

Lesson 24: “Create in Me a Clean Heart”

2 Samuel 1 – 12; Psalms 51

Purpose: To encourage us to be chaste in thought and action and to repent of their sins.



My lessons take a different path than the Gospel Doctrine lesson manual. The lesson outline looks closer at the doctrinal topics included in the lesson purpose and scripture block. The lessons are designed to challenge mature, active Latter-Day Saints who have a solid Gospel foundation and are looking for insights into the scriptures that will broaden their faith and understanding.

If you are interested in downloading the Powerpoint file, links to source material or reading posts about improving Gospel Doctrine class preparation, delivery and engagement, you can join my Facebook Group and have full access to the content posted there. The link is <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188904648521022/>

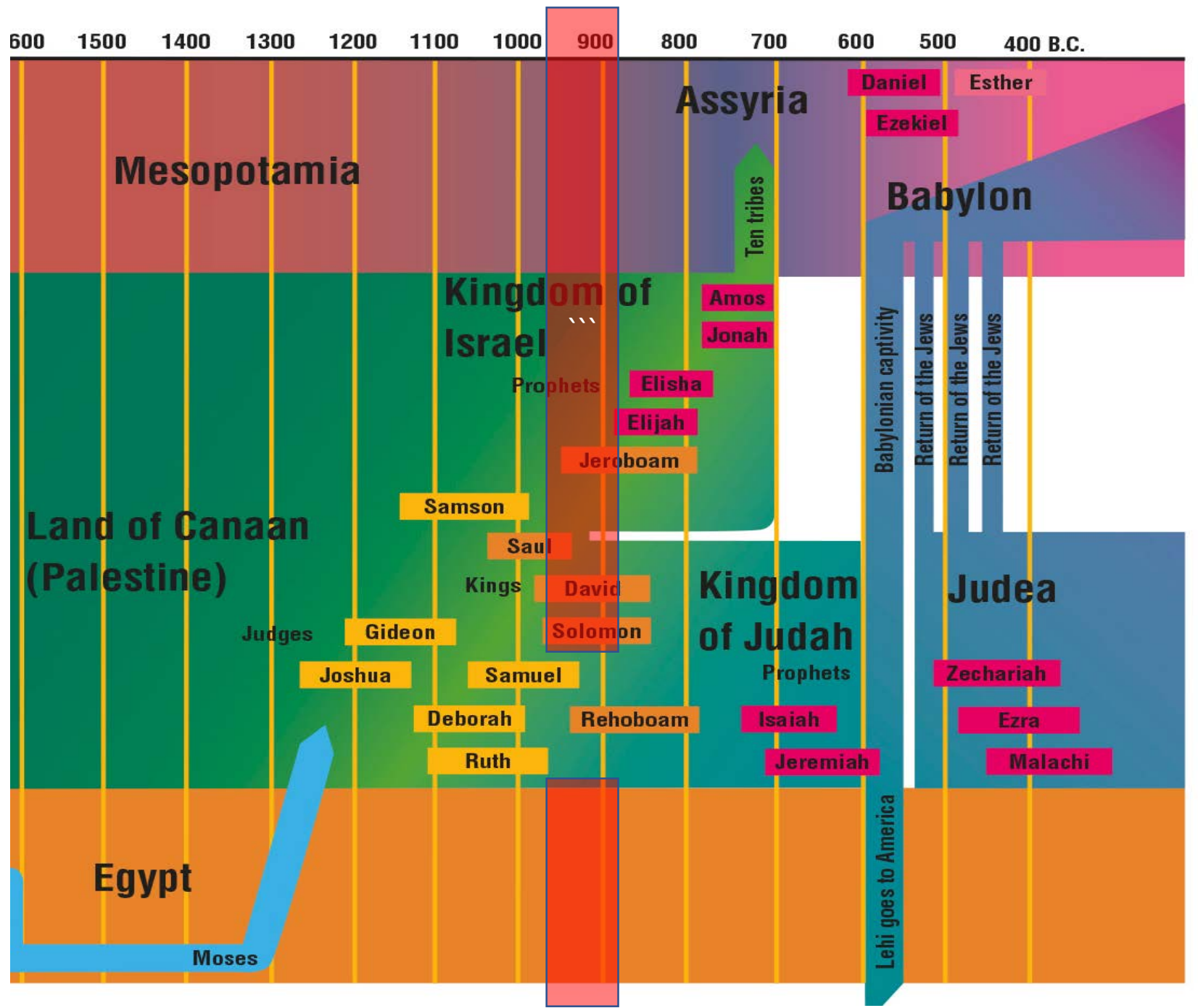
Last Week's Lesson Challenge

Consider how much more you will gain in your life if you first strive to see others as an opportunity for friendship rather than a challenger or competitor.

Also consider how you own lack of faith or disobedience is holding you from finding true friendship both here on earth and with the Savior.

Would anyone wish to share their thoughts and experiences this past as they contemplated last week's lesson?

David and Bathsheba



2 Samuel begins with David learning of the death of Saul and Jonathan and becoming Judah's king. One of Saul's sons becomes king of Israel, or the Northern Kingdom. Chapters 1 – 10 principally address the wars David fought to unite Israel under his leadership.

Chapter 1 - David learns of the death of Saul and Jonathan—He slays the Amalekite who claims to have killed Saul—David laments the passing of Saul and Jonathan with a song.

Chapter 2 - David is anointed king over the house of Judah—Ishbosheth becomes the king of Israel—David's followers defeat Abner and the men of Israel.

Chapter 3 - The houses of David and Saul engage in a long war—David grows stronger—Abner joins David but is slain by Joab—David mourns for Abner.

Chapter 4 - Two of Saul's captains slay Ishbosheth—They take his head to David, who has them slain for killing a righteous person.

Chapter 5 - All Israel anoints David king—He takes Jerusalem and is blessed of the Lord—He conquers the Philistines.

Chapter 6 - David takes the ark to the city of David—Uzzah is smitten for steadying the ark and dies—David dances before the Lord, causing a breach between him and Michal.

