

What do you do when you have blown it big time and you sense that God is angry and is allowing a series of negative things to happen to you because He is angry? Do you have any chance of reversing things? Is there anything you can do to get God to be back on your side?

That is exactly what Psalm 85 is all about. It is written in view of the fact that Israel, as a nation, had blown it again and needed God to bail her out again. Israel had obviously experienced some setback as a nation because of her own foolish choices and once again she needed God to bail her out. Israel would blow it time and time again and then God would come to her rescue and get her out of it and then she would turn around and do the same thing again and the process started all over.

Now we can all relate to this Psalm because we have all been there. Who of us has not been miserable a time or two because of our own choices and seen God demonstrate His grace to us and start blessing us and then we fall into the same trap that made us miserable in the first place?

It is interesting that this is a Psalm of the sons of Korah. Korah was the one who led an uprising against Moses and God executed him and his family. God had permitted some of his sons to exist and, as a result, they experienced their own setbacks and they needed God's help. So this is written by a family that knows what it is like to make God angry and then turn to God for help.

The point of the Psalm is this:

WHEN GOD'S PEOPLE KNOW THEY HAVE DONE SOMETHING TO ANGER GOD, THEY NEED TO GO TO GOD IN PRAYER AND TRUTHFULLY ADMIT IT AND ASK FOR HIS GRACE AND PURPOSE TO CONFORM THEIR LIVES TO HIS RIGHTEOUS WAYS AND THEY WILL EXPERIENCE HIS MERCY AND PEACE.

Now carefully notice that this **Psalm is written for the choir director**. So not only was it to be taught, but it was to be sung. This is a masterpiece of a Psalm in getting the forgiveness of God when you have blown it. There are four main parts to this Psalm:

PART #1 – The writer reminds God what God's grace had done in the past. **85:1-3**

In these verses, the writer cries out to God for help and in doing so, he remembers what God had done in the past in similar situations. Now not only is he remembering himself, but he is also reminding God of these realities. This is an amazing package of grace forgiveness that features four realities:

Reality #1 - God had avored His people. **85:1a**

This is the epitome of grace—God showed favor to His people in their land when they did not deserve it.

Reality #2 - God had restored His people. **85:1b**

God restored His people to a relationship with Himself when they had blown it.

Reality #3 - God had forgiven His people. **85:2**

God forgave their “iniquity” which refers to perverse, depraved sin. Notice the verse says God covers “all their sin.” Selah—stop and just think about that for a moment.

Reality #4 - God had withdrawn His anger toward His people. **85:3**

Actually to have the forgiveness of sin, God must withdraw His anger and wrath.

Now the reason why these things are brought up is because God needed to do this one more time. Obviously Israel had blown it again and she needed God to once again demonstrate His grace.

The fact is if God forgave us in our worst state of sin as an unbeliever, can He not forgive us in our worst slip-up moments of sin as a believer?

It is very right, when we have blown it, to go to God and ask Him to remember His amazing package of grace. God can only favor those He has forgiven. God can only favor those whose sins are gone. The way to have those sins forgiven is to go to God in prayer.

PART #2 – The writer asks God for His grace in the present. **85:4-7**

In reminding God of the things He had done in the past, the writer brings it into the present. It is obvious the people need the same forgiving grace in the present time. There are five specific requests for which He prays:

Request #1 - He asks God for His restoration. **85:4a**

Notice this contextual point. Being restored into a right relationship with God is not contingent upon our wishes or will; it is contingent upon the action of God. God must do this work. Obviously one of the things we must do is ask Him to do it.

Request #2 - He asks God for removal of His indignation. **85:4b-5**

It is one thing to have people angry with us because they are not right with God; it is another to have God angry at us because we are not right with Him.

Request #3 - He asks God for His revival. **85:6**

Notice joy is found in being right with God. When the relationship with God has been revived, there is great joy. Carefully notice the adverb “again.”

What this means is that this had happened before. This was not the first time a revival was needed. Joy comes to being revived in our relationship with God.

Request #4 - He asks God for His mercy. **85:7a**

The Psalmist asks God to show the people His mercy. There are times when we need to pray prayers like this.

Request #5 - He asks God for His salvation. **85:7b**

Do not overlook the theology of this verse because it clearly teaches that salvation is a grant from God. Salvation is a grace grant from God. Now the salvation or deliverance here is a deliverance from the negative things God was permitting to happen as a result of sin.

PART #3 – The writer acknowledges that He will listen to what God says. **85:8-11**

Verse 8 is so important to our lives–“I will hear what God the LORD will say...”. Here is the main problem with most people–they do not want to hear what God has to say to them. The only way to experience God’s grace and peace is to listen to the Word of God.

Godly people want to hear the Word of God because they want God to speak to them. Hearing the Word of God is a critical key to peace. Now if one is going to have a peaceful relationship with God, one must be willing to hear the Word of God and specifically make five applications:

Application #1 - If one is to have a peaceful relationship with God, one cannot turn back to folly. **85:8c**

Those who are backslidden need to carefully consider what is said here. This verse should console but it should also warn. If you turn back to your folly once God has delivered you, things will be, as one commentator said, seven times worse.

Application #2 - If one is to have a peaceful relationship with God, one must fear God. **85:9**

Those who are right with God have a deep reverence for God.

Application #3 - If one is to have a peaceful relationship with God, one must realize that there is an intimate connection between mercy and truth. **85:10a**

In a true relationship with God, there will always be a harmony between grace, mercy, love and truth. God’s love is based on truth. God’s grace is based on truth. God’s mercy is based on truth. Try to cover or color truth and there will never be a peaceful relationship with God.

Application #4 - If one is to have a peaceful relationship with God, one must realize there is an intimate connection between righteousness and peace. **85:10b**

The key to having peace in a soul is to have righteousness in a life.

Application #5 - If one is to have a peaceful relationship with God, one must realize truth must be admitted on earth because righteousness looks down from heaven.
85:11

Notice again the emphasis on truth. If one is to have a relationship with God in the aftermath of failure, there must be truthful assessment of the sin and truthful confession of the sin.

What this means is that one who wants a peace relationship with God must admit he is a sinner and is desiring a relationship with the Holy Righteous God.

PART #4 – The writer believes what God will do in the future. **85:12-13**

God will eventually bring total peace to the land in Israel. The Psalmist was completely confident that God would in fact deliver. There are four futuristic promises that God makes:

Futuristic Promise #1 - God will give what is good. **85:12a**

Now the good that is being referred to here is the restoration of the relationship. It is absolutely true that when one is right with God, one realizes all good things come from God, not themselves and not luck. However, the best good that God can give is a healthy relationship with Himself.

Futuristic Promise #2 - God will cause the land to yield produce. **85:12b**

Look carefully at what is said here because it absolutely proves that there will be a literal 1000 year millennium.

Futuristic Promise #3 - God will have righteousness before Him. **85:13a**

This not only has application to what will exist in His kingdom, total righteousness, but it also has to do with those who will have complete access to Him in that reign.

Futuristic Promise #4 - God will make His ways everyone's way. **85:13b**

Just imagine a time when God will cause all people in the world to walk in His ways. His way will become their way. That will happen in the millennium.

PARTING THOUGHTS:

- 1. If you have blown it, remember God has forgiven someone in the past of the very sin you have committed in the present.**
- 2. If you have blown it, go to God and admit truth.**
- 3. After you have gone to God and confessed sin, turn from it and walk in His righteous ways.**