**The Cost of Sin, Salvation, and Sacrifice**

*2 Samuel 24; 1 Chronicles 21*

**Introduction**

1. The honesty of God’s revelation results in the great mistakes of the characters in inspired history being on full display – even those heroes of faith we look up to so much.
2. There is a great need for the record of such difficult periods of history.
3. 2 Samuel 24 and 1 Chronicles 21 reveal a sin committed late in the reign of king David when he numbered the people of Israel.
4. The account of David’s sin highlights the great cost of sin, salvation, and sacrifice.
5. David’s Sinful Census
6. The Sin
	1. It was a temptation of Satan – **2 Samuel 24:1-2; 1 Chronicles 21:1-2**
		1. The two suggest God allowing Satan to tempt David with this evil.
			1. Satan is seeking to destroy us – **1 Peter 5:8**
			2. God allows temptation – **1 Corinthians 10:13**
		2. ***“Again the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel”*** – the whole sinful decision of David is used by God to punish Israel for prior sin.
			1. Some suggest the population’s compliance with the rebellion of Absalom (**ch. 15-18**) and Sheba (**ch. 20**).
			2. But it does not say specifically.
			3. Regardless, there is always a cost to sin – if it does not seem to affect us immediately, it certainly will catch up with us.
	2. It was an abominable thing to Joab (commander of the army) – **2 Samuel 24:3; 1 Chronicles 21:3, 6**
		1. Numbering the people was not something inherently sinful.
		2. However, the circumstances under which David sought the census, and likely the attitude of David perceived by Joab led him to the conclusion that such was sinful.
	3. It displeased God – **1 Chronicles 21:7**
	4. God provided escape, but David continued to the sin – **2 Samuel 24:3-4; 1 Corinthians 10:13**
7. The Guilty Conscience
	1. David knew his actions were sinful, and his conscience could no longer be ignored – **2 Samuel 24:10**
		1. He did not ignore his self-condemnation – **2 Samuel 24:10-11** – he turned to the Lord in prayer, evidently through the night – ***“When David arose in the morning…”***
		2. God is greater than our heart – **1 John 3:18-21** – if we try to fool ourselves, we certainly cannot succeed in fooling God.
	2. ***“I have sinned greatly”***
		1. Compare with the acknowledgment of sin with Bathsheba, and murder of Uriah – ***“I have sinned against the Lord” (2 Samuel 12:13).***
			1. “This confession implies that David’s sin went even more to the heart of his relationship with God than his sin with Bathsheba.” (Waldron, 1052)
			2. While his previous sin was grievous, it consisted in weakness, absentmindedness, fleshly lust, passion, and fear.
			3. **The census was calculated, and even insisted on after an attempt to defeat it.**
		2. Prior context may hint at the sinfulness of the census:
			1. Absalom’s coup fails (**ch. 18**).
			2. Sheba’s rebellion fails (**ch. 20**).
			3. David is delivered from enemies:
				1. War with Philistines and slaying of giants from Gath (**21:15-22**).
				2. Defeat of the Moabites, Syrians, Edomites, and the Ammonites (**1 Chronicles 18-20**).
				3. David’s mighty men noted (**ch. 23**).
			4. Specified in the census – ***“valiant men who drew the sword” (2 Samuel 24:9); “men who drew the sword” (1 Chronicles 21:5)***
				1. David’s decision to number the people seemed to come from pride, and trust in military might.
		3. This ironically comes after David’s song of praise to God – **2 Samuel 22:1-4** – he had lost sight of this.
			1. ***“I have sinned greatly”***
			2. **The sin was an affront to the very foundation of the relationship between God and David – one of grace and faith.**
8. The Judgment
	1. God sent the prophet Gad to David with a choice of punishment (**2 Samuel 24:11-13**):
		1. Seven years of famine.
		2. Fleeing for three months before enemies.
		3. Three days’ plague in the land.
	2. David chose the plague, and 70,000 perished – **2 Samuel 24:15** – David’s pride in counting the great number in Israel is humbled by the swift reduction.
9. God’s Great Grace
10. The Lord’s Compassion
	1. The Lord did not carry out the full measure of punishment – **2 Samuel 24:15-16**
		1. **(v. 13)** – was supposed to be 3 days.
		2. ***“from the morning till the appointed time”*** – “the” not there in the original – ***“AN appointed time”***
			1. Combined with ***“the Lord relented from the destruction”*** shows that He did not carry it on for the full time.