Chapter 7 - David offers to build a house for the Lord—The Lord, through Nathan, says He has not asked David to do so—The Lord will establish David's house and kingdom forever—David offers a prayer of thanksgiving.

Chapter 8 - David defeats and subjects many nations—The Lord is with him—He executes judgment and justice unto all his people.

Chapter 9 - David seeks to honor the house of Saul—He finds Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, to whom he restores all the land of Saul.

Chapter 10 - David's messengers are abused by the Ammonites—Israel defeats the Ammonites and Syrians.

Ishbosheth was the fourth son of King Saul and the last representative of his family to be king over Israel (the northern kingdom, as opposed to the southern kingdom of Judah).

Ishbosheth was proclaimed king of Israel by Abner, Saul's cousin and commander in chief, who then became the real power behind the throne. The House of Judah, however, followed David, and war broke out between the two kingdoms. When Abner took Rizpah, one of Saul's concubines, Ishbosheth objected, because Abner's action was a symbolic usurpation of power. Abner then defected to David, leaving the northern tribes without effective leadership, and Ishbosheth was soon murdered by two of his captains. David had the murderers put to death. Ishbosheth's stand against Abner, weak as it was, led to Abner's defection to David and then to Abner's death at the hand of one of his enemies, events that caused strife in David's divided kingdom for some time to come.

Although the Bible states that Ishbosheth was 40 years old when he became king and that his reign lasted two years, scholars have found that these figures are incorrect. More likely he was quite young and his reign equaled that of David at Hebron, about 7 1/2 years.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ishbosheth>

The story of David and Bathsheba begins in 2 Samuel 11. It is important to note that at the time David first saw Bathsheba, he had many wives and children, although the real number is unknown.

David Commits Adultery with Bathsheba ([2 Samuel 11:1-5](#))

1 And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem.

2 ¶ And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

3 And David sent and inquired after the woman. And one said, Is not this Bath-sheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house.

