

“The Eternal Consequences of Sin”
Psalm 51- David’s Song of Repentance
(after his sin with Bathsheba and Nathan’s rebuke of him)

Review 2Sam.11:1-17, with emphasis on the steps that led to David’s sin:

He wasn’t *where* he should have been, v.1;

He was *looking* where he shouldn’t have been looking, v.2;

He *inquired* when he probably shouldn’t have, v.3;

He certainly *did* what he shouldn’t have done, v.4;

He tried to *cover/hide* his sin, vv.6-11;

He tried to *cover/hide* his sin again, vv.12-13;

He *murdered an innocent man*, and several others, to eliminate the obstacle, vv.14-17;

He *callously excused his sin*, v.25; and finally,

He *took the object of his affection*, v.27.

It is not the intent of this particular lesson to do an exhaustive exegesis of the passage, nor to do more than provide some select observations from its particulars, and the psalm as a whole, from some the specific words and phrases employed.

A. Note the words David used to describe *his sin*:

Transgressions, vv.1,3

Iniquity, vv.2,9

Sin, vv.3,4,9

Evil, v.4

Bloodguiltiness, v.14

He doesn’t bother with the modern, watered-down substitutes:

“*Mistake*” as if we accidentally turned left instead of right;

“*Error in Judgment*” as if we guessed wrong (in a game);

“*Blunder*” as if we tripped over something in the dark;

“*Misstep*” as if we accidentally rolled an ankle on the side of the walk;

“*Oversight*” as if we were looking for the right course, but just failed to see it.

All of these, though probably appropriate in some other applications, seem to be subtle efforts to “re-label” **sin** as something much less condemning and much more self-justifying or excusing.

B. Note the words David used to describe *God* and His *attributes*:

(Keep in mind that he used these terms post-condemnation from Nathan, God’s prophet, and therefore, **after** realizing his sin **and it’s consequences**, cf. 2Sam.12:14.)

Lovingkindness, v.1

Compassionate, v.1

Just, v.4

Blameless (or pure), v.4

Righteous, v.14

These are probably not the words those who would use *mistake, error, blunder, misstep, or oversight* to describe their own “sin” would use to describe God or His sentence **after** receiving this judgment. Instead:

They would probably cry “foul” and say how “unfair” it was **of God** to allow others to suffer for “my mistakes,” rather than realizing how tragically “**my**” sin had affected others, cf. Matt.18:6-7. It is all about accountability and accepting responsibility, even in tragic circumstances, cf. 2Sam.12:13-15.

They might want to “*curse God and die*” as per Job’s wife’s advice to him amidst tragedy and loss, but neither was this David’s desire, 2Sam.12:16-18.

They might even use suicide to escape the realities of the burden to be carried in the future, but this was not how David responded, cf. 2Sam.13:19-23.

C. Note specifically for what it was that David asked:

Grace, v.1

Blot out (of transgressions), vv.1,9

Wash and Cleanse, vv.2,7,10

Purify, v.7

Spiritual healing, v.8

Renewal, v.10

Restoration, vv.11-12

Deliverance, v.14

Blessings to the Kingdom, vv.18-19

Note that all of these refer to *spiritual* rather than *physical* restoration, with the possible exception of vv.18-19, which certainly refers to *the kingdom of Israel* more than David himself, even if they are considered to be *physically-oriented* pleas.

Now again, is this the kind of specific requests made by one who has a) tried to mitigate “sin” by calling it something less self-incriminating; or, b) found fault with God’s judgment and punishment more so than their own sin?

D. Finally, note the words with which David pledges himself to God’s purposes in the future:

My sin is ever before me, v.3; cf. 1Cor.15:9-10

Teach transgressors Thy ways, v.13a; cf.1Pet.2:9

Sinners will be converted to Thee, v.13b; 2Tim.2:2

My mouth may declare Thy praise, v.15; Heb.13:12-15

Conclusion:

Perhaps these things give us a good indication as to why David was “a man after God’s own heart,” Acts 13:22. And they certainly give us a format on how to regard and deal with our sin!

