

# Psalm 51:10-19 Commentary

Ps 51:10 **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 [sustain](#) me with a [willing spirit](#).

13 Then I will [teach transgressors](#) Your [ways](#), and [sinners](#) will be [converted](#) to You.

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](#).

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](#). (NASB: Lockman)

- Verbs in red are imperatives
- Words in blue link to short Strong's definition

Psalm 51:10 **Create** in me a clean heart, O God, And **renew** a steadfast spirit within me:

- **Create**: 2Co 5:17 Eph 2:10
- **clean**: Ps 73:1 Pr 20:9 Jer 13:27 32:39 Eze 11:19 18:31 36:25-27,37 Mt 5:8 Ac 15:9 1Pe 1:22
- **renew**: Ro 12:2 Eph 4:22-24 Col 3:10 TitUS 3:5
- **right**: or, constant, Ps 78:8,37 Jos 14:14 1Ki 15:3-5 Ac 11:23 1Co 15:58 Jas 1:8)

## ELOHIM, CREATOR FIXER OF HEARTS BROKEN BY SIN

**Create in me a clean heart** is a prayer we all would do well to pray daily and even many times during the day for a clean heart is a non-negotiable condition for communion with God. When David prayed for a clean heart, God answered affirmatively. How do we know? Because the lasting legacy of David is not a man with an unclean heart, but "a man after God's own heart." (Acts 13:22).

It is fitting that this verse is the "center" of Psalm 51 for it serves to emphasize the centrality of the state of our heart in all our interactions with God.

**Create** (imperative mood) ([01254](#)) (**bara'**) has the basic meaning "to create", to bring into existence (first use Ge 1:1) and God is the subject of the majority of the OT uses of **bara'** (exceptions - Josh 17:15, 18 = "clear away")! Only God can "**create**" out of nothing (See Genesis passages below - also Dt 4:32, Ps 89:12, 89:47, Isa 40:26, 43:1 Ezek 21:30; 28:13, 15)! In the context of cutting covenant with Israel, God says He will "perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth." (Ex 34:10). Bara describes the "entirely new thing" God brought about by opening the earth to swallow Korah and his family into Sheol (Nu 16:30). Ps 102:18 describes a "people yet to be created" who will praise the LORD, which anticipates the divine intervention in the future on behalf of Zion (cf Ps 102:13, 16-17, cf Isa 4:5). Ps 104:30-[note](#) speaks of God creating life in nature by giving breath.

It should be noted that **bara'** does not always describe creation out of nothing (Josh 15:17, 17:18 = "cut"), but can also stress forming anew, reforming, renewing (Ps 51:10 Isa 43:15, 65:17). In most of the uses the verb **bara'** describes the divine activity of fashioning something new, fresh, and perfect. In Ge 2:3 the use of "created and made" suggests that **bara'** conveys more than just making something.

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **bara'** in Ps 51:10 with the Greek verb **ktizo** and in fact uses this same verb to translate **bara'** in all of the Psalms (Ps 89:12, 47-[note](#), Ps 102:18-[note](#), Ps 104:30-[note](#), Ps 148:5-[note](#)). **Ktizo** which means to bring something into existence or call it into being something that has not existed before. In the NT **ktizo** is used only of God's creativity (man = Mt 19:4, 1Co 11:19, Dt 32:6, creation = Mk 13:19, Col 1:16, Re 4:11, Ex 9:18, Dt 4:32, Creator = Ro 1:25, "re-creation" of men, of his dead spirit = regeneration = Eph 4:24, of the church = Eph 2:15). **Ktizo** is used in Ephesians 2:10-note "For we are His workmanship, **created** (ktizo) in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

All of the uses of **bara'** in Genesis, the book of beginnings are translated in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** with the verb [poieo \(see Vine's discussion\)](#) which basically means to make and is used by Jesus to describe God's creative activity (Mt 19:4 quoting Ge 5:2)

(Gen 1:1) In the beginning God **created** (**Lxx = [poieo](#)**) the heavens and the earth.

(Gen 1:21) God **created** (**Lxx = [poieo](#)**) the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

(Gen 1:27) God **created** (**Lxx = [poieo](#)**) man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

(Gen 2:3) Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had **created** (**Lxx = [poieo](#)**)

and made (Note: **Lxx** translated "created and made" with a single verb **poieo**).

(Gen 5:1) This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God **created** man, He made him in the likeness of God.

(Gen 5:2) He **created** (**Lxx** = **poieo**) them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.

(Gen 6:7) The LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have **created** (**Lxx** = **poieo**) from the face of the land, from man to animals to creeping things and to birds of the sky; for I am sorry that I have made them."

In Ps 51:10, clearly David is asking for God to perform a miracle, a supernatural work in his heart, something only God can accomplish. The whole of David's spiritual being had, as it were, fallen into "moral chaos", and he was in dire need of a pure heart, a child-like assurance that he could approach His Father, a confidence that could only be brought about by a supernatural work of God. **Only God can "fix" a heart that has been broken by the destructive effects of sin!**

Creation is an action that only God can take and so David appeals to God to "Create a pure heart out of nothing." He is not asking God to reform him, for there is nothing in him out of which a genuinely pure heart could be formed! He was born in sin and his sin was ever before him. We are all sinners like David and thus this prayer is a plea for what we all need.

**NAS Usage:** brings about(1), clear(2), create(6), created(32), creates(1), creating(3), Creator(4), cut them down(1), make(2), produced(1).

**Bara** - 45v -

Ge 1:1, 21, 27; 2:3f; 5:1, 2; 6:7; Ex 34:10; Nu 16:30; Dt 4:32; Josh 17:15, 18; Ps 51:10; 89:12, 47; 102:18; 104:30; 148:5; Eccl 12:1 (**Lxx** = **ktizo**); Isa 4:5; 40:26, 28; 41:20; 42:5; 43:1, 7, 15; 45:7, 8, 12, 18; 48:7; 54:16; 57:19; 65:17, 8; Jer 31:22; Ezek 21:19, 30; 23:47; 28:13, 15; Amos 4:13; Mal 2:10

In Isaiah 57 God uses the verb **bara'** declaring...

For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite. For I will not contend forever, Neither will I always be angry; For the spirit would grow faint before Me, And the breath of those whom I have made. Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain I was angry and struck him; I hid My face and was angry, And he went on turning away, in the way of his heart. I have seen his ways, but I will

heal him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners, **Creating** (bara') the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near," Says the LORD, "and I will heal him." But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud. There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked." (Isa 57:15 16 17 18 19 20 21)

**Comment:** In the context, Jehovah's creation of praise is coming from a revived heart, a contrite heart like David displayed in psalm 51. Such a heart provides the fertile soil in which Elohim does His supernatural creative work of revival and restoration.

Psalm 102 (also one of the traditional penitential psalms [Ps 6,32,38,51,102,130,143]) uses **bara'** to describe one of the purposes of God's creation (to praise the LORD which would explain David's desire for a new heart).

This will be written for the generation to come; That a people yet to be **created** may praise the LORD. (Ps 102:18)

**Vine** - **bara** (01254 ,אָבַרַ), "to create, make." This verb is of profound theological significance, since it has only God as its subject (**Ed**: Actually not the case - bara' used in Josh 17:15, 18). Only God can "create" in the sense implied by bara. The verb expresses creation out of nothing, an idea seen clearly in passages having to do with creation on a cosmic scale: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Ge. 1:1; cf. Gen. 2:3; Isa. 40:26; 42:5). All other verbs for "creating" allow a much broader range of meaning; they have both divine and human subjects, and are used in contexts where bringing something or someone into existence is not the issue. **Bara** is frequently found in parallel to these other verbs, such as asah, "to make" (Isa. 41:20; 43:7; 45:7, 12; Amos 4:13), yatsar, "to form" (Isa. 43:1, 7; 45:7; Amos 4:13), and kun, "to establish." A verse that illustrates all of these words together is Isa. 45:18: "For thus saith the Lord that created [bara'] the heavens; God himself that formed [yatsar] the earth and made [asah] it; he hath established [kun] it, he created [bara] it not in vain, he formed [yatar] it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else." The technical meaning of bara (to "create out of nothing") may not hold in these passages; perhaps the verb was popularized in these instances for the sake of providing a poetic synonym. **Objects of the verb include** the heavens and earth (Gen. 1:1; Isa. 40:26; 42:5; 45:18; 65:17), man (Gen. 1:27; 5:2; 6:7; Dt. 4:32; Ps. 89:47; Isa. 43:7; 45:12); Israel (Isa. 43:1; Mal. 2:10); a new thing (Jer. 31:22); cloud and smoke (Isa. 4:5); north and south (Ps. 89:12); salvation and righteousness (Isa. 45:8); speech (Isa. 57:19); darkness (Isa. 45:7); wind (Amos 4:13); and a new heart (Ps. 51:10). A careful study of the passages where bara occurs shows that in the few non-poetic uses (primarily in Genesis), the writer uses scientifically precise language to demonstrate that God brought the object or concept into being from previously nonexistent material. **Especially striking is the use of bara in Isaiah 40-65.** Out of 49 occurrences of the verb in the OT, 20 are in these chapters. Because Isaiah writes prophetically to the Jews in Exile, he speaks words of comfort based upon God's past benefits and blessings to His people. Isaiah especially wants to show that, since Yahweh is

the Creator, He is able to deliver His people from captivity. The God of Israel has created all things: "I have made [asah] the earth, and created [bara] man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded" (Isa. 45:12). The gods of Babylon are impotent nonentities (Isa. 44:12-20; 46:1-7), and so Israel can expect God to triumph by effecting a new creation (Isa 43:16-21; 65:17-25). **Though a precisely correct technical term to suggest cosmic, material creation from nothing, bara is a rich theological vehicle for communicating the sovereign power of God, Who originates and regulates all things to His glory.**

Some commentaries seem to suggest that David was asking God to give him his initial salvation experience but I agree with Derek Kidner who observes that...

David's early history and the language of Ps 51:11, 12 show that this is not an unregenerate man's request, but a prayer for holiness (cf. Ps 51:11b). ([Psalms 1-72 Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries](#) or [Logos](#))

**Boice** goes on to explain that "It is an important part of dealing with sin that we confess it and experience the cleansing of God on the basis of Christ's atoning sacrifice. But in addition to this we need to be remade if we are to keep from sin and live to God. A great problem with many Christians is that they seem to be satisfied continuing to live as they always have, even at times much as they lived before they became believers. What we need is the creation of a new heart and its constant renewal." (Genesis: An Expository Commentary)

**J Vernon McGee** - "I need a new heart," David said. "Create in me a new heart," and the word **create** means "out of nothing." In other words, there was nothing in David's heart that God could use. He was not asking for renovation or reformation. He was asking for something new. Sometimes we hear the invitation, "Give God your heart." May I ask you, "What do you think God wants with that old dirty, filthy heart of yours?" He doesn't want it. God is not asking anybody to give Him his heart. He wants to give you a new one. That's what He wants to do. (**Thru the Bible Commentary**)

**Boice** - In other words, as Derek Kidner writes, "With the word **create** he asks for nothing less than a miracle." He desires what only God can provide.

Don't miss the foundational truth that for one to have a **winsome witness** for the Gospel, he must begin with a "**clean heart**" from God, a heart which then is moved to teach transgressors and see sinners converted to God. (Ps 51:13) Saved sinners filled with the Spirit make great evangelists to unsaved sinners.

**Spurgeon** - "**Create.**" What! has sin so destroyed us, that the Creator must be called in again? What ruin then doth evil work among mankind! "Create in me." I, in outward fabric, still exist; but I am empty, desert, void. Come, then, and let Thy power be seen in a new creation within my old fallen self. Thou didst make a man in the world at first; Lord, make a new man in me!

**Martin Luther** explains create in me a clean heart...

He is not talking about some momentary operation, but about the continuation of a work that has been begun; as though he were to say: "Thou hast begun Thy work in me so that I trust Thy mercy. Therefore what Thou hast begun, now complete. Confirm, O God, what Thou hast done in me. (Luther's Works, Vol. 12 : Selected Psalms I)

**Clean** ([02889](#)) (**tahor**) means pure, clean, purified, genuine, unalloyed (God's Word in Ps 12:6). "It is applied concretely to substances that are genuine or unadulterated as well as describing an unstained condition of a spiritual or ceremonial nature... **Clean** most frequently describes the purity maintained by avoiding contact with other human beings, abstaining from eating animals, and using things that are declared ceremonially clean. Conversely, cleansing results if ritual procedures symbolizing the removal of contamination are observed." (Vine)

**Tahor** is a Hebrew adjective which occurs ninety-four times and is used in a **material** sense as of "pure" gold, in a **ritual** sense, and in a **ethical** sense. The idea of **tahor** is the identification and distinction of those things (utensils, places, people) that were culturally pure, capable of being used in, or taking part in the religious rituals of Israel. The Lord decreed that Israel must mark off the clean from the unclean (Lev. 10:10; 11:47; Job 14:4). While clean things were considered normal, unclean things were considered polluted, but could be restored to purity (Lev 13:13). However some things, especially certain animals were permanently unclean (Lev. 11:7, 26, 29-31). The deeper sense of tahor was in God's desire that His people be morally pure ("Your eyes are too **pure** to approve evil" = Hab 1:13), and so after his sin with Bathsheba, David asked God to create in him a **clean** heart. (Ps 51:10).

First use is to describe the "clean" (ceremonially, ritually) animals Noah was to take on the Ark (Ge 7:2) and was to use for burnt offerings (Ge 8:20).

Most of the 28 uses of **tahor** in Exodus refer to "pure (tahor) gold" God required for the articles used in worship (eg, Mercy Seat Ex 37:6, Frankincense, perfume, incense Ex 30:34, 35, 37:29, etc). **It follows that if God required pure materials in the construction of the worship center, how much more would he desire (and require) pure, clean hearts to worship in that center! This principle is axiomatic and timeless! How many worship services are attended by men and women who are involved in willful known sins, of which they refuse to confess and repent (and be made clean like David, cf 1John 1:9-[note](#))?**

Most of the 20 uses in Leviticus refer to clean versus unclean (especially offerings), speaking of "ceremonial" cleanness (eg, a "clean place" in Lev 4:12-note, clean animal Lev 20:25-note, etc). When persons were clean, they could eat clean meat, but an unclean person could not (Lev. 7:19-note). The 7 uses in Numbers all refer to a (ceremonially) "clean" person (eg, Nu 5:28, etc) and contact with a human corpse was especially defiling so that contact with it made a person unclean for seven days (Nu 19:11).

**Vine** - God demands that His people have **spiritual and moral purity**, unsullied by sin.

Anyone not clean of sin is subject to divine rejection and punishment. This contamination is never outgrown or overcome. Because sin pollutes one generation after another, Job asks: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" (Job 14:4). All outward appearances to the contrary, it cannot be said that there is "one fate...for the clean, and for the unclean" (Eccl. 9:2). Hope is available even to the chief of (unclean) sinners, because any man can entreat the mercy of God and say: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). In sharp contrast with mankind's polluted nature and actions, "the words of the Lord are pure words" (Ps 12:6). The Lord is "of purer eyes than to behold evil" (Hab. 1:13)... Cleansing rituals emphasized the fact that the people were conceived and born in sin. Though conception and birth were not branded immoral (just as dying itself was not sinful), a woman who had borne a child remained unclean until she submitted to the proper purification rites (Lev 12). Leviticus 15 prescribes ceremonial cleansing for a woman having her menstrual flow, for a man having seminal emissions, and for "the woman also with whom man shall lie with seed of copulation" (Lev. 15:18). To be ceremonially "clean," the Israelite also had to abstain from eating certain animals and even from touching them (Lev 11; Dt. 14:3- 21). After the Israelites settled in the Promised Land, some modifications were made in the regulations (Dt. 12:15, 22; 15:22). **Purification rites frequently involved the use of water.** The person to be cleansed was required to wash himself and his clothes (Lev. 15:27). Water was sprinkled on the individual, on his tent, and on all its furnishings: "A clean person shall take hyssop and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it on the tent and on all the furnishings and on the persons who were there, and on the one who touched the bone or the one slain or the one dying naturally or the grave." (Nu 19:18). Sometimes the person being cleansed also had to change garments (Lev. 6:11). **However, the rites were not meritorious deeds, earning God's favor and forgiveness. Nor did the ceremonies serve their intended purpose if performed mechanically. Unless the rites expressed a person's contrite and sincere desire to be cleansed from the defilement of sin, they were an abomination to God and only aggravated a person's guilt.** Anyone who appeared before Him in ritual and ceremony with "hands...full of blood" (Isa 1:15) and did not plead for cleansing of his crimes was judged to be as wicked as the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. Zion's hope lay in this cleansing by means of an offering (Isa. 66:20).

The **Septuagint** uses the adjective **katharos (see word study)** which describes that which is clean and free of adulterating matter and is the opposite of **rhuparos** (dirty, foul - see study of derivative word **rhuparia**).