			2. **“’from the morning to the time of the assembly,’ viz., for the evening sacrifice.” (Edersheim, Alfred, *Bible History of the Old Testament*)**
			3. Less than a day – morning to evening.
	2. The Lord may discipline us, but He does not delight in doing so, and is merciful in the end – **Isaiah 40:27-31** – it is always best to appeal to God’s mercy, especially in times where we have failed Him – He wants our good.
11. The Lord’s Provision
	1. The Lord’s hand is always stretched out to save, and any reconciliation ultimately comes at His provision – **Isaiah 59:1-2, 15-16** – though, it is our duty to seek it, and act on it.
	2. The Lord provided a way of reconciliation to David – **2 Samuel 24:18-19, 25**
		1. **1 Chronicles 21:18** – the Lord sent Gad with this instruction.
12. The Lord’s Eternal Preparation
	1. Araunah would see David coming, and offer him the place, and everything needed to offer sacrifice without charge – **2 Samuel 24:20-23** – David refused.
	2. It was God who sent David to this place – **1 Chronicles 21:18**
	3. David would declare the place the house of the Lord, and altar of burnt offering – **1 Chronicles 22:1**
		1. In this way, God introduced the place of His dwelling, grace, mercy, atonement, and fellowship to Israel.
		2. **Solomon would build the temple there – 2 Chronicles 3:1 – MOUNT MORIAH.**
	4. Contrast – Araunah offered, free of charge, everything David needed to offer the sacrifice for atonement and reconciliation to God; it was right for David to refuse, and do what he did; **however, this was the same area where years before, GOD PROVIDED – standing for the fact that only God can provide salvation.**
		1. It was a mount in Moriah where God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac.
		2. It was there that the Lord provided a sacrifice – **Genesis 22:7-8, 13-14** – Jehovah-Jireh – ***“The-Lord-Will-Provide”***
		3. **Sin is too great for man to remedy, so God did – Romans 5:6-9**
			1. God offers all, and we accept by obedient faith.
13. David’s Self-Sacrifice
14. David’s Awareness and Admirable Attitude
	1. David refused Araunah’s offer for great reason – **2 Samuel 24:22-24**
	2. Awareness – ***“for I will not take what is yours for the LORD” (1 Chronicles 21:24).***
		1. This was David’s offering for HIS sin – **2 Samuel 24:10**
		2. What HE had done displeased the Lord – **1 Chronicles 21:7, 17**
	3. Admirable Attitude – **1 Chronicles 21:24-26** – emphasis on YOUR and ME.
		1. David’s own sin was before him, and he sought to deal with it before God.
		2. (**v. 26)** – God showed His acceptance of the sacrifice in an unmistakable fashion.
			1. Would He have been pleased with a sacrifice which cost David nothing?
			2. **Psalm 51:16-17** – does a broken and contrite heart act for self-preservation, or to demonstrate full repentance through full surrender of self? (**cf. Joel 2:13-14** – rend heart, return to Him.)
15. God Pleasing Sacrifice is Always Costly
	1. ***“nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing.” (2 Samuel 24:24***) – an attitude we would all do well to keep at the forefront of our minds.
	2. Sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice means nothing – **Malachi 1:6-8** – back from Babylonian captivity for over 100 yrs, but still haven’t learned.
		1. God has always required and desired our best to offer Him!
		2. Anything less is unacceptable, and more so, insulting to God.
	3. **It is a wonder that any Christian possesses a mindset that God is okay with anything less than full devotion:**
		1. What He desires from us corresponds to what He has given to us – **Romans 12:1-2** – ***“by the mercies of God”***
		2. Ours is in minuscule reciprocation – **1 John 4:10**
		3. We must surrender all – **Luke 14:33**
			1. “All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give; I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live.”
			2. “All to Jesus I surrender, humbly at His feet I bow; Worldly pleasures all forsaken, take me, Jesus, take me now.”
			3. “All to Jesus I surrender, Lord, I give myself to Thee; Fill me with Thy love and power, let Thy blessings fall on me.”

**Conclusion**

1. We should learn from David’s sin, God’s grace and mercy, as well as David’s honest acknowledgement of his sin, and devoted repentance.
2. Sin is always a great cost, as well as the means of the salvation God offers, and the sacrifice of our lives we must give to Him in response.