

ספר תהילים נא | Tehillim / Psalms 51

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The Sacrifice of Righteousness and the Torah

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 51:1-19*, David opens the Psalm saying א לְמִנְצַחַת מְזִמּוֹר **א** לְמִנְצַחַת מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד: *A psalm of David.* David asks the Lord to forgive his sin saying ב בָּבֹא-אֵלָיו נָתַן הַנְּבִיא כַּאֲשֶׁר-בָּא **ב** בָּבֹא-אֵלָיו נָתַן הַנְּבִיא כַּאֲשֶׁר-בָּא אֵלָיו נָתַן הַנְּבִיא כַּאֲשֶׁר-בָּא אֵל- **ג** הַנְּבִיא אֱלֹהִים כַּחֲסִדְךָ כָּרַב רַחֲמֶיךָ מַחֵה פְשָׁעַי: *51:1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. (NASB)* He confesses his sins before the Lord, a thing that is characteristic of those who belong to the Lord (51:2-4). As part of his confession, he says that he was brought forth in iniquity and in sin he was conceived (51:5, ו **ו** לָךְ לְבִדְךָ | חֲטָאתִי וְהִרַע בְּעֵינָיִךְ עָשִׂיתִי לְמַעַן-תִּצְדַּק בְּדַכְרֶךָ תִּזְכֶּה בְּשִׁפְטֶךָ: *What does it mean to be conceived in sin and why would he need to recognize this about his conception? How does this compare to the Lord desiring truth be found in the inner most being? (51:6)* How does the Lord make us to know wisdom? David asks to be purified drawing a parallel to the cleansing ritual detailed in the Torah (51:7). David says יא *51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. (NASB)* He asks the Lord to *51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. (NASB)* After the Lord has done all of these things, he will teach transgressors God's ways. Being taught the way of God causes a sinner to be converted. What is the meaning of conversion in this sense? (51:13) David asks the Lord to open his lips so that he can declare his praises (51:15) how is the Lord involved in this process? When we give God praise, is He causing us to do so? Following all of these things David states, יז *51:16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. (NASB)* Here he says the Lord does not desire sacrifice. Isn't sacrifice required for forgiveness of sins? What is the role of the sacrifice in the day and the life of Israel and the Tabernacle? Is David saying the sacrifice is not efficacious for sins? David concludes saying כ *51:18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 51:19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar. (NASB)* Here David says the Lord will delight in the sacrifices, in burnt offerings, and in whole burnt offerings. What is it that causes the Lord to be delighted as compared to previously?

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהילים פרק נא	ספר טוביה פרק נא	ספר טוביה פרק נא	ספר טוביה פרק נא	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 51	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 51
א לְמִנְצַחַת מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד: ב בָּבֹא-אֵלָיו נָתַן הַנְּבִיא כַּאֲשֶׁר-בָּא אֵל-בַּת-שֹׁבַע: ג הַנְּבִיא אֱלֹהִים כַּחֲסִדְךָ כָּרַב רַחֲמֶיךָ מַחֵה פְשָׁעַי: ד הַרְבֵּה [הַרְבֵּה] כַּבְּסִנִּי מַעֲוֹנֵי וּמַחְטָאתֵי טָהֵר רְנִי: ה כִּי-פָשַׁעִי אָנִי אֲדַע וְחַטָּאתִי נִגְדִי תָמִיד:	א לשבחא תושבחתא לדוד: ב כד אתא לותיה נתן נבייא כד שמיש עם בת שבע: ג חוס עלי יהוה אלהא היך טיבותך היך סגיעות רחמיך שבוק מרודי: ד סוגעא תחוורינגי מן עוייתי ומן חובי תדכי יתי: ה ארום מרודי אנא קדמי גליין וחובי לקיבלי תדירא:	א לשבחא תושבחתא לדוד: ב כד אתא לותיה נתן נבייא כד שמיש עם בת שבע: ג חוס עלי יהוה אלהא היך טיבותך היך סגיעות רחמיך שבוק מרודי: ד סוגעא תחוורינגי מן עוייתי ומן חובי תדכי יתי: ה ארום מרודי אנא קדמי גליין וחובי לקיבלי תדירא:	א לשבחא תושבחתא לדוד: ב כד אתא לותיה נתן נבייא כד שמיש עם בת שבע: ג חוס עלי יהוה אלהא היך טיבותך היך סגיעות רחמיך שבוק מרודי: ד סוגעא תחוורינגי מן עוייתי ומן חובי תדכי יתי: ה ארום מרודי אנא קדמי גליין וחובי לקיבלי תדירא:	51:1 εις το τέλος ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυὶδ ἐν τῷ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς αὐτὸν Ναθαν τὸν προφήτην ἠνίκα εἰσηλθεν πρὸς Βηρσαββε ἐλέησόν με ὁ θεὸς κατὰ τὸ μέγα ἔλεός σου καὶ κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν σου ἐξάλειψον τὸ ἀνόμημά μου 51:2 ἐπὶ πλεῖον πλυνόν με ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομίας μου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας μου καθάρισόν με 51:3 ὅτι τὴν ἀνομίαν μου ἐγὼ γινώσκω καὶ ἡ ἀμαρτία μου ἐνώπιόν μου ἐστὶν διὰ παντός	51:1 εις το τέλος ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυὶδ ἐν τῷ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς αὐτὸν Ναθαν τὸν προφήτην ἠνίκα εἰσηλθεν πρὸς Βηρσαββε ἐλέησόν με ὁ θεὸς κατὰ τὸ μέγα ἔλεός σου καὶ κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν σου ἐξάλειψον τὸ ἀνόμημά μου 51:2 ἐπὶ πλεῖον πλυνόν με ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομίας μου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀμαρτίας μου καθάρισόν με 51:3 ὅτι τὴν ἀνομίαν μου ἐγὼ γινώσκω καὶ ἡ ἀμαρτία μου ἐνώπιόν μου ἐστὶν διὰ παντός

