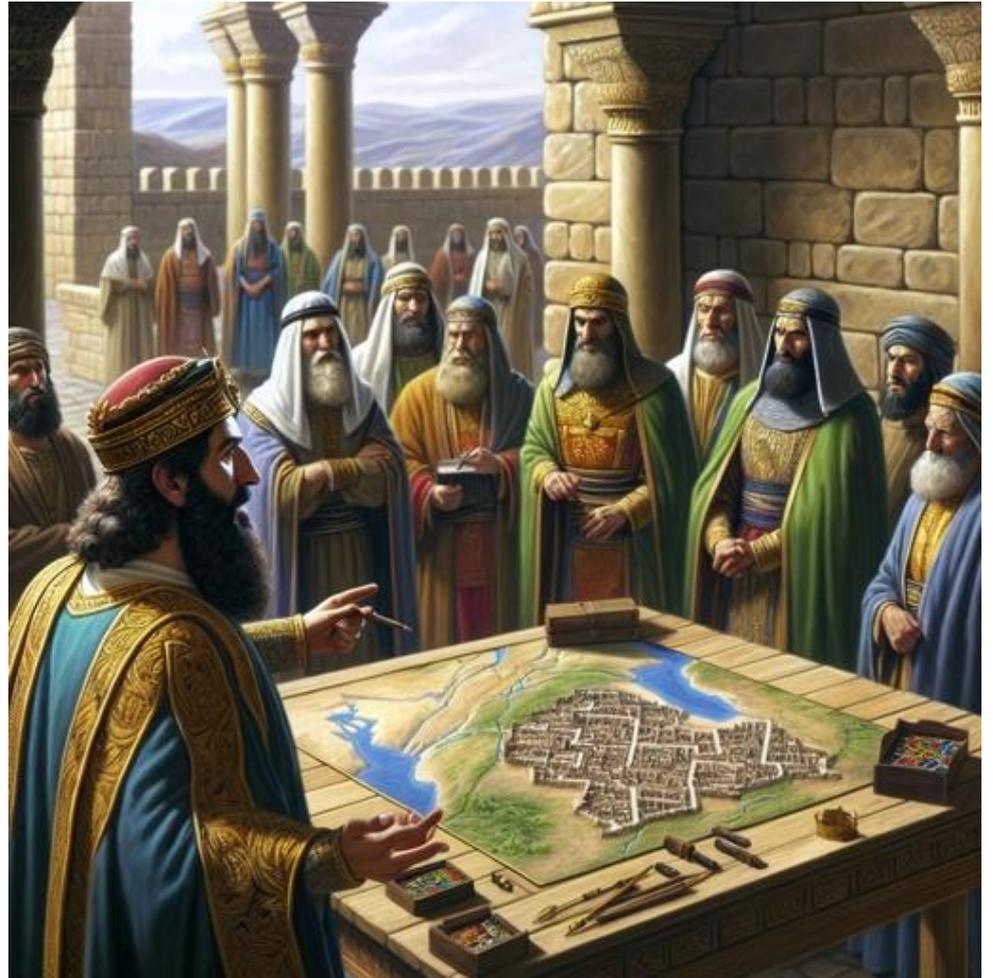


# Numbering the People-2

9-28-2025



# Previous lesson - The Census

- **2 Samuel 24:1-2 (KJV) moved to number**

<sup>1</sup> And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

<sup>2</sup> For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which *was* with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beersheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people.

- **1 Chronicles 21:1-4 (KJV) provoked to number**

<sup>1</sup> And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

<sup>2</sup> And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know *it*.

# Census taken

- **2 Samuel 24:3-8 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> 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*. But why does my lord the king desire this thing?"

<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the presence of the king to count the people of Israel.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> Then they came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi; they came to Dan Jaan and around to Sidon;

<sup>7</sup> and they came to the stronghold of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to South Judah *as far as* Beersheba.

<sup>8</sup> So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

- **Why does David desire to number the people?** This is where we get to the root of the problem. In one word the answer is "pride." Successes in battle have gone to his head. In knowing the number of the army he can brag and boast about his army but also be in danger of relying on the army instead of the Lord for his victories. He begins to walk by sight and not by faith. Pride prompts David to make serious blunders. If we are not careful, our pride and disobedience to God's Word can create serious problems for us no matter who we are or how old we are. Pride hurts our walk with God. Treasures From the Scriptures
- When **the king** ordered **Joab** to begin the numbering, David's military **commander** demonstrated better judgment than he did. He realized that the purpose of the census was to cater to David's pride, and he urged **the king** to desist, but in vain. Obedient to David, Joab and his men went throughout the land, numbering the people; they found that there were **eight hundred thousand** soldiers in **Israel** and **five hundred thousand** in **Judah**. Believer's Bible Commentary

# The Number given the King

- **2 Samuel 24:9 The Sum**

<sup>9</sup> Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king. And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

- **2 Samuel 24:10 The Conviction**

<sup>10</sup> And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

- This brings us to an important question. What did David do that was wrong? What was his sin?
- Have they been numbered before?
- Moses numbered the people twice in [Numbers 1 & 26](#).
- The purpose for numbering was for determining military draft and taxes.
- Specific instructions were given concerning this matter in
- [Exodus 30:12](#)—*When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them.*
- **God did not authorize the numbering and the ransom money was not collected.** David would pay a price for not following God's instructions as we will see later. The census was senseless because there was no threat or war. Treasures From the Scriptures

