

Background

- 2 Samuel 11:1-12:31
 - David not at war...
 - sees Bathsheba... lusts after her... permits his sin to have a foothold
 - sends for her, sleeps with her
 - compounds the sin by having Uriah first come back to Jerusalem to cover for David having got Bathsheba pregnant
 - and then having him bumped off so no one will know it wasn't Uriah who got her pregnant
- At this point it looks like David might have got away with it...
- But then God sends the prophet Nathan to David
 - *(go tell the king, the one with all the big bodyguards and stuff, that he's been naughty!!)*
 - Nathan tells a parable: poor man whose only lamb is taken from him by his rich neighbour, and killed for a guest so the rich man doesn't have to kill one of his own
 - *David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! (2 Sam 12:5)*
 - through Nathan God reveals to David his sin - he is that man!
 - the child dies... and David goes back to being king, mustering the army himself as he should have done in the first place

Exposition

- Some comments, rather than gross detail, since this is a fairly simple to comprehend Psalm
 - v.4: against God only? Not Uriah? Fundamentally!
 - v.5: original sin: the one whom God has convicted is conscious of the full weight and breadth and depth of sin's reach
 - v.6: inside out, not just surface performance that matters!
 - v.7: what is hyssop and its implications in this context?
 - *"Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it into the blood in the basin and put some of the blood on the top and on both sides of the doorframe. Not one of you shall go out the door of his house until morning." (Exodus 12:22)*
 - *also used by priests in various cleansings...*
 - *interestingly, note: "A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. (John 19:29)*
 - v.8: God is the one who has crushed the sinner - to get him repent!
 - *(what is crushed in this context? just feeling bad? probably here also the death of David's child born to Bathsheba... though God is gracious and merciful, he does)*
 - v.10: new start, new heart, new spirit
 - v.11: sin bad enough that there is the risk of being chucked out of God's presence
 - v.13: once restored, once forgiven, the natural response is to **teach transgressors your ways**. we might hear that as **"read to transgressors your Laws!"** but the sense is much more **"teach transgressors how gracious, how merciful God has been to me - his ways of dealing with me!"**
 - v.16: insufficiency of sacrifices: adultery, murder not covered by the sacrificial system?
 - v.17: observation that what God desires is on the inside too, the inner reality of a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart... aware of sin, almost angry at it!
- What is it that he asks for?
 - **mercy, washing from sin, blotting out of sin, cleansing, to be able to hear joy and gladness, to rejoice, that God hide his face from sin (turn away from the sin), that he not be cast out from God's presence, that he be restored to the joy of salvation, saved from bloodguilt**

- same thing, over and over again, in different guises!
- sin has pretty serious implications!!
- sin is the core problem...

Conclusion

- This is one of those Psalms where the thought is really fairly obvious:
 - almost disturbingly so!!
 - as Mark Twain said "Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture they don't understand - but I have always noticed that the passages that bother me are the ones I do understand!"
 - where are we at with our sin?
 - cherishing, tolerating, dabbling with it? or **repenting of it?**
 - however much I know the right answer, however good or sound or orthodox my belief is, I still need to come to God on bended knee, broken hearted over my sin, over its offense, over its seriousness, over its profound consequences
 - to come, pleading as David did, for mercy, cleansing, restoration to joy...