

## “FACING THE GIANT OF GUILT”

By Rom A. Pegram (5/12/19)

GUILT is ‘the silent killer.’ Physically, high blood pressure is known as ‘the silent killer.’ But, spiritually ... this GIANT is called GUILT. There are people all around us who are being slowly crushed, slowly suffocated by the GIANT of GUILT! It kills slowly, with *excruciating internal pain...*

Never have *the affects* of this GIANT been more visible than in the biblical story of a man named ... *David*. David had it all—every good thing life had to offer—and he knew it!

- He ruled the greatest nation in the world (of his time)...
- He was not only God’s anointed, but he was the people’s choice...
- Once an obscure shepherd boy, he was now the most important man alive...
- He could sing beautifully, play musical instruments, and dance artistically...
- He was a military hero—a conqueror of armies...

It’s been said David had ‘the heart of an artist, the soul of a priest, the mind of a philosopher, and the body of a warrior.’ What else was there? He had it all, didn’t he? Yet, he finally found an enemy feared: MIDLIFE. *Maybe it’s that he’d done it all ... and needed a new GIANT to conquer.* Sadly, however, *he now found one that got the best of him!* Maybe you know the story from 2 Samuel 11 about the *SECOND GIANT* David had to slay. Let me share this with you...

David found himself restless on the battle lines—not scared, but *bored*. So, he stayed home. At home, he found he couldn’t sleep and decided to take a walk on the palace roof—a terraced property. It was from there a sight in the courtyard below caught his eye. There was a woman—a strikingly beautiful woman, bathing in the twilight. David couldn’t take his eyes away; afterward, he couldn’t take his thoughts away. So, he sought her out. One thing led to another—eventually to adultery, and finally to remorse. *He sent the woman home and tried to move on.* But, the whole affair turned into a nightmare when David found out Bathsheba was pregnant. Everyone knew her husband was away on the battlefield; everyone *also* knew who’d stayed home from the battle. The situation was sticky. David had been a godly and moral king; this would ruin his people’s faith in him if word got out...

David came up with a solution. He sent for Bathsheba’s husband, Uriah. David wined and dined him, then sent him home to spend time with his wife (so folks would think it was Uriah’s baby). Surely that would fix things up! What David didn’t count on was the innocence and goodness of the husband. Uriah told David he just wouldn’t feel right spending the night with his wife, when his comrades were out on the battlefield. So, he slept the night on the palace steps...

David’s plan failed. He couldn’t think clearly now, so he made a *desperate move*. He wrote a note for Uriah to carry to the field general; little did Uriah know that he was carrying his own death sentence. He was to go to the front lines, sure to be killed there. This, however, would produce a *pregnant widow* ... available for marriage right away. Surely, this would take care of the mess...

Now, *murder and intrigue has been added to adultery*. Talk about complicated! David came to realize the gravity of his deeds ... and was sentenced to living with his own GUILT for the whole next year. *This was the year that just about killed King David!*

**TRANSITION:** Folks, we have 2 records of what was going on in David's soul at the time: Psalm 32 & Psalm 51. And, actually, they should be read in reverse order— Psalm 51 showing *the excruciating pain of his guilt*, and Psalm 32 showing *the resolution & eventual renewal of his relationship with God*. Listen now as I share Psalm 32 with you. Psalm 51 I'll weave into the message...

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! <sup>2</sup> Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! <sup>3</sup> When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. <sup>4</sup> Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. <sup>5</sup> Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. <sup>6</sup> Therefore, let all the godly pray to you while there is still time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment. <sup>7</sup> For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory. <sup>8</sup> The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. <sup>9</sup> Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control." <sup>10</sup> Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the LORD. <sup>11</sup> So rejoice in the LORD and be glad, all you who obey him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

Why does David say these things? Because it's not always easy; that's why... "You that are righteous, be glad ... You that obey him, shout for joy!" Righteousness and obedience ... are the life of victory! Righteousness and obedience ... are the life that leads to gladness ... and joy! In this Psalm, however, we also see David's life before; we see what the GIANT of GUILT brought to David's life ... and what it can bring to yours ... and mine. Here's how GUILT unfolds in life...

### **THE AGONY OF GUILT: PSALM 32 involves...**

- **SILENCE** - When the damage is done ... and guilt sets in, our first impulse is always silence; listen again to David's awful description (NIV): "When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long" – Psalm 32:3 (NIV). What else is there in times of guilt, but silence? We can't talk to people, even those closest to us. And, we don't feel like we can talk to God. Here we see 'the man after God's own heart' exiled from God ... and the silence was killing him...
- **SORROW** - One thing leads to another; because of this 'silence' in his relationship with God, David also experienced 'sorrow'... "For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer" – Psalm 32:4 (NIV). Not only are there spiritual consequences to our actions, but physical, too! David was trapped inside his own guilt ... and it overcame him in so many ways...

