"The Sinner's Guide to Forgiveness"

PSALM 51

7-17-2019

*** King David experienced the cleansing of God; And so can you! How?**

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(The Basis for God's Cleansing)

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B. ONLY THE CLEANSED MAN CAN GIVE SACRIFICES THAT PLEASE GOD (v. 16-19)

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PSALM 51

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INTRODUCTION:

Psalm 51 is "the sinners' guide" to forgiveness.

Give background to the heading of the psalm. II Sam. 11-12.

David's sin with Bathsheba (he looked; he desired; he took)

Four people died as a result: 1. Uriah 2. Baby 3. Amnon 4. Absolum

David tries to cover his sin for one year, until God speaks to him through Nathan (II Sam. 12:1-15).

Sometimes we need others to point out our sin. How we respond reveals our humility and love for righteousness.

PROPOSITION: King David experienced the cleansing of God; And so can you! How?

I. DAVID <u>APPEALED</u> TO THE <u>MERCY</u> OF GOD FOR CLEANSING (v. 1)
(The <u>Basis</u> for God's Cleansing)

David has nothing to appeal to other than the mercy of God.

Both of David's sin deserved death!
1. Adultery - Dt. 22:22
2. Murder - Num. 35:31

"The wages of sin is death . . ." (Ro. 6:23)

Don't ever ask God for justice. If we got justice (what we deserved), we would be in hell. We need His mercy.

Ps. 136 - "His mercy endureth forever"

A reason the Catholic doctrine of purgatory is so blasphemous is because it assumes that man by <u>his</u> suffering, by <u>his</u> merit, by <u>his</u> payment, will appease the wrath of God.

Only Christ can appease God's wrath. God saw the travail of His Son and was satisfied (Is. 53).
God's forgiveness is never deserved, never earned. It can't be bought. No one has any right to it. It can't be demanded. But praise God it's available.

ILLUS: the woman caught in adultery (Jn. 8) saw the mercy of Christ.

God's love knows no boundaries (when you come to Him).

David knew God so well, that He knew God could pardon his sin no matter how black it was.

A. GOD IS A GOD OF LOYAL LOVE

"Lovingkindness" = loyal love; his covenant faithfulness (the stork was named after this attribute of God because it displayed this characteristic to its young - in contrast to the ostrich which forsakes her young).

B. GOD IS A GOD OF TENDER COMPASSION

For those who are terrified at the multitude of their sins, our God has a multitude of tender mercies.

"Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound."

"Tender mercies" = the word means compassionate pity. It is the word for the womb and denotes the maternal yearnings of a mother toward her offspring. The word is plural - showing an intensive compassion where God's heart just goes out to us.

David is saying, "God you have revealed numberless acts of goodness in the past (to many other people). Please repeat it again to me . . . add one more act of grace to the long list of your compassions."

EX. of this compassionate heart:
1. Joseph wept for his brothers (Gen. 43:30)
2. Solomon and 2 women with a child. Real mother yearned for the child and was willing to give it up to have it live (I Ki. 3:26).

"Tender mercies" - it's the affection parents have when their children are in extreme life and death situations (EX. a fire)

ILLUS: of a boy who does something terribly wrong and is afraid to tell his dad until he remembers that his dad loves him (EX: Prodigal son and his father)

"Blot out" = wipe the slate clean, erase sins.

EX: "White Out" removes typing errors.

ILLUS: person with many "points" on his driving record is relieved when his record is cleaned up.

ILLUS: student who begins a new semester at Bible college with no demerits.

The blood of bulls and goats could not take away our sins, but praise God the blood of Christ can!

"Transgressions" = rebellion.

David (by his sin) sought to overthrow God's rule in his life and make himself the final authority.

Every time we sin, we are rebelling against God, and are giving ourselves the right to do that which is forbidden.

David throws himself upon the merciful character of God as his only ground of hope.

His only basis of appeal was God's lovingkindness and tender mercies.

II. DAVID ADMITTED HIS DESPERATE NEED FOR CLEANSING (v. 2-6)

(The Need for God's Cleansing)

A. DAVID FACED HIS SIN SERIOUSLY (V. 2)

David didn't just say: "Please forgive my errors. Amen."