**NASB Usage:** clean(51), pure(40), purity(1), unclean\*(2), who is clean(1).

**Tahor** - 88v -

Ge 7:2, 8; 8:20; Ex 25:11, 17, 24, 29, 31, 36, 38f; 28:14, 22, 36; 30:3, 35; 31:8; Ex 37:2, 6, 11, 16f, 22, 23, 24, 26, 29; 39:15, 25, 30, 37; Lev 4:12; 6:11; 7:19; 10:10, 14; 11:36, 37, 47; 13:13, 17, 37, 39, 40, 41; 14:4, 57; 15:8; 20:25; 24:4, 6; Nu 5:28; 9:13; 18:11, 13; 19:9, 18, 19; Deut 12:15, 22; 14:11, 20; 15:22; 23:10; 1 Sam 20:26; 1Chr 28:17;



2Chr 3:4; 9:17; 13:11; 30:17; Ezra 6:20; Job 14:4; 17:9; 28:19; Ps 12:6; 19:9; 51:10; Pr 15:26; 22:11; 30:12; Eccl 9:2; Isa 66:20; Ezek 22:26; 36:25; 44:23; Hab 1:13; Zech 3:5; Mal 1:11

**Jesus** explains the infinite value of a **clean heart** declaring...

Blessed are the pure ("clean" = same word as used in Lxx here in Ps 51:10 = **katharos**) in heart, for they shall see God. (Mt 5:8- note)

**Comment:** Surely this is what David desired.

**Solomon** alludes to the value of a **clean heart** charging us...

**Watch over** (command) your **heart** with all diligence, (Why? term of explanation) for from it flow the springs of life. (Pr 4:23- see in depth discussion of this important verse)

**Play Keith Green's classic vocal version of David's prayer -**

- [Create in me a clean heart](#)
- [Or listen to this country music version - very nice](#))
- [Another vocal](#)
- [Maranatha Singers](#))

**Charles Horne** - The purification and renovation of the heart and spirit of man is a work to which that power only is equal, which, in the beginning, created all things, and, in the end, will create all things new.—" A right spirit is renewed within us," when the affections turn from the world to God, and charity takes the place of concupiscence (strong desire, lust, coveting of carnal things). ([Psalm 51 Commentary](#))

**J R Miller** - Next he prays for renewal of heart: "**Create in me a pure heart, O God.**" He has discovered the black fountain of sin in his life, pouring up its defiling waters and polluting all his soul. He cannot himself purify this black well, and he brings it to God that He may purify it. The word "**create**" shows that David understood the necessity of a divine work in him, a work nothing less than a new creation. ([Devotional Hours with the Bible](#))

**Heart** ([03820](#))(**leb**) almost always is used in Scripture in the figurative sense to describe the center of reason, the deepest seat of one's emotions and decisions. In Hebrew, the heart of something referred to the center of that entity. I like to think of the heart as our "control center" think of the vital function of "air traffic controllers") The **heart** is the part of our being where we desire, deliberate, and decide. The **heart** has been described as "the place of conscious and decisive spiritual activity," "the comprehensive term for a person as a whole; his feelings, desires, passions, thought, understanding and will," and "the center of a person. The place to which God turns." The **heart** is sometimes used as the symbol for the whole, inner, spiritual aspect of a person.

When God sent the plagues against Egypt, it was Pharaoh's **heart** that was hardened; meaning his "will" (Ex. 9:7). When King David's son, Absalom wanted to turn the allegiance



of the people from David to himself, the Bible says that he "stole the **hearts** of the men of Israel"; meaning their allegiance (2Sa 15:6). God sent the worldwide flood on mankind because He "saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his **heart** was only evil continually" in this context clearly referring to mankind's moral mindset (Ge 6:5). When David numbered his soldiers in disobedience to God, the Bible tells us that his "**heart** condemned him"; meaning his conscience (2Sa 24:10). King Rehoboam was said to be an evil king, "because he did not prepare his **heart** to seek the LORD" which speaks of his inner priorities and commitments (2Chr 12:14). In sum, the heart is the whole "inner-life", that part of us where our thought-life, our values, our drives, our choices, and our sense of right and wrong all find their seat and origin.

**Blaise Pascal** - We come to know truth not only reason, but still more so through our hearts.

**John Calvin** - Men never entertain a real hatred towards sin unless God illuminates their minds and changes their hearts.

## **SIN: THE WORM IN THE APPLE**

Sin is to the heart like a worm is to an apple and explains David's plea for a clean heart. The worm gets into the apple when the mother worm lays her egg in the apple blossom, which then hatches in the "heart" of the apple. That's what sin is like -- it begins at the core of our being, our heart, and "eats" its deceptive, destructive way into our thoughts, our words and our deeds. Do not be deceived by sin -- even the "little worms" that are not dealt with quickly can cause big destruction! David confessed some "big worms" to God, but in so doing he gives us a beautiful template by which we may confess any and all of our "worms" (big or little, they are all "big" to a holy God) and seek His favor to create in us a clean heart. Hallelujah for the Cross of Christ, which makes confession, contrition, cleansing and creation of a new heart our ever present path to restored fellowship, joy and peace in Christ.

**Bill Gaither Trio's rendition** (old fashioned gospel singing but very nice) of [\*\*A Perfect Heart\*\*](#)

**J Henry Jowett** on **heart** - "Heart" comprehends not only feeling, but intellect and will. It suggests the impulsive; the sphere of the emotions and sympathy, of hatred and of love. It suggests the directive; the realm of plans and of judgment, the sphere and home of thought. It suggests the executive; the power which prosecutes purpose, the forces of persistence and resistance; the offensive and defensive energies of the life. The dominion of the heart is inclusive of the threefold sovereignty of emotion, intellect and will. A clean heart is, therefore, very much more than refined and sensitive feeling. It is also inclusive of illumined and clarified discernment; of healthy and wholesome will. "Create within me a clean heart" is a very wealthy and comprehensive prayer; make my feelings like clean fire, make my thought like a sea of glass. Make my will like a loyal soldier, incapable of mutiny. How is this splendid aim to be gained? By an act of creation. "Create in me a pure heart, O

God.” There is something in creation that is revolutionary: it is the gift of a seed. John Stuart Mill said that a revolutionary force entered into his life on the day he came to know the lady who was afterwards to be his wife. The experience is a commonplace in ordinary life. Intimacies mark the beginnings of revolutions. A father says, “It was a bad day when my lad became intimate with such a one,” and he mentions the name with bitterness and shame. But why a bad day? A revolutionary force got hold of him, bad principle possessed him. The seed of devilry was implanted, which worked itself out in all manner of unworthiness and sin. The first step in the creation of devilry is to become related to one. On the good side and on the bad the revolutionary in life is occasioned by the establishment of a new relationship. The first requisite in the creation of the Godlike life is relationship with God. Life is revolutionized when man comes into conscious communion with his Maker. Let me illustrate. Here is a reservoir supplying the needs of a great town. The waters become poisoned and defiled. The vast mains become the agents of destruction, the vehicles and purveyors of disease. Epidemics break out. Pestilence abounds. Let me assume that on pure and unpolluted heights there are discovered unmeasured resources of water, clean and undefiled. Let us assume that we could connect the corrupted mains with the clean and wholesome flood. The linking of the two would be the beginning of a revolution. The epidemic would not be obliterated in a day, even with the opening of the crystal flood. But in the revolution would be the potency of health. And here am I, a member of a race, down whose waterways flow currents of diluted and defiled life. That truth is not only proclaimed in the Scripture, it is the doctrine of modern science. One calls it the legacy of Adam, the other the bequest of heredity. “In Adam all die;” the elements of corruption are transmitted; the reservoir from which I drink has been defiled. Now let us assume that I could become related to some reservoir in the heights, some pure river of water of life. How then? What I bespeak as an assumption has been proclaimed as a gospel. I can change the reservoirs; “as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” The heredity can be changed; “heirs of Adam,” we can become “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” The first element in the new creation is a new relation. We become “new creatures” when we become “one with Christ.” The revolution is succeeded by evolution. Becoming the “heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ,” I am subjected to a discipline which is intended to develop all the wealth of my inner life. The discipline is intended to discharge the twofold ministry of instruction and chastening. (J. H. Jowett, M. A.)

**God** - Hebrew word **Elohim (see study)**, the Name of God which is intimately linked with Creation.

**Spurgeon - Renew a right spirit within me.** It was there once, Lord, put it there again. The law on my heart has become like an inscription hard to read: new write it, gracious Maker. Remove the evil as I have entreated thee; but, O replace it with good, lest into my swept, empty, and garnished heart, from which the devil has gone out for awhile, seven other spirits more wicked than the first should enter and dwell. The two sentences make a complete prayer. “Create” what is not there at all; “renew” that which is there, but in a sadly feeble state.

**Renew** (imperative) ([02318](#)) (**chadash/hadas**) means to make new, to restore, to repair, to renovate or reconstruct ("renew the kingdom" ~ the altar = 1Sa 11:14, restored the altar = 2Chr 15:8, restore the house of Jehovah, the Temple = 2Chr 24:4, 12, surface of the ground = Ps 104:30). The idea is to make like new and implies a restoration to a former state of something which has become faded or disintegrated (in David's case in Ps 51:10, this would refer to the effects of unconfessed sin). To begin again.

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **chadash/hadas** here in Ps 51:10 with the Greek verb **egkainizo** (most of the words used to translate the Hebrew uses are derivatives of the great word **kainos**) which means to give newness to something (in Ps 51:10 to David's innermost spirit). **Egkainizo** describes King Asa's restoration of the altar (a place for meeting with God) of the LORD in 2Chr 15:8. **Egkainizo** is also used in 1Ki 8:63 where it conveys the sense of to dedicate (Solomon and all the people dedicated the Temple to the LORD. Cp similar use 2Chr 7:5.) Hebrews 9:18 and Hebrews 10:20 use **egkainizo** with the sense of to inaugurate. Isaiah refers to an eschatological renewal in the last days (Isa 61:4).

We would all do well to pray Jeremiah's prayer for renewal after destruction of God's City and Temple (for us after sin has wreaked havoc on our body, heart, soul and spirit, God's Temple today, our bodies)...

**Restore** (imperative) us to You, O LORD, that we may be restored;  
**Renew** (chadash; Lxx = **anakainizo** = renew, restore) our days as of old (Lam 5:21)

**NASB Usage:** renew(5), renewed(1), repair(1), restore(3), restored(1).

**Chadash/hadas** - 10v - 1Sa 11:14; 2Chr 15:8; 24:4, 12; Job 10:17; Ps 51:10; Ps 51:12 (Lxx = apodidomi) Ps 103:5 (Lxx = anakainizo); Ps 104:30 (Lxx = anakainizo); Isa 61:4 (Lxx = kainizo); Lam 5:21 (Lxx = anakainizo)

**Jamieson - Renew** implies that he had possessed it (**Ed:** And by "default" was indeed a genuine OT believer.); the essential principle of a new nature had not been lost, but its influence interrupted (Lk 22:32); for Ps 51:11 shows that he had not lost God's presence and Spirit (1Sa 16:13), though he had lost the "joy of his salvation" (Ps 51:12), for whose return he prays.

**Perowne** comments that a **steadfast spirit** refers to

one that is firm in faith, not easily swayed hither and thither through its own weakness or by the blasts of temptation, and therefore also firm and constant in obedience. ([The book of Psalms](#))

Regarding a **steadfast spirit**, **Darby** describes it as...

a fixed, settled, spirit within me - one that calmly, settledly thinks on God, the heart's only object, and peacefully counts and waits on Him. The soul thus taught cannot do without the presence of God.

## (Practical Reflections on the Psalms - Book 2)

**C H Spurgeon** (Morning and Evening) speaks on the sinners continual need for a steadfast spirit noting that...

A backslider, if there be a spark of life left in him will groan after restoration. In this renewal the same exercise of grace is required as at our conversion. We needed repentance then; we certainly need it now. We wanted faith that we might come to Christ at first; only the like grace can bring us to Jesus now. We wanted a word from the Most High, a word from the lip of the loving One, to end our fears then; we shall soon discover, when under a sense of present sin, that we need it now. No man can be renewed without as real and true a manifestation of the Holy Spirit's energy as he felt at first, because the work is as great, and flesh and blood are as much in the way now as ever they were. Let thy personal weakness, O Christian, be an argument to make thee pray earnestly to thy God for help. Remember, David when he felt himself to be powerless, did not fold his arms or close his lips, but he hastened to the mercy-seat with

### **Renew a right spirit within me.**

Let not the doctrine that you, unaided, can do nothing, make you sleep; but let it be a goad in your side to drive you with an awful earnestness to Israel's strong Helper. O that you may have grace to plead with God, as though you pleaded for your very life-

### **Lord, renew a right spirit within me.**

He who sincerely prays to God to do this, will prove his honesty by using the means through which God works.

Be much in prayer; live much upon the Word of God; kill the lusts which have driven your Lord from you; be careful to watch over the future uprisings of sin.

The Lord has his own appointed ways. Sit by the wayside and you will be ready when He passes by.

Continue in all those blessed ordinances which will foster and nourish your dying graces; and, knowing that all the power must proceed from him, cease not to cry,

### **Renew a right spirit within me.**

**F B Meyer** in his devotional **Our Daily Homily** has the following thoughts about renewing a steadfast spirit...

Perhaps a **steadfast spirit** is our chief need: especially so as we gird up our loins for a new stretch of pilgrimage. We do not need nobler ideals. They flash over our souls. We read of Browning kissing, on each

anniversary of his wedding, the steps by which his bride went to the marriage altar; and we vow to lift our wedded life higher. We read of Henry Martyn mourning that he had devoted too much time to public work, and too little to private communion with God; and we vow to pray more. We recall the motto written on Green the historian's grave at Mentone, "He died learning;" and we vow that each day shall see some lesson learnt from the great store of Truth. We read those noble words of W. C. Burns, "Oh to have a martyr's heart, if not a martyr's crown;" and we vow to give ourselves absolutely to witness and suffer for Jesus.

**But, alas! our ideals fade within a few hours, and the withered petals are all that remain. We need the steadfast spirit.**

But this God can give us by His Holy Spirit. He can renew our will from day to day, and infuse into us His own unaltering, unalterable purpose. He can make possible, obedience to the apostolic injunction, "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." (1Co 15:58-note) Hear what comfortable words the Apostle Peter says: "The God of all grace, who called you unto his eternal glory in Christ, after that ye have suffered a little while, shall Himself restore, establish, and settle you." (1Co 5:10-note) Then we shall move resolutely and unfalteringly onward; like Columbus, undaunted by discouragement, we shall cross unknown seas, till the scent of the land we seek is wafted across the brief intervening distance.

## **PRAYER FROM A BROKEN HEART**

**Thomas Reade** (1841) offers a great prayer in his notes on Psalm 51:10...

For your name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity; for it is great." Psalm. 25:11

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10

David's plea must be mine; "O Lord pardon my iniquity for it is great." Also the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner." And Peter's cry, "Lord, save me! or I perish."

With shame and confusion of face I look up unto You, Oh! bleeding Lamb, for having slighted Your goodness, and loving-kindness towards me. Take away this earthliness from my mind; this coldness from my heart; this insensibility to the things of God. Preserve me from a secret alienation of heart; from a growing lukewarmness. Do not allow the enemy to triumph over me. Allow me not to fall from You.

Adorable Jesus! I acknowledge my vileness, my worthlessness, my

ingratitude. But, oh! let me still hope in Your mercy; still plead the merit of Your blood; still expect Your renewing strength; still long, and look, for the visits of Your grace. I am a sinner, and You died to save sinners.

You are the Rock of Ages, the everlasting Strength. Endue me with power from on high to overcome all my indwelling corruptions, which, like a thick cloud, intervene between my soul and You, the Sun of Righteousness, and thus prevent the rays of Your consolation from gladdening my heart, and making me to abound in the fruits of righteousness. To whom can I look- to whom can I go, but unto You, O Friend of sinners. Lord, I come invited by Your word. I come at Your sweet call, for pardon, peace, and holiness. You delight to save. O make me willing to be saved in Your way, and on Your terms. May I have grace to receive salvation as the gift of grace, and to plead for mercy as a lost sinner, through Your all-prevailing Name and merits.

You, O Jesus, are exalted "to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins;" and shall I not praise You for such infinite love, such abounding grace to the chief of sinners? O give me a heart to praise You. Stir up my languid desires. Inflammé my cold affections. Set my whole soul on fire with holy love. Lord! I am sorely grieved, that I love You so little; that my affections move so slowly towards You. But, You give more grace. O bestow it upon me in richer abundance, that so I may live more to Your glory, and to the comfort of my own soul, until joy shall be complete, and love perfected, in Your presence and glory.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." What reason I have continually to complain of a barren heart. Did I say barren? Is it not full of evil? And, yet, it is a barren heart still, destitute of that love and humility, and those heavenly affections, which dwell in every child of God. Oh! how I long to be a real, sincere disciple of Jesus Christ. It is easy to make a profession of religion; that may be done by fallen nature; but to possess the Spirit of Christ, can only be enjoyed by those whom Sovereign Grace endues with so great a benefit.

Oh! that I knew how to estimate the blessings of salvation. Lord, enlighten my mind to see more clearly the riches of Your grace, the wonders of Your love, and the greatness of Your mercy, as manifested to perishing sinners, in Christ Jesus. O allow me to taste Your goodness, and relish those sublime truths, which are revealed in Your holy word. How painful, that I should be so little affected by the agony and bloody sweat, the Cross and passion, of my suffering Redeemer. Why is not my soul all on fire, when I think of Your love? Why is it not melted into tears, when I think of my dying Savior? Am I harder than the rock in Horeb? Colder than the northern ice? Lord! Smite my rocky heart with

the rod of your loving-kindness; dissolve my frozen affections, by the melting beams of Your grace.

Ah! "When shall I be made clean? When shall it once be." Lord grant that it may be now. This night I may be in eternity. O! blessed Jesus, hasten Your glorious work of sanctification in my soul. Alas! what cause have I to complain of that dead sea which lies within. Oh! that the living waters from the sanctuary may flow into my corrupted heart; that pure streams may constantly issue from it into my life and conversation.

How distressing are evil thoughts. How dreadful is the perception of such subtle wickedness, insinuating itself into the mind, and fixing its abode for days, in opposition to strivings, prayers, and tears! Lord lift up Your arm. "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered." Bid the powers of darkness to depart from me; or, if these thoughts arise from the corruption of my fallen nature, O! Remove this dreadful cause, by plunging me into the fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness; by sitting as a refiner's fire; and by consuming, through Your grace, the dross of sin. Then shall I be holy and happy, peaceful and full of joy. ([Reference](#))

**John MacDuff** prays...

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."—Psalm 51:10

Almighty God, who has mercifully preserved me during the unconscious hours of slumber, I desire to dedicate my waking moments and thoughts to You. Pre-occupy my mind with hallowed and heavenly things. May I be enabled throughout this day, by the help of Your Holy Spirit, to exclude all that is vain and frivolous and sinful, and to have my affections centered on You, as my best portion and chief joy. As Your Spirit of old brooded over the face of the waters, may that same blessed Spirit descend in all the plenitude of His heavenly graces, that the gloom of a deeper moral chaos may be dispersed, and that mine may be the beauty and happiness and gladness of a soul that has been transformed "from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God."

Forbid, blessed Lord! that I should be resting in anything short of this new creation. May my old nature be crucified; and, as one alive from the dead, may I "walk with Jesus in newness of life." May the new life infused by Your Spirit urge me to higher attainments and more heavenly aspirations. May I be enabled to see the world in its true light—its pleasures fading, its hopes delusive, its friendships perishable. May I be more solemnly and habitually impressed by the surpassing



magnitude of "the things not seen." May I give evidence of the reality of a renewal of heart by a more entire and consistent dedication of the life. May my soul become a temple of the Holy Spirit; may "Holiness to the Lord" be its superscription. May I be led to feel that there can be no true joy but what emanates from Yourself, the fountain and fullness of all joy—the God in whom "all my well springs" are.

