

## No More Sacrifice (Part 2)

Will the sins we commit after salvation be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ? If so, how do we reconcile this with passages of Scripture such as Heb. 10:17, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more"? If not, how do we explain verses such as Heb. 10:26, "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins"? In [Part 1](#) we gave three truths that demonstrate God judges sin in the realm of man's soul but does not judge sin in the realm of man's spirit. We continue with three more truths in this article.

### **Truth #4: God bestows His mercy and forgiveness upon those who fear Him**

*1 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.*

*2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:*

*3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;*

*4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;*

*8 The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*

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

*10 He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*

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

*12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

*13 Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth **them that fear him**.*

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

*18 To **such as keep his covenant**, and to **those that remember his commandments to do them**.*

*Psalms 103:1-4, 8-13, 17-18 (emphasis mine)*

Many have made the mistake of taking v. 12 out of context and applying it soteriologically. In other words, they say v. 12 is referring to the salvation of our spirit. But the context does not bear that out. Look carefully at the preceding verse (v. 11) and the succeeding verse (v. 13) – in fact, numerous places in this psalm. Virtually the entire chapter is about God bestowing His mercy upon **those who fear Him**, and forgiving **those who fear Him**. So this is obviously a conditional reward related to experiential sanctification, not an unconditional promise for all who are saved (i.e., positionally sanctified). These verses apply to the saving of the soul.

Now consider the implication. If God bestows His mercy and forgiveness upon those who fear Him, then what is the converse? He does not bestow His mercy and forgiveness upon those who do not fear Him. Which means that v. 12 is not a promise to all saints, but only those saints who fear Him, those who obey His commandments (v. 18).

Interestingly, the psalmist clarifies that God forgiving and forgetting and bestowing His mercy is, according to v. 2, a benefit. The word "benefits" is defined as recompense or rewards. Notice that one way God rewards those who fear Him is by forgiving and forgetting. In fact, v. 4, He "crowns" them with His lovingkindness and tender mercies. Furthermore, according to v. 17, His reward of mercy and forgiveness is eternal!

Consider one shocking conclusion of this passage. If God forgives and forgets all the transgressions of those who fear Him, and if He does so eternally, as a reward, then what does that mean for those saints who do not fear him? As a very minimum, it means God does not forget their transgressions in this life or at the Judgment Seat. Which means, of course, they will receive a negative reward. Which will probably mean they will not be included in the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of Reward. They will, instead, be in the darkness outside. It may also mean they will not glow with Christ's brightness and that will be the case throughout eternity. It could mean they will not be allowed entrance into the new Jerusalem. The extent of the negative reward is not clear. But we must understand that the consequences for not fearing God as a Christian are dire.

Incidentally, what does it mean to fear God? Fearing God involves four things:

1. Having a tremendous awe or reverence for Him
2. Dreading the thought of displeasing Him
3. Hating sin as He hates it
4. Submitting self to Christ

That is what it means to fear God. The consequences are eternal for those who fear and those who do not.

**Truth #5: There is no judgment for those saints who are walking in the Spirit**

*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Romans 8:1*

Of course, that begs the question: What about those saints who are walking in the flesh? Apparently, there is condemnation for them! "Wait a minute!" someone might interject, "Are you suggesting some Christians may go to hell?" Of course not!

For some reason, many Christians have been trained to think of condemnation as hell. However, the word in the Greek simply means a negative verdict – presumably, at the Judgment Seat. In fact, the verb form of the word is used

several times in the New Testament in reference to saints, as in the following verse:

*Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. James 5:9*

Yes, even Christians can be condemned, in the sense that they can be judged. Ultimately, they can be given a negative verdict at the Bema if they persist in sinful, fleshly living.

From chapter six of Romans onward, the apostle Paul has been addressing matters of sanctification, not justification. Romans 8:1 is set in that sanctification context. I always used to essentially end the verse after the words "Christ Jesus." But it continues. There is no condemnation – no negative verdict at the Judgment Seat – for those who are in Christ and who are walking in the Spirit as opposed to the flesh.

To suggest the verse is referring to salvation (i.e., justification) is to take the position that in chapter seven Paul is describing his struggle to become a Christian. That is not correct! Paul, in chapter seven, is describing his struggle, as a believer, to get victory over sin. He could not get victory of his own self-effort, but once he depended on Christ, he obtained the victory. In that context, Romans 8:1 is saying there will not be a negative verdict for those saints who walk in the Spirit, the life of victory.

Walking is the idea of taking reiterated steps. Thus we have action in this verse, behavioral action. So we dare not relegate this to justification. Clearly, this is progressive sanctification. To be sure, there is no condemnation to believers in a soteriological sense either, for we are eternally secure, but that is not the point of this particular verse.

