

“Do Not Take Your Holy Spirit From Me”

by Wayne Goff

Psalm 51 is considered to be David’s penitent psalm as he asks forgiveness for his adultery with Bathsheba and the subsequent murder of her husband, Uriah. In this article I wish to look at **Psalm 51:11** ~ “Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.” David realized his perilous condition before God forgave him. If God had cast David away from His presence, then he would have gone to hell when he died. The same is true today for those of us who sin and **never repent** of that sin!

But what does David mean when he says “do not take Your Holy Spirit from me”? We recall that David was the king who replaced *rebellious* King Saul. When Saul became king, Samuel **anointed** him (**1 Sam. 9:16-27; 10:11**) and God put his **Holy Spirit upon him** and he *prophesied*. The Spirit of the Lord gave Saul wisdom, understanding and judgment so long as he was faithful to God (**1 Sam. 11:6ff**). Unfortunately, Saul’s humility and faithfulness began to wane, and he sinned first by offering a sacrifice to the Lord without permission (**1 Sam. 13:9-14**). It is at this point that Samuel informs Saul that God is going to replace him and his family with another man from another tribe to be the next king.

Secondly, Saul was commanded to **utterly destroy** the Amalekites — “kill man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey” (**1 Sam. 15:3**). This was done as God’s judgment against the nation who had attacked the weak and small of Israel when they came out of Egypt. Unfortunately, King Saul spared King Agag and the best of the sheep, oxen, failings, lambs, and all that was good (**vv. 8-9**). When Samuel confronted Saul he tried to lay the blame on the people, but God laid the blame on him, the *leader* of God’s people! Saul continued to deny his guilt, and God once again condemned Saul and said “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king” (**1 Samuel 15:23**). Additionally, Saul’s good friend, prophet and mentor “Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death” (**v. 35**).

Now we come to the point of **Psalm 51:11b. 1 Samuel 16:14** reads “But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him.” For the rest of his life, Saul’s spirit was troubled and he became a sad, depressed and seemingly insane king. When the Spirit of Jehovah departed from Saul, his fate was sealed and he died as a man cursed by God.

Do you see now why David prayed to God “do not take Your Holy Spirit away from me”? Had God turned His back on David for his great sin **with** Bathsheba and **against** Uriah, what would have become of him? But God *forgave* David, presumably because of his *reverent spirit and humble penitence*. God did not take away His Holy Spirit from David. Still, David’s house suffered for the rest of his life because of this sin.

Hebrews 10:26-31 warns us of a similar fate. “For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries” (**vv. 26-27**). Do not **rebel** against God as King Saul did. When you sin, as we all do and will, **humbly repent, confess and pray God** for forgiveness while you have the time! *And do not turn your back on God’s Word, the revelation of His Holy Spirit*, or else God may it away from you, too! Read **Amos 8:11** to see the warning!

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