Whatever may be the discipline You are employing for this inward heart-transformation, let me be willing to submit to it. Let me lie passive in the arms of Your mercy, saying, "Undertake for me." May it be mine to bear all, and endure all, and rejoice in all—adoring a Father's hand, and trusting a Father's faithfulness—feeling secure in a Father's tried love.

Blessed Jesus! anew would I wash in the opened Fountain. The new heart, like every holy blessing I can ask, is the purchase of that blood which You so freely shed. May it be sprinkled on my guilty conscience. May I ever know what it is to be living on a living Savior, bringing all-emptiness to all-fullness—the unworthiness of infinite demerit to the worthiness of all-sufficient, all abounding, grace and mercy.

Shine upon my ways. May I this day get nearer heaven. May I feel at its close that I have done something for God—something to promote the great end for which existence was given me—the glory of Your holy name. Bless all my beloved friends. Unite us together in bonds of holy fellowship here; and at last, in Your presence, may we be permitted to drink together of the streams of everlasting love. And all I ask is for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Cause me to hear Your loving-kindness in the morning, for in You do I trust." ([FOR RENEWAL OF HEART](#))

**Wilson** - O, the wonder of it! When my heart has been washed by the blood of Jesus Christ, the bloodstains on my hands disappear as though they had never been. When my heart is pure my hands are clean. I can open my hands in the very presence of the Lord. And when the call rings out, Who may stand in His holy place?, with confidence, I can reply, "I may. By the blood of Jesus Christ, I may." For my heart is pure and my hands are clean. (**Journey into holiness**)

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## HINTS FOR PASTORS AND LAYPERSONS

### 1) The change to be effected.

A clean heart.

A right spirit.

### 2) The power by which it is accomplished.

A creative power, such as created the world at first.

A renewing power, such as continually renews the face of the earth.

### **3) The acquirement of these blessings. The prayer, "Create," etc.**

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**J Evans** writes on a **clean heart**...

#### **I. INQUIRE INTO THE MEANING OF A CLEAN HEART, or the proper ingredients and expressions of such a temper of soul.**

1. A fixed habitual abhorrence of all forbidden indulgences of the flesh. This is that which principally constitutes a clean heart; and from this all the other fruits and expressions of such a temper will proceed.
2. All past impurities, either of heart or life, will be reflected on with shame and sorrow (Jeremiah 31:19; Ezekiel 16:63; 20:42, 43).
3. A clean heart imports that the heart is actually freed in a good measure from impure thoughts and irregular desires; or at least that they are not entertained with pleasure and delight. He cannot be at rest till they are dispossessed and gone.
4. A clean heart discovers itself by a cautious fear of the least degrees of impurity. He dares not allow himself to go to the utmost bounds of things lawful, because he reckons himself to be then upon a precipice.
5. A clean heart necessarily implies a careful and habitual guard against everything which tends to pollute the mind (Proverbs 4:23-note). All loose and vicious company will be avoided as much as may be by those who have a clean heart. Intemperance will be carefully avoided by those who have an earnest concern to maintain their purity.

#### **II. REPRESENT THE OBLIGATIONS THAT LIE UPON US TO SEEK AFTER SUCH A PURITY OF HEART.**

1. A ruling inclination to sensuality is directly contrary to the purity and holiness of the Divine nature.
2. Sensuality has a special tendency to extinguish the light of reason, and to unfit for anything spiritual and sacred.
3. Sensuality is most contrary to the design and engagements of Christianity. Our Lord inculcated the strictest purity upon all His disciples; not only an abstinence from gross outward acts, but from polluting thoughts and desires (Mt 5:27, 28-note, Mt 5:29, 30-note).
4. The blessed hope with which Christianity inspires us, lays us under a forcible engagement to present purity.

(1) Those of the contrary temper are absolutely excluded, by the express

declarations of the Gospel, from the kingdom of God (1Cor 6:9, 10).

(2) On the contrary, the promise of the future blessedness is most plainly made to the pure in heart (Matthew 5:8- note).

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**Fresh** - What do you think of when you hear the word fresh? When the weather is nice, my husband and I enjoy going to the farmers market so we can buy produce that was picked that very morning. To me, fresh means just-harvested fruits and vegetables—not stale or spoiled, but crisp and full of exquisite flavor.

I need that kind of freshness in my relationship with God. I can have too many stale attitudes—impatience, criticism, and selfishness—and not enough “longsuffering, kindness, ... gentleness,” which are “the fruit of the Spirit” (Gal 5:22, 23).

As David repented of the sin in his life, he prayed, “Create in me a clean heart.” Then he petitioned God: “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation” (Ps 51:10, 11, 12). Confession and repentance of our sin renews our fellowship with the Lord and allows us to joyously begin anew.

What better time than today to ask God to give you a newness of spirit, a freshness of faith, and a renewed appreciation of Him!

Lord, we want the fruit of our lives to always be “fresh and flourishing” (Ps 92:14). Help us to experience Your love, compassion, and faithfulness that are “new every morning” (Lam 3:22,23). Amen. — by Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Master is seeking a harvest  
In lives He’s redeemed by His blood;  
He seeks for the fruit of the Spirit,  
And works that will glorify God.

—Lehman

**To bear good fruit,  
clear out the weeds of sin.**

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**Spiritual Heart Care** - You’re up at the crack of dawn, doing your exercises. You’re not going to let your heart get weak! You’ve trimmed the fat from your diet. You get regular cholesterol checks. And you’re exercising four times a week to keep your cardiovascular system in peak condition.

But you’ve let your spiritual heart turn to mush. Preoccupied with the temporary, you’ve neglected the eternal. You seldom read the Bible anymore. Your prayers are lists of requests to God to make your life more comfortable and pain-free. By the time you reach

the church door after the sermon, you can't recall what the pastor said because you were thinking about something else.

If this describes you, it's time to get into a spiritual heart-care program. It begins where David (a man after God's own heart) was in Psalm 139—by acknowledging that God knows all about your heart. It continues in Psalm 51:10, "Create in me a clean heart, O God." And it results in the prayer of Psalm 19:14, "Let... the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord."

Taking care of your body makes sense, but it makes even more sense to gain spiritual fitness by walking with the Lord. That's an exercise program with eternal value! — by David C. Egner

Dear Jesus, take my heart and hand,  
And grant me this, I pray:  
That I through Your sweet love may grow  
More like You day by day.  
—Garrison

**To keep spiritually fit,  
keep walking with the Lord.**

---

### **Gracious God, My Heart Renew**

Gracious God, my heart renew,  
Make my spirit right and true;  
Cast me not away from Thee,  
Let Thy Spirit dwell in me;  
Thy salvation's joy impart,  
Steadfast make my willing heart.

Sinners then shall learn from me  
And return, O God, to Thee;  
Savior, all my guilt remove,  
And my tongue shall sing Thy love;  
Touch my silent lips, O Lord,  
And my mouth shall praise accord.

Not the formal sacrifice  
Has acceptance in Thine eyes;  
Broken hearts are in Thy sight  
More than sacrificial rite;  
Contrite spirit, pleading cries,  
Thou, O God, will not despise.

Prosper Zion in Thy grace  
And her broken walls replace:  
Then our righteous sacrifice  
Shall delight Thy holy eyes;  
Free-will offerings, gladly made,  
On Thine altar shall be laid.

### **Give Me a Clean Heart**

**Psalm 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me:**

- **Cast:** Ps 43:2 71:9,18 Ge 4:14 2Ki 13:23 17:18-23 23:27 2Th 1:9
- **take:** Ge 6:3 Jud 13:25 15:14 16:20 1Sa 10:10 16:14 2Sa 7:15 Isa 63:10,11
- **holy:** Lk 11:13 Jn 14:26 Ro 1:4 8:9 Eph 4:30)

### **THE ROTTEN FRUIT OF SIN: SEPARATION FROM GOD LOSS OF FELLOWSHIP**

**Do not cast me away** - Clearly this implies David had previously experienced God's presence. The Septuagint uses *aporripto* meaning to cause a sudden or forcible separation (used in Acts 27:43). Many commentators feel that David was recalling the fate of his predecessor's disobedience and failure to repent of his sin...

Now the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord terrorized him. Saul's servants then said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you. (1Sa 16:14, 15)

**Comment:** Beware of the unconfessed sin potentially exposing you to the influences of an evil spirit! This may not be a principle, but it certainly is a possibility. There are several NT occasions where God turned people over to demons or Satan for judgment (see Acts 5:1, 2 3; 1Co 5:1-7; 1Ti 1:18, 19, 20).

**Cast... away** ([07993](#))(**shalak/salak**) means to throw, fling, hurl, cast, as in Ge 21:15 and Nu 35:20. Throw often implying intensity or violence (Ge 37:20). Reject, to thrust behind the back, no longer have a relationship as before (1Ki 14:9; Ne 9:26; Eze 23:35) **Shalak/salak** can mean to cast away in the sense of getting rid of something that hinders (sin = Ezek. 18:31; fetters = Ps. 2:3). Shalak/salak describes God's rejection (2Ki 17:20; 24:20). In a figurative use, the psalmist encourages us to "Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." (Ps 55:22-[note](#)) Another figurative use is cast a wrong out of sight and thus forgive. (Isa

38:17). In Ex 32:19, Dt 9:17 Moses casts the tablets of the Law down, depicting Israel's breaking of the covenant. To cast someone or something to the ground may be a gesture of victory over them (Da 8:7). Cast off in the sense of abandon (idols = Ezek 3:1, 20:7-8)

The Lxx translates **shalak** in Ps 51:11 with the verb **aporripto** which means to throw down or away, to cast oneself overboard (Acts 27:43), to cause a sudden or forcible separation (1Pe 5:7, Ps 50:13).

**Herman** - The verb is used in a wide variety of situations ranging from the physical act of throwing an object to the metaphorical use of abandoning or rejecting a person or thing... Another important use of **šālak** is “throw away,” “cast off or out.” In Neh 13:8, Nehemiah throws Tobiah’s things out of the temple. Similarly in Isa 2:20, when God begins to speak in judgment, the idolaters will throw away their idols and run to the caves and rocks. So in Ps 71:9 the Psalmist prays that God will not cast him away (i.e. abandon him) in his old age (cf. also Ps 102:10]).

**Vine** - shalak (7993 ,שָׁלַךְ), “to throw, fling, cast, overthrow.” Its first use in the OT is in Ge 21:15, which says that Hagar “cast the child [Ishmael] under one of the shrubs.” The word is used to describe the “throwing” or “casting” of anything tangible: Moses “threw” a tree into water to sweeten it (Ex 15:25); Aaron claimed he “threw” gold into the fire and a golden calf walked out (Ex. 32:24). Trees “shed” or “cast off” wilted blossoms (Job 15:33). **Shalak** indicates “rejection” in Lam 2:1: “How hath the Lord ...cast down from heaven unto the earth the beauty of Israel.

**NAS Usage:** brings him down(1), **cast**(41), cast it away(1), cast me away(2), cast me off(1), cast them away(1), cast away(5), cast down(2), cast off(1), casts(1), dropped(1), fling(2), hurl(1), hurled(2), left(1), risked\*(1), snatched(1), stretching(1), **threw**(29), threw her down(1), threw his down(1), threw them down(1), threw down(1), throw(13), throw it down(1), throw them away(1), throw away(1), thrown(8), thrown away(1), thrown down(1).

**Cathar** - 121 verses -

Ge 21:15; 37:20, 22, 24; Ex 1:22; 4:3; 7:9f, 12; 15:25; 22:31; 32:19, 24;  
Lev 1:16; 14:40; Nu 19:6; 35:20, 22; Dt 9:17, 21; 29:28; Josh 8:29;  
10:11, 27; 18:8, 10; Jdg 8:25; 9:17, 53; 15:17; 2Sa 11:21; 18:17; 20:12,  
21f; 1Kgs 13:24f, 28; 14:9; 19:19; 2Kgs 2:16, 21; 3:25; 4:41; 6:6; 7:15;  
9:25f; 10:25; 13:21, 23; 17:20; 23:6, 12; 24:20; 2Chr 7:20; 24:10;  
25:12; 30:14; 33:15; Neh 9:11, 26; 13:8; Job 15:33; 18:7; 27:22; 29:17;  
Ps 2:3; 22:10; 50:17; 51:11; 55:22; 60:8; 71:9; 102:10; 108:9; 147:17;  
Eccl 3:5f; Isa 2:20; 14:19; 19:8; 34:3; 38:17; Jer 7:15, 29; 9:19; 14:16;  
22:19, 28; 26:23; 36:23, 30; 38:6, 9; 41:9; 51:63; 52:3; Lam 2:1; Ezek  
5:4; 7:19; 16:5; 18:31; 19:12; 20:7f; 23:35; 28:17; 43:24; Da 8:7, 11f;  
Joel 1:7; Amos 4:3; 8:3; Jonah 2:3; Mic 2:5; 7:19; Nah 3:6; Zech 5:8;  
11:13

David although heavily burdened with sin, yet maintains a consciousness of still having the divine presence and a dread of losing it which prompts his prayer.

**Spurgeon - Cast me not away from Thy presence.** Throw me not away as worthless; banish me not, like Cain, from Thy face and favor. Permit me to sit among those who share Thy love, though I only be suffered to keep the door. I deserve to be forever denied admission to Thy courts; but, O good Lord, permit me still the privilege which is dear as life itself to me.

**W Wilson** - Like the leper who is banished from society till cleansed, or as Saul was rejected from being king, because he obeyed not the word of the Lord. 1Samuel 15:23. David could not but feel that his transgression would have deserved a similar rejection. W. Wilson.

**Presence** ([06440](#)) (**paniym**) refers first to the face and is so translated in Ps 34:16. The Septuagint noun is **prosopon** (**pros** = toward + **ops** = eye or face) which is literally the part toward the eye and thus toward the face or countenance of God in the present context.

Only those who have confessed their sin would even desire to **seek the face** of the Holy One of Israel (see Ps 24:6, 27:8, 9, Ps 31:16, Ps 80:3, Ps 80:7, Ps 80:19)

**Your presence** - This is David's great desire and reminds one of his great declaration in Psalm 16:11

Thou wilt make known to me the path of life. **In Thy presence** (paniym) is fulness of joy. In Thy right hand there are pleasures forever.

In **Psalm 69** David requests of God...

**Do not hide Thy face** (paniym) from Thy servant, for I am in distress; answer me quickly. (Ps 69:17)

**Spurgeon:** A good servant desires the light of his master's countenance; that servant, could not bear to lose the presence of his God. The more he loved his Father, the more severely he felt the hiding of his face.

The psalmist in **Psalm 102** beseeches Jehovah...

**Do not hide Thy face** (paniym) from me in the day of my distress; Incline Thine ear to me; In the day when I call answer me quickly. (Ps 102:2)

**Spurgeon:** Do not seem as if thou didst not see me, or wouldst not own me. Smile now at any rate. Reserve Thy frowns for other times when I can bear them better, if, indeed, I can ever bear them; but now in my heavy distress, favor me with looks of compassion.

**Psalm 143...**

Answer me quickly, O LORD, my spirit fails. **Do not hide Thy face** from me, lest I become like those who go down to the pit. (Ps 143:7)



**Spurgeon:** Communion with God is so dear to a true heart that the withdrawal of it makes the man feel as though he were ready to die and perish utterly. God's withdrawals reduce the heart to despair, and take away all strength from the mind. Moreover, His absence enables adversaries to work their will without restraint; and thus, in a second way, the persecuted one is like to perish. If we have God's countenance we live, but if He turns his back upon us we die. When the Lord looks with favor upon our efforts we prosper, but if He refuses to countenance them we labour in vain.

**David pleads with God** that he not lose the closeness of God's face and His Holy Spirit. David understood that in the Christian life, everything depends on our fellowship with the Lord and so was anguished about losing the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Beloved, may we all come to understand that while we are all sons of God by faith in Christ, we are not all enjoying intimate fellowship with our Father. Fellowship depends on our faithfulness (obedience) to God. And so if we like David confess our uncleanness and seek His cleanness and forgiveness, we retain this wonderful sense of intimacy with God. Don't let unconfessed sin rob you of enjoying the intimate presence of the Lover of your soul. The believer's fellowship with God is conditional. Simply stated - If we have unconfessed sin, we cannot enjoy fellowship with God.

**W. Jackson** says **do not cast me away from...**

From Thy protecting presence into danger.

From Thy loving presence into wrath.

From Thy joyous presence into distress.

From Thy affluent presence into destitution.

From Thy gracious presence into despair. Sin hurries us away from God; grace hastens us into his embrace: the former severs, and the latter unites, God and the soul.

**Spurgeon - Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.** Withdraw not His comforts, counsels, assistances, quickenings, else I am indeed as a dead man. Do not leave me as Thou didst Saul, when neither by Urim, nor by prophet, nor by dream, thou wouldst answer him. Thy Spirit is my wisdom, leave me not to my folly; He is my strength, O desert me not to my own weakness. Drive me not away from Thee, neither do Thou go away from me. Keep up the union between us, which is my only hope of salvation. It will be a great wonder if so pure a Spirit deigns to stay in so base a heart as mine; but then, Lord, it is all wonder together, therefore do this, for Thy mercy's sake, I earnestly entreat Thee.

**Take** ([03947](#)) (**laqah**) is a frequent verb in Hebrew (>900x) in the present context means to remove from David's presence.

**The Holy Spirit** is agreed by most commentators to be a clear reference to the third Person of the Godhead (Father, Son, Holy Spirit).

**Boice** writes...

Today most commentators recognize that David is not talking about eternal security or the fear of losing his salvation at all. He is only acknowledging that he is unable to live a holy life without God. Therefore, he needs the help and power of the Holy Spirit every single moment if he is to be able to overcome temptation and follow after godliness. J. J. Stewart Perowne writes along these lines, explaining, "It is the cry of one who knows, as he never knew before, the weakness of his own nature, and the strength of temptation, and the need of divine help." Alexander Maclaren has the same idea in mind when he says, "The psalmist is recoiling from what he knows only too well to be the consequence of an unclean heart—separation from God."

