

2 Samuel Chapter 24 & 1 Chronicles 21

And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, go, number Israel and Judah. ²For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people.

Verse 1 – God angry at Israel for some sin. He allows David to be tempted. He moved I understand is a Hebrew idiom meaning He allowed David to be moved. The temptation or sin was that David wants to number or count the people. Why is this an issue?

- David had no orders from God to do it, so he was operating from his flesh/soul and not led by the Spirit. He never asked God if this was okay.
- It may show a lack of faith in the ancient promise that said God would increase his throne.
- Most consider it as a pride issue.
- 1 Chronicles 21:1 says Satan provoked him....so it was suggested by the enemy. That alone makes it a bad deal. How do we know when the suggestion to do something is from the enemy?
- Satan was against Israel and attacked them through David's response. Satan will attack the people by getting the leader to sin.
- He never asked God about this.

³And Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing? ⁴Notwithstanding the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. And Joab and the captains of the host went out from the presence of the king, to number the people of Israel.

Verse 3 – Joab does what we should do....asks the question as to why David would want to do this. Why is doing this making you happy? Why would it indeed?

- Points out that God is the one who provides the increase so He knows what you need and has increased to the extent that you can see it.
 - This is important to note that Joab points out to David that while he doesn't know the exact number, God has blessed him to the extent that David can see the increase and goodness.
 - Question, is there some blessing that God has allowed you to see, but for some reason, that isn't good enough for you to move by faith?

- One of my classes asked why did David want to do this? While the Bible is not specific, when placing ourselves in the story and asking is there something that God has allowed us to see, we can probably figure out the reasons.
 - I may see something or how God is blessing and pride creeps in where we want to brag about how much we have. This is probably what David's issue was here...pride.
 - Reference made to Proverbs 6:17, seven things God hates and pride is the first listed.
 - There is also the aspect that while we see God moving and providing, we doubt that He is continue to move and bless and our fear causes us to take a particular action not based upon the Spirit. This is a particular problem since the Bible says God didn't give us the spirit of fear. If He didn't give us the spirit of fear and Jesus and the angels often tell people in the Bible to "fear not", that tells me when we operate through fear...this leads to decisions being made in the flesh. They are not spiritually led and this will land us in trouble just like David.
- David doesn't give him the answer as to why he wants to do this.
- We have a responsibility to point out the mistakes of leaders with respect. Joab in the verses in 1 Chronicles 21 tells David that his action would be bad and cause the people to trespass.

Application: I personally have a problem with people (especially Christians) who follow a leader or political party in whole without challenging them to correct those areas which are not in line with the Spirit of God. We cannot accept everything from the world and place this within our religion and relationship with God.

- You cannot be 100% Republican or 100% Democrat and still be 100% for God. These are world organizations and the world shouldn't be mixed in with your relationship and right standing with God. Make sure your politics don't define your Christianity.
- An example: I'm an Auburn fan. I always want them to win. However, this year when Alabama faced them in the Iron Bowl, I was okay with the Tide winning. Why, because Auburn has no chance at winning the national title this year...Bama does. Most "true" Auburn fans will now have a problem with me. Some Tide fans will not want my temporary support. No matter to me....because while I'm an Auburn fan, I'm a greater State of Alabama fan. Because when either Auburn or Alabama wins....they do the State proud! Got it. Now, as much as I don't like them....last year (2019), I pulled for LSU. Why would I ever do that? Because they are in the SEC. I am a larger SEC fan than even a State of Alabama or Auburn fan. For the good of a higher goal (of which Auburn & Alabama are a part of), I'm always pulling for the SEC. I personally can't be 100% for Auburn and still be 100% for the SEC....because I would be working against the higher goal. I'm just talking about me! Nothing against those die hard 100% fans out there for something other than the SEC. Just doing me.

Now, in the same Spirit, I find that I cannot be 100% Republican or 100% Democrat, for they are both imperfect worldly organizations. I might have a preference for who I want to win but in the end, I'm 100% pulling for a higher order of which both parties fall under. I don't let my desired preference get in the way of pulling for the US. And I'm an even larger fan of

the Kingdom and Government of God. I want to always be sure that my desires don't work against the Kingdom because I want to be 100% for Him. My preferences, my desires, my culture, my race, while important to me, do not distract me for being 100% for Him....⁴ His glory.