<p>ו לך לבדך קטאתי והרע בעיניך עשיתי למען-תצדק בדברך תזכה ב- שפטך: ז הן-בעוון חוללתי ובחטא יחמתני אמי: ח הן-אמת חפצת בט- חות ובסתם תקמה תודיעני: ט תח- טאני באזוב ואטהר תכבסני ומשגל אלבין: י תשמיעני ששון ושמה תגלנה עצמות דפית: יא הסתר פניך מחטאי וכל-עונתי מחה: יב לב טהור ברא-לי אלהים ורוח נכון חדש בקרבי: יג אל-תשליכני מל- פניך ורוח קדשך אל-תקח ממני: יד השיבה לי ששון ישעך ורוח נדיבה תסמכני: טו אלמדה פשעים דרביך וחטאים אליך ישובו: טז הצילני מדמים אלהים אלהי תשועתי תרנן לשוני צדקתך: יז אדני שפתי תפתח ופי יגיד תהלתך: יח פי לא-תחפץ זבח ואמנה עולה לא תרצה: יט זבחי אלהים רוח נשברה לב-נשבר ונדפה אלהים לא תבזה: כ היטיבה ברצונך את-ציון תבנה חומות ירוש- לם: כא אז תחפץ זבחי-צדק עולה וכליל אז יעלו על-מזבחתך פרים:</p>	<p>ו קדמך בלחודך בלחודך חבית וד- ביש קדמך עבדית מן בגלל דתזכי יתי במללותך תברור יתי כד תדין תידון: ז הא בעוייא איתלידית ובחובא עברית מני אמי: {ת"א} הא בעוויין סבר אבא למברא יתי ובחוב יצרא בישא יתחמי- נני אומי: ח הא קושטא רעיתא בכור- ליין ובמטמור לבא חוכמתא תהודענני: ט תדי עלי היך כהנא דמדי באזובא על מסאבא מוי אדיותא מן קטם תור- תא ואדכי תסחינני תחורניני ומן תלגא אתחור: י תבשרינני תשמעינני חדווא ואודיצותא תבוען תושבחתא איבריא גרמיא דשיפיתא: יא סליק אפך מן חוביי וכל וכולהון עויתי מחי: יב לב בריר ברי לי אלהא ורוח מכוון בדחל- תך חדית בגווי בגושמי: יג לא תטלוק יתי מן קדמך ורוח נבואת קודשך לא תסלק מיני: יד אתיב לי לותי אוריתך למידוך בפורקנך ורוח נבואה נדבותא תסמכינני: טו אאליך למרודיא אור- חתך וחיביא קדמך יתובון: טז פצי יתי מדין קטול יהוה אלהי פורקני תי- בוע לישני צדקתך: יז יהוה סיפוותי פתח באוריתא ופומי יתני תושבחתך: יח ארום לא תצבי נכסת קודשא ואתן עלתא לא תתרעי: יט נכסת וקודשא דאלהא נפשא מיתברא לב תביר ושפי אלהא לא תבסור: כ אוטיב ברעותך ית ציון תשכלל שורי ירושלם: כא בכך תצבי דיבחין דצדקתא "נכסת קו- דשין דזכוותא עלתא וגמיר דמתסקא הבכך יסקון כהניא על מדבחך תורין:</p>	<p>51:4 σοὶ μόνῳ ἤμαρτον καὶ τὸ πονηρὸν ἐνώπιόν σου ἐποίησα ὅπως ἂν δικαιωθῆς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις σου καὶ νικήσῃς ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε 51:5 ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἐν ἀνομίαις συνελήμφθην καὶ ἐν ἁμαρτίας ἐκίσσησέν με ἡ μήτηρ μου 51:6 ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἀλήθειαν ἠγάπησας τὰ ἄδηλα καὶ τὰ κρύφια τῆς σοφίας σου ἐδήλωσάς μοι 51:7 ῥαντιεῖς με ὑσώπῳ καὶ καθαρισθήσομαι πλυνεῖς με καὶ ὑπὲρ χιόνα λευκανθήσομαι 51:8 ἀκουτιεῖς με ἀγαλλίασιν καὶ εὐφροσύνην ἀγαλλιάσονται ὅστ᾿α τεταπεινωμένα 51:9 ἀπόστρεψον τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου καὶ πάσας τὰς ἀνομίας μου ἐξάλειψον 51:10 καρδίαν καθαρὰν κτίσον ἐν ἐμοί ὁ θεὸς καὶ πνεῦμα εὐθὲς ἐγκαίνισον ἐν τοῖς ἐγκάτοις μου 51:11 μὴ ἀπορρίψῃς με ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιόν σου μὴ ἀντανέλης ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ 51:12 ἀπόδος μοι τὴν ἀγαλλίασιν τοῦ σωτηρίου σου καὶ πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῷ στήρισόν με 51:13 διδάξω ἀνόμους τὰς ὁδοὺς σου καὶ ἀσεβεῖς ἐπὶ σὲ ἐπιστρέψουσιν 51:14 ῥῦσαί με ἐξ αἱμάτων ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς τῆς σωτηρίας μου ἀγαλλιάσεται ἡ γλῶσσά μου τὴν δικαιοσύνην σου 51:15 κύριε τὰ χεῖλη μου ἀνοίξεις καὶ τὸ στόμα μου ἀναγγελεῖ τὴν αἴνεσίν σου 51:16 ὅτι εἰ ἠθέλησας θυσίαν ἔδωκα ἂν ὀλοκαυτώματα οὐκ εὐδοκήσεις 51:17 θυσία τῷ θεῷ πνεῦμα συντετριμμένον καρδίαν συντετριμμένην καὶ τεταπεινωμένην ὁ θεὸς οὐκ ἐξουθενώσει 51:18 ἀγάθυνον κύριε ἐν τῇ εὐδοκίᾳ σου τὴν Σιών καὶ οἰκοδομηθῆτω τὰ τεῖχη Ἱερουσαλὴμ 51:19 τότε εὐδοκήσεις θυσίαν δικαιοσύνης ἀναφορὰν καὶ ὀλοκαυτώματα τότε ἀνοίσουσιν ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριόν σου μόσχους</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 51 For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. 51:1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. 51:3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. 51:4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge. 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. 51:6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. 51:7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. 51:9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities. 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. 51:13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You. 51:14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; Then my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. 51:15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise. 51:16 For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. 51:18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 51:19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 51 51:1 For praise; a hymn of David. 51:2 When Nathan the prophet came to him when he had lain with Bathsheba. 51:3 Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to your kindness; according to the abundance of your mercies, forgive my rebellion. 51:4 Cleanse me thoroughly from my iniquity, and make me clean from my sin. 51:5 For my rebellions are manifest before me, and my sin is in front of me always. 51:6 Before you, you alone, I have sinned, and that which is evil in your presence I have done; so that you may make me righteous when you speak, you will clear me when you give judgment. 51:7 Behold, in iniquity was I born, and in sin my mother was pregnant with me. Another Targum: Behold, in iniquities my father thought to create me; and in the sin of the evil impulse my mother conceived me. 51:8 Behold, you desire truth in the inner being; and in the hidden place of the heart you will make wisdom known. 51:9 You will sprinkle me like a priest who sprinkles with hyssop waters of purification made from the ashes of the heifer on the unclean, and I will be clean; you will wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. 51:10 You will proclaim to me joy and jubilation; the limbs that you have purified will rejoice with a hymn. 51:11 Remove your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. 51:12 A pure heart create for me, O God; and renew within me a spirit inclined to revere you. 51:13 Do not cast me from your presence; and do not remove from me your holy spirit of prophecy. 51:14 Return your Torah to me, to exult in your redemption; and may the spirit of prophecy support me. 51:15 I will teach the rebellious your ways, and sinners will return to your presence. 51:16 Deliver me from the sentence of death, O Lord, God of my salvation; my tongue will rejoice in your generosity. 51:17 O Lord, open my lips with Torah, and my mouth will recount your praise. 51:18 For you will not desire the holy sacrifice; when I give a burnt offering, you are not pleased. 51:19 The holy sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a heart broken and purged, O God, you will not spurn. 51:20 Show favor in your good will to Zion; you will complete the walls of Jerusalem. 51:21 Then you will desire the sacrifices of righteousness, burnt offering and holocaust; then the priests will sacrifice bulls on your altar. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 51 For the end, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, when he had gone to Bersabee. 51:1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of thy compassions blot out my transgression. 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 51:3 For I am conscious of mine iniquity; and my sin is continually before me. 51:4 Against thee only have I sinned, and done evil before thee: that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. 51:5 For, behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother conceive me. 51:6 For, behold, thou lovest truth: thou hast manifested to me the secret and hidden things of thy wisdom. 51:7 Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be purified: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. 51:8 Thou shalt cause me to hear gladness and joy: the afflicted bones shall rejoice. 51:9 Turn away thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit in my inward parts. 51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and remove not thy holy Spirit from me. 51:12 Restore to me the joy of thy salvation: establish me with thy directing Spirit. 51:13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and ungodly men shall turn to thee. 51:14 Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation: and my tongue shall joyfully declare thy righteousness. 51:15 O Lord, thou shalt open my lips; and my mouth shall declare thy praise. 51:16 For if thou desiredst sacrifice, I would have given it: thou wilt not take pleasure in whole-burnt-offerings. 51:17 Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit: a broken and humbled heart God will not despise. 51:18 Do good, O Lord, to Sion in thy good pleasure; and let the walls of Jerusalem be built. 51:19 Then shalt thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, offering, and whole-burnt-sacrifices: then shall they offer calves upon thine altar. (LXX)</p>
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This week’s study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 51:1-19*, David opens the Psalm saying לְמַנְצֵחַ מְזִמּוֹר אֶל־לְדָוִד אֶל־לְדָוִד *A psalm of David. For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.* The Book of Psalms (תְּהִלִּים, “Tehillim” means “Praises”), is commonly referred to as Psalms or “the Psalms,” and is the first book of the Ketuvim (“Writings”), and is the third section of the Hebrew Bible. The Aramaic Translation titles this as “Toviyah” (טוביה) meaning “Happy, good.” The Septuagint (Greek Translation) titles the Psalm as ψαλμοί “psalmoi,” meaning “instrumental