**Psalm 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit:**

- **Restore:** Ps 85:6-8 Job 29:2,3 Isa 57:17,18 Jer 31:9-14
- **joy:** Ps 13:5 21:1 35:9 Isa 49:13 61:10 Lk 1:47 Ro 5:2-11
- **Sustain** Ps 17:5 19:13 119:116,117,133 Isa 41:10 Jer 10:23 Ro 14:4 1Pe 1:5 Jude 1:24
- **willing:** Ro 8:15 2Co 3:17 Ga 4:6,7)

**Restore to me** - Personal plea for restoration, implying that he desires to return to a place with God that he has experienced in the past. **Restore** is in the imperative mood in the Hebrew, which is amazing to me that finite beings could approach God using the imperative mood. On the other hand it surely reflects how incredible is the privilege to us as His children who "have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand" (Ro 5:2-note), an entree which makes available to every sinning saint the boldness and "confidence to (approach) the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need." (Heb 4:16-note). Oh, how we should be overwhelmed with gratitude for God's mercy and lovingkindnesses that allow us to use the imperative mood in our prayers to Him!

**Restore** (same as **renew** in Ps 51:10) ([02318](#)) (**chadash/hadas**) means to make like new and implies a restoration to a former state of something which has become faded or disintegrated (in David's case the joy destroyed by the deadly effect of unconfessed sin). To begin again (Reminds me of Jesus call to the church at Ephesus to repent and return to their first love - Rev 2:4-[note](#), Rev 2:5-[note](#)).

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translate **chadash/hadas** not with the Greek verb egkainizo (used to translate chadash = renew in Ps 51:10) but with the verb **apodidomi [word study]** which means to pay back or give back, to restore to an original possessor.

**Spurgeon - Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation.** Salvation he had known, and had known it as the Lord's own; he had also felt the joy which arises from being saved in the Lord, but he had lost it for awhile, and therefore he longed for its restoration. None but God can give back this joy; He can do it; we may ask it; He will do it for His own glory and our benefit. **This joy comes not first, but follows pardon and purity:** in such order it is safe, in any other it is vain presumption or idiotic delirium.

**Joy of your salvation** - What a beautiful truth - salvation brings joy. Not happiness (which comes from hap which depends on what happens) but joy which is supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-note) and is present independent of adverse circumstances or manifold afflictions. Note he is not praying to restore his salvation but the **joy** of it! He had not lost his salvation but he had lost the **joy** and we will also when we sin and fail to confess and seek forgiveness.

**Joy** (used in Ps 51:8) ([08342](#)) (**sason** from **sus** = to exult, rejoice) almost universally it speaks of human happiness and abounding delight. **Sason** describes "a state of happiness, with a focus on making sounds and expressions of joy." (Swanson)

**Baker** - It refers to joy, exultation toward God's King (Ps. 45:7); given to God's people (Ps. 51:8, 12); in His own people at deliverance (Ps. 105:43); over the testimonies and laws of God (Ps. 119:111). God is the joy of His people (Isa. 12:3). Joy will be removed from a rebellious people (Jer. 7:34; Joel 1:12). In God's restoration of His people, joy will be abundant (Zech. 8:19).

**Sason** is used in the great verse...

Jeremiah 15:16 Your words were found and I ate them, And Your words became for me a **joy** (Lxx = euprosune = joy, gladness) and the delight of my heart; For I have been called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts.

The **Septuagint (Lxx)** translates **sason** with a variety of Greek words - here the word **agalliasis** See agalliamas in Isa 22:13, 35:10, 51:3, 51:11. These words describe great exultation or extreme joy (He 1:9-note). See study of the related verb **agalliao** which pictures on jumping for joy! Some uses of sason are translated with **euphraino** (Jer 7:34).

**NAS Usage:** gaiety(1), gladness(3), joy(15), joyously(1), rejoicing(2).

Sason - 22v - Esther 8:16f; Ps 45:7; 51:8, 12; 105:43; 119:111; Isa 12:3; 22:13; 35:10; 51:3, 11; 61:3; Jer 7:34; 15:16; 16:9; 25:10; 31:13; 33:9, 11; Joel 1:12; Zech 8:19

**Wiersbe** writes...

Nehemiah 8:10 says that the joy of the Lord is our strength. When you enjoy doing something, the enjoyment gives you sufficient strength to do the task. On the other hand, all of us have tasks to perform that we don't enjoy. We do them out of duty and because it's the right thing to do, but they don't provide the strength that comes from joy. We need

the joy of the Lord to witness for Him. Joy shows unsaved people that it is worthwhile to know Jesus. He is the Power for our service...

Joy and willing obedience go together. When you enjoy doing something or when you enjoy the person for whom you are doing it, you serve willingly. David is saying, "I have been in bondage because I have not confessed my sin. Therefore, I lost my joy and my willing spirit. I lost that real delight that comes from obeying God." How can you restore joy? Confess your sin. Then look to Jesus Christ, not yourself. If you look at yourself, you won't rejoice. But if you look to Him, you will rediscover the joy of His salvation. God intends that you rejoice in your salvation. **Have you lost the joy of your salvation? Do you miss the delight that comes from obeying the Lord? Make sure your life is free from sin, and then ask Him to restore your joy. ([Lost Joy](#))**

**Salvation** (Lxx = soterios = bringing salvation, delivering, rescuing) (03468) (**yesha'/yesa'**) means deliverance, rescue, liberty, welfare, salvation (cp 2Sa23:5 where we see David in the midst of strife appeal to God's salvation based on his covenant relationship).

**Yesha'/yesa'** is used by Micah who declares...

But as for me, I will watch expectantly (Lxx = epiblepo = look intently) for the Lord; I will wait (Lxx = **hupomeno**) for the God of my salvation (yesha'/yesa'; Lxx = **soter** = a Savior, One who rescues, delivers, preserves, clearly a reference to the Messiah!). My God will hear me. (Mic 7:7).

**Boice...**

As long as David was living in sin he had no joy. His fellowship with God was broken (**Ed**: The Holy Spirit, the believer's source of joy, was grieved, cp Ep 4:30-note). Now that he has repented of his sin, found (Ed: experienced divine) cleansing, and is seeking a renewed spirit, he wants to have that joy again. How relevant to many people's thinking today. Many think that the way to joy or a good time is by sinning. They think that godliness is dull. Actually the opposite is the case.

**Sin brings sorrow.  
Righteousness brings rejoicing.**

Allowed to continue, sin will remove every good thing from our lives—joy, health, wealth, and at last even life itself. Only righteousness will restore them. One commentator notes wisely, "The fact that the psalmist prays for so many things [in Ps 51:7-12] indicates how many things he knew he had lost when he plunged into sin."

**Henry Drummond** - In reality, **joy** is as much a matter of cause and effect as pain. No

one can get **joy** by merely asking for it. It is one of the ripest fruits of the Christian life, and, like all fruits, must be grown. (**Ed**: Grown in a convicted, confessed, repented, clean heart.)

**John Newton** wrote the following poem on **joy**...

Joy is a fruit that will not grow  
In nature's barren soil;  
All we can boast, till Christ we know,  
Is vanity and toil.

But where the Lord hath planted grace,  
And made His glories known,  
These fruits of heavenly joy and peace  
Are found, and there alone.

**Sustain** ([05564](#)) (**samak**) means to uphold as when one places something on a person or an animal and figuratively in this verse it describes God supporting the believer. The Septuagint (Lxx) translates **samak** with **sterizo [word study]** which is used in Peter's description of the stabilizing effect of the God of all grace on those who have suffered for a while (1Pe 5:10-note). David's prayer in this section reminds me of Paul's warning in First Corinthians "let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall." (1Co 10:12). The **only way** a believer can stand in a sin sick world is if God affirmatively answers this prayer for His stabilizing, sustaining Spirit energizing our walk!

**A willing spirit** - David desired for God to make him willing to obey. Some such as Spurgeon see this a reference to the Holy Spirit. While I favor the former, I certainly would not discount the latter interpretation because we would not have a willing spirit unless His Spirit willed it in us! (cp Php 2:13-note). A human spirit that says "Not my will, but Thy will" is possible only by His Spirit's enablement.

The Hebrew word for **willing** is translated in the **Lxx** by the adjective **hegemonikos** (English - hegemony = preponderant influence or authority over others) which pertains to being in a supervisory capacity, guiding or leading, a translation which does suggest that the **spirit** David is referring to is primarily the Holy **Spirit**. Interesting!

**Thomas Alexander** writes that...

A loving mother chooses a fitting place, and a fitting time, to let her little child fall; it is learning to walk, it is getting over confident, it may come to a dangerous place, and if possessed of all this confidence, may fall and destroy itself. So she permits it to fall at such a place, and in such a way as that it may be hurt, wholesomely hurt, but not dangerously so. It has now lost its confidence, and clings all the more fondly and trustingly to the strong hand that is able to hold up all its goings. So this David, this little child of the great God, has fallen; it is a sore fall, all his bones are broken, but it has been a precious and a

profitable lesson to him; he has no confidence any longer in himself, his trust is not now in an arm of flesh (2Chr 32:8). "Uphold me with thy free spirit."

### **Robert Murray M'Cheyne...**

I am tempted to think that I am now an established Christian, that I have overcome this or that lust so long that I have got into the habit of the opposite grace, so that there is no fear; I may venture very near the temptation, nearer than other men.

#### **This is a lie of Satan.**

I might as well speak of gunpowder getting by habit a power of resisting fire, so as not to catch the spark. As long as powder is wet it resists the spark, but when it becomes dry it is ready to explode at the first touch. As long as the Spirit dwells in my heart, he deadens me to sin, so that if lawfully called through temptation I may reckon upon God carrying me through. But when the Spirit leaves me, I am like dry gunpowder. Oh, for a sense of this! (**Ed**: Oh, to continually pray sustain me with a willing spirit!)

**Spurgeon - And sustain me with a willing spirit.** Conscious of weakness, mindful of having so lately fallen, he seeks to be kept on his feet by power superior to his own. That royal Spirit, whose holiness is true dignity, is able to make us walk as kings and priests, in all the uprightness of holiness; and He will do so if we seek His gracious upholding. Such influences will not enslave but emancipate us; for holiness is liberty, and the Holy Spirit is a free Spirit. In the roughest and most treacherous ways we are safe with such a keeper; in the best paths we stumble if left to ourselves. The praying for joy and upholding go well together; it is all over with joy if the foot is not kept (i.e., we don't walk in obedience to the Spirit); and, on the other hand, joy is a very upholding thing, and greatly aids holiness; meanwhile, the free, noble, loyal Spirit is at the bottom of both (joy and holiness).

**J R Miller** - In this prayer for renewal, he pleads also that the Holy Spirit may abide with him, be with him. He remembered Saul's terrible fate, when God took His Holy Spirit from him, and pleaded that the same calamity might not fall upon him. "Do not cast me from your presence, or take your Holy Spirit from me." While he prayed for the continuance of God's Spirit upon him, he prayed also that his own spirit might be **constant, steadfast, and free**—that is, **willing**. In other words, **he desires the spirit of entire consecration to God's will and service.** ([Devotional Hours with the Bible](#))

**F J Austin** outlines this section...

#### **I. Salvation Begets Joy**

- A. The joy of reconciliation.
- B. The joy of possession.
- C. The joy of anticipation.

## II. This Joy Is Lost by Indulgence in Sin

- A. The Christian sometimes falls into sin.
- B. No man can sin and retain his peace of mind.
- C. The departure of joy leaves a vacancy in the heart.

## III. Joy Will Be Restored upon True Repentance

What is true repentance? Not simply fear of punishment; but grief at having broken God's law, and grieved God's Spirit; combined with a desire to live a nobler, purer life. Forgiveness cannot be obtained while sin is retained. (Sermon Outlines on the Book of Psalms)

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**A Lost Experience** - A pastor in Los Angeles visited a man and asked if he was a Christian. "Oh, yes, I was a member of a church in Ohio," he said, "and when I asked for my letter of church membership before coming west, I sat down and wrote out my Christian experience. I took them both and put them in a little box. I would like to show them to you."

But when he got the box, it was evident that a mouse had gnawed its way into the container and destroyed the papers. He said to the pastor, "I have lost my Christian experience and my church letter."

If all that the man lost was those two documents, it was no great loss. Many put great stock in a baptismal certificate or a church letter but have experienced no genuine work of grace in their heart. Only faith in the Savior will provide salvation.

Genuine Christians can also take a warning from this story. Their once vital "experience" may have been "put in a box" and allowed to deteriorate. They have failed to keep it fresh and vibrant by daily fellowship with the Lord through prayer and Bible study.

If this describes you, cry with David, "**Restore to me the joy of Your salvation**" (Psalm 51:12). ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
Show the way that Jesus has trod;  
Then I will tell of Your saving grace,  
Until the day when I see Your face.

—Hess

**Faith in a creed can go stale—  
faith in Christ can be fresh every day.**

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**The Old Tractor** - My friend Gary restores tractors. He told me about an old John Deere that had been sitting in a farmer's field for years. It had served its owner faithfully for decades.

When Gary was finally able to start the tractor, the engine was in such bad shape that it couldn't have pulled a child's wagon, much less a plow. The belts were cracked, the wires were split, the plugs were rusted, and the carburetor was way out of adjustment.

With loving hands, Gary went to work. He replaced the plugs and points and adjusted the carburetor. When he put it all back together and fired it up, its engine purred like a kitten. It can now pull a plow as strongly as it ever did. Under Gary's restorative skill, it will do all it was designed to do.

In Psalm 51, David repented of his sin with Bathsheba and asked God to restore him to the place of fellowship he once enjoyed. He prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God... Restore to me the joy of Your salvation" (Ps 51:10,12).

Through neglect or sin, have you ended up by the wayside spiritually? Turn right now to the Lord. Place yourself in His tender hands. Confess your sin, repent, and ask His forgiveness. He is waiting to restore you to Himself and make you a productive Christian again.

Our sinfulness can sap our joy  
And make us feel far from the Lord;  
Confession and repentance, though,  
Provide the way to be restored.  
—Sper

### **God specializes in restoration**

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**Fresh** - What do you think of when you hear the word **fresh**? When the weather is nice, my husband and I enjoy going to the farmers market so we can buy produce that was picked that very morning. To me, **fresh** means just-harvested fruits and vegetables—not stale or spoiled, but crisp and full of exquisite flavor.

I need that kind of freshness in my relationship with God. I can have too many **stale** attitudes—impatience, criticism, and selfishness—and not enough "longsuffering, kindness, ... gentleness," "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22, 23-note).

As David repented of the sin in his life, he prayed, "**Create in me a clean heart.**" Then he petitioned God: "**Restore to me the joy of Your salvation**" (Ps. 51:10, 11, 12). Confession and repentance of our sin renews our fellowship with the Lord and allows us to joyously begin anew.

What better time than today to ask God to give you a newness of spirit, a freshness of faith, and a renewed appreciation of Him!

Lord, we want the fruit of our lives to always be “fresh and flourishing” (Ps. 92:14). Help us to experience Your love, compassion, and faithfulness that are “new every morning” (Lam. 3:22,23). Amen. --by Cindy Hess Kasper

The Master is seeking a harvest  
In lives He's redeemed by His blood;  
He seeks for the fruit of the Spirit,  
And works that will glorify God.  
—Lehman

**To bear good fruit,  
clear out the weeds of sin.**

**Psalm 51:13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You:**

- **Then:** Ps 32:5,8-10 Zec 3:1-8 Lk 22:32 Jn 21:15-17 Ac 2:38-41 9:19-22 2Co 5:8-20
- **ways:** Ps 25:4,8 Isa 2:3 Ac 13:10
- **converted:** Ps 19:7 Isa 6:10 Jer 31:18 Mt 18:3 Ac 3:19 15:3 26:18-20 Jas 5:19,20)

**Do you think that you have sinned so heinously and horribly against the Almighty that He can never again use you? If so, you are wrong.** This psalm is written for you and this verse clearly answers your question. If you think "God could never use me. You don't know what I've done." then you don't understand what Christ did on Calvary. You have underestimated the breadth and length and height and depth of God's forgiveness and His supernatural power to revive and restore a sinner to service in His Kingdom work! **So what is the "condition"?** Conviction of sin, confession of sin and contrition for sins. In short a broken and contrite heart He will not despise (Ps 51:17).

We see a similar pattern of recognition of one's sinfulness and state of ruin in Isaiah's vision of the high and lifted up Lord (Isa 6:1, 2, 3-note), who responded with a "Woe is me. I am ruined" (Isa 6:5-note). But the gracious God Who is filled with lovingkindness and compassion did not let Isaiah remain in that broken state but cleansed his prophet making him adequate for divine service (cp 2Co 3:5, 6-note), to which the prophet responded "Here am I. Send me!" (Isa 6:8-note). God specializes in using vessels who are broken and emptied of self.

**Then - When?** (See discussion of **expressions of time such as words like "then"**). Clearly David bases this assurance on the fact that God will answer his previous requests affirmatively. When the forgiving, giving God gives us a clean heart, a right spirit, His presence, His enabling Spirit, the joy of our salvation and a willing spirit, **THEN** we will not

just be able to teach, but we will want to teach other transgressors about God's "ways" and how He is mercifully magnanimous to sinners who come to Him with broken and contrite hearts!

**As a corollary, have you ever noticed how you resist or have little desire for witnessing for the Lord when you have unconfessed sin? Sin will always silence our speaking about Christ to sinners.**

**Spurgeon...**

**Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways.** It was his fixed resolve to be a teacher of others; and assuredly **none instruct others so well as those who have been experimentally taught of God themselves.**

**Reclaimed poachers  
make the best gamekeepers!**

Huntingdon's degree of S.S., or Sinner Saved, is more needful for a soul-winning evangelist than either M.A. or D.D. The pardoned sinner's matter will be good, for he has been taught in the school of experience, and his manner will be telling, for he will speak sympathetically, as one who has felt what he declares. The audience the Psalmist would choose is memorable—he would instruct **transgressors** like himself; others might despise them, but, "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind." If unworthy to edify saints, he would creep in along with the sinners, and humbly tell them of divine love. The mercy of God to one is an illustration of his usual procedure, so that our own case helps us to understand His "ways." or His general modes of action: perhaps, too, David under that term refers to the preceptive part of the word of God, which, having broken, and having suffered thereby, he felt that he could vindicate and urge upon the reverence of other offenders.

