

King David And Repentance

Proverbs 17:9 [NIV] *“He who covers over an offence promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.”*

To **not** expose another’s sin is a sign of love.

Proverbs 10:12 [NIV] *“Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs.”*

Again love is related to the covering of a person’s sins **from public knowledge**.

Psalms 103:12 [NIV] *“as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”*

God wants to remove the knowledge of our sins into outer space.

Jeremiah 31:34 [NIV] *“... for I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”*

God will blot out our sins from His memory.

Why then did our loving God expose to all humanity King David’s sins?

This article aims to answer this question.

Throughout this study we need to always remember what our loving God tells us about the character of King David.

Acts 13:22 [NIV] *“After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.’”*

This is God’s personal opinion of King David.

Let us now examine one of King David’s most well known sins.

2 Samuel 11:1-5 [NIV] *“In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king’s men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, “Isn’t this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” **Then David sent messengers to get her. She came to him, and he slept with her.** (She had purified herself from her uncleanness.) Then she went back home. The woman conceived and sent word to David, saying, “I am pregnant.”*

This was a chance encounter as far as King David was concerned.

I have doubts as to Bathsheba’s motives when we read about her other scheming activities, and that the exposure of her naked body led to a considerable leap in social status.

King David had fallen into Satan’s trap.

One of King David’s weaknesses was women, particularly beautiful women, this comes out in the narrative of his life as recorded in the Christian Bible.

2 Samuel 11:6 [NIV] *“So David sent this word to Joab: “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” And Joab sent him to David.”*

King David planned to conceal this sinful act that was the result of giving in to his weakness.

2 Samuel 11:7-13 [NIV] *“When Uriah came to him, David asked him how Joab was, how the soldiers were and how the war was going. Then David said to Uriah, “Go down to your house and wash your feet.” So Uriah left the palace, and a gift from the king was sent after him. But Uriah slept at the entrance to the palace with all his master’s servants and did not go down to his house. When David was told, “Uriah did not go home,” he asked him, “Haven’t you just come from a distance? Why didn’t you go home?” Uriah said to David, “The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in tents, and my master Joab and my lord’s men are camped in the open fields. How could I go to my house to eat and drink and lie with my wife? As surely as you live, I will not do such a thing!” Then David said to him, “Stay here one more day, and tomorrow I will send you back.” So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. At David’s invitation, he ate and drank with him, and David made him drunk. But in the evening Uriah went out to sleep on his mat among his master’s servants; he did not go home.”*

King David tried every tactic to be able to blame Uriah for Bathsheba’s pregnancy, but all to no avail.

2 Samuel 11:14-17 [NIV] *“In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah. In it he wrote, “Put Uriah in the front line where the fighting is fiercest. Then withdraw from him so that he will be struck down and die.” So while Joab had the city under siege, he put Uriah at a place where he knew the strongest defenders were. When the men of the city came out and fought against Joab, some of the men in David’s army fell; moreover, Uriah the Hittite died.”*

A sin that was the result of giving in to a human weakness had grown into a pre-meditated act of murder.

This was no longer a secret sin for other people knew of the situation. Joab must have spread this story, perhaps after imbibing too much wine in the company of his fellow soldiers.

2 Samuel 12:14 [NIV] *“But because by doing this you have made the enemies of the LORD show utter contempt, the son born to you will die.”*

This indicates that what King David had done was common knowledge.

2 Samuel 11:26-27 [NIV] *“When Uriah’s wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him. After the time of mourning was over, David had her brought to his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son. But the thing David had done displeased the LORD.”*

At least nine months had passed before God responded to the two sins of King David. David may by then be thinking he had got away with these sins.

2 Samuel 12:1-6 [NIV] *“The LORD sent Nathan to David. When he came to him, he said, “There were two men in a certain town, one rich and the other poor. The rich man had a very large number of sheep and cattle, but the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb that he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup and even slept in his arms. It was like a daughter to him. “Now a traveller came to the rich man, but the rich man refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare a meal for the traveller who had come to him. Instead, he took the ewe lamb that belonged to the poor man and prepared it for the one who had come to him.” David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, “As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity.”*

God forgiving King David and allowing him to continue to live.

Remember that according to the laws that God had given Israel David could have been stoned to death along with Bathsheba.

These sins took their toll on King David and others.

