

Part 1 – The Transgression of the Wicked

In chapter thirty-five, part 1, we learned that our Heavenly Father (as well as His Son, Jesus Christ) is a ‘man of war’. The difference, of course, between His warfare and mankind’s is that His warfare is *always* just and righteous. And that means He punishes the wicked and rewards the righteous. Thus, when David asked the Lord to ‘plead his cause’ by fighting *against* those who persecuted him, the Lord was well able to do so. And, as Ps 18 explained, the Lord indeed delivered David from all his enemies. But that was only because he remained a faithful servant to the Lord (YHWH). And we also learned that this Psalms (while being historical) is also prophetic of Jesus Christ. Therefore, it was written ‘in view of’ Ps 22, which spoke of the sufferings Jesus Christ went through to be able to pay for our sins and conquer death (Satan’s power over it). And so, while the Lord did not deliver Jesus Christ from the cross at the First Advent (and Jesus truly didn’t ask Him to, because He *willingly* died for our sins, John 10:15-18, 15:13), He will indeed have Jesus Christ take vengeance on all His enemies, when He returns as the King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19). But, ‘the day of vengeance’ shouldn’t be something we fear *if* we serve Jesus Christ; because His wrath is *only* aimed at *His enemies*. He will reward and protect those who faithfully serve Him, *unto the end* (Mth 10:22, 24:13).

In part 2 we learned more about how those who are wicked persecute the righteous, and how the Lord will deliver us from them, just as He did for David and so many others throughout all time. For just as the wicked seek to shame and confound us (hoping we’ll give up) *they* will be the ones shamed and confounded when then the Lord fights *against them*. For our Heavenly Father (and Jesus Christ) is a ‘man of war’ and will indeed fight against those who hurt His children, especially the innocent and most especially those who serve Him. This is true, even now, even if we don’t see all the ways He fights against the wicked. Part of trusting in the Lord is to have faith to know that, just because we cannot see how He fights them *now*, doesn’t mean He is not. And further, just because it seems like the wicked are ‘getting ahead’ doesn’t mean they are. Truly, though they try and ‘dig pits’ for *us* to fall in (physically and spiritually entrap us), all they are doing is digging *their own grave*! For when Jesus Christ returns, He’ll surprise most everyone on earth, for they’ll think the Messiah (Jesus) has finally returned, when it’s really Satan himself. As such, they will not receive eternal life, or be allowed to reign with Jesus Christ because they’ve been groveling at the feet of the antichrist (Satan). Rather, they’ll be disowned by Jesus and have to show, by their works, that they are not incorrigible criminals by the end of the Millennium (or be blotted out of existence). So, David has spent a lot of time, so far in this Psalm, explaining to the Lord how the wicked unjustly (without a cause) persecuted him. But, he will now begin to praise the Lord for His deliverance before going back to speaking of how the wicked persecuted him. So, we see that David is teaching us how to endure the hard times by his going back and forth between pointing out what the wicked were doing to Him but then also pointing out how the Lord delivered him out of all his troubles *and* (importantly) *praising him for it*. We must remember this too, for in our own life, it’s the same way when we faithfully serve the Lord. The wicked won’t stop persecuting us until Jesus Christ returns but we must always remember to thank, and praise, Him for His mercy, and grace, in delivering us out of all our trials and tribulations and giving us the strength to endure them.

In part 3 we learned how, even when we are going through the hard times, it's good to remember to be joyful in the Lord and rejoice in His salvation *because* He will *always* help us through *all* our hard times. And of course, it's good to do this even during the good times because being joyful in the Lord, and rejoicing in His promised salvation (even eternal life), helps us to remember to 'count our blessings' - which counteracts all the bad news we hear, as well as keeps us from being depressed. Having a 'pity party' for our self only brings on depression and that's not something servants of Jesus Christ can afford to put up with, because it causes us to lose focus on the Word of God and the great promises within it. So, regardless of our situation in life, we need to learn to keep kicking out the bad thoughts, and desires, and not allow all the 'bad' news of the things going on in the world to get us down. After all, when we study the Word of God, we *know* what's coming and we *know* the Lord will help us through it all, so long as we remain faithful to Jesus Christ and keep our faith in Him firm. We also know that Jesus Christ will return to the earth and take over. If we want to obtain eternal life, and have a part in the kingdom of God (being allowed to serve in Jesus' eternal government), we must not allow our soul to be corrupted just because 'bad things' happen to us.

