



In this issue:

Psalm 10: God Has Not Forgotten p. 1

Man's Predicament p. 3

From Slavery to Salvation p. 4

Does It Matter Which Bible We Use? P. 5

God Has Not Forgotten Verses p. 7

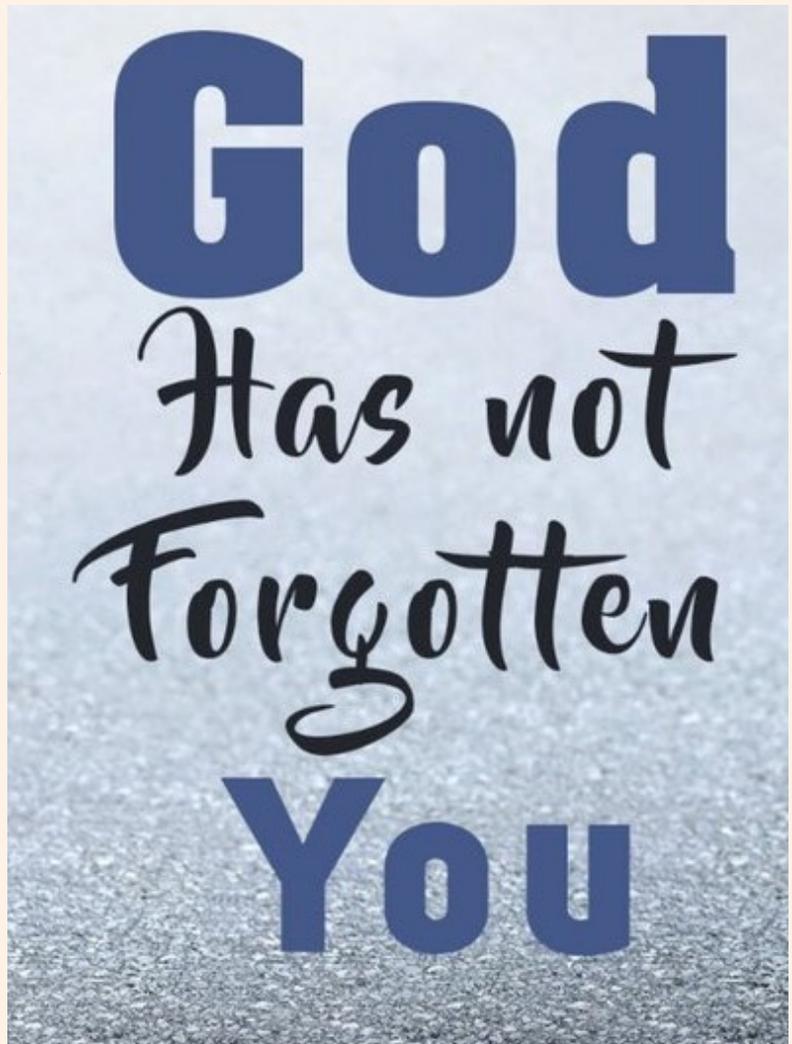
Psalm 10: God Has Not Forgotten

“He lies in wait secretly, as a lion in his den; he lies in wait to catch the poor; he catches the poor when he draws him into his net. So he crouches, he lies low, that the helpless may fall by his strength. He has said in his heart, ‘God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see.’ Arise, O Lord! O God, lift up Your hand! Do not forget the humble. Why do the wicked renounce God? He has said in his heart, ‘You will not require an account.’ But You have seen, for You observe trouble and

grief, to repay it by Your hand. The helpless commits himself to You; You are the helper of the fatherless. Break the arm of the wicked and the evil man; seek out his wickedness until You find none.” Psalm 10:9-15

Psalm 10 begins on a rather negative note, “Why, O Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?” This may seem negative, but it is also a very human reaction. At times, when we face trials and crisis, the Lord does seem to be far off and impersonal.

This is especially true when we have to deal with those that reject the Lord. Verses 2 through 11 vividly describe a person who has no thought of the Lord, or his responsibilities to God. “His ways are always prosperous; he is haughty and your laws are far from him; he sneers at all his enemies. He says to himself, ‘Nothing will shake me I’ll always be happy and never have trouble.’ He says to himself, ‘God has forgotten; he covers his face and never sees.’” How many of us know people that reflect that attitude in their lives? When we look at unbelief and the evil actions



that come from it, we may wonder why God allows this to happen. Why does He seem to stand off and watch?