music” and, by extension this may be read to say, “the words accompanying the music.” There are 150 psalms in the Jewish and Western Christian tradition and many of the psalms are linked to the name of King David according to the Masoretic Text. Modern Bible scholars however do not believe in the authorship of David in the psalms and attribute the psalms to the Ugartic texts and to the people of the land of Canaan. Studying the Apostolic Writings, the writers of the NT did however attribute to David the authorship of the psalms. For example, in *Tehillim / Acts 4:25* the author of acts attributes *Tehillim / Psalm 2* to David. *Hebrews 4:7* states that *Tehillim / Psalm 95* is by David. *1 Chronicles 16:7-36* contains parts of *Tehillim / Psalms 96, 105 and 106*, and these passages we read is stated that the psalms are written by David. In addition to this, *Acts 2:25-28* referencing *Tehillim / Psalm 16* and *Acts 2:34-35* referencing *Tehillim / Psalm 110* are also both written by David. Why modern Bible scholars choose to reject the writings of the Masoretic Text which explicitly states the psalms are written by David is unknown. This illustrates the importance of recognizing commentators are equally susceptible error in their theology, just like anyone else and even myself. Always read commentaries using a critical eye.

ב בְּבוֹא־אֵלָיו נָתַן הַנְּבִיא כְּאֲשֶׁר-בָּא אֶל-בַּת-ג הַיְנָנִי אֱלֹהִים כְּחַסְדְּךָ כָּרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ מְחַה פְּשָׁעַי: *When Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. 51:1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions. (NASB)* Based upon the opening two verses from the Masoretic Text, the psalm is attributed to David and is being linked to the time when Nathan the prophet came to David following his sin (transgression) with Bat-sheva (בַּת-שֶׁבַע, Bathsheba). Now most English speaking people look at the name Bathsheba and think on how she was bathing, the origin of the name “bath,” were David looked upon her and sinned. The construction of the English name “Bath-Sheba” is the result of the transliteration of two Hebrew words into English. The name Bat-Sheva means “daughter seven” where שבע when used as a noun means “seven,” and as an adjective can mean “satisfied, satiated, full,” and as a verb can have the meaning to swear, take an oath (לְהִשָּׁבַע). Bat-Sheva simply means that she was the seventh daughter that was born. Her name could also refer to her Father’s joy of being satisfied and full in the birth of a baby girl, or in the fulfillment of the covenant that he “swore” to God or recognizing the covenant that God has sworn to His people, etc. Without further information on Bat-Sheva’s father it is hard to say, but regardless of this we understand from a Hebraic perspective, the naming convention of the Hebrew boys and girls revolved around one’s life and relationship with God. This is why Israel was called the people of the book.

In *Tehillim / Psalms 51:1 (51:3)* we get the idea that David’s soul is suffering under the weight of his guilt after having lusted for another man’s wife, being intimate with her, impregnating her, and then to cover up his sin, killing Uriah, Bat-Sheva’s husband (Read *2 Samuel 11*). Here in *Tehillim / Psalms 51:1 (51:3)*, the word khesed חֶסֶד is most often translated as “steadfast love” or “lovingkindness” in the English translations. According to the Scriptures, the word khesed (חֶסֶד) draws in the connection to God’s covenant with His people. Brown, Driver, and Briggs lexicon define khesed as “favor, grace, charity, kindness, benevolence, graciousness, mercy, prayerful, benignity.” Another way to think about khesed (חֶסֶד), within the context of the covenant, is that this is God’s “Covenant Love” which He has for His people. It is by this covenant love (and grace) the Lord decided to enter into even after the people’s sin of idolatry in Parashat Ki Tisa. What is indicated in the word khesed חֶסֶד is God’s faithfulness in His Covenant with His people according to the promises He made to Abraham in Parashat Lech Lecha (*Bereshit / Genesis 12-17*). According to Parashat Lech Lecha, the Lord promised Abraham that His covenant will be an everlasting covenant for Abraham’s offspring (descendent’s, seed, etc). Therefore, it was because of the Lord’s covenant with Abraham that He extended His grace (חֶסֶד) to the people at Sinai and made them His people. Similarly, it is by His grace (חֶסֶד) that the people of Nineveh (a gentile population) were forgiven, when they showed repentance the Lord turned from His wrath. It is with this Torah perspective that David is seeking the Lord to turn from His wrath due to his sin with Bat-Sheva. As we study the Scriptures, we learn that throughout Israel’s history the Lord extended his grace (חֶסֶד) because of the covenant that He entered into at Sinai. The

emphasis on the character of God in *Shemot / Exodus 34 verses 6-7* reveal God's mercy and grace (חֶסֶד khesed) towards His chosen people. As a result of these things, the Lord proceeds to give the Torah to the people and establish His covenant with them exactly as He had promised 400 years prior to Abraham.

The Aramaic Targum states, ב כד אתא לותיה נתן נבייא כד שמיש עם בת א לשבחה תושבחתא לדוד: ג חוס עלי יהוה אלהא היך טיבותך היך סגיעות רחמיך שבוק מרודי: *51:1 For praise; a hymn of David. 51:2 When Nathan the prophet came to him when he had lain with Bathsheba. 51:3 Have mercy on me, O Lord, according to your kindness; according to the abundance of your mercies, forgive my rebellion. (EMC)* The Septuagint translation states, 51:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυιδ ἐν τῷ ἐλθεῖν πρὸς αὐτὸν Ναθαν τὸν προφήτην ἠνίκα εἰσῆλθεν πρὸς Βηρσαβεε ἐλέησόν με ὁ θεὸς κατὰ τὸ μέγα ἔλεός σου καὶ κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν σου ἐξάλειψον τὸ ἀνόμημά μου *For the end, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, when he had gone to Bersabee. 51:1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of thy compassions blot out my transgression. (LXX)* The rabbis translate David's words with a similar understanding from a Torah perspective, the Lord is merciful, He is forgiving, and He will show kindness to David though there are consequences for his sinful actions. The Septuagint agrees with the MT and the Targum, the Lord will show great mercy (μέγα ἔλεός σου) because of the multitude of his compassions He will blot out David's transgressions. From a Torah perspective, the Lord is abounding in mercy and compassion. What a wonderful God we serve who is so merciful to us.