"Wash me throughly" = lit. "Give me many washings; multiply my washing.

It is asking God to put you in the washing machine. This Hebrew word is used always in the literal sense of laundering clothing by vigorously beating them in cold water.

In all but one use, this verb for "washing" is associated with defilement. (Lev. 13-15)

If the garment had a fungus, or mildew, or something leprous that made holes in the garment, they were to wash it (let it dry and air out for 7 days), and then if it still showed signs of the plague, they were to burn it (lev. 13:54, 55).

Sin defiles, sin spreads - and the only remedy is God's washing.

He is saying, "Lord, wash and wash, and wash again, till the last stain is gone, and not a trace of defilement is left."

"Iniquity" = perversion and twisting of God's moral standards.

"Cleanse me" = purify me and pronounce me clean from missing Your mark.

"It is not the punishment he cries out against, but the sin. Many a murderer is more alarmed at the gallows (electric chair) than at the murder which brought him to it. The thief loves the plunder, though he fears the prison. Not so with David: he is sick of sin as sin; his loudest outcries are against the evil of the transgression, and not against the painful consequences of it. When we deal seriously with our sin, God will deal gently with us. When we hate what the Lord hates, he will soon make an end of it, to our joy and peace." (Spurgeon, p. 402).

B. DAVID FACED HIS SIN HONESTLY (V. 3)

"Acknowledge" = know, a close awareness. (EX: same word used of Adam "knowing" his wife Eve)

David didn't shift the blame
He said: "I acknowledge my transgressions." (Note: all the personal pronouns in the chapter - "I, my, mine, me")
He didn't excuse his sin
He took full responsibility for it!

It takes a person of real character to do this!

ILLUS: acknowledging that I broke the law (was guilty) when I went through a red light.

EX: how we are so quick to point fingers at others:
in marriage - she/he is to blame!
in job - My boss stinks!
in school - the teacher isn't fair!

Just swallow your pride and honestly admit you were wrong. I respect people who do this!

"My sin is ever before me" = my sin confronts me all the day long.

David is saying: "I know how grievously I have sinned, and the thought of it clings to me night and day." (Leupold, p. 402).

True, honest remorse for sin does not make sin appear light, inoffensive, not such a bad thing, etc., but freely admits how horrible it is.

Today, sin isn't so sinful in the minds of many Christians.

A truly repentant person does not belittle his wrong, nor does he overly exaggerate it. He simply admits it.

When excuses are offered, repentance is not genuine (sincere).

C. DAVID FACED HIS SIN HUMBLY (V. 4-6)

1. Be humble enough to admit that:
Your sin is against God (v. 4a)

All sin is against God ultimately -

1. Because it is a violation of a standard that He set (not man). God established all moral laws.

2. Because only God has a right to forgive sin "No one can forgive sins but God only" (SEE Mk. 2)

Our sin is against God!

If we sin against a person and ask them to forgive us and they say, "I do," are we forgiven? NO! Why? Because we have not gone to God yet! Only He can actually forgive sin.

When people say, "I forgive you," they are not removing our sin. They are just acknowledging that it won't come in between you and them anymore.

Only God can truly forgive!

Every time we sin, God is sinned against.

All sin against others is a sin against God, but not all sin against God is a sin against others.

Private sin = private confession
Personal sin = personal confession
Public sin = public confession

Joseph said, "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God!" (Gen. 39:9).

NOTE: Contrast of attitude about sin:

1. In II Sam. 11, David's only question was in effect, "How do I cover my tracts?"

2. Now it is "How could I treat God so?" (Kidner, p. 190).

"Against thee" - Samuel said: "God forbid that I would sin against God in ceasing to pray for you."

When we love our fellow man, it is because we are loving God, when we sin against man it is because of sin in our relationship with God.

"Evil in Thy sight" = David felt that his sin was committed in all its filthiness while God Himself looked on. Nothing escapes God's notice!

2. Be humble enough to admit that:
Your sin deserves God's judgment (v. 4b)

David is saying: "God, you are proven right when you speak." (Your charges are entirely just. I am entirely wrong. Your decision is unimpeachable.")

Whatever God says is right, and He has the absolute right to judge (cp. Rom. 3:4)

3. Be humble enough to admit that:
You have always been a sinner (v. 5)

In verse 5, David now removes from the act of sin (v. 3-4) to the deeper spiritual root of the problem.

