

The Sacrifice of Brokenness

By Steve Pruitt

My sacrifice [the sacrifice acceptable] to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart [broken down with sorrow for sin and humbly and thoroughly penitent] such, O God, you will not despise.

Psalm 51:17 AMP

Most of us are familiar with the life of King David. God called him a man after His own heart, yet we know David made some big time mistakes that cost him and others a great deal of pain. One of those grave mistakes was his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah.

Some time elapsed from the time he committed those sins until the prophet Nathan paid David a visit. We don't know exactly how much time went by. I read in one commentary that it could have been as much as one year. Can you image the guilt David must have lived with for that year? After Nathan rebuked David and brought his sin into the open David penned the words to Psalm 51.

In speaking of a broken spirit David uses the Hebrew word shabar. Shabar means to burst, to break to pieces or to reduce. It is easy to see the brokenness in David's heart as he approaches God about his sin. When speaking of a contrite heart he uses the Hebrew word dakah. This word means to crumble, to beat to pieces, to bruise, to crush or to humble.

There is a popular prayer in many Christian circles today that says, "Lord break our hearts with the things that break yours." It's easy to look around us and see the things that break the Father's heart. Those things include injustices of all kinds; hunger, abortion, war, racism to name of few. However, we want to make sure we don't overlook the things inside of us that break his heart. The sin that so easily besets us should break our hearts as well.

Brokenness is essential when approaching God. Though we may approach him boldly (Hebrews 4:16), we should never go into his presence presumptuously as though we have earned the right to be there. We have nothing to offer God that he hasn't provided for us. We come to him with our will and self-sufficiency crushed, having taken on a new form. Its total dependency is on Christ and the sacrifice he gave. He earned the right for us to come into the Father's presence by shedding his blood (Hebrews 10:19).

Are you broken over your sin? Have you resisted to bloodshed striving against sin (Hebrews 12:4)? Ask the Father to show you the things in your life that breaks his heart. Ask his forgiveness and his help to walk humbly before him.

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Scriptures for meditation:

Isaiah 57:15
Psalm 34:18
James 4:10