

Dr. Bruce Waltke, Psalms, Lecture 15

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This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 15, Petition Psalms, Psalm 51.

Let's begin again with a word of prayer before we approach the text.

Father, we thank you for Bill and for biblical training, for Robin and his family, and for the investment that he's made in this and his faith in moving ahead with it. Pray Lord that you will bless and reward him and bless our endeavors here. Be with the students that will, by your grace, be edified.

They will be able to share your word and all of its riches with others. Give the students joy in themselves, a joy that will express itself in praise to you. In Christ's name, Amen.

All right. We're in Psalm 51 and these are two reasons I chose the psalm. First of all, it's because it's again, one of the most famous psalms.

It's like Psalm 23. Many people know the psalm of David's confession after his sin with Bathsheba. It's one of those psalms.

It's also a petition psalm. It's a petition for forgiveness of sin. It's a psalm we need constantly for God's grace because I know how great are my sins and how many, but I also know that God hears a prayer like this, and his grace is greater than our sin.

Translation then Psalm 51.1, it's a psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba, have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love. According to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions, wash away all my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

Surely, I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. You desired faithfulness. And this is almost uniquely the NIV in the womb.

It says in the smeared-over place, you taught me wisdom in that secret place. But it's a two words here on tzittum and tulach and it means of the bottled-up place. I'll talk more about that.

Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean. Wash me and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness.

Let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways so that sinners will turn back to you.

Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God my Savior. And my tongue will sing of your righteousness. Open my lips, Lord, and my mouth will declare your praise.

You do not delight in sacrifice, so I would bring it. You do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. My sacrifice, O God, that's a textual change.

It could be the sacrifices of God or with a slight revocalization, my sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart, God, you will not despise. May it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem. Then you will delight in the sacrifices of righteousness, of the righteous rather than burnt offerings offered whole.

Then bulls will be offered on your altar for the director of music. This is on page 181. And we can go, I know, again, I will just go directly into the psalm.

And that begins really on page 184, going directly into the psalm. And we begin with superscript, the psalm of David. I'll just give you a little bit of background to it.

That's a note from Jim's work that in Professor Houston's work, in the medieval Roman breviary, this psalm was recited every hour at the conclusion of each monastic service, with the exception of Christmas and Lent. For 13 centuries, it was repeated seven times daily finding cleansing from sin. As the French *de miserie*, as of misery, it was selected for Ash Wednesday in the Jewish tradition.

It was sung with the ram's horn appropriately on the day of atonement. So, it's had a great history within the history of covenant people. And really we commented, it's a psalm and song.

And now the bottom of the page is when Nathan the prophet came to him after he committed adultery with Bathsheba. And this is an important part. And the next thing I make down there, I note, and this verses are off that in the psalm, in the superscript with the sin against Bathsheba, there are sins of passion.

There's a sin of passion and there's a sin of calculated cold-blooded murder. So, Bathsheba was the lust of the moment and his lust overwhelmed him. The lust of the flesh destroyed him.

But the murder of her husband transpired over a two-week period. This is coldly calculated murder. His attempt is going to be to cover up his Bathsheba gait and that he's going to father the child out of adultery.

He has to make it appear that the husband Uriah sired the child, and fathered the child. It's obvious that her husband, who is a Hittite, again, a Gentile, a very loyal soldier, converted to trusting Israel's king and becomes part of the covenant community. His husband is one of the 30 great warriors that David celebrates.

He's one of the top 30, a tremendous warrior. He is out battling with Joab outside of Ammon. David is home in Jerusalem.

He shouldn't have been at home. I think he should have been out there with his troops, but he's in, anyway, he stayed at home and that's his mistake. And when he learns from Bathsheba that out of his adultery, she tells him she's pregnant, he needs a cover-up, that it will appear as though Uriah has the husband, has fathered the child.

And so, he sends a messenger to Ammon Rabbah and it takes four days for the messenger to get there. That's four days. He brings Uriah back with him to Jerusalem.

That's another four days, eight days. He tries to get Uriah to sleep with his wife and that's over two or three days. Uriah, the faithful man that he is, will not, not during war, not during battle, do I have pleasure and refuses.

