

When you come to Christ for mercy and love and help in your anguish and perplexity and sinfulness, you are going with the flow of his own deepest wishes, not against them.

—Dane Ortlund

The Baptist Catechism

AS PRINTED BY THE CHARLESTON ASSOCIATION IN 1813

(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the
Riverside Baptist Church)

60. Q. What is forbidden in the third commandment?

A. The third commandment forbiddeth all profaning and abusing of any thing whereby God makes himself known (Mal. 1:6, 7, 12; 2:2; 3:14).

61. Q. What is the reason annexed to the third commandment?

A. The reason annexed to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment (1 Sam. 2:12, 17, 22, 29; 3:13; Deut. 28:58, 59).

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THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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DELIVERED AND SET FREE

I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy: for thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities; And hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy: thou hast set my feet in a large room. (Psalms 31:7-8).

The thoughts expressed in this Psalm by David have often proven to be very comforting to me. I am sure that others have experienced a sense of being trapped in situations like those of David's distress. But as did David the cry must always be to the Lord. Doing so never fails to attract the loving attention of the Lord: *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. (Psalms 34:18)*. Praise is the result as we realize the Majesty of His person and His condescension to attend to our needs. And we know Him who is the Truth, and He has set us free. And we are free to move about the Kingdom.

David often found himself in apparently impossible situations. The precious thoughts expressed in this Psalm and these verses reflect the lessons he learned during these times. From the time of his anointing to be king the adversary was hot on his trail and would have destroyed him in the way. In his awareness of this David often expressed sorrow at the persistence of his enemies in their quest to destroy him. David was hated by Saul and by the devil who worked in the heart of Saul. It was evident that this man was to be no ordinary king, but one through whom King Jesus would come into the world. History reveals that the pretender to lordship in the world waited every opportunity to stop the coming of Christ into the world. Of course, it was not to be, and David would not be stopped.

David often expressed a sense of great distress as he contemplated both the intent and the power of the enemy. These times were followed by a sense of the Lord's presence and the ability to rest upon the promise to deliver and ultimately establish him in the appointed office. He might on the one hand declare that “there is but a step between me and death” but on the other hand sing of the fact that “thou hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy.” We are blessed that the Lord has shown us both the desperate times in David's life alongside the absolute expressions of faith in the Lord to accomplish all His glorious purpose in him. Through much of this Psalm David lays his condition as a hunted fugitive before the Lord and sees no end in sight. His recoveries are simple expressions of the facts and the manner of the Lord's attendance to his needs.

There is great depth of experience to be understood here. Our tendency is to seek after and trust in the mercy of our God as a last resort. The only ones living in this present world and not troubled are most certainly in concert with and walking happily according to “the spirit that even now worketh in the children of disobedience.” Our troubles come from many sources including but not limited to our old nature, friends and family, illness and affliction, concern for our nation and especially a marked decline in attention to the revealed will of God. Yet, David was able to “call to remembrance my song in the night.” His is a study in contrast in

that he had just mentioned those that regard lying vanities but declares his ability to rejoice in the mercy of the Lord. Two precious thoughts embolden this rejoicing. The first is that he declares the omniscience of God and claims the divine consideration of his troubles. Such an understanding is not too difficult for most. It is the next thought that we treasure. It is that the Lord had known David's soul in adversities. The Lord's attendance with His people is to the most infinite detail. It is not a matter of material prosperity or even of physical soundness and health. The ultimate concern of the Lord is the preservation and wellbeing of the souls of His people. He was in essence saying, "Lord You not only know of my troubles, but You also know of their effect and potential harm to my soul, and you are with me to assure that no damage is done."

But neither is the mercy and grace of our God restrained or confined. Again, two thoughts are brought to our minds for precious consideration. The first is that despite relentless pursuit, the enemy was not able to entrap David. David sought the will of the Lord when he heard of Philistine intrusions against Keilah. At the direction of the Lord and over the objections of his fearful men David delivered them. But it was revealed to David that Saul knew of his location and considered him trapped there. The Lord further revealed that Keilah would give him up and so he escaped. So it was that many times Saul fell short of closing his grip around David.

