

Finishing Well

Lesson #31 Enemies That War In My Soul - JEBUSITES August 25, 2021
Threshing Floor

The account of the threshing floor is linked to David's sinful census in: II Sam. 24 & I Chron. 21

Question: Why is God so angry at David and Israel?

II Sam. 24:1 And again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, 'Go and take a census of Israel and Judah.'

The parallel account reveals who incited David to take the census:

I Chron. 21:1 And Satan stood up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel.

- This discrepancy is often explained by the understanding that, in order to achieve His purposes, sometimes God sovereignly permits Satan to act.

God can use Satan in various ways, with the result being the refining, disciplining, and purification of disobedient believers [Luke 22:31-32; I Cor. 5:1-5; II Cor. 12:7-10].

I Chronicles 21 opens with "And" which should cause us to look at the immediate context.

I Chron. 20 closes with: These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

- What a record of notable exploits and victories for David and his mighty men.

Newton: It was a remarkable juncture in the history of David. The ancient foes of Israel, after centuries of conflict, had at last succumbed. Even the powerful sons of Goliath had been so crushed by his vanquisher that they no longer made any effort to antagonize. But not only had the surrounding nations been subdued, they were despoiled, and the huge quantities of gold which had been taken from them was dedicated unto the Lord. [I Chron. 18; 20:4]

➤ AND Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel. [I Chron. 21:1] Expositors have pointed out that these words "stood up" have a forensic force, being an expression which alludes to the posture of those who accuse or charge another person with a crime in a court of law.

- It appears the spiritual condition of Israel at this time gave the adversary an advantage.
- He promptly represented their condition to the Lord as a reason why they should be punished. [II Samuel 24:1]

Pink: Nothing gives Satan so easy an approach to and such an advantage over us as when we are swelled by a sense of our self-importance. Few things are more detestable unto God than a heart that is inflated by egotism. [7 things God hates: 1st > "A proud look" Prov. 6:16-19].

II Sam. 24:2 For 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.

There were 2 reasons for taking a census in those days:

- (1) to assess a tax on the population
- (2) to prepare to conscript an army.

Note: The land was at peace. There was no need to conscript an army. Israel had extended its borders and was a recognized power.

Question: Why was God angry at David? In those times, a man only had the right to count or number what belonged to him. Israel did not belong to David; Israel belonged to God.

Morgan: "David was tempted to take some of the glory in himself. He looked at how Israel had grown and prospered during his reign - it was remarkable indeed. The count was a way to take credit to himself. The spirit of vainglory in numbers had taken possession of the people and the king, and there was a tendency to trust in numbers and forget God.

"This census was taken so David could take pride in the strength of his army. In determining his military strength, he was beginning to trust more in military power than in God."

II Sam. 24:3 But Joab said to the king, "May the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times as many as they are, while the eyes of my lord the king *can still see*; but why does my lord the king delight in this thing?"

- Joab: God has always made the people of Israel appear to be a hundred times stronger than they actually were. Walk by faith and trust God.

Pink: If he were intoxicated with the successes which Heaven had granted to his arms, and was more occupied with them than their Giver, then that would readily account for his disastrous lapse, for "pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

Key Point: If we feel self-sufficient and put confidence in our strength apart from God, we will soon fall to Satan's schemes.

Note: God provided a WAY OUT in Joab's counsel, but David seemed spurred on by arrogance.

Pink: "In this instance it is clear at least that God permitted Satan to tempt David, and David being left to himself yielded to the temptation and sinned. Moreover, the fact that David yielded so readily, and so obstinately rejected the counsel of his servants, seems to indicate that he had not been walking with holy watchfulness before God."

Ex.30:12 God told Moses, "When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, then Each One of them shall give a Ransom for himself to the LORD when you count them, so there will be no plague among them when you count them."

It was up to God to command a census, and if David counted, he should only have done it at God's command, receiving a ransom to "atone" for the counting.