David makes him drunk, but his morals and commitment are so firm that even though he may have drunk too much, he cannot violate who he is. He's a tremendous man of God. So now we have eight days plus two or three.

Now, and so what David does, he writes Uriah's death sentence and tells Joab to put him right up against the wall of the city and then withdraw. So, he's out there all by himself and he's sure to be killed. It looks like it's a tragedy of war.

So, it's a coverup, a total coverup. It's utterly, utterly wicked what David is doing. So under this coverup, as though it's just an accident of war, these things happen in war and so forth.

Yet it is calculated murder. Moab, Joab doesn't like it either. He knows what's going on.

So, when Joab, when Uriah gets back there, sure enough, Joab withdraws all the troops and leaves Uriah standing out there against the city and the city wall with arrows raining down on one man. He doesn't have a chance and he's killed. He's killed.

The agent is David and the sword is the sword of the Ammonites. That is coldly calculated, premeditated murder. There is absolutely no excuse.

This is not a matter of passion. He is utterly, utterly guilty. So it's a sin of passion and really coldly calculated murder of a wonderful man, one of his chief officers, all to cover up for himself.

The worst part is that he's accused, when Nathan comes to him and accuses him of doing this, he accuses him of despising God's word because that's the problem. He just utterly has rejected God's word. I give you some verses there on the bottom of page 184, but the verses aren't as accurate as I would like.

So, I say the crimes against humanity, and then it's the main thing is defiance against God, namely his word, and that should be 2 Samuel 12.9. So, if you want to turn to 2 Samuel 12.9, it summarizes the two parts of the sin, the adultery and the murder. So, 12.9, this is David condemning. And he said, 2 Samuel 12.9, Nathan says to David, why did you despise the word of the Lord by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own.

You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. There's the accusation. He violated God's word.

The two laws, and they're not altogether accurate here. So just write them in more precisely. The two laws, the one for murder is Numbers 35.16. And the one for adultery is Deuteronomy 22.12. Those are really the only two laws you need.

So, you could see Numbers 35.16, the law he is violating. It says, if anyone strikes someone a fatal blow with an iron object, that person is a murderer. The murderer is to be put to death.

So according to the law, I mean, the iron object in this sense is the sword. He did it through the agency of the eminent, but ultimately David is doing it. So he violates that commandment and he should be put to death.

He's under a sentence of death. And for adultery turn with me to Deuteronomy chapter 22, where the adulterer and the adulteress both are to be put to death. Deuteronomy chapter 22 and verse 22.

Does that recall? I have it right here. Deuteronomy 22 and verse 22, the man is found sleeping with another man's wife, both the man who slept with her and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel.

So, in a sense, both of them, both David and Bathsheba are under a sentence of death. He finds no fault. He doesn't, he takes total responsibility in the psalm.

He doesn't say, wait, God, she made me do it. I mean, I may wonder, everyone knows where the king is, just like we know where President Obama is. And sometimes we wish we didn't know where Bill Clinton was.

But in any case, everyone knows where the president or where the king is. Everybody knows he's in residence and his palace is on top of the hill. And I have to ask myself, what is a woman doing bathing on the roof of a well underneath the king's palace? It raises some questions, but the Bible doesn't answer that and doesn't fault Bathsheba.

It faults totally David in this case. But the point is he has despised God's word and disobeyed it for his own lust. And he's under a sentence of death.

And here's what I'm saying is when you read the law, you must read the law as part of the primary history. It's just part of the narrative that's thrown in there. But the law really continues not only what he said to Moses, but how it is interpreted by God within the history of Israel.

So, the sparing of Rahab the harlot, that shows us how to interpret the law. When you have someone who's under a sentence of death and they repent and they own and confess God as Lord. She and her whole household came into the covenant community.

That is part of Torah. And this whole story that God forgives him and you will not die. That has to be read in connection with these two commandments of a capital offense for murder and a capital offense for adultery.

They're not exacted when there is true repentance. That is part of Torah is the point I'm making. So, they're both under a sentence of death.

