

Psalm 051 - Pauline Psalm: Penitential Psalm: David's Repentance

Psalm 51 records how David repented in response to Nathan's Spirit-inspired accusation. David broke two of God's commandments: the 7th commandment: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" (with Bathsheba). David broke the 6th commandment: "Thou shalt not kill" (arranging death for Uriah, one of his mighty men and one of David's most faithful followers).

Psalm 51

[To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.]

A Prayer for Cleansing and Pardon

1 Be gracious to me, God, according to Your faithfulness; According to the greatness of Your compassion, wipe out my wrongdoings.

1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

1 Have mercy, God, according to your gracious love, according to your unlimited compassion, erase my transgressions.

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my guilt And cleanse me from my sin.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin.

2 Wash me from my iniquity, cleanse me from my sin.

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I know my **wrongdoings**, And **my sin is constantly before me**.

3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.

3 For I acknowledge my transgression; my sin remains continuously before me.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

— "...wrongdoings" - to transgress is to step over the boundaries of God. Iniquity means that which is altogether wrong. And David admitted it!

— In v2-3 "sin" is *chattath*, meaning "sin offering"

- In v4 it is *chata*, translated in the LXX by the Greek word *hamartia*: “to miss the mark” [the verb is indicative aorist active 1st person singular]
- “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23)
- “...my sin is constantly before me” - how many times did David wish he would replay that evening with Bathsheba and make different choices
- However, David offered no excuses (v4)

David used three different words for sin that he also used in Ps 32:5.

Cry of Confession of Sin & Clemency

4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned, and done what was evil in your sight. As a result, you are just in your pronouncement and clear in your judgment.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Sin Against Whom?

- Against Bathsheba
- Against Uriah, her husband
- Against Joab by involving him
- Against his family
- Against the community & Jerusalem
- Against the nation of which He was king
- Against God Himself!

The others are now gone. It continues to give the enemies of God cause to blaspheme “railing accusations” (Cf. 2 Sam 12:14). Also, as Joseph (Cf. Gen 39:9!) God says, in effect, “David, You’ve hurt me!”

5 Behold, I was brought forth in guilt, And in sin my mother conceived me.

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.

5 Indeed, in iniquity I was brought forth; in sin my mother conceived me.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

- David acknowledged that he was born with a tendency to turn from God and His ways

Every man knows that of himself which he dares not tell his dearest friend. — Samuel Johnson

We must say of ourselves that we are evil, have been evil, and unhappily, I must add—shall be also in the future. Nobody can deliver himself; someone must stretch out a hand to lift him up. — Seneca

- 6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in secret You will make wisdom known to me.
- 6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.
- 6 Indeed, you are pleased with truth in the inner person, and you will teach me wisdom in my innermost parts.
- 6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

- 7 Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean; Cleanse me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- 7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I will be clean. Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
- 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

- 8 Let me hear joy and gladness, Let the bones You have broken rejoice.
- 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.
- 8 Let me know joy and gladness; let the bones that you have broken rejoice.
- 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

It may be that God can forgive sin, but I don't see how. — Socrates, ~500 BC

Cry for Cleansing and Communion

- 9 Hide Your face from my sins And wipe out all my guilty deeds.
- 9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities.
- 9 Hide your countenance from my sins and erase the record of my iniquities.
- 9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

- 10 Create in me a clean heart, God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.
- 10 God, create a pure heart in me, and renew a right attitude within me.
- 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.
11 Do not cast me from your presence; do not take your Holy Spirit from me.
11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And sustain me with a willing spirit.
12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit.
12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and let a willing attitude control me.
12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.
- He lost the joy, not the salvation

13 *Then I will teach wrongdoers Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.*
13 *Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You.*
13 Then I will teach transgressors about your ways, and sinners will turn to you.
13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Save me from the guilt of bloodshed, God, the God of my salvation; *Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.*
14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; *Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.*
14 Deliver me from the guilt of shedding blood, God, God of my salvation. Then my tongue will sing about your righteousness.
14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 Lord, open my lips, So that my mouth may declare Your praise.
15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise.
15 Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.
15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You do not take pleasure in burnt offering.
16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering.
16 Indeed, you do not delight in sacrifices, or I would give them, nor do you desire burnt offerings.
16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, God, You will not despise.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

17 True sacrifice to God is a broken spirit. A broken and chastened heart, God, you will not despise.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem.

18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem.

18 Show favor to Zion in your good pleasure; and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then bulls will be offered on Your altar.

19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.

19 Then you will be pleased with right sacrifices, with burnt offerings, and with whole burnt offerings. Then they will offer bulls on your altar.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.