Midrash Tehillim
מדרש תהילים

Midrash Tehillim 51, Part 1
1. For the leader. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to BatSheva (Tehillim / Psalms 51:1-2). These words are to be considered in the light of the verse Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Mishley / Proverbs 18:2), that is, a man’s tongue can bring him to dwell in the world to come. For what brought David into the world to come? The tongue in his mouth which said, I have sinned, as is said, And David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord (2 Samuel 12:13). David was in darkness, and came to a physician. The physician said, You cannot have treatment. The wound is large, but the money in your hand is little. The man said, I beg you, take all the money that I have here, and as for the rest, let it come from you. Have mercy upon me, have compassion upon me. So too, David said to the Holy One blessed be He, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness. You are compassionate to the Holy One blessed be He, said to Solomon, If you will walk in My ways and come to a physician, the Holy One blessed be He, said to Solomon, If you will walk in My ways.

Midrash Tehillim 51, Part 2
2. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness (Tehillim / Psalms 51:3). With whom may David be compared? With a man who had a wound on his hand and came to a physician. The physician said, You cannot have treatment. The wound is large, but the money in your hand is little. The man said, I beg you, take all the money that I have here, and as for the rest, let it come from you. Have mercy upon me, have compassion upon me. So too, David said to the Holy One blessed be He, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness. You are compassionate.
and According to the multitude of Your compassions blot out my transgressions. You have already shown me much mercy. David also said, May passing great Your mercies, O You that saves them that take refuge in You (Tehillim / Psalms 17:7). Healing comes from You. Because the wound is large, lay on a large poultice for me, as is said, Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity (Tehillim / Psalms 51:4). Hence, you learn that every man who commits a transgression is as unclean as though he touched a dead body and must be purified with hyssop. So too, David said, Purge me with hyssop, and I will be clean (Tehillim / Psalms 51:9).

Did David actually fall into cleanness? No, but into an iniquity before me (Tehillim / Psalms 51:5). Hence it is said, I know your transgressions, and my sin is ever before me (Tehillim / Psalms 51:5). According to the multitude of Your compassions blot out my transgressions. You have already shown me much mercy. David, but all Israel, since it is said You are My witnesses, says the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen (Isaiah 43:10).

Midrash Tehillim 51, Part 3

3. For You, You only, have I sinned, that You may be justified when You speak (Tehillim / Psalms 51:6). To whom may David be likened? A man who broke a limb, and came to a physician. The physician marveled and said, How great is your break! I am much distressed on your account. The man with the broken limb said, Are you distressed on my account? Was not my limb broken for your sake, since the fee is to be yours? Just so David said to the Holy One blessed be He, For You, You only have I sinned, Should You receive me, then if You say to transgressors Wherefore have you not repented? All transgressors will submit to You, for all of them will behold me, and I will surely bear witness that You receive the penitent. Hence the Holy One blessed be He, said, Behold I have given him for a witness to the peoples (Isaiah 55:4). And God gave as a witness not only me, David, but all Israel, since it is said You are My witnesses, says the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen (Isaiah 43:10).