

PSALM 51: A PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Theology in
Grace Theological Seminary
May 1983

Title: PSALM 51: A PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
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Date: May, 1983
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The Christian worker in the Lord's service needs six characteristics developed within the immaterial part of his being before he can participate in a fruitful ministry of proclaiming the Word of God and seeing sinners repent and turn to God. Such characteristics include a pure heart, a wise heart, a joyful heart, a steadfast heart, an anointed heart, and a willing heart. The example of King David's prayer for forgiveness in Psalm 51 sets forth the need for such characteristics in order to minister effectively in God's service.

Chapter one investigates the significance and scope of David's ministry. David served as theocratic king of Israel, a priest representing the people before God, and a prophet representing God before the people. David ministered not only to his own people but also extended his witness of God to gentile nations surrounding Israel. Aspects of David's tasks of priest and prophet transfer to New Testament believers today. Just as David needed the six characteristics for worthwhile ministry in his day, so the New Testament believer needs those same characteristics in his ministry today.

Chapter two converges on the definitions of the six characteristics as they pertain to the development of the immaterial part of man. The meanings of the characteristics are identified in Hebrew and Greek and are correlated to New Testament usage.

Chapter three centers on the procurement of the six characteristics. David realizes his own ineptitude to produce such traits of character and urgently beseeches God to act on his behalf to overcome his deficiency. A grammatical link between the Testaments using the Greek of the Septuagint demonstrates that just as David needed God to build these six characteristics into his life so that effective ministry might flourish, so the New Testament believer needs God to do the same in his life. The third and final chapter also intimates that Psalm 51 directs the believer to prayer and Bible study as a means to help discern the completion of the preparation process.

Accepted by the Faculty of Grace Theological Seminary
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Master of Theology


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS	v
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPE OF DAVID'S MINISTRY	4
Ministries of David	4
Task of Monarch	4
Task of Priest	5
Task of Prophet	8
Nations to Whom David Ministered	11
Israel	11
Gentile Nations	11
New Testament Transference of David's Min- istries	13
Task of Monarch	13
Task of Priest	14
Task of Prophet	15
II. THE SIX CHARACTERISTICS FOR MINISTRY DEFINED	18
Pure Heart	19
Forgiveness Motif	24
Blot Out My Transgressions	25
Wash Away My Iniquity	29
Cleanse Me From My Sin	31
Wisdom	35
Joy	39
Steadfast Spirit	41
Presence of the Holy Spirit	44
Willing Spirit	46
III. PROCURING THE SIX CHARACTERISTICS FOR MINISTRY	48
Participation by God	48
Man Implores God to Act	48
Man Trusts God to Act	69
Participation by Man	73
Prayer	73
Bible Study	74
CONCLUSION	76
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
BAG	Bauer, W.; Arndt, W. F.; and Gingrich, F. W. <u>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament</u>
BDB	Brown, F.; Driver, S. R.; and Briggs, C. A. <u>Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</u>
BSac	Bibliotheca Sacra
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
DNTT	<u>Dictionary of New Testament Theology.</u> Edited by Colin Brown
ExpTim	Expository Times
GKC	<u>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</u> , ed. E. Kautzsch, tr. A. E. Cowley
JTS	Journal of Theological Studies
KB	L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, <u>Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti libris</u>
LSJ	Liddel-Scott-Jones, <u>Greek English Lexicon</u>
LXX	Septuagint
NIV	New International Version of the Holy Bible. All scripture references from this source.
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <u>Theologi- cal Dictionary of the New Testament</u>
TWOT	<u>Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament.</u> Edited by Laird Harris. Chicago: Moody Press, 1981.
VT	Vetus Testamentum
ZPEB	<u>Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible.</u> 5 vols. Edited by Merrill C. Tenney. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975.

INTRODUCTION

When is a believer ready to launch out into ministry for his Lord, specifically an evangelistic endeavor as described by Psalm 51:13, "Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you?" Such a question is a difficult one to answer because of its inherent subjectivity. God's sovereignty includes room for even the vilest of men to be saved, trained, and used to the glory of God. Such a process of preparation involves various methods and differing time schedules for each individual believer.

Recognizing the supremacy of God's sovereignty and its subjective operation from a human position of observation, is it possible for a believer to discern the character qualities that God must build into his heart in order for him to achieve maximum ministry results in an evangelistic endeavor?

It is the proposition of this thesis to show that through a process of preparation, God develops six characteristics in a believer's life that equip him to achieve positive results in an evangelistic outreach ministry. Psalm 51 is a passage of Scripture that delineates those characteristics and establishes the fact that God, on behalf of man, instills those characteristics into the

believer's personality. When the preparation is completed, believers can proclaim the ways of the Lord and sinners will repent and turn to God.

This writer seeks only to point out the six characteristics necessary for productive ministry and their development by God in the believer. The thesis does not attempt a comprehensive explanation to determine the completion of such a process by God in each individual but simply directs the believer to prayer and Bible study as a means of beginning such a determination.

The focus of chapter one considers the ministries of King David and attempts to correlate the functions of David's ministry with the functions of ministry afforded New Testament believer's today.

The attention of chapter two converges on the definitions of the six characteristics as they pertain to the development of the immaterial part of man. It will be shown that David needed and New Testament believers require hearts that are pure, wise, joyful, steadfast, anointed, and willing. These six traits will be identified and defined as to their meaning in Hebrew and Greek and will be correlated to New Testament usage.

The discussion of chapter three centers on the procurement of the six characteristics. David realizes his own ineptitude and urgently beseeches God to act on his behalf to overcome his deficiency. A grammatical link between the Testaments using the Greek of the Septuagint

will demonstrate that just as David needed God to build these six characteristics into his life so that effective ministry might flourish, so the New Testament believer needs God to do the same in his life.

Chapter three also attempts to briefly interact with the subjectivity of knowing when God has completed such a process of development thus allowing the believer to set forth into ministry. From an observation of Psalm 51, it will be intimated that prayer and Bible study are the means by which such a determination of preparedness might be discerned.

CHAPTER I

SIGNIFICANCE AND SCOPE OF DAVID'S MINISTRY

Ministries of David

Within the scope of Psalm 51:1-12, Israel's second king, David,¹ asks his God to develop six characteristics of personality that will enable him to again enter into fruitful ministry for his God (Ps. 51:13-15).² It becomes necessary at this time to discern just what tasks the God of Israel had assigned King David. Also of importance is a consideration of which if any of King David's ministerial duties transcend Mosaic covenantal and dispensational distinctives to apply to the New Testament believer.

Task of Monarch

The first and most obvious task assigned to David was the office of king of God's theocratic kingdom upon the

¹For discussions of Davidic authorship of Psalm 51 see: Pro: J. J. Stewart Perowne, The Book of Psalms, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), pp. 411-13; H. C. Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1959), pp. 398-400; and ZPEB, s.v. "Book of Psalms," by J. B. Payne, vol. 4, pp. 925-27. Con: Edward R. Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962), pp. 209-32.

²Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 281.

earth (1 Sam. 16:1,13; 1 Chr. 28:2,4).¹ As theocratic king, David was to 1) procure the land of promise, a feat not yet completed since the Israelites entered Canaan² (Josh. 1:1-5; Judg. 1:19,21), but most of which was accomplished in a generation,³ 2) protect the land of promise, which he did by driving out the Philistines in two decisive battles⁴ and reducing to tributary status the surrounding nations of Moab, Edom, Damascus, Zobah, and Ammon,⁵ and 3) promote truth and righteousness in the land.⁶

Task of Priest

In ancient Israel, the priest was responsible for representing the people before God.⁷ He did this by offering sacrifice for the people; leading the people in

¹Alva J. McClain, The Greatness of the Kingdom (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), pp. 100-01.

²R. K. Harrison, Old Testament Times (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), p. 191.

³John Bright, The Kingdom of God (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953), p. 40.

⁴Leon Wood, A Survey of Israel's History (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), pp. 264-65.

⁵Thomas Hunter Weir, "David," The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia, vol. 2, edited by James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1915), p. 784.

⁶Patrick Fairbairn, The Typology of Scriptures (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, n.d.), p. 434.

⁷Merrill F. Unger, Unger's Bible Dictionary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), p. 882.

worship, and teaching the law (Deut. 18:5; 33:8-10).¹ The priest was then to be a personal example of holiness before the people (Deut. 33:19).²

At this time in Israel's history, the monarch held powerful sway over the priesthood and its religious duties.³ As David made his positive contributions to the priesthood,⁴ he at times actually functioned in the role of priest (even though he was not officially designated a כֹּהֵן) by leading the people in worship, offering sacrifices on their behalf,⁵ and teaching them the law of Yahweh.⁶ David united the dignities of king and priest⁷ for a time.

When the ark was properly borne into Jerusalem, David, while leading the procession as he danced, wore an ephod (2 Sam. 6:12-15) which was a distinctive part of

¹TWOT, s.v. "Kōhen," by J. B. Payne, pp. 431-32. See also BDB, p. 463 (2 Chr. 15:3).

²Ibid., p. 431.

³Harry M. Buck, People of the Lord (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), pp. 75, 80.

⁴Ibid., p. 83.

⁵ZPEB, s.v. "Priests and Levites" by C. L. Feinberg, vol. 4, p. 857.

⁶Charles Foster Kent, The Founders and Rulers of United Israel, The Historical Bible (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 182.

⁷Thomas Guthrie, Studies of Character From the Old Testament (New York: E. B. Treat, n.d.), p. 234.

dress for the Levitical priesthood.¹ David's use of it at this festive time suggests his limited role as priest on special occasions.² Later that day, David continued his priestly functions by having the ark placed in the tent of the Lord, offering sacrifices before the Lord, and blessing the people (2 Sam. 6:17-18).³

During his tenure as monarch in Israel, David directed the activities of the priesthood. He rebuked the Levitical priests for not consecrating themselves and inquiring of the Lord as to the proper way to carry the ark (1 Chr. 15:13).⁴ David prepared hymns of praise and worship that the priests were ordered to incorporate into the sanctuary services (2 Chr. 29:30; Ezra 3:6; Neh. 12:24).⁵ He designed and constructed musical instruments that accompanied the singing of the praises (1 Chr. 15:16; 2 Chr. 7:6). He then arranged divisions of labor within the priesthood (gatekeepers, singers, musicians, altar personnel, and treasurers) and set up the timetable by which the

¹C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes, vol. 2, Samuel, reprint ed. (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 36.

²Unger, Bible Dictionary, p. 244.

³Rudolf Kittel, Great Men and Movements in Israel (London: Williams & Norgate, Ltd., 1925), p. 138.

⁴Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary, vol. 3, Chronicles, p. 201.