In part 4 we learned how to overcome evil with good, for David gave us excellent examples of this throughout his life, and in the many Psalms he wrote. And in this Psalm, David pointed out that he treated his enemies well by praying for them during their times of distress. He prayed so earnestly for them that it was as if he prayed for himself; and with such intensity that it was like a woman who had lost her child. So, with great sincerity and emotion David prayed for his enemies, yet they did *not* reciprocate this kindness. Instead, when David was in adversity, fell sick or was hurt, they rejoiced because they hated him so much (without a just cause) that they wanted him dead, no matter how that came about. David pointed out that they even foolishly slandered him when they were feasting and asked how long the Lord would put up with the way he was being treated by the wicked when he had done nothing to deserve it. But, in all his pain and grief, David still remembered to praise the Lord. And he showed true faith that the Lord would help him (because he was sure he had not sinned nor done anything to bring these hard times upon himself) when he promised the Lord that, when it was all over with (the persecutions) he would praise and thank him *publicly* amongst many people (a great congregation). And David made good on this promise. He published many of his prayers so the people could study and learn from them, even though some of them were quite personal; such as times he was repenting for his sins. And thank God that he did because we still have these precious prayers (Psalms) to study and learn from yet today. Of all the people recorded in the Bible, we have probably the most information about the events of David's life (thanks to books like Samuel, Kings and the Chronicles), as well as his emotions and thoughts while going through them (thanks to the Psalms). While we know there were righteous men before, and after him (Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Paul, etc.), we're given precious information about David's life *to teach us how to endure the hard times and proof that indeed we will be blessed* (as David was) if we too learn to *patiently* endure the hard times (while remaining a faithful servant to the Lord, YHWH), just as David did.

In part 5 we learned that, *if* we love our Heavenly Father (and His Son, Jesus Christ) we will be persecuted, and hated, without a cause *because* the wicked *hate the truth*. And all those who serve Jesus Christ *love truth* and therefore, they not only share the truth (the Gospel of Jesus Christ) but they also live their life according to truth (the Word of God). Thus, the truth that radiates from them is despised by the wicked; which again, is why they persecute the righteous without a *just* cause. They did this to David, to Jesus Christ, to His followers and to so many others throughout time. Therefore, those who hate the truth will *still* persecute those who love truth (i.e. faithful followers of Jesus Christ). As 2 Pt 2:2 says, *the way of truth shall always be evil spoken of*. But, no matter how insolent, or oppressive, they become, we are to not allow ourselves to do evil in retribution to their wicked doings to us. Rather, we should continue to faithfully serve Jesus Christ and learn to endure the hard times, as David, Jesus Christ (and many others) did; because we *know* that the Lord will help us *if* we remain faithful to Jesus Christ. But, even during the hard times, it's natural for us to call upon our Heavenly Father for help. After all, He is the Supreme God; He's the highest Authority in all the Universe. And He alone can see all that goes on in heaven, and in earth. Therefore, He can even see what's going on in the hearts and minds of all His children, even the wicked. So, He is fully able to know if we're sincerely trying to serve Him or, if we're being halfhearted in our seeking (and obeying) Him. But if we are wholeheartedly serving Him, He'll *always* help us out of *all* our afflictions, just as He did for David (as Ps 18 testifies to).

In part 6 we learned how our Heavenly Father will indeed vindicate the righteous; which are those who remain faithful to Him, despite the hard times they have to go through for loving and serving Him. In this life, the wicked will always persecute the righteous because they hate the truth (the Word of God) that dwells within the righteous. We also saw David ask that the wicked would not be able to rejoice in warfare against him, nor even be allowed to think they were going to conquer him; but instead, he asked that they would be greatly disappointed and ashamed for wanting him dead. David then asked that all those who fought for his righteous cause would also be able to have joy, and be glad, because of the Lord's coming deliverance for the righteous. Essentially, because David was loyal to our Heavenly Father, he *was* fighting a 'just cause' because he was doing what was right (obeying God Almighty). And he thus prayed that the wicked who were persecuting him would be punished, and that he (and all others who helped him) would be rewarded simply because, the wicked were truly rebelling *against the Most-High God*, while David and those loyal to him (or to those who were trying to help him) were *not* rebelling against our Heavenly Father. Therefore, David was *not* seeking his own glory. As such, He promised to speak of the Lord's righteousness and praise Him all the day long when he was vindicated of his enemies. And we also learned that David made good on his promise. The many Psalms David wrote were made available for the public to use in worship and to learn from and thankfully we still have them available to us to study and learn from. And, indeed the Lord did disappoint and shame David's enemies. Saul and his army were defeated in battle against the Philistines; and Saul even lost his life fighting against them as well. And in his death, his flesh body did see great shame, for the Philistines cut off his head and paraded it around their nation, even putting it in the house of their idols for a while. Meanwhile, David was made king over the tribe of Judah after Saul's death, and seven years later, he was made king over *all* of Israel. So,