Verse 4 - David's will, not God's will prevailed...for now. Just an observation, this whole matter doesn't seem like a big deal. It seems like a small thing and may not be morally or logically incorrect. But I think the point is that anything that is not motivated and directed by the Holy Spirit is from the flesh or soul and can easily land us in trouble. Even lack of faith can be a sin.

⁵ And they passed over Jordan, and pitched in Aroer, on the right side of the city that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and toward Jazer: ⁶ Then they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtimhodshi; and they came to Danjaan, and about to Zidon, ⁷ And came to the strong hold of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites, and of the Canaanites: and they went out to the south of Judah, even to Beersheba. ⁸ So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. ⁹ And Joab gave up the sum of the number of the people unto the king: and there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword; and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

When looking at 1 Chronicles 21:6...

But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

Some interesting observations are in this verse that leads one to question why Joab excluded these particular two tribes or groups from being involved in the King's policy. As I pondered this it started to become clearer by looking into what these tribes may have meant to Joab.

First, the priesthood comes out of the tribe of Levi. Second, Benjamin is the tribe or family from which Joab came from. This tribe was his kinfolk. So here we have it, Joab didn't want the King's decision to impact the workers in the temple and his family.

Key Application: There are some things that leaders and governments decide and do that we need to protect the church and our families from. What things of the world do we need to make sure that the church and our families, don't need to become overly involved in or focused on? Think about it.

¹⁰ And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

¹¹ For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, ¹² Go and say unto David, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.

It takes more than 9 months of unnecessary effort and trouble to complete what David asked. All during this time, his actions are not pleasing to God. As a result, God judges Israel because of David's act.

V10 – David confesses he has sinned. Knew deep down he had messed up. When did his heart feel the condemnation? Didn't sound like much of a mistake...but he realizes now it was a great sin.

- What did he do that was so bad?
- David asked for forgiveness. Wants the iniquity and this feeling of guilt to be removed, so he confesses again.
 - God can remove the guilt of sin; walk in that freedom of no condemnation when you follow these same steps.

V11 – God delivers a word through David's prophet Gad. Perhaps a reminder that he should have spoken to Gad before now.

Notice the process. If it wasn't for the word from God in verse 11, David may not have experienced the humility and repentance he needed to get back in right relationship with God. Look at the steps:

- David is humbled and realizes his need for God. The Word of God will reveal the need for God in your life.
- Next, David repents and turns from his sin and mistake by confessing his error. He turns from celebrating numbering the people to regretting it.
- The critical third step is David next places his entire hope and trust in God.
- Likewise, we must follow these same steps to be right with God. Our hope is in Him alone.

V12 – God gives him a choice between three punishment options.

¹³ So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land? Or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee? Or that there be three days' pestilence in thy land? Now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me.

¹⁴ And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

V13 – The choices were 7 years of famine; on the run from enemies for 3 months; three days pestilence.

V14 – David chooses to receive judgment from God rather than man; recognizes the mercy of God. Somehow, while he is being punished, he recognizes God still has mercy available.

- Sin brings men into straits.

Matthew Henry states sin needed to be punished.

So let's ask the question, "could all of this been avoided?" Yes. David could have avoided this by not being motivated by fear and pride. Follow the Spirit and check with God first.

Key observations about David's rationale to trust God rather than man.

- Real simple...don't put your trust in men, the world, governments, political parties, etc.
- Instead, put your trust and faith in God who has an abundance of mercy. His mercy is great and is new every day. The world and man doesn't have this kind of mercy apart from God.
- This is a key point in our "Feast" theology process. A believer really can't be merciful in the Spirit of the Lord (Level 5, Feast of Trumpets), unless they have gone through the first four steps/Feasts in being in right standing with God. The steps to be in proper alignment with God personally, places us in position to display the mercy of God.