⁵Ibid., p. 202.

shifts within the divisions were to rotate on a monthly basis (1 Chr. 16:4; 2 Chr. 8:14).¹

A number of David's sons were appointed to the positions of royal priests thereby allowing them to also perform priestly functions on occasion (2 Sam. 8:18).² Others than hereditary Levitical priests, then, performed priestly functions on special occasions.³

In summary, the primary function of the Levitical priesthood was to maintain, assure, and if necessary, re-establish the holiness of the people of God (Exod. 28:38; Lev. 10:7; Num. 18:1).⁴ David, as a special representative of God and His anointed king, was able to function as a priest⁵ (cf. Ps. 110:4) on special occasions and to contribute guidance and liturgical material to the priestly institution as needed (1 Chr. 21:26,28; Ps. 51:14-19).

Task of Prophet

The essential idea of an Old Testament prophet just prior to and during the United Monarchy was that of

¹Ibid., p. 337.

²William Gesenius, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1849), p. 450. See TWOT, p. 431 for a discussion of קֹהֵן as a "Confidential Advisor" rather than "A Priest" in the normal sense of the word. Gesenius' view is still preferred by this writer.

³Siegfried Herrmann, A History of Israel in Old Testament Times (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1975), p. 161.

⁴ZPEB, vol. 4, p. 854.

⁵Buck, People of the Lord, p. 79.

authorized spokesman¹ who spoke in Yahweh's name.² As an ambassador from God, coming to men,³ the prophet functioned as a preacher of God's message and a recipient of revelation, that is, revelation in addition to the Mosaic law.⁴

In the role of preacher, the prophet 1) showed the people their sin (Nathan was unsparing in the condemnation of his monarch's sin, e.g. 2 Sam. 7:2-17)⁵ 2) called people to repent of their sin⁶ (Samuel commanded the nation of Israel to renounce her idolatry, e.g. 1 Sam. 7:3-4)⁷ 3) declared the judgment of God⁸ (Gad the prophet asserted that David had three options of punishment for numbering the fighting men of Israel, e.g., 2 Sam. 24:11-15) 4) encouraged God's people with a promise of deliverance after the judgment⁹ (Nathan told David he was forgiven and would not die for his sin, e.g., 2 Sam. 12:13).

¹BDB, p. 611.

²TWOT, s.v. "Nābi'," by Robert D. Culver, p. 544.

³Unger, Bible Dictionary, p. 891.

⁴Wood, Survey of Israel's History, p. 201.

⁵Herbert Lockyer, All the Men of the Bible (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1961), p. 253.

⁶ZPEB, vol. 4, p. 896.

⁷Lockyer, All the Men of the Bible, p. 293.

⁸DNTT, s.v. "Prophet," by C. H. Peisker, vol. 3, p. 79.

⁹ZPEB, vol. 4, p. 896.

As a recipient of revelation, the prophet 1) spoke and recorded sacred Scripture apart from that of the law¹ (David spoke as God directed him by means of the Holy Spirit, e.g., 1 Chr. 28:5)² 2) anointed kings (Samuel anointed Saul and David while Nathan participated in the anointing of Solomon, e.g., 1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13; 1 Kgs. 1:34)³ and 3) declared the divine will, both morally and futuristically⁴ (Nathan rebuked David's adultery and disclosed the future day when David's concubines would undergo a similar treatment, e.g., 2 Sam. 12:11-12).

In his conduct as prophet, David functioned both as 1) a preacher of God's message (Ps. 40:9) which depicted the sin of the people (Ps. 52:1-4), called them to repentance (Ps. 62:7-12), heralded the judgment of God (Ps. 52:5-8), and then encouraged them with a promise of deliverance (Ps. 60:1-12) and 2) a receptor of divine revelation other than the Torah (Ps. 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3 with Rom. 3:10-13 --the revelation that both Jew and Gentile alike are under sin). A king, great leader, or a priest could also perform the function of a prophet if God commanded him to do so.⁵ Such was the case with David.

¹Ibid., p. 883.

²McClain, Greatness of the Kingdom, p. 101.

³R. K. Harrison, Old Testament Times, pp. 183-84.

⁴ZPEB, vol. 4, pp. 896-97.

⁵Ibid., p. 877.

Nations to Whom David Ministered

Israel

David ministered first and foremost to his own nation, the chosen people of Yahweh. As monarch, he ruled over their land and lives.¹ As priest, he taught them the law of God and led them in worship.² As prophet, he brought them messages from God rebuking sin and calling the people back to God's standard.

Gentile Nations

David exercised his duties as priest and prophet to bring the name of his God before Gentile kings and their peoples (Ps. 57:9) The Gentiles were not excluded from the salvation of Yahweh or membership in His kingdom.

Neither the Mosaic covenant nor the Old Testament dispensation precluded qualified Gentiles from entering the Promised Land or the assembly of the Lord. The instructions received by Moses from God and passed on to the Israelites made provision for aliens that chose to dwell in peace within the borders of Israel (Lev. 18:26). Edomites and Egyptians could enter the assembly of the Lord after the third generation of Israel's entrance into Palestine (Deut. 23:7-8) while Ammonites and Moabites had to endure a ten generation wait (Deut. 23:3-6).

¹Wood, Survey of Israel's History, pp. 263-64.

²Ibid., pp. 275-76.

Aliens in the land were not to be mistreated (Lev. 19:33). Surplus grain was to be left standing in the fields so that the foreigner would not go hungry (Lev. 19:10). Circumcised aliens were allowed to partake of the Passover Feast (Exod. 12:48).

Israel as a whole nation was called to be a priestly nation.¹ They were to make the Lord's deeds known among the nations (1 Chr. 16:8). They were to proclaim the Lord's salvation day after day to all nations (1 Chr. 16:23-24). They were to call for the nations to praise the Lord (1 Chr. 16:28-31).²

God's holy character was to be reflected in the life of Israel (Lev. 11:44-47). The fact that God vested the priestly function in one tribe did not release the rest of the nation from their original obligation.³ The situation of Ruth rejecting the gods of Moab to embrace the God of Naomi and Israel is but one example of the alien being grafted into the Hebrew economy following successful witnessing by a righteous individual.⁴

¹Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary, vol. 2, Samuel, p. 336. See also BDB, p. 463 (Isa. 61:6) and TWOT, p. 431 (Exod. 19:6 with Hos. 4:6).

²James Smith, Handfuls on Purpose, vol. 6 (London: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.), p. 72.

³ZPEB, vol. 4, p. 854.

⁴Charles F. Pfeiffer, Old Testament History (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973), p. 253.

A small, politically impotent group of tribes warring among themselves and acting like their immoral neighbors made little if any positive spiritual impact upon the surrounding nations. But as David unified the tribes of Israel into a dynamic monarchy and began to vanquish troublesome foes, the Gentile peoples began to at least give heed to the message from a morally revived Israel about their living God Yahweh as it pertained to his military might (1 Chr. 14:17; Ps. 18:47-49).¹

Envoys from distant countries such as Egypt and Cush resided at David's court and examined the religious mandate in Israel (Ps. 68:31-32). David lost no time in publicly praising his God and making His ways known (2 Sam. 22:44-51).² Just as David's ministries extended into the Gentile sphere of spiritual need, so the New Testament believer has the obligation to minister spiritually to all peoples (Matt. 28:19-20).

New Testament Transference of David's Ministries

Task of Monarch

The task of theocratic king does not transcend dispensational boundaries into the current church age economy. David's position of monarch in the theocratic kingdom of God

¹Martin Noth, The History of Israel (New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960), p. 196.

²Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters Gideon to Absalom (Edinburgh and London: Oliphants Ltd., n.d.), p. 143.

upon the earth passes on by means of hereditary channels only. David's son Solomon followed him in ruling Israel. Solomon's son Rehoboam followed him. Such progression continued until the final days of the kingdom which ended with the exile of Judah to Babylon.¹

Jesus Christ the Messiah will one day re-establish the theocratic kingdom upon the earth. His coming will again create the position of monarch which He Himself will occupy completely and forever.² New Testament believers will co-reign with Christ (2 Tim. 2:12), will judge angels, and will inherit the riches of Christ but they will not do so as theocratic king.

Task of Priest

Aspects of the task of priest as David performed it do transcend dispensational ages. Just as David functioned as priest on special occasions (offering appropriate sacrifice, leading the people in worship, teaching the law of God and setting an example of personal holiness) so the New Testament believer has similar priestly functions to execute.

David offered the prescribed burnt offerings of bulls and other animals (1 Chr. 21:26). Such sacrifices are now obsolete in the New Testament economy because the final sacrifice of Jesus Christ is accomplished thereby fulfilling

¹McClain, Greatness of the Kingdom, p. 126.

²Ibid., pp. 127-28.

and completing the requirement of Old Testament blood sacrifice (Heb. 10:1-10). Whereas David offered burnt offerings of animals, the New Testament believer, operating within the sphere of a holy priesthood created by Christ's finished cross work, offers sacrifices involving the giving of 1) service in God's will (Rom. 12:1-2), 2) gifts to Christian workers (Phil. 4:18) and 3) worship of God (1 Pet. 2:5).

David also functioned as priest by leading his people in worship and teaching them the law of God. New Testament believers have a very similar task as they minister to the spiritual needs of each other (Col. 3:16). Just as David was called upon to set an example of personal holiness before the people, so the New Testament believer must walk in holiness (1 Pet. 2:12) before the people he interacts with.

Task of Prophet

The task of prophet as David experienced it transferred to the New Testament and remains in part for believers today. As stated above David both preached God's message in the manner of a prophet and received divine revelation in addition to that supplied by the Torah, even though he was not designated an official נָבִיא in the Old Testament Scripture.¹

¹TDNT, vol. 6, p. 831 maintains that in light of New Testament revelation, David was indeed a prophet (Acts 2:30 with 1:16; 2:25).

New Testament prophets in the first century of Christianity received the gift of prophecy in all aspects as David had. They received divine revelation, communicated it verbally and by means of the written word, and preached it in the manner of the Old Testament prophet.¹ Agabus foretold future events (Acts 21:10-11); John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul (Saul), and Barnabus showed the people their sin, called them to repentance, and declared to them God's judgment; finally Judas and Silas encouraged and strengthened the brethren (Acts 15:32).

As the written word of God was completed toward the end of the first century A.D., the prophetic aspect of receiving direct divine revelation by means of visions, dreams, and forms of ecstasy ceased (Rev. 22:18-19).² The divine revelation of salvation and godly living had been given in its fullness for righteous men to proclaim worldwide. Only the function of proclaiming God's written message remained for the New Testament prophet (2 Tim. 2:2; Gal. 1:6-9).

Believers today can still exercise a portion of the prophetic gift given to David by pointing out sin in the attitudes and deeds of men, calling them to repentance, declaring God's judgment for rejecting God's ways, and

¹DNTT, s.v. "Prophet," C. H. Peisker, vol. 3, p. 84.