He is not excusing his sin, rather he is tracing his sinfulness all the way back to his mother's womb to show how he was a sinner since birth - yes, even since conception.

The sex act is not sin in a marriage (Heb. 13:4).

Lev. 15 - Everything associated with the birth process is unclean in O.T. because God wants His people to know that they are passing uncleanness on from one generation to another.

Job. 14:4 - "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing?

Cp. Rom. 5 - sin passed on from Adam.

Sin is inbred. We sin because we are sinners. We are depraved from conception. David was like any other man.

NOTE: This verse is strong proof that life begins at conception! That which is conceived is a person. NOTE: David says, "I" ... "Me" - not "it!" It is not a mere embryo, it is not a fetus, it is not just some biological matter that is conceived. It is a living soul!

4. Be humble enough to admit that:
Your sin is <u>without excuse</u> (v. 6)

Whereas verse 5 dealt with our internal sin nature, verse 6 deals with the truth and wisdom that God wants inside of us.

--God desires that we do right
--He even was putting His moral law in us when we were in our mother's womb.

He has "made us know wisdom." We are not without light! We are not without knowledge of right and wrong! We know what sin is! We know what it does! Therefore, we are <u>without excuse</u>!

"The <u>fear</u> of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

III. DAVID SURRENDERED HIMSELF TOTALLY TO GOD FOR CLEANSING (v. 7-12)

(The Effectiveness of God's Cleansing)

A. DAVID'S CONFIDENCE

Full Surrender will take place when:
You are confident in the ability of God (v. 7-10)

1. God is able to totally cleanse (v. 7)

The cleansing is described in ceremonial terms. "Purge, hyssop, wash" - David is crying out, "Give me the reality which the legal ceremonies symbolize."

"Purge" = caused me to be "de-sinned"

In O.T., for adultery and murder there was no sin-offering provided - they were stoned to death! David here is calling on a special act of God.

"Hyssop" = an absorbent plant that was soaked in blood and sprinkled upon an object or person being cleansed.

Was used:
1. At Passover (Ex. 12:22)
2. For cleansing of a leper (Lev. 14:6-7)
3. For cleansing of one who touched a dead corpse (Num. 19:16-19)

"Wash me" = (cp. v. 4) to launder/scrub (used of defiled garments)

"Whiter than snow" -
--There is no half-cleansing with God!
--He can do an immaculate (spic & span) job of removing sin and guilt!

ILLUS: of lives wasted in sin, that God cleaned!

Isaiah said: ". . . Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Is. 1:18)

No matter how hard you try, you can't dye a red garment white, but God can!

EX: Jesus washed disciples' feet. "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." (Jn. 13:8)

David was confident that God could clean him up totally. When we ask forgiveness, and we still feel dirty, maybe we doubt God, or forget His ability to thoroughly cleanse.

ILLUS: People try to help God out in the cleaning; God wants full surrender to Him.

2. God is able to revive your weary soul (v. 8)

David's ear had become blocked to sounds of joy because of his sin (Remember Saul's spirit was lifted up when David played the harp for him)

Joy and gladness come when sin is forgiven, when God pronounces you cleansed (II Sam. 12:13 - "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."

"Bones" = refers to the wearisome physical and emotional problems caused by sin. (Ps. 32:3 - "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long."

NOTE: Joy comes when you know you are right with God.

If you want joy, don't seek after joy. If you want happiness, don't seek after happiness. (Seek after God and His righteousness!)

3. God is able to forgive and forget (v. 9)

David repeats (v. 1) "Blot out . . ." "Not all repetitions are vain repetitions" (Spurgeon, p. 404).

"Blot out" = erase from the books, remove, clean slate (cp. v. 1)

When we are justified, we are "just as if I had never sinned." (Ro. 3)

If God were not able to block out our sin from His presence, He would have to block us from His presence and we would got o Hell . . . If God could not "blot out" our sins, He would out of necessity have to blot our names out of His book of life.

But He is able!

God said, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34)

Nothing escapes God's notice (Ps. 139:7), except forgiven sin.

Our sin is buried, covered, hidden from sight, all because of Christ's finished work.