And furthermore, they cannot change the situation. In other words, it's irredeemable. There is the historical fact of what he did.

That is, he cannot give life. He can't affect lex talionis, that is eye for eye, tooth for tooth. He cannot, well, that's a little different.

He cannot give life back to Uriah. He's dead. He cannot give Bathsheba back her purity.

He can't give purity back to Bathsheba. It's impossible. Even though he cannot make the word I'm looking for restitution and restoration, he is forgiven, which I think is amazing.

I've listed this then on your notes on page 185 that in his defiance against God, I point out it's a capital offense, both for adultery and for murder. Two, restitution is not possible. I need a third one in here that I didn't include.

That is, we need to add here third, that whoever confesses his sin or her sin and renounces it obtains mercy. That's Proverbs 28.13. Again, I think it's worthwhile turning it to Proverbs 28.13. I hope I didn't look this up ahead of time. Yes.

Whoever conceals their sin does not prosper, but one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy. And what David does in this psalm, he confesses it. He comes with an absolutely clean break.

He renounces it. He looks to blood for cleansing and he's forgiven. You will not die.

It's the word from the prophet. This is amazing grace. Number four, then because he renounces, confesses, and turns to God's mercy, he finds complete forgiveness with this godly repentance.

In fact, the forgiveness is so great that out of the adultery sprang Solomon, who was called Jedidiah, beloved by God. God's grace was greater than all his sin, but there's still historical guilt. If I get in a drunken brawl and I break a beer bottle and I stabbed somebody's eye out, and then I turn to God for forgiveness, God will forgive me.

But the person I injured will still be blind. There still are historical consequences. And there are, in this particular case, the baby's going to die because God wants the world to know because David is his representative.

I still am a God of justice. And so, he has the death of the baby instead of the death of David, of justice. This is absolutely an amazing story to me that God's grace is this great.

I'd be interested, Mike. I remember it was some years ago that you had, what was her name? Faye. She was a capital serialist.

She had killed 19 people here in Texas. Carla Faye, wasn't that it? And she truly confessed and she, everybody knew her. And I saw on TV, no question that that was a new creation.

In my judgment, Governor Bush should have pardoned her. If God could pardon David, it seems to me the state can pardon a woman like that, who was totally terrible what she did, absolutely terrible. But if David, the point of the story is no matter how great our sin is, God's grace is greater than our sin when there's true repentance, such as is expressed in this psalm.

It shows to me how we ought to respond to people who are truly changed and transformed by the grace of God as she was. That would have been my judgment on that case. I think several people interviewed her and said her confession of repentance was legitimate.

But she also said that whatever he said. That's right. That was her part of her humility.

That's what David did. That's the grace of David. Oh, and that's, I think, thank you for saying that.

See what happens is when Nathan says, you are the man, it gives the illustration of the rich man who took the lamb from the poor man and all of that wrong. And David, what he brings out of David in that parable about the rich man who takes the lamb from the poor man in order to feed his guests. He brings out of David, the true David.

And David is a man truly of justice. He had a tremendous lapse, but he says, that man should be put to death. Nathan says, you are the man.

And David says, whatever God decides, he turns it over to God, to the word of God. He doesn't presume it all there. And that's very similar to what she was doing.

Whatever you say, it's going to be right. And she had no bitterness in her heart. It was to me, part of her salvation.

She reflected to me covenant values through it. Well, that's an illustration of, I think, how we might apply the psalm and the way we think about sinners who may have committed the most egregious sins, but they turn back to God with godly repentance, such as we see in this psalm. So those are some of the this superscript I think is extremely important to understand how terrible it was, how he fractured the word of God.

He coveted his neighbor's wife. He stole her. He committed adultery.

He committed murder. He didn't love God. Everything is wrong, but he prays this prayer.

And that's why I guess the monks prayed it 13 times a day. We need forgiveness. I'm going to ask you this question.

When wrong is done, say in our time, and people come to that realization, I'm thinking more on the commercial side of it. What role does restitution play in that equation? Thank you for asking that. In this case, he couldn't make restitution, but if restitution can be made, it should be made.

