

## Psalm 51

We read in the book of Job, “Behold, happy is the man whom God corrects; Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty. For He bruises, but He binds up; He wounds, but His hands make whole.” Job 5:17-18 In truth God would desire that He never had to correct us, oh He knows He won’t see perfection in us, at least not until the day we see Jesus, then we shall be like Him for we shall see Him as He is. But that we would recognize our own sinfulness and be eager and willing to repent of our sin apart from the heavy hand of His correction. God would rather that our hearts be sensitive to the things of His Spirit, but there’s something about the human nature that rebels against repentance. We don’t like the idea of humbling ourselves, confessing our faults, making known the fact that we’ve erred tremendously in the sight of God. For some reason we have the suspicion that if we make known our sin that God will be disappointed in us, perhaps impose a penalty upon us. In reality God already knows that we’ve sinned and there is tremendous liberty and freedom that comes from true confession, the weight is lifted off, the oppression of guilt is removed; God restores, and renews through repentance. Yet for all that so often we resist the still small voice that urges us to repent and so the heavy hand of God’s correction comes upon us. But don’t despise the chastening of the Almighty, for He bruises, but He binds up; He wounds, but His hands make whole. The book of Hebrews tells us, “Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” Heb 12:11 The 51<sup>st</sup> Ps is the overflow of David’s bruising and binding, His being wounded yet made whole through the hand of God upon His life, the present painful chastening that trained David and brought about in David the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

The occasion? It’s found in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel Ch’s 11-12, it was springtime, the time that king’s went out to war. But for some reason (of which we’re not told) David didn’t go this time. That was his 1<sup>st</sup> mistake; he should’ve been fighting the good fight, engaged in the battle but he took some time off, a bit of a break from the heat of things (if you will). and I’m just going to draw the application right now, God has called you, He’s called me to fight the good fight, to be engaged in the battle, we don’t take a break from our walk with the Lord, that which He’s called us to, oh, physically we might rest occasionally, but spiritually we’re not to let down our defenses. “Take a break from the war” so to speak; David did that. and We read that he was walking out on his roof one night (the equivalency of a deck) and he looked over and saw a beautiful woman taking a bath. He lusted after her, called for her, had relations with her and sent her home.

Now there’s another topic there that I’m going to touch for just a moment. I’m sure that Bathsheba was not completely innocent in all of this, she knew that she was in view of the king’s porch, she knew the time of night he liked to lounge about and take in the view of the city. Be that as it may here’s what I want you to realize, the bible never indicts Bathsheba or assigns fault to her or places accountability on her. Here’s what I’m saying, I do believe that there can be a problem with some gals regarding modesty.

Always on the edge with how much skin they can show, how low can the V be cut in their shirt, how tight the shirt is, how high the skirt is and all the rest. The bible calls women to be discreet and absolutely that should be adhered to. The problem comes in of course when one person enforces their person definition of modesty upon another, and we've talked about this. Where is the boundary exactly, God's only pleased with ankle length skirts? Below the knee is righteous, about the knee is wicked? We're to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling and we need to be careful not to impose personal conviction upon another person.

But here's what I'm saying, though (Gals) you should be careful not to dress in a way to entice a brother to lust; the guy who has a problem with lust isn't going to not lust just because you've worn an ankle length skirt. Because the problem isn't in your clothing, it's in his heart. The guy with the lust problem doesn't need to see skin to lust; here's what I'm saying. The responsibility isn't so much upon the gal to get a new dress code (and I hope you understand what I'm saying), the responsibility is upon the guy to get a new heart, to repent, there's a sin issue in his heart that needs dealt with. and It seems as though we've placed all the responsibility on the gals to be careful how they dress when in reality the guys should seek the Lord for a pure heart and repent over their perverse hearts. and I'm not trying to say dress as skimpy as you like, I hope I haven't come across that way, there is to be discretion. I'm simply seeking to emphasize where the problem truly lies. The blame doesn't fall to Bathsheba, it falls to David.