²Charles R. Smith, Tongues in Biblical Perspective (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1976), pp. 129-31. And Robert G. Gromacki, The Modern Tongues Movement (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 139-41.

speaking encouragement to those seeking salvation and deliverance from sin and death (Matt. 28:19-20).

Strength for David to accomplish his tasks (those of priest and prophet as described by Ps. 51:13-15) necessitated the endowment of six characteristics within his immaterial being. Just as David needed such characteristics, it will be demonstrated that the New Testament believer requires the same characteristics to fulfill the ministries of prophet and priest that God has extended for him to accomplish. What are the six characteristics needed to prepare for the ministry of prophet-priest?

CHAPTER II

THE SIX CHARACTERISTICS FOR MINISTRY DEFINED

The purpose of chapter two is to identify and define the six characteristics that David asked God to instill within his heart so that he could participate in a fruitful ministry of turning sinners to the Lord (51:13-15).

After having identified and defined in Hebrew the six characteristics needed by David for fruitful ministry, this writer will attempt to establish a link between the Old Testament situation of David and the present-day situation of the New Testament believer. Do the concepts of Psalm 51 transfer from the Old Testament into the New Testament with similar ideas by means of the choice of words used?

An examination of the Septuagint¹ will provide insight as to how second century B.C. Jewish scholars viewed the concepts of Psalm 51 as they brought the truth of God's word into the lingua-franca of that day, Greek. As the language of the LXX parallels that in the Greek New Testament, a grammatical and conceptual link can be

¹See Unger's Bible Dictionary, pp. 242-47, for an introductory discussion concerning the Septuagint.

established that bridges the Old and New Testament economies. Where there are no exact word parallels, conceptual links alone will be suggested as correlations of the concepts of ministry preparation in Psalm 51 with New Testament needs of the same type.

Pure Heart

A clean, pure heart devoid of unrepentant sin was the first characteristic David realized he needed in order to re-establish his fellowship with God and his availability for ministry in God's program of turning sinners from their sin (51:13). The heart was the place where a total renovation was required to bring forth again David's usefulness in Yahweh's service.

The heart, לב, has two meanings as it is used in the Old Testament; that of a literal bodily organ and that of a metaphorical designation of the immaterial part of man.¹ As a description of the immaterial part of man, the heart encompasses the functions of mind, will² and emotion.³ It became the richest biblical term for the totality of man's inner, immaterial nature.⁴

As the seat of man's mind, the heart includes the spheres of understanding, knowledge, rational forces and

¹DNTT, 2:181.

²BDB, pp. 523-25.

³KB, pp. 468-70.

⁴TWOT, p. 466.

powers (1 Kgs. 3:12; 4:29), as well as fantasies and visions (Jer. 14:14). Folly and evil thoughts were known to also operate in the heart.¹

As the seat of man's will, the heart carefully weighed intentions (1 Kgs. 8:17) and decisions to be put into effect (Exod. 36:2).²

As the seat of man's affections, the heart displayed love (Judg. 16:15), joy (1 Sam. 2:1), grief (Gen. 6:6), contempt (2 Sam. 6:16), envy (Prov. 23:17), anger (Prov. 19:3), fear (Gen. 42:28) and bravery (2 Sam. 17:10).³

Heart means less an isolated function than the man with all his urges, i.e., the person in his totality (Ps. 22:26). It is a comprehensive term for the personality as a whole, its inner life, its character.⁴

Classical Greek denoted the heart as the center of things in general. It referred to heart as the physical organ of the body and the center of physical life. Gradually it received an extended range of meaning to include the intellectual and spiritual center of man as well.⁵

The LXX renders **לֵב** predominately by **καρδία** and uses the term in its literal and metaphorical designations.

¹DNTT, 2:181.

²Ibid.

³TWOT, pp. 466-67.

⁴DNTT, 2:181.

⁵Ibid., 2:180.

In Psalm 51, καρδία operates in the metaphorical sense to describe the immaterial part of man to include the seat of man's feeling, thinking, and willing.¹

Within the scope of the New Testament, καρδία predominately brings forth the metaphorical sense of the word, whereas reference to the physical organ of the body is seldom mentioned (only in Luke 21:34; Acts 14:17; Jas. 5:5).² In its metaphorical use, the heart is that part of man that is addressed by God and is responsible before God. A right standing ushers a man into fellowship with God, a wrong standing will separate³ man from God's fellowship. Sin marks, dominates, and spoils not only the thinking, feeling, and willing individual elements of the heart, but also the entire structure, man's innermost being. If the heart is enslaved, the whole man is in bondage. Jesus referred to his sinful opponents as "being far from him in their hearts" (Mark 7:6).⁴ To achieve fellowship with God, wrongdoing (sin) must be done away with in the heart.

Purity, from the root קָדַשׁ , of heart is the condition for fellowship with God⁵ and participation in His

¹Ibid., 2:181.

²Ibid., 2:182.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., 2:182-83.

⁵John Peter Lange, Commentary on the Holy Scriptures (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1872), Psalms, p. 326.

service. In the Old Testament the distinction between purity and impurity is inseparably connected with Israel's belief in Yahweh. It is grounded in the presupposition that uncleanness and Yahweh were irreconcilable opposites. Impurity separated one from worship of Yahweh and from God's people, so it had to be opposed and purged out as an abomination (Lev. 7:19f).¹

Even the prophets speak out on occasion against the impurity of the priesthood thereby introducing the concept that purity had to do with all of the people's behavior. Impurity then takes on shades of meaning having to do with guilt and sin.² The clean heart then was one that was ethically pure,³ not beclouded by sin.⁴

Classical Greek used the adjective καθαρός as a term to describe "ritual cleanness as opposed to uncleanness" and "moral purity" in a religious sense.⁵

The LXX translated טָהוֹר (51:10a) as καθαρός in the sense of moral purity.⁶ The thought was that ritual purity in and of itself did not procure the forgiveness of God but

¹DNTT, 3:104.

²Ibid., 3:104-05.

³BDB, p. 373.

⁴KB, p. 139.

⁵DNTT, 3:102.

⁶BDB, p. 373.

rather was intended to teach God's holiness and moral purity.¹ It was the inner attitude of the individual as God had brought him to repentance that indicated the presence of true purity.² David knew as he had never known before that ritual purity alone would not satisfy offended Yahweh, hence his reference to the inadequacies of burnt offerings in 51:16-17. Something must be done to the inward man. The pollution of sin had infected his innermost being.³ He was defiled, therefore he prays for forgiveness.⁴

The New Testament shows usages of καθαρός as meaning several things: ritual purity (Rom. 14:20); moral purity (free from sin) (John 15:3), and a combination of ritual and moral purity (Luke 11:41).⁵ Jesus preached that behind ritual purity was the necessity of moral purity in the heart, the former was invalidated without the presence of the latter.⁶ The writer of Hebrews links the concept of purity with that of forgiveness (Heb. 9:22),⁷ a cleansing

¹TWOT, p. 344.

²Ibid.

³Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 152.

⁴Ibid.

⁵BAG, p. 388.

⁶DNTT, 3:106.

⁷Ibid., 3:106.

of man before God in order to restore a broken relationship. Such was accomplished by removal of sin.¹

The רָחַם that David needed to re-establish a fellowship with God is carried over in the New Testament as the believer today needs καθαρός , in order to establish a forum for fellowship with and service in behalf of his God (Acts 18:6).

Forgiveness Motif

Psalm 51 is chiefly a cry for pardon.² As a penitential Psalm, it is a prayer for expiation through the mercy of God.³ All the great truth about God's readiness to pardon the penitent, from Exodus 34:6ff onward, is the foundation upon which this entire Psalm is built.⁴

Harrison uniquely observes that "History has demonstrated that it is easier for men, whether as individuals or nations, to fight their way to eminence than to retain this position."⁵ In a day of rest and relaxation, it became easy for king David to act for sinful, selfish pleasure thereby undoing the example of a lifetime.⁶

¹Ibid., 2:701.

²Alexander Maclaren, The Psalms (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1899), vol. 2, p. 127.

³Lange, Psalms, p. 323.

⁴Leupold, Psalms, p. 401.

⁵Everett F. Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," BSac 92:365 (Jan.-Mar., 1935):26.

⁶Ibid., pp. 26-27.

This Psalm follows Nathan's assurance of forgiveness (2 Sam. 12:13) and shows how David struggles to gain an inward and conscious certainty of that assurance.¹

A rigid analysis of the Psalm is difficult, because under the stress of great emotional upheaval, David intermingled and repeated the petitions which yearned for expression.² Over half the verses of the Psalm (51:1-5,7,9,10a, 14a,16,17) deal with the forgiveness motif which is summarized by 51:10a: "Create in me a pure (clean) heart, O God. . . ." David needed a pure heart as a necessary condition for communion with God (Ps. 66:18).³ In asking for forgiveness, David never uses the word "forgiveness" but indicates such a desire by means of poetical expressions, i.e., "blot out my transgression," "wash away my iniquity," and "cleanse me from my sin" (51:1,2).

Blot Out My Transgressions

David first describes his wrongdoing as transgressions, עֲוֹנוֹתַי, a revolt⁴ against God.⁵ Such rebellion is a conscious act which violates a known standard⁶ of a

¹Keil and Delitzsch, Psalms, p. 134.

²Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 29.

³Perowne, Psalms, p. 420.

⁴KB, p. 785.

⁵BDB, p. 833.

⁶Elmer A. Leslie, The Psalms (New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1949), p. 399.

rightful authority.¹ Transgression is the strongest term for sin and represents sin under its most active aspect.² As a collective noun it denotes the sum of misdeeds and a fractured relationship.³ Not only does עֲוֹן create a gulf between God and man, it also gives rise to a host of further sins⁴ in man such as a tendency to hide his actions, deceitfulness, apathy, illness, a love for strife, a sense of enslavement, anger, hypocritical worship, and a sense of defilement.⁵

The LXX translates עֲוֹן by the Greek word " $\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\iota\alpha$," a concept denoting lawlessness.⁶ The law was manifested in the Torah, originally as an instruction from God, a command for a certain situation.⁷ These instructions both protected a man's rights to life in an ordered society and gave direction concerning proper worship of the deity.⁸ Lawlessness, then, was a form of impurity, against both God⁹ and

¹Maclaren, Psalms, 2:129.

²Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 88.

³TWOT, p. 741.

⁴Perowne, Psalms, p. 414.

⁵TWOT, p. 742.

⁶BAG, p. 71.

⁷DNTT, 2:440.

⁸Ibid., 2:441.

⁹Ibid., 3:104.

the community of men.¹ As such, it needed to be removed from the land.

