

DAVID'S REMORSE



The back story

This is a sorry story of David yielding to temptation, and of how one sin led to another, and cost innocent lives. Read it in 2 Samuel 11. Then read on in chapter 12, to see how Nathan the prophet confronted David with his sin, and its consequences.

Lectio:

Psalm 51 is headed *A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.* Read the psalm silently, and spend some time meditating on it. Then read it aloud, maybe verse and verse about. Share which verse particularly impacts you and pray for one another.

Explore further:

- Why does David believe God will be merciful? Compare 1 John 1. 8-9
- Notice the repeated imagery of washing and cleansing. Don't let its familiarity diminish its impact. Hyssop was widely used in ancient times for rinsing water for laundry and bathing, and is a key ingredient in some soaps, colognes and creams. Have you experienced the feeling of being dirty, in the presence of the holy God? Does David believe he can be made clean again? Do David's words strengthen your belief that we can be 'made clean'?
- Do you agree with the title, 'David's remorse'? There's a more appropriate word, in 2 Corinthians 7.10. Compare Judas and Peter, in the Easter story. Judas felt remorse, and hanged himself (Matthew 27.3-5) Peter wept bitterly over his denial, but his repentance brought his reinstatement. Which word better fits David? Is he forgiven?
- Compare verses 4 and 14. How often is our sin against God alone? How does it impact on other people? What about when there are ongoing consequences, even when we've been forgiven. Have you had an experience of this? How has it affected you and other people? Sadly this was to be true for David, as we read in 2 Samuel 12. 9-14.
- Verses 10-12 speak of restoration. What are the outcomes to be? (Verses 13 and 15)
- Verses 16-19 speak of Old Testament sacrifices. Our assurance of salvation is through the once-and-for-all-time sacrifice of Jesus, spelt out in Hebrews 10, especially verses 12-14.

Worship:

Verses from this Psalm were used every week in the 1662 Prayer Book liturgy. Try using them in your daily prayers.

Psalm 51 is known as a penitential psalm. The Latin setting, 'Miserere', by Gregorio Allegri, is often sung on Ash Wednesday. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrrl1eqZEKs>

Kristyn Getty sings 'Before the throne of God I have a strong and perfect plea'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LULK2nZ6sCc>