

1 Chronicles 21-23

Good evening and thank you so much for joining us! Would you please turn in your Bibles to 1 Chronicles chapter 21? Remember at this point the Hebrews have been released from Babylon, and the author of Chronicles is reminding the nation of its history, and God's faithfulness.

We're gonna be studying chapters 21-23, and the title of tonight's message is Prepared to Worship

Let's pray

1 Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel. Recall what it says in **2 Samuel 24:1 Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah."**

2 Samuel 24 says God "moved David." 1 Chronicles 21 says Satan "moved David." Which is it? The answer is both. God is sovereign. Ultimately, God either causes or allows all that happens in the universe.

Apparently, God saw in David's heart a sin that needed to be addressed, and God uses David's sin to bring punishment to the nation of Israel.

2 So David said to Joab and to the leaders of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and bring the number of them to me that I may know it." David ordered a census to count the population of Israel. Now this wasn't evil in and of itself... Moses numbered the nation so he could organize and serve the people.

The problem with David's census was the motivation. David wanted a head count so he could boast about the extent of his kingdom. In Bible times counting implied ownership. Normally, you don't number someone else's stuff. It's not my place to count your money or vice versa.

To be clear, all counting isn't evil. There have been times when we've needed to count our attendance out of love and respect for people like for our agape feast, or make sure we have the right number of seats to provide. It depends upon the motive.

Story of pastors conf?

Prov 14:7 Go from the presence of a foolish man,
When you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.

3 And Joab answered, "May the LORD make His people a hundred times more than they are. But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? Why then does my lord require this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?" Joab's concerned with David's motivation for this census.

4-6

4 Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab. Therefore Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came to Jerusalem. 5 Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David. All Israel had one million one hundred thousand men who drew the sword, and Judah had four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew the sword. 6 But he did not count Levi and Benjamin among them, for the king's word was abominable to Joab. The number of men Moses counted when he led Israel out of Egypt was 603,550. Now, 600 years later the

number has swelled to well over 1.4 million - the population had more than doubled. With women and children... maybe 4 million...

Imagine David's elation when he hears the news. He's king of a country with several million people!

Remember at one time David wrote these words...

**Ps 20:7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.**

7 And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel. 8 So David said to God, "I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing; but now, I pray, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

Here in verse 10 he confesses his sin, says I've sinned greatly. Shockingly, David didn't say 'greatly' with Bathsheba. He didn't say very foolishly with Bathsheba which we would think was his greatest sin.

This is conviction, not condemnation. The difference between conviction and condemnation of sin is their origin. The bible tells us condemnation comes from the devil. Conviction comes from the HS. Both feel lousy.

Here's how you tell the difference between conviction and condemnation and it's critically important. Condemnation drives us away from Christ, yet conviction from the HS drives us to Christ.

If we sin and our heart is smiting us and it's causing us to repent and get right with the Lord, that's good. If that bad feeling is causing you to say 'why should I even try, I keep blowing it, I should know better, I'm gonna throw in the towel-that's the enemy.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,[fn] who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

9-12 God now uses David's sin to punish Israel

9 Then the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, 10 "Go and tell David, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three things; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do it to you." ' "

11 So Gad came to David and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Choose for yourself, 12 either three[fn] years of famine, or three months to be defeated by your foes with the sword of your enemies overtaking you, or else for three days the sword of the LORD—the plague in the land, with the angel[fn] of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.' Now consider what answer I should take back to Him who sent me." God was angry at Israel, and used David's sin as the method for punishing them. And now God gives David the choice of 3 different punishments.

1st option was 3 years of famine: This would surely be the death of some in Israel, but the wealthy and resourceful would survive. Israel would have to depend on neighboring nations for food. But as king, David and his family would've been fine.

2nd option was to flee three months before their enemies: This means there would be bloody battles, and soldiers and perhaps families would perish. They would have to fight and

contend with enemies among their neighbors. David and his family would once again be fine since he had a mighty army to fight

The 3rd and final option was three days' plague in the land:

Here, David and his whole household could be affected in ways the other 2 judgments wouldn't have!