Within the New Testament economy lawlessness also needed to be defeated and in time was overcome by Christ,² who hated lawlessness (Heb. 1:9). One finds however that even Christians were prone to continued acts of lawlessness (Rom. 6:19).³ Those who remained in true faith could confess their acts of lawlessness, receive forgiveness, and begin to do that which was well-pleasing to God (1 John 3 and 4).⁴

David asks God to "blot out" his transgressions (51:1). The term $\pi\pi\eta$ has a meaning of to "obliterate from the memory."⁵ While God is omniscient, these sins he deliberately remembers against David no more.⁶ The word $\pi\pi\eta$ also carries the nuance of a cumulative debt written down against the time of payment by punishment.⁷ The sins of David would be erased from a divine record book thereby

¹James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 45.

²DNTT, 2:448.

³BAG, p. 72.

⁴DNTT, 2:449.

⁵BDB, p. 562.

⁶TWOT, p. 499.

⁷KB, p. 135.

cancelling his debt.¹ Leslie relates the incident of the priest wiping off a curse into water (Num. 5:23) as a possible way to explain this metaphor of David.² All the nuances have to do with wiping or blotting clean a record of wrongdoing. David is seen as truly conscious of the polluting power of sin.³

The LXX translates $\pi\eta\eta$ as $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$, to "wipe out" or "blot out."⁴ Classical Greek used the term in a literal sense "to polish by rubbing smooth with oil" and to "white-wash something." Metaphorically it meant to "wipe out, obliterate, cancel, or destroy."⁵ In the LXX, $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$ referred to God's judicial action of wiping out life (Gen. 7:23), names and memory of offenders (Exod. 17:14; Deut. 9:14), erasing names from the Book of Life (Exod. 32:32f), as well as obliterating sins and their immediate full penalty.⁶

In the New Testament, $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\alpha\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$ refers to the obliterating of sins (Acts 3:19) so that individuals may live and experience times of refreshment (Acts 3:20). Even the

¹Perowne, Psalms, p. 414.

²Leslie, Psalms, p. 399.

³Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 30.

⁴BAG, p. 272.

⁵DNTT, 1:471.

⁶Ibid.

written code that evidenced condemnation for the believers was wiped out (Col. 2:13-14).¹

Wash Away My Iniquity

David next identified his wrongdoing as iniquity, $\gamma\iota\upsilon$.² Such action was considered perversion³ and a twisting of moral standards.⁴ Iniquity was also considered crooked behavior⁵ in which one deviated from a right path.⁶ Both the deed of iniquity and its consequences (punishment) were viewed together in the Old Testament economy. Sometimes the focus was on the deed (Job 31:11), the punishment (Ps. 39:12), or the time interval between (guilt) (1 Sam. 25:25). The Old Testament thought however, did not radically separate the notions of sin and its penalty.⁷

Guilt was the major consequence of $\gamma\iota\upsilon$ on the inner man.⁸ David's passion had made for him a crooked path where he found no end.⁹ David's losing battle with guilt compelled him to seek for Yahweh's forgiveness (Ps. 32:1-5).

¹BAG, p. 272.

²BDB, pp. 730-31.

³KB, pp. 686-87.

⁴Leupold, Psalms, p. 401.

⁵TWOT, p. 650.

⁶Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 91.

⁷TWOT, pp. 650-51.

⁸Ibid., p. 651.

⁹Maclaren, Psalms, p. 129.

The LXX translates $\gamma\iota\gamma$ with $\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\mu\iota\alpha$. Its definition is discussed above.¹

David again asks for forgiveness using the term כִּבֵּט which means to "make stuffs clean and soft by treading, kneading and beating them in cold water."² The word is used of clothing, to "launder," and never of washing the body.³ It is differentiated from הִטֵּף , a rinsing.⁴ David might have envisioned his sin as deeply ingrained dirt⁵ requiring vigorous washing to cleanse his soul from the stain and guilt of sin.⁶ Such figurative usage of כִּבֵּט ⁷ is common in reference to ceremonial cleansing.⁸

The word כִּבֵּט is translated $\text{\pi\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\nu\omega}$ in the LXX. The washing of $\text{\pi\lambda\acute{\upsilon}\nu\omega}$ in Classical Greek had to do with cleansing of clothes, never the body.⁹ It was also used as a term

¹See above discussion under "Transgression" for comments about $\acute{\alpha}\nu\omicron\mu\iota\alpha$, pp. 26-27.

²KB, p. 422.

³TWOT, p. 428.

⁴Keil and Delitzsch, Psalms, p. 135.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Matthew Henry, Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible (New York and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), n.p., Ps. 51:1-6.

⁷BDB, p. 460.

⁸TWOT, p. 428.

⁹DNTT, 1:150.

describing a preliminary action of the weaving process and a segment in a medical receipt.¹

The concept carried into the New Testament with the literal activity of washing nets (Luke 5:2). The book of Revelation depicts saints washing the stain of sin from their robes (7:14) which makes an easy transition to a figurative sense of being free from the impurity of sin.² Sin is forgiven by washing it away by means of Christ's blood sacrifice.

Cleanse Me From My Sin

Another term David uses to record his wrongdoing is that of "sin" (51:2). Sin, חטאת, is the missing of a mark³ as a slinger of stones might miss a target (Judg. 20:16b) or a traveller his way (Prov. 19:2b).⁴ Sin is always ultimately against God⁵ (51:4) in that the sinner asserts his independence of God and opposition to His will. In missing the aim, the sinner misses the divine purpose for man.⁶ Such failure by man brings a lack of wholeness

¹Moulton and Milligan, Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, p. 674.

²BAG, p. 674.

³KB, p. 288.

⁴Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 92.

⁵BDB, p. 308.

⁶Maclaren, Psalms, p. 129.

and acceptance before God.¹ Sometimes sin was severe enough to warrant death, i.e., adultery (Deut. 22:22) and murder (Deut. 19:11-13).² Such was the predicament of David.

The LXX translates $\eta\sigma\eta\eta$ as $\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\iota\acute{\alpha}$, sin.³ The word $\acute{\alpha}\mu\alpha\rho\tau\iota\acute{\alpha}$ in the Classical Greek portrayed the idea of an offense against that which was right. The notion of "sin" is perhaps too strong for the Greeks did not have a firm godward orientation of guilt and fate.⁴

The word used in connection with the Old Testament definitely takes on the connotation of sin as wrongdoing that separated man and nation from God.⁵ Sin, guilt, and punishment were frequently not separated because sin was estrangement from Yahweh with harm and punishment following close behind. Sin was universal (Gen. 6:5; Isa. 64:6) with the consequence of sin being death (Gen. 2:17). That God did not execute righteous judgment immediately demonstrated that punishment was not His last word. There was a purpose for forgiveness and restoration to right conduct.⁶

¹TWOT, p. 278.

²KB, pp. 288-90.

³BAG, p. 43.

⁴DNTT, 3:577.

⁵Ibid., 3:577-78.

⁶Ibid., 3:578.

The concept of all sin being against God in an ultimate sense (Ps. 51:4) carries over into the New Testament with the use of ἁμαρτία.¹ The combination "sinful and adulterous generation" (Mark 8:38) strongly implies that sin separates from God. Hence repentance and forgiveness are necessary.² Paul conceived of sin as very personal. Men served it (Rom. 6:6), were slaves to it (Rom. 6:17,20) and needed to be set free from it (Rom. 6:22) through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:21).³

God could deal with sin by punishing those who continued in it or forgiving the penitent⁴ with "cleansing," טָהַר.⁵ Such cleansing in Israel's religion was a ceremonial, declarative act in which the priest pronounces the worshiper clean (Lev. 13:6).⁶ People that needed ceremonial cleansing were those who had contacted a tomb or corpse (Num. 19:9,11,12), soldiers who had killed in battle (Num. 31:19),⁷ and those recovering from some disease, i.e., leprosy⁸ (Lev. 13:6,34).

¹Ibid., 3:579.

²Ibid.

³BAG, p. 43.

⁴TWOT, p. 278.

⁵BDB, p. 372.

⁶Leslie, Psalms, p. 399.

⁷TWOT, p. 343.

⁸Perowne, Psalms, p. 414.

Because "hyssop" (51:7) is used in the ceremonial cleansing of a leper, David perhaps views himself in a similar situation before God as the leper did before society--unclean and unfit for fellowship.¹ Only God could cleanse him of his impurity.²

The root טָהַר translates in the LXX as καθαρίζω.³ In its Old Testament usage, καθαρίζω denoted the taking away of the sin that separated one from Yahweh's fellowship.⁴

In the New Testament, this concept is most explicitly portrayed in the Johannine writings where cleansing is brought into relation with the saving death of Christ. "The blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).⁵ Sin is forgiven by cleansing.

David viewed his sin and guilt as a blotted record to be expunged, stained clothing to be washed, and a fatal disease to be cured.⁶ He appropriately claimed the sin as his own and correctly asked God for forgiveness.⁷

¹Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 30.

²TWOT, p. 344.

³BAG, p. 387.

⁴DNTT, 3:106.

⁵Ibid., 3:107.

⁶Maclaren, Psalms, p. 130.

⁷Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 147.

But pardon alone cannot suffice to carry the penitent into the future. Unless something new is done within the personal life of the Psalmist, the future will but repeat the past. The perpetuation of restored purity deeply troubles David, hence he prays for renewal,¹ the return of five additional characteristics that will enable him to function properly and productively in the service of Yahweh.

Wisdom

The second characteristic that David realizes that he needs is that of wisdom. Before wisdom can be achieved, man must know truth as an attribute of God² and desire the fulfillment of God's will.

Truth, אמת (Ps. 51:6a), carries a fundamental sense of "certainty," "dependability,"³ "faithfulness,"⁴ "firmness" and "trustworthiness."⁵ All usages relate to God directly or indirectly. Truth is applied to God as a characteristic of his nature (Exod. 34:6). Closely related to God's character is the veracity of His words (Ps. 119:142, 151).⁶

¹Ibid.

²TWOT, p. 52.

³Ibid.

⁴BDB, p. 54.

⁵KB, p. 66.

⁶TWOT, p. 52.

Truth, then, signifies a relationship between a spoken word and the actual deed performed.¹ Truth is seen as the opposite of deceit and falsehood. Truth is arrived at by taking into account all the facts and hiding nothing (Gen. 42:16; Exod. 18:21; Deut. 13:14).² In the servant of God, truth is a sincere nature corresponding to its ideal, the righteous will and requirements of God.³ Maclaren correctly echoes that thought as he equates truth with the penetrating depth of the requirements of God's law. Truth becomes an inward correspondence to the will of God.⁴ This is what God desires in the inward parts (51:6).⁵

The inward parts, *לִב* (the heart),⁶ and the secret parts, *סֵתֶר* (the closed chamber of the breast)⁷ are parallel terms⁸ referring to the immaterial part of man. It is here that God desires truth and makes known His wisdom.⁹

¹DNTT, 3:882.

²Ibid., 3:880.

³Lange, Psalms, p. 325.

⁴Maclaren, Psalms, p. 134.