So, it is with us who trust the Lord. The way of escape had been forever secured through Christ our Lord and we are forever delivered from the bondage of sin and death. We may be sensitive to the pursuit but not subject to such captivity.

The second precious revelation here is that we are not limited as to what we may claim in the Lord. Joshua was told that he had been given every place where the sole of his foot would tread. He was further told that "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life." David realized that he was given ample space to move about and that Saul would never take him. As we think of David and Joshua and others who have claimed the promise of God, we note that He has never placed limitations on our inclinations to follow Him and to do His will and to go wherever we would go. How sad that we do not often take Him at His word and ask for what He has proffered: *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Luke 11:13.* C. H. Spurgeon wrote, "Blessed be God for liberty: civil liberty is valuable, religious liberty is precious, spiritual liberty is priceless."

By virtue of the new birth, we have entered the Kingdom of God. We seem to be "hunkered down" not knowing what to make of the enemy. We are worrying over a defeated and restrained foe. If the Lord has indeed "set our foot in a large room," why are we sitting in a corner? *bhs*

SINNING AGAINST GOD – (An excerpt from the article)

Remember, when Isaiah saw the Lord Jesus high and lifted up and heard the cry, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory;" it was then that Isaiah said, "Woe is me! for I am undone: because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Isa. 6:3, 5). Sin is in stark contrast here. Remember, the Bible declares of the Lord, "for You only are holy" (Rev. 15:4). The Lord is unchangeably holy for there is "no variation or shadow of turning" with God (James

1:17). Stephen Charnock said that this was “the greatest title of honour.” This is the revelation that so boldly distinguished Isaiah’s great separation from God by sin. Isaiah realized that iniquities separated men from God, and also sins have blocked our pleas before God (59:2-3). This knowledge will cause Isaiah to be as the leper and cry unclean. Clearly Isaiah saw the holiness of God in its revealed way and did not twist the attributes of God to fit man’s ideas (Ps. 50:21). Isaiah did not believe that the love or mercy of God would override every other facet of God’s being. There are a number of themes that Isaiah would repeat in his ministry. They are: God is holy, man is sinful, cleansing is a necessity, serving God necessitates a call, and judgment is definite.

Just consider how David’s sin of adultery and the death of Uriah were handled. Jehovah sent Nathan the prophet to confront David with his sin. Consider the words of the prophet, “Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife” (2 Sam. 12:9-10). Did you notice that in verse 9 Nathan told David that he had “despised the commandment of the LORD” and then in verse 10 he said that David had “despised me” said Jehovah? Despising the Word of God and despising the Lord are equally sin. Sin is always against the holy God. The Hebrew word for “despise” implies contempt or to treat contemptuously. All sin is showing the holy God contempt.

Our sin is against the one true God in three persons as we have seen in God the Son and God the Father. Now consider that it is against God the Holy Spirit. Sin is against the Holy Spirit for it grieves Him. Jehovah knows every word upon our tongue (Ps. 139:4). “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:29-30). God has judged our sin in the person of Jesus Christ His Son by laying “on him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. 53:6). “Us” those chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son and regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Truly “Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe!”

Ralph Venning in his book *The Plague of Plagues* showed how our sin is against God, “sin is the dare of God’s justice, the rape of his mercy, the jeer of his patience, the slight of his power, the contempt of his love ... the upbraiding of his providence (Ps. 50), the scoff of his promise (2 Pet. 3:3-4), the reproach of his wisdom (Isa. 29:16)” [32].

Sin can only be forgiven in God’s designated way. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life and no man comes unto the Father except through Him (John 14:6). For only the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ can cleanse us of sin. Have you come to Christ? –Dr. H. R. Rumburg