Word comes back to David; "Bathsheba's pregnant." Now David is freaking out, she's a married woman, her husband is off at the battle fight for David, he's one of his mighty men, Uriah the Hittite. David decides to bring him home, sets up a couple of occasions to try and entice him to go home and be with his wife. He refuses on account of his loyalty to the men who are fighting and sleeping in fields, he won't betray them by going home and enjoying his wife. David finally says, "ok" sends him back to the battle with a letter to Joab (his general), "Put Uriah in the heat of the battle, then with draw from him so that he's killed." Uriah carries his own death warrant back to the battle. That's exactly what happens, David marries Bathsheba, looks like a hero who married the grieving widow, she has his son, alls well that ends well, right? Wrong, for nearly a yr David held this sin with in himself, refused to repent, went through all the motions, no doubt went to the tabernacle, made the sacrifices, was playing the game, but his life wasn't right, and he knew it, yet he wouldn't confess it, tried to cover it. and What does the bible say? "He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy." Prov 28:13 But until the heavy hand of God's correction came upon him he refused to repent and confess his sin, he tried to cover it.

One day the prophet Nathan comes in and says, "David, I have a story for you." We all like stories right? "I'm all ears." "There was a man who had one little lamb, and he loved this lamb like it was one of his own children, it ate from his dish, it drank from his cup, it was like a daughter to him."

Now David used to be shepherd, he knew all about this kinda thing, no doubt David was riveted to what Nathan was sharing with him. “There was rich man who lived next door to this man and a wayfaring stranger came to him and the rich man refused to take from his flock to provide for the man, but went and took that little lamb that didn’t belong to him, violated that lamb (slaughtered it) and used that lamb instead of his own to feed the stranger.” David became enraged. He said, “Surely such a man shall be put to death and restore 4 fold because he’s done this thing and has shown no pity!” Nathan said to David, “You are the man!” and You can almost see David’s jaw drop, the lights come on in David’s heart, he’s been busted. Nathan continued to give him the application, and the ramifications of his actions and what he’d done. How the child that she had would die as the result of his sin because he’d given the enemies of the Lord occasion to blaspheme, there would be adversity in his own house, his wives would be given to others, he’d done his thing in secret but what would happen to him would be done in the open. God was chastening him. The application was obvious, David had everything, Uriah had nothing, yet not being content with what God had given him, he took what wasn’t his and violated the sanctity of another man’s home. and Upon being confronted with his sin, David came clean, he was broken before the Lord and said, “I have sinned.”

Nathan said, “and The Lord has put away your sin, you shall not die.” You guys it’s God’s desire not to punish, but to pardon, we’ve got to come to Him, confess our sin before Him and seek Him to be cleansed, to be made whole, and right in his sight. Well, as the result of all of that, this Ps was penned.

### Vs1-3

You read these Vs and you almost wonder where to start they’re so rich, this is the cry of a man who is desperately desiring to be made right with God, to restore a relationship that’s been breached. and I suppose the 1<sup>st</sup> thing we should notice is that his appeal to God is on the basis of God’s mercy. What is mercy? It’s not getting what I deserve, “What I deserve is to be cast from You God, I deserve to be separated from You as the result of my sin, God I’m crying out for mercy. Don’t give me what I deserve.” You remember that passage there in the NT where Jesus is speaking about the 2 men who presented themselves before God, one a Pharisee, the other a tax collector. and The Pharisee raised his eyes to the heavens and began to brag about all the good things he did for God. Gave a tithe of all he had, didn’t do this or that; said, “God thank You that I’m not like other men, especially like this tax collector over here, this notorious sinner.” But the tax collector wouldn’t even so much as look up, he hung his head in shame, beat his chest and said, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.” Jesus said, “I tell you the truth that man went away justified.” The implication being that the other man did not. There’s just something about true humility that seems to be irresistible to God, He’s drawn to it, He responds favorably to it. Well the bible puts it like this, “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.” James 4:6 This is David’s heart cry, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.”

He casts himself upon the mercy of God; and seeing as how there’s an immeasurable supply of God’s mercy that’s a pretty good place to be.

The grace and mercy of God is beyond our comprehension, we in all our sin couldn't demand even a thimble full out of the endless ocean of His supply. Where sin abounds, grace abounds still more, it's just waiting for us, how do we tap the supply, through humility, through repentance.