⁵Harrison, "A Study in Psalm 51," p. 34.

⁶BDB, p. 377.

⁷Ibid., p. 711.

⁸Keil and Delitzsch, Psalms, p. 138.

⁹Lange, Psalms, p. 325.

Wisdom, חִכְמָה,¹ is a divine attribute found in God, the source of all wisdom. Reflected in Old Testament wisdom is the teaching of a personal God who is holy and just and expects those who know Him to exhibit His character in the many practical affairs of life. The teaching of wisdom in the wisdom literature majors on ethical and spiritual conduct founded upon truth (Ps. 19:7), the revealed principles of right and wrong in the Word of God.² Wisdom is not found instilled in the conscience at birth as Dalglish suggests;³ rather, it must be taught⁴ to man by God (Prov. 2:6; Job 11:6).⁵ Solomon asked God for wisdom at the beginning of his reign (1 Kgs. 3:9,12,28; 4:29-34) and the simple mind can gain wisdom by studying God's statutes (Ps. 19:7).

As man recognized the truth of God, desired the truth of God, and conformed in conduct to the truth of God (all three steps accomplished in God's power), man experienced the guidance of God's gift of wisdom.⁶ After viewing

¹BDB, p. 315.

²TWOT, p. 283.

³Dalglish, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 126.

⁴KB, p. 297.

⁵TWOT, p. 283.

⁶Ibid.

the discrepancy between the divine demand and his own dismal failure,¹ David asks God for wisdom.

The LXX translates חֵכְמָה as σοφία. In Classical Greek, wisdom was initially conceived of as an attribute, never an activity.² The ethical dynamic of Greek philosophy lay in the intellect; if a person had perfect knowledge he could live the good life (Plato). Knowledge was virtue.³ The Stoics combined theory and practice to describe wisdom as realized knowledge.⁴ Wisdom as a relationship between word and deed is evidenced in both the Greek of the later classics and the Hebrew of the Old Testament.

As σοφία was used in the New Testament, the idea of "word" and "deed" as one (truth in action) continued. For the believer, σοφία is the wisdom of God, i.e., Christ (the truth, e.g., John 14:6) in action. Christ demonstrated the wisdom of God in salvation by offering himself in crucifixion (1 Cor. 1:23) and then rising from the dead (1 Cor. 15:20-23).⁵

In Acts, Stephen is represented as a man equipped by God with the Spirit and wisdom.⁶ In the Pauline epistles,

¹Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 127.

²DNTT, 3:1026.

³TWOT, p. 283.

⁴DNTT, 3:1027.

⁵Ibid., 3:1030.

⁶Ibid.

Paul asks God to bestow wisdom upon the believers of Ephesus (Eph. 1:17) so that they might know Christ better and do the things God prepared for them to do (Eph. 2:10). In like manner, Paul also prays for the saints at Colosse that they might be filled with the wisdom of God in order to bear fruit in every good work.¹ James encourages believers to ask God for wisdom (Jas. 1:5) and to demonstrate the possession of wisdom through good behavior manifested by works of kindness (Jas. 3:13).² The New Testament believer needs the wisdom of God to successfully carry out work in God's service.

Joy

The third characteristic David requests is that of joy, described by two synonyms, $\gamma\dot{\iota}\nu\dot{\iota}\psi$ (joy)³ and $\eta\eta\dot{\iota}\nu\dot{\iota}\psi$ (gladness).⁴ When the two are used together they form a standing expression for deep joy.⁵ Joy and gladness denote the condition of the disposition as indicated by its association with the heart (Exod. 4:14).⁶ As an individual responds to various stimuli, especially God's help in

¹Ibid., 3:1032.

²Ibid.

³BDB, p. 765.

⁴Ibid., p. 790.

⁵Leupold, Psalms, p. 404.

⁶TWOT, p. 879.

situations of need,¹ the feelings² of the heart experience joy.³

David is suffering loss of joy and the presence of depression⁴ because of his guilt (51:8) and the lack of fellowship with Yahweh (51:12a).⁵ That guilt is involved is evidenced from the close association of Psalm 32:3-5 with Psalm 51:8. In both Psalms (32:3 and 51:8b), the bones of David's body are figuratively described as broken and wasted away. These are metaphors describing the pain of David's soul due to the guilt of unconfessed sin (Ps. 32:5).⁶

That fellowship is in view and not a loss of spiritual salvation is evidenced by the fact that the phrase "restore to me the joy of your salvation" is hardly a synonym for spiritual salvation.⁷ If loss of spiritual salvation was the subject, why would God wait nearly a year before sending Nathan to rescue David?⁸ Intimate fellowship

¹DNTT, 2:355.

²KB, p. 924.

³DNTT, 2:355.

⁴Leupold, Psalms, p. 405.

⁵Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 157.

⁶Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 35.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., p. 29.

was the relationship David was seeking to obtain again the joy of the Lord (Ps. 16:11; 11:7; 21:7).¹

The LXX translates $\gamma\acute{\iota}\omega\omega$ as $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\lambda\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$, a term used by the Greeks to denote great rejoicing and exultation.²

In the New Testament, $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\lambda\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ³ is used in conjunction with the worship services of the Jerusalem believers (Acts 2:46). Such joy as these saints expressed to each other implies that others observed the joy, desired it, and came to experience it in the Savior Jesus Christ. As joy was a need in David's life as he reached out to sinners in his environment, so the believer today needs to experience and express joy as he contacts his world for Christ.

Steadfast Spirit

The fourth characteristic delineated by David as a need in his life is that of a steadfast spirit (51:10b).

The " $\pi\eta\tau\eta$ " here described is a term frequently standing alongside "heart" (Exod. 35:31-35), the ideas behind the two words being very similar.⁴ The spirit of a

¹Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 157.

²DNTT, 2:352.

³BAG, p. 3.

⁴DNTT, 3:691.

man¹ evidences mental acts (Deut. 34:9), volitional acts (Ps. 5:12,14), and emotional acts (courage, e.g., Job 5:1; anger, e.g., Judg. 9:23; jealousy, e.g., Num. 5:14; desire, e.g., Isa. 26:9; sorrow, e.g., Job 7:11).² The spirit then is observed to equate to the immaterial part of man,³ his inner personality, disposition, and heart.⁴

The word steadfast, נָכוֹן, manifests a meaning of to be "firmly established,"⁵ "fixed aright,"⁶ "confident" and "fearless."⁷ A steadfast spirit is one firm in faith, not easily swayed through its own weakness or by blasts of temptation.⁸ It rests assured in God's grace and total pardon.⁹

David in his youth had constantly stayed himself on his God. But his recent failure had shaken all his confidence and he felt the need to fix his life purpose¹⁰ so that

¹KB, pp. 877-79.

²BDB, pp. 924-25.

³TWOT, p. 836.

⁴Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 154.

⁵KB, pp. 426-27.

⁶BDB, p. 465.

⁷Lange, Psalms, p. 326.

⁸Perowne, Psalms, p. 420.

⁹Leupold, Psalms, p. 405.

¹⁰Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 34.

his behavior would be ever godward.¹ Contemplating a reinstatement to the ministry of teaching sinners and rebels the ways of God, the Psalmist asks God for a steadfast spirit.²

The LXX translation of steadfast spirit was πνεῦμα εὐθεῖς. Classical Greek used πνεῦμα to denote "air in motion." The air that men breathed was considered to be the bearer of life. By the fifth century onward a distinction was made between the air that men breathed and man's inward, innate spirit.³ Greek literature used πνεῦμα to distinguish the inner aspect of man from his outer aspect, σάρξ. The spirit was considered the seat of insight, feeling, and will.⁴

The term εὐθεῖς (from the root εὐθύς) has the nuance of "upright."⁵ The Hebrew more fully and correctly elucidates the meaning of "steadfast" than does the LXX rendering.⁶

In the New Testament, the need for a steadfast spirit (heart) is illustrated when the Apostle Peter prevented Simon the Sorcerer from receiving the Holy Spirit

¹DNTT, 3:691.

²Mitchell Dahood, Psalms II, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970), p. 8.

³DNTT, 3:689.

⁴BAG, p. 675.

⁵Ibid., p. 320.

⁶Perowne, Psalms, p. 420.

and participating in the Lord's work (your heart is not right [ἐυθής] before God--Acts 8:21).

Presence of the Holy Spirit

The fifth characteristic needed by David was that of the presence of the Holy Spirit (51:11). In the Old Testament economy, the Spirit of God was not bestowed upon the nation generally but was given on occasion to the prophets who warned and taught the nation.¹ The king was the only official in Israel who had any type of permanent possession of the Holy Spirit.²

It is an error to think of the removal of the Spirit as equivalent to the loss of salvation. The Spirit came upon David at his anointing by Samuel (1 Sam. 16:13) but David knew the Lord in a salvific relationship before that as a mere lad among sheep. The taking away of the Spirit would indicate that God's choice had fallen on another.³ To continue in office and re-establish his functions of ministry, David prays that God not take the Holy Spirit from him.⁴

In view is the sorry plight of King Saul, in which the Spirit of God left him to be replaced by a spirit of evilness (1 Sam. 16:14-15).⁵ David, however, continued

¹Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 158.

²Ibid., p. 159.

³Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 35.

⁴Keil and Delitzsch, Psalms, p. 140.

⁵Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 161.

to view Saul as God's anointed, rightful king even after the Holy Spirit had departed from him (1 Sam. 24:6; 26:9-11). Given two situations in which he could have killed King Saul (1 Sam. 24:4-13; 1 Sam. 26:2-11), David refused the opportunities. Saul lost not his salvation but the right to continue as God's representative in the office of theocratic king. The Psalmist does not wish a similar situation to overtake him thus he urgently requests God to retain the divine-human fellowship in his life.¹

The terms קדושה רוח translate in the LXX as τὸ πνεῦμα ἅγιον. The Greeks had no specific god that was designated as "the Holy Spirit." In time they regarded "spirit" as a type of god or demon.² "Holiness" was considered an attribute of not only Greek gods, but also Oriental gods (Isis, Serapis, Baal).³

The New Testament indicates that the Holy Spirit is in fact very God (Acts 5:3-4). His ministry to the believer is similar to his former ministry to the kings of Israel. The Spirit of God was involved in giving the gift of the office of king to Saul and David and He empowered them with strength to accomplish their duties of office. In the New Testament economy, the Spirit of God bestows gifts of ministry to believers (1 Cor. 12:4-7) and empowers them for

¹Ibid.

²DNTT, 3:689-90.

³Ibid., 2:224.

outreach ministry (Acts 1:8; 2:4-6). Just as David needed the presence of the Holy Spirit for ministry accomplishment, so the New Testament believer needs His power (cf. John 15:5).