David continues by asking the Lord to cleanse him from his sins and he describes his sins in a variety of ways. What can we learn by the way he describes his sins in *Tehillim / Psalms 51*?

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 51:2-4

51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin. 51:3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me. 51:4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

ד הָרְבָה [הָרַב] כַּכִּסִּי מַעֲוֵנִי וּמַחֲטָאֵתִי טְהַרְנִי: ה כִּי-פָשַׁעִי אָנִי אֲדַע וְחַטָּאתִי נִגְדִי תָמִיד: ו לְךָ לְבַדְּךָ | חַטָּאתִי וְהָרַע בְּעֵינֶיךָ עָשִׂיתִי לְמַעַן-תִּצְדַּק בְּדַבְרֶךָ תִּזְכֶּה בְּשִׁפְטֶךָ:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 51:4-6

51:4 Cleanse me thoroughly from my iniquity, and make me clean from my sin. 51:5 For my rebellions are manifest before me, and my sin is in front of me always. 51:6 Before you, you alone, I have sinned, and that which is evil in your presence I have done; so that you may make me righteous when you speak, you will clear me when you give judgment.

ד סוגעא תחורניני מן עוייתי ומן חובי תדכי יתי: ה ארום מרודי אנא קדמי גליין וחובי לקיבלי תדירא: ו קדמך בלחודך לבלחודך חבית ודביש קדמך עבדית מן בגלל דתזכי יתי במללותך תברור יתי כד תדין תידון:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 51:2-4

51:2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 51:3 For I am conscious of mine iniquity; and my sin is continually before me. 51:4 Against thee only have I

sinned, and done evil before thee: that thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

51:2 ἐπὶ πλεῖον πλῦνόν με ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομίας μου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας μου καθάρισόν με
51:3 ὅτι τὴν ἀνομίαν μου ἐγὼ γινώσκω καὶ ἡ ἁμαρτία μου ἐνώπιόν μου ἐστὶν διὰ παντός 51:4
σοὶ μόνῳ ἤμαρτον καὶ τὸ πονηρὸν ἐνώπιόν σου ἐποίησα ὅπως ἂν δικαιωθῆς ἐν τοῖς λόγοις
σου καὶ νικήσῃς ἐν τῷ κρίνεσθαί σε

In *Tehillim / Psalms 51:1-4*, David uses three words to describe his sin before God. He uses the word פְּשָׁעַי meaning “*crime, sin, offense, felony, transgression,*” מַעֲוֹנֵי from the root עוון meaning “*sin, crime, offence, evil,*” and the word וּמַחֲטָאתַי from the root חטא meaning “*sin, fault, offence, sinfulness, ungodliness, crime.*” Similarly, in David’s confession of his sin, he also uses three words asking for forgiveness, כַּבְּסֵנִי from the root word כסא meaning “*grace, mercy,*” רַחֲמֵיךָ from the root word רחם meaning “*to have mercy, compassion,*” כַּבְּסֵנִי from the root word כבס meaning “*to wash.*” Notice how the rabbis describe David’s words in the Septuagint, they say ἐπὶ πλεῖον πλῦνόν με ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομίας μου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας μου καθάρισόν με “*Abundantly wash me from my lawlessness and from my sin cleanse me.*” Here the rabbis translate David’s words: טְהַרְנֵי: [הָרְבָה] כַּבְּסֵנִי מַעֲוֹנֵי וּמַחֲטָאתַי טְהַרְנֵי: “51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin,” “*my sin*” (וּמַחֲטָאתַי) as “*anomias*” (ἀνομίας μου) in Greek meaning “*lawlessness,*” which describes an utter disregard for God’s Torah (His written and living Word). In the Hebrew text David asks that the Lord would cleanse him saying “tehareni” (טְהַרְנֵי) which is describing cleansing in the sense of ritual purity. The Septuagint translates into Greek “*katharison me*” (καθάρισόν με), this word is used as a reference to “*cleansing*” with regard to ritual purity, but is translated here as “*wash*” in English. This word “*katharison*” (καθάρισόν με) is used 32 times in the Apostolic Writings (NT). These statistics along with their occurrences are available at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/search>. The point is within the Apostolic Writings we find many references to ritual cleansing where the English translation translates simply as washing by water. Something is lost by not engaging in the original languages. From a Torah perspective, we know this is a reference to the Mikvah and to the other methods of becoming ritually pure which enables one to then be a part of the community of believers, to worship and to serve God in His Temple in Jerusalem. The cleansing of Yeshua, His blood, His Word, and His Spirit that dwells within each of us, these things are all drawn out from a Torah perspective. This is the context in which Yeshua the Messiah enables us to commune with God, He hears our prayers because Yeshua has made us holy and righteous. And because He has made us holy and righteous, we are to live holy and righteous lives and we do so according to the Torah. The Aramaic Targum translates David’s words as: 51:4 Cleanse me thoroughly from my iniquity, and make me clean from my sin. (EMC) The rabbis translate using the same word for sin “*oveyti*” (עווייתי) and call this sin “*khovi*” (חובי) “*debt, obligation, guilt.*” Here again David is asking to be cleansed (תדכי) to be purified “*to cleanse, to purify ritually,*” for the Lord to purge his sin from him. He is asking to be purged of his anomias (lawlessness). Have you ever asked the Lord to purge you of your anomias (lawlessness)? Are you willing to admit that you have a little anomias and are guilty and need Yeshua the Messiah to be justified before our Father in heaven? Admitting sin and repentance (turning from sin) are the first steps towards receiving forgiveness.

On the topic of sin, the Torah lists for us those sins that separate us from God. *Mishley / Proverbs 21:2-3* tells us הַנָּהָר יִשָּׁר בְּעֵינָיו וְהַתְּכַן לִבּוֹת? הַנָּהָר 21:2 Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts. (NASB) *Mishley / Proverbs 21:3* explains to us that the Lord God weighs our hearts saying “*To do righteousness and justice is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice.*” Concerning sin in our lives, God sees our hearts and knows everything about us, nothing is hidden from Him. David realizes this while writing his Psalm in *Tehillim / Psalms 51*.