**William Cowper** writes that in this passage...

We see our duty craves that when we have received mercy from God for ourselves, we should make vantage of it for the edification of others. Every talent received from God should be put to profit, but specially the talent of mercy; as it is greatest, so the Lord requires greater fruit of it, for His own glory, and for the edification of our brethren. Seeing we are vessels of mercy, should not the scent and sweet odor of mercy go from us to others? This duty Christ craved from Peter: "And thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren." (Lk 22:32)

**J R Miller...**

Notice once more in this Psalm, David's thought about serving God. When he had been forgiven and the joy of salvation had been restored

to his heart, he would begin to be a blessing to his neighbors and friends. We cannot bring others to Christ—when we have no joy of forgiveness in our own hearts. But the moment we are forgiven and the joy begins in us—we begin to desire to help others, to teach transgressors God's ways, and to lead sinners back home.

Other suggestions are found in the words which follow.

**The tongue of a forgiven man will sing aloud of God's righteousness.**

**His opened lips will speak forth God's praise.**

The character of the service which God desires from us, is sketched in the closing words—not sacrifice of animals or any possessions. The sacrifice that pleases God—is a penitent spirit and contrite heart.

[\(Devotional Hours with the Bible\)](#)

**Sinners will be converted to You** - Our great and mighty God is able to use our testimony of brokenness and restoration to draw others to be converted to Him.

**Converted** (07725) ([shub/sub](#)) which conveys the basic meaning of movement back to point of departure. To turn, return, go back, do again, restore. **Lxx** translates **shuwb** with **epistrepho** which means to revert, to turn about, to turn around, to turn toward, to return and figuratively to convert. The idea of epistrepho and in this present verse is a definite turn to God in conduct as well as in one's mind.

David uses the same verb **shuwb** in Psalm 19 describing the restorative (reviving Ps 119:25) power of the Word of God, the Law of Jehovah...

The law of the LORD is perfect, **restoring** the soul. (Ps 19:7)

**Spurgeon comments:** Making the man to be returned or restored to the place from which sin had cast him. The practical effect of the Word of God is to turn the man to himself, to his God, and to holiness; and the turn or conversion is not outward alone, "the soul" is moved and renewed. The great means of the conversion of sinners is the Word of God, and the more closely we keep to it in our ministry the more likely we are to be successful. It is God's Word rather than man's comment on God's Word which is made mighty with souls. When the law drives and the gospel draws, the action is different but the end is one, for by God's Spirit the soul is made to yield, and cries, "Turn me, and I shall be turned." Try men's depraved nature with philosophy and reasoning, and it laughs your efforts to scorn, but the Word of God soon works a transformation.

**Dr Barrick** writes...

Even those believers who, like David, were adulterers and murderers might have a writing ministry or deal with people one-on-one in order

to help others escape the shackles of sinful living. ([Psalm 51 Notes](#))

### Spurgeon...

**And sinners shall be converted unto thee.** My fall shall be the restoration of others. Thou wilt bless my pathetic testimony to the recovery of many who, like myself, have turned aside unto crooked ways. Doubtless this Psalm and the whole story of David, have produced for many ages the most salutary results in the conversion of transgressors, and so evil has been overruled for good.

### Charles Horne comments...

He that would employ his abilities, his influence, and his authority, in the reformation of others, must take care to reform himself, before he enters upon the work. "When thou art converted," said Christ to Peter, "strengthen thy brethren."—Luke 22:32. The history of David has "taught" us many useful lessons; such as the frailty of man, the danger of temptation, the torment of sin, the nature and efficacy of repentance, the mercy and the judgments of God, etc. by which many "sinners" have in all ages since been "converted," and many more will be converted, so long as the Scriptures shall be read, and the Fifty-First Psalm recited in the church. ([Psalm 51 Commentary](#))

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## HINTS FOR PASTORS AND LAYPERSONS

### Verse 12-13. A threefold desire.

To be happy -- "Restore," etc.

To be consistent -- "Uphold," etc.

To be useful -- "Then will I teach," etc. W. Jackson.

### Verse 13.

It is not our duty to seek the conversion of others until we are converted ourselves.

The greater enjoyment we have in the ways of God, the more faithfully and earnestly we shall make them known to others.

The more faithfully and earnestly we make them known to others the more they will be influenced by them.

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**Honest Evangelism** - If Christians were more honest about their own sinfulness, they would be more effective in reaching nonbelievers for Christ.

Philip Yancey told of a prostitute, sick and without food, who asked an inner-city Christian worker for help. When he suggested that she should go to a church, she replied, "Church!"

Why would I go there? They'd make me feel worse than I already do!"

We who go to church regularly tend to put on a happy face or look pious on Sunday morning. This may give the impression that we never struggle with temptation or fall short of the high standard we profess. No wonder many street people or down-and-outers who visit church get the feeling that they are the only bad ones there.

This is not to suggest that we should make public all our sinful thoughts and actions. Rather, the solution to this situation begins with total honesty about ourselves like that expressed by David in Psalm 51. If we admit to ourselves our own sinful tendencies and recognize our own capacity for evil, we will not convey a holier-than-thou attitude. Down-and-out sinners will sense this, and God will then be able to use us to "teach transgressors [His] ways" (Ps. 51:13). ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, help us to be honest about our sin  
and our need of Your grace. Help us to be  
the kind of people who draw others to You.

**To know the potential for sin in our own heart  
gives us a more sympathetic heart for sinners.**

**Psalm 51:14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation;  
Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness:**

- **Deliver:** Ps 26:9 55:23 Ge 9:6 42:22 2Sa 3:28 11:15-17 12:9 21:1
- **bloodguiltiness:** Heb. bloods, Eze 33:8 Ho 4:2 Ac 18:6 20:26
- **God:** Ps 38:22 68:20 88:1 Isa 12:2 45:17 Hab 3:18
- **tongue:** Ps 35:28 71:15-24 86:12,1
- (**righteousness:** Ezra 9:13 Ne 9:33 Da 9:7,16 Ro 10:3)

**Young's Literal** - Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God Who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

**Deliver** ([05337](#)) (**nasal**) means to deliver (set free) and is used especially of the power of one entity overcoming the power of another, in this case God over sin (and death - the wages of sin being death).

The **Lxx** translates **nasal** with **rhuomai** [word study] (from **rhúo** = to draw, drag along the ground) means to draw or snatch to oneself and invariably refers to a snatching from danger, evil or an enemy. In the Lxx of Ps 51:14, **rhuomai** is in the aorist imperative, a command calling for urgent attention. This basic idea is that of bringing someone out of severe and acute danger, and so to save, rescue, deliver, preserve. **Rhuomai** emphasizes greatness of peril from which deliverance is given by a mighty act of power. In the NT

**rhuomai** is always associated with God as the Deliverer and with a person as the object of His deliverance. **Rhuomai** was used in a secular writing to describe a soldier going to a wounded comrade on the battlefield and carrying him to safety (he runs to the cry of his comrade to rescue him from the hands of the enemy).

**From bloodguiltiness** - The NET Bible note reads "Heb "from bloodshed." "Bloodshed" here stands by metonymy for the guilt which it produces."

Blood for blood. Deliverance **from bloodguiltiness** is only possible through the blood of our Righteous Redeemer (Play a beautiful rendition of [There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood](#) and take time to ponder the mystery of the infinitely, eternally, precious blood of our Dear Dying Lamb). If you would like to worship a bit longer on the greatness of our Father's love [Think About His Love](#). And then **meditate** on the driving motivation in Paul's life when he explained that it was "the love of Christ" which controlled him, compelled him, constrained him (2Co 5:14-note) to live an "other worldly", supernatural "Galatians 2:20 (note) life".

**Salvation** (08668) (**teshu'ah**) means deliverance, safety, victory which is not by human or fleshly means (cp uses of teshu'ah in Ps 33:17; 108:12; 146:3; Pr 21:31) but by God (cp uses of teshu'ah in 2Chr 6:41; Ps 119:81; 144:10). The **Lxx** translates with the Greek noun **soteria**, which describes the rescue or deliverance from danger, destruction and peril. **Salvation** is a broader term in Greek than we often think of in English. Other concepts that are inherent in **soteria** include restoration to a state of safety, soundness, health and well being as well as preservation from danger of destruction.

**Then** - Always stop and ask "When?" Obviously when God delivers or rescues.

**Joyfully** (07442) (**ranan - see word study**) means to shout for joy or to sing joyfully.

The **Lxx** translates **ranan** with **agalliao** (from **agan** = much + **hallomai** = jump; gush, leap, spring up) which means literally to "jump much", "leap for joy", skip and jump with happy excitement and so to be exceedingly joyful, overjoyed or exuberantly happy.

Joyful singing of God's righteousness reminds one of the NT teaching of Paul of one of the first manifestations of a believer who is filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit (Ep 5:18-note)...

speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual **songs, singing** and **making melody with your heart** to the Lord (Ep 5:19-note)

**Comment:** David's confession set his spirit free and allowed the Holy Spirit to put a song in his heart. Just try to sing joyfully of the righteousness of the Lord when you have unconfessed sin and an unrepentant heart which grieve the Holy Spirit.

**Spurgeon...**

**Deliver me from bloodguiltiness.** He had been the means of the



death of Uriah, the Hittite, a faithful and attached follower, and he now confesses that fact. Besides, his sin of adultery was a capital offence, and he puts himself down as one worthy to die the death. Honest penitents do not fetch a compass and confess their sins in an elegant periphrasis, but they come to the point, call a spade a spade, and make a clean breast of all. What other course is rational in dealing with the Omniscient?

**O God, thou God of my salvation.** He had not ventured to come so near before. It had been, "O God," up till now, but here he cries, "Thou God of my salvation." Faith grows by the exercise of prayer. He confesses sin more plainly in this verse than before, and yet he deals with God more confidently: growing upward and downward at the same time are perfectly consistent. None but the King can remit the death penalty, it is therefore a joy to faith that God is King, and that he is the author and finisher of our salvation.

**And my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness.** One would rather have expected him to say, I will sing of Thy mercy; but David can see the divine way of justification, that righteousness of God which Paul afterwards spoke of by which the ungodly are justified, and he vows to sing, yea, and to sing lustily of that righteous way of mercy. After all, it is the righteousness of divine mercy which is its greatest wonder. Note how David would preach in the last verse, and now here he would sing. We can never do too much for the Lord to whom we owe more than all. If we could be preacher, precentor, doorkeeper, pewopener, footwasher, and all in one, all would be too little to show forth all our gratitude. A great sinner pardoned makes a great singer. Sin has a loud voice, and so should our thankfulness have. We shall not sing our own praises if we be saved, but our theme will be the Lord our righteousness, in whose merits we stand righteously accepted.

**John Calvin** writes...

Deliver me from bloods. The term bloods in Hebrew may denote any capital crime; and in my opinion he is here to be considered as alluding to the sentence of death, to which he felt himself to be obnoxious, and from which he requests deliverance.

**Charles Horne** comments...

The unhappy criminal entreats in this verse, for the divine help and deliverance, as if he not only heard the voice of innocent blood crying from the ground, but as if he saw the murdered Uriah coming upon him for vengeance, like an armed man. If he can but obtain the pardon of this sin, he promises to publish to all the world the righteousness of God, who justifies sinners, and shows mercy to the penitent; though he

must, at the same time, publish likewise his own heinous and horrid wickedness. ([Psalm 51 Commentary](#))

## Augustine

When man uncovers his sin, God covers it. When man cloaks, God strips bare. When man confesses, God pardons.

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**C H Spurgeon - Morning and Evening** - In this SOLEMN CONFESSION, it is pleasing to observe that David plainly names his sin. He does not call it manslaughter, nor speak of it as an imprudence by which an unfortunate accident occurred to a worthy man, but he calls it by its true name, **bloodguiltiness**. He did not actually kill the husband of Bathsheba; but still it was planned in David's heart that Uriah should be slain, and he was before the Lord his murderer.

**Learn in confession to be honest with God.  
Do not give fair names to foul sins.  
Call them what you will.  
They will smell no sweeter.**

What God sees them to be, that do you labour to feel them to be; and with all openness of heart acknowledge their real character. Observe, that David was evidently oppressed with the heinousness of his sin. It is easy to use words, but it is difficult to feel their meaning. The fifty-first Psalm is the photograph of a contrite spirit. Let us seek after the like brokenness of heart; for however excellent our words may be, if our heart is not conscious of the hell-deservingness of sin, we cannot expect to find forgiveness.

Our text has in it AN EARNEST PRAYER-it is addressed to the God of salvation. It is his prerogative to forgive; it is his very name and office to save those who seek his face. Better still, the text calls him the God of my salvation. Yes, blessed be his name, while I am yet going to him through Jesus' blood, I can rejoice in the God of my salvation.

The psalmist ends with A COMMENDABLE VOW: if God will deliver him he will sing-nay, more, he will "sing aloud. " Who can sing in any other style of such a mercy as this! But note the subject of the song-"THY RIGHTEOUSNESS. " We must sing of the finished work of a precious Saviour; and he who knows most of forgiving love will sing the loudest.

**Psalm 51:15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise:**

- **O Lord:** Ge 44:16 1Sa 2:9 Eze 16:63 Mt 22:12 Ro 3:19
- **open:** Ex 4:11 Eze 3:27 29:21 Mk 7:34
- **mouth:** Ps 63:3-5 119:13 Heb 13:15)

**Derek Kidner** notes that...

In the light of verse 14b, the prayer open thou my lips is no mere formula but the cry of one whose conscience has shamed him into silence. He longs to worship freely, gratefully again; and he believes that by the grace of God he will. Seen in its true setting, this heartfelt, humble plea leads the worshipper in one step from confession to the brink of praise.

**Wilson** suggests...

David seems to have the case of the leper before his mind, with the upper lip covered, and only crying unclean, unclean; and he prays as a spiritual leper to be enabled, with freedom and fulness, to publish abroad the praise of his God. W. Wilson.

**John Calvin** - The meaning, usually attached to the expression is, that God would so direct his tongue by the Spirit as to fit him for singing his praises. But though it is true that God must supply us with words, and that if He does not, we cannot fail to be silent in His praise, David seems rather to intimate that his mouth must be shut until God called him to the exercise of thanksgiving by extending pardon. n.

**Spurgeon**...

**O Lord, open Thou my lips.** He is so afraid of himself that he commits his whole being to the divine care, and fears to speak till the Lord unstops his shame-silenced mouth. How marvelously the Lord can open our lips, and what divine things we poor simpletons pour forth under His inspiration! (**Ed**: And what fleshly things when not under His inspiration!) This prayer of a penitent is a golden petition for a preacher. Lord, I offer it for myself and my brethren. But it may stand in good stead any one whose shame for sin makes him stammer in his prayers, and when it is fully answered, the tongue of the dumb begins to sing.

**And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.** If God opens the mouth he is sure to have the fruit of it. According to the porter at the gate is the nature of that which comes out of man's lips; when vanity, anger, falsehood, or lust unbar me door, the foulest villainies troop out; but if the Holy Spirit opens the wicket (gate), then grace, mercy, peace, and all the graces come forth in tuneful dances, like the daughters of Israel when they met David returning with the Philistine's head.

**John Boys**...

O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. As man is a little world in the great, so the tongue is a great world in the little (Jas 3:5). It has no mean; it is either a great evil, or a great good. If good the tongue is a walking library, a whole university of edifying knowledge; but if bad (Jas 3:6), "a world of wickedness." No

better dish for God's public service, when it is well seasoned, but, none worse, when ill handled. So that if we desire to be doorkeepers in God's house, let us entreat God first to be a doorkeeper in our house, that He would shut the wicket (gate) of our mouth against unsavory speech (Ps 141:3), and open the door of our lips, that our mouth may show forth His praise. This was David's prayer, and ought to be our practice, where we observe three points: **Who?** The Lord; **What?** Open my lips; **Why?** That my mouth shall show forth thy praise (Cp interrogation of text with the 5W/H'S).

For the first -- man by himself cannot untie the strings of his own stammering tongue, but it is God only Who opens "a door of utterance." (Col 4:3-note). When we have a good thought, it is (as the school doth speak) *gratia infusa* (in order to make dark); when a good word, *gratia effusa* (in order to give exhilaration); when a good work, *gratia diffusa* (in order to spread out). Man is a lock, the Spirit of God has a key, "which opens and no man shuts;" again, "shuts and no man opens." (Rev 3:7). He opened the heart of Lydia to conceive well (Acts 16:14), the ears of the prophet to hear well (Isa 50:1-11), the eyes of Elisha servant to see well (2Ki 6:17), and here the lips of David to speak well. And therefore, whereas in the former verse he might seem too peremptory, saying, My tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness; he does, as it were, correct himself by this later edition and second speech: O Lord, I find myself most unable to sing or say, but open my lips, and touch my tongue, and then I am sure my mouth shall show forth thy praise.

**Charles Horne** comments...

The mouth which sin had closed, can only be opened by pardon: and to show this, he who came, conferring pardon, caused the tongue of the dumb to speak, and to sing praises to the Lord God of Israel. ([Psalm 51 Commentary](#))

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## HINTS FOR PASTORS AND LAYPERSONS

When God does not open our lips we had better keep them closed.

When He does open them we ought not to close them.

When he opens them it is not to speak in our own praise, and seldom in praise of others, but always in His own praise.

We should use this prayer whenever we are about to speak in his name. "O Lord, open," etc.

**Psalm 51:16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering:**

- **delight:** Ps 51:6 Ex 21:14 Nu 15:27,30,31 35:31 Dt 22:22 Ho 6:6
- **otherwise:** Ps 40:6 50:8 Pr 15:8 21:27 Isa 1:11-15 Jer 7:22,23,27 Am 5:21-23 Heb 10:5,6

**For** - [term of explanation](#). David explains why praise is better, an explanation that continues into the next verse. God is never pleased with sacrifices that reflect external acts of merely "going through the motions" but only delights in worship that flows from a repentant heart.

**You do not delight in sacrifice** - Praise is better than sacrifice. But the key is that the heart must be right with God, for neither praise nor sacrifice is acceptable (pleasing) unless the heart is right! Ritual without genuine repentance is useless.

**Delight** ([02654](#)) (**chaphets**) means to have pleasure, to have favor, to be pleased, to feel great favor towards something and to desire and/or be willing to do something not by force implying voluntary choice. In the OT the idea of **delight** means much more than merely 'to long for' but in Hebrew psychology the whole personality was involved in delight. The idea includes a longing for something that promises enjoyment or satisfaction.