To validate that, for example, if I, the law was, if you had a sheep or a cow or a bull, whatever, and I were to steal your sheep, restitution would be, I would have to give you back two sheep for justice because as I intended to rob you, now I must be robbed. So, I not only give you back your sheep, I give you back two sheep because I must make restitution for what I did. It's a strict justice.

Now, supposing I steal your sheep and I eat it and I can't give it back to you because I eat it. Now I have to give you four sheep to make sure I've covered my wrong. That's restitution.

So it's absolute justice when you can make restitution. That's why I think executions are restored fourfold. That's what the model of the law would have been from what he exacted as a collaborator, as a tax collector with Rome.

So, thank you for asking. We have a lot of that. People have to deal with that in some ways.

In our society, they were sheep and goats, but ours is, whatever it may be, there's a type of asset. That's right. And it takes a certain intelligence to appropriate the law.

What really struck me, the law was you had in Deuteronomy 22, that same chapter, you have to put a parapet around the roof of your house. I'm reading with the children about putting a parapet around the roof of the house. So I said to the kids, I said, what do you think? Should we put a railing around the roof of the house? Well, I said, Dad, God said you should, I guess we should.

I said, well, now think about it. In that world roofs were flat and people were on the roof of the house and children fell off and were maimed or killed. Whereas we have a steep roof to keep the rain and the snow keep falling off the roof and nobody's up there and the parapet would do no good.

Now, what do you think? No, it didn't make any sense to put a parapet up there. So, then I said to them, okay, so how, what does the law mean today? I was amazed. My

nine-year-old said to me immediately, almost, it means we ought to have good brakes on our car.

Exactly. How the mind, how his mind could have gone from that specific to the abstraction that you protect your neighbor to a new specific of brakes on the car. He was exactly right because the principle behind that specific was to protect the life of your neighbor.

If he said, it means we shouldn't smoke or something, which we protect my own life, it would be a wrong application. I don't know how to teach that kind of intelligence. I don't know that's something there that just takes a native intelligence that some people have more ability to do that than other people.

But that's a very important part of interpretation that you're able to get the principle behind these ancient laws and apply them to a new situation, which is exactly what should be done with these laws. Well, now we've had that background material and let's dig into the psalm. I'm going to do the same as I did in Psalm 3 and just have your translation in hand or have the translation of a Bible in hand on page 181.

Now, first of all, let's look at the structure in light of what we've learned about motifs. What we have here, as I would understand it, we have the direct address immediately, O God. What we have is an introductory petition for God's mercy in the A verse said, and then the specific that God will just blot out my transgression, which means just erase the slate, just erase it.

What a flakker, just wash it clean, and blot it out. Along with washing away all my iniquities. Then after that introductory petition and address, we now come to the lament, which is a lament for his sin.

For I know my transgression. Now he confesses and he says, I against you, and you only have I sinned. So, he's confessing his sin.

And I'll come back to it, his overt sin and for his nature, sin nature in verses three through six. That is the lament. It's the lament for sin in three through six.

I'll analyze that more closely. I think you can see in verse seven, we begin the petition with the imperatives, cleanse me, let me hear, hide your face, create in me, do not cast me out, restore to me. So, we had two verses by way of an introductory petition.

We get four verses of lament in verses three, four, five, and six. And now we get six verses of petition in verses seven through 12. So, what we're looking for, what normally occurs is an address and sometimes an introductory petition.

Then we get lament. Then we get petition. And then at the end, we have praise.

And that extends from verses 13 through verse 18. So, he says, do not cast me away from your presence. No, he says, verse, then I will teach transgressors your ways and my mouth will sing of your righteousness.

And there we get the praise section of the psalm. And I'll come back to that. Then we get a wish at the end of it.

So, having looked at the basic structure by the motifs of a petition psalm, we can now discreetly understand, and analyze it, tearing this wonderful flower apart. But yet it's worthwhile to investigate its parts, I suggest. Let's look now in more detail.

First of all, at the introductory petition or the address, I won't get to this. I will be editing this psalter. You'll notice the address is to, O God.