13 And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress. Please let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are very great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man." David chooses the plague. 14-18 provide some of the most interesting imagery in the OT!

14 So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel, and seventy thousand men of Israel fell. 15 And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it. As he^[fn] was destroying, the LORD looked and relented of the disaster, and said to the angel who was destroying, "It is enough; now restrain your^[fn] hand." And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of Ornan^[fn] the Jebusite.

16 Then David lifted his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, having in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. So David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. 17 And David said to God, "Was it not I who commanded the people to be numbered? I am the one who has sinned and done evil indeed; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, O LORD my God, be against me and my father's house, but not against Your people that they should be plagued."

18 Therefore, the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to say to David that David should go and erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. 2 Chronicles 3 tells us that

the threshing floor of Araunah was on Mount Moriah. And why is mount Moriah important? We'll see soon...

19-22

19 So David went up at the word of Gad, which he had spoken in the name of the LORD. 20 Now Ornan turned and saw the angel; and his four sons who were with him hid themselves, but Ornan continued threshing wheat. 21 So David came to Ornan, and Ornan looked and saw David. And he went out from the threshing floor, and bowed before David with his face to the ground. 22 Then David said to Ornan, "Grant me the place of this threshing floor, that I may build an altar on it to the LORD. You shall grant it to me at the full price, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people." David wanted to transform this place where chaff was separated from wheat into a place of sacrifice and worship.

23 But Ornan said to David, "Take it to yourself, and let my lord the king do what is good in his eyes. Look, I also give you the oxen for burnt offerings, the threshing implements for wood, and the wheat for the grain offering; I give it all." Ornan had a good, generous heart and wanted to give David anything he wanted.

24 Then King David said to Ornan, "No, but I will surely buy it for the full price, for I will not take what is yours for the LORD, nor offer burnt offerings with that which costs me nothing." David knew that it wouldn't be a sacrifice to the LORD if it did not cost him something. David didn't look for the cheapest way possible to please God.

I wonder how often I-how often we've served the Lord with our scraps and leftovers - rather than reserving for Him our best, and

most costly... We give Him leftovers of our time, our money, our energy.

25 So David gave Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the place. 26 And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called on the LORD; and He answered him from heaven by fire on the altar of burnt offering. God showed His acceptance of David's sacrifice by consuming it with fire from heaven.

27-30

27 So the LORD commanded the angel, and he returned his sword to its sheath.

28 At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. 29 For the tabernacle of the LORD and the altar of the burnt offering, which Moses had made in the wilderness, were at that time at the high place in Gibeon. 30 But David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD. This plot of land was on the mountain just north of the city of David - outside the walls of Jerusalem - on Mount Moriah. This was near the spot Abraham had offered Isaac as a sacrifice – and it will become the location on which God chooses to build His Temple in Jerusalem.

SHOW PIC I'm sure David didn't realize the land he'd bought would one day become the planet's most expensive piece of real estate. This is where Solomon constructs the Temple – where God's glory resides for the next 500 years. Even today this is Jerusalem's centerpiece. We call it the Temple Mount. **CLOSE**

PIC

The Bible indicates that a third temple will be built on or near the site of Solomon's temple (Daniel 9:27). This would seem to present a problem given the political obstacles that stand in the way: the religious activities on the Temple Mount are currently controlled by the Supreme Muslim Council. Yet nothing can put a wrinkle in God's sovereign plans.

Muslim control of this area simply fulfills the prophecy of **Luke 21:24** **And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.**

Chapter 22-David Prepares to Build the Temple

1-4

1 Then David said, "This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel."

2 So David commanded to gather the aliens who were in the land of Israel; and he appointed masons to cut hewn stones to build the house of God. 3 And David prepared iron in abundance for the nails of the doors of the gates and for the joints, and bronze in abundance beyond measure, 4 and cedar trees in abundance; for the Sidonians and those from Tyre brought much cedar wood to David. David knew it wouldn't be him that would build the Temple, so he's stockpiling materials for his son.

