

Psalm 51 – Thursday, October 11th, 2018

- I have really been looking forward to Psalm 51 for quite some time now because it's a powerful Psalm concerning brokenness.
 - This because, David has finally come to the place of a broken and contrite heart over his sin of both adultery and even murder.
 - In order for us to better understand this Psalm of repentance, I think we would do well to have a little bit of the backstory first.
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- We have the account of this in 2 Samuel 12, which I want for us to reacquaint ourselves with before we go through Psalm 51.
 - It all started when David made the catastrophic decision to remain in Jerusalem instead of going to battle as kings did in spring.
 - This led to one particular evening when he couldn't fall asleep then gets up and notices Bathsheba bathing on the roof close by.
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- In spite of the warnings David sends for her lies with her and she returns to her home, and it would appear he gets away with it.
 - That is until Bathsheba sends a message to David that she is pregnant with his child. Then David's response is just disastrous.
 - Instead of confessing his sin David seeks to cover up his sin and in so doing ties the hands of God's forgiveness and cleansing.
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- It's hard to imagine but David not confessing and choosing to cover it up instead would bring about such horrific consequences.
 - Namely, this unwanted pregnancy, then subsequently the death of this precious baby, not to mention the murder of one Uriah.
 - If this weren't bad enough his son rapes his daughter, one son murders another son and there's a rebellion by his son Absalom.
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- Be that as it may, David's cover up Plan A is met with utter and total failure when Uriah doesn't do what he had hoped he'd do.
 - More specifically, the plan to get Uriah to have relations with his wife in order to cover up Bathsheba's pregnancy as being his.
 - Interestingly, we're told not just that he didn't sleep with her we're told why. He couldn't enjoy his wife while Israel was in battle?
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- Instead of repenting, which he could have done at this point, David resorts to getting Uriah drunk so his resolve is weakened.
 - However, David has underestimated the commitment and character of his faithful servant and loyal soldier who will not give in.
 - As one said, David was drunk with lust and slept with Bathsheba, and hoped making Uriah drunk with wine would do the same.
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- Sadly, when this plan fails, David writes a letter and has Uriah himself carry it to Joab, not knowing that it's his death sentence.
 - Joab then places Uriah on the front line per David's instructions, which ultimately leads to his murder in David's cover up effort.
 - One might think that alas, David's plan has finally succeeded in muting the voice of Uriah who alone could testify against him.
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- Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth; now, the enemy is rejoicing at David's fall, little by little, over the 20-years.
 - In other words, David didn't go from lust to adultery to deception to murder overnight rather, it took place over a period of years.
 - Then there's Bathsheba, who goes along with David's scheme even though her husband has now been murdered by her lover.
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- This makes me wonder about Bathsheba. The question to me is; I wonder if she's relieved at the news of her husband's death?
 - If you really think about it, she is complicit in this act of adultery and as such, would have been punished for this capital crime.
 - Instead, she seems to go from adulterous to victim and widow overnight, and with her, David is a hero instead of a murderer.
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- Another question I have is; does Bathsheba know that David arranged for her husband to be murdered so he could cover it up?
 - Some suggest that she did not know and just assumed he had become a casualty of war, and that she herself is not culpable.
 - Well, regardless of what she knew or didn't know David marries her and she gives birth to a son, after a period of nine months.
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- 2 Samuel 12:1-9, 13-14** - 1 Then the LORD sent Nathan to David. And he came to him, and said to him: "There were two men in one city, one rich and the other poor. 2 The rich man had exceedingly many flocks and herds. 3 But the poor man had nothing, except one little ewe lamb which he had bought and nourished; and it grew up together with him and with his children. It ate of his own food and drank from his own cup and lay in his bosom; and it was like a daughter to him. 4 And a traveler came to the rich man, who refused to take from his own flock and from his own herd to prepare one for the wayfaring man who had come to him; but he took the poor man's lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him." 5 So David's anger was greatly aroused against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, the man who has done this shall surely die! 6 And he shall restore fourfold for the lamb, because he did this thing and because he had no pity." 7 Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8 I gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your keeping, and gave you the house of Israel and Judah. And if that had been too little, I also would have given you much more! 9 Why have you despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in His sight? You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. ...13 So David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die. 14 However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die."
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- I find it rather interesting that God would first mention the occasion David's sin has given God's enemies to blaspheme Him.
 - He mentions this consequence even before He does the second one, which is the death of David's son born to Bathsheba.
 - The question becomes, why? I believe for David, this would have been worse than anything else, even his own son's death.
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- To me, this explains why David had a heart after God's own heart, and it also explains why he had a broken and contrite heart.
 - Enter Psalm 51, which gives us a glimpse into the heart of David during this dark night of his soul, receiving mercy from God.
 - What I would like to do is read through this Psalm in it's entirety, then by way of observation draw from it personal application.

Psalm 51 -- To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David When Nathan the Prophet Went to Him, After He Had Gone in to Bathsheba. 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. 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. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may 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. 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 uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart— These, O God, You will not despise. 18 Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.

- I should probably begin by saying that I would be grossly remiss were I not to mention the best teaching I've ever heard on this.
- It's from my favorite Bible teacher pastor Damian Kyle of Calvary Chapel Modesto California, titled "Blessing from Brokenness."
- I would really encourage you to go online to their website and avail yourself of this teaching, which has been a blessing to me.

- What follows is an abbreviated teaching of sorts that comes from many years of my own personal experience, in this regard.
- While those seasons of brokenness were very painful and difficult, I would not trade my closeness with the Lord for anything.
- It's what's been called the "dark night of the soul," but God!!! Weeping lasts for the night, but God brings joy in the morning.

- One of the things I'm learning is brokenness and contrition brings us closer to God in ways that we could not otherwise know.
- It's when God has us all to himself, as it were, that He's able to do that deep work in our hearts that He couldn't otherwise do.
- Such is the case with David here in this beautiful Psalm before us. What follows are just four things that come from brokenness.

1. Humility before God

- I'm struck by David humbling himself before the Lord in repentance for his sin against the Lord, asking for mercy from the Lord.
- If pride comes before a fall, and it most certainly does, then so too can humility come after the fall, as it does with David here.

Proverbs 11:2 - When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.

2. Compassion for people

- If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the best lessons learned from brokenness, compassion for others would be it.
- The reason being is when God brings us through difficult and painful experiences in our lives, we feel for others in their lives.
- Actually, it's those very painful experiences that give us the right to speak into the life of others because we've got through it.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 - 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. 5 For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. 6 If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. 7 And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.

3. Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit

- There's much in the way of confusion when in verse eleven David prays that God would not take His Holy Spirit away from him.
- It's my belief that what David is asking for is that God would continue to speak in that still small voice of the Holy Spirit to him.
- I believe this because of what he says next about restoring the joy of his salvation, which is the fourth thing from brokenness.

4. Joy of our salvation

- It's important to understand that David did not lose his salvation, or the Holy Spirit with it; rather he lost the joy of his salvation.
- I suppose you could see it and say it this way, he lost the joy of his salvation because he lost the fruit of joy of the Holy Spirit.
- Thankfully, when there's a godly sorrow that leads to a genuine repentance and brokenness, the joy of the Holy Spirit returns.

5. Praise to the Lord

- In verses fourteen and fifteen, David declares his tongue will sing aloud of God's righteousness as he shows forth His praise.
- I would suggest that the blessing from brokenness leads to our praising and thinking God for His amazing grace and mercy.
- I cannot think of a better note to end a Bible study with than that of the paramount importance of praising God for His goodness.