Today, it seems like the forces arrayed against the Lord's people - the Church – are growing stronger. The doomsday prophets see the church in retreat. People challenge the fact that God is involved in the world of man today. “Look at the evil that exists. Look at how unfair things seem to be. Look at the people that seem to

be doing just fine that never once thought about God or Jesus Christ.”

These statements may be correct. There is a great deal of evil in the world. In fact, considering the nature of the world, it would be surprising if it was otherwise. However, the apparent strength of the opposition to Christ has nothing to do with the reality of God and His authority. What is David's response to such thoughts? Verse 16 states, “The Lord is King for ever and ever...” Appearances are deceiving. Regardless how the world sees the present order, the Lord is King forever and ever.

Appearances are deceiving. Regardless how the world sees the present order, the Lord is King forever and ever.

Simply because people may ignore that truth does not make it less real and true.

One of the reasons why the Lord seems to stand back is His desire that all come to Him, and the Lord will give each person as many chances as possible to accept the offer of salvation. Peter wrote, “But do not forget this one thing, dear friends. With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”

God is love, and He does love all people. That is why the offer of salvation is open to all. When we think that God does not seem to care, it may be that he is giving a person another chance to repent.

As for us, we know that the Lord is King, and we know that we have an inheritance of eternal life. What can happen to us in this world that will change that? Can it be taken away or destroyed? No. There is nothing in this world that can affect our relationship with the Lord except ourselves. We can reject the offer that has been made; but

other than that, our treasure is secure. Yes, as we have to face the day to day problems of life, we may echo the thoughts of David – “Why, O Lord, do you stand far off?” But as we consider the entire picture, we know better.

God doesn't stand far off. He is right here with us. Yes, we will have to face problems and trials. Yes, we will see injustice and tragedy in the world. God never promised to place us in a vacuum. But as we place our lives in the hands of our Lord, He will strengthen us and guide us to a more Christ-like life.

The first verse of Psalm 10 began very negatively, but the last is a message of hope. “You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, defending the fatherless and the oppressed, in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more.”

A final thought concerns verse 6 again. The wicked say, “Nothing will shake me; I'll always be happy and never have trouble.” We know better. Such people are fooling themselves. Sooner or later, the sharp bite of despair will be felt. The words said with such arrogance in verse 6 are the words of youth and health. Everything in this life will surely pass away. Only the Lord stands forever. Only those that are joined to Him in Jesus Christ can say, “I will never be shaken!” That is a blessing that we need to remember.

Jim Shelburne

San Antonio, TX

Man's Predicament

When God put man in the Garden of Eden He told him, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Ge 2:16-17). Ro 6:23 informs us that "the wages of sin is death." Genesis 3 tells us that Adam and Eve sinned when they ate of the forbidden fruit. We read in He 9:27, "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment." Ro 3:23, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Man is in a predicament.

A few days ago I watched a spider built its web. It was delicate looking and was a masterpiece of beauty, design, and construction. There was nothing about it that appeared dangerous. A couple of days later I happened to walk by the same spider's web. An unsuspecting fly had landed on one of the strands, expecting to fly off after a brief rest. But it couldn't. The more the fly struggled to free itself, the more entangled it became and the stronger the web held the fly in its clutches.

The same is true with all people. We are all caught in the web of sin and the more we struggle to get free, the more we are entrapped. Our predicament just gets worse. The story of the fly caught in the spider's web is true of all people as we struggle with sin.

As Christians we are acutely aware of the fact that we live in a sinful world. We face the adversary every day. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him..." (1 Pe 5:8). We are imprisoned in a body that is growing old and is decaying. Worldly knowledge cannot answer questions such as "Where did I come from?" and "Why am I here?" and "Where am I going?" The answers to these questions are not found in earthly knowledge. The only place to find

real answers is in the Word of God. The world seeks power, pleasures, and possessions as a means of fulfilling its longings for inner peace, but these fail to meet man's needs. Paul wrote in Ro 7:24, "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

Sin is the cause of our predicament. We, like the fly in the spider's web, are caught in the web of sin. Sin is a web set before us, and we enter it ourselves. James 1:13-15 describes how we are caught in the web of sin. "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God;' for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (Ja 1:13-15).

