

Psalm 51

The Miserere: Prayer of Repentance

1 For the leader. A psalm of David, 2when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

I

3 Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love;
in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions.

4 Thoroughly wash away my guilt;
and from my sin cleanse me.

5 For I know my transgressions;
my sin is always before me.

6 Against you, you alone have I sinned;
I have done what is evil in your eyes
So that you are just in your word,
and without reproach in your judgment.

7 Behold, I was born in guilt,
in sin my mother conceived me.

8 Behold, you desire true sincerity;
and secretly you teach me wisdom.

9 Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

10 You will let me hear gladness and joy;
the bones you have crushed will rejoice.

II

Turn away your face from my sins;
blot out all my iniquities.

12 A clean heart create for me, God;
renew within me a steadfast spirit.

13 Do not drive me from before your face,
nor take from me your holy spirit.

14 Restore to me the gladness of your salvation;
uphold me with a willing spirit.

15 I will teach the wicked your ways,
that sinners may return to you.

16 Rescue me from violent bloodshed, God, my saving God,
and my tongue will sing joyfully of your justice.

17 Lord, you will open my lips;
and my mouth will proclaim your praise.

18 For you do not desire sacrifice* or I would give it;
a burnt offering you would not accept.

19 My sacrifice, O God, is a contrite spirit;
a contrite, humbled heart, O God, you will not scorn.

III

20*Treat Zion kindly according to your good will;
build up the walls of Jerusalem.

21 Then you will desire the sacrifices of the just,
burnt offering and whole offerings;
then they will offer up young bulls on your altar.

LENTEN PRAYER

God of all compassion,
Father of all goodness,
to heal the wounds our sins and selfishness bring upon us,
you bid us turn to fasting, prayer, and sharing with our brothers and sisters.

We acknowledge our sinfulness,
our guilt is ever before us;
when our weakness causes discouragement, let your compassion fill us with hope and lead us
through a Lent of repentance to the beauty of Easter joy.

Grant this through Christ our Lord. Amen.