Willing Spirit

The sixth characteristic David needed for ministry was that of a "willing" spirit, נְדִיבָה, one that was "inclined" or "incited"¹ to do something "voluntarily."² The quality of spirit David yearned for was that of one set free from the dominion of sin,³ delighting to obey and eager to serve.⁴ A willing spirit would be able to channel divine support through it enabling it to meet the challenge of future experience.⁵

The word "willing" is translated in the LXX as ἡγεμονικῶ from the root ἡγεμονικός. The Greek term does not adequately bring forth the concept of "voluntarily or freely giving" as does the Hebrew. Arndt and Gingrich present only the synonyms "leading" and "guiding."⁶ The New Testament does not use the term ἡγεμονικός. The concept of ministry by means of a "willing" spirit is demonstrated in the New

¹BDB, p. 622.

²KB, pp. 595-96.

³Keil and Delitzsch, Psalms, p. 140.

⁴Maclaren, Psalms, p. 137.

⁵Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 162.

⁶BAG, p. 343.

Testament by the apostle Peter, who commanded the church elders to lead God's flock with a "willingness" (ἐκουσίως) of attitude (1 Pet. 5:2).

Chapter two identified and defined the six characteristics David needed to properly and adequately minister before Yahweh. As a prophet-priest calling sinners to repent and teaching them the ways of God, David realized his need for a 1) pure heart 2) wise heart 3) joyful heart 4) steadfast spirit (heart) 5) the presence of the Holy Spirit (anointed heart) 6) willing spirit (heart). The LXX translations and usages were then correlated to New Testament usages showing the New Testament believer's need for the six characteristics of ministry. The question is then considered "How does the believer obtain these needed characteristics?"

CHAPTER III

PROCURING THE SIX CHARACTERISTICS FOR MINISTRY

Participation by God

The six characteristics David asked for were of such a nature that he could not produce them in his own power. They were too noble, too high for even a man after God's own heart to generate. The perverse activity of David's immaterial being (51:4) had already demonstrated the total depravity (51:5) that could and would later rise up again (2 Sam. 24:1-25; 1 Chr. 21:1-30). David desperately needed God to act on his behalf to bestow the six characteristics of ministry before he could again launch out into his Lord's service.

Man Implores God to Act

David needed a pure heart (51:10). He beseeches God to create, בְּרָאֵלַי, a new heart within him.¹ The root בְּרָא, has a meaning of "to shape, fashion, or create."² In the Old Testament, בְּרָא is a theological term the subject of which is God exclusively.³ When בְּרָא is in the Qal stem

¹Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 34.

²BDB, p. 135.

³KB, pp. 146-47.

in Hebrew, it is always used with God as the subject of the action, and it always means "create."¹ The verb stem of פָּרָא in Psalm 51:10 is that of the Qal.² As such, God must be the subject of the action. The action involved emphasizes the initiation of the object,³ a pure heart. The creation of a pure heart was David's foremost need, a need that only God could fulfill.⁴

David earnestly asks God to act on his behalf by using the imperative,⁵ in this sense a request.⁶ David requested God to create purity within his heart, a feat outside the sphere of human ability.⁷ With purity a characteristic of his heart, David could continue his request of additional qualities that would prepare him to re-establish his ministry of prophet-priest (51:13).

The Greek κρίσον, of the root form κρίξω, parallels the Hebrew meaning of פָּרָא. In Classical Greek, the development of the word came to generate an understanding of

¹Weston W. Fields, Unformed and Unfilled (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1978), p. 54, citing KB, p. 147.

²BDB, p. 135.

³TWOT, p. 127.

⁴Leslie, Psalms, p. 401.

⁵BDB, p. 135.

⁶GKC, p. 324, sect. 110a.

⁷TWOT, p. 127.

"to bring into being. . . ." ¹ The LXX usage of κτίξω expresses the decisive, basic act of the will of God in his creative activity. ² The rendering of κτίξω for פָּרָא in Psalm 51:10 declares the necessity of God to intervene on behalf of the individual sinner. ³

The aorist active imperative, κτίσον, adequately brings out David's request for purity and closely adheres to the Hebrew's Qal imperative, פָּרָא-לִי.

The active voice demonstrates the movement of the subject to produce action that affects an object. ⁴ In the context of the Psalm, David realizes his inability to act as a proper subject to formulate purity within his own heart. ⁵ He then urgently solicits God to act as subject by means of the imperative mood. ⁶

The imperative mood is normally that of command. ⁷ Oftentimes the imperative has the nuance of urgency or

¹DDNT, 1:378.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 379.

⁴H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament (Toronto, Ontario: The Macmillan Company, 1957), p. 155.

⁵Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 152.

⁶Ibid.

⁷J. Gresham Machen, New Testament Greek For Beginners (Toronto, Ontario: The Macmillan Company, 1958), p. 180. (Hereinafter referred to as Grammar).

request (Luke 17:5; Mark 9:22; John 17:11),¹ as when a lesser person addresses a higher person or a person of equal essence in a subordinate position addresses another in a higher position of authority. In the context of Psalm 51, the LXX uses the imperative of entreaty² wherein David, the lesser person in a lesser position, presents his urgent need and subsequent requests to God, the highest person in the highest position of authority.

The aorist tense specifies that action which is viewed as occurring without reference to progress, the exception being aorist action in the indicative mood.³ Action is seen as a single whole irrespective of the parts of time involved.⁴ In regard to the active voice and imperative mood in Psalm 51:10, the aorist tense is best taken as inceptive (ingressive), that is, the action is contemplated in its beginning.⁵ David is here urging God to begin an action on his behalf that God will begin after man has confessed his sin and repented. David is now in the preliminary process looking forward to the completion of the action by his God.

¹Dana and Mantey, Grammar, p. 176.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 178.

⁴Ibid., p. 194.

⁵Ibid., p. 196.

The New Testament continues such a notion of God working on man's behalf to establish a right standing before God. The passage of Ephesians 2:8-10 deals with the soteriological aspect of a man's new creation resulting in right relationship to God in order to accomplish proper good works in God's service.¹ The $\kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\xi\omega$ takes place in Christ Jesus after God's act of workmanship (Eph. 2:10). The drive of man to establish himself by his own efforts, even when these efforts are religious in character, belongs to the activity of the old man.² If the New Testament believer is to acquire a pure heart, he must request it of God and experience God's working on his behalf to produce purity and readiness for ministry.

The process of instilling purity within the heart of David involved the removal of sin from the immaterial part of David. The poet-king referred to such a process, forgiveness, as "blotting out of transgression" (51:1), "washing away of iniquity" (51:2), and "cleansing from sin" (51:2).

As observed previously, "blot out," מָחָה , puts forth the idea of "exterminating sin."³ Such removal of

¹DNTT, 1:386.

²Ibid.

³KB, p. 511.

transgression takes place "when God no longer remembers the sin against the sinner."¹

David manifests his need for the blotting out of his sin by phrasing his petition in the Qal imperfective. The Qal stem denotes simple or light action² by the subject, God, while the imperative makes a request of the subject.³

The term ἐξαλείφω in the Greek echoes the meaning of נָּחַח . Classical Greek viewed ἐξαλείφω as a physical action of "anointing and rubbing with oil" or of "rubbing something smooth such as plaster." A metaphorical nuance is also noted: "to wipe out, obliterate, cancel or destroy."⁴

The LXX carries both meanings. However, in Psalm 51:1,9 it refers metaphorically to the gracious work of God in obliterating sins.⁵

In the New Testament, ἐξαλείφω appears also as a metaphor for "obliterating sins" (Acts 3:19).⁶ The people of the New Testament economy, along with David, have a need to repent of sin and trust God for the procedure of doing away with sin and its consequences.

¹BDB, p. 562.

²Moshe Greenberg, Introduction to Hebrew (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956), p. 45.

³GKC, p. 324, sect. 110a.

⁴DNTT, 1:471.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

David further describes his need for a pure heart as the forgiveness motif encompasses the term פָּבַט, to "wash away" iniquity (51:2), as one might wash stained clothing.¹ This figurative washing² is another means by which David looks forward to the forgiveness of the impurity in his heart.³

The Piel imperative,⁴ פָּבַטְנִי, gives another form of request⁵ as David seeks purity of heart. The Piel stem carries several nuances of meaning. In the context of Psalm 51, the Piel usage most appropriate would be that of the factitive. The denominative is not a possibility since the verb used, פָּבַט, occurs 51 times in the Old Testament, all in verbal forms.⁶ The factitive appears as the best nuance because the verb appears only once in the Qal stem as a participle and evidences a transitive active meaning in the Piel.⁷ The factitive generates a stronger, more specific causative idea than a simple causative normally would.

¹KB, p. 422.

²BDB, p. 460.

³TWOT, p. 428.

⁴BDB, p. 460.

⁵GKC, p. 324, sect. 110a.

⁶TWOT, p. 428.

⁷Thomas O. Lambdin, Introduction to Biblical Hebrew (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), p. 193. (Hereinafter referred to as Grammar).

The factitive helps bring to light David's deep need and desire for God to purify his heart.

The Greek idea of "washing inanimate objects, especially clothes," is noted in Classical Greek literature by the word πλύνω.¹ This same word is used by the LXX to translate סָבַף.

The LXX renders πλύνω as an aorist active imperative, πλύνόν. The parsing brings out the idea of request for God to act in David's interest.

The New Testament finds πλύνω used in Revelation 7:14² in reference to saints who have come out of the Great Tribulation and washed their (stained?) robes in the blood of the Lamb, thereby making them white (most likely a symbol of moral purity³). The figurative language of washing clothing to purify them pertains to the saints dealing with their sins by means of the blood of Christ--an action in which God provides the means to purify from sin.

The third phrase used by David to request a pure heart is that of "cleansing" from sin, קָטַף (51:2). Such

¹DNTT, 1:150.

²Ibid., p. 152.

³Adam Clarke, The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments with a Commentary and Critical Notes (New York and Cincinnati: The Methodist Book Concern, 1823), p. 997.

a cleansing would purify morally¹ and pronounce the sinner clean.²

The parsing of טָהַר נִי indicates another Piel imperative. The imperative³ form asserts a request made by David of God while the Piel stem indicates a causative source⁴ of the action begun in 51:1. The denominative⁵ is not in view here because טָהַר exists 94 times in the verbal form,⁶ 32 of which are in the Qal stem,⁷ and the Piel meaning parallels that of the Qal usage: ritual and moral purity. Derivatives⁸ are also close to the Qal meaning of ritual and moral purity but not in overwhelming number or definition to demand the denominative nuance. The factitive⁹ is the most likely choice because טָהַר occurs in the Qal stem as a stative verb and in the Piel stem as a transitive verb.

The LXX translation of טָהַר is that of καθαρῶ. In Classical usage in the later Hellenistic period, the verb

¹BDB, p. 372.

²KB, pp. 347-48.

³GKC, p. 324, sect. 110a.

⁴Lambdin, Grammar, p. 193.

