

A PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS
Psalm 51:1-17

Introduction:

- 1. It was the time of year when kings go out to battle, but David remained at home in idleness (2 Samuel 1 & 12).**
- 2. One evening when David walked on the roof of his house, he saw a beautiful woman bathing.**
 - a. She was Bathsheba, wife of Uriah, a faithful soldier.**
 - b. David sent for Bathsheba and they committed adultery.**
- 3. Sometime afterward, Bathsheba told David she was with child.**
 - a. David sent for Uriah to come home under pretense of giving him an update on the battle to take Rabbah.**
 - b. After Uriah reported, David told him to go home to be with his wife, but Uriah did not go.**
 - c. When asked why, he said: “My fellow soldiers are dwelling in tents on the battlefield; it is not right that I should enjoy the comforts of my home.”**
- 4. David wrote a letter to Joab, commander of his army, and sent it by Uriah.**
 - a. The letter said: “Put Uriah in the forefront of the battle; then retreat from him so that he will die.”**
 - b. Joab did as commanded and Uriah was killed.**
 - c. When David learned of this, he took Bathsheba to be his wife after the days of mourning were over.**
 - d. “But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord!”**
- 5. God sent Nathan the prophet to David.**
 - a. Nathan told him the story of a rich man with great flocks who stole the pet lamb of a poor neighbor to feed a guest.**

- b. David was angered at the rich man's selfishness and said, "He shall surely die!"
 - c. Nathan replied: "You are the man!"
6. David was guilty of breaking three of the Ten Commandments:
- a. "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife" (Exodus 20:17).
 - b. "You shall not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14).
 - c. "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13).
7. The Lord told David he would not die, but he would suffer the consequences of his sin for the rest of his days.
- a. When David realized the magnitude of his sins, he sought God's forgiveness.
 - b. Psalm 51 is David's plea for God's mercy and forgiveness.

Discussion:

I. DAVID BEGGED FOR GOD'S MERCY (1,2).

- A. A sinner has no merit to plead; he must depend on God.
- B. David asked for three things:
 - 1. "Blot out (remove, erase) my transgressions (acts of rebellion against God)."
 - 2. "Wash me thoroughly (remove the filth) from my iniquity (warped or twisted state)."
 - 3. "Cleanse (scrub, pound) me from my sin (missing the mark)."

II. DAVID ACKNOWLEDGED HIS SIN (3-6).

- A. It was not, "If I have sinned, I ask for forgiveness," but a forthright, "I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me."

B. He acknowledged his sin was ultimately against God.

- 1. Sin is “a transgression of God’s law” (1 John 3:4).**
- 2. God’s law is a reflection of His holiness; therefore, sin is a personal affront against God.**
- 3. When Potiphar’s wife tempted Joseph, he said: “How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39:9).**
- 4. God is just and has every right to condemn sinners.**

C. David acknowledged he was wholly given over to sin.

- 1. He was “brought forth in iniquity,” born into a world filled with sin.**
- 2. “...in sin my mother conceived me;” David was not illegitimate, nor was the act of conception sinful, but his parents were sinners and he was born into a world filled with sinners.**
- 3. The Calvinistic doctrine of original (inherited) sin is not taught in the Bible (Ezek. 18:20; Matthew 19:14).**

D. David acknowledged that God desires us to be truthful, honest and pure to the depths of our being (Matthew 5:8).

III. DAVID PLEADED FOR CLEANSING (7-11).

A. He made five statements to express his deep desire to be free from the burden of his sin.

- 1. “Purge me with hyssop” (a branch dipped in blood or water and sprinkled on the object to be cleansed).**
- 2. “Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow” (Isa. 1:18).**
- 3. “Make me hear joy and gladness” (he was miserable because he was alienated from God and wanted to know once more the joy of God’s presence).**
- 4. “Hide your face from my sins” (he pleads for God to forgive and then to forget his sins - Hebrews 8:12).**

5. **“Blot out all my iniquities” (cancel as a debt my sins so that I will not be held accountable for them).**

B. He pleads that God will make him a new, cleansed person.

1. **“Create in me a clean heart” (we are made new creatures when born again of water and the Spirit (John. 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17).**

2. **“Renew a steadfast spirit within me” (he desires to have God at the center of his life and to serve him faithfully again).**

3. **“Do not cast me away from Your presence” (Saul had been cut off from God because of his sin; David did not want this to happen to him).**

4. **“Do not take your Holy Spirit from me” (2 Sam. 23:2).**

IV. DAVID VOWED TO SERVE GOD IF RESTORED (12-17).

A. He would teach transgressors God’s ways.

1. **He would not glory in the things of the past, but use them to warn others (1 Cor. 10:12; 1 Peter 4:3,4).**

2. **The most zealous soul-winners were once the vilest of sinners such as Paul (1 Timothy 1:12,13).**

B. If God would deliver him from the guilt of bloodshed, he would praise God.

1. **David had committed murder (Genesis 9:6).**

2. **In gratitude, he would praise God’s righteousness.**

Conclusion:

1. **David knew the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins (Hebrews 10:4).**

2. **He also understood that one must truly grieve for his sins (2 Cor. 7:10; Matthew 5:4).**

3. **Repent and be baptized so that your sins may be forgiven (Acts 2:38).**