We note the context in which David wants to be dealt with, it's not according to his works, it's not according to God's justice; but rather according to His lovingkindness. According to the multitude of His tender mercies; He's crying out for God's pity, that He might deal with him in accordance with His great compassion. and Man, that's where we want to be, we don't want God to deal with us on the basis of His justice, on the basis of what we deserve, but rather out of the overflow of His compassion, that He would pity us and show mercy to us.

We've mentioned before that Hebrew poetry isn't built upon rhyming patterns like we have here in the west. It's framed in what's called parallelism, where a concept is built upon itself, saying something in more than one way to seek to communicate the depth of what's being stated. David says, "Blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly of my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." In every way one might express wrong doing, David wants cleansed of it, "However you want to say it, I'm guilty of it, wash me, cleanse me, blot out my transgression." Transgression meaning he'd crossed a line, God lays out parameters in His word, David crossed the boundaries, he transgressed. His iniquity speaking of perversity or inward depravity, our warped (and prone to pervert God's ways) nature. Sin meaning to miss the mark, he wants to be pleasing to the Lord, he's missing the mark. and So, "My rebellion, my warped and twisted ways, my missing of the mark, God cleanse me (ceremonially) of my sin, wash me (inwardly) of my iniquity and blot out (legally) my transgression, wipe away my debt."

We're reminded of the mercy of God once again as we consider Isa 43:25, "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins." David is doing the right thing, turning to the right One to deal with his sin, and make atonement for his iniquity.

Which is something else we want to note, David didn't try to pass the buck, didn't try to justify his position, didn't say, "God I wouldn't have done that if Bathsheba wouldn't have enticed me, it's her fault really she should've never exposed herself to me." David takes full responsibility, full accountability, notice it over and over again, "my transgressions, my iniquity, my sin." No one else is to blame I made my own choice. How quick we are to play the blame game, you know what that means? Not truly repentant, we feel justified in our actions. David says, "This is on me God, show mercy."

Vs 3

What do we have here? Confession, "I acknowledge my transgressions." The word acknowledge speaking of understanding, "I understand what I've done, I know I've violated the sanctity of our relationship God because of sin in my life." David is confessing his sin to God. and Of course we realize that confession goes beyond a simple admission, "I did it."

But it's agreeing with God about the destructive nature of it, the self seeking in it and the fact that I'm repenting, turning from it, not looking to be a repeat customer regarding it. and This is such a key, forgiveness is linked directly to confession, and true confession is really tantamount to repentance. and What did John say? "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9

David says here, "My sin is always before me." For nearly a year David tried to put on his game face, but day and night he was plagued by what he'd done. The scandal he'd sought to cover rather than confess; concerning this same incident we read in Ps 32:3-4, "When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer." Have you ever seen someone going through such a stressful time that it takes its toll upon them physically? They seem to age, their hair begins to turn white... I think that if you'd have seen David during this period of seeking to cover his sin you'd have seen him age. He looked different when all this was over than he did before it all began. Sin takes its toll on us. It demands a heavy price to pay, apart from repentance it's always before us, through repentance it's removed from us as far as the east is from the west. You tell me which is the better way?

Vs4

Now some people have a problem with what David said here. "Against You and You only have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight." and I have to admit when we 1<sup>st</sup> read that it's like we want to grab David by the lapels and shake him around a bit. "What do you mean you sinned against God, and God only? You sinned against Uriah, you sinned against Joab by asking him to be your accomplice in murder, you sinned against your own family, you sinned against the entire kingdom that would suffer ultimately because of your actions personally David, what do you mean you sinned against God only?" But I believe that if you'd have asked David he'd tell you, "I know I sinned against all those people." He wasn't seeking to say that his decision didn't damage the lives of other people. But rather that ultimately even though our sin impacts other people peripherally or even directly, they're all still sinners as well personally. Every sin committed however is against God specifically, He's holy, He's righteous, He's the blameless and innocent One. and Paul picked up on this in the book of Romans Ch 3 as he was developing the fact that the whole world stands guilty before God.

When we sin our sin may or may not impact a particular person or group of people (though it's never isolated to only us) but our sin will always violate the Lord. All the world doesn't stand guilty before me, but we all stand guilty before God, when we sin we sin against Him. As the result of that He's completely vindicated in His judgment; let God be true and every man a liar. God will be found just when He speaks, and blameless when He judges; because all the world stands guilty before Him.

