

Bible Readings

Old Testament Reading

2 Samuel 24:1-25

David Enrolls the Fighting Men

24 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."

2 So the king said to Joab and the army commanders with him, "Go throughout the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and enrol the fighting men, so that I may know how many there are."

3 But Joab replied to the king, "May the LORD your God multiply the troops a hundred times over, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king want to do such a thing?"

4 The king's word, however, overruled Joab and the army commanders; so they left the presence of the king to enrol the fighting men of Israel.

5 After crossing the Jordan, they camped near Aroer, south of the town in the gorge, and then went through Gad and on to Jazer. **6** They went to Gilead and the region of Tahtim Hodshi, and on to Dan Jaan and around toward Sidon. **7** Then they went toward the fortress of Tyre and all the towns of the Hivites and Canaanites. Finally, they went on to Beersheba in the Negev of Judah.

8 After they had gone through the entire land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

9 Joab reported the number of the fighting men to the king: In Israel there were eight hundred thousand able-bodied men who could handle a sword, and in Judah five hundred thousand.

10 David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done.

Now, LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.”

¹¹ Before David got up the next morning, the word of the LORD had come to Gad the prophet, David’s seer: ¹² “Go and tell David, ‘This is what the LORD says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.’”

¹³ So Gad went to David and said to him, “Shall there come on you three years of famine in your land? Or three months of fleeing from your enemies while they pursue you? Or three days of plague in your land? Now then, think it over and decide how I should answer the one who sent me.”

¹⁴ David said to Gad, “I am in deep distress. Let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into human hands.”

¹⁵ So the LORD sent a plague on Israel from that morning until the end of the time designated, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died. ¹⁶ When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, “Enough! Withdraw your hand.” The angel of the LORD was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. ¹⁷ When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD, “I have sinned; I, the shepherd, have done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family.”

David Builds an Altar

¹⁸ On that day Gad went to David and said to him, “Go up and build an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” ¹⁹ So David went up, as the LORD had commanded through Gad. ²⁰ When

Araunah looked and saw the king and his officials coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

²¹ Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?"

"To buy your threshing floor," David answered, "so I can build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped."

²² Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. ²³ Your Majesty, Araunah gives all this to the king." Araunah also said to him, "May the LORD your God accept you."

²⁴ But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them. ²⁵ David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the LORD answered his prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

New Testament Reading

Romans 5:1-11

Peace and Hope

5 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And

hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

⁶ You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

⁹ Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! ¹⁰ For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! ¹¹ Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Sermon

God's Wrath Satisfied (2 Samuel 24:1-25 & Romans 5:1-11)

29-Nov-20

This is our **final look at the book of 2 Samuel**.

So please turn your Bibles to 2 Samuel - **chapter 24**.

If you'd like to take notes - you can use the **outline**.

Let me **pray** first...

Let's pray...

Intro

- In this chapter we see **David commit a sin**
- So, first up then - **what is sin?**

[PowerPoint 1-Sin?]



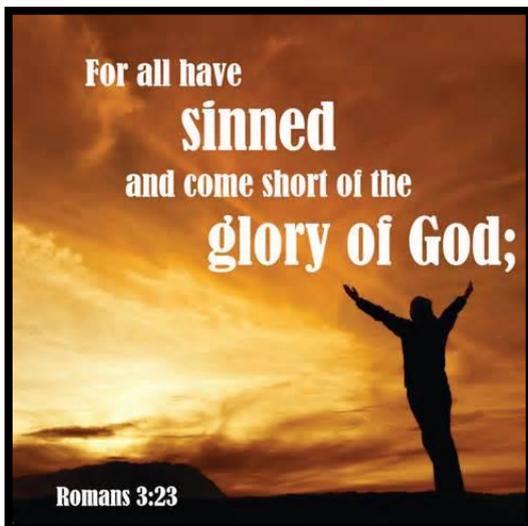
[PowerPoint 2-defintion]

The Dictionary says sin is: *An immoral act (wrong behaviour) considered to be a transgression against divine law [God's rules]*

You see **God** has a set of rules - and unfortunately, we all break these rules

As Romans 3:23 says:

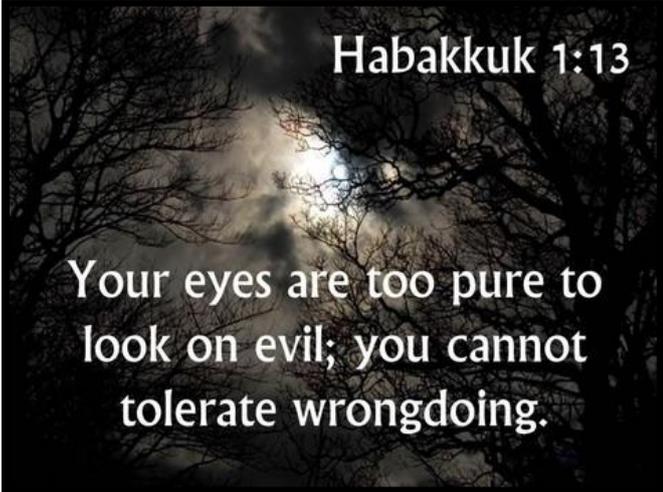
[PowerPoint 3-Romans 3:23]



- We all fall short of God's perfect standards

- Sin first came into this world with the disobedience of Adam and Eve - when they disobeyed God's rule - not to eat the forbidden fruit
- And we all then inherited that sinful nature
- Also - God cannot look upon sin - as Habakkuk 1:13

[PowerPoint 4-Hab 1:13]



- Sin makes God angry!
- And sin separates us from God

[PowerPoint 5-separates]



- As we see in our chapter 2 Sam 24 - **God's anger burned**

The Sin Committed (2 Sam 24 vv1-9)

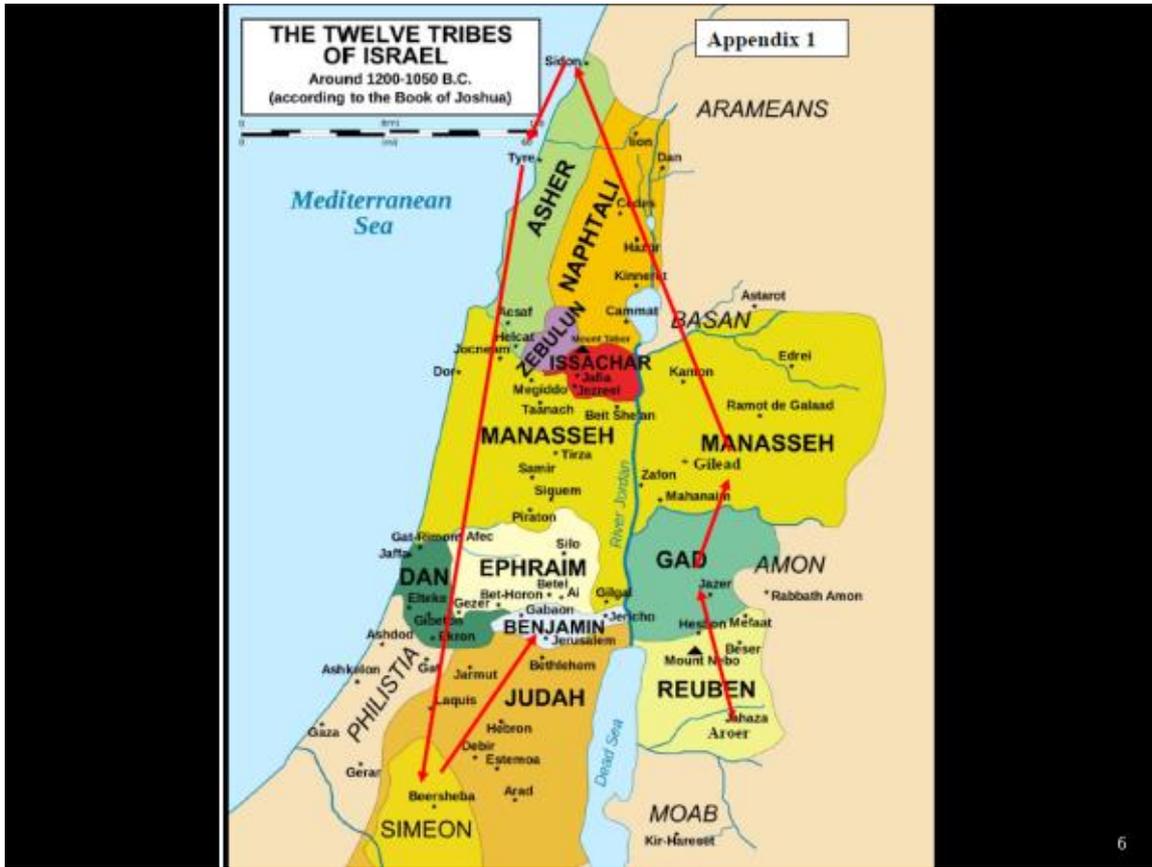
- See V1 - *Again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go and take a census of Israel and Judah."*
- This verse implies it was **God's idea to encourage David to take a census**
- But in the **parallel story** from **1 Chronicles 21:1** - we read that it was Satan (the tempter, the deceiver, the liar) who encouraged David to take the census
- We can reconcile this apparent contradiction by saying Satan tempted David to take the census - and God allowed it
- Why does God get angry about the census?
- Why is this a sin?