The child born of this sinful act died. [2 Samuel 12:18]

One of King David's sons raped his own sister. [2 Samuel 13:1-13]

David's son Amnon was murdered by his brother Absalom. [2 Samuel 13:20-29]

Absalom, a vain and spoilt teenager, tries to take over King David's kingship. [2 Samuel 15:1-13]

King David had to flee from his own palace. [2 Samuel 15:14-17]

Absalom rapes King David's concubines. [2 Samuel 16:20-21]

King David's son Absalom was eventually murdered by King David's General Joab. [2 Samuel 18:14-15]

King David's son Solomon followed his father's example and multiplied his wives and concubines which contributed to his rejecting God who had blessed the beginning of his life. [1 Kings 11:1-6]

Just like the Jewish leaders who claimed to be representing the Creator God, Christians can blaspheme God's name by sinning. [Romans 2:17-24]

God uses King David's personal experience of sin to warn all humanity of the far-reaching effect of human sin.

David tried to use his personal experience of sin to warn his son Solomon as to the outcome of sin through the proverbs he wrote.

Ecclesiastes 12:11 [NIV] *"The words of the wise are like goads, their collected sayings like firmly embedded nails, given by one Shepherd."*

The shepherd could be King David or Jesus Christ.

Remember that many of the proverbs were written for Solomon by his father King David.

[Proverbs 1:8; Proverbs 2:1; Proverbs 3:1; Proverbs 4:1; etc.]

Let us now study the more positive side of King David's life

King David, much like the apostle Peter, was a man of great zeal, and a great zest for life.

King David never did things by half, he was a 100% man, this applied to what was good in his life but also his sins.

We could never liken King David to the Christians in Laodicea who were "lukewarm." [Revelation 3:14-18]

King David was an expert repenter, a very good example for all of us to follow.

King David shows this humble attitude of mind in the psalm he wrote after the prophet Nathan pointed out his sin against God by committing adultery with Bathsheba.

Psalms 51:1-4 [NIV] *“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 that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.**”*

David appeals to the known nature of the almighty Creator God.

“Have mercy” is the language of a person who knows that they have **no claim** to that mercy but begs for it to be extended to them.

For all this unworthiness King David still knows that he belongs to his Creator God.

1 Samuel 16:13 [NIV] *“So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the **Spirit of the LORD came upon David in power.** Samuel then went to Ramah.”*

King David was one of the few who had the Holy Spirit working in them at that time.

Once we have been empowered with the Holy Spirit after repentance and baptism, as an outward sign of our being born again, even when we sin God still looks on us as a created child.

Luke 15:20-21 [NIV] *“So he got up and went to his father. “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’”*

The father still called the prodigal son his son, as the son still called him father.

This son/father relationship remains as long as we have an attitude of repentance.

Isaiah 43:25 [NIV] *“I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.”*

King David knew that this was God’s nature.

Notice it was for God’s own sake that He does this.

2 Peter 3:9 [NIV] *“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.**”*

The apostle Peter also knew this desire the Creator God has for all humans.

During the writing of this psalm of repentance we can trace the thoughts of King David as God through the Holy Spirit reveals to him the real enormity of his sin as a leader in Israel.

We can follow these thoughts by the Hebrew words that David uses for his sin.

“Transgressions” Hebrew “*pasha*” meaning to break away from authority, to offend or rebel.

“Iniquity” Hebrew “*avon*” meaning perverseness, to turn away from truth.

“Sin” Hebrew “*châtâ*” meaning to miss the mark, not reaching the goal.

“Evil” Hebrew “*raa*” meaning wicked and injurious, from a root referring to breaking up all that is good and desirable.

This is the Hebrew word used to describe the very nature of Satan.

As King David meditated on his sin he realised just how it had hurt the Creator God that he loved and who had showered blessings on him.

Psalms 51:5 [NIV] *“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.”*

We are all born into corrupt world from the moment of our birth our mind is influenced by this society that is being led astray by Satan. [**Revelation 12:9** [NIV]; **1 John 5:19** [NIV]]

Remember that Adam and Eve did **not** have any children before they sinned against God by rebelling against His command.

All humans have inherited this rebellious, sinful nature from our first parents.

Romans 7:17-20 [NIV] *“As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. **I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.** For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do, this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.”*

Paul recognised that he had, as all humans have, in us a nature that is prone to sin.

Romans 7:24-25 [NIV] *“What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God, through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.”*

Only the cleansing power of the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ can free us from the enslavement.

Psalms 58:3 [NIV] *“Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies.”*

King David realised that this sin was no freak event, but part of the character moulded even before he left his mother’s womb.

Psalms 51:6 [NIV] *“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.”*

King David knew that what his Creator God was desiring to create in him the very character of his Creator, that of love, faithfulness, compassion and patience.

This had to be more than a façade we put up to impress other human beings but the controlling of our inner thoughts, our hidden life.

A life that is only known to ourselves and the spirit world, hidden from other human beings.

