

## THE PRAYER OF A PENITENT ADULTERER AND MURDERER

Text: Psalm 51:1-2

INTRO: David had sinned. He had committed adultery with the wife of a loyal military officer. Uriah was one of David's mighty men, 2 Sam. 23:39. Then to cover up his sin, he intentionally caused the death of the woman's husband. Nathan the prophet had peaked David's interest with a story about a man who had many sheep, but when company came, he butchered his neighbor's pet lamb to feed them. David's anger was aroused. He pronounced the scoundrel worthy of death. Nathan declared: "You are the man," (2 Sam. 12:7).

### I. DAVID'S BACKGROUND.

A. After King Saul had become unfaithful & disobedient to God, God had hand-picked David to be Israel's next king, 1 Sam. 16:7-12.

B. David's exemplary faith was manifested even as a teenager: "The Lord, who delivered me from the paw of the lion & from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine" (1 Sam. 17:37).

C. Even tho he knew Saul's kingship was on its way out & that he himself had been chosen to replace Saul, he was loyal & dedicated to Saul to the end, 1 Sam. 26:23-24.

D. God summed up the general character & attitude of David: "The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14).

### II. BUT DAVID WAS A MAN--AND HE SINNED GRIEVOUSLY.

READ 2 SAMUEL 12:7-9

A. David's moral fall came, not in days of struggle, but after he had reached success. He was successful & prosperous. Many men & women have learned to be faithful in difficult times, only to fall away from God in times of prosperity.

B. David lost sight of God & His will, not while he was busy,

but in times of leisure. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop."

READ 2 SAMUEL 11:1-4.

C. David's sin was not that of lustful youth, nor was it prompted by desperation of age. David, like so many in our own circle of acquaintances, fell morally in the middle years of his life.

D. But God be thanked that David did not choose to remain alienated from God.

### III. DAVID'S RESTORATION.

A. God sent a preacher to make David aware of his sin. No sinner is really ready to come to God until he is aware of the nature, the sinfulness, of his sins. David realized what he had done.

David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." (2 Sam. 12:13).

B. But David not only realized what he had done; he also realized what he had lost. He had lost a clean heart. He had lost a right spirit. He had lost his salvation & the joy that had accompanied it.

READ PSALM 51:10-12.

C. David penitently acknowledged his sin. He made no defense. He offered no excuse. He did not confess the sin of Bathsheba or plead situation ethics. Not like Saul. Saul confessed his sin, but blamed others, 1 Sam. 13:11-14; 1 Sam. 15:24.

D. David noted that his sin was against God, 2 Sam. 12:13; Psalm 51:4. True, he had wronged Uriah. He had wronged Bathsheba. He had wronged his wives, his sons, & all who looked to him for an example. But these (with the exception of Bathsheba) were unaware of his sin. But it was committed in full view of God.

And it was God's law he had violated. Sin is the transgression of God's law. Like Joseph, Gen. 39:9.

E. David seeks mercy & forgiveness & renewed joy. The sweet singer of Israel longs to sing again,  
READ PSALM 51:1-3, 7-12.

F. As he seeks these blessings, David also renews his commitment:

READ PSALM 51:12-13.

If we plant & water, God *will* give the increase. If the joy of God, the joy of salvation, is in our hearts, we *will* plant & water & God will give the increase.

CONCLUSION: When I remember that Psalm 51 is the song of an adulterer and a murderer who found forgiveness & hope & joy, it renews my hope that I, too, can know mercy & forgiveness & joy & fruitfulness in the vineyard of the Lord.

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, September 19, 1993  
Lancaster County, PA, October 17, 1993  
Pruett & Lobit, Baytown, TX, December 26, 1993  
Northside, Georgetown, TX, October 2, 1994 (lectureship)  
North Courtenay, Merritt Island, FL, February 12, 1995  
South Loop, Taylor, TX, June 17, 1996 (meeting)  
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, August 12, 2001