**Swanson** - 1. (qal) desire, want, i.e., have a feeling or attitude to experience or possess an object (Dt 25:7); 2. (qal) delight, take pleasure in, be eager, i.e., have a fondness or affection for an object or experience (Nu 14:8); 3. (qal) be willing, i.e., to do something not by force, implying a voluntary choice (Ru 3:13)

**Leon Wood** - The basic meaning is to feel great favor towards something. Its meaning differs from the parallel roots, āmad, āšaq, and rāâ, in that they connote less emotional involvement. āmad and āšaq are usually translated "desire," and rāâ "accept," favor being based on need, or judgment of approval. In the case of āpē, the object solicits favor by its own intrinsic qualities. The subject is easily attracted to it because it is desirable. A fourth root, gîl, somewhat parallel, connotes even greater emotional involvement. Here the subject gives expression to his delight in a joyful attitude and conduct. The root āpē is used more frequently than the other words, a total of 123 times, including the verb and its derivatives. āpē occurs only in the Qal stem, and it means "to experience emotional delight." This delight may be felt by men or by God. Men are said to experience it in respect to women. Shechem, son of Hamor, had "delight" in Jacob's daughter Dinah (Gen 34:19). The contestants in King Ahasuerus's beauty contest did not return to him after the first viewing unless he had "delight" in them (Esther 2:14). Men also experience it with other men. When King Saul wanted David to marry his daughter Michal, he instructed his servants to inform David that the king had "delight" in him (1Sa 18:22). This delight may be experienced in respect to matters and things. Joab used the word when he asked David why he persisted in having a census taken, or the army mustered (see pāqad), i.e. why he had "delight" in it (2Sa 24:3). The word is also used in reference to people delighting in

certain activities. King Ahasuerus asked Haman what should be done to the man whom the king “delighted” to honor (Est 6:6). Still another use of the word is in an absolute sense, as in a repeated expression of Song: “Nor awake (my) love, until he please” (Song 2:7; 3:5; 8:4). The word is used of God having delight in certain people. In David’s song of deliverance, he says that God provided for him because he “delighted” in him (2Sa 22:20). The Queen of Sheba expressed a blessing to God because he “delighted” in Solomon (1Ki 10:9). God is said to experience this delight toward good works of men. For instance, he “delights” in his sabbath being kept and his law observed (Isa 56:4), in “mercy” and “knowledge of God” (Hos 6:6), and in “truth” (Ps 51:8). In respect to himself, God engages in activities in which he takes “delight” (Ps 115:3; 135:6). Samson’s father, Manoah, feared death for himself and wife because the Angel of the Lord had appeared to them, but his wife replied that had God “delighted” to do this, he would not have received their sacrifices. (TWOT)

**NAS Usage:** **delight**(15), **delighted**(7), **delights**(8), **desire**(9), desired(3), desired\*(1), desires(5), favors(1), have any pleasure(1), have... delight(2), have... pleasure(1), pleased(6), pleases(7), take pleasure(1), take... pleasure(2), wish(2), wished(1), wishes(1)

### **Chaphets** - 70 v -

Gen 34:19; Num 14:8; Deut 21:14; 25:7f; Judg 13:23; Ruth 3:13; 1 Sam 2:25; 18:22; 19:1; 2 Sam 15:26; 20:11; 22:20; 24:3; 1 Kgs 9:1; 10:9; 2 Chr 9:8; Esth 2:14; 6:6f, 9, 11; Job 9:3; 13:3; 21:14; 33:32; Ps 18:19; 22:8; 37:23; 40:6, 8; 41:11; 51:6, 16, 19; 68:30; 73:25; 109:17; 112:1; 115:3; 119:35; 135:6; 147:10; Pr 18:2; 21:1; Eccl 8:3; Song 2:7; 3:5; 8:4; Isa 1:11; 13:17; 42:21; 53:10; 55:11; 56:4; 58:2; 62:4; 65:12; 66:3f; Jer 6:10; 9:24; 42:22; Ezek 18:23, 32; 33:11; Hos 6:6; Jonah 1:14; Mic 7:18; Mal 2:17

The **Lxx** translates **chaphets** is Ps 51:16 with **thelo** which describes the exercise of the will and motivated by inclination to be pleased with something.

### **Spurgeon...**

**For thou desirest not sacrifice.** This was the subject of the last Psalm. The Psalmist was so illuminated as to see far beyond the symbolic ritual; his eye of faith gazed with delight upon the actual atonement. (**Ed:** In other words the sacrifices by themselves were but pictures of the greater work of God on the Cross and as such could only be "seen" with the eye of faith. Sacrifices that are mechanical or rote are useless, even as mechanical, rote worship and praise is worthless, no matter how emotion is the participant. God is ever examining the heart before He looks at the actions!)

**“Else would I give it.”** He would have been glad enough to present tens of thousands of victims if these would have met the case. Indeed, anything which the Lord prescribed he would cheerfully have rendered.

We are ready to give up all we have if we may but be cleared of our sins; and when sin is pardoned our joyful gratitude is prepared for any sacrifice. "Thou delightest not in burnt offering." He knew that no form of burnt sacrifice was a satisfactory propitiation. His deep soul-need made him look from the type to the antitype, from the external rite to the inward grace.

**Burnt offering** ([05930](#))('olah from 'alah = to ascend and thus the picture of *going up* in smoke) refers to a whole burnt offering (one which *goes up* in smoke), which was voluntary, was understood as a sacrificial gift to God, resulting in a pleasing aroma acceptable to Jehovah (Lev 1:9). The presenter laid hands on the sacrifice which many feel signifies they saw the animal sacrifice as their substitute. The blood was sprinkled on the altar (Lev 1:6) When this offering was properly carried out (including a right heart attitude not just a "going through the motions," [which was not pleasing to God - Jer 6:20, Jer 7:21, 23, 24, as described here by David in Ps 51:16-17] not just an external "work," but an internal submission and obedience to Jehovah), they made atonement and were acceptable before Jehovah. The total burning indicated (or should have indicated) total consecration of the presenter's heart and soul and life to Jehovah.

**Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise:**

- **sacrifices:** Ps 107:22 Mk 12:33 Ro 12:1 Php 4:18 Heb 13:16 1Pe 2:5
- **broken spirit:** Ps 34:18 147:3 2Ki 22:19 Isa 57:15 61:1, 2, 3 66:2 Eze 9:3,4,6 Mt 5:3 Lk 18:11-14
- **You will not despise:** Ps 22:24 102:17 2Ch 33:12,13 Am 5:21 Lk 7:39-50 15:2-7,10,21-32)

**Behold, I fall before your face;  
My only refuge is your grace.  
No outward forms can make me clean,  
The leprosy lies deep within.**

**Spurgeon** exhorts all believers...

Let us seek after the like brokenness of heart; for however excellent our words may be, if our heart is not conscious of the hell-deservingness of sin, we cannot expect to find forgiveness.

There are men and women whose self-righteousness would never allow them to descend to the depths of immorality committed by David and yet sadly, whose hearts remain stony hard and almost incapable of penitence (because of the pride of their self righteousness). This brings to mind Jesus' powerful teaching on the Pharisee and the tax-gatherer...

Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a **Pharisee**, and the



other a **tax-gatherer**. The Pharisee stood and was praying thus to himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other people: swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax-gatherer. 'I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get. But the tax-gatherer, standing some distance away, was even unwilling to lift up his eyes to heaven, but was beating his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful (hilaskomai = be propitious, make reconciliation - Christ is the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins 1Jn2:2) to me, the sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified (dikaioo = declared righteous) rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted. (Luke 18:10-14)

### Spurgeon...

**The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit.** All sacrifices are presented to Thee in One, by the man whose broken heart presents the Savior's merit to Thee. When the heart mourns for sin, thou art better pleased than when the bullock bleeds beneath the axe.

**A broken heart** is an expression implying deep sorrow, embittering the very life; it carries in it the idea of all but killing anguish in that region which is so vital as to be the very source of life. So excellent is a spirit humbled and mourning for sin, that it is not only a sacrifice, but it has a plurality of excellencies, and is pre-eminently God's "sacrifices."

### J. J. Stewart Perowne...

When speaking of thankfulness, we might have expected him to say, "a joyful heart, or a thankful heart," but instead of that he says, "a contrite heart." For the joy of forgiveness does not banish sorrow and contrition for sin: this will still continue. And the deeper the sense of sin, and the truer the sorrow for it, the more heartfelt also will be the thankfulness for pardon and reconciliation.

**The tender, humble, broken heart,  
is therefore the best thank offering.**

**Broken** ([07665](#))(**shabar**) means to break in pieces, to shatter, to smash. The first biblical occurrence of shabar is in Ge 19:9, where the men of Sodom "pressed hard against Lot and came near to **break** the door." In another use, God says "I will also **break** down your pride of power" (Lev 26:19). In Ezekiel 6:9 God describes how He has "been hurt (broken) by their adulterous hearts which turned away from" Him "and by their eyes which played the harlot after their idols" (describing faithless Judah now in captivity in Babylon).

The **Lxx** translates **shabar** with **suntribo** which means to cause destruction of something by making it come apart (by shattering, smashing or crushing) and figuratively to be severely damaged psychologically and thus to be broken (as used in Lxx to describe the "brokenhearted" in Isa 61:1, Ps 34:18, Ps 147:3)

The broken person is one who responds to the convicting ministry of the Spirit by turning from self and unto God and manifesting this change of heart in their thoughts, words and deeds (repentance). The antithesis of a broken person is the self-centered, self-made, hard hearted individual who refuses to humble themselves and repent (see Saul's superficial facade of repentance - 1Sa 15:24, 30 resulting in God stripping him of his kingdom - Saul's words reveal that his heart was resistant to God's verdict in contrast to King David - 2Sa 12:13 who the Lord forgave). The fundamental distinction between a hard heart like Saul and a broken heart like David had is seen in how one reacts when confronted in their sin. The contrite heart chooses to be humbled and to repent. The contrite person trembles at God's Word (see Is 66:2 below) and instead of despising His Word (2Sa 12:9, 10), receives His Word (especially His Word of reproof), which is able not only to convict but to heal and make whole (Ps 147:3).

For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being," declares the Lord. "But to this one I will look, To him who is **humble** and **contrite** of spirit, and who **trembles** at My word. (Is 66:2).

The Messiah came for those who are broken in heart as prophesied in Isaiah and fulfilled in Luke...

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the **brokenhearted** (**Suntribo** from **sun** = together, with + **tribo** = break > crush completely), To proclaim liberty to captives, And freedom to prisoners (**This healing, liberty and freedom clearly being a result of the power of the proclamation and reception of the Glorious Gospel**); (Lk 61:1)

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the **brokenhearted** (**Suntribo** from **sun** = together, with + **tribo** = break > crush completely), to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,<sup>19</sup> To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. (Quoting the KJV - Lk 4:18, 19)

**ISBE** entry says that **brokenhearted** are...

People who feel their spiritual bankruptcy and helplessness, and who long for the help and salvation of God. Such people are in the right condition to be met and blessed by God. Compare "of contrite spirit" (Ps 31:18; Isaiah 66:2). ([International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#))

**Allan Ross** writes that...

In the Old Testament, anyone who sinned as David did had to receive a word from a priest or prophet indicating he was forgiven. Only then

could the penitent person again take part in worship and make a peace offering. In the New Testament the word of forgiveness is forever written in God's Word—the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from sin (1Jn 1:7). **Yet even in the New Testament a believer must have a spirit broken of all self-assertion; he must acknowledge his need before God to find spiritual renewal and cleansing** (1Jn 1:9). ([Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., et al: The Bible Knowledge Commentary. 1985. Victor](#)) (Bolding added)

God does not receive "broken" (defiled) animals as sacrifices (Mal 1:6, 7, 8), but He always receives broken hearts! **Have you committed some heinous, even embarrassing sin against your LORD? The way back begins with a heart that is broken over your sin against a holy God. That is a sacrifice God will never reject!**

**Warren Wiersbe** - Have you ever studied the broken things in the Bible? A woman broke a vessel at the feet of Jesus and anointed Him (Mk 14:3, 4, Mt 26:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13). Jesus took bread and broke it as a picture of His body given for us (Mt 26:26). God uses broken things, and He starts with broken hearts. This is what repentance is all about. God doesn't listen to the lips. He doesn't measure a material sacrifice. He looks at the heart and says, "If your heart is broken, then I can cleanse it."... Even though no sacrifice was available for his sin at the time, God looked down the corridors of time and saw a cross where Jesus Christ would die for David's sin. God looks at the heart, not the hand. He wants sincerity from the heart, not religious routine. A broken heart is not remorse, nor is it regret. It is repentance, a turning away from sin. It's telling God you hate sin, are judging it and claiming his forgiveness. Bring to Him the sacrifice of a contrite heart. ([Psalm 51:16-17 Broken Things](#))

**Spurgeon - A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.** A heart crushed is a fragrant heart. Men contemn (view with contempt) those who are contemptible in their own eyes, but the Lord sees not as man sees. He despises what men esteem, and values that which they despise (cp Isaiah 55:8, 9). Never yet has God spurned a lowly, weeping penitent, and never will He while God is love, and while Jesus is called the Man Who receives sinners. Bullocks and rams He desires not, but contrite hearts He seeks after; yea, but one of them is better to Him than all the varied offerings of the old Jewish sanctuary.

**Contrite** ([01794](#)) ([dakah](#)) means to crush, break in pieces, smash or crush down into pieces; to hammer or beat out, such as metal into thin pieces. **Dakah** is used figuratively in this passage to describe David as one who is crushed, beaten down, bruised emotionally and spiritually as is proper in one who is weighed down by one who senses his guilt and recognizes that his sin is clearly against a holy and loving God.

**Herbert Wolf** - This verb is a by-form of the verb dk', which also means "to crush," and of dūk "to pound, beat." It is used only in Psalms, twice in the Niphal (Psalm 38:8 [H 9]; Psalm 51:17 [H 19]) and twice in the Piel (Psalm 44:19 [H 20]; Psalm 51:8 [H 10]). The form in Psalm 10:10 is disputed, though it is possibly a use of the Qal. Most versions render it "he

crouches" (KJV ASV), although "he is crushed" is also plausible. The verb appears only in laments and is consistently used of one who is physically and emotionally crushed because of sin or the onslaught of an enemy. In Psalm 51:8 [H 10] and probably Psalm 38:8 [H 9], the psalmist speaks of his bones being broken because of involvement in sin. Psalm 51 refers to David's adultery with Bathsheba and the subsequent conviction of sin that he experienced. In Psalm 51:17 [H 19] he notes with some consolation that God does not despise a broken and contrite ("crushed") heart. The same parallel (using *dk'*) occurs in Psalm 34:18 [H 19]. In Psalm 74:21 "oppressed" is parallel to "the afflicted" and "needy." In Psalm 44:19 [H 20] the situation seems to refer to a military defeat in which the nation has been "crushed." No sin is mentioned in the entire psalm, and yet the land has been humiliated, and overrun with jackals (cf. Jeremiah 9:11). Proverbs 26:28 notes that a liar hates the people he crushes. (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

**Baker** - A verb meaning to crush, to break in pieces; to crouch. It is most often used figuratively of persons crushed emotionally and spiritually by the wicked (Ps. 10:10; kjv, nasb, nkjv, crouches); of persons weighed down and broken by their guilt before the Lord (Ps. 38:8[9]) or seemingly under His judgment (Ps. 44:19[20]); of bones broken by the Lord's imposition of guilt for sins (Ps. 51:8[10]); of a broken spirit as an acceptable sacrifice to God (Ps. 51:17[19]). (The Complete Word Study Dictionary - Old Testament)

Do we really see our sin that way? Do we understand that when we sin we sin against His love, the boundless, everlasting love of a Father and how this must surely grieve His heart! I seldom think this way when I am wantonly, willfully choosing selfishly to sin - I am focused on self not the Savior of my soul! Would God's Spirit give all of us a heightened sense of the utter stupidity and selfishness of sin the next time we are tempted, so that as we think upon that which is pure and lovely, etc, we might quickly return to our senses and resist the temptation and rest in God's goodness in Christ. Amen

Our English word **contrite** is derived from Latin *contrere* which means to grind or bruise, which is interesting when we see this as one's proper response to sin against a holy God. **Contrite** describes one's grieving and penitent for sin or shortcoming (a "euphemism" for sin). Those who have a **contrite** spirit weep over wrongdoing and express genuine sorrow for their sins (cp Mt 5:4; Lk 6:21; 2Co 7:10). A contrite heart is one in which the natural pride and self-sufficiency have been completely humbled by the consciousness of guilt.

In sum, true contrition and/or brokenness can come when we are reprov'd and made aware of our sin (Eg, even an evil king like Manasseh - 2Chr 33:10, 11, 12, 13). It can also come from an up close and personal encounter with God when we see Him high and lifted up as did Isaiah (Isa 6:1) responding with a "Woe is me for I am ruined" reaction! (Isa 6:5). Another way contrition comes about is when providential events beyond our control defeat the lie that we are in control of our lives and we come to our sense and realize we are "boxed in", cornered, with nowhere to go or to turn much like Job after his horrible tragedies (see Job 42:3, 4, 5 for the effects of his trials)

**Dakah** - 5x in the OT - .broken(1), contrite(1), crouches(1), crushed(2).

Psalm 10:10 He **crouches**, he bows down, And the unfortunate fall by his mighty ones.

Psalm 38:8 I am benumbed and badly **crushed**; I groan because of the agitation of my heart.

Psalm 44:19 Yet You have **crushed** us in a place of jackals And covered us with the shadow of death.

Psalm 51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have **broken** rejoice.

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a **contrite** heart, O God, You will not despise.