King David was talking about internalising the very words of God.

John 14:6 [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.”*

Jesus Christ personifies the very truth of God.

John 8:31-32 [NIV] *“To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

Accepting and abiding by the words of Jesus Christ frees us from the influence of our sinful nature.

John 6:53-56 [NIV] *“Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.”*

We eat the flesh of Jesus Christ by internalising the Word of God, the Christian Bible.

Just as we use physical food and drink to live our physical life, we need to use the body and blood of Jesus Christ to live our spiritual lives.

Psalms 51:6 [NIV] *“Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.”*

God wants to teach us wisdom as well as truth.

As we apply this knowledge to our own lives we are preparing to teach others as God calls them to become a part of His created family.

Revelation 1:4-6 [NIV] *“John, To the seven churches in the province of Asia: Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and **has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father**, to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.”*

Priests were the teachers in the Jewish culture of Christ’s time on earth and still are in the Jewish communities today.

This is what repentance is all about, an outward desire to be of benefit to other human beings.

If we repent only to save our own lives from eternal death we have not yet got a clear vision of what the Creator God desires for His created children.

All of God’s desires are sacrificial love towards others.

This must be our desire, even our motivation for repentance.

Psalms 51:13 [NIV] *“Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.”*

This was in the mind of King David as he sought forgiveness from God.

Psalms 51:7 [NIV] *“Cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”*

“Cleanse” the Hebrew refers to purity, a state of uncontamination.

“Hyssop” three possible thoughts in the mind of King David.

Hyssop was used to sprinkle water on a person who was unclean due to touching a dead body [**Numbers 19:18**].

David spiritually dead because of sin.

Hyssop was used in the cleansing of a leper who was an outcast of society.

King David was cut off from God because of his sin.

Hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood of the sacrificial lamb at the Passover service [Exodus 12:22]. King David needed the sacrificial blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

Psalms 51:8 [NIV] *“Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.”*

The result of the unburdening of the weight of sin and guilt onto Jesus Christ by repentance. [Isaiah 53:5-6]

Psalms 51:9 [NIV] *“Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.”*

King David was so ashamed of what he had done, realising his actions were seen by a vast audience in heaven as well as on earth. [Jeremiah 16:17; Psalms 139:1-12]

Psalms 51:10 [NIV] *“Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”*

“Create” asking for something that only a Creator God can do.

“Heart” – Hebrew “leb” referring to the centre that motivates all our thoughts and actions.

“Renew” – rebuild **not** patch up.

“Steadfast” – a stable, well-established, building.

Psalms 51:11 [NIV] *“Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.”*

What was most likely in the mind of King David at that moment was the experience he had seen of King Saul when God took away his Holy Spirit and allowed another evil spirit to take his place. [1 Samuel 16:14]

Psalms 51:12 [NIV] *“Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.”*

“Restore” – plagued by the guilt of sin, realised or not.

The joy that assurance of salvation brings, is lost when we sin.

“Willing spirit” – a spontaneous, generous and enthusiastic desire to serve our Creator God, is a spirit that only the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit can give us.

Psalms 51:13 [NIV] *“Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.”*

King David then plays his “master card” knowing for sure that this is the very desire that God has for him and all of His servants.

Psalms 51:14 [NIV] *“Save me from bloodguilt, O God, the God who saves me, and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.”*

Nowhere in this psalm is David concerned with escaping the material consequences of his sins.

It is the guilt of them that is a burden to him and the ill-effect they will have on others.

Psalms 51:15 [NIV] *“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.”*

This is the prayer of a person who has been shamed by the enormity of his sins.

Psalms 51:16-17 [NIV] *“You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”*

The physical rituals of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant were only designed to help us realise our need for the sacrifice of our Saviour Jesus Christ. [**Hosea 6:6; Isaiah 66:2**]

God is looking for the human who knows how little they deserve and how much they owe their Saviour and Creator God.

God seeks the person who trembles at His Word the Christian Bible and who is willing to change their mind and motivations in life.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

This is the type of life and mind that God is seeking to create in all human beings.

Conclusion:-

Now when we ask the question, why did God expose the sins of King David?

We can see the answer clearly.

Through reading the approach that King David had towards sin and repentance we can learn how to be a person who is like King David, a man who was seeking the very heart of God to be His own.

I don’t think that King David would have wanted his sins to have so much exposure.

But when we personally express our thanks to him, at the time of the resurrection, for his example of repentance recorded in God’s Word, the Christian Bible, I feel he will be less embarrassed.

Also when Jesus Christ reminds King David that he did ask to be used to bring others to repentance, I believe King David’s embarrassment will be abated completely.