David's life shows that **wickedness 'does not pay'** but loving, and sincerely obeying, our Heavenly Father (YHVH) does indeed 'pay' very well. The Lord (YHVH) promises great blessings for obeying Him; and David's life is just one of many examples in the Word of God that proves He 'makes good' on His promises. So long as we 'stick with Him', He'll *always* 'stick with us'.

Psalms 36

1 A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord.

First off, we see that this Psalm has a 'superscription', or 'title'. The only other Psalm that has this same 'title' was in Psalms 18, which spoke of God giving David victory over all his enemies. However, the English translation has twisted the words around a bit. The *Companion Bible* points out that it should read: ***Relating to the Lord's (YHVH's) servant, by David***. So, this Psalm relates to those who serve the Lord; and *will show the comparison of His true servants to those who claim they are serving the true God, but really are not*. And this Psalm is also a continuation of the last Psalm. So, it's another 'Messiah's prayer and praise' Psalm that's written 'in view of' Psalm 22, a Psalm which spoke of the sufferings of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Thus, this Psalm looks prophetically to how the Lord's true servant, Jesus Christ, would suffer to pay for the sins of mankind; and that His doing so was truly 'serving' the Lord. Isa 42:1 also tells us, Jesus Christ was the Lord's servant: ***Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.***

So, not only did the Lord's servant (Jesus Christ) serve the Lord (YHVH) at His First Advent (where He suffered greatly on the cross to atone for our sins) but He *still* serves the Lord. As Rom 8 says, He is in heaven (at God's right hand) making intercession for us, day and night. That's why 1 John 2:1-2 tells us that (even though we should try hard not to sin) if we do sin, *we have an **advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world*. The word 'advocate' here means an *intercessor* or *consoler* (#3875). It's the same word translated as 'Comforter' in John 14-16. But, what's more, Jesus will also serve the Lord (YHVH) when He returns at His Second Advent, to pour out God's 'cup of wrath' upon the wicked, the ungodly, the 'workers of iniquity' during the 'day of vengeance'. And then He'll also serve the Lord during the Millenium; for He and His faithful (and righteous) servants rule over (and teach) God's children, working to save as many as be possible (Rev 20). So, in all aspects of Jesus' (continuous) life, He indeed serves the Lord *faithfully*. That's why He is our perfect (without fault) example of how to serve the Lord (YHVH) faithfully (John 13:15). Now, let's look at what the rest of verse 1 says...

Psalms 36

Vs 1 (continued)... *The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.*

At first glance, this verse seems confusing. As such, some commentators try and say that the word 'my' (as in 'my' heart) should be translated as 'his heart', to try and 'make sense' of this

verse; and in doing so they are *assuming* that David is explaining what the wicked say in *their* heart. However, the word ‘my’ here is *not a word in itself*. Rather, the words ‘**my heart**’ are actually one Hebrew word, *leb* (#3820), which means (unsurprisingly) ***the heart***; also used (figuratively) very widely for ***the feelings***, the ***will*** and even the ***intellect***; likewise for the center of anything. But, the notes in the *Companion Bible* are even more revealing, because the words ‘my heart’ (being used in this way) is actually a *figure of speech*, (*Synecdoche*, apx 6), which *symbolizes* the ‘whole person’ - so that the words ‘within my heart’ would have been better rendered ‘within me’. And the word ‘saith’ would be better rendered as ‘declared as an oracle’ (#5002, 5001). An oracle in the Bible is usually used to refer to the Tabernacle (especially the Ark of the Covenant), where God spoke from; but it’s also been used to reference the written Word of God too (ex: Acts 7:38). So, ***what this verse says is that David was convinced (in his own heart) that those wicked people – the transgressors (who were truly rebelling against God) - really did not have any ounce of fear or respect for God.***