⁵Ibid.

⁶TWOT, p. 343.

⁷BDB, p. 372.

⁸TWOT, p. 343, 110 times according to Harris.

⁹Lambdin, Grammar, pp. 193-94.

conveyed the idea of "to cleanse in physical, ritual, and/or a religious sense" (e.g. Josephus, Ant. 10, 70, "to purify the land").¹

New Testament usage of καθαρίζω in relationship to forgiveness of sin for enablement to minister in God's service is evidenced in Hebrews 9:14.² In this passage, καθαρίζω must take place to cleanse a believer's conscience from acts that lead to death, so that the believer might serve the living God.

The LXX rendition of καθαρίζω is καθάρσον, an aorist active imperative. David implores his Lord "to cleanse him ritually and morally"³ so that ministry might begin afresh.

The evidence shows that the acquisition of purity of heart was a phenomenon that David could not generate in his own power. He definitely needed God to act in his interest to forgive his sin and extend to him purity of heart. The Hebrew constructions of the Qal imperative and Piel imperative together with the Greek aorist active imperative adequately express David's requests to God to act in his behalf in order to establish the needed characteristic of purity of heart.

¹DNTT, 3:102.

²BAG, p. 387.

³DNTT, 3:105-07.

The procurement of the characteristic of joy also involves an entreaty made by David of God. On two occasions in the Psalm, David asks that joy be restored to him (51:8, 12).

In the first instance, the phraseology used is "Let me hear joy" (51:8). The verb שָׁמַע means basically to "perceive a message."¹ It is also used to denote prayerful communication between God and individuals (Judg. 13:9).² In the context of the Psalm, Leupold rightly states that שָׁמַע is referring to the state of the heart,³ not joyful sounds made at public festivals in which the whole congregation would unite in praising God as Perowne inaccurately suggests.⁴ The penitent heart is not too bold when it asks for joy. Genuine, well-founded gladness and joy exist (in the heart) only as divine forgiveness is granted.⁵ It is God's work to make man hear joy and gladness and to take comfort from it.⁶

The verb form exhibited in the text is that of a Hiphil imperfect, תִּשְׁמַעֵנִי .⁷ The imperfect describes the

¹ TWOT, p. 938.

² Ibid.

³ Leupold, Psalms, p. 404.

⁴ Perowne, Psalms, pp. 419-20.

⁵ Maclaren, Psalms, p. 135.

⁶ Henry, Commentary, n.p., Ps. 51:7-12.

⁷ BDB, p. 1034.

type of action a verb generates. The imperfect can represent action in past time,¹ present time,² and future time.³ Other types of action related to the imperfect include habitual or customary action,⁴ and modal action,⁵ in which the action is described as conditional, potential, or simple desire.⁶ The context of the Psalm encompasses future action and request. The imperfect form effectively brings out the desire of David to acquire joy and gladness within his heart in the near future.

The Hiphil stem primarily denotes causative action.⁷ If the verb in the Qal already has a transitive meaning, then the Hiphil takes two accusatives⁸ (usually one of the person and one of the thing).⁹ Such is the case of וַיִּשְׂמַח in 51:8. The subject, God understood, is going to cause something, "joy," to happen to someone, "me" (David). "Joy" and "me" (David) are the two accusatives. The permissive¹⁰ is

¹GKC, pp. 314-16, sect. 107a.

²Ibid., sect. 107f.

³Ibid., sect. 107i.

⁴Lambdin, Grammar, p. 100.

⁵Ibid.

⁶GKC, p. 317, sect. 107 4a.

⁷Ibid., p. 144, sect. 43c.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., p. 370, sect. 117cc.

¹⁰Lambdin, Grammar, p. 212.

closely related to the causative nuance but context does not permit its use here.

The stative¹ also does not apply because $\gamma\eta\psi$ is transitive in the Qal rather than stative. The denominative² fails to qualify as a nuance in this instance because the verbal root $\gamma\eta\psi$ is not derived from a noun form.

The LXX renders $\gamma\eta\psi$ as ἀκουτιεύς, a future active indicative of ἀκουτίζω. The word in Classical Greek portrayed the meaning of "to cause to hear."³

The future tense is an indicative tense and as such, the element of time is very pronounced. The verbal idea presents the progress of action as indefinite.⁴

The indicative mood is the declarative mood of certainty. It makes a simple assertion or interrogation. The indicative represents the verbal idea from the viewpoint of reality in the writer's mind.⁵

The future tense and the indicative mood are both sometimes used to demonstrate an imperative situation of command. In the future tense, command is not a foreign concept for command necessarily involves futurity.⁶ The

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 213.

³BAG, p. 31.

⁴Dana and Mantey, Grammar, p. 191.

⁵Ibid., p. 168.

⁶Ibid., p. 192.

cohortative indicative brings out the same nuance of command.¹

The LXX rendition of ἀκουτιεῖς as a future active indicative adequately represents David's request for joy from the hand of God.

The second instance of David's petition for joy centers around his deepening appreciation and understanding of God's salvation (51:12a). David here asks God to restore the joy of God's salvation.

The verb שׁוּב basically means "to return."² In the Hiphil stem, it carries the nuance "to put back" or "allow to come back"³ and "to cause to return."⁴

The rendering of שׁוּב as a Hiphil imperative, יִשׁוּבָהּ, superbly affirms the request nature of David's petition to God to bring back the joy he had missed for nearly a year.

The imperative expresses the request⁵ nature of David's communication with God. The Hiphil stem⁶ sets forth the necessity of God to act on David's behalf. God must cause the joy to flood back into David's heart. The

¹Ibid., p. 169.

²TWOT, p. 909.

³KB, pp. 951-54.

⁴BDB, p. 998.

⁵GKC, p. 324, sect. 110a.

⁶Ibid., p. 144, sect. 53c.

causative nuance of the Hiphil best adheres to the context of the Psalm. In the causative sense the subject, God, takes two objects,¹ "me" and "joy," while the Qal form of the verb finds expression as a transitive.² The permissive, stative, and denominative³ nuances, then, are not applicable to 51:12a.

The Greek usage of ἀποδίδωμι also manifests the meaning of "return" or "give back."⁴ The LXX rendering of ἀποδίδωμι as ἀπόδος, an aorist active imperative, (51:12a), adequately brings out the request for joy that David makes of God.

The New Testament supports such a concept for New Testament believers in that early Christians were able to enjoy close fellowship and to praise God because of joyful (ἀγαλλιᾶσαι) and sincere hearts. Such behavior probably motivated others to investigate the claims of the gospel and react positively to its message⁵ (Acts 2:46-47).⁶ New Testament believers, along with David, needed joy in their hearts to minister effectively.

¹Ibid., p. 370, sect. 117cc.

²BDB, pp. 996-97.

³Lambdin, Grammar, pp. 211-13.

⁴BAG, p. 90, #2.

⁵Henry, Commentary, n.p., Acts 2:42-47.

⁶W. F. Moulton, A. S. Geden, and H. K. Moulton, A Concordance to the Greek Testament (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 36 George Street, 1980), p. 4.

A further instance of man earnestly asking God to act on his behalf is that of David asking God to renew the characteristic of a steadfast spirit within his heart (51:10b).

The verb שׁוּׁן has a basic meaning of "repair" or "rebuilding pertaining to cities (Isa. 61:4), the temple (2 Chr. 24:4,12), and the altar (2 Chr. 15:8)."¹ Figuratively, it is used to mean "renew" or "make anew"² and "give afresh."³ Metaphorically, שׁוּׁן refers to God renewing a steadfast spirit within David's heart.⁴

The word is structured as a Piel imperative, שׁוּׁן . The Piel stem in this instance might take on a denominative function⁵ in that שׁוּׁן does not exist in the Qal stem and it is very close in meaning to its adjectival derivative שׁוּׁן . Another possibility is that of a factitive function⁶ in which a Qal form would imply "be new" whereas the Piel translates the meaning "to renew." The intensive usage is not a possibility in 51:10b.

¹TWOT, p. 265.

²BDB, pp. 293-94.

³KB, p. 279.

⁴TWOT, p. 265.

⁵Lambdin, Grammar, p. 194.

⁶Ibid., pp. 193-94.

For the request nature of this construction, one must refer to the imperative which appropriately implies at least simple desire.¹

The LXX renders $\psi\tau\eta$ as $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, a verb of little known usage meaning "restore."² As an aorist active imperative, $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\iota\sigma\omicron\nu$ brings forth David's request for a steadfast spirit in a vivid manner.

Although $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ translates into the New Testament meaning "dedication of a covenant" (Heb. 9:18) and "opening a way" (Heb. 10:20),³ a similar word $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, meaning "to renew,"⁴ is used to exhort Christians not to conform to the pattern of the world but rather to renew their minds (part of the heart) in holiness (Rom. 12:1-2). Such renewing would allow believers to recognize and follow God's perfect will, the same idea that "steadfast spirit" brings across in Psalm 51:10b. The relationship between $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ and $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ is that they share the same root, $\kappa\alpha\iota\nu\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, "to make new."⁵

Both David and New Testament believers needed God to renew within them hearts that were steadfast, that is,

¹GKC, p. 324, sect. 110a.

²BAG, p. 215.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. 55.

⁵Ibid., p. 394.

recognizing righteousness and moving straight on course toward righteous service.¹

Another request David makes of God is that of maintaining the Holy Spirit in his life so that ministry for God may continue. David uses a negative to express his desire: "do not take (נִקַּח-לֹא) your Holy Spirit from me."

The verb נִקַּח connotes the idea of "grasping," "seizing,"² and "taking away from so as to deprive of."³

The rendering of נִקַּח as a Qal imperfect with לֹא, נִקַּח-לֹא,⁴ presents an interesting form of negative request.⁵ The jussive with לֹא expresses prohibition, negative desire, and request.⁶ The force of such a construction can vary from a simple warning⁷ to an immediate, specific prohibition⁸ of strong desire.⁹ David's remembrance of the devastation wrought upon King Saul after the Holy Spirit left him¹⁰ and the general tenor of Psalm 51 would

¹Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 34.

²KB, pp. 485-86.

³BDB, p. 542.

⁴Ibid.

⁵GKC, p. 321, sect. 109c.

⁶Ibid., p. 479, sect. 152f.

⁷Ibid., p. 317, sect. 107o.

⁸Lambdin, Grammar, p. 114, #102.

⁹Ronald J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p. 34, #184.

¹⁰Leupold, Psalms, p. 405 and Maclaren, Psalms, p. 137.

indicate the stronger use of the construction in David's entreaty.