[PowerPoint 6-Exodus 30:12]

- Well back in Exodus 30:12 - **God had told the nation of Israel**
When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, each one must pay the LORD a ransom for his life at the time he is counted. Then no plague will come on them when you number them.
- The **principle of Exodus 30:12** is that of **God's ownership of His people.**
- In the thinking of the culture of the day, a person only had the right to count or number what belonged to them. Israel did not belong to David; Israel belonged to God.
- It was **up to the Lord to command a census; not David.** And if David did count the men, he could only do so at the Lord's request and he would have to pay a ransom for each man counted.

- *The ransom is a bit like a modern-day poll tax [A poll tax, also known as head tax or capitation, is a tax levied as a fixed sum on every liable individual. Head taxes were important sources of revenue for many governments from ancient times until the 19th century.]*
- Despite the census not being commanded by God - v2 - David goes ahead and commands Joab to go from Dan to Beersheba and enroll all fighting men
- **Dan to Beersheba - is a bit like us saying from Darwin to Hobart**
- Basically, David wants to know how big his army has grown
- **Joab is not keen on the idea of the census**
- **Joab rightly sees that David's army is the Lord's army and it is the Lord who fights for His people - and the size of the army is not important**
- Remember the story of Gideon [in Judges 7] where God made Gideon reduce his army down to 300 men - to show that God Himself was fighting the battle
- **But David's mind is made up and he commands Joab to go from South to North and then back to the South again**

[PowerPoint 7-Map]



- This counting takes 9 months and 20 days
 - What is the sin that David commits here?
 - It's the sin of pride
- [PowerPoint 8 - Pride]
- *The dictionary says pride is: a feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements*
 - Here David is taking credit for what belongs to God
 - Israel belongs to God - And it's God's army
 - David should be relying on God and not on the size and security of the Army
 - David's security should be in the Lord - not himself
 - David's success had gone to his head

- And v1 suggests that it had also gone to Israel's head - as it says
God's anger burned against Israel!
- The nation as a whole - had a **puffed-up attitude**
- Applying that to us...

Application

- It's not necessarily wrong to **take pride in our work, or in something else we've done well**; the Bible urges us to **be diligent and do our best**. The Bible says, "*I know that there is nothing better for people than to ... find satisfaction in all their toil—this is a gift of God*" (Ecclesiastes 3:12-13).
- But when we take all the credit for our success and begin to think that we're better than everyone else—then pride turns into something poisonous.
- **This is the kind of pride God condemns, because it puffs us up and makes us think we're better than we really are. It blinds us to our faults; it also cuts us off from others, because no one likes a cocky, arrogant person.** The Bible warns, "*Do not be wise in your own eyes*" (Proverbs 3:7).
- Have you noticed **how hard it is to pat yourself on the back?**
- **Perhaps God made us that way for a reason**
- **But most of all, pride cuts us off from God. Why bother turning to God and humbling ourselves before Him, if we think we don't need Him but are sufficient in ourselves?**

- We become like the proud Pharaoh in ancient Egypt who kept God's people as slaves and told Moses, "*Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord*" (Exodus 5:2).