Now consider the implication. If there is no negative verdict for those who are walking in the Spirit, then what about those who are walking after the flesh? We must conclude there is a negative verdict for them.

**Truth #6: Judgment begins at the house of God, here and now, and culminates at the Bema**

*For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 1 Peter 4:17-18*

God's judgment begins at His house, with His people. What does He judge? Certainly our service for him and also our motivations – the thoughts and intents of the heart. But if we look back at the Scriptures we get a good glimpse at what God judges. He primarily judges sin!

In Exodus 32 God's redeemed people, who had been saved by the blood at the Passover, made a golden calf in direct disobedience to the second commandment. God would have killed the people, but Moses interceded and God judged by sending a plague instead. Then Jehovah showed Moses His glory while making this proclamation:

*And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; Exodus 34:6-7*

Yes, God forgives sin, but only for those who confess their sin. He does not clear the guilty.

Think of Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, priests who chose to offer incense improperly, in defiance of God's instructions. God killed them. He judged their sin.

In Numbers 14 the people of Israel listened to the discouraging, evil report of the ten spies who did not believe God about taking possession of the promised land. As a result, the nation rejected God's will and sinned through their unbelief. Moses pleaded with God to spare them, for God was about to kill them all. In fact, Moses quoted what God had said to him back in Exodus 34.

*The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty ... Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy ... And the Lord said, I have pardoned according to thy word: But as truly as I live ... all those men which have seen my glory, and my miracles, which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to my voice; Surely they shall not see the land which I swear unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it. Numbers 14:18-23*

What was the problem with the wilderness generation? Was it merely motivation? No, it was blatant behavioral sin. They repeatedly refused to believe God. They tested Him ten times, and did not hearken to His voice. What was the consequence of their sin? God killed the ten spies and consigned the remainder of that generation to wander and die in the wilderness. They were never able to enter the promised land, because of the sin of unbelief. The faithful spies Caleb and Joshua, on the other hand, were exempted from the punishment and rewarded abundantly.

King Saul was judged by God for refusing to kill all the Amalekites, as God had instructed. He lost his kingdom and died in battle because of the sin of disobedience. King David was judged by God for the sin of adultery with

Bathsheba and murdering Uriah the Hittite.

Granted, these are Old Testament examples, but we serve the same God in the New Testament era, and He describes Himself as a consuming fire (Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:29). Examples can also be given from the early church.

Ananias and Sapphira were judged for lying to the Holy Spirit. God instantly killed both of them. Though God doesn't typically judge so swiftly and severely, He can if He so desires. In 1 Corinthians 5 Paul admonished the church to discipline a member who was living incestuously. The church was not to tolerate his sin; rather, they were "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 5:5)." If the man did not repent, then Satan would tear up his soul. Yes, he would be saved, but it would be so as by fire.

In 1 Corinthians 11 some who had partaken of the Lord's Supper unworthily were sickly and others had died because of God's judgment upon them. Every one of these instances of God's judgment was due to specific sin.

Furthermore, God disciplines His children, according to Heb. 12 to purge us from the sins in our life that keep us from fellowshiping with Him. The purpose of discipline is to produce in us the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Which implies that God disciplines us when we are not living in righteousness; when we are living in sin. Some might argue that God's discipline is not the same as His judgment. But 1 Corinthians 11:32 says "when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord." In other words, chastening and judging are essentially the same, or as very minimum, judging is one form of chastening.

If God judges and disciplines us *now* for sin, why would he not do so at the Judgment Seat? The point is that He *will* do so, for those sins that remain unconfessed; sins in which we persist, presumptuous sins. Perhaps that is why the psalmist cried out:

*Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression. Psalm 19:13*

We will discuss truth #7 and arrive at our conclusions in Part 3.

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## [No More Sacrifice \(Part 1\)](#)

Will the sins we commit after salvation be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Some say an emphatic "no!" because our sins are completely covered under the blood of Calvary. Some say an emphatic "yes!" because the nature of

Christ's judgment of our sins at the Bema is not legal, as if to determine our position in Him, but rather it is disciplinary, like a father determining the necessary punishment for his child's misbehavior. Others say "yes and no," and some aren't sure. But what saith the Scriptures?

*For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Hebrews 10:26-27*

What a frightening prospect! It is the expectation of no more sacrifice for sins for those who continue in willful, persistent sin. To whom does this refer?

Those of an Arminian theological persuasion interpret this to mean a Christian who persists in heinous sin can lose his salvation. Another view is held by some from the Calvinist theological tradition, who believe this admonition refers to so-called, professing Christians that have demonstrated by their lifestyle they were never saved in the first place. I believe both of these theological positions are incorrect biblically. However, the Arminian position appears to be closer to the truth than the Calvinist position. For the Arminian sees something as being lost, and he is right about that. But to suggest salvation is what is lost is a doctrinal error. How can that which is eternal be lost? The Bible very clearly teaches the doctrine of eternal security. Those who are saved have passed from death unto life. That transaction happened at a point in time in the past, and can never be lost or forfeited. Once saved, always saved. You, dear child of God, have been credited with the righteousness of Christ in your spirit, and you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of God.