Everyone sins and sin results in death. "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows" (Ga 6:7). There are real physical consequences of sin. For instance, there are heartaches, tears, sickness, pain, and death. "The wage of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ro 6:23).

The consequences of sin are treated too lightly by the world today. Sin is glamorized; it is excused and explained away. Satan makes sin to appear as the way of life. But, when we see what sin does, we understand why God despises sin so much.

1 Jn 3:4 says that sin is the transgression of God's law. Ja 4:17 says that it is knowing to do good and not doing good. Paul wrote in Ro 14:23, "Whatever is not from faith is sin." Pro 24:9 says foolish thoughts are sin.

Sin separates us from God. "Your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not

hear” (Is 59:2). Sin separates us from God, and we cannot pray to Him. “We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him” (Jn 9:31). Sinners do not know God as a friend because they are not keeping His commandments. And 1 Jn 2:3 tells us, “By this we know that we know God, if we keep His commandments.”

Without God sinners have no hope. We read in Ezekiel 18:4, “The soul that sins shall die.” The death a sinner dies is not just a separation of the body and spirit which is physical death. It is to be eternally separated from God, which is the second death or hell, the final resting place for the sinner.

This would be the final end of man's predicament if it were not for Jesus. Joseph was told, “Do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Mt 1:20-21). Jesus came into the world

to save sinners, 1 Tim 1:15. Jesus tasted death for everyone, Heb 2:9. God sent His only begotten Son to die on the cross to pay for the sins of everyone, yes you and me, so that we might live in heaven with God, Christ and the redeemed of all ages.

Jesus invites everyone to come to Him and be saved. God's Word, the New Testament, tells people what they must do to be saved. 1) We must hear the Gospel, Ro 10:17; 2) We must believe, Jn 8:24; 3) We must repent of our sins, Lk 13:3 & 5; 4) We must confess our faith in Christ, Mt 10:32-33; and 5) We must be baptized, Acts 2:38. “We were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Ro 6:4). And we are to remain faithful until death, and we will receive the crown of life.

Ray White
Sand Springs, OK

FROM SLAVERY TO SALVATION: A JOURNEY OF FAITH AND MIRACLES

“Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.” 1 Corinthians 10:1-5

Can you picture this? Your people have been enslaved for hundreds of years. You've spent your entire life laboring under an oppressive ruler just to survive. You've heard stories about the God of your ancestors and have placed your faith in Him, but you haven't seen Him work in a grand way in your

own life. Then, a man named Moses arrives, claiming to speak for this God, and causes trouble for the king, making life even harder for you. You're angry, frustrated, and wish this Moses guy would just go away. Then, one night, Moses gives you strange instructions: smear blood on your doorframe because the LORD is coming to strike down the firstborn in every household, unless there's blood on the door. You've heard of God's power through stories, but you're torn. Could Moses really be right, or is he just crazy? Still, after witnessing the plagues—locusts, frogs, boils—you decide it's better not to take chances. You follow his instructions and mark your door with blood. That night, you hear the wailing throughout the city, but your household is safe.

The next day, the king finally orders your people to

leave, and you depart with plunder. But as you're fleeing, you notice the king's chariots and soldiers are closing in on you. Panic sets in. You're trapped—caught between the king's army and the sea, with nowhere to go. Once again, you're angry, questioning why Moses and your God would bring you to such a dead end. You start thinking you'd be better off as a slave, at least back then you had shelter and a bed. But then, something miraculous happens. The waters of the sea part, and you walk across on dry land, escaping the king's army. God had made a way out and destroyed your enemies. Once again, He protected you and your family. The entire people break into song and praise, singing, “The LORD is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation.” God had worked in small ways before, but now He had shown up in a

big, powerful way, performing miracles before your eyes.

But the journey is far from over. The people face countless challenges, disappointments, and temptations as they travel toward the promised land. God grows angry and rebukes them, but time and time again, He shows patience, compassion, and love. Still, due to their sin, the people must wander the desert for 40 years, and only a few will live to see the promised land. So, what about you? Will you continue to complain, grumble, and rebel against God, or will you choose to live a life that honors Him and leads you to the promised land?

Michelle Franklin
Rogers, AR

Does It Matter Which Bible We Use?

