

## DIVINE VOLUNTARY AMNESIA

“Divine Voluntary Amnesia” was the term I coined some years ago to describe a phenomenon the pondering of which not only thrilled me to bits, but humbled me, blessed me, and lifted my gloom anytime the enemy of my soul pursued me to make me endure, rather than enjoy, my walk of Faith.

Amnesia is loss of memory. My GOD is Omniscient – He knows all things. And to hear Him tell Prophet Jeremiah (chapter 31 verse 34) “**And I will remember their sins no more**” left me wondering how this was possible. Here was I, ever mindful of my sins of commission, sins of omission, and the follies of youth, and yet these very sins will be remembered no more by The Omniscient God because they have been comprehensively dealt with by The Lord Jesus Christ. O how sweet His Name sounds in a believer’s ear, it soothes my sorrows, heals my wounds, and drives away my fear.

God Almighty does this not for any good in me. HE does it for His own Name’s sake: “**I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins**” (Isaiah 43 verse 25). I love how the King James AV put it. I immediately appropriate the “thy” (singular) for myself; if it was “your sins” I might be minded to consider this promise of Almighty God at this particular point to be addressed to many. Am I selfish to appropriate it just for me – “*thy* sins”? My sins, which I sadly remember, God Almighty has chosen NOT to remember. This *Divine Voluntary Amnesia* is too wonderful for me. Through The Lord Jesus Christ, God Almighty looks at me as if I had never sinned. Through His dear Son I am JUSTIFIED – *Just as if I’d* never sinned. O How Marvelous! Horatio Spafford writes:

**“My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thought!**

**My sin, not in part but the whole,**

**Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more;**

**Praise The Lord, Praise The Lord, O my soul!**

How can I thank GOD enough for not only placing my iniquities on His dear Son, The sinless Lord Jesus Christ, thus absolving me of all guilt but also clothing me with His righteousness and pronouncing me guiltless? A wretched hypocrite declared righteous? With such double transaction who, as Judge on the last Day, can lay any accusation against me? ANSWER: It is God who justifies! And who is he that will condemn me? ANSWER: It is Christ who died, yes also having been raised, who also is at the right hand of God who also intercedes on behalf of us. [Romans 8 verses 33 & 34]. The Lord Jesus Christ, having been raised for my justification has, with God The Father, sent God The Holy Spirit to make me holy on my earthly pilgrimage. Having placed my sins squarely on The Lord Jesus Christ I have been left scot-free!

**If Thou hast my discharge procured,**

**And freely in my room endured**

**The whole of wrath divine;**

**Payment God cannot twice demand,**

**First at my bleeding Surety’s hand,**

**And then again at mine**

This marvelous third verse of Augustus Toplady's hymn "From whence this fear and unbelief?" moves me so much. How can My God twice demand the Fine for my debt of sin, first from His Dear Son, then from me? O what a wonderful God this is! O what a wonderful Saviour Christ Jesus is! Our beloved Rev John Marshall used to say from the pulpit: "The Lord Jesus Christ is very kind. He IS very kind!" And indeed He is. Through Him GOD Almighty has chosen to remember my sins no more!

### **The Enemy Cannot Leave Me Alone**

Satan hates me. If he left me alone he would be unemployed. He tried his level best for years to prevent me from realizing the enormity of my guilt and from turning in repentance to The Lord Jesus Christ. The devil failed. And now he constantly harasses me by reminding me of sins of the past, insisting my accumulated sin is still there. Liar that he is he rather makes me recall a true story from my tribe in southern Ghana.

This is the story: On market days the women would carry their heavy loads (bananas, plantain, cocoyam, and other farm produce) on their heads and trek several miles to the market. In the early days of motor vehicles the women who could afford to pay the reasonable fares would stop a lorry, be helped on to the vehicle with their burden, and get to the market quicker. On one such market day a woman who had just arrived from the hinterland, and who had not ridden on a lorry before was walking the six miles to the market when, to her relief, she saw one approaching. She waved it down and was helped on board with the huge load of bananas when she paid the fare.