How, then, do we understand what is being lost, according to this verse? The key is to remember the scriptural concept of [The Three Tenses of Salvation](#) and then to determine in every scripture passage which salvation is in focus. Is it the salvation of the spirit, resulting in instantaneous justification and positional sanctification – that is, salvation from eternal condemnation (soteriology)? Or is it salvation of the soul, resulting in progressive sanctification over one's lifetime and positive reward at the Judgment Seat? Unfortunately, many Bible students fail to distinguish between the two and assume all references to salvation in the New Testament refer to salvation of the spirit, that is, salvation by grace through faith alone. Thus, they assume the phrase "saving of the soul" at the end of this passage is soteriological.

*But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Hebrews 10:39*

It is not hermeneutically accurate to insist that the "saving of the soul" is referring to justification. Our soul is saved (i.e., sanctified) only to the extent we cooperate with God's working in our lives. There is the prospect of

a believer's soul not being saved (i.e., sanctified) in this life because of foolish, carnal choices to live for self. When that believer stands before Jesus at the Judgment Seat, his soul will be forfeited in the sense that any positive reward will be lost and only negative reward will be given. Instead of hearing, "well done, good and faithful servant" that believer will hear "thou wicked and slothful servant." And so this passage is not speaking of lost people and their need for justification. It is warning saved people of their need for sanctification, so that that their soul can be deemed "saved" at the Judgment Seat.

How can we know when salvation references are justification-oriented vs. sanctification-oriented? Here is a clue to interpreting salvation passages in the New Testament. Typically, when salvation is mentioned as in the **past** tense, it is referring to salvation from eternal condemnation, or the salvation of the spirit. But when salvation is mentioned as in the **future**, it is referring to the salvation of the soul, discipleship that leads to rewards.

The key to answering the question, "Will my sins after salvation be judged at the Bema?" is specifying which aspect, or plane, of man's being is affected by the judgment. If we are speaking of the plane of our spirit becoming justified, then we must emphatically say, "no!" Our sins after salvation will never be judged at the Judgment Seat, for they are under the blood of Calvary and, therefore, eternally forgiven. However, if we are speaking of the plane of the soul becoming sanctified, then we must emphatically say "yes!" Our sins after salvation will be judged at the Judgment Seat, if we do not confess them as sin, here and now, and put them under the continued cleansing blood of Jesus – 1 John 1:7. We will attempt to substantiate this point scripturally as we go along.

In the extreme case of someone who lives willfully, carnally, and selfishly (however God judges that), there remains no more sacrifice for sins. We must understand this statement in reference to the plane of the soul and the matter of rewards, not as a reference to the plane of the spirit and the matter of eternal security. Over the course of the next three articles we will examine seven truths that have bearing on our question.

**Truth #1: God does not listen to the prayers of saints who continue in known sin**

*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. Psalm 66:18-20*

*Behold, the Lord 's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. Isaiah 59:1-2*

If you have known sin in your life and continue to harbor that sin, God will not hear your prayers. However, if you confess your sins and keep short accounts with God, he will hear your prayers.

What is the implication of verses like these? By not listening when we are praying, God brings a form of temporal judgment upon us. Why? Because our fellowship with Him is marred. Are these verses speaking of the spirit plane of man or the soul plane? Obviously the soul plane, because on the spirit plane we are completely righteous and all of our sins have been forgiven; they are under the blood of Calvary legally and positionally. They are no longer an issue. But on the soul plane there is the matter of fellowship with God, and that fellowship is damaged by sin.

### **Truth #2: God removes His hand of spiritual blessing when we continue in sin**

*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Proverbs 28:13*

Notice the implication of this verse. The Lord does not show mercy to those saints who conceal their sins and refuse to confess and forsake them. He deals in judgment, not mercy.

Furthermore, from Psalm 1 we learn that God's hand of spiritual blessing is upon the righteous – those who live uprightly, without sin in their lives – but He judges those who walk in sinfulness. Clearly, these are references to the soul plane and not the spirit plane.

### **Truth #3: God does not forgive the sins of those saints who refuse to forgive others**

*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14-15*

Wait a minute! How can God not forgive the sins of saints when we are told plainly, "their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Hebrews 10:17)? Again, we must think on two planes, not merely one. On the soteriological plane we are forgiven, but on the sanctification plane we are not forgiven if we do not forgive others. Thus, we are eternally secure, even if we don't forgive others, but we face God's judgment, both here and now and at the Judgment Seat, if we refuse to forgive.

We will discuss additional truths in [Parts 2](#) and 3.