

# The Sacrifice of God is a Broken Spirit

by Anton Bosch

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*This sermon delves into Psalm 51, focusing on David's repentance after his sin with Bathsheba. David acknowledges his transgressions, seeks God's mercy, and emphasizes the importance of a contrite heart and broken spirit in true repentance. The sermon highlights the need for genuine repentance, the restoration of joy in God's salvation, and the significance of God's grace in cleansing and renewing us.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:1, 2 Corinthians 4:7, Luke 7:36, Acts 3:19, Hebrews 10:22, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9, Romans 2:4, Isaiah 57:15, Matthew 5:3

**Topics:** "Repentance", "God's Grace"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Psalm 51, as we continue to look at Psalm 51, and we got up to verse 6 last week, but let's read the whole of the chapter again, or at least read verses 1 through 17. I'm not going to deal with verses 18 and 19, there's a long story attached to those two verses, but let's read from the beginning, to the chief musician, the Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went into him after he had gone into Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your lovingkindness, according to the multitude of your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, alone, have I sinned, and done this evil in your sight, that you may be found just when you speak, and blameless when you judge.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, you desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part you will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones you have broken may rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me by your generous spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners shall be converted to you. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth your praise.

For you do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it. You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.

These, O God, you will not despise." So we introduced the chapter last week in terms of speaking about the background to this, how that David killed Nathan, one of his valiant men, and took, sorry not Nathan, Uriah, and took his wife Bathsheba. And as a result of this, Nathan the prophet goes to David and tells him the story, a parable. David's response is the right response to the parable, but he doesn't get it that he in fact, the parable is about him.

Nathan says to him, you're the guy. And so David then responds with complete repentance. And so that's what the psalm is all about, is David's response to the fact that Nathan had pointed the finger at him.

We have been comparing David's response to that of Saul, and I'll make a couple of comments on that again this morning. But the issue of repentance is a very important one, and I need to restate this again. These days the idea of repentance is not only ignored in most churches, and not preached in most churches, you won't hear much of it on Christian radio or Christian television.

But not only is it ignored, but a whole theology has been designed around making repentance as not something which is part of the New Testament, which is just totally, just totally crazy. And we spoke about that sometime a couple of years ago, 18 months I think, when we were still outside during COVID, speaking about the true gospel heresy. And so there is a whole doctrine which is becoming more and more popular, saying that repentance is not part of Paul's preaching, it was only part of Jesus' preaching and part of the Old Testament.

Of course, we know that's not true. You can revisit that video. But Paul is very clear three times in the book of Acts when he defines, he gives his testimony, he's very specific that he preached repentance, both to the Jews and to the Gentiles.

And of course the whole idea of repentance, and we'll see the idea of brokenness this morning, are all part of the New Testament. So let's begin in verse 7. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean. David does not make reference to the blood of Jesus in this passage, in this psalm.

But also, you'll notice that he doesn't make reference to the sacrifices of the Old Testament. In fact, he makes a reference, he says, you don't want those sacrifices, you want a broken and a contrite heart. David understands that there is no sacrifice in the sacrificial system that will deal with his sin, because it is a willful sin.

We're going to see some of that in the book of Hebrews in a few weeks' time again. And so the only thing he can appeal to is God's grace and God's mercy. But here is a reference to the blood, because, and you say, well, I don't see blood in this verse.

Well, the hyssop, remember, was that which they used to brush the blood onto the doorposts and the lintel of the houses when the angel of death passed over. And so the hyssop is that, it's just a little shrub, a little bush, and they would use it as a brush or a broom, and you could use it and paint the doorposts. And remember that they offered Jesus vinegar, and they put it on hyssop.

And so there's an oblique reference here to the blood, referring obviously to the Passover. So purgify me, and I shall be clean. So David, even though he does not have the New Testament, even though he's living in the Old Testament under the law and under the sacrificial system, understands that God can cleanse and wash away sin.

In spite of the fact that he cannot bring a sacrifice, in spite of the fact that his sin was willful, purgify me, wash me, and I will be clean. Wash me and I will be whiter than snow. And this is amazing how that a man in the Old Testament can have such a complete grasp of the efficacy of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is able to not just cover sin, as we've been saying over and over in the book of Hebrews, but is able to wash and cleanse, and is able to not remember their sins and iniquities anymore, as we saw in the last verse of chapter 9 in Hebrews.

So he says, Lord, cleanse me and cleanse me, and I will be clean. Notice he says, I shall be clean, and I shall be whiter than snow. So his faith was greater than people in some religions today, who say, well, I just hope that everything's okay.