And there's somehow in the providence of God, there was an editing at some point of what we call the Elohist Psalter. And from psalms, for 42 psalms, from 42 through 83, there are 42 psalms which use Elohim in preference to Yahweh, Jehovah, I Am. The statistics, I'll give it to you when we get to the lecture on editing the psalms are staggering.

In all the other sections of the book, I mean, this covers book two from 42 to 72 is book two. Then in book three, 73 through 83, the priority is Elohim. They address God as Elohim.

That's a whole other discussion. So, I know that it's addressed as God because I'm in the book that uses the name for God. Interestingly enough, there are 42 psalms and it begins with Psalm 42.

The number 42 speaks of premature death. It speaks of death, premature death. And so, you have, this is some dark material.

So that, for example, when Elisha calls the bear on the boys, how many boys? 42. When Jehu kills the offspring of Athaliah in his coup, how many were those that were killed? 42. 42 has something to do with death, premature death.

This demands some discussion. I don't have all the answers. As I said, I don't have to have answers to everything for me to continue.

I'll enjoy what I do understand. But I'm just calling your attention to it, that this is a part of this Elohist Psalter where he addresses him as, and this is God and his transcendence. Evidently, there was some editor that preferred God to I Am and gave it priority, the creator.

It's unique. Anyway, that's the address. I kind of love you just hanging here.

But my responsibility is to be honest with my text and give you the data. That's my job. I don't say I can explain everything, explain what I can, but I can't explain everything.

Now notice what he does in this introductory petition. He exhausts the vocabulary for sin, not exhaust, but he uses the three primaries. See, he's talking about transgressions in verse one, iniquity in verse 2A, and sin in verse 2B.

He uses three different words for sin. Every word for sin assumes an absolute standard. It's a deviation from a standard.

The Greek word for sin and is Bill there? Yeah, correct me here. Anamia means without law, without no standards, living without a standard, or not obeying a standard. In any case, in Hebrew, every word assumes there is a standard and it's a violation of a standard.

Each one has a different picture and a different strength. Most people know that the word for sin at the end of verse two means a standard and you fall short of it. It means to miss the mark.

That's the basic meaning of the translation sin is that you miss the mark. You don't measure up. So, none attains the glory of God.

The word transgression is the strongest word. So, if you think of a line with a standard transgression in its use, this means to rebel. You can picture it with a raised fist of rebellion.

David has rebelled against the rule of God in murder and adultery. The word iniquity has a standard too. The standard is either you deviate from it or you twist it.

We're not sure that's at any rate, this is the etymology. How much you can put on etymology may be useful, but he's using different words. Iniquity includes guilt with it.

The important point is that they all assume a standard and he's missed it. He's transgressed against it. He's twisted it.

This is going to be important when he says, against you and you only have I sinned because the standard is God's. When we sin, we are sinning against God's standard. This has profound implications to it.

So, we'll see when Jesus says, your sins be forgiven you. Those keen theologians, they said, who forgives sin, but God, because it's his standard that we are violating. I'll come back to that.

That's the first thing. The second thing to note is notice how he's using Exodus 34:6. He's really three words that come directly out of God's communicable attributes, namely, mercy, and unfailing love. This is in verse 1a, Mercy, according to your unfailing love and your great compassion.

Those are three of the five words in Exodus 34:6. Those are the ways of God. That's when in verse 11, he says, then I will teach transgressors your ways. God's ways are ways of grace.

That's what sinners have to hear that God is compassionate upon them. That God has the word mercy, as I said, it means that he looks at you. He looks at you with favor and he meets your need to have grace.

The word compassion is to have pity. He remembers our frame. He knows we are dust.

He knows our propensity to sin and he takes pity upon us. He had called David and he has an unfailing loyalty to David is in a helpless situation. He cannot save himself and he's appealing to God with his repentance, remain loyal to me with love, and keep your covenant.

So, as I think McLaren put it, standing in the deep hole of sin, he looks up, that's in a deep well. He looks up and he sees stars of God's grace that those who stand in the noonday sunlight of their own self-righteousness never see. He's standing in that deep hole of sin and he sees this quality of God.