¹⁵ So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

V15 – God brings the pestilence starting in the morning....70K die...number of perfection.

There are consequences and a price to pay for sins. Whatever pride David had from knowing the number, it is probably dealt with since his actions result in the significant loss of the number he once enjoyed. There is a real life application here. At the end of the matter, sin will result in more loss than you gain.

¹⁶ And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁷ And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? Let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

¹⁸ And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite. ¹⁹ And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.

V16 – Angel was bringing the plague and arrived at Jerusalem when God changed His mind. It was enough...the debt paid. Stopped by the threshing floor of Araunah = I shall shout for joy.

- Matthew Henry comments – mercy rejoices against judgment.
- It was going to be worse before God decides to step in again...that is His mercy. It could have been and should have been worse. Don't let what you're going through cause you to miss His mercy.
 - If you only focus on the mistake and the loss, you easily miss the mercy you just received.

V17 – David was able to see the angel. Confesses again...realizes the consequences of his decision. Intercedes for the people because the cause of this was his action so let it be on him. Now he is showing a concern for his people.

- Different degree of repentance?
- When you sin, others are effected.

So this is interesting, let's discuss some key observations.

- He had already confessed in verse 10, why does he confess here again in verse 17?
- Notice when he confessed the first time, it was for himself. He was trying to return to right standing with God. David was at step/Feast #3 before. But now he is preparing to take steps forward.
 - David was able to see the Angel. It was revealed to him (step #4). To me it seems David cycle back through the process from steps 1-4 as he reaches the 5th step (Feast of Trumpets) to display mercy.
- Whether you agree with my opinions above or not, one thing is clearly evident....David confesses the first time for himself. This time he is repenting over his concern for others.
- Once you are in a good restored place with God and He reveals to you, then it is time and you are ready to intercede and bring mercy for others.

V18 – After he prays to God, a word is received through Gad. Instructions are to build an altar on that threshing floor, owned by a Gentile. Note: As you progress through the Feast steps, you receive more revelation at each step.

- Threshing floor = barn or flat surface or floor where corn is crushed and broken.
- Altar – according to Matthew Henry is a token of our reconciliation with God.
- This is supposed to be the same location on Mt. Moriah, where Abraham had been and where the temple would later be built.

V19 – David obeys these instructions. When you obey, you are always headed up in the right direction.

²⁰ And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground. ²¹ And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people.

²² And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood. ²³ All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee.

²⁴ And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

²⁵ And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

V20-22 – Araunah greets and respects David as he arrives. Asks why he’s there.

- The buy the floor; build an altar; so the plague can stop...doing this to stop the judgment on the people.
- A sacrifice was needed to save the people from judgment.
- Araunah offers freely what David needs for a sacrifice.

V23 – 24 – David declines the free offer. David wants to pay for it. Not going to use someone else’s sacrifice to replace his own. He knows that true worship requires a sacrifice on our part.

Two types of offerings there...burnt offering and a peace offering. These two sacrifices are on behalf of the people/land. Plague is then stopped. In 1 Chronicles 21...the fire hits the sacrifice, not the person.

Burnt Offering – Lev 1:1-17

- Only clean, male and domestic animals used. Cost you something, tame and easily led.
- Without blemish, your best.
- Rom 12:1 – consecration....present ourselves as a living sacrifice. Sacrificial living. Christ a type of burnt offering (Eph 5:2). He died as our substitute...Mt. Moriah.
- Whole offering, not just a part. A sweet savor to God. Not for sin, for devotion. Nothing held back.
- The sacrificed animal represents us and is for us. We still get to live.

Peace Offering – Lev 3, 7

- Thanksgiving offering, could be male or female.
- Offering of reconciliation. Type of Lord’s Supper.

The burnt offering for sin and the peace offering for fellowship.

Note – when David obeys and sacrifices there (step # 6, Feast of Atonement), God delivers them, hears their prayers and stops the plague. The land enters peace (step #7, Feast of Tabernacles).

The threshing floor is often a picture of end time prophesy and how God will deliver His people.