I just hope that somehow my sins have been washed away. No, David says, if you wash me, I will be clean. And he says that twice.

Verse 18, make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones you have broken may rejoice. So David, you'll see over and over in the psalm, speaks about the fact that he wants to restore the joy of his salvation. Make me hear joy and gladness.

David knows there's an issue between him and God. He knows that his sin has come between him and the Lord. Remember the Lord says concerning Israel, that his arm is not short, that it cannot save.

His ear is not heavy, that it cannot hear. But your sins and iniquities have made a separation between you and your God. David understands that outside of the presence of God, there is no joy.

Over and over in the Psalms, as we read through the Psalms, Sunday after Sunday, we see how that David expresses the fullness of joy that is to be found in the presence of the Lord, in a right relationship with the Lord. Outside of that relationship, when we walk in disobedience, when we walk in rebellion, when we walk in unconfessed sin, the relationship is broken. And outside of the Lord, there is no joy.

There is no peace. And so make me hear joy and gladness. So Lord, deal with the issue.

Deal with my sin so that I can know how it feels to be joyful in your presence again. And then he says that the bones you have broken may rejoice. He's going to speak about brokenness again at the end of the chapter, and we'll speak more about that at that point.

But I want you to notice that he feels his guilt in a physical way. This is not just... You see, the problem is that sometimes when we mess up, sometimes when we sin, we have just a twinge of conscience, but it's there and we shrug it off. David says, no, you've broken my bones.

This has broken me physically. And that tells me why God so loved David, because he was not like Saul, who trifled with sin. But in fact, sin was something that affected him physically, that broke his bones.

And obviously we understand that he doesn't mean physically that his bones were actually broken. But you have afflicted me in a physical way, not just in a spiritual and an emotional way. And folk, wit to God that we had the same sensitivity that David had.

That when we displease the Lord, when we sin, when we do what we ought not to do or don't do what we ought to do, that that would affect us physically. That we feel physically broken, because the Lord is displeased with us. Because the Lord has been dishonored in our lives.

And so that the bones you have broken may rejoice. And then in verse 9, hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Now it may seem in the first part of that verse that he is saying, well, Lord, just look the other way.

That's not what it's saying. In fact, that's what we pray many times. We say, well, Lord, just don't, just look the other way.

The same way as, you know, you hope that the policeman will just look the other way when you don't stop at the stop sign or something like that. God cannot look the other way. We know that.

We know that by the very fact that when Adam sinned, God could not just look away and say, well, yeah, no, it didn't really, I didn't see that. God has to send his son Jesus to die because of Adam's sin. That's the degree to which God cannot just look the other way.

So when he says, hide your face from my sins, how is God not going to see his sin? There's only one way God cannot see his sin, and that is if the sin is removed. That's the only way. Until the sin is dealt with, it is in God's face.

You know, it may not be in our face, because as I've said, we have an amazing skill set at ignoring the conviction that comes from the Holy Spirit, at somehow living with an evil conscience, at somehow being able to deceive ourselves into believing everything is fine when it's in fact not okay. So how's God going to hide his face from my sins? By blotting out my iniquities. By blotting out my iniquities, by purging them, by cleansing them.

I suppose in a modern translation we would probably use the word delete, because that's the language we understand in computers and stuff today. You hit the delete button and it's gone. In fact, it's not a good illustration, because as you know, even if you hit the delete button, it's still somewhere on the hard drive or somewhere in the cloud.

But when God blots it out, it's gone. The sins and iniquities I will remember no more. He's just said, wash me and I will be whiter than snow.

What an understanding. And folks, here's the thing, is that when we look at the Psalm, and I think that sometimes we avoid the Psalm because it seems so dark, it seems so heavy, as David speaks about brokenness and speaks about confessing his sin. And yet all through, the magnitude of his sin is offset by the greatness of God's grace, that God's grace in fact is greater than all his sin.

And so even though he is heavily burdened and he is broken, he understands that there is grace. He understands that if he comes to the Lord, the Lord will cleanse him and will purify him and make him new in that sense. Verse 10, creating me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

You see, again, we saw that earlier in the chapter. David understood that his sin was not just an external thing. It wasn't just something that he did out of character or something that he did which wasn't, that just happened to be a little hiccup.

He understood that this was endemic. This was an issue of his heart. And again, he's crying out and he says, Lord, don't just forgive me, but make me clean.