So, my encouragement is that what if skeletons may be in our closet, however, deep that hole, you can see those stars of grace up there. That's the second thing, the words for sin, the words for grace. What a God.

Third, what is he asking for in addition to God having mercy on him and so forth? Two things. One is forensic for forgiveness, blot out, just wipe the slate clean. There are 54 different ways of expressing forgiveness in the Old Testament.

He removes them as far as the east is from the west. He buries them in the bottom of the sea. He hides his face.

He can't see them anymore. And here's another one, just erase it off the slate. When I get to heaven, all the things I did wrong because I've asked God, my slate is clean.

He puts a benediction upon us. So, I think we all can look back and see our failures, at least I do and know God's grace forgives it and removes it. It's no longer in his sight.

And the other point is not only is he looking for legal forgiveness, blot it out, but he's also looking for liturgical cleansing. That is, he feels unclean. He feels unworthy to be with the people of God.

He feels like a dirty garment. He stinks. And that's why he's saying in verse, wash me.

And that means to put it in a river and just tread it over and over again and wash me and cleanse me and de-sin me. Those are the introductory petitions so that he will be legally forgiven. He will be ready to go back into the temple with the people of God, even though he had all these terrible things like 1 Corinthians 6, and you were adulterers and immoral, and you were homosexuals.

And Paul says you were all of that. You are the people of God and you're a sweet fragrance to him. And he washes us.

I mean, that is wonderful. That's amazing grace. Thank God for this psalm that expresses it.

Now we have his lament, which includes his confession and that falls into two parts. First of all, he's speaking about his overt acts of sin, going back to blot out. Now he talks about his overt acts of sin.

I know my transgression and my sin is always before me. Notice how he takes full responsibility with the personal pronouns, I, my, my, me. I'm guilty God, it's me.

And I know, in other words, I know it is a transgression. He's aware he's sinned against God. There's no hardness here.

And my sin is always before me. I think what he's saying is when I commit a sin, I keep replaying it over and over again in my head. I keep going back to it and I keep seeing it in my head.

And what he's asking for is that, that's what's always before me. And he's asking God, give me a clean heart. Take that memory away from me.

It's always before me. And then he says something amazing, against you and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So, you were right in your verdict and justified when you judged.

How can he say against you and you only? Well, it's because of the words for sin. It's God's standard. It's not a human standard.

And therefore, it's a transgression against God. In the process, you could speak about sinning against your neighbor, but that'd be a loose way of speaking of it. The way I illustrate it is that I grew up on the streets of Jersey City, opposite New York City.

And it was a cement sidewalk. We were sort of on a hill and we lived in a six-family house. And there wasn't any place to play except right out on the street.

So, we would play two-handed touch football. It's scraped up every so often. One time I hung my head on the fender of a car, blood gushing out.

Mother let us play out there on the street. Kids have boys who have to do stuff like that. So, she had one rule and that was you could not kick the ball.

That was her only rule. Well, one day I couldn't resist the temptation. I gave the ball a good boot.

Never for me would be a good boot, but it was, I kicked the ball and it did go sailing right through my neighbor's window on the second floor. I guess my mother was watching. As soon as I heard the crashing glass, I heard my mother bruise and I was in deep trouble.

Against whom did I sin? My mother or my neighbor? I sinned against my mother. It was her standard that was to protect me. I damaged my neighbor and I had, out of what little bit I got, I had to replace that window.

I had to make restitution for it. But the point I'm making, I sinned against my mother. It was her rule.

That's why I'm saying when Jesus healed the paralytic, they let the paralytic down for the house in front of Jesus. He said to him, take up your sins are forgiven you, and take up your bed and walk. Then the keen theologian said, who can forgive sin but God? That was a claim to deity.

Who can do that? Jesus said, which is easier to say your sins are forgiven or take up your bed and walk and make the man whole. I'm not Mr. Everybody. But you see, they saw that as a claim to deity that he could forgive sin.

I think the reason he's doing this, as I said earlier, I don't think everybody in Israel forgave him. All that mattered was that God forgave him. I don't think Ahithophel forgave him.