Mishley / Proverbs 21:1-5

21:1 *The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes. 21:2 Every man's way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts. 21:3 To do righteousness and justice Is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice. 21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart, The lamp of the wicked, is sin. 21:5 The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, But everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty. (NASB)*

א פלגים-מים לב-מלך ביד-יהוה על-כל-אשר יחפץ יטנו: ב כל-דָּרָךְ אִישׁ יִשָּׁר בְּעֵינָיו וְתָכֵן לְבוֹת
יהוה: ג עשה צדקה ומשפט נבחר ליהוה מזבח: ד רום עינים ורחב-לב נר לשעים חטאת: ה
מחשבות חרוץ אף-למוֹתֵר וְכָל-אֶץ אֶף-לְמַחְסוֹר:

Based upon David's use of these three words to describe his sin, פִּשְׁעֵי appears to be a reference to his external guilt in sin, whereas מְעוֹנֵי and וּמַחְטָאֵתִי are referring to the internal spiritual guilt. David recognized that in his heart he did not exercise justice (מִשְׁפָּט) and righteousness (צְדָקָה) before God and before others. He committed murder. The greatness of this external and internal uncleanness excluded David from worshipping in God's presence. Only a complete eradication of his sin will restore him into fellowship with God and to be able to stand in His presence. As a result, David seeks the internal cleansing that is accomplished only by the grace and mercy of God as understood according to the psalm on the use of the words כַּחֲסֻדָּךְ and רַחֲמֶיךָ and then to be cleansed externally by the purifying waters indicated by the phrase "to wash" (פָּכַסְנִי) me from my sins. This is emphasized in David's statement in *Tehillim / Psalms 51:4* in the Hebrew Bible, (verse 51:2 in the English Bible) הִרְבָּה [הֶרַב] כְּפִסְנִי מְעוֹנֵי וּמַחְטָאֵתִי טְהַרְנִי by the word טְהַרְנִי meaning "cleanse me" in the sense of ritual purity. David realizes that sinning with Bat-Sheva and against Uriah is synonymous with sinning against God. He then confirms the Lord's righteous judgment against sin and God's desire for righteousness in His people (לֵךְ לְבַדְּךָ | חֲטָאֵתִי וְהִרַע בְּעֵינַיִךָ עֲשִׂיתִי לְמַעַן-תִּצְדַּק בְּדַבְרֶךָ תִּזְכָּה) according to *Tehilim / Psalms 51:6*.

David continues saying: הֵן-בְּעוֹן חוֹלַלְתִּי וּבְחַטָּא יִחַמְתַּנִּי אִמִּי: 51:5 *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states ז הא בעוייא איתילידיית 51:7 *Behold, in iniquity was I born, and in sin my mother was pregnant with me. Another Targum: Behold, in iniquities my father thought to create me; and in the sin of the evil impulse my mother conceived me. (EMC)* Here David says that he was conceived in sin. What does it mean to be conceived in sin and why would he need to recognize this about his conception? The point David may be making is to illustrate how mankind or human nature is conceived, (1) people are born with a propensity to sin; and (2) being born with the propensity to sin does not excuse us in sin, but rather tends to aggravate and deepen our guilt. The Septuagint translates this verse to say, ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἐν ἀνομίαις συνελήμφθην καὶ ἐν ἀμαρτίαις ἐκίσσησέν με ἡ μήτηρ μου 51:5 "For behold in lawless deeds I was conceived in sins craved strange food for me my mother." Note here again we find the word anomias (lawlessness) in parallel to being conceived. Is he saying conception is a form of lawlessness? Procreation, conception was the first command given by God when He said "be fruitful and multiply." What are these strange foods? The strange foods appears to be something other than the nutrition of a mothers milk. So the rabbinic understanding of David's words (the Targum) are that as a child he craved something that was not nourishing, this may be paralleled to causing a form of improper development due to malnutrition. Because he does not develop correctly, physically, his body does not function properly and this may affect the way he walks. The concepts that are generated here in the idea that he craved strange foods brings us back to a Torah perspective, with regard to sin, walking in a strange way, craving sinful things, the parents lusting for one another during sex, etc. According to king Solomon's words in his proverbs, wisdom is described as mixing drink and preparing food. Food has the ability to nourish the body, and the parallel that is given here is that wisdom nourishes the soul and makes us strong spiritually. Likewise,

the Torah nourishes the soul and makes us strong spiritually. The food of the Torah is the Word of God being integrated into our lives and becoming a way of life, living, and walking according to God's ways. This is what Yeshua meant when he spoke about keeping His word in our hearts (*John 14:23*) saying, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." (*NASB*) The Lord makes known his wisdom in His Word (the Bible, Scripture), and the power of the Holy Spirit is to write that Word upon our hearts.

David continues saying, תַּחֲטְאֵנִי בְּאֵזוֹב וְאַטְהַר תְּכַבְּסֵנִי וּמְשַׁלֵּג אֶלְבִּין: י תִּשְׁמִיעֵנִי שְׁשׁוֹן וְשִׁמְחָה תִּגְלָנָה, עֲצָמוֹת דְּפִיתָ: יא הִסְתַּר פְּנֵיהֶּ מִחֲטָאֵי וְכָל-עֲוֹנֹתַי מָחָה: יב לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא-לִי אֱלֹהִים וְרוּחַ נְכוֹן חִדַּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי: יג *Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. 51:9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities. 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit. (NASB)* There are a lot of important concepts that David is making here in his psalm. In each verse we can see how David is emphasizing something the Lord is involved in doing. David expresses the importance of being cleansed in *51:9* saying תַּחֲטְאֵנִי בְּאֵזוֹב וְאַטְהַר תְּכַבְּסֵנִי וּמְשַׁלֵּג אֶלְבִּין "Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (*NASB*) He asks that Hyssop (בְּאֵזוֹב) be used in the cleansing process. What is the significance of the request for cleansing by hyssop? According to the Torah, hyssop is an aromatic herb from the mint family that was used to sprinkle the blood on the door posts at Pesach (Passover) according to *Shemot / Exodus 12:22*, therefore hyssop draws in the Torah perspective of Pesach and blood protection from the angel of death. We also read about hyssop in *Vayikra / Leviticus 14:4-6, 14:49-52* and its use for sprinkling the waters of purification upon one who is unclean. The person who is unclean then becomes clean following a seven day waiting period after the sprinkling ritual. The use of the word Hyssop draws in the Torah concepts of uncleanness, both spiritually and physically, protection from death, and protection by innocent blood. (*Note: Yeshua laid down his life on Pesach, so that we who believe in Him (Yeshua) would not perish but have everlasting life.*) David is applying the concept of cleansing to the internal cleansing from sin in the phrase תַּחֲטְאֵנִי בְּאֵזוֹב וְאַטְהַר which translates literally as "my sins in hyssop and I will be clean." Remember earlier we discussed the different words used to describe the different aspects of sin in David's life. He is asking the Lord to cleans him both inwardly and outwardly. David desires not only that his sins be forgiven him but that his heart would be made pure in *Tehillim / Psalms 51:12-13*, יב לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא-לִי "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." (*NASB*) (English bible *51:10-11*). David asks the Lord to create (בְּרָא) in him a "lev tahor" (לֵב טָהוֹר), "a ritually clean/pure heart," and to restore to him the joy of God's salvation and to sustain a willing spirit within (וְרוּחַ נְכוֹן חִדַּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי: יג אֶל-תִּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיהָ וְרוּחַ קְדֹשְׁךָ אֶל-תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי: "Return to me") which provides for us the idea of "returning" to David, this word provides us with a repentant attitude, the turning from sin, returning to the Way of the Lord, etc. Isn't it interesting how all of these requests suggest that the Lord is the one who is doing these things on David's behalf, even helping him to have a sustained spirit within (וְרוּחַ נְכוֹן חִדַּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי) or to "uphold" his spirit within which may indicate the Lord's role in keeping David's spirit willing to be obedient and not sin. This should be our prayer today that the Lord would help us to live obedient lives.