Give me a clean heart. Give me a heart that is right before you. And then he says, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Earlier he said that the sin is an inward thing. You desire purity, I think he says. Verse 6, behold, you desire truth in the inward parts and in the hidden part you will make me to know wisdom.

And so he says, Lord, deal with the sin. Deal with the consequences of that sin, but deal with a source. Deal with my heart and create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit.

Now, here I prefer King James, the old King James. It says, and renew a right spirit. That's the best way I understand that Hebrew word, and I'm not a Hebrew scholar, but when he says a steadfast spirit, it doesn't connect to the Hebrew, but the word right, and it is a complicated word, but the word right spirit seems to capture it better.

My spirit was wrong. I had a wrong spirit. I need a right spirit.

And so David understands that it's an inward issue. God needs to deal with his heart. Verse 11, here it gets really scary.

Do not cast me away from your presence and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. Now, I know there are people who say, well, God would not have done that. Well, God did do that with Saul.

Remember that God takes his spirit from Saul and gives Saul a demon. I don't think we spoke about that when we looked at the history last week, but if you read the story of Saul, you'll find that God gave him an evil spirit, gave him a demon. And so a very, very sad situation that Saul ends up in.

If this wasn't a possibility, then why does David say so? And so David understands that there is the potential of being thrown away. Paul says, I'm, you know, I keep myself under control, lest having preached to others, I myself may be cast away. Same words that David's using here, that I do not cast me away from your presence.

Don't banish me from your presence. David, as a king, understands the authority that God has. As the king, David could banish someone, not just from the palace, but from the country.

He could kick them out and say, you can't live in Israel. And we know that that used to be the most severe punishment that the early colonies here had on the East Coast, the New England colonies, that if they didn't like you, if you misbehaved, if you broke the law, or if your religion didn't match what they wanted, they could banish you, and you could not live in the colony. So David understood what banishment meant.

He had that power and that authority, and he understood that God had the same power to banish him from his presence. But he says, do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me. When I looked at this verse, one of the things that really struck me was the difference between David and Saul again.

And I reread, when I came to this part, I reread the chapter again, to see if there was anywhere in this psalm that David shows any concern about his position as the king. And there is nothing. Not at one point does he say, Lord, you know, please keep me on as the king.

Please don't let me lose my throne. That is the last of his concerns. Saul, that was his only concern.

Saul couldn't care, could care less whether God banished him from his presence, as long as Saul got to sit on that throne, as long as he got to wear that crown, as long as he got to be respected by his people. You remember how he says to Samuel, now go with me so we can make sacrifice, so the people can see that I'm still okay. That was his only concern.

David has no concern for his position whatsoever. He doesn't ask about his throne. He does not ask about his descendants even.

His concern is one thing only, and that is his relationship with the Lord. And folk, that really shows a true heart, a true repentant heart, because so many times we are more concerned about the consequences of our sin, in the sense of, how will it make me look? How will it affect my position? David says, no, there's only one thing, and remember he begins and he says, I've sinned before you and you alone. That's the only issue that matters, is my relationship with you.

And folk, again, here is true repentance. False repentance is only concerned about how will I look. True repentance is only concerned with how do I stand before God.

That's the only issue. Everything else is by the way. Restore to me the joy of your salvation.

Again, he comes back to this idea of joy, and he understands that there is joy in the Lord's salvation. Now again, I want you to see how that he, living in the Old Testament, understands salvation. When you read the Psalms and he uses the word salvation and save me, many times it has a political or a military context.

Save me from my enemies. Save me from famine and from pestilence. But here, he's not using this in that sense.

He's using this in the sense of salvation, the way we use that word salvation, in the sense that God is able to save our souls, that God is able to save us from condemnation and from damnation. And so restore to me the joy of your salvation. He again understands too that this is not up to me.

It's not I cannot save myself. It's not my salvation. It's not Israel's salvation.

It's God's salvation. It's God who made the plan. It's God who will ultimately, from David's perspective, send his son to die on the cross and to pay the price for our sin and shed the blood.

And so it is God's salvation. And he says, I find joy in the salvation you provide. You see, when our salvation is self-made, we find joy in ourselves.

Remember the Pharisee, thank you God, that I'm not like other people, like this man over here. He found joy in his own merits, in his own good works. David says, no, it's not about me.

It's not about what I, it's about your salvation. And in your salvation, the salvation you provide, there is joy. And he says, I remember what that was like.

So please, Lord, restore me. But here's the thing. If you're walking in disobedience, if you're walking in rebellion, if you're dealing or living with unconfessed sin, you can remember how things used to be.