[PowerPoint 9-Pride answer]

- We shouldn't take credit for our abilities. Instead, humbly thank God for giving them to us, and make it our goal to use our abilities for God's glory.
- And we should, by a simple prayer of faith submit our life to Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "*Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God*" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

The Sin Admitted (2 Sam 24 v10)

- After David counted the fighting men - his conscience (his moral sense of what is right and wrong) **got the better of him**
- And he **realized his sin** - see v10.

[PowerPoint 10-Sin admitted]

- David admits - *I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing*
- What we have here is a **genuine admission of his guilt in sinning against God** by carrying out this **unauthorized census**

Application

- For us
- It's **important** we are diligent in **examining ourselves** for any sin in our lives that we haven't confessed to God

- As Psalm 139:24

See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

- Perhaps this morning we need to ask ourselves if there is something we need to confess to God and repent of?

- We're never too bad that God won't forgive us...

- As 1 John 1:9 says:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

- God promises to forgive us if we genuinely confess and do a U-turn in our lives - turning away from sin - and turning towards God

The Consequences for Sin (2 Sam 24 vv11-17)

- Unfortunately, sin has consequences and leads to punishment
- Even back in the garden of Eden - when Adam and Eve disobeyed God's rules - the consequence was - they had to leave the Garden - and the punishment was they would one day die
- There are consequences, here, for David's sin - in carrying out the census

[PowerPoint 11-Options]

- God, through the prophet Gad, gave 3 options for punishment - in v13
 - Option 1 - 3 years of famine in the land
 - Option 2 - 3 months of fleeing from Israel's enemies
 - Option 3 - 3 days of plague in the land

- What a dilemma for David - **whatever option he takes** - it will have **dire consequences** for innocent people
- See v14 - David is in **deep distress?**
- So, he chooses to **fall into the hands of the Lord**, because **God's mercy is great**, rather than fall into human hands
- If you think about it the **3-day plague** - option 3 - is the only one that is **directly from God's hands**
- The **famine** relies on how humans handle the famine and feed people
- **And fleeing from their enemies** for 3 months relies on the mercy of the enemy soldiers
- Whereas the plague **relies on the mercy of God alone**
- If you also think about it
- In option 1 - if there was a **famine** - **David and the royal family could be pretty much protected from this** - and receive special treatment
- In option 2- if the **army fled from their enemies for 3 months** - again **David and the royal family could be protected** - and remember we said a couple of weeks ago - **David was too old for battle now** - so it's not going to affect him.
- But with option 3- the **plague could affect anyone** - rich/poor - royal family/subjects. David knew he had to expose himself - to the chastisement of God; yet he also knew God is merciful.
- The **plague is a like the COVID19 virus** - the plague does not discriminate; it attacks rich/poor and old/young; as does COVID19.
- So, **David leaves his fate in God's hands** - knowing God will be far more merciful than any human being

- *And God allows the plague - and 70,000 men are killed*

Application

A few things we learn from this

- **Our sin can have consequences for others** [as well as ourselves] - so we need to think before we act
- We also **need to take responsibility for our sin** - and **take the punishment we deserve, as David does here**

[PowerPoint 12-Confession]

- Look at David's confession in v17
I have sinned; I, the shepherd, have done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family
- David is willing to cop what he deserves
- What about us? Do we take responsibility for our actions? For our sins? Or do we let others take the blame or even blame others?

The Sacrifice for Sin (2 Sam 24 vv18-25)

- As well as consequences for sin
- As well as confessing sin

[PowerPoint 13-Sacrifice]

- There needs to be atonement for sin
- Atonement is making amends for a wrong doing
- In the OT God introduced the idea of an animal sacrifice so that the blood of an animal became the way to make amends for sin
- The animal died instead of the person who committed the sin

- And so, the **blood** of the **animal** made amends for the person's sin
- As **Lev 17:11** says