The LXX translates $\pi\rho\lambda$ with $\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha\nu\alpha\iota\rho\acute{\epsilon}\omega$, an infrequently used term meaning "to take away as a punishment"¹ or "strike out of an account."²

The form encountered is $\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha\nu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta\varsigma$, a second aorist active subjunctive alongside a negative particle $\mu\grave{\eta}$. Such a construction indicates negative prohibition.³ The purpose of a prohibition when expressed by the aorist subjunctive is to forbid a thing before it has begun.⁴ The Greek and Hebrew constructions coincide to demonstrate David's deep desire to maintain the Holy Spirit's presence in his life.

New Testament passages abundantly set forth the necessity of the Holy Spirit to empower one to minister in the service of God. In the Gospels, Jesus claimed that the Holy Spirit would remind the apostles of what He had said and would teach them all things (John 14:26). In the Acts of the apostles, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would empower the apostles to witness about their Lord (Acts 1:8). The Pauline epistles note that the Holy Spirit dispenses gifts of ministry to men so that the church might be built up (1 Cor. 12:4-7; 14:12). Peter asserts that those using

¹BAG, p. 72.

²LSJ, p. 149.

³Machen, Grammar, p. 180, #422.

⁴Dana and Mantey, Grammar, p. 301, #290.

spiritual gifts should do so only in the power of God (1 Pet. 4:10-11).

New Testament believers therefore need the presence of the Holy Spirit in order to minister successfully as much as David ever did.

The last characteristic for which David urgently solicits God is that of sustaining him with a willing spirit. David recognizes that a willing spirit will uphold and sustain him (51:12b) when the pressures and burdens of ministry increase beyond natural abilities.

The verb שָׁמַר has a primary meaning of "to lean upon."¹ In a figurative sense, the definitions of "support," "uphold," and "sustain" apply.² A person is "sustained with a supplied thing."³

David's use of שָׁמַר was that of a Qal imperfect, שָׁמַרְתִּי. The Qal stem simply expresses an action.⁴ The imperfect implies request, ranging from that of simple desire in the sphere of future time⁵ to strong command of the injunctive rendered by "must" or "shall."⁶ The deep

¹TWOT, p. 628.

²BDB, p. 702.

³KB, p. 661.

⁴Williams, Syntax, p. 27, #134.

⁵GKC, pp. 316-17, sect. 107 m,n.

⁶Williams, Syntax, p. 32, #173.

need of David coming forth in the context of the Psalm would suggest the latter.

The LXX translates $\eta\delta\theta$ with $\sigma\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$, a verb reflecting the Hebrew thought of "support."¹ The Greek definition expands upon the Hebrew meaning somewhat by adding the nuance "to set up," "establish," and "fix firmly."²

The construction of an aorist active imperative,³ $\sigma\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\sigma\omega$, agrees with the concept conveyed by the Hebrew Qal imperfect, namely, that David makes an urgent request of God, in this case, for the sustaining divine power that is channeled through a willing heart, capable to meet the challenge of future experience.⁴

The New Testament does not use $\sigma\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ in conjunction with a willing spirit, but does declare the New Testament believer's need to be strengthened ($\sigma\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$) by the power of God for effective ministry:

May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and hope, encourage and strengthen ($\sigma\tau\eta\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\alpha\iota$) you in every good deed and word (2 Thess. 2:16-17).⁵

¹BAG, p. 768.

²Ibid.

³Dana and Mantey, Grammar, p. 176.

⁴Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 162.

⁵Moulton and Geden, Concordance, p. 904.

Man Trusts God to Act

The first five characteristics were requests made by David as he beseeched God to act in his behalf. The last characteristic, that of wisdom, is acquired by David in this case not by direct request, but rather by trusting God to act based on God's past standard and performance of faithfulness.

David asserts God's desire for truth in the immaterial part of man (51:6a).¹ Such desire by God is a "delight"² and an "experience of pleasure"³ in truth. The basic meaning indicates "high emotional involvement."⁴ From a human perspective, the meaning of this word is "what men are said to experience in respect to women."⁵ The term נָחַם is found only in the Qal.⁶ As a perfect, נָחַם , it can signal habitual activity with no specific action value. Such is the frequent case in poetry and proverbial expressions,⁷ and it specifically applies to this situation (51:6a). Truth is an attribute of God (Ps. 31:5) that He

¹Perowne, Psalms, p. 418.

²BDB, p. 342.

³KB, p. 321.

⁴TWOT, p. 310.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Lambdin, Grammar, p. 39.

habitually maintains in Himself and constantly desires to teach and establish within the heart of His servant.¹

The LXX uses the word ἀγαπάω to translate ὕψι. In Classical Greek, ἀγαπάω was quite often a colorless word, appearing as a synonym with ἐράω and φιλέω, meaning to "treat respectfully," "be pleased with," and "welcome." On rare occasions it was used of a God displaying generosity to a man for the sake of the man. At other times the term was applied to an only child to whom all the love of his parents is given.²

In the New Testament, the concept of God's love for the truth is expressed in a unique manner. Jesus stated that He was the way, the truth, and the life . . . (John 14:6). God the Father, in loving His son (John 15:9; Col. 1:13) loved the truth. The Apostle John reflects God's love for the truth as he encourages believers to obey the commands of God the Father and Jesus Christ thereby demonstrating that the truth of God is in them (1 John 2:3-4). God's desire for truth in His servants is adequately manifested in both Old and New Testament economies.

As he viewed the constant desire of God for truth, David confidently trusted God to make wisdom (truth in action) known to him (51:6b).³ The term "know," $\gamma\tau\iota$
 τ

¹Dalglisch, Psalm Fifty-one, p. 125.

²DNTT, 2:539.

³Henry, Commentary, n.p., Ps. 51:1-6.

expresses a multitude of shades of knowledge gained by the senses.¹ While ordinarily gained by experience, knowledge is also the contemplative perception possessed by the wise man (Prov. 1:4; 2:6; 5:2).² In the context of man's relationship to God, God makes one know³ the ways of God so that man may know God.⁴

The Hiphil imperfect, חִוֵּי־עֲנִי,⁵ brings out David's trust that God will act in the future to provide David's need of wisdom for righteous living and ministry.

The imperfect signifies the simple future.⁶ The Hiphil indicates the causative nature⁷ of the situation in which God must act on David's behalf to produce the wisdom.⁸ The causative idea is preferred here because יָדַעַתְּ is transitive in the Qal⁹ and takes two accusatives,¹⁰ "me" and "wisdom."

¹TWOT, p. 366.

²Ibid.

³KB, p. 366.

⁴BDB, p. 395.

⁵Ibid., p. 394.

⁶Lambdin, Grammar, p. 100, #91.

⁷Williams, Syntax, p. 28, #147.

⁸Harrison, "A Study of Psalm 51," p. 34.

⁹BDB, pp. 393-94.

¹⁰GKC, p. 144, sect. 53c.

The LXX translates $\gamma\tau\iota$ with $\delta\eta\lambda\acute{o}\omega$, a verb in Classical Greek meaning to "announce," "make manifest," "explain," or set forth."¹ In Stoic philosophy it takes on the nuance of "interpreting" or "clarifying."² Hellenistic writers of the second century A.D. use the verb for the publication of divine secrets.³

The LXX's use of $\delta\eta\lambda\acute{o}\omega$ is principally that of "divine revelation, a disclosure of the mysteries of God."⁴ God brings to light His name, His purposes, His ways, His mysteries, His covenant, His power, and His glory.⁵ The concept of $\gamma\tau\iota$ is carried over accurately by the LXX.

The Greek parsing of both $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\acute{\alpha}\omega$ and $\delta\eta\lambda\acute{o}\omega$ as aorist active indicatives, $\acute{\eta}\gamma\acute{\alpha}\pi\eta\sigma\alpha\varsigma$ and $\acute{\epsilon}\delta\acute{\eta}\lambda\omega\sigma\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$, brings forth the idea of action in the past,⁶ specifically, past action in which the subject (God) has done something (desired truth and bestowed wisdom) for someone (David). Such usage of the aorist indicative by the LXX in regard to the Qal perfect of $\gamma\beta\eta$ is most accurate. However, the rendering of the Hiphil imperfect with the aorist indicative completely eliminates the future implications of $\gamma\tau\iota$. The LXX in this

¹DNTT, p. 316.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Dana and Mantey, Grammar, p. 194.

case sadly misses the request nature of Psalm 51 in general and the verse (51:6b) specifically.

The concept of God causing man to obtain wisdom for effective ministry is attested to by several New Testament passages:

. . . we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding (Col. 1:9).

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him (Jas. 1:5).

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and counsel one another with all wisdom (Col. 3:16).

The New Testament believer like King David of Israel needs the wisdom of God to minister effectively. Only God can bestow such wisdom to our needy hearts.¹ It is the saint's duty to admit his need for wisdom and ask God to supply it abundantly.

Participation by Men

Prayer

The entire Psalm is a prayer. In it, David admits his needs before God and asks God to supply those characteristics that will enable him to minister fruitfully to lost sinners.

The New Testament believer has the same privilege and duty to approach the Throne of Grace, admit his need, and ask for appropriate ministry characteristics.

¹Lange, Commentary, p. 823.

Bible Study

In his request for wisdom, David gives the reader insight as to how wisdom might be gained from a human perspective.

Wisdom presupposes the acquirement of objective knowledge. Such knowledge that enlightens one about God and His ways is found in God's Scriptures. David secured such knowledge from his study, memorization and meditation upon the written Word of God.

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Psalm 19:7-11

and

To do your will, O my God, is my desire; your law is within my heart. I proclaim righteousness in the great assembly; I do not seal my lips, Psalm 40:8-9

As David studied the word of God, he gained characteristics (wisdom--Ps. 19:7; joy--Ps. 19:8) that enabled him to minister (Ps. 40:9). Likewise, the New Testament believer can actively participate in God's development of the characteristics of ministry by the study of God's word.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every

good work. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction. 2 Timothy 3:16-4:2

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. Colossians 3:16

CONCLUSION

David's ministry in Israel to God's chosen people and surrounding nations was that of functioning as the theocratic king in God's kingdom upon the earth, as a speaking and writing prophet delivering God's message to people who needed to hear it, and as a priest interceding for the people, leading the people in worship, teaching the people the Word of God, and setting a personal example of holiness.

As David fell into sin and refused to repent, his ministry of prophet-priest waned into oblivion. In order to re-establish the prophet-priest ministry and retain the position of theocratic king, David had to obtain six characteristics of profitable ministry. These characteristics described in Psalm 51 involved proper conditions of the heart, namely: a pure heart, a wise heart, a joyful heart, a steadfast heart, an anointed heart, and a willing heart.

The language of the LXX as it was carried over into the New Testament showed that the New Testament believer needed these same six characteristics in his ministry of prophet-priest just as much as David did in his era of service.

The verb structures of both the Hebrew and Greek languages amply indicate that only God can supply and

develop these six ministry characteristics within the heart of man.

Man, from his human perspective, can participate in God's development of the six characteristics by means of the avenues of prayer and Bible study.

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