5-8

5 Now David said, "Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, famous and glorious throughout all countries. I will

now make preparation for it.” So David made abundant preparations before his death.

6 Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel. 7 And David said to Solomon: “My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build a house to the name of the LORD my God; 8 but the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘You have shed much blood and have made great wars; you shall not build a house for My name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in My sight. For the first time we’re told exactly why God refused to let David build the Temple. It wouldn’t have been proper for a man of war to construct a house of peace. BTW “Solomon” means “peaceable”.

The remainder of the chapter is David’s advice to Solomon. And David begins by recounting God’s word to him to equip his son.

9 Behold, a son shall be born to you, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies all around. His name shall be Solomon,[fn] for I will give peace and quietness to Israel in his days. 10 He shall build a house for My name, and he shall be My son, and I will be his Father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.’ 11 Now, my son, may the LORD be with you; and may you prosper, and build the house of the LORD your God, as He has said to you. 12 Only may the LORD give you wisdom and understanding, and give you charge concerning Israel, that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. 13 Then you will prosper, if you take care to fulfill the statutes and judgments with which the LORD charged Moses concerning Israel. Be strong and of good courage; do not fear nor be dismayed. The Bible is filled with these commands not only for

David but for you and I. We need to be strong and of good courage!

14 Indeed I have taken much trouble to prepare for the house of the LORD one hundred thousand talents of gold and one million talents of silver, and bronze and iron beyond measure, for it is so abundant. I have prepared timber and stone also, and you may add to them. 15 Moreover there are workmen with you in abundance: woodsmen and stonecutters, and all types of skillful men for every kind of work. 16 Of gold and silver and bronze and iron there is no limit. Arise and begin working, and the LORD be with you.”100,000 talents of gold and 1,000,000 talents of silver alone – at today’s market prices – would make the ticket for the Temple - \$240 billion. David tells his son the money is in the bank.

And I can’t help but to think this is what Jesus is saying to us tonight. All that we need to build a glorious Temple – personally and corporately has been prepared for us-by Jesus! **1 Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?**

17-19

17 David also commanded all the leaders of Israel to help Solomon his son, saying, 18 “Is not the LORD your God with you? And has He not given you rest on every side? For He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the LORD and before His people. 19 Now set your heart and your soul to seek the LORD your God. Therefore arise and build the sanctuary of the LORD God, to bring the ark of the

covenant of the LORD and the holy articles of God into the house that is to be built for the name of the LORD.” When God calls a leader He also calls other leaders to help. And they needed as verse 19 describes-to set their heart and soul to seek the Lord, while they were doing their work.

Chapter 23

David’s victories over his enemies created a period of peace where Solomon, his successor could focus his energies on construction rather than fighting battles. An elderly King David is about to hand off his kingdom to his son.

1 So when David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel. David was just 70 years old when he died, but all the battles, and the nights sleeping in caves, and the days on the run from Saul had taken its toll. Now he’s at the end of his life so he’s appointed his son, Solomon to be king.

Interestingly, Josephus, the Jewish historian, says Solomon was just 14 years old when he came to the throne. David knew managing a vast kingdom and constructing an enormous Temple would be huge challenges for a teenager, so David does what he can to help in advance. Here David organizes the priesthood...

2 And he gathered together all the leaders of Israel, with the priests and the Levites.

3 Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and above; and the number of individual males was thirty-eight thousand. It is interesting David became king at age 30 – the Law

prohibited the priests from assuming office until they reached age 30 – Jesus didn't begin His ministry until He was about 30 years old. Evidently, age 30 is a mark of maturity.

