

2 Samuel 24

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Preacher: Jonathan Lee

[0:00] Good evening, church.

Tonight, we will look at the last chapter of 2 Samuel, chapter 24.

We'll come to the conclusion of our series on Book of Samuel. Last week, a group of kids from Bridges of Hope mentoring program told me that I speak with an accent.

And jokingly, I told the kids, you guys are breaking my heart. I've been practicing past 30 years trying to perfect my English.

So pardon my accent and put up with my accent for a little while. So this chapter has three sections.

[1:12] First section is about David's census. And then the second section is the Lord's judgment of David's sin.

And then the third section, David builds an altar. And as we study this chapter, we will see what does this...

You may think this is just a moment in ancient history, but it's not. It teaches us many things.

And we will look into this tonight. Let us pray. Lord Jesus, thank you for gathering us here tonight. Lord God, we ask for your grace and mercy.

And Lord, we pray that your words will touch each one of us in different ways. For those who need hope, give them hope.

[2:17] For those who need healing, give them healing. But Lord, teach us about our perfect King, Jesus, tonight.

In your mighty name we pray. Amen. All right, let us turn to... In your pew Bible, it's page 277.

Page 277. 2 Samuel chapter 24. Again, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel.

And he incited David against them, saying, Go number Israel and Judah. So the king said to Joab, the commander of the army who was with him, Go through all the tribes of Israel.

Go through all the tribes of Israel. From Dan to Beersheba, and number the people that I may know the number of the people. 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 still see it.

[3:42] But why does my lord the king delight in this thing? But the king's war prevailed against Joab and the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.

They crossed the Jordan and began from Aror and from the city that is in the middle of the valley toward Gad and onto Jazar.

Then they came to Gilead and to Kadesh in the land of the Hittites. And they came to Dan and from Dan they went around to Sidon and came to the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites.

And they went out to the Negev of Judah at Beersheba. So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to the king. In Israel there were eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword. And the men of Judah were five hundred thousand.

[4:56] Now the beginning of this chapter, it was a little confusing. Why would God incite David against Israel?

Why would God tell David to go number his people? And then it was counted as great sin. It was hard to comprehend.

But if you look at the parallel account in 1 Chronicles chapter 21, we may have a better understanding. So let's turn to page 350 in your pew Bible.

And like I said, this is the parallel account of the same event. And let's see how this was recorded in 1 Chronicles.

1 Chronicles chapter 21. Then Satan stood against Israel and incited David to number Israel.

[6:08] So David said to Joab and the commanders of the army, go number Israel from Beersheba to Dan. And then I'm going to skip down to verse 6.

But Joab did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering. For the king's command was abhorrent to Joab.

King's command was so offensive and detestable. Joab did not include Levi and Benjamin. And we'll come back to this.

So in God's sovereignty, he may have allowed Satan to incite David.

Because God neither tempts men or neither get tempted. And that's in James chapter 1 verses 13 through 15.

[7:12] It is our own desire. When we are lured and enticed by our own desire. And when our desire gives birth to sin.

And then when sin fully grows, it brings death. So when you look at this account of what happened, I believe King David, I was trying to figure out why did King David go against his military commander's advice.

Joab said, my Lord, don't do this. You are committing sin. Was it King David to pride?

That he wanted to number the military men and to see how much he has accomplished? Or was it because he, for the moment, did he lack faith in God?

Or did he not trust God completely? Maybe he was worrying about another invasion and wondering, do I have enough military power to defend my country?

[8:29] Whatever the reason was, whether he did this out of pride, whether he did this out of, you know, lacking trust in God, it was counted as a great sin.

His commander, Joab, fully understood that. And in 1 Chronicles account, he asks King David, why do you cause our nation to be guilty by doing this?

And yet King David, maybe he was so blinded by his own pride and his sin, he just pushed forward.

So his word prevailed against Joab and the rest of the commanders of the army. Now, the first census was done in the time of Moses.

The first census, God told Moses to number all the people except the tribe of Levi. The second census, God told Moses the same thing.

