

1/17/10

The Presumptuous Sin of David

2Sam. 24:1-25

We have walked with David from the days of his youth, to his old age.

1. As a young shepherd, he slew the giant, Goliath, because he blasphemed the God of Israel.
2. As a member of Saul's court he became the loyal minstrel and armor-bearer of Saul.
3. As a rising warrior, he became the captain over the army of Saul.
4. As the chosen king by God, he became a threat to Saul, having to go into exile.
5. As God judged Saul, David was anointed and crowned king by Judah and Israel.
6. As the reigning king, he conquered Jerusalem and made it his capital and God promise to build him a house through the Messiah.
7. As a self-willed king, he abused his authority and power to commit adultery with Bathsheba and kill Uriah.
8. As a hypocritical king, he was exposed by Nathan the prophet and suffered all the same sins, through his children.
9. As a repentant king, He was restored to God but David was never the same, difficulties and troubles plagued him.

What a fitting way to end our study of Second Samuel with the account of David's sin that brought a pestilence on his people, reminding us that David was not perfect but it also reveals the repentant heart of David.

* For this reason, he is called "a man after God's own heart", he repented, confessed and trusted God for the ability to live out his difficult life.

The text before us, is the pestilence brought about by the sin of David for numbering the people, which unfolds in a three movement: 2Sam. 24:1-25

- I. The transgression of David by pride. vs. 1-9
 - II. The transgression of David judged by God. vs. 10-17
 - III. The transgression of David was forgiven by God. vs. 18-25
- I. The transgression of David by pride. vs. 1-9**
- A. The declaration of judgment by God. vs. 1
 1. The people of Israel had sinned, "Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel." vs. 1a
 - a. The word "again" reminds us of the famine God brought on the land, due to Saul. 2Sam. 21:1
 - b. The anger of the LORD Yahweh was against Israel, the people.

- 1) This implies a failure by the people.
 - 2) The declaration is the perfect judgment of God, for He is Holy.
 2. The charge of failure, is also to king David, “and He moved David against them to say, “Go, number Israel and Judah.” vs. 1b-c
 - a. The leader of the nation was David.
 - 1) The parallel passage in Chronicles clears up the seeming injustice by God, revealing David failed the test, “Now **Satan** stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel.” 1Chron. 21:1
 - 2) Like in the instance of Eve and Job, God allowed the test. Gen. 3, Job 1:12, 2:6-7
 - 3) Joshua the high priest, passed. Zech. 3
 - b. The taking of census had two purposes.
 - 1) For assessing the male population for military service. Num. 1:2
 - 2) For taxing the people for the sanctuary of God. Ex. 38:25-28
 - 3) For taxes by Rome. Lk. 2:1-3
- B.** The transgression of David against God. vs. 2-3

1. David through pride wanted to assess his military might, “So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, “Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that I may know the number of the people.” vs. 2
 - a. Verse 9 makes it clear, the census was for assessing the military might, being able to have confidence in them.
 - 1) The Lord was displeased. 1Chron. 21:7
 - 2) David’s confidence was to be in God alone!
 - * “Some trust in horse, some trust in chariots, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.” Ps. 20
 - b. Dan to Beersheba, indicated the boundary of the north to the south.
 - c. The military age was 20. Num. 1:3
2. Joab understood the sin against God. vs. 3
 - a. Joab told David, the number of people do not matter to God, “And Joab said to the king, “Now may the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it.” vs. 3a-c

- b. Joab asked David his motive, “But why does my lord the king desire this thing?” vs. 3d
 * Joab warned David regarding God’s judgment, he said, “Why should he be a cause of guilt in Israel?”
1Chron. 21:3f
- c. David did not pay heed to the check by his officers. vs. 4
- 1) He misused his kingly power, ignoring danger, “Nevertheless the king’s word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army.” vs. 4a
 - 2) He abused his authority, as king, ignoring the consequences, “Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the presence of the king to count the people of Israel.” vs. 4b
 * The words of David were an abomination to Joab. 1Chron. 21:6