- The ransom, $\frac{1}{2}$ shekel, was required of those 21 and older; those would go to war.
- This money was to help provide upkeep of the Tabernacle.
- This would keep Israel from a plague.
- This eventually grew to the custom of the "temple tax" that was used to pay for temple expenses. [Ex. 30:12-16]

Key Point: This ransom wasn't to help for an army. It was to support the worship of God. Help the Tabernacle and work towards putting Israel's focus on God - not on their army. The Jewish historian Josephus records [*Antiquities*, 7:12:1]

"Now king David was desirous to know how many ten thousands there were of the people, but forgot the commands of Moses, who told them beforehand, that if the multitude were numbered, they should pay half a shekel to God for every head."

- Conclusion: David didn't pay the "ransom."

II Sam. 24:10 Now David's heart troubled him after he had counted the people.

So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, LORD, please overlook the guilt of Your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."

II Sam. 24:12 The prophet Gad brought David a message from the LORD:

This is what the Lord says: "I am imposing upon you three choices; choose for yourself one of them, and I will do it to you." So Gad came to David and told him, and said to him...

- 3 years of famine [II Sam. 24:13 says 7 years of famine??] Explanation Below
- 3 months of fleeing from your enemies while they pursue you & overtake you
- 3 days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel.

Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to Him that sent me.

3 years or 7 years: The key lies in understanding the greater context of the account.

II Sam. 21:1 Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David inquired of the LORD. And the LORD answered, "It is because of Saul and his bloodthirsty house, because he killed the Gibeonites."

- Israel had already experienced 3 years of famine before David numbered the people of Israel and Judah—for reasons unrelated to the situation in question.

II Samuel 24:1-7 records the initiation of the census.

- 24:8 "when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of 9 months and 20 days." [Famine is approaching the 4th year.]

So according to the text, numbering the people was nearly a year-long process.

There is no clear indication that God had suspended the initial three-year famine prior to the events in chapter 24. Now if God had combined three *additional* years of famine [I Chron. 21:12] with the 3 years of *initial* famine, and a possible intervening year while the census was conducted, the resulting overall famine would have totaled about 7 years [II Samuel 24:13].

I Chronicles: No mention of the ongoing 4 years of famine in the land prior to David's sin.

He recorded the length of David's punishment as 3 years of famine.

So were there seven years of famine or only three? The answer is BOTH. Had David chosen this option, there would have been seven years of famine altogether in Israel, because four years had already occurred, and the punishment offered to David was three additional years of famine.

Consider: Choices 1 & 2 would have involved some level of dependency upon the mercy of man.

- Famine would require Israel to seek food from other nations
- The warfare of the enemy would be as severe as the enemy desired.

Conclusion: David chose to rely on the mercy of God. The plague was God's most direct form of punishment and they could only look to God for relief and mercy.

The discipline that he will experience should not be taken lightly, but it is the discipline of a loving father, discipline meant to draw David near to Him: [Heb. 12:7-13]

II Sam. 24:14 Then David said to God, "I am in great distress. Let us now fall into the hand of the Lord, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into human hands."

II Sam. 24:15 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.

C.F. Stuart "Yet it is also to be noted that God's scourge fell immediately upon the people themselves, for it was against them Jehovah had a controversy (v. 1). A solemn time it must have been. Pestilence was walking in darkness, and destruction was wasting at noonday, The destroying angel was actively at work, and no man was able to withstand him. Throughout the length and breadth of the land death was claiming its victims. Who would next be struck no one could tell. No remedy availed to cure the sick. No intercession, however urgent, succeeded in preserving the life of a beloved one. All joy must have fled: all energy for ordinary pursuits must have been paralyzed. God was working, and in power. Of old He had laid bare His arm and worked in power on behalf of Israel; now His hand was outstretched, but in this deadly way against them. Could any charge Him with injustice? No. They deserved the chastisement, though David's act in numbering them was the proximate cause for this visitation. Helpless, how helpless were they all. Their only hope was in the mercy of God."

I Chron. 21:15 And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the Lord beheld, and He repented Him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand.

And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

II Sam. 24:16 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. [Even in His rebuke God still shows His love and mercy.]