5 And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child.

“Things were getting too easy for David; he had leisure to stay at home while Joab and his men were out fighting Ammonites and Syrians. In his leisure he looked from his rooftop at his neighbor's wife. Leisure and lust led to adultery and then to murder, which sins had eternal repercussions, as well as tragic earthly results. **It is one of the shocking and serious warnings of the Old Testament that a man may be ever so good and great and eminent and still have weaknesses which can lead to deeds that entirely overshadow and defeat the better self!**”

(Rasmussen, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1:185.)

<https://www.lds.org/manual/old-testament-student-manual-genesis-2-samuel/2-samuel-1-12-the-fall-of-king-david?lang=eng>

David Tries to Hide His Sin by Influencing Uriah ([2 Samuel 11:6-13](#))

6 ¶ And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

8 And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king's house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king.

9 But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

10 And when they had told David, saying, Uriah went not down unto his house, David said unto Uriah, Camest thou not from thy journey? why then didst thou not go down unto thine house?

11 And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and Israel, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing.

12 And David said to Uriah, Tarry here to day also, and to morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jerusalem that day, and the morrow.

13 And when David had called him, he did eat and drink before him; and he made him drunk: and at even he went out to lie on his bed with the servants of his lord, but went not down to his house.

David does all that he can to have Uriah go and be with his wife Bathsheba to hide the fact that she has become pregnant from their adultery. Uriah is too honorable a man and soldier to go and be with his wife when the other soldiers continue in battle. David bribes Uriah with food and alcohol but Uriah stays true to his role as a soldier over husband.

David Commits Murder to Hide the Sin of Adultery ([2 Samuel 11:14-17, 26-27](#))

14 ¶ And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.

17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

26 ¶ And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

“As happens too frequently, it is only when a sinner knows that his sin is known that he begins to repent! The figure of Nathan boldly accusing the king to his face by an allegorical parallel is impressive, though not as surprising in Bible stories as it would be in accounts of other peoples where the will of God was not such a recognized factor in determining the morality of men and in specifying the results. Nathan’s allegory was skillfully drawn, and his climatic ‘Attah ha ish!’ (‘Thou art the man’) must have crashed in upon the conscience of David like the harbingers of doom’s day.

“His repentant feelings were no doubt sincere, but he could not repent enough to restore the life of his friend, Uriah, nor the virtue of his wife. Though he later hoped and prayed that his soul would not be left forever in hell (the spirit prison), yet the eternal destiny of doers of such twin sins does not look good.”
(Rasmussen, Introduction to the Old Testament, 1:185.)

<https://www.lds.org/manual/old-testament-student-manual-genesis-2-samuel/2-samuel-1-12-the-fall-of-king-david?lang=eng>

2 Samuel 12:1-6 - Nathan Tells David the Story of the Little Ewe Lamb

1 And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb (*a person's most cherished possession*), which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

With Samuel's death, Nathan became one of Jehovah's prophets in Judah. His actions are described in the Books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles.

According to 2 Samuel, he was a court prophet who lived in the time of King David. He announced to David the covenant God was making with him (2 Samuel 7:4-17, a passage known as Nathan's Oracle), contrasting David's proposal to build a house (i.e. a building) for the Ark of the Covenant with God's plan to build a house (i.e. a dynasty) for David. Later, he came to David to reprimand him for committing adultery with Bathsheba while she was the wife of Uriah the Hittite, whose death the King had also arranged to hide his previous transgression.

According to Chronicles, Nathan wrote histories of the reigns of both David (1 Chronicles 29:29) and Solomon (2 Chronicles 9:29), and was involved in the music of the temple (see 2 Chronicles 29:25).

In 1 Kings 1:8-45 it is Nathan who tells the dying David of the plot of Adonijah to become king, resulting in Solomon being proclaimed king instead. Nathan presides at the anointing of King Solomon, and his name appears in the coronation anthem Zadok the Priest.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathan_\(prophet\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nathan_(prophet))

2 Samuel 12:7-14 - Nathan Tells David that He is the Object of the Story and Rebukes Him

7 ¶ And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; **and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.**

9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

11 Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.