The Aramaic Targum states, ט תדי עלי היך כהנא דמדי באזובא על מסאבא מוי אדיותא מן קטם תורתא, ואדכי תסחינני תחורניני ומן תלגא אתחור: י תבשרינני תשמעניני חדווא ואודיצותא תבוען תושבחתא איבריא גרמא דשיפיתא: יא סליק אפיך מן חוביי וכל וכולהון עויתי מחי: יב לב בריר ברי לי אלהא ורוח מכון בדחלתך חדית בגווי בגושמי: יג לא תטלוק יתי מן קדמך ורוח נבואת קודשך לא תסלק מיני: יד אתיב לי לותי אוריתך *51:9 You will sprinkle me like a priest who sprinkles with*

hyssop waters of purification made from the ashes of the heifer on the unclean, and I will be clean; you will wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. 51:10 You will proclaim to me joy and jubilation; the limbs that you have purified will rejoice with a hymn. 51:11 Remove your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. 51:12 A pure heart create for me, O God; and renew within me a spirit inclined to revere you. 51:13 Do not cast me from your presence; and do not remove from me your holy spirit of prophecy. 51:14 Return your Torah to me, to exult in your redemption; and may the spirit of prophecy support me. (EMC) Here the Targum translation states explicitly that David is referring to the waters of purification from the ashes of the red heifer. Notice how the cleansing process brings great joy, and by cleansing the Lord removes and blots out David's iniquity. The rabbis translate David's words to have him requesting the Lord not to remove the spirit of prophecy and to return God's Torah (instruction) to him. He also asks that God's Spirit of prophecy would support him or lift him up. Is it surprising to see how David and the rabbis understand God's work in our lives and how consistent this is with our understanding today?

The Septuagint translation says the following:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 51

51:7 Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be purified: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. 51:8 Thou shalt cause me to hear gladness and joy: the afflicted bones shall rejoice. 51:9 Turn away thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit in my inward parts. 51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and remove not thy holy Spirit from me. 51:12 Restore to me the joy of thy salvation: establish me with thy directing Spirit. (LXX)

51:7 ῥαντιεῖς με ὑσσώπῳ καὶ καθαρισθήσομαι πλυνεῖς με καὶ ὑπὲρ χιόνα λευκανθήσομαι
51:8 ἀκουτιεῖς με ἀγαλλίασιν καὶ εὐφροσύνην ἀγαλλιάσονται ὅσα τεταπεινωμένα 51:9 ἀπόστρεψον τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν μου καὶ πάσας τὰς ἀνομίας μου ἐξάλειψον
51:10 καρδίαν καθαρὰν κτίσον ἐν ἐμοί ὁ θεὸς καὶ πνεῦμα εὐθὲς ἐγκαίνισον ἐν τοῖς ἐγκάτοις μου
51:11 μὴ ἀπορρίψῃς με ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιόν σου μὴ ἀντανέλης ἀπ' ἐμοῦ
51:12 ἀπόδος μοι τὴν ἀγαλλίασιν τοῦ σωτηρίου σου καὶ πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῷ στήρισόν με

The rabbis translate David's words into Greek to say that he is requesting the Lord to establish him with God's directing Spirit. In all of these things we are being shown how the Lord is involved in the cleansing, guiding, sustaining, and saving process. In addition to this, in the ritual of the sprinkling of the waters of purification is a direct connection to the cleansing of the leper according to *Vayikra / Leviticus 14*. This reminds us of Yeshua healing lepers according to *Matthew 8:2-3, Mark 1:40-42, and Luke 17:11-19*. In *Luke 17:11-19*, Yeshua was on his way to Jerusalem (Ἱερουσαλήμ) and passing between Samaria (Σαμαρείας) and Galilee (Γαλιλαίας) he met 10 lepers. The Lepers raised their voices saying ¹³καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤραν φωνὴν λέγοντες, Ἰησοῦ ἐπιστάτα, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς *17:13* ... "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" Yeshua told the lepers to go and show themselves to the Cohanim (Priests) and as they went they were healed, cleansed of the disease as they made their way to show themselves to the Cohen.

Luke 17:11-19

¹¹Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ καὶ αὐτὸς διήρχετο διὰ μέσον Σαμαρείας καὶ Γαλιλαίας. ¹²καὶ εἰσερχομένου αὐτοῦ εἰς τινα κώμην ἀπήντησαν [αὐτῷ] δέκα λεπροὶ ἄνδρες, οἱ ἔστησαν πόρρωθεν, ¹³καὶ αὐτοὶ ἤραν φωνὴν λέγοντες, Ἰησοῦ ἐπιστάτα, ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. ¹⁴καὶ ἰδὼν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Πορευθέντες ἐπιδείξατε ἑαυτοὺς τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν. καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ὑπάγειν αὐτοὺς ἐκαθαρίσθησαν. ¹⁵εἷς δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἰδὼν ὅτι ἰάθη, ὑπέστρεψεν μετὰ φωνῆς μεγάλης δοξάζων τὸν θεόν, ¹⁶καὶ ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον παρὰ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ εὐχαριστῶν

αὐτῶ: καὶ αὐτὸς ἦν Σαμαρίτης. ¹⁷ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Οὐχὶ οἱ δέκα ἐκαθαρίσθησαν; οἱ δὲ ἐννέα ποῦ; ¹⁸οὐχ εὐρέθησαν ὑποστρέψαντες δοῦναι δόξαν τῷ θεῷ εἰ μὴ ὁ ἀλλογενὴς οὗτος; ¹⁹καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῶ, Ἀναστάς πορεύου: ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε.

The Scripture translates literally to say, “Continuing on the journey, to show themselves to a Cohen (ἱερεῦσιν) it came into existence (ἐγένετο) their cleansing.” (Πορευθέντες ἐπιδείξατε ἑαυτοὺς τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν. καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ὑπάγειν αὐτοὺς ἐκαθαρίσθησαν.) The Greek stem καθαρίζω for the word ἐκαθαρίσθησαν is a verb meaning “to make clean, cleanse, to cleanse a leper by curing, to free from defilement of sin and from faults, to purify from wickedness, to free from the guilt of sin, to consecrate or pronounce clean in a Levitical sense.” As these 10 Lepers acted upon their faith, the Lord God healed them of their disease of Tzaraat. Based upon the text it appears the men (i) believed Yeshua was able to heal them and (ii) they needed to act upon their faith even though the Tzaraat remained upon their bodies physically. The work of believing and then physically doing what the Lord instructs us to do are connected. In other words, we are shown how important it is to step out in faith first trusting in the Lord and then ordering out steps based upon the faith that we have. By performing the act of going to the Cohen to show their bodies they were healed. Did their healing come by their own hands or by their works, or by the power of God? They moved by faith to show their bodies to the priests and offer the sacrifices required according to the Torah, even though there remained the sign of Tzaraat. By their faith they glorified the name of the Lord and were obedient to His word and God healed them. Studying the Ketuvei Shelachim, healing was always done so to glorify the Lord God Almighty.