And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing place of Araunah the Jebusite.

Araunah = original Hurrian name Ornan = derived name in Hebrew

Jebusite, thresher, means to tread down or trample with the effect of destruction.

- A threshing floor like Araunah's would have been a large, open, elevated area to facilitate threshing and winnowing.
- The threshing floor, a flat surface that was smooth and hard, was used to tread on the husk of the freshly picked grain.
- After the harvest, the grain was separated from the straw and husks by beating it manually
- Animals such as oxen were used to tread on the husk to separate the edible grain from the scaly, inedible chaff. Flails or sticks could be used for this purpose.
- They also used a threshing sledge, an arrangement of heavy boards with abrasive material (e.g., sharp rocks) on the bottom side. The sledge was pulled by draft animals back and forth across the grain to separate the tough outer husk from the kernel.

- Then winnowing forks were used to throw the mixture into the air so the wind would blow away the chaff and leave the good grain on the threshing floor.

Both the Old and New Testaments refer to the threshing floor as a symbol of judgment.

Hosea prophesied that, because Israel has repeatedly turned from God to false idols, His judgment upon them would scatter them to the winds as the chaff from the threshing floor.

Hosea 13:3 "Therefore they will be like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears, like chaff swirling from a threshing floor, like smoke escaping through a window."

Jer. 51:33 pronounces a similar fate on the Babylonians who persecuted Israel, likening their fate to the trampled sheaves on the threshing floor.

I Chron. 21:16 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.

What did the Lord "behold"? David and his servants, "clothed in sackcloth," fallen "upon their faces." Then follows immediately David's supplication.

II Sam. 24:17 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.

I Chron. 21:17 And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on Thy people, that they should be plagued.

- David had focused on his thousands which now must be drastically reduced.
- At the end of the judgment, an angel had slain 1/20 of David's military might.
- David refers to Israel as "Thy people." In his folly he had regarded them as his people, but in his wisdom, he now saw them as the Lord's.

Thomas Scott: "Whatever we idolize or grow proud of, God will generally take from us or else convert it into a cross."

Pink: It is the one clothed with sackcloth, on his face in the dust, whose intercession prevails with God! It is the one who is thoroughly humbled, who is brought to the place of self-loathing, and who takes upon his own spirit the afflictions of others, who alone is qualified to plead on their behalf.

Key Point: Let us seek constantly to bear in mind that, the only place where we are safe from a fall is to lie in the dust before God.

Key Point: David, a type of Jesus Christ, presents himself as the intercessor before God: stepping into the breach and making supplication for his afflicted kingdom.

David said, Smite me, the shepherd, but let the flock be spared.

God would not allow David to suffer in the stead of all Israel. No, none could fill that awful and honorable place of substitution but David's Son and Lord. David foreshadowed

The Good Shepherd, who took upon Himself the sins of His sheep and died in their place.

II Sam. 24:18-25 Obedience Has A Price Tag: God had a different solution > sacrifice

It was David's sin that led to God's judgment and punishment. But David confessed his sin. He needed to offer the proper sacrifices to God for his sin to be covered.

This was always done at the tabernacle of the Lord at Gibeon. But God commanded:

II Sam. 24:18-19 And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the Lord commanded.

I Chron. 21:18 Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up, and set up an altar unto the LORD in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

Note: The context of King David's initiative to purchase that threshing floor was the need to stop the Angel of Death, who was exacting the punishment for sin.

Recall: David's sin = Pride = He counted as his [the people] that belonged to the LORD.

They had just won major victories over the Philistines. God's anger was also against Israel. He and the people focused on their military might and their self-reliance rather than focusing on and worshipping God. He did not collect the ransom which was to be used to support the Tabernacle and the worship of God.

David began to make his way up to the place where the angel of the LORD had been halted.

The Significance of Mt. Moriah = a ridge system that starts about 600 meters above sea level.