You can remember how it was to be right with God, the joy of serving the Lord, the joy of having no condemnation. That should be an incentive to say, Lord, I want that back again. I want to be in that place again where there is joy in serving you, where there is joy in worship, where there is joy in reading my Bible.

Folks, when we find reading the Word becomes hard, when we find meditating on the Word, when we find prayer becomes hard, when it becomes a job, there's a problem. Because there is joy in serving the Lord. There is joy in his Word.

There's joy in prayer. There's joy in fellowship. And so he says, I remember what it was.

Please restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me by your generous spirit. Generous spirit here I think is a good translation for a difficult word, speaking about the fact that God gives the Spirit without measure, the New Testament says. He gives his Spirit without measure.

He is generous in his Spirit, in giving us his Spirit. So God is not a mean or a stingy God. God doesn't give us his Spirit in measure, but he gives us abundantly, not just his Spirit, but his grace.

Now I want you to see that he is now moving into another phase in his prayer. And he says, Lord, you need to help me and deal with my sin. You need to deal with my heart.

But now, moving forward, you need to uphold me. David has now come to understand how weak he really was, how deceived his heart was, how easily he fell into the severest of sin. And he says, Lord, you need to hold me up.

You need to keep me. Because remember, as the prophet says, unless the Lord keeps the city, they that keep watch, keep watch in vain. Unless the Lord builds the house, they that build, labour in vain.

So the Lord is the one who needs to hold us. Paul says, I am assured that that which I've committed to him, he is able to keep until that day. So Paul, even in all of his understanding and wisdom and knowledge, doesn't feel that he can hold himself.

But he says, the Lord is able to keep what I've committed to him. And David is here committing himself and committing the future to him. And he says, Lord, you need to hold me up.

You need to protect me. You need to help me. You need to strengthen me.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners shall be converted to you. Now, I thought long and hard about this verse. Is David saying, well, I'm going to start preaching the gospel once this has all been dealt with? And remember, this wasn't going to just go away overnight.

David's relationship with the Lord would be restored when he confessed and when he repented. God restored him, but the consequences of his sin continued. And so that child that was conceived by Bathsheba would die after it was born.

And so there was still a long way to go, many months, maybe a year and a half, two years to go before this would all be concluded. So there was still a long way that David was going to... And of course, that's just the reality, is that God deals with the sin, but sometimes the consequences of what we have done, what we have done to others, linger on, and they take time to work out. And sometimes it takes years.

But is he saying, I'm going to go out preaching the gospel? No, I think that he's speaking about his life, because what David did was not hidden. It wasn't something that he did behind the scenes, and nobody knew what he did. Everybody knew.

When he sent the servants and he said, go and fetch her for me, they said, but that's Uriah's wife. They knew what was going on. They knew what he had done with Uriah.

When Uriah goes back to the battlefield with a letter, the general knew what this was all about. In fact, he's given a code. David says to him, look, you know, send message, send me word how the battle is going.

And in the, what we would call a sitrep, situational report in the army, in the sitrep, you need to say these words, Uriah is dead. We attacked and we were overcome and Uriah died. So that David could, so everybody knew it was, it was not a secret at all.

But his forgiveness and his restoration would be the message that God is able to forgive. And David still teaches us today about God's forgiveness. How does he teach us? Not just by his words, but by the very fact that God forgave him, that God restored him, that God establishes his kingdom forever.

And that while some of the consequences were there, the child dies, the kingdom is eventually divided. Two generations later, Judah and Israel would be separated. That's part of God's judgment on David's deeds.

The sin has been forgiven. The consequences are still there, but David is restored. David is not just slightly restored.

David doesn't, he doesn't get into heaven and sit there in the outer perimeters of heaven. David will be upon the throne in the new Jerusalem in the millennium. David is 100% restored and that's the lesson that he teaches those who sin.

There is restoration. There is healing. There is forgiveness.

There is cleansing. If we only come to him with a repentant heart, and again contrasting that with Saul, then I will teach transgressors your ways and sinners will be converted to you. I wonder how many people over the centuries have been saved as a result of Psalm 51.

Powerful psalms speaking about how we really need to repent. And so I will teach transgressors through my testimony and people will be converted. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation.

Again, that idea of my salvation. And my tongue shall sing aloud of your righteousness. Deliver me from the guilt.

Interesting word again. He doesn't say cleanse me. He's used that word.

Forgive me. But deliver me from the guilt. You see, what is it that we need to be delivered of? We need to be delivered of something that ensnares us, that captures us, that locks us up.