- [9 : 46] Number the people except the tribe of Levi. Because he wanted to know how he can divide the land and give inheritance according to the number of tribes.
- Now, King David here, he tells Joab, go number all tribe. In 1 Chronicles, Joab purposely excluded Levi.
- So Joab knew that was also wrong, that you are not, when you do the census, you are not supposed to include Levi.
- But King David's command was, go ahead and go through all the tribe. Now, I think we can relate to this because we also, out of our own desire, we conceive an idea and that can be totally against God.
- And sometimes, just like Joab advised King David not to do this because you're about to bring guilt of this entire nation. We sometimes hear the same kind of advice through our brothers and sisters in Christ when you listen to a sermon or when you are reading scripture.
- [11 : 23] You get this kind of conviction. And yet, a lot of times, don't we just ignore that and just push forward because we are enticed by our own desire.
- So I think we can relate to what David did here. Moving on to verse 10.
- But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the Lord, I have sinned greatly in what I have done.
- But now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of your servant for I have done very foolishly. And when David arose in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, Go and say to David, Thus says the Lord, Three things I offer you.
- Choose one of them that I may do it to you. So Gad came to David and told him and said to him, Shall three years of famine come to you in your land?
- [12 : 47] Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? David must have said, Oh no, not again. I've been chased by Saul.
- I've been chased by Philistines. I've been even chased by my own son Absalom. So he must have shook his head. Or shall there be three days pestilence in your land?
- Now consider and decide what answer I shall return to him who sent me. Then David said to Gad, I am in great distress. Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great.
- But let me not fall into the hand of man. So the Lord sent the pestilence on Israel from the morning until the appointed time. And there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba 70,000 men.
- And when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented from the calamity and said to the angel who was working destruction among the people, It is enough.
- [13 : 56] Now stay your hand. And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Arona the Jebusite. Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel who was striking the people and said, Behold, I have sinned and I have done wickedly.
- But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand be against me and against my father's house. So when you read this part, you know, you can't help but wonder 70,000 men died because of what King David did.
- So Pastor Matt and I were talking about this the other day and he brought out a really excellent point. we're living in such an individualistic culture and society.
- You know, we immediately we think as long as I didn't do the wrong, you know, why should I suffer? King David did this wrong and what these 70,000 people have to do with it.

But if you think in a more communal sense, for example, let's use a sports team. If a head coach makes a really poor, almost ridiculously dumb decision at a championship game against his three assistant coaches and let's say they lost the championship game, who takes the consequences?

- [15:47] Who suffers? Is it just the head coach or the whole team or even the fan base? Another example will be say a father of family of six.

This dad gets really greedy. He overcomes with greed and then he makes really bad financial decisions.

He decides to invest in some get-rich-quick scheme, invest all his savings, all the kids' college savings, even takes out a home equity loan and just put everything into that investment and then the money starts to bleed.

Now, who suffers the consequences? Is it just the dad or is it the whole family, his wife, his children? So, when the head of the nation, like King David, when he commits this sin, unfortunately, it's the 70,000 of men got killed by the pestilence.

man and he is the king of the king David, when he's confronted by the prophet, he doesn't give out excuses.

- [17:21] He immediately humbles himself and then he starts to repent. a few chapters ago, when he killed Riah, when he took his wife, prophet Nathan came and confronted David and King David did not give any excuse.

He told prophet Nathan he has committed sin against God and he started to repent. and he does the same thing here. When you read verse 17, King David says, behold, I have sinned and I have done wickedly but these sheep, what have they done?

Please let your hand be against me and against my father's house. So he owns up to his problem and he throws himself at the mercy of God.

Verse 14, then David said to Gad, I am in great distress. Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great, but let me not fall into the hand of man.

Are we ready to do that? when we falter, when we fall, when we commit sin against God, are we ready?

- [19:03] When somebody, when God points it out to us, that you have done this wrong, you know, whether through reading a scripture, again, whether while you're listening to a sermon, whether through your brothers or sisters in Christ, point something out to you.

are we ready to humble ourselves like King David immediately and then start to seek God's mercy? What he said here is really amazing, that he wants to fall into hand of God for his mercy is great, but don't let me fall into the hand of man.

in the third section, verse 18, and Gad came that day to David and said to him, go up, raise an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Arona the Jebusite.