Maybe the people who were friends of Uriah didn't forgive him either. So, he says, against you and you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight. So you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

So only God can make a judgment about this. I'm not under the judgment of anybody else. I think that's the point he's trying to make in this psalm.

So, he confesses the overt act of sin. Now he moves beyond that. He goes back to Freud's id.

What made me do this? I'm not even a master in my own house. He now speaks of his moral impotence. He talks about the contradiction within our very nature.

So, he says, surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. Now this ought to say a lot about the unborn in the womb. They are in a spiritual state and they are in a state of sin in the womb.

This is original sin. I am sinful. That's my basic nature.

I was sinful in my mother's womb. The contradiction to it is he says, well, we should have put it here. Yet you desired faithfulness even in the womb.

You taught me wisdom in that secret place. Here's his contradiction. He's basically sinful, but God was also putting a conscience in him that he knew right from wrong.

He could have wisdom. He was giving them the wisdom of how he ought to live. That's the contradiction of human nature that we're sinful, but we know better.

That's what he's confessing. So, I'm sinful, but there's something else in me. This is the struggle of the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde that is in us.

So instead of saying, I can't help myself, he is saying, he's confessing that I am a sinful creature. He says, well, that's the way I am. I can't help myself.

I'm given to these ways of living and that's who I am. I'm not responsible. David is saying, he's lamenting it.

I'm sinful and I know better. Now comes after these four lines of lament and confession of his overt act of sin and his moral impotence not to, now comes his petition of six lines. The first three pertain to the overt acts of sin in verses seven, eight, and nine.

The next three pertain to his moral impotence. He's looking for a new spirit that will enable him. First of all, with his overt acts and he reverses it.

Now he starts with the cleansing. In the first half, he asked for forgiveness and then the cleansing. Now he starts with the cleansing.

He says, cleanse me with hyssop. This is rather ad hoc. The hyssop was a very hairy plant and you dipped it into blood and water.

It was used on two occasions. It was when, say, you came across a carcass and you saw death. Then you would go to the priest and he would sprinkle you with blood and water.

In that symbolic act, you were transferred from the realm of death into the realm of life. That was the intention of why when you saw an unclean and were in the presence of death, you don't belong to that realm. You belong to this realm of life.

So, the priest would put water and blood on you, which was anticipatory of the blood of Christ. They would use the ashes of the red heifer, which the writer of Hebrews says was a type of Christ. His, as we appropriate by faith, his blood and the water from his side to our lives, we are transferred from the realm of death to the realm of life.

I think David is using that. I've been in the realm of death, bring me into the realm of life. The other way you would use it, the other case you would use hyssop is if you were a leper and you were unclean, and then you were healed and you would be sprinkled again, you would be transferred from the other.

And that's what I think David is really a bit ad hoc here. He sees himself as being in the realm of death. He's asking God to take him into the realm of life.

He is not denying blood in this psalm. This is always alleged. When you talk about hyssop, that is metonymy.

That is one noun for another. But hyssop implies blood. So he says, sprinkle me with hyssop.

Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean. Wash me and I will be whiter than snow. Now here we come to another figure of speech.

Let me hear joy and gladness. Now that is obviously a figure of speech. Figure of speech is when you have words that don't go together.

You cannot hear an emotional state. You know, you're dealing with a figure of speech. There's something wrong.

That's in a posit juxtaposition of words. Let me hear. So, he has to hear something.

You have to put it, fill it in that will produce joy and gladness. The only thing I can see that he's talking about is the words of Nathan, you are forgiven and that will produce joy and gladness. So, he jumps in the terseness of poetry, causing me to hear the word of forgiveness, and that will produce joy and gladness, which is exactly what God did.

When I accepted Christ as a 10-year-old, all I knew was to send his prayer, God be merciful to me to send it. I knew he heard my prayer and it produced joy and gladness. And the bones you have crushed will rejoice.

And you can see my whole being and it refers to his psyche, my whole being. Now it comes to the blotting out of my iniquity. You see how it's a chiasm.

He started with blot out and then he had a launder, cleanse. Then he comes here to the full elaboration of the petition, cleanse, and now we have blot out. And we come back to where we started.