The ritual cleansing process then required the rigorous procedure of inspection and blood atonement as described in the Torah. According to the Scriptures in *Vayikra / Leviticus 14:2-3* ב זאת תהיה תורת המצוה זאת תהיה תורת המצוה ביום טהרתו והובא אל הכהן: ג ויצא הכהן אל מחוץ למחנה אל-מחוץ למחנה וראה הכהן והנה נרפא נגע-הצרעת מן-הצרוע: ד וצוה הכהן ולקח למטהר שתי-צפרים חיות טהרות ועץ ארז ושני תולעת ואזב: *14:2 ‘This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing. Now he shall be brought to the priest, 14:3 and the priest shall go out to the outside of the camp. Thus the priest shall look, and if the infection of leprosy has been healed in the leper (NASB).* The person with Tzaraat is to meet the Cohen (Priest) half way. Yeshua sent the lepers to show their bodies to the Cohen because the first step of acting in faith is crucial for a believer. As it says in *Hosea 14:2*, קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אלי-יהוה אמרו אליו כל-תשא עון וקח-טוב ונשלמה פרים שפתינו: *14:2 Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to Him, ‘Take away all iniquity And receive us graciously, That we may present the fruit of our lips. (NASB)* It is only when we sincerely return to the Lord and act upon our faith that He will take care of our problem of impurity, uncleanness, and sin. According to the Scriptures only the Cohen could diagnose Tzaraat. The reason being, Tzaraat was a spiritual malady that required spiritual discernment to both diagnose and treat. When someone was found to have Tzaraat, they were forced to leave society and undergo a period of mourning and Teshuvah (repentance). Before the leper is reintegrated into the community of believers, he must undergo inspection by the high priest, kept aside for seven days and then reexamined, and then the person is cleansed and purified through the ashes of the Red Heifer. The details are listed in *Vayikra / Leviticus chapter 14*. Let’s examine some of the details for the cleansing of the person stricken with Tzaraat who was healed of the Lord in *Vayikra / Leviticus chapter 14*.

The Hebrew Scriptures say, *Vayikra / Leviticus 14:2 ‘This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing. Now he shall be brought to the priest, 14:3 and the priest shall go out to the outside of the camp. Thus the priest shall look, and if the infection of leprosy has been healed in the leper; 14:4 then the priest shall give orders to take two live clean birds and cedar wood and a scarlet string and hyssop for the one who is to be cleansed. 14:5 ‘The priest shall also give orders to slay the one bird in an earthenware vessel over running water. (NASB)* According to these scriptures, as we mentioned earlier, the Cohen (Priest) meets the person half way outside of the camp (מחוץ למחנה). Since the person with Tzaraat was not allowed inside of the city, they needed help to bring word to the Cohen to come out. Might the Cohen have been outside of the city (מחוץ למחנה) looking for those who were in need of being healed of the Lord? The Messiah is

looking for those who are lost. Our Father in Heaven is searching for the person who is lost. Could there be a connection to the parable of the Prodigal Son as Yeshua described in *Luke 15:11-32*? Could one of the functions of the Cohen be to go outside the city to search and look for those who are healed of the Lord? Studying this portion of scripture, it is interesting that the Cohen gives the order to slay one of the birds over Mayim Khayim (מַיִם חַיִּים) “*Living Waters*.” In Parashat Khukat (*Bamidbar / Numbers 19:1-22:1*) the Lord speaks to Moshe about the “*red heifer*” אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ | אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּקְחוּ בְּזֵאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה יְהוָה לְאמֹר דְּבַר 19:2 *This is the statute of the law which the Lord has commanded, saying, ‘Speak to the sons of Israel that they bring you an unblemished red heifer in which is no defect and on which a yoke has never been placed. (NASB)* Eleazar the Priest will take the heifer outside of the camp, slaughter the animal, and sprinkle the blood towards the front of the Ohel Moed (אֹהֶל-מוֹעֵד, *Tent of Meeting*) seven times. The entire heifer is burned to ashes, its hide, flesh, blood, and refuse, everything (19:5). Cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet material are also cast into the midst of the burning heifer. The Cohen then washes himself and his cloths; he is unclean until evening and may then enter the camp. A clean man then is to gather up the ashes of the heifer. The ashes of the heifer with water are used for removal of impurity; it is for the purification from uncleanness (19:8-9). The mitzvot on touching the dead is given; if a man touches the dead he will become unclean. If he finds himself in the room with a dead person, he is unclean; if a man touches a dead man who was slain in the field he is unclean. In fact, if a person who has become unclean by a dead body touches anyone, the person he touches becomes unclean too (19:22). These Scriptures show how uncleanness behaves as a transmittable defilement. It is interesting here that the only thing that can overcome becoming unclean by death is death itself, the ashes of the red heifer. Does the purification by ashes of the red heifer provide for us a future messianic expectation of the work of the Messiah? Upon coming in contact with or being in the presence of a dead person it is required to be cleansed using the waters of impurity. If a person was not sprinkled with the waters of impurity he would remain unclean and his uncleanness would remain on him (19:13).

In the Psalm, within the hyssop, sprinkling of the waters of purification, and David’s words, we see how faith is working together here in the sense that we do not understand how death can make one clean since the Torah declares that death has the power to make one both unclean and clean before God. It may be that we are given a picture of how death atones, and the person must wait seven days for cleansing, and he will be allowed to again have a part in the Temple ritual. Faith comes with obedience to God, that obedience the fruit of our faith, walking, living, and bringing glory to God by the love, grace, mercy, justice, and righteousness we have towards one another.

Tehillim / Psalms 51:10 states, “*create in me a clean heart in the sense of ritual purity, and a right/correct new spirit inside of me.*” These Torah concepts helps to lead us to true heartfelt repentance before God with the longing to returning to God’s ways, away from wickedness and into fellowship with the Lord with an awareness of our need to be forgiven. David recognized that in sin, his relationship with God was estranged and asks the Lord to not cast him away from His presence and do not take away His Holy Spirit (אֶל-תִּשְׁלִיכֵנִי מִלְּפָנֶיךָ וְרוּחַ קִדְשֶׁךָ אַל-תִּקַּח מִמֶּנִּי). According to *Tehillim / Psalms 51:12-13*, sin causes separation from the Lord which is another way to say that as we sin we are acting in opposition to the leading of God’s Spirit. In the final verses David recognizes that the Lord is looking for repentance, justice (מִשְׁפָּט) and righteousness (צְדָקָה) over sacrifice in his statements in *Tehillim / Psalms 51:18-19* (English Bible 51:16-17) יח | כִּי לֹא-תִחַפֵּץ זֶבַח וְאַתְנֶנָּה עוֹלָה לֹא תִרְצֶה: יט זִבְחֵי אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ נְשֻׁבָּה לֵב-נִשְׁבָּר וְנִדְבָה אֱלֹהִים meaning “*For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering.*” The sacrifices the Lord God is looking for is a broken spirit, and a broken and a contrite heart. It is interesting to note that in *Tehillim / Psalms 51:15* David says, אֶלְמִדָּה פִשְׁעִים דְּרָכֶיךָ וְחַטָּאִים טו אֲלֶיךָ יָשׁוּבוּ: “*Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted/turn to You*” just before verse 51:18-19 saying that the Lord does not delight in sacrifices but in a broken spirit. The Psalm is verifying God’s way that our relationship with the Lord begins with getting our heart being right. The heart is made right by the confession of our sins, turning from our sins, and then faith in the absolution from

our sins according to the Torah (faith in the sacrifice). Note what Yeshua said in *Matthew 5:23-26* ²³ἐὰν οὖν προσφέρῃς τὸ δῶρόν σου ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον κάκει μνησθῆς ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου ἔχει τι κατὰ σοῦ, ²⁴ἄφες ἐκεῖ τὸ δῶρόν σου ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, καὶ ὑπάγε πρῶτον διαλλάγηθι τῷ ἀδελφῷ σου, καὶ τότε ἔλθων πρόσφερε τὸ δῶρόν σου. ²⁵ἴσθι εὐνοῶν τῷ ἀντιδίκῳ σου ταχὺ ἕως ὅτου εἶ μετ’ αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, μήποτε σε παραδῶ ὁ ἀντιδικὸς τῷ κριτῆι, καὶ ὁ κριτὴς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ, καὶ εἰς φυλακὴν βληθήσῃ. ²⁶ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃς ἐκεῖθεν ἕως ἂν ἀποδῷς τὸν ἔσχατον κοδράντην. “*Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. “Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. “Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent.”* (NASB) Yeshua’s words indicate that if we bear iniquity in our hearts (having something against your brother) that we must make right with our brother first which leads to justice (מִשְׁפָּט) and righteousness (קְדוּשָׁה) before God. Only then would atonement be accepted at the altar.