- **SECRECY** - As we've seen, the GIANT of GUILT is a force of *isolation*... David couldn't talk to anyone about his guilt; he was worse than an adulterer; he was one who'd murder just to avoid negative publicity. Only Bathsheba ... and his trusted advisor, Joab, knew the truth; the king spent the better part of a year living with this intolerable secret, in psychological exile from God and from people ... all a part of THE AGONY OF GUILT. But, God reached down ... and offered David a way out through...

**THE ACCUSATION OF GUILT: 2 SAMUEL 12:1-7.** Enter David's pastor, by the name of NATHAN ... and (after God had spoken to him) *he told David this story*...

Two men lived in a city—one rich and one poor. One had the finest flock in the kingdom; the other only one little ewe that was like a family pet. The little lamb was one of the family—eating from their hands and drinking from their cups. No more than a little lamb but loved dearly by this poor family.

Meanwhile, the rich man was entertaining a visitor. Dinnertime came around and the host didn't want to make a withdrawal from the wealth of his own herd, so he decided to tap his neighbor for dinner; you got it, the little pet lamb ... dearly loved by the poor family. That little lamb was on the rich man's menu that night...

David was furious! How in the world could anyone be so self-centered? How could anyone be so un-caring of others? So insensitive? There was no excuse for this lack of civility! David's response? "David was furious. "As surely as the LORD lives," he vowed, "any man who would do such a thing deserves to die!" – 2 Samuel 12:5 (NLT) Then Nathan, I'm sure pointing a pastoral finger at David, said: "You are that man!" – 2 Samuel 12:7a (NLT) What a painful, but necessary, accusation. The secrecy was over. David now had to deal with the repercussions of his actions—even as king, but at least the solitude of the secret was finally past...

So, first the AGONY ... then the ACCUSATION of GUILT. What comes next with this GIANT? Folks, here's our example of how to deal with GUILT in our own lives: Like David, we begin to face it, *honestly and we come to...*

**THE ADMISSION OF GUILT: PSALM 51 (THE AFTERMATH).** Here's what it looks like...

- **ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR SIN.** It all begins with 'owning up' to our actions. Many of us are masters at *shifting the blame* ... and scapegoats come cheap; but look through Psalm 51 at David's example; see how many times you read the personal pronouns *I, Me, Mine*... Folks, DON'T OVERLOOK THIS STARTING POINT! The journey to recovery from the GIANT of GUILT begins here or it begins nowhere; we have to 'own up' to *our* actions...
- **ACKNOWLEDGE THE SINFULNESS OF OUR SIN.** Another pet 'coping device' we use is to minimize our sins—"Oh, it was no big deal..." Think of the excuses David might have used:
  - "I was dealing with stress..."
  - "I made a poor decision, but it was just a one time thing..."
  - "The man was bound to die in battle anyway..."

- “I’m the king; I deserve to have beautiful wives ... I’m entitled...”

Instead, David used words like ... *transgressions* (revolt), *iniquity* (perversity), *sin* (missing the mark), and *evil* (calling it what it was). When you’ve failed to live by God’s standards, *listen carefully to your language*; are you ready for true confession ... or not? And finally...

- **ADDRESS YOUR CONFESSION TO GOD!** After acknowledging the reality of sin in our lives, the second step is to turn our faces *toward* God... “Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight...” – Psalm 51:4a (NIV) We may have hurt others by our actions, but ultimately God is the one whose face has been slapped; confession must be directed *above* first—that’s where it has to begin...

### THE ANSWER TO GUILT is to ... **LEARN TO PRAY THE PSALMS!**

- **Pray for your sin to be removed (use David’s prayer; he’s been there)...**

“Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.” – Psalms 51:2 (NIV)

- **Pray for restoration of the JOY God gives...**

- Unfinished business of the soul takes its toll on our lives; one of the noticeable changes that takes place when guilt takes over our lives ... is *the JOY that comes with salvation is missing*; when it is, we need to check the backlog for ‘unconfessed sin.’ (Again, pray David’s way...)

“Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.”

– Psalms 51:8 (NIV)

“Restore to me the joy of your salvation....” – Psalms 51:12a (NIV)

- **Pray for renewal of fellowship with God...**

- Imagine being cast away from the presence of God—the presence of LOVE (my description of Hell, by the way)! This is what GUILT does to us when it consumes our lives (again, pray David’s way)...

“Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.”

– Psalms 51:11 (NIV)

- **Pray for a refocusing on the future...**

- What do you need to do to continue a righteous relationship with God? Pray this: “...grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.” – Psalm 51:12b (NIV)

Corrie Ten Boom says: “The purpose of being guilty is to bring us to Jesus.” That’s all God wants today—for you and I to draw closer, to let go of the guilt. God wants us to know freedom ... in Christ. And, we can; Christ died for that. Just bring your GUILT to God today!