We always use the word deliverance in the sense of someone being set free. Now David's not asking to be delivered from the judgment of God. He's already asked about that.

But from the guilt. You see, here's the thing. It's one thing for God to forgive us, which he does.

But it's another thing for us to get rid of the guilt, even once we've been forgiven. Because we remember the things that we did. And God says, I don't remember them.

I've forgiven them. And yet we remember, we remind ourselves of them. We remind God of them.

And we're ensnared and entrapped with the guilt of stuff that has been dealt with by the blood of Jesus. And he says, Lord, set me free from a guilty conscience, which does not need to be guilty. Remember, there's always this issue.

If I have reason to be guilty, and I've not dealt with sin, then obviously, how's God going to set me free from a guilty conscience? He's given me a guilty conscience for a reason. But if I have a guilty conscience over something that has been dealt with, something that happened before I got saved, I need the Lord to help me to be set free from that guilty conscience. Because the sin is not there.

So if the sin is not there, if the sin has been washed, and cleansed, and removed, and he's made me whiter than snow, what's the point of why am I feeling guilty? I'm feeling guilty over something that doesn't exist. Because his blood has dealt with it. And so Lord, help me with my guilt.

Because I understand your grace. I understand the completeness of your forgiveness. And so deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation.

And my tongue shall sing aloud of your righteousness. You can see again how that he connects the forgiveness and the deliverance that comes from the Lord with worship. Remember, Jesus tells that parable, and he says, he who has been forgiven much will love much.

If we have really been forgiven, it must generate praise within our lips. It must bring about a heart of living a life of gratitude, and of worship, and of adoration because of what he has done. Because he has forgiven us.

Because he has cleansed us. Because he's made us new creatures. And so my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

And in fact, David does that over and over in the Psalms. He sings about God's goodness. He sings about the forgiveness that comes because of the Lord and of his righteousness.

If we've truly been forgiven, and we've understood our forgiveness, we cannot live disgruntled, miserable lives. We must live lives of worship and of praise because we've understood what he has done for us. And

so my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

Verse 15, Lord open my lips and my mouth shall show forth your praise. So he understands that he can't speak at that, up to that point because the sin is an issue. But Lord deal with the sin and now help me to be grateful.

Help me to be worshipful and to praise you. Now here comes verse 16 and he says, do not desire, you do not desire sacrifice or else I would give it. And of course, he understood there was no sacrifice as I've said for willful sin.

Remember that it's interesting the parallels again between David and Saul. Samuel says to Saul, the Lord's not wanting sacrifice. He's wanting obedience.

He's wanting obedience. David understands also it's not about sacrifice. It's about the heart.

This connects back to the inefficacy of the sacrifices in the Old Testament, the inability of the sacrifices in the Old Testament to really deal with sin. All they were really doing was not just covering but pointing to the ultimate sacrifice, pointing to Jesus who would make that complete and that finished sacrifice. And so he understands it's not about sacrifice.

The Lord's looking for a heart. And that's all he's always been looking for. It's never changed between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

God's looking for a right heart. Sometimes we, even in the New Testament, say, well, you know, I've messed up but you know, I'll do this for you. No, it's not about doing this for you.

Or, you know, I'll do better. Or, you know, I'll go, I'll read. Instead of reading one chapter, I'll read two chapters or whatever bargain we want to make with God.

God's not interested in those sacrifices. You do not desire sacrifice, else I would give it. And remember, David knew about giving sacrifices.

Remember at one time he counted Israel against God's instruction. He did a census, and God judges that and sends pestilence across the land. And he begins to do a survey.

He travels around the land looking at the damage, and thousands of people are dying, and it's a terrible time. And he comes to the threshing floor of Arona, the Jebusite, and he says, I need to make a sacrifice. And the Lord accepted that sacrifice, incidentally.

And so Arona says, well, you're the king, you know, here's the threshing floor, you can use this, make it as an altar, and you can use the cattle that I'm using, the oxen, you can make, you can sacrifice them, you can use the threshing implements as wood and make a sacrifice. And David says, no, I won't take it from you. I'll buy it, because I will not offer to the Lord that which cost me nothing.

David understood what sacrifice was all about. He understood what a proper sacrifice was about. But he says, this is not the issue here.

This is not what you're looking for. And here's verse 17. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart.

These are God you will not despise. And folks, here's the thing, it does not change from the Old Testament to the New Testament. You see, here's where we get ourselves into trouble.