## Vs5

Again this isn't David seeking to justify his position as though he was doomed from the beginning. He simply stating a fact that reinforces God's righteous position against us. There's never been a time even from the womb that we've stood innocent before God. It's as though sin is somehow woven into our DNA pattern. When Adam sin, he forfeited his sinless nature, you can't pass on what you don't possess. What Adam had at that point was a sin nature, that's what we inherit. Job said, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one!" Job 14:4 So the moment he was delivered from the womb iniquity was present in him; then he goes back even farther, from the moment of conception sin was present.

By the way for those of you wanting a little scriptural support for when life begins, when a soul is present here you go. Because the bible tells us, "The soul who sins shall die." Ezek 18:20 There can't be sin apart from a soul, where there is no life, there is no soul, sin couldn't be present apart from a soul. Yet here David tells us that from the moment of conception there is sin, which tell us what, that there's a soul. Human life begins at conception.

## Vs6

Basically here David is acknowledging that he's been playing games with God. Acting like everything was good on the outside, but on the inside he was severely messed up, going through the ringer. But it's not the outward that God is concerned with, but rather the inward. God wants genuine integrity, genuine spirituality and a godly reality in the inward parts, from the heart. You can get baptized and be nothing more than a baptized sinner still not right with God, you can go to church outwardly, but you don't honor God inwardly, those things are exterior, God's looking for truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part He wants to make us know wisdom. (We're not going to go there but you might just jot down Eph 3:14-19 and read it later, that's what God wants for you.)

## Vs7-9

Again "Purge me, wash me, blot out all my iniquities." But what I want you to see here is David's faith in God's ability to cleanse him. He didn't say, "Purge me God so that hopefully I'll be ok, wash me and I'll look a lot better." He said, "Purge me, and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." "God I don't doubt you one bit, if You purge me I'll be clean, if You wash me I'll be whiter than snow, do it Lord, for Your glory and Your Name's sake." David had faith that if he confessed God would forgive, completely/totally.

What's the scoop on hyssop? Hyssop is a little shrub like plant grows in the middle east, it was only used for 3 things in the OT. #1 It was used to place the blood of the sacrificial lamb on the doorposts and the lintels of the homes on the night of the Passover. So David probably isn't referencing that. It was also used in the purification process if someone touched a dead body. The ashes of a red heifer that had been burned and while in fire hyssop was thrown in the flames, the ashes would be gathered, mixed with water and the water would be applied to someone who'd been defiled by a dead body for purification.

So this more than likely isn't what David is thinking of either. The 3<sup>rd</sup> way hyssop was used was in the cleansing rites of a leper, a leprous garment or a leprous house. and It seems to me that this is probably what David is referencing.

That his sin is so atrocious that he feels as though he's as an unclean leper in the site of the Lord. To simplify the ritual; 2 birds, one killed in an earthen vessel over running water, the hyssop would be dipped in the blood of the bird that had been slain and in the running water and then it would be sprinkled 7 times over the house, or garment, or previously leprous sore or whatever it was that had been healed and cleansed of the Lord. Then the living bird would be set free. and The picture there is of the death, shed blood and resurrection of JESUS CHRIST for the cleansing of our sin. Leprosy being a picture of sin in the scriptures, numbing us, desensitizing us to the damage that's being done to us. The only way and leper would be healed would be a sovereign touch of the Lord, no medicine would or could heal a leper.

But in every case hyssop has to do with cleansing, purifying, and making clean. David is saying, "Lord I'm like a leper in Your site, and there's nothing that anything, or anyone can do for me about it, I need You to touch me, to cleanse me, to purge me and I shall be clean. I'll be a new creation, whiter than snow." Of course the bible teaches us that though our sins are as scarlet, in Christ we're washed whiter than snow.