13 And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.

14 Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.

When repentance is true and sincere, the sinner confesses to God, to those he or she has offended, and to his or her priesthood leader when the sin is as serious as David's was (see D&C 58:42–43). David's discussion with Nathan, however, happened after the birth of the baby David fathered with Bathsheba. Therefore, the discussion must have been at least nine months after David's first transgression. Furthermore, the Lord had to send Nathan to David instead of David going to Nathan to confess.

What can we learn about David's remorse and repentance if, after such a long time, Nathan had to come to David to confront him about his sin?

What can we learn from David's lack of true repentance for his sins?

- We can assume that David was remorseful for his sins, but did he confess them to Jehovah or Jehovah's prophets?
- Over nine months went by before Jehovah told Nathan to challenge David. Had time allowed David to forget about his sins or at least learn to live with them?
- Did David believe that with time, he would not need to repent of his sins, that Jehovah had forgiven him because it had been forgotten about?

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David's strength and reliance on the Lord marked him as an exceptional leader and the epitome of Israelite heroism. Subsequent rulers were measured against his stature, and his name was linked with that of the awaited messiah. Scripture indicates that David's blessings, including his wives, were given to him as a result of God's favor.

But when David also acquired wives and concubines, apparently under his own authority, he was condemned by God (Jacob 2:23-24). Certainly David lost divine approval as a result of his adulterous union with Bathsheba and the subsequent contrived murder of her husband, Uriah.

Because of David's transgressions, his eternal blessings were taken from him (TPJS, pp. 188-89). The Lord granted David a continuation of life for another twenty-one years, perhaps because of his immediate and deep remorse (cf. Ps. 51), his acts of repentance, and his continued faithfulness to Jehovah. However, he must await in the spirit prison the redemption promised to him (Acts 2:34; WJS, p. 74). Even with the assurance of the Lord's ultimate mercy (Ps. 86:13), David lost much that God had given him on earth, he fell "from his exaltation" and his wives were given unto another" (D&C 132:39). Yet his personal integrity appears in his insistence that he be punished in place of his people, whom he saw in vision being destroyed.

http://eom.byu.edu/index.php/David,_King

Jacob 2:23-24

23 But the word of God burdens me because of your grosser crimes. For behold, thus saith the Lord: This people begin to wax in iniquity; they understand not the scriptures, for they seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms, because of the things which were written concerning David, and Solomon his son.

24 Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord.

Psalm 51

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

We are not told when David wrote Psalm 51, but it is widely believed that it is a statement of repentance for his sins with Bathsheba. Considered one of the greatest of David's psalms, in Psalm 51 we find a true statement of repentance.

- David acknowledges his sins (v. 3)
- David acknowledges the gravity of his sins (vs.4-6)
- David accepts that he deserves punishment for sins and that punishment is the beginning of the road to repentance (v. 7)
- David acknowledges that he is separated from Jehovah because of his sins (v. 9)
- David asks for forgiveness through
 - a clean heart (v. 10)
 - a return to Jehovah's presence and having the Holy Spirit with him again (v. 11)
- David asks for the return of his eternal blessings by his repentance (v. 12)
- David promises to help other sinners to repent and be forgiven (v. 13)
- David asks for Jehovah to talk with him again (v. 15)

One of the most important parts of Psalm 51 is David's acknowledgment that burnt offerings as sacrifices are not what Jehovah wants, but he accepts from Israel because they fell from the Melchizedek Priesthood at Mt. Sinai. Verse 17 states the following: *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."*

Through his sins and repentance, David comes to understand that the true sacrifice before Jehovah is not a physical manifestation, but a spiritual commitment to change, a "mighty change of heart" as it is called.

This Week's Lesson Challenge

It is hopeful that we will never be guilty of the grievous sins David committed. This doesn't reduce our need for repentance for the sins we do and will continue to do throughout our lives.

David said "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

Our weekly challenge is to discover what that means in our own lives.