disciples of Christ.

David used the present tense, *“blessed IS the man”* rather than *“blessed WILL BE the man”* in prophetic future. How could that prevail under the covenant of law, for neither law nor its rituals could remit sin? The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. But the Lamb could. He would be sacrificed at the end of the age to redeem those under the Law of Moses (Gal. 4:4). So forgiveness of sin under the first covenant was accounted in anticipation of the atonement to be made centuries later.

It is evident in the text that David was the man to whom the Lord imputed no iniquity, though David had a rap sheet of violations. On what basis were his sins covered? Was it election and imposition of irresistible grace which guaranteed eternal security? Was it faith in God as a sole condition? Was keeping of rituals of the Law of Moses a factor?

Surely, faith was a factor, for *“without faith it is impossible to please him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him”* (Heb. 11:6). His faith led him to observe the Law of Moses, imperfect as his efforts were, for it was violation of that law that made him a sinner. Did God just ignore his violations and those of other law-breakers, choosing not to impute sin to them? God held him accountable, for *“If .. every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?”* (Heb. 2:2-3).

The classic example of David's sin is his sordid and wicked affair with Bathsheba. He tried to hide his adultery and murder. No, God had not overlooked, forgotten, nor forgiven, but he sent Nathan to confront him. Then acknowledging his degrading conduct in deep and heart-rending contrition, he pled humbly for God to blot out his transgression, to cleanse his heart, and to renew his spirit. Please read his emotional outpouring to God (Psa. 51) to discover the blessed man whose sin is covered and to whom God imputes no iniquity.

Back to Psalms 32, we see the rank sinner in whose spirit is deceit. It was a miserable, hypocritical effort to cover up. *“When I declared not my sin, my body wasted away through my groanings all day long.”* But after being convicted, *“I acknowledged my sin to thee, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord’; then thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.”* The Lord covered his sin, blotted it out, and no longer imputed it to him. That is the man whose sins were not reckoned against him.

Thus God dealt with a man who was in covenant relationship with him under the former covenant, and he deals like that with us who are in covenant relationship, walking in that light, at the present time. *“If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us”* (1 John 1;6-10).

Paul quoted David’s words to Roman disciples indicating that they, too, could enjoy that blessedness. However, Paul puts a different spin on it, concluding, *“So also David pronounces a blessing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: ‘Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not reckon his sin’”* (Read Rom. 4:1-8). Paul emphasized faith like Abraham had as the basis of justification rather than works meriting grace as a wage or due. But in the example of Abraham, he is not dealing with all the constituent elements of it. So he then pointed to David as an example indicating other factors included in the kind of faith that saves. Abraham’s faith and David’s response to faith are both essential prerequisites to becoming the person to whom the Lord does not reckon sin.

You, too, can be that blessed person whose sins the Lord covers.

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