4 Of these, twenty-four thousand were to look after the work of the house of the LORD, six thousand were officers and judges, 5 four thousand were gatekeepers, and four thousand praised the LORD with musical instruments, “which I made,” said David, “for giving praise.” **SHOW PIC** Think of the business of the White House in Washington, DC. It's been estimated there are 3k+ fulltime employees who work at the White House - and probably another 3000 parttime workers. It takes over 6000 people to oversee the traffic and security and business of the White House. **CLOSE PIC**

But that was nothing compared to God's House. The Temple would become a hubbub of constant activity – and it would require a large staff - 38,000 priests were assigned to serve as civil servants, security agents, worship leaders... And unlike the White House, 4000 priests did nothing but praise the Lord.

God wanted His house to be a musical place – a praise place – a house of praise.

Notice also our text tells us David was an inventor of musical instruments. The 4000 priests praised God on instruments... “which I made,” said David...”

The prophet Amos tells of a judgment- **Amos 6:5 Who sing idly to the sound of stringed instruments, And invent for yourselves musical instruments like David;**

David was a musical engineer. He designed guitars, fiddles, ukuleles. And notice verse 5 tells us why David invented new instruments... “for giving praise”.

If you have a musical instrument, the instrument God enabled you to purchase and play has a higher purpose. It’s been made to glorify God.

In the remainder of chapter 23 David divides the Levites into three groups.

6 Also David separated them into divisions among the sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. **SHOW PIC** While the Ark resided in the Tabernacle the primary duties of Levi’s three tribes were the moving of the tent. The Kohathites carried the furniture – the Gershonites the fabrics – the Merarites the frame. **CLOSE PIC**

verses 7-23 list the names of the Levites, I’ll let you read this list of names on your own –

13 The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses; and Aaron was set apart, he and his sons forever, that he should sanctify the most holy things, to burn incense before the LORD, to minister to Him, and to give the blessing in His name forever. Notice the fourfold duties of the High Priest... Dedication of holy things –The priest was to have an active concern for holiness, and to be able to discern between what was holy and what was not.

burning incense in the Holy Place – Incense is a picture of intercessory prayer. The priest had to represent the people before the Lord.

ministering to the Lord by the sprinkling of the blood – He was to spend time in personal devotion, worship, and attention given to God.

and declaring the priestly blessing to the people of Israel...

Remember the blessing God gave to Aaron to give to Israel...

Numbers 6:24 “The LORD bless you and keep you;

25 The LORD make His face shine upon you,

And be gracious to you;

26 The LORD lift up His countenance upon you,

And give you peace.” ’

24 These were the sons of Levi by their fathers’ houses—the heads of the fathers’ houses as they were counted individually by the number of their names, who did the work for the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of twenty years and above. Notice, priests had to be 30 years old – Levites, 20 years old.

25 For David said, “The LORD God of Israel has given rest to His people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem forever”; **26** and also to the Levites, “They shall no longer carry the tabernacle, or any of the articles for its service.” What had been the chief duty of the Levites – transporting of the Tabernacle - had become obsolete. The portable tent was being replaced with a permanent Temple.

27-32

27 For by the last words of David the Levites were numbered from twenty years old and above; 28 because their duty was to help the sons of Aaron in the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts and in the chambers, in the purifying of all holy things and the work of the service of the house of God, 29 both with the showbread and the fine flour for the grain offering, with the unleavened cakes and what is baked in the pan, with what is mixed and with all kinds of measures and sizes; 30 to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at evening; 31 and at every presentation of a burnt offering to the LORD on the Sabbaths and on the New Moons and on the set feasts, by number according to the ordinance governing them, regularly before the LORD;

32 and that they should attend to the needs of the tabernacle of meeting, the needs of the holy place, and the needs of the sons of Aaron their brethren in the work of the house of the LORD. The Chronicler mentioned many specific duties of the Levites (purifying all holy things...with the showbread...what is baked in the pan). Yet he included among them this most important duty: to stand every morning to thank and praise the LORD. This was essential among the duties of the Levites and the priests, and could never be neglected.