In Vs he references broken bones. David is broken before the Lord. Being a shepherd the reference here was to the problematic sheep. When there was a sheep that was prone to wandering the shepherd would take it and break its legs and then carry it over his shoulders until it healed. In that time the sheep would learn dependency upon the shepherd and when the legs mended it wouldn't stray anymore, it stayed near the shepherd. David is saying that he's been like that wandering sheep, that God has broken his bones (proverbially speaking) so that he might learn not to wonder but to stay near to his Shepherd. Right now he's sowing in tears, he's longing to reap in joy. (Ps 126:5)

Vs10-12

David isn't looking for a renovation of his old heart, he wants a new creation of a clean heart. A heart that's morally pure, not defiled or polluted. When he says, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," That word create is interesting, there are 2 words in the Hebrew translated "create" one speaks of the assembling of something from materials previously existing. When you build a house you take previously existing materials and assemble them in a way so as to make something new. That's not what this word is, he's not looking for a remodel. This is the same word employed in the book of Genesis, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It speaks of creating something out of nothing, doing something altogether new, something only God can do, take nothing and out of it make something. David is saying, "I don't want anything to do with the heart I presently have God, I want You to do an altogether new work in me, to create in me fresh and clean, undefiled completely pure heart...and What does the bible say?"

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” 2 Cor 5:17 When we come to Christ God doesn’t remodel our old heart, He gives us a brand new one, old things pass away, they are no more, all things have become new.

“Renew a steadfast spirit with in me, a spirit that’s established in seeking You, not straying from You, a spirit that is right with You, not broken down and in disrepair before You.”

No doubt thinking of how God took His Spirit from Saul when he sinned against the Lord David cries out, “Don’t cast me from Your presence, or take Your Holy Spirit from me.” Under the O.C. God would impart His Spirit to various men for specific tasks, kings, prophets, priests... and God might just remove it from you if you rebelled against Him; as He did with Saul and with Samson, David says, “God don’t do that to me, have mercy.”

Now under the N.C. the Holy Spirit isn’t reserved for a special office, if you come to Christ, the Holy Spirit is given to you to indwell you. and If you’re in Christ then the Spirit is in you, He’ll never leave nor forsake you.

Vs 12 David is seeking the Lord for the restoration not of God’s salvation, but the joy of God’s salvation in his life. The joy of the Lord is your strength, David was down and he was asking the Lord to lift him up and to hold Him up by the power of His Spirit.

Vs13

“God show Your grace to me, share Your grace with me and I’ll teach transgressors of Your love and Your grace and they’ll turn to You and trust in You.” It’s hard to teach someone something you know nothing about, but if it’s real in your life you can teach it with conviction. Sometimes people think sin automatically disqualifies them from serving the Lord, that’s not true. Unrepentant sin sure can, but if you’ve experience the grace and the forgiveness of God that makes you a prime candidate for teaching others to trust in the Lord for the same.

Vs14-15

The reference to bloodshed is concerning Uriah whom David murdered by the sword of the people of Ammon. But what I want you to see here is this, “Deliver me... and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.” The proper response to God’s deliverance in our lives, being delivered from sin, being delivered from death is that our tongue should sing aloud of His righteousness, our mouths should show forth His praise. Far from being ashamed of our relationship with the Lord, our mouths should sing aloud of His righteousness, His goodness and grace on our behalf.

## Vs16-17

I mentioned earlier that David probably offered all kinds of sacrifices at the tabernacle throughout that yr that he was hiding his sin. But he knew in his heart that things still weren't right with God, because his heart wasn't right with God. "You don't desire sacrifice or else I would give it." How many times we feel like if we've sinned we need to be punished, somehow perhaps asceticism, afflicting ourselves will make things better. God doesn't want our sacrifices, He doesn't want us to give up this, or offer that and feel like now we're ok. Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams (1 Sam 15:22). God wants a heart of obedience, He doesn't respond to how much we sacrifice to try and make things right, but rather He's looking for that brokenness before Him, humility and repentance...these O God, You will not despise.

## Vs18-19

Right sacrifices come from a right heart, when God's doing a work in our lives, in our heart, when we're walking in obedience, then He's pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness. Because they're not being offered to try and make up for sin, or to be made right before God, but they're given because we are right with God, out of the overflow of His goodness toward us. God wants a right relationship with us, draw near to Him, humble yourself before Him, seek for truth in the inward parts, and in the inward part He will make you to know wisdom.

## Prayer Points:

Father we're so thankful for the multitude of Your tender mercies. May we receive the urgency with which we need to draw near to You, walk intimately with You, and help us that we not be prone to wander away from You. Purge us with hyssop, wash us and we'll be whiter than snow, make us to know truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part make us to know wisdom.