After travelling about a mile the driver looked in the rear mirror and was astonished to see the woman sitting erect, but with her load still poised gingerly on her head!

"Hey, Madam, what is this?" The astonished driver asked in our Krobo language. "Yes, Papaa Driver, I am alright, but I thought the money I paid covered just me. I had not paid for the burden". Shaking with laughter the driver stopped. .

"Madam", he said to her "Everything is covered. Let the lorry carry the load. Nothing more to pay!"

Similarly, I remind myself when Satan insists that my load of sin and guilt requires to continue to be carried when, in fact, it has all been paid for. Payment God cannot twice demand. First at my bleeding Surety's hand, and then again at mine Augustus Toplady's hymn helps me repel Satan when he comes to sow doubt and fear. When God's enemy and mine comes to "spoil my pleasure" (a phrase my father often used) I frequently also turn to The Lord Jesus Christ as John Newton did when reminded of the enormity of his sin and guilt of throwing slaves overboard in the Atlantic. After addressing himself: "Approach, my soul, the Mercy Seat where Jesus answers prayer" he then turns to The Saviour, The Lord Jesus Christ, begging Him:

**"Be Thou my shield and hiding place,  
That, sheltered near Thy side,  
I may my fierce accuser face,  
And tell Him Thou has died"**  
[JOHN NEWTON, 1725-1807]

O how Satan has succeeded in robbing many a true believer of Assurance of Salvation by constantly reminding them of past sins. I shall never forget one Sunday morning at Westminster Chapel when I convinced a fellow medical student to accompany me. I knew it was going to be special because it was the last Sunday of the year, and Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones never missed an occasion like that to preach his heart out. Sitting in the gallery with over 1,500 others at worship my heart throbbed with joy when in his usual manner he began: “The text to which I would like to draw your attention this last Sunday morning of the year is to be found in Paul’s second epistle to the Corinthians chapter 13 verse 5; **Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?**” He repeated the text slowly, and deliberately.

What happened next astonished me and the friend that I had taken there, a fellow Presbyterian, whom I thought needed to hear what a true Christian was. The Doctor said in every trade and commercial endeavor, end of year accounts were made when the books were carefully examined. Apostle Paul demands us to examine ourselves whether we are in the Faith, or whether we are not. I waited to hear the Doctor examine my friend, and conclude that he was not a Christian, but he began by saying he wanted, through his examination, first of all to prove that there were some sitting in the Chapel that morning who if they died that day would go to Heaven, and yet did not know that they were saved. He wanted through the meticulous examination make them walk out of Westminster Chapel that morning, knowing that they were saved.

The sermon was with the demonstration of The Holy Spirit, and of power! Step by step, he proved that my Ghanaian friend was saved. I had thought all along that because he never, like me, used phrases like “being born again”, or could not spell out the meaning of words like “evangelical”, “evangelistic”, “Calvinist”, “Arminian”, and my friend was not, like me, incessantly rushing to House Parties here and there, that he was not a Christian. But he was! He had looked at the Saviour hanging on the tree at Golgotha, and he had repented of his sins, and trusted in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. I left the Chapel that morning chastened. Those who prostrate themselves before The Lord Jesus crying out “Lord I believe, help Thou my unbelief!” are also saved. This is why I love this Good News. My sins, and my friends’ transgressions, despite what Satan says, Our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ has chosen NOT to remember anymore. I now constantly beg The Lord Jesus to make me love Him more, and more. Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones told us what Hudson Taylor prayed daily, and I love it dearly:

**LORD JESUS, Make Thyself to me  
A Living Bright Reality;  
More present to Faith’s vision keen  
Than any outward object seen;  
More dear and more intimately nigh  
Than even the sweetest earthly tie.**

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