4. God is able to perform miracle operations (v. 10)

"Create" = "bara" = to create out of nothing (Gn. 1:1, 2:3).

An instantaneous miracle (not a process).

Only God can create "ex nihilo" (out of nothing).

David is asking for a miracle that only God can do. He is not saying "Clean up my old one" - rather, "Create a new clean one!"

Ez. 36:26 - "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

We have a new heart when we are born again (Jn. 3:3, 5)

In Christ the old has passed away and "behold all things are become new!" (II Cor. 5:17)

"Heart" = the center of man; the core; (the mind and emotions of man that determine his will).

David wanted his thinking and feeling cleaned up!

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8) (Cp. Acts 15:9 - our hearts are purified by faith)

"Renew" = shows David was a saved man

Renew a right (steadfast) spirit. Why a renewal? Because his spirit lost its steadfastness when he plunged into sin.

David wants a spirit in him that will stand firm in the moment of temptation.

B. DAVID'S CONCERN

Full surrender will take place when:
You are concerned about your relationship with God (v. 11-12)

1. David was concerned about a: Loss of fellowship (v. 11a)

"Cast me not away from Thy presence" - The picture is of one who incurs his king's displeasure and is banished from his presence.

Is. 59:1-2 - "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

The thought of a continued loss of fellowship was unthinkable to David.

Every true child of God, genuinely wants to be close to God. In your heart you desire His presence. If you don't, then you are not saved.

2. David was concerned about a: Loss of power (v. 11b)

Holy Spirit - was the Theocratic anointing in O.T. given to kings and leaders (positions of authority) so they had power to rule (not the baptism [Jn. 14:17] or filling of N.T.)

Moses had this anointing (Num. 11:17)

"The Spirit of the Lord came upon" - Othniel (Jud. 3:10); Gideon (6:34); Jephthah (11:29); Samson (13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14, 19).

In O.T., the Spirit jumped from leader to leader.

Jesus, after baptized, was anointed. He was the last king in the line of theocratic anointings.

The background for David's request here is King Saul, from whom the Spirit of the Lord departed (I Sam. 16:1-7, 13, 14)

David remembered how Saul totally degenerated when God removed His Spirit, and David greatly feared that this might happen to him.

--We should be fearful that we grieve or quench God's Spirit.

3. David was concerned about a: Loss of Joy (v. 12a)

David knew something was missing.

Sin always robs our joy.

"Uphold" = support

"Free" = willing and eager spirit (volunteer)

The Spirit is willing!

We need God's Spirit to support us from sin. To protect us. To keep us from falling. We can't do it alone!

4. David was concerned about a: Loss of Stability (v. 12b)

"The fact that the psalmist prays for so many things (v. 7-12) indicates how many things he knew he had lost when he plunged into sin. His prayer is that all this tragic loss may be recovered by God's grace." (Leupold, p. 405-406)

IV. DAVID DESIRED RESTORED USEFULNESS AFTER BEING CLEANSED (v.13-19)

(The Results of God's Cleansing)

We can't rightly represent our Savior and call ourselves by His name (Christian) if we are not living right.

ILLUS: Man in Alexander the Great's army who had brought shame to the Greek army was brought before Alexander the Great. Alexander asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Alexander." The king then said, "Either change your ways or change your name."

A. ONLY THE CLEANSED MAN CAN GIVE TESTIMONIES THAT MAGNIFY GOD (v. 13-15)

1. Only he can sincerely witness (teach others) (v. 13)

One who is transgressing God's Law cannot teach transgressors God's ways.

1) You feel like a hypocrite because you are!
2) They won't listen to what you have to say (they won't be converted)

Can a law breaker teach God's justice?
Can a liar teach God's trustworthiness?
Can an unforgiving person teach God's forgiveness?
Can a vengeful person teach God's mercy and grace?
*****Can a man weighed down by sin teach God's ability to remove it totally?

In context, David wants to be able to tell others of God's mercy, lovingkindness, and tender mercy (v. 1).

David desires forgiveness, so that he can tell others about God's forgiveness. How can you honestly tell others about something you have not experienced?

Maybe this is why many so-called "believers" do not witness.

In order to witness (testify), you must be one who has first-hand knowledge and experience of what you are talking about.