It rises to about 740 meters = site of threshing floor & Temple Mount

The peak of Mt. Moriah = Place where Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac

- The place where God the Father will give His only Begotten Son as The Sacrifice
777 meters

I Chron. 21:20 Ornan turned back and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves.

Now Ornan was threshing wheat.

Note: Even after David captured Jerusalem from the Jebusites, Mt. Moriah [chosen by God] is again trodden underfoot by Ornan the Jebusite who used God's most sacred place as a threshing floor.

II Sam. 24:20-21 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.

²¹And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant?

And David said, To buy the threshing floor of thee [from the Jebusite], to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people.

I Chron. 21:21-22 And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David, and went out of the threshing floor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.

Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshing floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the LORD: thou shalt grant it me for the full price: that the plague may be stayed from the people.

II Sam. 24:22-23 Araunah's response: And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems 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.

Note: Extra Jewish Biblical writings say Araunah was the last pre-Israelite ruler of Jerusalem.

I Chron. 21:23 And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt offerings, and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat offering; I give it all.

Reminded me: Matt. 4:8-10 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. ¹⁰ Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Satan offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world without the sacrifice of the cross. For Jesus to gain all the kingdoms of the world and provide salvation, it will cost Him the FULL PRICE.

David's Response: II Sam. 24: 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 threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver.

I Chron. 21:24-25 And king David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings without cost.

²⁵ So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.

A sacrifice that doesn't cost anything is not a sacrifice at all. David understood that to demonstrate his repentance and his faith in the mercy of God, he needed to pay for the site and supply the oxen, threshing sledges and wheat for the offerings. The Full Price

II Sam. 24:25 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.

I Chron. 21:26-28 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.

²⁷ And the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof.

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

Note: David's sin was not completely dealt with until there was blood shed. [Heb. 9:22]

This site became the Temple Mount II Sam. 24:16-24; I Chron. 21:22-30

II Chron. 3:1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

- Thousands upon thousands of animals were sacrificed each year to atone for sin.

God took David's sin of pride and self-reliance and turned the entire situation around so that the threshing place became not just "a place" of worship but would be the place for Solomon's Temple where the Shekinah Glory of the Lord will dwell.

The Threshing Floor: A place of confession, offering, purification to prepare for worship.

Ruth 3:1-5 Ruth [picture of the Bride of Christ] prepared to meet Boaz [type of Christ, our kinsman redeemer on the threshing floor.

1. 3:3a She washed herself

- If we want a deeper relationship with our Lord, we must "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. [II Cor. 7:1]
- We must separate ourselves from what defiles or pollutes us.
Clean out our library, CD's, DVD's, magazines, TV.
- If the OT priests came into God's presence defiled, they were in danger of death.

Eph. 5:26 That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word,

2. 3:3b She anointed herself

- Anointing oil speaks of the presence and working of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- ALL believers have received the anointing of the Spirit. [I John 2:20, 27]
- Therefore, we ought to be a "fragrance of Christ" to God the Father.

3. 3:3c She changed clothes

- Put off the garments of a sorrowing widow and put on the garments for a wedding.
- Salvation is pictured as a change of clothes. Christian living means taking off the "graveclothes" of the old life and putting on the "grace clothes" of the new life.
- We cannot come into God's presence in our own righteousness. All our righteousness is as filthy rags. [Isa. 64:6]
- If you want to enter into a deeper fellowship with your Lord, then let your garments always be white and let your head lack no oil. [Eccl. 9:8]

4. 3:3-4 She learned how to present herself to Him.

- Put herself at the feet of the Lord of the Harvest. He did the rest.

5. 3:5 Ruth promised to obey.

- All that you say to me, I will do.
- She was a hearer and a doer of the Word. A willingness to obey
- She submitted to Boaz.

Rom. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

It is not a life of cheap grace without taking up our cross. It is a place of daily submission to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a place where we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice with a humble heart on God's threshing floor so He can burn away from us everything that is chaff - - not like Jesus. This act of worship can be seen as stepping onto God's threshing floor, to meet with and commune with our Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. What are you willing to do to prepare yourself?