

# The Psalms of Ascents

## Week 5 – Tuesday

Psa. 51:4-6, 17 – Footnotes 5<sup>1</sup>, 6<sup>1</sup>

The second great failure of David before God in his old age was in numbering the people of Israel (2 Sam. 24). This numbering was to satisfy the inner pride of David. In this matter he was stricken by God. When he was disciplined by God, David fell down in the presence of God and said, “Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father’s house.” The lesson we learn here is that David did not defend himself in the midst of his failure and during the process of being stricken. His attitude was humble even when God was disciplining and striking him.

David was a humble man before God; even so, the test which he met concerned his pride. Therefore we should always look to God. At no time can we rely on ourselves. We should not think that once we have learned a lesson and gained a virtue, everything will be fine with us. Once we depart from the Lord, immediately we will fail in this same thing. Here we must learn that we cannot let loose our entire life. We always need to depend on the Lord, seeking His mercy. None of us should consider that we have no problem. No matter how spiritual we are, we always will have problems within. We cannot rely on ourselves; we will fail immediately whenever we depart from the Lord.

We can consider the apostle Paul as the greatest among the apostles; he received the greatest and highest revelations and became a very mature brother. He speaks of the revelations and visions that he received in 2 Corinthians chapter 12. The visions were so high that he was raptured to the third heaven and also to Paradise in Hades. He even heard secret words that cannot be uttered by man. Everyone who has died including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Elijah and David. All the saints from the past generations are in Hades. Paul went to Hades and heard words that cannot be uttered by man. Thus, he knew many mysteries that are hidden from us, but God would not let him write them down. Today on Earth there are many things that we still do not understand; we need to wait until that day. Everything of God that we need to know is written in the Bible. When Paul gained revelations in the third heaven and Paradise, he said, “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure” (v. 7). Even such a spiritual man as Paul who lived by the life of God, needed to be careful because the revelations he received were too great. This made an opportunity for him to become proud so God allowed the messenger of Satan to attack him with a thorn in his flesh. Paul prayed to God three times about this, hoping that God would remove the thorn. God’s response was that the thorn needed to remain but “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” The thorn remained with Paul. Whenever his pride may have risen up, the thorn was there to keep him down.