

David speaks of his sin (the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah) in the 51st Psalm. During the discourse he is asking God to forgive him of the sin which he committed. Then, in v.5 David makes a very interesting statement. "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." Those who espouse the doctrine of original sin point to this verse and say that David was born sinful. Job makes a very similar statement in his writings, "What is man, that he should be pure, or he who is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?"

In Psa. 51:5 the words "brought forth" are translated "shapen" in the King James Version. The Hebrew word translated literally means to turn around, to twist, to "twirl". Therefore David is saying that he was twisted and turned around in sin. He was sinful because his nature, attitudes and desires were not straight (right with God). It was because of his twisted, turned around thinking that caused him to sin.

The New International Version has a very unfortunate rendering of the passage. The NIV states, "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." David was not a sinner at birth as this translation would suggest. The phrase "in sin did my mother conceive me" also needs to be looked at.

The Hebrew word translated "conceive" literally means to warm, not to become pregnant or give birth. The word used in 51:5 is "yacham" while the word "harah" is used in the Hebrew to denote pregnancy or birth. This author believes that all of this can be explained very simply by realizing that David was not a sinner at birth, his mother did not give birth to him in sin, but like all men David had a sinful nature. Read Eph. 2 :3, "...by nature children of wrath..." The correct or literal translation of the passage should be, "Behold, I was twisted in iniquity, and in sin did my mother warm me."

No mention whatsoever is made by David that he has the sin of Adam or that of his parents. David is responsible for his own sin and is saying (in the entire psalm) that he wants God to forgive it.

Next week, Psalm 58:3.

--Greg