Hide your face from my sins, which is another figure of speech, and blot out all my iniquity. So obviously we're going back to verse seven, wash me, which matches verse two, wash away. And verse nine, blot out, which goes back to verse one, blot out.

And you can see how you have an introductory petition that is now being elaborated upon in the full petition. So now we come to the second half. He has lamented his moral impotence in this contradiction of human nature.

We're born sinful and yet we know better. So, what's the resolution? It's the Spirit of God. It's going to be the Spirit as far as he could understand it.

Notice what happens now in verses 10, 11, and 12 in the B verse sets. Every verse references the Spirit. 10, be a new Spirit, a steadfast Spirit.

11, Holy Spirit. 12, willing Spirit. And so, it's a changed Spirit he's asking for that will give him the strength.

So, he says, create in me a pure heart. There are some people who can accept God's forgiveness and there are some who can't and they stay in their sin. He says a creation that you're able to accept the grace of God.

Create in me a pure heart that I really know I'm forgiven. You have to create that. Every good and perfect gift comes from God.

Even the ability to accept forgiveness is a gift of God. Create in me a clean heart and renew so that I'll have a steadfast Spirit and I'll persevere in a new way of life that will overcome my depravity. Second, do not cast me from your presence.

He is the King and take your Holy Spirit from me. The Holy Spirit basically enabled, and empowered a person. When God took his Spirit from Saul, he could no longer function as a King.

David is saying, don't take that anointing, that Spirit away from me. Cast me out. Let me continue to be with your Holy Spirit and your anointing to be the King.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation and to be full of joy and grant me a willing Spirit. So, I just offer myself up wholly and freely to you with a clean heart, full of the Spirit, a steadfast Spirit. I offer myself up as a freewill offering with that kind of Spirit.

That's how he will overcome his impotence. We now come to his praise section. Then I will teach transgresses your way so that sinners will turn back to you.

And the ways in this Psalm are the ways of mercy, unfailing love, grace. Those were the ways in Exodus 34.6. Because people have hope that God can forgive them as in the prodigal son, they can turn to God and find salvation. They will return back to you because they know they can be forgiven and have a relationship with the living God.

He doesn't presume upon God. Deliver me from guilt of bloodshed, O God, you who are God, my Savior. And my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

And here we have the word of praise. I will sing of it. Your righteousness means that you restore what's topsy-turvy, which includes salvation.

It's going to right everything that's wrong with David. So often righteousness is almost equivalent to salvation as you restore a topsy-turvy situation. Open my lips and my mouth will declare your praise.

So, there we have the word of praise. I said the praise has two parts. It has a word of praise and it has a sacrifice.

You would eat a meal in conjunction with the word. It's in that context that David is saying, this is not the time for us to have a big meal with a pregnant wife, a dead husband. How in the world are we going to have a big party here? We couldn't feed on that.

And so, he says, you do not delight in the sacrifice. I would bring it. You do not take pleasure in a burnt offering.

My sacrifice, O God, of what we can all feed on is a broken spirit, a broken, a contrite heart, God, you will not despise. And so, his sacrifice is his broken spirit. He's not denying the sacrificial system.

Almost everybody reads this. He's moved beyond the sacrificial system. They don't read about cleansing with chiseled.

They don't understand the form of the psalm. They can't handle the psalm correctly. If you don't understand that you're in the praise section and how to understand what this praise is, what the sacrifice is.

And then comes the wish at the end and he moves beyond it that the whole kingdom has been under a cloud. And now if the king is restored, may it please you to prosper Zion, to build up the walls of Jerusalem. And when that occurs, then we'll have burnt offerings again.

Then you will delight in the sacrifices of the righteous in burnt offerings offered whole, then bulls will be offered on your altar. And if the king gets right, the kingdom gets right and the kingdom can again expand because the king is right. To us, I handed it over to the chief musician, whatever our sphere of influence may be, that if we are right and we're cleansed and we're forgiven, the kingdom can expand. But we have to renounce any sin.

This is Dr. Bruce Waltke in his teaching on the book of Psalms. This is session number 15, Petition Psalms, Psalm 51.