- C. The execution of the transgression by Joab and the captains. vs. 5
1. They first went to the east, “And they crossed over the Jordan and camped in Aroer, on the right side of the town which is in the midst of the ravine of Gad, and toward Jazer.” vs. 5
 2. They then were towards the north, “Then they came to Gilead and to the land of

- Tahtim Hodshi; they came to Dan Jaan and around to Sidon; and they came to the stronghold of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. vs. 6-7a
3. They went to the south, “Then they went out to South Judah as far as Beersheba. So when they had gone through all the land.” vs. 7b-8a
 4. They returned to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. vs. 8b
 - a. The time was considerable, almost 10 months.
 - b. Like his sin with Bathsheba.
 5. The census was reported to David. vs. 9
 - a. “Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king.” vs. 9a
 - b. “And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.” vs. 9b-c
 - 1) The number in Chronicles differs, “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.” 1Chron. 21:5-6

- 2) A possible explanation is given to us in Chronicles, “Joab the son of Zeruiah began a census, but he did not finish, for wrath came upon Israel because of this census; nor was the number recorded in the account of the chronicles of King David.” 1Chron. 27:24

Illustration

God reduced the army of Gideon from 32,000 to 300 for a simple reason, “And the LORD said to **Gideon**, “The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’” Jud 7:2

Application

1. The number one sin mentioned in the Bible often is pride, for it is the heart of sin.
 - a. “These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.” Prov. 6:16-19
 - b. “When **pride** comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.” Prov. 11:2

- c. “By **pride** comes nothing but strife, But with the well-advised is wisdom.” Prov. 13:10
 - d. “In the mouth of a fool is a rod of **pride**, But the lips of the wise will preserve them.” Prov. 14:3
 - e. “**Pride** goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.” Prov. 16:18
2. The number of people that make wrong decisions, usually do not take counsel of anyone or they do not heed the counsel given to them.
 - a. “A wise man fears and departs from evil, But a fool **rages** and is self-confident.” Prov. 14:16
 - b. “A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire; He **rages** against all wise judgment.” Prov. 18:1
 - c. “Where there is no **counsel**, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety.” Prov. 11:14
 - d. “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds **counsel** is wise.” Prov. 12:15
 3. The failure of leaders of nations to take council of their advisers or the people they serve, always hurts the people and the nation.
 - a. Bad policies, corrupt bills and bribes.
 - b. Ignoring the best decisions.
 - * “Righteousness exalts a **nation**, But sin is a reproach to any people.” Prov. 14:34

4. God in His mercy places and give us people to protect us from ourselves.
- a. Our wives and husbands are on the top of the list.
 - b. Our family members, including sons and daughters.
 - c. Our godly friends and brothers and sisters in the Lord.
 - d. Our spiritual leaders, pastors, elders and co-laborers in ministry.
 - 1) “Who is **wise** and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.” Ja. 3:13
 - 2) “Open rebuke is better Than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” Prov. 27:5-6

The transgression of David by pride was a mistake!

II. The transgression of David judged by God. vs. 10-17

- A. The contrition of David. vs. 10
1. Conviction fell on David, “And David’s heart condemned him after he had numbered the people.” vs. 10a

2. Confession came from David, “So David said to the LORD, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done.” vs. 10b-c
 - a. The sin of David with Bathsheba was of the flesh, lust.
 - b. The sin of David against God was of the spirit, a willful act of rebellion.
 3. Purification was asked by David, “but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant.” vs. 10d-g
 4. Humiliation marked his attitude, “for I have done very foolishly.” vs. 10h
 - * David is found throughout the Scriptures confessing his sin. 2Sam. 12:13, 24:10, 17, Ps. 41:4, 51:4, 1Chron. 21:8
- B. The revelation to the prophet by God. vs. 11
1. When David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad. vs. 11a
 2. Gad was David’s seer. vs. 11b
 - * “Now the prophet **Gad** said to David, “Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah.” So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.” 1Sam. 22:5
- C. The commissioning of the prophet to David, vs. 12

