

GONE FOR GOOD

*You will tread our sins underfoot and
hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.*

—*Micah 7:19*

INTRODUCTION

Do you ever commit a sin and then start getting down on yourself, thinking about all the bad things you've done? If so, and you've already confessed those other sins to God, then there's something important you need to know. It's not God who's reminding you of your past mistakes; it's your enemy, Satan. His name literally means "the accuser," and that's what he's up to—dredging up the memory of past sins and accusing you as if you were still guilty of them! The truth is, in God's eyes, you are his beloved child, and the only sin you're guilty of is the one you haven't confessed yet. You just have to deal with that—and only that—by admitting to God that you did it, asking his forgiveness, and making a commitment not to do it anymore. Because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, God is able to forgive you and make you completely innocent again!

But what happens to the sins you've confessed?

That's what today's devotion is all about. It's based on Micah 7:19, which says, "You will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea." The devotion is called "Gone for Good."

DEVOTION

A buzzer sounded at the indoor ice rink. Struggling to stay on his skates, Ian said, "Aw, I was just getting good at this!"

His dad laughed. "It's time for the Zamboni to come out." Everyone left the rink, and a large, rectangular vehicle rolled onto it. A man rode it around, smoothing out the ice.

When the man drove off the rink, Ian and his dad asked him if they could look at his machine. "Sure!" the man said, climbing down. He pointed out the blade that scraped off the rough ice, and the tank where it was collected. "Come on," he said, climbing back up. "I'll show you what we do with the old ice." They followed him into a back room. There he pulled a lever. The front of the Zamboni machine tilted, dumping the ice on the floor. It looked like snow. "We call this room the snow pit," he said. "Here the bad ice melts and goes down the drain."

When God forgives you and takes away your sins, he doesn't keep them someplace. He never pulls them out again to remind you of them. He gets rid of them completely, so neither of you ever has to think about them again.

WORDS TO TREASURE

As far as the east is from the west, so far has [God] removed our transgressions from us.

—Psalm 103:12

QUESTIONS

1. When you do something wrong, do you ever feel as if God is opening up a big, heavy book that lists all of your past mistakes—and wondering whether he ought to forgive you *again*? What does the Bible say about this?

The answer is: for any Christian who keeps confessing his or her sins and repenting of them, there will be no sins written in God's book, the Book of Life—only the person's name.

2. After you've confessed a sin to God and asked him for forgiveness, are you ever tempted to think you need to do more to get rid of your guilt? What can you do to remind yourself that you don't?

One answer is: memorize Scripture passages such as 1 John 1:9, which says, "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

3. Now you know that once you confess a sin, God gets rid of it completely. But God is all-wise. He knows everything. Don't you think he remembers those old sins at least once in a while?

The answer is: in Hebrews 8:12, God says, "I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

4. What if you've done something *really* bad? Won't God be sure to remember that for a long time, if not forever?

The answer is: There is no sin so bad that God can't forgive it and forget it—totally. Isaiah 1:18 says, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow."

5. What should you do anytime you start feeling guilty?

The answer is: Pray and ask God if there is a sin you need to confess. The Holy Spirit will help you remember any you haven't confessed yet! And he'll help you deal with Satan's false accusations, if that's what's going on.

Consider spending some time playing a game or doing an exercise to help children memorize the "Words to Treasure" Scripture verse.