In other words: David’s saying that ‘within my heart’ (meaning ‘within himself’) he realized that the wicked are not just ‘mean men’. They are *totally godless*. They have ignored their conscience to the point it was seared over (1 Tim 4:2). And therefore, there’s no evil they don’t fear to do. David realized there was literally **no** ‘fear of God’ before their eyes. Now, the word ‘God’ here is *'elohiym* (#430), which means *the supreme God*. It’s one of YHVH’s (Yehovah, #3068) ‘titles’ that refers to His relationship with His Creation, and He being our Creator (apx 4 I). So again, David’s simply saying that he finally realized (i.e. he is now convinced) that the lawless ones (the ‘transgressors’ – those who are rebelling against God) **are wicked** *because* (1) they don’t know the Lord, Yehovah (the Covenant God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel) and (2) they don’t even acknowledge Him as their Creator. Therefore, they don’t fear to do evil; they are not at all scared to sin (#6343) As Prov 16:6 says, *only by the fear of the LORD do men depart from evil*.

Now, the latter part of this first verse (*there is no fear of God before his eyes*) is actually quoted in the New Testament, by Paul, in the third chapter of the book of Romans. And anytime this happens, it’s always befitting that we go and look at those New Testament Scriptures (or vice versa if we’re studying in the New Testament) so we understand *why* they quoted from the Old Testament. This is a very important part of ‘rightly dividing God’s Word’, as 2 Tim 2:15 tells us also. The word ‘dividing’ in 2 Tim 2:15 means ***to make a straight cut***, i.e. (figuratively) ***to dissect*** (expound) **correctly** (*the divine message*) (#3718). So, when we study how *Jesus*, the Gospel writers, Paul, Peter, James (and any others who accurately quoted from the Old Testament) ‘interpreted’ the Old Testament, it gives us *very* valuable insight into what these Scriptures mean (and are truly speaking of), especially prophetically. Thus, it helps us to see the ‘different levels’ of understanding in the Scriptures. As you continue to study God’s Word throughout your life, when you go back to Scriptures you have not read for some time (even back to the ‘basics’) then you’ll realize you understand it *much* better – your understanding of them will be much broader. This is why studying the Word of God never gets old, if you do so with sincerity. God’s Word is ‘pregnant’ because *it always keeps giving you more understanding of truth*, even Scriptures you’ve read *over and over again*.

So, with this in mind, let's look at Romans 3. But before we do, let's understand what Paul has been saying in this chapter, so understand the subject. So, in chapter 3 of Romans, Paul is making the point that: those who *still* keep the 'covenant of circumcision' (or *any* of the blood sacrifices) after Jesus Christ's death, and resurrection, are 'missing the point' of Jesus Christ's atoning blood. While Gen 17 tells us the 'covenant of circumcision was given to Abraham and his descendants 'forever', Heb 10:10 tells us that 'the way' we 'keep' this covenant *has changed* since Jesus' blood was shed to pay for our sins. Therefore, we (who believe in Jesus Christ) are not to perform blood sacrifices anymore (not ever). Doing so is actually saying you don't believe in Jesus Christ; so it's truly denying Jesus Christ. And circumcision is a form of blood sacrifice. Now, this doesn't mean circumcision is bad to do *for health reasons*, but we should not do it for *religious* reasons. But, many in Paul's day did not understand this. They did not understand that, after Jesus died for our sins, He abolished the ordinances of blood sacrifices, including circumcision (Col 2:14, Eph 2:15). So, many 'Jews' clung to it and insisted that the gentiles should also physically circumcise their male children, *if* they wanted to 'be saved'. But again, they 'missed the point' of Jesus' atoning blood. And really, they even missed the point of why circumcision was given. For, even in the Old Testament, God told Israel what that 'covenant of circumcision' *symbolized*. In Deut 10:16, Moses said to Israel: *Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked*. Later, in Deut 30:6, *Moses then said: And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live*. Later still, God Himself said, through Jeremiah: *Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings* (Jer 4:5).

So clearly, the point of the physical circumcision *looked forward to the atoning blood of Jesus Christ* (as did all the blood sacrifices). Because it is was Jesus' blood shed (and His subsequent victory over death through His resurrection) that caused the Holy Spirit to be given to all who believe in Jesus Christ. And it is the Holy Spirit of God that truly helps us 'circumcise' our heart (the carnal mind; the part of us that wants to sin). This is why, in 1 Cor 7:19 Paul said: *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the **keeping of the commandments of God***. It does not matter if you flesh body is circumcised or not; what matters to God is if you clean your heart and put on the 'new man' who desires, and strives, to sincerely obey God's Word. That's why Paul goes on to say, in Gal 5:6 that: *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but **faith which worketh by love***. Faith in Jesus Christ is what causes us to put on the 'new man', which gives us a new mindset and changes our dirty heart to love God instead of ourself (and idols). That's why Paul also says in Gal 6:15: *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but **a new creature***.