- **Exodus 30:11-16 (NKJV)** Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: "When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when *you* number them. This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel *is* twenty gerahs). The half-shekel *shall be* an offering to the LORD. Everyone included among those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering to the LORD. The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *you* give an offering to the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves. And you shall take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves." commanded that a half-shekel ransom be collected when a census was taken.
- There is no record of David's doing so. Pride motivated him to number the people. The census might cause him to depend on the size of his army and not on the arm of the Lord. Believer's Bible Commentary

# The Three Choices

- **2 Samuel 24:11-14 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup> Now when David arose in the morning, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

<sup>12</sup> "Go and tell David, 'Thus says the LORD: "I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you." ' ' "

<sup>13</sup> So Gad came to David and told him; and he said to him, "Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or shall you flee three months before your enemies, while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days' plague in your land? Now consider and see what answer I should take back to Him who sent me."

<sup>14</sup> 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."

- **After** the census was finished, the king was convicted of his sin, and cried out **to the LORD** for forgiveness. God sent **the prophet Gad** to him, offering any one of three punishments:
- (1) **seven years of famine... in the land;**
- (2) **three months** of pursuit by his **enemies;**
- (3) **three days** of pestilence or **plague.**
- **David** chose to **fall into the hand of the LORD**, and not into man's.

Believer's Bible Commentary

- The census lasted for nine months and twenty days. David had plenty of time to repent and stop the census but he would not. Now he is forced to make a very difficult choice. David was in turmoil. He never dreamed his pride, sin, and disobedience would put him in this predicament and bondage. **Satan camouflages the end of the path of sin where the damage and heartache are covered up.** What a deterrent to sin it would be if, before the fact, we could see a glimpse of its impact, sorrow, and grief it will cause us and others. We would most likely never get involved in that sin. David throws himself upon the mercy of God. Treasures From the Scriptures

- **2 Samuel 24:15-17 (NKJV) The Punishment**

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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." And the angel of the LORD was by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

<sup>17</sup> Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people, and said, "Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house."

- **2 Samuel 24:18-21 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> 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."

<sup>19</sup> So David, according to the word of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded.

<sup>20</sup> 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.

<sup>21</sup> Then Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" 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."

- **2 Samuel 24:22-25 (NKJV)**

<sup>22</sup> 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.

<sup>23</sup> All these, O king, Araunah has given to the king." And Araunah said to the king, "May the LORD your God accept you."

<sup>24</sup> Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy *it* from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

<sup>25</sup> And David built there an altar to the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel.

- **The LORD sent** three days of **plague**, killing **seventy thousand men**. The destroying **angel** was about to **destroy** the city of **Jerusalem** when God stopped him at **the threshing floor of Araunah** (also called Ornan). David asked the Lord why He was destroying the people of Israel when it was David and his house who were guilty. God's reply, given through **Gad**, was for David to build **an altar... on the threshing floor of Araunah**. **So David** the king immediately began to arrange with **Araunah the Jebusite** for the purchase of the site. Although he was a Gentile, Araunah offered not only **the threshing floor** without charge but also **oxen** for sacrifices and the **threshing implements** for firewood. The king's noble answer was, "**nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing.**"
- Finally **David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver**. ([1 Chron. 21:25](#) says that David paid 600 shekels of gold for the place, but this undoubtedly included the property surrounding the threshing floor.) **The plague** stopped when **burnt offerings** were offered on the altar ([v. 25](#)). Believer's Bible Commentary

- The prophet Gad instructs David to construct an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah or Ornan. These were the specific instructions from the Lord. It was a specific place, specific people, and specific obedience was expected.
- On a threshing floor, the wheat is beaten, smashed, and sliced to separate the chaff from the grains of wheat. God has been threshing the nation to bring out the good and remove the chaff from David and the nation.
- David knew that sacrifice must cost something or it's not sacrifice at all. True giving is measured by sacrifice. The reason why Jesus pointed out the widow with two mites is she gave all that she had. Are you sacrificing anything for the Lord?
- David purchased the threshing floor for 50 shekels of silver which was about 1.25 pounds. The entire piece of property of 35 acres was sold for 600 shekels (15 lbs.) of gold ([1 Chronicles 21:25](#)). David makes an offering and the Lord accepts it.

- This piece of landscape has played an important role in Bible history. This land was located on top of Mt. Moriah ([2 Chronicles 3:1](#))
  - <sup>1</sup> Now Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where *the Lord* had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
- . This was the place where Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice. The father offered the son for atonement of sin and God provided a substitute ram in the thicket. It was renamed *Jehovah-Jireh*... the Lord will provide ([Genesis 22:1-2](#)). Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."
  - <sup>2</sup> Then He said, "Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." Treasures From the Scriptures

- The Scriptures are completely honest in their treatment of the heroes of the faith. David had his *faults* and they are mentioned alongside *his faith*. We have followed David from the flock, through exile, into exaltation. Few men walked closer to God; few men fell deeper into sin. But through it all he was sustained by the Lord. We have all benefited from the experiences that David passed through, because he recorded them in his psalms.
- The words of [Psalm 40](#) fitly summarize David's life:  
I waited patiently for the LORD, and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and He set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps. He has put a new song in my mouth—praise to our God; many will see it and fear, and will trust in the LORD ([Ps. 40:1-3](#)). Believer's Bible Commentary