**Ryken** - The crushing events of life do not automatically make one contrite. They may result either in bitterness (Ex 1:14; Ru 1:20-note) or genuine contrition as with Nebuchadnezzar (Da 4:37-note). **Broken/contrite** must therefore be distinguished from actions that leave one devastated, immobilized, crushed, hardened or embittered. The **contrite**, the person broken in the right place, has been bruised or crushed in a way that results in true humility. This person does not carry the anger, fear of punishment or lowered self-esteem that characterize the bitter person. Adversity or a heightened awareness of sin can result in a stripping away of the natural pride, leaving a tender and contrite heart. One passage that deeply shapes the image of contrition is Psalm 51, in which David, humbled by the prophetic denouncement of his sin with Bathsheba, declares that "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise" (Ps 51:17 NIV). In this psalm David also uses the related image of being brokenhearted. ([Ryken, L., Wilhoit, J., Longman, T., Duriez, C., Penney, D., & Reid, D. G. Dictionary of biblical Imagery. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press](#) - recommended)

**Ron Mattoon** explains a **broken and contrite heart**...

The idea of these two words (Hebrew = **shabar** and **dakah**) deals with humility, submission, shaping and surrender. An object which has been broken has succumbed to the power of a greater force. The blacksmith with his hammer molds and shapes the metal into his image and will. The metal yields to the flame and the hammer over time. The **broken and contrite heart** is one that is yielded to the will and power of God in his life. The flame of trials, trouble, and tribulation and the hammer of hurt, pain, suffering, and chastisement bring the person to a point where he raises the white flag of "repentance and surrender" to the Lord. The spirit of humility, openness, and teachableness of such a person says, "I repent. Here am I. Do what you wish in my life. Mold me, make me, or break me into what you want me to be. Lead my life and I will follow and trust in you." This is the sacrifice and offering that God wants from us. He wants us to offer a heart that is tender and yielded to Him. This is what He values. He will not despise or treat with contempt someone who has a heart like this. ([Treasures From](#)

## [Treasured Psalms](#))

**Thomas Blackley** in his comments on Ps 147:3 describes a broken heart...

The broken in heart is one whose heart is affected with the evil of sin, and weeps bitter tears on account of it; one who feels sorrow, shame, and anguish, on the review of his past sinful life, and his base rebellion against a righteous God. Such a one has a broken heart. His heart is broken at the sight of his own ingratitude -- the despite done by him to the strivings of the Holy Spirit. His heart is broken when he considers the numberless invitations made to him in the Scriptures, all of which he has wickedly slighted and despised. His heart is broken at the recollection of a thousand kind providences to him and to his family, by day and by night, all sent by God, and intended for his moral, spiritual, and eternal benefit, but by him basely and wantonly abused. His heart is broken at the consideration of the love and compassion of the adorable Redeemer; the humiliation of his birth; the devotedness of his life; the reproach, the indignity of his sufferings; the ignominy and anguish of his death. His heart is broken when his conscience assures him that all this humiliation, this suffering, this death, was for him, who had so deliberately and repeatedly refused the grace which the blood and righteousness of Christ has purchased. It is the sight of Calvary that fills him with anguish of spirit, that overwhelms him with confusion and self abasement. While he contemplates the amazing scene, he stands, he weeps, he prays, he smites upon his breast, he exclaims", God be merciful to me a sinner!" And adds, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" The broken in heart must further be understood as one who seeks help from God alone, and will not be comforted till he speaks peace to his soul.

It is interesting to note that Martin Luther used **contrite** or **contrition** four times in his "Ninety-Five Theses" in his historic statement which had as a principle purpose the urging of true repentance.

There is a line in **Rock of Ages** which I think accurately pictures a **broken and contrite spirit**...

**Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thy cross I cling.**

The picture of **brokenness and contrition** is seen in several other passages...

The LORD is near to the **brokenhearted (Lxx = Suntribo** from **sun** = together, with + **tribo** = break > crush completely), And saves those who are **crushed** (dakka' = same Hebrew word translated "contrite" in following verse) in spirit. (Ps 34:18)

**Comment:** Crushed (dakka') Pertains to being humble and

unpretentious, as a figurative extension of an object in a low position due to pressure placed on it.

For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the **contrite** (dakka' = bruised, broken in pieces, smitten) and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the **contrite**. (Isa 57:15)

He heals the **brokenhearted (Lxx = Suntribo** from **sun** = together, with + **tribo** = break > crush completely), And binds up their wounds. (Ps 147:3)

**Spurgeon:** This the Holy Spirit mentions as a part of the glory of God, and a reason for our declaring his praise: the Lord is not only a Builder, but a Healer; he restores broken hearts as well as broken walls. The kings of the earth think to be great through their loftiness; but Jehovah becomes really so by his condescension. Behold, the Most High has to do with the sick and the sorry, with the wretched and the wounded! He walks the hospitals as the good Physician! His deep sympathy with mourners is a special mark of his goodness. Few will associate with the despondent, but Jehovah chooses their company, and abides with them till he has healed them by his comforts. He deigns to handle and heal broken hearts: he himself lays on the ointment of grace, and the soft bandages of love, and thus binds up the bleeding wounds of those convinced of sin. This is compassion like a God. Well may those praise him to whom he has acted so gracious a part. The Lord is always healing and binding: this is no new work to him, he has done it of old; and it is not a thing of the past of which he is now weary, for he is still healing and still binding, as the original hath it. Come, broken hearts, come to the Physician who never fails to heal: uncover your wounds to him who so tenderly binds them up!

Return, O wanderer, return!  
And seek an injured Father's face;  
Those warm desires that in you burn  
Were kindled by recovering grace.

Return, O wanderer, return!  
Your Savior bids your spirit live;  
Go to his bleeding side, and learn  
How freely Jesus can forgive.

Return, O wanderer, return!  
Regain your lost lamented rest;  
Jehovah's melting affections yearn



To clasp his Ephraim to his breast.

([Winslow](#))

## **BROKENNESS ALONG THE CALVARY ROAD**

**Roy Hession** in his simple but excellent book dealing with personal revival entities his first chapter **BROKENNESS...**

We want to be very simple in this matter of Revival. Revival is just the life of the Lord Jesus poured into human hearts. Jesus is always victorious. In heaven they are praising Him all the time for His victory. Whatever may be our experience of failure and barrenness, He is never defeated. His power is boundless. And we, on our part, have only to get into a right relationship with Him, and we shall see His power being demonstrated in our hearts and lives and service, and victorious life will fill us and overflow through us to others. And that is Revival in its essence.

### **BROKEN WILLS: BREAKING THE PROUD SELF DYING TO SELF**

If, however, we are to come into this right relationship with Him, the first thing we must learn is that our wills must be broken to His will. To be broken is the beginning of Revival. It is painful, humiliating, but it is the only way. It is being "Not I, but Christ" (Gal 2:20-**note**), and a "**C**" is **a bent "I."** The Lord Jesus cannot live in us fully and reveal Himself through until the proud self within us is broken. This simply means that the hard unyielding self, which justifies itself, wants its own way, stands up for its rights, and seeks its own glory, at last bows its head to God's will, admits its wrong, gives up its own way to Jesus, surrenders its rights and discards its own glory - that the Lord Jesus might have all and be all. In other words it is dying to **self** and **self**-attitudes. As we look honestly at our Christian lives, we can see how much of this self there is in each of us.

**It is so often self who tries to live the Christian life (the mere fact that we use the word 'try' indicates that it is self who has the responsibility).**

It is **self**, too, who is often doing Christian work. It is always **self** who gets irritable and envious and resentful and critical and worried. It is **self** who is hard and unyielding in its attitudes to others. It is **self** who is shy and self-conscious and reserved. No wonder we need breaking. As

long as **self** is in control, God can do little with us, for all the fruit of the

Spirit (they are enumerated in Galatians 5:22-**note**, Gal 5:23-**note**), with which God longs to fill us, are the complete antithesis of the hard, unbroken spirit within us and presupposes that it has been crucified.

Being broken is both God's work and ours. He brings His pressure to bear, but we have to make the choice. If we are really open to conviction as we seek fellowship with God (and willingness for the light is the prime condition of fellowship with God), God will show us the expressions of this proud, hard self that cause Him pain. Then it is, we can stiffen our necks and refuse to repent or we can bow the head and say, "Yes, Lord."

**Brokenness in daily experience is simply the response of humility to the conviction of God.**

And inasmuch as this conviction is continuous, we shall need to be broken continually. And this can be very costly, when we see all the yielding of rights and selfish interests that this will involve, and the confessions and restitutions that may be sometimes necessary. For this reason, we are not likely to be broken except at the Cross of Jesus. The willingness of Jesus to be broken for us is the all-compelling motive in our being broken too (read 2Co 5:14-**note**). We see Him, Who is in the form of God, counting not equality with God a prize to be grasped at and hung on to, but letting it go for us and taking upon Him the form of a Servant - God's Servant, man's Servant (Php 2:5, 6, 7-**note**, Php 2:8-**note**). We see Him willing to have no rights of His own, no home of His own, no possessions of His own, willing to let men revile Him and not revile again (1Pe 2:21, 22, 23-**note**), willing to let men tread on Him and not retaliate or defend Himself. Above all, we see Him broken (cp Mt 26:26) as He meekly goes to Calvary to become men's scapegoat by bearing their sins in His own body on the Tree. In a pathetic passage in a prophetic Psalm, He says,

"I am a **worm (see note below)** and no man" (Ps 22:6-[note](#)).

Those who have been in tropical lands tell us that there is a big difference between a snake and a worm, when you attempt to strike at them. The snake rears itself up and hisses and tries to strike back - a true picture of **self**. But a worm offers no resistance, it allows you to do what you like with it, kick it or squash it under your heel - a picture of true brokenness. And Jesus was willing to become just that for us - a worm and no man. And He did so, because that is what He saw us to be, worms having forfeited all rights by our sin, except to deserve hell. And He now calls us to take our rightful place as worms for Him and with Him. The whole Sermon on the Mount with its teaching of non-retaliation, love for enemies and selfless giving, assumes that that is our position. But only the vision of the Love that was willing to be

broken for us can constrain us to be willing for that.

**Lord, bend that proud and stiff necked I,  
Help me to bow the head and die;  
Beholding Him on Calvary,  
Who bowed His head for me.**

But dying to self is not a thing we do once for all. There may be an initial dying when God first shows these things, but ever after it will be a constant dying, for only so can the Lord Jesus be revealed constantly through us (2Co 4:10-**note**). All day long the choice will be before us in a thousand ways. It will mean no plans, no time, no money, no pleasure of our own.

**YIELDEDNESS TO GOD  
MEASURED BY  
YIELDEDNESS TO MAN!**

It will mean a constant yielding to those around us, for our yieldedness to God is measured by our yieldedness to man. Every humiliation, everyone who tries and vexes us, is God's way of breaking us, so that there is a yet deeper channel in us for the Life of Christ. You see, the only life that pleases God and that can be victorious is His life - never our life, no matter how hard we try.

**But inasmuch as our self-centered life is the exact opposite of His, we can never be filled with His life unless we are prepared for God to bring our life constantly to death. And in that we must co-operate by our moral choice.**

(I recommend reading his book [The Calvary Road](#) now available free online)

**Note on Psalm 22:6 "Worm"** - On the cross the Lord Jesus called Himself a "Scarlet Worm". The Hebrew word is **towla** which was also the worm from which Israelites obtained red dye (a number of the 42 OT uses of towla [See [Hebrew lexicon entry](#)] are translated "crimson" or "scarlet" in the KJV). The female worm when laying her eggs, affixes her body to a wooden surface on which she will die after the young are born. The wood (think of the blood/crimson stained Cross, see 1Co 1:18, 1Pe 2:24-**note**, 2Co 5:21-**note**), her body, and the young are reddened with the death of the life-giving mother. In a similar image the Lord Jesus made "peace through the blood of His Cross" (Col 1:20-**note**). The permanent quality and deep red color of the dye makes it a striking figure in Isaiah 1:18-**note**

Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson,

they will be like wool.

Jesus calls Himself a "SCARLET WORM"... for me He died... deep, deep mystery of redemption. Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain, yea, even crushed like a helpless, defenseless worm.

**Thomas Watson** on the advantages of **affliction** that brings **contrition**...

**In affliction**, we often detect the sin which most easily besets us. This is the most difficult sin to find out, though the most in operation, on account of its blinding and deceiving nature. We have therefore cause to bless God for showing to us the accursed thing, and wherefore he contends with us.

**In affliction**, we obtain clear views of the insufficiency of all earthly things. A dark shadow is thrown over the smiling scenes of busy life. We discover the little value of those possessions, the attainment of which once appeared so desirable.

**In affliction**, we learn to estimate, above all treasures, an assured interest in Jesus Christ. The blessedness of the believer is then felt and acknowledged. His peace of mind, and hope of glory, the fruits of saving faith, are esteemed more precious than rubies.

**In affliction**, the promises of God's holy word are sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. They are sacred cordials administered by infinite love, to revive and strengthen the drooping saint.

Thus, while the prosperous worldling in the midst of his abundance despises the "hidden manna;" the contrite believer in his heaviest trial can extract sweetness "from the wormwood and the gall." A Savior's love, experienced in the soul, renders all palatable, however distasteful to our nature. ([On Affliction](#))

**James Smith** writes that...

a broken heart for sin is one of God's choice blessings, and by it, He distinguishes His own people from all around. By the application of His law, and by the revelation of Christ—sin is discovered, hated, and mourned over (cp 2Sa 12:7, 13). The **law** for a time seems to harden the heart—but the **Gospel**, when attended by the **power of the Spirit**, breaks it. Then there is true repentance, godly sorrow for sin (2Co 7:9, 10), and deep heart-felt grief—because God has been dishonored, and the Lord Jesus tortured, and put to death. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise." Repentance lies at the root of all experimental religion, and characterizes the true believer all the days of his life.

**Religion without repentance,  
abiding repentance, is false.**

Repentance begins at the Cross, and accompanies the Christian to the gates of the Celestial city. ([THE STIMULUS](#))

**Thomas Watson...**

How far from being godly are those who scarcely ever shed a tear for sin! If they lose a near relation—they weep. But though they are in danger of losing God and their souls—they do not weep. How few know what it is to be in an agony for sin, or what a broken heart means! ([The Godly Mans Picture](#))

If you wish to be thankful, get a heart deeply humbled with the sense of your own vileness. A broken heart is the best pipe to sound forth God's praise. He who studies his sins, wonders that he has anything, and that God should shine on such a dunghill: "I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man—but I was shown mercy!" (1 Timothy 1:13). How thankful Paul was! How he trumpeted forth free grace!

A proud man will never be thankful. He looks on all his mercies as either of his own procuring or deserving. If he has an estate, this he got by his wits and industry; not considering that scripture, "Always remember that it is the Lord your God who gives you power to become rich" (Dt. 8:18). Pride stops the current of gratitude. O Christian, think of your unworthiness; see yourself as the least of saints, and the chief of sinners—and then you will be thankful.

**Thomas Brooks** discusses the

contrition or grief of heart for sins committed. Now this is called sometimes godly sorrow, 2Co 7:10; and sometimes a contrite spirit, Isaiah 66:2; and sometimes a broken and contrite heart, Ps 51:17; and sometimes the afflicting of our souls, Lv 16:29; and sometimes the humbling of the heart, 2Chr 7:14, Lam 3:20; and sometimes a mourning, Zech. 12:10; and sometimes a weeping, Mk 14:72. All repenting sinners are mourning sinners. David repents—and waters his couch with his tears, Psalm 6:6. Hezekiah repents—and humbles himself for the pride of his heart, 2Chr 32:26. Ephraim repents—and Ephraim bemoans himself and smites upon his thigh, and is even confounded, Jer. 31:18, 19. Mary Magdalene repents—and weeps, and washes Christ's feet with her tears, Luke 7:38. The Corinthians repented—and they were made sorrowful after a godly manner, 2Cor 7:9. Repentance in the Hebrew is called an irking of the soul; and in Greek, after-grief; and in the Latin, poenitentia; all which do import, that contrition or sorrow for sin is one part of true repentance. Oh the

sighs, the groans, the sobs, the tears, which are to be found among repenting sinners, etc. Luther hit the mark when he said, "What are all the palaces of the world to a contrite heart; yes, heaven and earth, seeing penitential heart is the seat of divine majesty?"...

**Penitential confessions are commonly attended with grief in the heart, and with shame in the face.** Psalm 38:18, "For I will declare my iniquity, I will be sorry for my sin. [Compare these scriptures together: Psalm 51:17; Isaiah 61:1, and 57:15; Job 16:20; Psalm 119:1, 36; Jer. 9:1, 31:18-19.] He tells you not only that he will declare his iniquity—but he tells you also, that he will be sorry for his sin. The same spirit you may find working in Jacob, Hosea 12:4; yes, he had "power over the angel and prevailed, he wept and made supplication unto him." The people of God, in the day of their confession, do not only say, We have sinned—but they also draw water and pour it out before the Lord in token of contrition, 1 Sam. 7:6. Every sin is as a sword in a penitent man's bosom, and therefore while confessions are in his mouth—you shall mostly find either tears in his eyes or sorrow in his heart. **And indeed, true confession of sin is many times rather a voice of mourning than a voice of words.**

**Sometimes a penitent man's eyes will in some way tell what his tongue can in no way utter.** Many times the penitent is better at weeping than he is at speaking: Psalm 39:12, "Hold not your peace at my tears." Tears have a voice as well as blood has—and are very prevalent orators with God: Psalm 6:8, "The Lord has heard the voice of my weeping." Penitent tears are undeniable ambassadors, and they never return from the throne of grace without an answer of grace. Tears are a kind of silent prayer, which though they say nothing—yet they obtain pardon; they prevail for mercy, and they carry the day with God, as you may see in that great and clear instance of Peter. He said nothing, he confessed nothing that we read of—but "went out and wept bitterly," and obtained mercy. ([Evangelical Repentance](#))

**J C Philpot** - Now, if a man lacks a broken heart, he lacks the main evidence of being a partaker of grace; for the leadings, teachings, and dealings of God all tend to this; they all tend to break a man's heart. If the Lord deals with him in conviction, it breaks his heart; breaks up the hard, impenetrable soil he formerly possessed. If the Lord manifests mercy, kindness, love, tender favor, it breaks the heart; for it softens, melts, and humbles it. That is one mark, then, of a "good" heart--to be broken and contrite.

