

Psalm 51

To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David One who was given the chore of conquering 100 foreskins, killing Goliath, “killing 10,000’s”, getting behind enemy lines, led 30 mighty men, 400 men followed Him to potential death; he killed a bear and a lion (by tearing them—dwarfing Samson’s tearing of “the kid”); etc...

When Nathan the Prophet Went to Him, After He Had Gone in to Bathsheba. See 2 Samuel 12. This is another example of how the Psalms and the prophets mingle with the historical books just as the epistles mingle with the Gospels and Acts.

51:1

Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; See here that David’s gratitude drives him to confession. David wants as much **mercy** as God has **lovingkindness**. He is aware of how much God has. May we be more experted in confession than we are in our sin. More often, though, we are students in confession and experts in sin. May we ever be cognizant that only something as lofty as God’s **mercy** can solve something as deep as my sin.

According to the multitude of Your tender mercies parallel to lovingkindness, Blot out the parallel of mercy.

51:2-5

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. If the lofts of God’s mercy look intense, wait until He **washes thoroughly**. I am certain this is not a comfortable reality. Anybody that has had a burn debridement knows how this can be painful: removing dead tissue allows it to heal, but it hurts.

If we are **washed thoroughly**, it may mean that the **sin** is no longer a part of our fiber and we lose some things that are part of our inward parts (see verse 5).

How **thorough** is God? It would have been a whole lot easier on David if God would have killed Bathsheba instead of their baby. Perhaps this is why David can say “my sin is always before me” (verse 3). He wakes up to his sin each day, and the pain it causes.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. Again, maybe our payment would have been, “David, you can’t keep her,” but she was a reminder of not being able to remove people from your life after you’re done using them. It doesn’t hurt to revisit that regret with those behind us. God is omniscient and cannot forget anything so He will not be upset if you chat further with Him concerning a matter. **4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight—That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.** His son died; his daughter was raped; his son Absalom sought his kingdom (dad taught him he could take someone else’s possessions); Absalom took David’s women on a housetop (ironic since David took a man from his housetop); the sword was consistently in David’s house; and Solomon (a type of Christ) was known forever as a “son of fornication.” When we have these circumstances, we are pushed to be honest to the hilt with God (verse 6).

51:11

Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Confession bursts from a fear of being left alone. 1 John 4:14 shows this to have a particular “upgrade” for the NT Christian. David is concerned about both “push” and “pull.”

There seems to be an absence of the “within” ministry of the NT within the OT (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19). The OT seems to speak of the “upon” ministry of the Holy Spirit (such as in Samson). That is not to say that this doesn’t happen in the NT, for we would say that is primarily the ministry spelled out in Acts (particularly in Cornelius’ ministry of chapter 10). The “upon” ministry is doubtless what is being spoken here: perhaps for empowerment or anointing. He was enabled to write Scripture and fight mighty battles. Worse, David had already seen the **Spirit** depart from Saul. David said, “I’ve seen bitterness and a lack of confession and misery. God! Don’t let me be like Old King Saul” (1 Samuel 16-17).

If both the “upon” and “within” are in the NT, then we may with some assurance say that those who are NT believers are permanent houses of the Holy Spirit with special times in our lives where we receive special empowerment by the Holy Spirit. We know doctrinal truth of the “within” and sometimes we are more aware of empowerment than at other times. David knows what a powerless king looks like.

51:12

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, There was no fear of losing **salvation**, but rather the **joy** thereof. **Joy of salvation** is linked to the presence of the “Holy **Spirit**” somehow. He doesn’t question His **salvation** (51:14), but rather the “feeling” of it.

And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

51:13-15

14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, Clearly speaking of his murder of Urijah. **O God...And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.** It’s hard to sing of freedom when you have none. It’s not a personality thing. **15 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise.** Moody speaks of how a sheep and a pig being thrown into the mud find but one of them speaking (bleating). Why (the sheep)? Because the sheep doesn’t belong in the mud and knows it.

51:16-19

For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. Pretty weighty since He often required **sacrifice** of this type. Men, though, have a sense of sacrifice. It is some of the easiest stuff a man does, is **sacrifice**. That is why this passage flows through confession and repentance before we get to the right to **sacrifice**. “I might be a jerk, but that’s ok...cause I do other things well!” No...offer what you want after you offer what God wants.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—after a bursting spirit and a collapsing heart **sacrifice** (under the weight of my sin), then you can **sacrifice** righteousness (verse 19).

19 Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar. Psalm 50:7-10 shows God’s heart on this. He doesn’t need the **sacrifices**. The act is for us.