The Aramaic Targum states the following:

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 51:14-21

51:14 Return your Torah to me, to exult in your redemption; and may the spirit of prophecy support me. 51:15 I will teach the rebellious your ways, and sinners will return to your presence. 51:16 Deliver me from the sentence of death, O Lord, God of my salvation; my tongue will rejoice in your generosity. 51:17 O Lord, open my lips with Torah, and my mouth will recount your praise. 51:18 For you will not desire the holy sacrifice; when I give a burnt offering, you are not pleased. 51:19 The holy sacrifice of God is a broken spirit; a heart broken and purged, O God, you will not spurn. 51:20 Show favor in your good will to Zion; you will complete the walls of Jerusalem. 51:21 Then you will desire the sacrifices of righteousness, burnt offering and holocaust; then the priests will sacrifice bulls on your altar. (EMC)

יד אתיב לי לותי אוריתך למידוך בפורקנך ורוח נבואה נדבותא תסמכניני: טו אאליף למרודיא אורחתך וחיביא קדמך יתובון: טז פצי יתי מדין קטול יהוה אלהי פורקני תיבוע לישני צדקתך: יז יהוה סיפוותי פתח באוריתא ופומי יתני תושבחתך: יח ארום לא תצבי נכסת קודשא ואתן עלתא לא תתרעי: יט נכסת וקודשא דאלהא נפשא מיתברא לב תביר ושפי אלהא לא תבסור: כ אוטיב בכך תצבי דיבחין דצדקתא "נכסת קודשין דזכוותא ברעותך ית ציון תשכלל שורי ירושלם: כא עלתא וגמיר דמתסקא הבכך יסקון כהניא על מדבחך תורין:

The rabbis have David asking the Lord to return His Torah to him for the purpose of exulting in His redemption and that the spirit of prophecy would sustain him. The idea behind this request is being taught the way of God causes a sinner to be converted. What is the meaning of conversion in this sense? (טו אַלְמָדָה פְּשָׁעִים) *51:13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners will be converted to You. NASB*) Note that conversion is the English rendition of the word “*Yashuvu*” (יָשׁוּבוּ) meaning to return to the Lord. This is David’s way of saying one returns to God’s His ways, to the ways of the Torah which is rooted in love, grace, mercy, justice, and righteousness that we have towards one another. David is speaking of ordering one’s life according to the Torah. Have you ever ordered your life according to the Torah? Do you have a standard for living before God? David asks the Lord to open his lips so that he can declare his praises (51:15). This is interesting because it illustrates that the Lord is involved in placing in our hearts a reason to praise His name. When we praise the name of the Lord, He is involved in causing us to do so. The Aramaic Targum has David asking the Lord to open his lips with the Torah so that His mouth can give Him praise. The reason being is that contained within the Torah is the expectation of what the Lord is going to do in our lives because of what He has done in the past. This means that Scripture gives us reason to believe

and reason to praise God's name even before He has done anything on our behalf.

Following the request to help him give praise to the Lord, David states, יז אֲדַנְי שְׁפָתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד :תהלתך: 51:16 *For You do not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; You are not pleased with burnt offering. (NASB)* Here he says the Lord does not desire sacrifice. The point is that the sacrifice is brought by reason of obedience to God's word and by faith. This is not a work that was required for a man to earn his own salvation. This is the context of David's conclusion that the Lord desires a broken spirit and a broken heart, a clean heart. Only such a heart will result in obedience to the Lord and His word. The role of the sacrifice in the day and the life of Israel and the Tabernacle was for the purpose of obedience to God's word and to seek the Lord for forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness is a matter of the Lord canceling a debt by reason of His mercy and grace. The Torah command to bring a sacrifice illustrates how we are ordering our lives to be obedient to God's word, we are seeking Him for Salvation because ultimately forgiveness is in his hands. All of these things provide for us an expectation that the Lord is the One who is involved in bringing Salvation and forgiveness. David is not saying that the sacrifice is not efficacious for sins. It is the sacrifice that the Lord brings that is efficacious. The Torah is describing what the Lord had planned to do and later did do in Yeshua His Messiah.

David concludes saying כ הִיטִיבָה בְּרִצוֹנָה אֶת-צִיּוֹן תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם: כא אַז תִּחַפֵּץ זִבְחֵי-צֶדֶק עוֹלָה וְכֹחַ :פְּרִים: 51:18 *By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 51:19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar. (NASB)* Here David says the Lord will delight in the sacrifices, in burnt offerings, and in whole burnt offerings. The Aramaic Targum states 51:21 *Then you will desire the sacrifices of righteousness...* The Sacrifice of righteousness is seeking the Lord, trusting in Him and His Messiah with a pure heart and with the right intentions, to draw near to the Lord. The thing that causes the Lord to be delighted in is the one who desires to live righteously because the Lord has made him righteous in the Messiah. Obedience to the Torah is something that flows out of a heart that longs for and loves the Lord God our Father in heaven and His Messiah Yeshua. The Torah is not a list of rules that are horrible and a burden that none can bear. Too often are we taught that sort of nonsense. When we examine the facts a little closer, studying the Torah we learn that the Lord God is instructing us to love one another, to have compassion, to live with justice and righteousness, and to serve God with a joyful heart. These are the sacrifices of righteousness that the Lord is looking for in our lives. This is what Yeshua meant when he spoke about keeping His word in our hearts (*John 14:23*) saying, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him." (*NASB*) The Lord makes known His love and His wisdom in His Word (the Bible, Scripture), and Yeshua sends the Holy Spirit to empower us by writing His Word upon our hearts, His eternal Torah (*Isaiah 40:8*). Halleluia! Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

Great are You and Greatly are You to be praised! We thank You for helping us to understand the meaning and the purpose of Your Torah for our lives in this present age. We praise Your name because You have told us how we can bring glory to Your name in our lives daily in the sacrifice of righteousness that You desire. Help us to live spirit filled lives so that we can bring glory of Your name! We want to glorify You and give You Praise by the way we live because You always keep Your promises and have always drawing us back to You! Lord deliver us from sin in our lives and increase our faith. You have demonstrated the greatness of Your love for us in Your Son Yeshua the Messiah. Thank You Lord for sending Your son Yeshua that we may enter into the covenant of peace that You have promised to Your people. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua's (Jesus') Name we pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

Notes