1. He was sent in the authority of Yahweh, “Go and tell David, ‘Thus says the LORD.’” vs. 12a-b
 2. He was sent to offer David a choice judgment, “I offer you three things; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do it to you.” vs. 12c-d
- D.** The propositions of the prophet of God to David. vs. 13
1. The first, “So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, “Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land?” vs. 13a-c
 - a. Chronicles says three years. 1Chron. 21:12
 - b. There must have been another visit or communication between the prophet and David, lowering the time.
 2. The second, “Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you?” vs. 13d-e
 - a. This would place the people at the vengeance of the enemy.
 - b. David would be more protected.
 3. The third, “Or shall there be three days’ plague in your land?” vs. 13f
 - a. This would be the shortest.
 - b. This would also expose David to the danger.

4. The exhortation by Gad to David was to consider well his choices, “Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me.” vs. 13g
 - a. To reflect on his decision making, that got him in trouble in the first place.
 - b. To consider the people.
- E.** The decision of David was to trust the direct hand of God, rather than man’s. vs. 14
1. David spoke forth his choice, “And David said to Gad, “I am in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are great; but do not let me fall into the hand of man.” vs. 14
 2. God honored David’s choice, “So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel from the morning till the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men of the people died.” vs. 15
 - a. It is believed that these 70,000 were of the fighting men.
 - b. For each time the word men “am” appears in the chapter, it is for the fighting men. vs. 9, 15-17, 21
 3. God was merciful to David. vs. 15
 - a. “And when the angel stretched out His hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD relented from the destruction, and said to the angel who

was destroying the people, “It is enough; now restrain your hand.” vs. 16a-d

- 1) The word relent “nacham” is used for man’s repentance but we know God can not repent, as man repents. Num. 23:19
 - 2) The used of the word appears a number a times to describe the deep grief and sorrow of God over the sin and evil of man.
 - 3) Thereby acting in mercy, as He always knew He would.
- b.** And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” vs. 16e
- 1) The angel of the LORD, is Jesus.
 - 2) The term is found throughout the Scriptures. Gen. 16:7, 22:11, Ex. 3:2, Num. 22:24
* “So the LORD commanded the angel, and he returned his sword to its sheath. At that time, when David saw that the LORD had answered him on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. 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. But David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the LORD.’ 1Chron. 21:27-30

- F.** The manifestation of the heart of a shepherd by David. vs. 17
1. David saw the people suffer because of him, “Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people.” vs. 17a
 - a. David saw visibly what his sin was doing to the people.
 - b. David felt compassion for the people, but God was just in his execution of the people.
 2. David asked the Lord to judge him alone. vs. 17b-j
 - 1) David reconfirmed his own guilt, “and said, “Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly.” vs. 17b-e
 - 2) David reaffirmed his love for his people, “but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father’s house.” vs. 17f-j

Illustration

The judgment of the flood was just and deserving.

Application

1. The most important thing that God is looking for is repentance.

- a. A conviction of our sin.
- b. A confessing of our sin.
- c. An abandoning of our sin.
- d. Whenever possible, restitution of our sin.

* “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1Jn. 1:9

2. The most important thing for us, is to learn through obedience, not experience of disobedience, bringing harm to others for our sins.

- a. I can stumble young Christians.
- b. I can destroy a friend, brother or sister.
- c. I can devastate my wife, husband and children.
- d. I can destroy my witness for Christ.

* “Let no one despise your youth, but be an **example** to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” 1Tim. 4:12

3. The most important thing, after I have brought calamity on myself and others, is to deal with it honestly and with integrity.

- a. Don't excuse it.
- b. Don't blame others.
- c. Don't justify it.
- d. Don't deny it.
- e. Don't feel sorry for yourself but the others you have harmed.

* “He who covers his sins will not **prosper**, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.” Prov. 28:13

The transgression of David judged by God was just!