We say, well, you know, David was Old Testament, we're in New Testament, Jesus died, and so everything's fine. So we continue in sin that grace may abound. No, God is still looking for a broken spirit.

God is still looking for repentance. And we say, well, brokenness is not something, and here's another subject we don't like to talk about these days, and that you will hear no preaching on, the idea of brokenness. And we say, well, you know, that's not, you know, I don't want to be broken, I want to be whole.

I want to be fixed, I want to be right, I want everything to be cool, I want to be healed. But God is still looking for a brokenness. And this is not a fake crying crocodile tears as you often see at altars.

This is a real inward brokenness. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. These are God you will not despise.

You see, because it's in brokenness that his healing can flow. You remember in the second letter to the Corinthians in chapter four, Paul makes reference to Gideon in the Old Testament. And remember that in the Old Testament, Gideon goes and attacks the Amalekites.

They whittle the people down. They're down to about 300 men against an army of 20,000. And they have pitchers.

And inside of these pitchers, not pictures, pitchers, vases, vessels, and inside are lamps. And so they surround the army of the Midianites, and they break the pitchers. And of course, there's a great noise as they break these pitchers, and they bring out the lamps, and there's light all over.

And the Lord sends his fear upon the Midianites, and they begin to kill one another, and they haste to get away. And they run for their lives, and God gives them a great victory that day. But in second Corinthians chapter four, Paul makes reference to that.

And he says, we have this treasure in earthen vessels, in pitchers, in earthen clay pots. The treasure is the gospel of the Lord Jesus, is the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We have that in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.

And so again, the vessel needs to be broken that the light can come out. And as long as I'm intact, people don't see Jesus, because all they're seeing is the pot. All they're seeing is the vessel.

But when the pot is broken, the vessel becomes, the light becomes visible. Remember the woman with the alabaster box who comes to Jesus and anoints his feet, and inside of the box is this very precious ointment. The box was valuable in itself because it was onyx, and it was valuable, semi-precious stone.

And yet she breaks the box, but the ointment comes out, and she anoints Jesus, and the fragrance fills the whole place. You see, as long as we're can-do, as long as we think we're great, as long as we're self-made, Jesus is nowhere to be seen. But Paul says, I rejoice in my weaknesses, because when I'm weak, then, and I'm paraphrasing, then his strength becomes visible.

David understands. He says, God is not looking for me to sort myself out. God's not looking for me to be the man here.

God's looking for me to die that he might live, for me to be broken that he might be visible, that he might be seen. And so the principle is still there in the New Testament. You see, exactly the same thing happened to Paul on the road to Damascus.

The same thing happens to Peter. Not so long ago, we spoke about Peter denying Jesus. He goes out weeping bitterly.

Peter is broken. But from there, God was able to build out of Peter's life one of the great apostles of the faith. And so God is not looking for strength.

He's looking for those who are willing to die, those who are willing to die to their own pride, their own agenda, their own self, broken before him, that he might come forth. Father, we pray that you'd help us to understand, Lord, these are hard things. Lord, brokenness, repentance, contriteness.

These are not words that are popular, even understood anymore. But I pray, Lord, that you'd help us to be those people who are like David, a man after God's own heart, a man who knew how to repent. Lord, even though David knew very well how to sin, just as we all do, and yet he had this one thing going for him.

He knew how to repent. And Lord, I pray that you'd help us to be men like David. Lord, that we may take responsibility for our sin and that we may cast ourselves upon your grace and upon your mercy.

Thank you, Lord. As we come to the table again this morning, we're able to be reminded again of that blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that cleanses us of all unrighteousness, of the brokenness of Jesus on the cross, that we might be healed and might be restored, not in our own strength, but in you. And so, Lord, I pray that you would pull all these things together in our minds.

We've covered a lot of ground. We've said many, many things, many different areas this morning. I pray that by your Spirit, Lord, you'd make these things real to us.

Lord, that we may be those who know how to repent. And Lord, that we may rejoice in the joy of your salvation, not our salvation because we've been able to save ourselves, but you've saved us. And you continue to save us.

And you continue to cleanse us and purge us and make us fresh and make us new. And Lord, we pray that we may find the balance between being overconfident in ourselves and being dependent totally upon you and upon your grace and your mercy. Write these things upon our hearts, I pray.

Lord, I pray for those who leave us now, you go with them, keep them and protect them, bless them. And Lord, for the rest of us who come together around your table, I pray that this may be a precious time, that we may again be reminded of the great sacrifice that Jesus made, that we might be cleansed and that we might be restored. I ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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