The Old Testament was written in the language of its writers, which was Hebrew, and the New Testament was written in the language of its writers — or at least the dominant language of commerce and culture — which was Greek. The Bibles we read are translations of those languages into the English language. So every Bible is, by necessity, a translation.

As with any translation from one language to another, there is often some freedom in regard to the most appropriate word or phrase that can be used to convey the actual Greek or Hebrew word. Further, a language such as English is in constant flux. We use different words, or give different meanings to words, all the time. This raises an important question: Does it matter which Bible we use? Yes, it does.

In the days of King James, they used words like “thee” and “thou.” That was contemporary for them. We don’t speak that way anymore, so the King James translation, while beautiful, is not as

easily understood as a more “modern” translation.

By modern, I mean newer translations from trained teams of linguists which better capture the original meaning of the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts in light of the ever-changing dynamics of modern language. Why would you use a translation that is so dated you need to offer a translation of the translation? Those who treat the King James edition as sacred, as if the Apostle Paul himself spoke King James English, fail to understand the nature of a translation. There is nothing more sacred about that translation than any other, and if its language is so cumbersome to modern ears that it becomes an impediment, then it makes no sense to continue using it.

As for the many newer translations that exist, I have long enjoyed the New International Version (NIV). I was not as much a fan of the subsequent TNIV; the degree of gender neutrality was not only unnecessary, but often did violence to the clear intent of the original text. But the original NIV was one of the

better translations of our generation.

Another good translation, even newer than the NIV, is the New Living Translation (NLT), a work that took a popular paraphrase (the Living Bible) and brought it to translation status while keeping the easy reading that paraphrases tend to provide. I find myself using the NLT more than the NIV of late in my teaching because I find some of the language of the NIV sounding a bit dated to my ears.

Many like the English Standard Version (ESV) because of its focus on giving a strict word-for-word translation. I won't get into accuracy arguments, but I find it a bit wooden and bereft of literary flourish. Also, the best translating does not always bind itself to strict word-for-word translation, particularly when the languages themselves are quite different from one another.

Those who treat the King James edition as sacred, as if the Apostle Paul himself spoke King James English, fail to understand the nature of a translation.

Of course, the most stunning achievement in recent years may be The Message. Yes, it is a paraphrase, and some are averse to paraphrases, but I think it depends on the skill and knowledge of the one doing the paraphrasing. Eugene Peterson, the writer behind The Message, is virtually without parallel in bringing the scholarship and literary ability needed to such a project. Like many, I found reading The Message so fresh and engaging it was like reading the Bible for the first time. But, as much as I enjoy The Message, I would say to read paraphrases for your personal enrichment, but do not use them for serious study.

While I would argue that those who preach and teach should feel free to use a good paraphrase in relaying Scripture, it should only be after they have done the due diligence of ensuring that the

paraphrase being used is true to what an actual translation would provide. Further, that the paraphrase actually conveys the text better in light of the language and understanding of the audience at hand.

All to say, continually updating our translations is a good thing, and those who are attempting to put Scripture forward in today's culture should make ample use of them. Because we know what happens when Scripture is made clear:

“For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires” (Hebrews 4:12, NLT).

But first, we have to get the “clear” part.

James Emery White

Churchandculture.org (Mar. 15, 2013)

“And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

2 Peter 1:18-21

God Has Not Forgotten

Verses

*Can a woman forget her nursing child,
And not have compassion on the son of her womb?
Surely they may forget,
Yet I will not forget you.
Isaiah 49:15*

*And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.
Deuteronomy 31:8*

*Remember these, O Jacob,
And Israel, for you are My servant;
I have formed you, you are My servant;
O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me!
Isaiah 44:21*

*The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed,
A refuge in times of trouble.
And those who know Your name will put their trust in You;
For You, Lord, have not forsaken those who seek You.
Psalm 9:9-10*

*Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you. So we may boldly say:
"The Lord is my helper;
I will not fear.
What can man do to me?"
Hebrews 13:5-6*



Volume 44 - Number 6 - Nov/Dec 2025

BC is published every other month. Send all inquiries, address changes and subscriptions to the editor: L Scott Gage, PO Box 3425, Fayetteville, AR 72702-3425 Voice 479-521-6809

Email: Lsgage129@cs.com

www.basicchristianity.net