

Psalm 51

David's Prayer of *Repentance*

I. His *Prayer* for Forgiveness and Cleansing (51:1-2)

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

² **Wash me** thoroughly from **my iniquity**
and **cleanse me** from **my sin.**

II. His *Personal Confession* of Sin (51:3-5)

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

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.**

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

III. His *Petition* for **God's "inward work"** of Renewal (51:6-10)

⁶ Behold, **You desire truth** in the **innermost being**,
and in the **hidden part You** will make me know **wisdom.**

⁷ **Purify me** with **hyssop**, and I shall be **clean**;
Wash me, and I shall be **whiter than snow.**

⁸ **Make me** to hear **joy** and **gladness**,
Let the **bones** which **You** have **broken rejoice.**

⁹ **Hide Your face** from **my sins**
and **blot out** all **my iniquities.**

¹⁰ **Create in me** a **clean heart**, **O God**,
and **renew** a **steadfast spirit** within me.

IV. His *Plea* for **God** to **restore him** to Service (51:11-13)

¹¹ Do **not cast me away** from **Your presence**
and do **not** take **Your Holy Spirit** from **me.**

¹² Restore to me the **joy** of Your *salvation* and sustain me with a *willing spirit*.

¹³ Then I will **teach** transgressors Your ways, and *sinners* will be **converted** to You.

V. His *Passionate* appeal for a **Heart restored to Worship** (51:14-17)

¹⁴ *Deliver me* from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully **sing** of Your righteousness.

¹⁵ O Lord, **open** my lips, That my mouth may declare Your **praise**.

¹⁶ For You **do not** delight in *sacrifice*, otherwise I would give it; You are **not** pleased with *burnt offering*.

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

VI. His *Prayer* for **Israel** (51:18-19)

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

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

Observations
King David's Prayer:
A Plea for true *Repentance*

1. *Repentance* looks to a **gracious** and **compassionate God**, and appeals to **Him** for **forgiveness** and **cleansing** from **sin**. (51:1-2)

“Be **gracious** to me, O God, according to Your *lovingkindness*;..” (51:1a)

“**Wash me** thoroughly from my **iniquity**..” (51:2a)

2. *Repentance* begins by **confessing** that we have **transgressed** and **sinned** against a **holy God**, who is *justified* and *blameless* in His judgments (51:3-5).

- a. **Confessing** our knowledge of *personal transgressions* (51:3)

- b. **Confessing** that our **sins** have been **against Him** (51:4)
 - c. **Confessing** that we are **sinful** by **nature** (51:5), and in our *flesh* “dwells no good thing” (Romans 7:18)
3. **True Repentance** is a **work of God** by which we are **renewed** and **restored** from the *destructiveness* of **sin** in our lives, to a *living* and *holy* relationship with **God**. (51:6-15)
- a. **Who desires** that we would **learn truth** and **wisdom** in our “innermost being” (51:6)
 - b. **Who purifies** and **cleanses us**—**washing us** “whiter than snow” (51:7)
 - c. **Who makes us hear joy** and **gladness**, even after **suffering** from **His discipline** (51:8)
 - d. **Who** “looks away” from our **sins**, and “**blots out all** our **iniquities**” (51:9)
 - e. **Who** “creates” within us a **clean heart**, and **renews** a **steadfast spirit** within us (51:10)
 - f. **Who restores us** to **service** to **Him** through **His presence** and **power** (51:11-13)
 - “Do **not cast me away** from **Your presence** and **do not** take **Your Holy Spirit** from me.” (51:11)
 - **restoring** to us the **joy** of **His salvation (deliverance)** (51:12a)
 - **sustaining** us with a “**willing spirit**” for service (51:12b)
 - > that we might **teach transgressors** the **ways of God** (51:13a)
 - > that we might **convert sinners** to **God** (51:13b)
 - g. **Who delivers us** from the **guilt** of even the **severest of our transgressions** (51:14)
 - h. **Who** “opens our lips” so that we may **worship Him** with **praise** (51:15)
4. **Repentance** that **pleases God** by *offering* to **Him** the “**sacrifices**” of a **broken spirit**, and a **broken** and **contrite heart**. (51:16-17)

Personal Application
Beginning the New Year with
 a **Prayer** for *Repentance*

- A. *Calling* upon a **gracious** and **compassionate God** for **forgiveness** and **cleansing** (51:1-20)
- B. **Confessing** our **transgressions** and **sins** before a **God** who is *just* and *blameless* in **His judgements** (51:3-5)
- C. *Committing* ourselves to **God**, **entrusting Him** to do the “**work**” of **repentance**, **renewal**, and **restoration** in our lives →
- “**blotting out**” of our **sins** and **transgressions**, (51:1,9)
 - **cleansing** and **purifying us** from our **sins**, (51:2, 7)
 - **imparting truth** and **wisdom** in our “**innermost**” **being** (51:6)
 - **restoring joy** and **gladness** in our lives (51:8, 12a)
 - **renewing a steadfast and willing *spirit*** for **service**, (51:10,12)
 - **delivering us** from **guilt**, (51:14)
 - **giving us hearts of praise** and **worship** (51:15)