David went up at Gad's word as the Lord commanded, and when Arona looked down, he saw the king and his servants coming on toward him, and Arona went out and paid homage to the king with his face to the ground, and Arona said, why has my lord the king come to his servant?

David said, to buy the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to the Lord, that the plague may be averted from the people.

- [20:45] Then Arona said to David, let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good to him. Here are the oxen for the burnt offering, and the threshing sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood.

All this, O king, Arona gives to the king. And Arona said to the king, may the lord your god accept you. But the king said to Arona, no, but I will buy it from you for a price.

I will not offer burnt offerings to the lord, my god, they cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver.

And David built there an altar to the lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the lord responded to the plea for the land.

And the plague was averted from people. temple. So where David builds the altar and this is where Solomon would build God's temple later on.

[22 : 06] And here if you look at verse 24, King David said, I will not offer burnt offerings to the lord, my god, that cost me nothing.

Does this remind you of something? That it cost? Well, the sacrifice for our atonement costed God, his son's life.

As I was reading this verse, yes, just like David wanted to bring an offering that cost something.

Our atonement came at a great price to God, his son's life. Now, King David, as we have studied the book of Samuel, was a great king, just like Pastor Nick preached this morning.

He was a man after God's own heart. Israelites maybe, you know, they thought this is the king. But he had his flaws, he had his faults.

[23 : 29] And this particular incident, look what happened to his people. Because of his sin, 70,000 people have died. died. Now, let's look at our king, King Jesus.

We certainly don't pay any consequences of his wrongdoing. There is no wrongdoing. But he, the king, took all our sin, all our flaws, all our shortcomings, all our wickedness, he took all that upon himself and took the consequences of our sin on himself.

Now, here is the perfect king. so, where are you on this chapter?

I would like for us to think about that this week. Are you on, like David, something is conceived in your heart and that it's against God's will?

And are you struggling with it? Or did somebody like Joab approach you and pointed that out to you already saying, please don't do this?

[25 : 19] Or are you at a stage where you're struggling with this sin and not knowing what to do? No matter where you are, be like King David.

Seek God's mercy. And where can we find God's mercy? Bring it to Jesus. Bring it to the feet of Jesus at the cross.

Because he die for us. He took all our sin, all our shortcomings. Romans said, we all fall short of glory.

And that gap between us and God was filled by Jesus. He's the perfect mediator. So no matter where we are, no matter where you are, whatever you're struggling with, bring it to Jesus.

And if you look at this chapter, it starts out, King David committing this sin. And then there comes God's mercy.

[26 : 38] And then at the end, where King David builds the altar, where he, God, receives his burnt offering and peace offering as a sign of reconciliation.

That's where Solomon builds God's temple. Now, isn't that sort of like us, our pattern?

You know, we bring our sin. We struggle with our sin. We bring this. Jesus. But then God, through his mercy, through Jesus' blood, he will transform that into something beautiful.

Gives us eternal life, salvation, promise for the future. But we need to come to the feet of Jesus at the cross.

So, this morning we celebrated Palm Sunday, our Lord entered Jerusalem riding a donkey.

[27:53] And Jesus is a humble king. And I would just like to read from 2nd Philippians verses 5 to 11.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death.

Even death on a cross, therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father.

So my brothers and sisters in Christ, are you longing for something like the Israelites hoped that King David would be the king, kind of like a perfect king?

are we putting our hopes in something like that? Or are you ready to put your hopes in Jesus, who is truly the perfect king, who is a humble king, who died for us?

[29:57] Jesus, and but it didn't just end there. Next Sunday, we will celebrate the risen Lord, resurrection of Christ.

and when you believe in Jesus we will rise just like he did and that's what he promised us so this Palm Sunday think about our perfect king think about what he did for all of us and how he promised that he will come back with his saints in glory to take us home that we'll be with him eternally where there will be no condemnation no more tears no more sickness and this is the message of the the perfect king let us pray

Lord our God we thank you Lord thank you for sending your son Jesus to take away the sin of the world to take away all our sin and give us salvation and eternal life Lord Father as we think about our Lord Jesus this week Lord please help us to commit our lives to you Lord Lord thank you and Lord we pray all this in Jesus name

Amen