

# PSALM 51

## A Time of Repentance

A Study by Mark Paynter

To get the most out of your study please read the text through several times. Then answer the questions from the passage.

### Read Psalm 51

What was the occasion when David wrote this Psalm? In light of your knowledge of that occasion what kind of feelings and longings do you David would have had as he wrote this Psalm?

What is the first thing that David requests (Psalm 51:1)? Why does David ask for mercy? In making this request how does he demonstrate awareness of the Lord's character? What will be the outcome of the Lord's mercy (Psalm 51:1a-2)?

What are the words that David uses before the Lord to express his wrongdoing? Try and explain each of these words in your own words (Psalm 51:3-4)? How does David speak of the Lord in these two verses? How can the Lord be a God who is merciful and yet at the same a judge who pronounces judgment against wrongdoing?

What does David confess his nature to have been since before birth (Psalm 51:5)? What do we think David meant by this confession? What had the Lord desired to see displayed in David's life? Where had the Lord taught David, what do you think David meant by this? What does the Lord desire to see displayed in our lives? Where and how does he teach us?

What requests does David ask of the Lord in Psalm 51:7-9? How does David describe the condition that he would be in after the Lord had cleansed him? What does this tell you about David's understanding of the Lord?

What two things does David ask the Lord for in Psalm 51: 10? Describe each of these using your own words? What is the difference between the use of the word "create" in Psalm 51:10a and "renew" in Psalm 51:10b? What do we learn about how David viewed himself from this verse?

What are the two requests David makes in Psalm 51:11? Is there a distinction between Psalm 51:11a and Psalm 51b? If so what is that distinction? If you do not think there is a distinction between the two parts of the verse explain why not?

What are the two requests David makes in Psalm 51:12? Do we rejoice in our salvation? Why does David need a willing spirit to sustain him? Does the word “spirit” refer to David’s spirit or the Holy Spirit? Use your own words to explain what David is praying for?

What does David say in Psalm 51:13 will happen if the Lord grants him the requests that he has just made? Who will he be able to teach? Why will sinners turn back to the Lord?