Observations from 1 Chronicles 21

While 2 Samuel 24 provides the historical aspects of this time, 1 Chronicles reveals some of the underlying spiritual aspects behind some of these actions. We will take a look at these additional revelations.

And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

1. Satan is involved and attacks the people by trying to get the leader (David) to sin. There is no change in this strategy by the enemy today. He still tries to attack God's people through the actions of leaders who do not make spiritual decisions.
 - a. Application – as believers, we must be praying for our leaders since the enemy still desires to provoke them into bad decisions.
 - b. This applies to praying not only for political and government leaders, but for all those in any leadership or position of responsibility. This includes pastors, parents, etc. If they are in charge of anything, the enemy will show up to provoke them to respond outside of faith.

³ And Joab answered, The LORD make his people a hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? Why then doth my lord require this thing? Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

2. Joab points out that what David wants to do may cause the people to trespass. We have certainly seen application of this in our politics where certain messages have caused people to not respond in the right spirit.

⁶ But Levi and Benjamin counted him not among them: for the king's word was abominable to Joab.

3. We point out earlier how we should follow Joab's example and not let certain decisions from leadership which are contrary to the will of God, impact our churches and families. There are certain laws which allow people to do some acts legally, but some of these laws should not apply or be used in the church or in our families, e.g., abortion, discrimination, etc.

⁷ And God was displeased with this thing; therefore he smote Israel.

4. While it may not seem like a big deal and may not seem morally wrong, if God is not pleased with it, then you better not do it. Since it is impossible to please God in the flesh, when we don't act based upon the influence of the Spirit...we can easily displease God.

¹⁶ And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces.

5. The Angel was in place because the plan was that judgement was to come to Jerusalem. That was the plan. However, obedience and sacrifice with a humble approach (following the steps in the process), can allow God to change the plan and outcomes for your good. God can still stop what was supposed to happen from happening.
6. Notice life and death is between heaven and earth. We need to make sure our focus is on heaven. God gives us a choice.
7. We see leadership by example as the elders follow David's humble example and seek God's mercy. Leaders and their actions can impact how other people will react. Be careful.

²⁰ And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves. Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

8. Ornan also saw what David saw in the Angel. He must have been in right standing with God to have received this revelation.

²⁶ And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD; and he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering.

9. Here is clear evidence that God is pleased....His approval came from heaven in the form of fire on the altar of sacrifice. Perhaps if/when we follow the steps of David and humbly seek His face, He will accept our sacrifice for ourselves and others.

²⁸ At that time when David saw that the LORD had answered him in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.

10. This is key in that David sacrificed in the place where he saw God answer his prayer and deliver him and the people. It is a very special place because God moved for him in that particular place. This place also has future historical significance as the temple is to be built on this site (see 1 Chronicles 22:1-2).
 - a. Judgement stopped and mercy are found at the threshing floor.
 - b. Death stopped and salvation is found there as well.
 - c. Revelation and peace with God are found there too.

²⁹ For the tabernacle of the LORD, which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt offering, were at that season in the high place at Gibeon. ³⁰ But David could not go before it to enquire of God: for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.

11. This is a powerful verse especially in the season of the COVID-19 impact. David cannot or will not travel to where the Tabernacle was because it was not where he was and he was afraid because of the judgment taking place. Let's be clear, it may not be that David was afraid of the plague upon himself, rather it could be that he feared having to travel so far away when there was an immediate need since the Angel was there. As the King, he probably feared leaving the people under such circumstances.
12. Here is perhaps a COVID-19 application. We may not due to the plague be able to worship or sacrifice where we used to or where we normally would have prior to the plague. That doesn't mean that God won't accept your sacrifice where you are. In fact, if it wasn't for the plague, David may not have seen the revelation and experience that God was getting ready to do a new thing in a new place.
 - a. We may all need to look through Spiritual eyes to see if God is trying to show us He is about to do a new thing in a new place.
 - b. God was not limited to just hearing David in Gibeon, He moved for David in an unlikely place as a result of the plague.



- c. A tough season may reveal and move us into position where God works it out in our favor.
- d. There was an expiration date on the plague...be encouraged....this season will pass.