III. The transgression of David was forgiven by God. vs. 18-25

A. David was commanded to offer sacrifice to God by Gad the prophet. vs. 18-19

1. Gad stated the location, “And Gad came that day to David and said to him, “Go up, erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” vs. 18

- a. The very sight where Abraham built an altar and offered his son Isaac. Gen. 22:2, 14
- b. The very same place God would have Solomon build the temple, Mount Moriah. 2Chron. 3:1

* “Then David said, “This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel.” 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. 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, and cedar trees in abundance; for the Sidonians and those from Tyre brought much cedar wood to David. 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. Then he called for his son Solomon, and charged him to build a house for the LORD God of Israel.” 1Chron. 22:1-6

2. David complied, “So David, according to the word of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.” vs. 19
 - a. The tabernacle was located in Shiloh in the days of Eli. 1Sam. 1-2
 - b. The tabernacle was located at Gibeon in Benjamin, at the time. 1Chron. 16:39-40, 21:29

B. David went to speak with Araunah. vs. 20-22

1. The attitude of Araunah towards David. vs. 20-21a
 - a. Araunah honored King David, “Now Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming toward him. So Araunah went out and bowed before the king with his face to the ground.” vs. 20
 - b. Araunah asked the purpose of David’s coming, in humility before David, “Then Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?” vs. 21a-b
2. The dialogue between David and Araunah. vs. 21c-22
 - a. David stated the purpose of his coming was to have God ward off the plague, “And David said, “To buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the LORD, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people.” vs. 21c-e
 - b. Araunah stated David could have all he needed, “Now Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take and offer up whatever seems good to him. Look, here are oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing implements and the yokes of the oxen for wood.” vs. 22

- C. David interceded for Israel and restored fellowship with God. vs. 23-25
1. Auranah expressed his kindness and desire for David's success, "All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God accept you." vs. 23
 2. David expressed his personal responsibility and love for God. vs. 24
 - a. His personal responsibility to God, "Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price." vs. 24a-c
* David bought the entire threshing floor. 1Chron. 21:25
 - b. His personal love for God, "nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing." vs. 24d
 - c. His purchase price, "So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver." vs. 34e
* The price is different, probably including other things, without doubt. 1Chron. 21:25
 3. David sacrificed to God. vs. 25
 - a. David offered two offerings, one for dedication and consecration, the other for fellowship with God, "And David built there an altar to the LORD, and

- offered burnt offerings and peace offerings." vs. 25a-b
- b. David was honored by God, "So the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel." vs. 25c-d

Illustration

God told Cain repentance is God's way for man to be accepted, "If you do well, will you not be **accepted**? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." Gen. 4:7

Application

1. The only thing to remedy our relationship with God and the consequences of sin is repentance.
 - a. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a **contrite** heart--These, O God, You will not despise." Ps. 51:17
 - b. "For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a **contrite** and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the **contrite** ones." Is. 57:15
2. The only thing God desires is obedience, not works, yet in obedience we do the work of God.
 - a. "Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As

in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.” 1Sam. 15:22-23b

b. “For we are His **workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Eph. 2:10

3. Giving to God is a privilege, not an imposition.
 - a. It is to be of a willing heart, not compulsion.
 - b. It is to be according to what we have, not what we do not have.
 - c. It is to be by all, that no one be burdened.
 - d. It is to be done hilariously, not begrudgingly.
 - e. It is to be done on the first day of the week, when the church meets, for convenience.
* 1Cor. 16:1, 2Cor. 8-9
4. The acceptance of anything we do, is based on the person of Jesus Christ, alone.
 - a. He is the final sacrifice.
 - b. He is the faithful High Priest.

The transgression of David was forgiven by God through genuine repentance!

Conclusion

This was the pestilence brought about by the sin of David, unfolded for us in three movements:

- I. The transgression of David by pride was a mistake!
- II. The transgression of David judged by God was just!
- III. The transgression of David was forgiven by God through genuine repentance!