

## Psalm 51:11 and Eternal Security

Psalm 51:11 reads, “Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.” Arminians use this verse to affirm that when one sins, he loses the Holy Spirit and falls away from a state of salvation. However, the verse teaches nothing of the kind, because:

1.) David prays Psalm 51 a long time after his sin with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah. Yet at this time his prayer is not, “restore” thy Holy Spirit, as he prayed in v.12, “restore unto me the joy of thy salvation,” but “take not thy holy spirit from me.” This demonstrates that he had not lost the Holy Spirit. Therefore Psalm 51:11 indicates, if, as with the Arminians, we affirm that this refers to the Spirit’s work associated with one’s state as a child of God, that a child of God can commit adultery and murder, as David did, and yet not lose the Spirit! This verse does not help the Arminians at all.

2.) This verse does not really relate to personal salvation at all in any case; the anointing with the Spirit spoken of relates to David’s position as king over the Israelite theocracy. As Saul got the Spirit when Samuel made him king (1 Samuel 10:6), and lost the Spirit when David replaced him (1 Samuel 16:14; 19:9) as king, and David himself got the Spirit when he was anointed king (1 Samuel 16:13), and, as Saul’s harpist to soothe him when the evil spirit was upon him, David saw firsthand the terrible effects that Saul’s kingship-losing sin (1 Samuel 15:23, 26) and loss of the Spirit had, he prayed in Psalm 51:11 not to lose his position as head of the theocracy as Saul did when he sinned. The kingly anointing (as the priestly anointing) also represented the coming of the Spirit upon the monarch (consider as well the theme of prophecy in relation to kingship with Saul/David; “Is Saul also among the prophets?” while David did indeed prophesy and compose inspired books, order the temple service under inspiration, etc.; this also could shed light on the “a divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment,” Prov 16:10—that could speak specifically of a supernatural ability provided the monarch of Israel as the leader of the theocratic state; it is “the” king in the verse, not “every king of every nation,” and Solomon writes to his son in Proverbs, so the theocratic monarchy is contextual). Unless we affirm that Saul was converted when anointed king, and David was as well, Psalm 51:11 has nothing to do with personal conversion in any case. However, even if it did, it would not validate the Arminian contention.

Praise the Lord for the consistent Biblical truth of eternal security!