

## God's Faithful to Forgive

I would like to thank David and ViZion church for this invite to give the Friday night devotional.

Tonight, I want to share with you some encouragement that I gleaned from the book of Psalms 103:3 but focusing on the first part of verse 3 in a Biblical word study devotional.

**Psalm 103:3 KJV Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;**

The book of Psalms has various authors written 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C and later with this Psalm 103 being penned by David himself; it was a time when he was remembering the benefits that the Lord had given him through a time of repentance when Nathan the Prophet in 2 Samuel 12 challenged and reprimanded David for sins regarding Bathsheba and Uriah.

Through David's sins of adultery and murder there were consequences from God, such as when he lost his new born child. David's life and family were never the same after this as you can read in your own time in 2 Samuel 12 and continuing chapters.

This is why he wrote Psalm 51, he wanted to be right with God, pleading for mercy, cleansing and forgiveness. This is the most read chapter in my Bible but Psalm 103 is just as important & valuable, where we read of God's love for us and the benefits of the good things that God is doing in our lives.

David lists these benefits.

1. God forgives us v3
2. He heals our diseases v3
3. He redeems us from life from destruction (death) v4
4. He Crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies; v4
5. He Satisfies thy mouth with good things (desires) v5
6. He Gives righteousness and justice for all that are oppressed. V6

Remember we as believers receive these benefits, so when you feel low or feel God is far from you, read this chapter to remind yourself of God's love for you! You may feel He's far from you but your feelings are fickle so take strength from this Psalm and stand firm on the truth instead of trusting your feelings.

Now let's look at this word in verse 3, "to forgive" the word in the Hebrew is "Salach" and appears 46 times in the Old Testament.

It means to forgive, to pardon to spare someone. It is first found in Exodus 34:9 Where Moses pleads to God on behalf of the Israelites for forgiveness of their sins.

When this word is used, it is only used when God does the forgiving, and ONLY Him. It doesn't mean that you can be forgiven by a priest or someone else, it is only God.

Let's look at some of these "Salach / to forgive" verses,

1. When "to forgive" was first used,
2. Where "to forgive" is mostly used
3. How we come to Christ to be forgiven

### **1. Salach / "to forgive" was first used...**

When Moses's was pleading with God to forgive his people the Israelites. **Numbers 14 verse 20** reads "And the LORD said, I have pardoned according to thy word:" (This is parallel verse with Ex 34:9) "pardoned is the same word for "Salach" meaning "to forgive".

You see the Israelite people had rebelled and were murmuring against Moses and Aaron wishing they had died in Egypt or in the wilderness where they were traveling.

The people were afraid to enter the promised land where they thought they would lose in battle, and they decided to make and new captain or leader to take them back to Egypt.

Moses and Aaron fell of their faces before the people in despair.

Joshua and Caleb, tore their clothing in despair also, because they travelled through the promised land, they saw the land was exceedingly good and it was flowing with milk and honey.

They were told to stop rebelling because the people of the land were like bread, they were an easy take over, but the Israelite people decided to stone them. This is when the glory of God appeared and Moses cried out to God on their behalf.

**Just when they were about to enter the promised land, they got cold feet! They were afraid of the battle ahead and they wanted to turn back to what was familiar even though they would be enslaved if they returned to Egypt. They had forgotten what the Lord had promised them.**

I am very much like the Israelites, are you? Sometimes I'm afraid, when big issues affect my life, I don't give it over to God and trust Him to deal with it and take care of it. It could be issues with your family, your housing, health, school, college, or a new job.

No matter how big or small issues are in your life don't let these problems stop your future, trust God as you reach your goal. He has brought you this far, like the Israelites to the borders of the promised land and He won't let you down! Keep remembering what God has done for you.

As God was going to reject and vanquish the Israelites, but Moses pleaded with God not too, and He pardoned and forgave them. This was Gods forgiveness, this was Salach.

You see the Lord is patient and longsuffering but when we plead for forgiveness, He is merciful toward us.

## 2. "Salach / to forgive" is mostly used...

In the sacrificial laws of Leviticus and Numbers, it is a typology of the Old Testament this means the typology is a picture language of the New Testament where sacrifices foreshadowed the redemptive sacrificial work of Jesus on the Cross.

One of the references we read is Numbers 15:25, 28 where it mentions, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven "Salach" him.

Prior to the redemptive work of Christ sin would be atoned for on the Day of Atonement once a year.

Aaron the brother of Moses was chosen by God to be the High Priest along with other priests who followed Gods command to offer blood sacrifices for the atonement of sin.

Aaron had the most important job where each year he would enter the 'Holy of Holies' the inner sanctuary of the tent. He would make bull offering as atonement for his own sins and then a goat offering as atonement for the sins of the Israelites.

Atonement means in the Bible means cover, covering or to cover and this ensured forgiveness from God through their faith.

This was so that the relationship between God and man could be restored. The Old Testament sacrifices didn't remove the offeror's sins as it says in [Hebrews 10:4](#) For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

You see animal sacrifices could not take away sins but just cover them and this was temporary, and it pointed to the future till Jesus came to be the High Priest in Hebrews 9 and the perfect sacrifice who would take away the sin.

## 3. So, how can we come to Christ to be forgiven

Let's turn our Bibles and read of this in **Romans 3:25** *Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;*

There is so much in this verse so let's delve into it before we finish.

- Jesus was sent forth to death on the Cross for the world to see, so that the new covenant could be established as we read in **John 3:16** *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* No more need for animal sacrifice because the blood of Christ not only covers our sin but completely takes it away when we repent and put our faith in Him .
- Jesus was the **propitiation**, Propitiation means that Gods wrath was satisfied by the death of Jesus on the cross who bore the sins of the world, where He turned the wrath of God from us and onto **Himself**.

As God dealt out His holy wrath on Jesus the perfect sacrifice it satisfied Him because sin can't come into the presence of a perfectly Holy God. Also, this sacrifice satisfied a gracious God who would save sinners like us.

As Passion week is around the corner **Matthew 27:50-51** Tells us *Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;*

At that very moment when Jesus died on the cross the veil or curtain in the temple was "rent in twain from the top to the bottom", it was ripped in two! Not from bottom to top as you might expect but from top to bottom. This was a supernatural event.

You see, that veil was between the outer room and the "holy of holies", the sacred place where only the priest could enter for the Day of Atonement.

But NOW it was open to the world, there was no need for a High Priest anymore.

Jesus, our High Priest, had fulfilled the atonement, and through this one final sacrifice, His death on the cross, He took the sin punishment, past, present and future which satisfied the wrath of God.

We don't need to come to God now with an animal blood sacrifice once a year, because the debt of sin has been paid by Jesus on the Cross. Now we can come before God unhindered with the Old Testament system gone.

We have the forgiveness, the "Salach" of God when we put our trust in Him. When you feel guilty for things you've done wrong don't lose heart and feel beyond help. The Lord paid a great price so that we can stand before Him not only covered but completely forgiven of our sin. We can lay it down and let it go.

As it says in [Romans 5:1-2](#) Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.