**Despise** ([0959](#)) (**bazah** - see word study from a root word meaning to accord little worth to something) means to disdain or to hold in contempt. The English definition of **despise** means to look down on with contempt, repugnance or aversion and suggests an emotional response which ranges from strong dislike to loathing or to have the lowest opinion of something! **Antonyms** of **despise** (which would be applicable in the present

context ) include to adore, to admire, to cherish, to esteem, to love. Indeed, God loves those whose heart is broken before Him. How different this is from the first use of bazah in Scripture where we see Esau "**despised** his birthright." (Ge 25:34)

**Bazah** is used by Isaiah in the famous description of the "**Suffering Messiah**"...

He was **despised** (Hebrew = bazah) and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. (Isaiah 53:3)

**Bazah** is used in a clearly Messianic psalm (prophesy of words that Jesus spoke)...

But I am a worm and not a man, a reproach of men and **despised** (bazah) by the people. (Ps 22:6)

**Bazah** describes Judah's response to the words of warning God sent them through His prophets...

but (see 2Chr 36:15) they continually mocked the messengers of God, **despised** (Hebrew = bazah; Lxx = exoudeneo = to hold or treat as of no account - present tense describes this as their continual response to God's attempts to speak to their heart!) His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy. (2Chronicles 36:16)

**Bazah** - 42x in the OT - Ge 25:34; Nu 15:31 (despise Word of the LORD); 1Sa 2:30 (despise God); 1Sa 10:27; 15:9; 17:42; 2Sa 6:16; 12:9, 10; 2Kgs 19:21; 1Chr 15:29; 2Chr 36:16; Neh 2:19; Esther 1:17; 3:6; Ps 15:4; 22:6, 24; 51:17; 69:33; 73:20; 102:17; 119:141; Pr 14:2; 15:20; 19:16; Eccl 9:16; Isa 37:22; 53:3; Jer 22:28; 49:15; Ezek 16:59; 17:16, 18, 19; 22:8; Da 11:21; Obad 1:2; Mal 1:6, 7, 12; 2:9. **NAS renders it** - careless(1), contempt(1), despicable(1), despise(5), despised(32), despises(2), disdained(1), disdained\*(1).

In Psalm 102 we see into the heart of God...

He has regarded the prayer of the **destitute** (poor, without money, etc; Lxx = **tapeinos** = humble, one brought low) and **has not despised** (bazah; Lxx = exoudenoo = treat as of no account, disdain, make light of) their prayer. (Ps 102:17)

**Spurgeon comments:** The Lord does not hear men because of the amount of money they possess or the breadth of the acres which they call their own, but in mercy listens most readily to the cry of the greatest need.

It is fascinating to observe the amazing supernatural character of God's grace - In 2Sa 12:9, 10 it was David who had despised the Word of God and the God of the Word and here in David's penitential psalm we see the same "despised" God not despising David's broken heart, for his is a heart that now clearly does not despise God! O God thank you for the transforming power of grace marinated with mercy and forgiveness in Christ. Amen.



## The Heart Healed and Changed by Mercy

William Cowper

Sin enslaved my many years,  
And led me bound and blind;  
Till at length a thousand fears  
Came swarming o'er my mind.  
"Where," said I, in deep distress,  
"Will these sinful pleasures end?  
How shall I secure my peace,  
And make the Lord my friend?"  
Friends and ministers said much  
The gospel to enforce;  
But my blindness still was such,  
I chose a legal course:  
Much I fasted, watch'd and strove,  
Scarce would shew my face abroad,  
Fear'd almost to speak or move,  
A stranger still to God.  
Thus afraid to trust His grace,  
Long time did I rebel;  
Till despairing of my case,  
Down at His feet I fell:  
**Then my stubborn heart He broke,  
And subdued me to His sway;  
By a simple word He spoke,  
"Thy sins are done away."**

**ARE YOU...  
HARDHEARTED**

**or**  
**BROKENHEARTED?**

<b>HARDHEARTED</b>	<b>BROKENHEARTED</b>
<p><b>Pharaoh</b></p> <p>Defied God by steadfastly refusing to let His people leave Egypt, which brought ten plagues on Egypt and great loss of life (Ex. 7-14).</p>	<p><b>Nebuchadnezzar</b></p> <p>Spent perhaps seven years living as a wild beast until he acknowledged the preeminence and sovereignty of God (Dan. 4-<b>notes</b>).</p>
<p><b>The Israelites at Kadesh Barnea</b></p> <p>Rebelled against God's promises to help them take the Promised Land, for which they spent forty years dying in the wilderness (Nu 13-14).</p>	<p><b>Joshua and Caleb</b></p> <p>Demonstrated a "different spirit" by keeping faith in the Lord, for which they were rewarded with entry into Canaan (Nu 13:30; 14:6-9, 24, 30, 36-38).</p>
<p><b>Saul</b></p> <p>Repeatedly disobeyed, disregarded, and dishonored God, for which he was stripped of his kingdom and eventually lost his life (1Chr 10:13,14).</p>	<p><b>David</b></p> <p>Confessed his sins of adultery and murder, fasted, and prayed after being confronted by Nathan the prophet, after which God pardoned him (2Sa 12:1-25; Ps. 51).</p>
<p><b>Jesus' Disciples</b></p> <p>Were unable to understand the significance of the feeding of the 5, 000 because of their hardness of heart—a blindness that continued on a similar occasion not long after (Mark 6:33-52; 8:1-21).</p>	<p><b>The Hemorrhaging Woman</b></p> <p>Recognized Jesus' ability to heal and touched Him, believing that that was all she needed to do (Mark 5:25-34).</p>
<p><b>People Who Were Quick to Divorce</b></p> <p>Told by Jesus that the Law permitted divorce in Israel as an accommodation to the people's hardness of heart (Mark 10:2-12).</p>	<p><b>The Woman Caught in Adultery</b></p> <p>Told by Jesus that she was forgiven and urged to sin no more (John 8:1-11).</p>
<p><b>Jesus' Disciples</b></p> <p>Rebuked for their unwillingness to believe the report of the women about his resurrection because of their hardness of heart (Mark 16:14).</p>	<p><b>Mary Magdalene</b></p> <p>Heartbroken over the loss of her Lord, but rewarded with the first encounter with the risen Christ (John 20:1, 11-18).</p>

## **The Jewish Council**

Rebuked by Stephen for being “stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears” in regard to God, as evidenced by their mistreatment of Jesus and His followers (Acts 7:51-53).

## **Cornelius**

Was devoted to God, as evidenced by fasting and praying, in response to which God sent Peter to tell him about the gospel (Acts 10)

Adapted from [The Word In Life Study Bible](#). Thomas Nelson Books or [Logos](#)

**Brokenhearted Father** - Among the first glimpses we get of our God is that of a Seeker: “Adam ... Where art thou?” (Gen. 3:9). In commenting upon this question to his Bible class, a teacher said, “You can never be a preacher if you read it as though God were a policeman. Read it as though God were a brokenhearted Father looking for a lost child!” (Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times)

One of Spurgeon’s students went into a pulpit with every expression of confidence but he had an extremely difficult time. He came down distressed, almost brokenhearted, and he went to Spurgeon about it. The words of Spurgeon to him were these, “If you had gone up as you came down, you would have come down as you went up.” (Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: Signs of the Times)

**The Wonder of Grace** - When I was a young boy, a few of my friends had fathers who led their families in daily Bible reading and never missed a church service. But I also knew that some of them were proud, tyrants at home, ruthless in their business dealings, and heartless toward people in need. Although I was young, I knew this kind of hypocrisy did not please God.

I was grateful that my father and several other men I knew modeled true faith and humility. They were quick to admit their wrongs and treated others with compassion. They obviously saw themselves as unworthy recipients of God’s wonderful grace.

In Psalm 51, David expressed his deep sense of guilt and his desperate need for God’s forgiveness and cleansing. As he grieved over his sin, he came to the Lord with the sacrifice of “a broken and a contrite heart” (Ps 51:17). When David thought about God’s love, mercy, and grace, he was filled with gratitude and praise.

If we recognize the seriousness of our sin, we too will come to the Lord with the sacrifice of “a broken and a contrite heart.” As we consider what Jesus did for us on the cross, taking the full punishment for all our sins, then we will be overwhelmed with the wonder of grace. —H V Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Lord is drawn to broken hearts  
And saves each sin-sick, contrite soul.

With healing touch His grace applies,  
And makes the wounded spirit whole.

—Bosch

### **Spiritual wholeness begins with a broken heart.**

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**Secrets Exposed** - For many years, Lake Okeechobee hid its secrets in thick waters and layers of muck. But in 2007, drought shrank the Florida lake to its lowest level since officials began keeping records in 1932, unveiling hundreds of years of history. Raking through the bottom of the lake, archaeologists found artifacts, pottery, human bone fragments, and even boats.

After King David committed adultery with Bathsheba and planned the death of her husband, Uriah, he covered his sins by denying them and not confessing them. He probably went many months conducting business as usual, even performing religious duties. As long as David cloaked his sinful secrets, he experienced God's crushing finger of conviction and his strength evaporated like water in the heat of summer (Ps. 32:3, 4).

When the prophet Nathan confronted David about his sin, God's conviction was so great that David confessed his sins to God and turned away from them. Immediately the Lord forgave David and he experienced His mercy and grace (2Sa 12:13; Ps. 32:5; Ps. 51:17).

Let's be careful not to hide our sin. When we uncover our sins by confessing them to God, we are covered with His forgiveness. — by Marvin Williams

Lord, help me to expose my sin,  
Those secret faults that lurk within;  
I would confess them all to Thee;  
Transparent I would always be.

—D. De Haan

Give God what He desires most—  
a broken and repentant heart.

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**Sacrifice** - In the agony of Psalm 51, David seems to contradict himself. He exclaims, "You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering" (Ps 51:16). Then, two verses later, he says, "You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering" (Ps 51:19). Does God want our sacrifices or not?

Sacrifices resemble the flowers a husband gives to his wife after a heated argument. The wife doesn't need the flowers. They are valuable to her only if they accurately represent her husband's feelings. If she thinks they are merely a ritual and do not symbolize his regret, the flowers make the divide between them worse.

God didn't need the animals offered to Him in sacrifice. Hebrews says, "It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins" (He 10:4). These sacrifices pointed to the once-for-all payment Jesus would make with His own blood when He died for our sins.

What mattered was the attitude of those making the sacrifices. If the offerings were without repentance, the ritual was a mockery. That's why David wrote, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise" (Psalm 51:17).— by Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

### **For Further Study**

Learn more about David's sin and his return to God.

Read David & Manasseh: Overcoming Failure

**Repentance is sorrow for the deed,  
not for getting caught.**

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**Legacy Of Repentance** - All nations have heroes, but Israel may be alone in making epic literature about its greatest hero's failings (Ps. 51). This eloquent psalm shows that Israel ultimately remembered David more for his devotion to God than for his political achievements.

Step-by-step, the psalm takes the reader through the stages of repentance. It describes the constant mental replays, the gnawing guilt, the shame, and finally the hope of a new beginning that springs from true repentance.

In a remarkable way, Psalm 51 reveals the true nature of sin as a broken relationship with God. David cries out, "Against You, You only, have I sinned" (v.4). He sees that the sacrifices God wants are "a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart" (v.17). Those, David has.

In his prayer, David looks for possible good that might come out of his tragedy and sees a glimmer of light. Perhaps by reading this story of sin others might avoid the same pitfalls, or by reading his confession they might gain hope in forgiveness. David's prayer is answered and becomes his greatest legacy as king. The best king of Israel has fallen the farthest. But neither he, nor anyone, can fall beyond the reach of God's love and forgiveness. - Philip Yancey

How blest is he whose trespass  
Has freely been forgiven,  
Whose sin is wholly covered  
Before the sight of heaven. —Psalter

**Repentance is the soil  
in which forgiveness flourishes.**

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## **DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME OF WORSHIP!**

**Wasted Worship** - If you are able to go to church on Sunday, you probably will. For most Christians, it's almost automatic—and rightly so. But is it possible that our efforts to go to church for worship might be **wasted**? Could it all be **in vain**? Yes. Before we even enter the church, the **worth of our worship** can be reduced to nothing because of **the way we've lived during the week**.

In Amos 5, the Lord had some harsh words for those who attempted to worship Him while bringing with them the guilt of an ungodly lifestyle. His people were constantly angering Him by following false gods (Amos 5:26). When they assembled to worship the Lord through sacrifices and songs, God despised their hypocrisy.

In Isaiah 1, God instructed His people that before they could worship Him, they were to **"cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice"** (Isa 1:16, 17-note).

What a challenge to us! Before we worship God, we are to put things in order by **confessing our sins, seeking His forgiveness**, and then serving Him. Our daily walk with God and our obedience to His commands are the elements that prepare us for church. Anything less will lead to **wasted worship**. — by Dave Branon

O holy God, undone by guilt depressing  
We come to Thee our every sin confessing;  
Grant us, we pray, Thy cleansing and Thy blessing;  
We worship Thee, O God!  
—Frost

**Worship that pleases God  
comes from an obedient heart.**

**Psalm 51:18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem:**

- **Do:** Ps 25:22 102:16 122:6-9 137:5,6 Isa 62:1,6,7 Jer 51:50 2Co 11:28,29
- **Your:** Lk 12:32 Eph 1:5,9 Php 2:13 2Th 1:11
- **build:** Ne 2:17 Isa 58:12 Da 9:25 Mic 7:11 Zec 2:5)

**By Your favor** - The Hebrew word **ratson** speaks of pleasure, delight, favor, goodwill. Lxx uses **eudokia** which describes the condition of being kindly disposed. It is a strong emotion in favor of something. David appeals to the goodness of God before he presents his request -- a good pattern in prayer.

**Thomas Alexander** - Whatever we seek must ever be sought under this restriction, **Thy good pleasure**. Build Thou, but do it in Thine own wise time, in Thine own good way. Build Thou the walls of separation that divide us from the world; let them be in it, not of it; keep them from its evil. Build Thou the walls that bind, that unite Thy people into one city, under one polity, that they all may be one. Build thou, and raze Thou; raze all the inner walls that divide Thy people from Thy people; hasten that day when, as there is but one Shepherd, so shall there be but one sheepfold. Amen

**Do good to Zion** - In Hebrew yatab is an imperative or command. Lxx uses agathuno in the aorist imperative which means to do good to or do well toward.

Notice how David passes from prayer for himself to prayer for others.

Let us in this day of great global groaning over the great City of God frequently intercede and...

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you." May peace be within your walls, and prosperity within your palaces." (Ps 122:6,7)

David in sin had torn down and now in repentance and restoration prays for building up! David pleaded for forgiveness and once received now prays for Jerusalem. The implication is that David recognized the effects that his sins had on his own nation. Sin almost always has much further reaching consequences than ever imagine. When we sin, the sin so deceives us that it makes us think "If anyone gets hurt, it will only be me!" That is the deadly lie of sin. Sin is like a stone thrown into a pond producing ripples of effect far beyond (time and space) the original commission of the sin. Do not be deceived, beloved! Sin can (and will) impact our families, our church, our community, and our nation. Because of David's sin, he was concerned for and interceded on behalf of his nation Israel, as represented by Zion, the chief city and place of God's Temple.

**Wiersbe** - David in his sin had been tearing down, not building up. He had given opportunity to the enemies of Israel to blaspheme God. The word got out. Soon everyone knew what David had done. So he says, "O God, when I was sinning, I was tearing down. I was not pleasing You. Now I want to please You. And because I'm pleasing You, I will be building up. And the walls of Jerusalem, walls of protection, will be strong." Are you tearing down or building up?

**Boice** - As for the walls being built up, two views are possible. David may be speaking metaphorically, suggesting that the strength of Jerusalem is in the righteousness of its people and that this had been weakened because of his sin and now needed to be restored. Or he may be speaking literally, since the walls, buildings, and temple were not completed until the days of Solomon (see 1Kings 3:1). In this case, David would be praying that this important work might not be hindered by his sin and might continue. Let us remember that everything we do affects other people, whether for good or evil. It is not true that we can sin "as long as it does not hurt anyone," because sin always hurts someone. But it is also true that those who confess their sin find forgiveness and renewal,

teach others the ways of God, and become a blessing.

### **Spurgeon...**

**Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion.** Let blessings according to Thy wont be poured upon Thy holy hill and chosen city. Zion was David's favorite spot, whereon he had hoped to erect a temple. The ruling passion is so strong on him, that when he has discharged his conscience he must have a word for Zion. He felt he had hindered the project of honoring the Lord there as he desired, but he prayed God still to let the place of His ark be glorious, and to establish His worship and His worshipping people.

**Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.** This had been one of David's schemes, to wall in the holy city, and he desires to see it completed; but we believe he had a more spiritual meaning, and prayed for the prosperity of the Lord's cause and people. He had done mischief by his sin, and had, as it were, pulled down her walls; he, therefore, implores the Lord to undo the evil, and establish His people. God can make His cause to prosper, and in answer to prayer He will do so. Without His building we labour in vain; therefore are we the more instant and constant in prayer. There is surely no grace in us if we do not feel for the people of God, and take a lasting interest in their welfare.

**Charles Horne** - The king forgets not to ask mercy for his people, as well as for himself; that so neither his own nor their sins might prevent either the building and flourishing of the earthly Jerusalem. ([Psalm 51 Commentary](#))

In 2Samuel **Nathan** describes the effect of **David's** sin on his nation (and his own son)...

However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die. (2Sa 12:14)

And so in this passage we see David interceding for his nation and for God's blessing.

**Application:** Intercession is another ministry in which every restored sinner can and should engage! Who better to feel compassion for a brother or sister engaged and entrapped in some sin of which we have confessed, repented and been forgiven! When you get your life right with the Lord, then you begin to have concern for others.

**Sin** may be **private** but it always has "**public**" consequences as David experienced (cp 2Sa 12:12)...

One needs only to look at the recent scandals involving famous evangelical leaders to see the effects on others of "private" sins. Once they are discovered—and the Bible tells us to "be sure your sin will find you out" (Nu 32:23)—families, friends, congregations, and the Christian



community at large will be harmed. Worse still, the cause of Christ will be damaged as unbelievers scoff and sneer at us and blaspheme His name (cp "enemies of the LORD to blaspheme" 2Sa 12:14). It may seem that people sin without visible consequences, but what is secret will one day be made manifest. "For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be known or brought out into the open" (Lk 8:17). **Can you honestly say that there is no one that would then be affected by your secret sins if they should become known?**

Sin that is kept secret produces guilt, and guilt has a way of changing us. Others see those changes and are affected by them. Perhaps a spouse, for instance, is unaware of her husband's addiction to pornography, but his addiction leads to a guilty secretiveness and change in attitude toward her as his sexual partner. She perceives that change and speculates on the possible cause—he finds her unattractive, he doesn't love her any more, or he's having an affair. While none of these things are true, the consequences of his "private" sin are potentially devastating to her, their marriage, and their family, even if his secret is never discovered. ([How does my personal, private sin affect others](#))