The best game warden is no doubt one who used to kill deer, etc. illegally (he knows where they naturally go and do)

The best street crime fighter is one who was once a street junkie or gang fighter.

The best soul-winning evangelist is not someone with B.S., M.Div., and D.D. after his name, but one with S.S. (Saved sinner) as his testimony.

"Converted" = to turn back; return (EX: Prodigal Son)

David wants to tell others of God's pardon. Such a testimony will assure others that they need not remain trapped in their sin, because God receives those who come back to Him.

2. Only he can joyfully sing (v. 14)

"Bloodguiltiness" = lit. "bloods" - David now sees that he shed Uriah's blood; his baby and 2 sons would die because of his sin.

NOTE: It is the guilt of sin that burdens David and causes him to be silent.

How can a guilty person sin about righteousness when he is guilty of unrighteousness?

We can joyfully sing about God's right standards and laws when the guilt of our breaking them is removed.

When God saves (cleanses) us, when we don't sing our own praises, but His praises.

3. Only he can freely praise (v. 15)

The prayer, "Open thou my lips" is the cry of one whose conscience has shamed him into silence. David longs to worship freely; unhindered by a guilty conscience.

Whoever the doorkeeper (porter) is of your lips determines what comes out.

When vanity, anger, falsehood, or lust unlock the door and open it, the most wicked villains troop out; but when the Holy Spirit opens the door, then grace, mercy, peace, truth flow gracefully out. (Cp. Spurgeon, p. 406).

Sin keeps us from witnessing, singing and praising God

B. ONLY THE CLEANSED MAN CAN GIVE SACRIFICES THAT PLEASE GOD (v. 16-19)

Why didn't God want a sacrifice in David's case?

1. There was no sacrifice for this sin. It was a high-handed sin that deserved death.

2. Sacrifice means nothing without the right attitude.

"Sacrifice" = a peace offering showing communion (you would eat part of it)

"Burnt offering" = total sacrifice would go up in smoke to show total dedication.

God wants more than outward signs of dedication and devotion (v. 16). He wants internal dedication (v. 17).

God is not interested in the letter of the Law if there is no inner remorse and love for Him.

God wants love not letter; He wants feeling not formalism; He wants sorrow, not sacrifice.

God wants your heart!

God is also teaching us here that: Nothing we sacrifice can earn forgiveness.

Song: What can wash away my sin, nothing but the blood of Jesus"

God wants us to be humbled and heart-broken over our sin.

We weep more over a sad TV show than over our sin.

We weep more over the death of our cat or dog than over our sin.

"The Midrash finely points out that a fractured limb disqualified an animal as a sacrifice, whereas a broken spirit (and heart) in man was approved by God" (Cohen, p. 162).

Is. 57:15 - "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high ad holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

(Cp. Is. 66:2-3 - Our sacrifice is an abomination to God if it is not backed up with a devoted, humbled heart)

We are constantly trying to change how we are seen, rather than change what we are!

We dress up externals and let our core rot!

God's selection of David was based on his heart - "God looketh on the heart."

David is saying, "God, don't let my sin ruin your kingdom." We should have a heart that says, "God, don't let my sin ruin my family (wife and children), church, etc."

"Zion" had suffered the ravages of an invading army. David in a sense holds himself responsible.

"Build the walls..." - Solomon later built walls for protection (I Ki. 3:1)

"Build walls" - David felt he had hindered the building project because of his sin. (as a matter of fact, he could not build God's sanctuary because he "had shed blood" - I Chron. 28:2).

When God "does good" and "builds" then you know that forgiveness has been granted (which means repentance has been real). Only then are sacrifices acceptable (v. 19).

NOTE: Now the sacrifices are called sacrifices of righteousness! (brought with right spirit and with right motive).

CONCLUSION:

We should be more concerned about the cleanliness of our lives before God, than about anything else.

More concerned, than about our clean house (ladies)
More concerned, than about our clean car (men)
More concerned than about our bodies.

Are you under a load of sin? Is iniquity crushing you? Are you stained and defiled, feel dirty, etc.?

God has a "fountain filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains."

Will you experience God's cleansing?

Then 1. appeal to His mercy
2. admit your desperate need