And, we become a 'new creature' (or a new person inside our soul – the 'new man' Paul speaks of in Eph 4:24, Col 2:10) when we 'circumcise' our heart (the carnal mind; the part of us that wants to sin.). That's why, in Phil 3:3, Paul then says: *For we are the circumcision, **which worship God in the spirit*** [John 4], *and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the*

flesh. Since Jesus Christ died for our sins, those who God now considers to be ‘circumcised’ are those who do so to their heart (our desires, intentions and emotions) and mind (thought process). That’s why, in Col 2:11 Paul says that *ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ*. Remember, Deut 30:6 said: *And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live*. This is done by the Holy Spirit of God (who is given to those who accept Jesus Christ and obey His commandments).

So, all of this groundwork is necessary to understand the subject of Romans 3, where Paul quotes from this Psalm 36 in the latter part of verse 1. And the point Paul is clearly making in Romans 3 is that: those who trust in the blood sacrifices to make them ‘acceptable’ to God are going to be very, *very* disappointed. And that’s because, one can perform all the blood sacrifices they want, but that does not mean they are pleasing to God. What matters is what’s in our heart and mind. That’s why Paul goes on to say...

9 What then? are we [the ‘Jews’ who are physically circumcised] better than they [the gentiles, who are not circumcised physically]? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:

16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17 And the way of peace have they not known:

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Rom 3:9-18

Now, in verses 10-18 Paul quotes from a lot of Old Testament Scriptures. For the most part, verses 10-12 are combined quotations from Ecc 7:20, Ps 14:2-3 and Ps 53:2-4 while verses 13-18 are a combination of Ps 5:9, 140:3, 10:7, Isa 59:7-8 and Ps 36:1. This teaches us that there are a lot of Old Testament Scriptures that speak of how people act when they *refuse* to put off the ‘old man’ (the carnal mind) and seek the Lord (YHVH). They not only refuse to *know* YHVH as the Covenant God (Jer 9:6, John 17:3), but many don’t even acknowledge that there is a Supreme God who Created the earth, and thus *will judge them for their wickedness*. As Peter says in 3 Pt 3 [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Peter/277], they are ‘willingly ignorant’ that God destroyed the first earth age and that He will do so again. Thus, they refuse to believe they’ll be punished for their wickedness.

And within these verses, Paul also points out that each and every one of us sins. Even when we are trying not to sin, we still do. That's why Paul quotes from the Old Testament, to prove that every living being on earth sins (*except* Jesus Christ, of course). And this is true. *Every* person on earth does indeed sin. And we must acknowledge that, repent for our sins and accept the one and only means of salvation that God has given us (through Jesus Christ, John 14:6) *or else we'll still be punished for our sins*. That's something the wicked (the kind of people David is speaking about here in Ps 36:1) don't want to acknowledge. The truth is that: without Jesus Christ in our heart and mind, we will be *habitual* sinners, which means *to not care at all if you are sinning*. People who are 'self-righteous hypocrites' also fall into this category (of habitual sinners) because *they cloak their sin in religion* but are not really seeking God. As Paul says in Rom 10:3, *for they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*. And that's what David means when he says in this Ps 35:1 that *there's no fear of God before the eyes of the wicked*.

Thus, **Rom 3:10-18** gives a very good description of the kind of people David is speaking about here in **Psalms 36:1**. But, David himself will continue on to explain what they are like, as well, in the following verses of this great Psalm 36. And we'll learn more about that in part 2. But until then, let's remember that 'wickedness does not pay'. Those who refuse to acknowledge their sins, repent sincerely for them, accept Jesus Christ's atoning blood to cover our sins – they will have to pay for their own sins. Eventually, this will mean with their very own soul and spirit as they'll be totally blotted out of existence after the Millenium, **if** they don't repent by that time. So, David is not speaking here about people who are *sincerely trying* to obey God's Word (those who study it, believe it and strive to obey it with the guidance of the Holy Spirit) but fall short and sin occasionally (as we all do that); he's speaking about those who truly are transgressing (rebellng) against God Almighty...

6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.

7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

1 Thess 5:6-11

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Cor 15:58

We'll pick this up in part 2...

AMEN.