For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

- In the case of David's sin in carrying out the **census**
- **God** is very angry
- To satisfy God's anger or wrath
- **God** - through the prophet Gad - **tells David** to **build** and **altar** to make an **animal sacrifice** in v18
- The location of this sacrifice happens to be at the place where God finally ordered the plague to stop
- This location was the **threshing floor** of a man called **Araunah**, a Jebusite.
- A threshing floor is: *a hard, level surface on which corn or other grain is beaten*
- This threshing or beating process loosens the edible part of the grain (or other crop) from the straw to which it is attached.
- The location of this threshing floor and the altar **becomes a very important location**
- According to Chronicles 21:28-22:5 - **David states** that the **temple for the Lord**, built by David's son, **Solomon**, will be built on that exact location.
- Notice too that **David offers to buy the threshing floor** from Araunah to build the altar on

- But **Araunah offers** to give the **threshing floor** and the animals for sacrifice to David - for free
- But **David refuses** in v24 saying – *“I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”*
- Basically, a sacrifice is not a sacrifice if it costs you nothing
- For David to make a proper sacrifice it has to cost him something personally
- So, **David pays 50 shekels of silver** and **makes the necessary sacrifice to make atonement** (amends for) for his sin of doing the census
- And **God accepted that sacrifice** - as the parallel passage from 1 Chron 21:26 says - *The Lord answered David with fire from heaven on the altar*
- Without this sacrifice there is **no atonement and no forgiveness**
- As Heb 9:22

the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

- The trouble with this animal sacrifice though - was that it **had to be repeated over and over**
- And on top of that the **priests** who made the sacrifice on behalf of the people - **were also sinful**
- So there **has to be a better sacrifice than that**
- And there is a better sacrifice
- **God's sent His son Jesus - to this Earth - as this better sacrifice**

The Once and for All sacrifice for Sin (Romans 5:1-11)

- Which brings us to our NT passage from Romans 5:1-11
- See v6

[PowerPoint 14-Once and for all sacrifice]

- At **just the right time** - when we were still powerless - just like David was powerless to the plague - we are powerless to the plague of sin
- God stepped in to stop the plague for David
- And God stepped in to stop the plague for sin for us
- He **allowed Jesus to die for us** (v6)
- Why would God allow this?
- **Because He loves us** (v8)
- And just like the blood of David's sacrifice stopped the plague and removed the guilt of David's sin
- **The blood of Jesus** (v9) justified us - in other words - made us not guilty anymore of our sins - that is just as if we never sinned -
- The blood sacrifice of Jesus - **stopped the plague of sin**
- This blood sacrifice of Jesus - **Satisfied God's wrath or anger over our sin**
- And **brought about reconciliation with God** -
- And **Jesus sacrifice** is a once and for all sacrifice - because Jesus's sacrifice - is perfect in every way - because Jesus keeps all God's laws perfectly - and so He can make that perfect once and for all sacrifice

Conclusion (Amazing Grace)

[PowerPoint 15-Conclusion]

- In chapter 24 of 2 Samuel - **God showed David amazing grace**

- David deserved to cop it - it was his idea to do the census and he was the one who authorized the census - he was to blame
- But God showed His amazing grace - God show His undeserved favour on David
- David is in the Bible - not because he's perfect - not because we should follow him
- He's in the Bible because he's sinful - just like us - and he's in the Bible so we can learn from his mistake - and so we can see God's amazing grace at work.
- God also shows us amazing grace too
- We deserve to be punished for our sins - we deserve to die for our sins
- But remember - as Psalm 103:10 says:
God does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.
- Praise be to God!
- Instead God shows grace and love by sending Jesus
- And God wants us to believe in Jesus and accept His perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins - so we can be reconciled to God
- Believing in Jesus is going to cost us - there's a cost in following Jesus
- As Jesus Himself says in Luke 14:33 - **those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples**

- This will mean us giving up our pride in what we have and remembering we only have ANYTHING because God allows us to have it in the first place
- It will mean giving up taking the credit for what we have been blessed with and remembering that God is the one that blesses us
- It will mean giving up saying "look what I have done" and saying "look what God has done"
- It will mean giving up relying on ourselves and remembering to rely on God in all things - He will guide us, He will give us strength, He will fight for us

- By believing in this perfect once and for all sacrifice of Jesus
- We have 2 precious gifts - peace and hope
- We have **peace with God** -the relationship with God and us is now fixed - no matter what this year has been like
- And we have hope - **a certain hope of a place in Heaven**

- This morning let us leave this place - thanking God for His amazing grace and mercy in sending Jesus - to bring us peace and hope
- Let's pray...