

2 SAMUEL 24:17 2026 -- A PRAYER OF DAVID, WHEN BECAUSE OF HIS PRIDE, HE HAD A CENSUS TAKEN OF ISRAEL

1/31/26 Sat Morn Prayer – P. Twente, <https://www.ptwente.com> 714 425-9221; ptwente@gmail.com

(2Sa 24:1-4) Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah." [2] 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." [3] 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?" [4] 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.

(2Sa 24:17,25) 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." [25] 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 So the LORD heeded the prayers for the land, and the plague was withdrawn from Israel.

(1Ch 21:17) 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."

The Biblical Setting:

- **What would you consider was David's greatest sin?** Murder? Adultery? Here we see the greatest sin, from God's perspective was David's pride.
- **We have this account given to us in two places** – 2 Samuel chapter 24 and 1 Chronicles chapter 21. God was angry with Israel – "Again the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel" (2 Sam. 24:1) Satan stood up against Israel – "Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel" (1 Chron. 21:1)
- **David's sin was not a hasty thing; he carried it out with cool, calculated precision.** He was rebelling against God! Note the contrasts between this sin and his sin with Bathsheba: (1) this was a sin of the spirit (pride) while the other was a sin of the flesh. *Joab and the captains of the army were against* taking a census (2Sa 24:4)! (2) here he acted with deliberate persistence, while his sin with Bathsheba came as the result of the sudden overwhelming desires of the flesh; (3) this sin involved the nation, and 70,000 people died; his other sin was a family matter, with 4 people dying. (4) Yet in both sins, God gave David time to repent, but he waited too long.
- **How many times have you and I taken a census?** We did not really trust God, and we put our faith in something else. For example – sufficiency of money for retirement? How much money do I have in investments and property? Will it be enough to last after retirement? Am I trusting in Him or in my own provision?

A Prayer for forgiveness and for God's mercy!

- **2 Samuel 24:17 - Then David spoke to the LORD,** In prayer; he and the elders of Israel being clothed in sackcloth, had fallen on their faces. He prayed, not unto the angel, but to Jehovah that sent him; see (1Ch 21:16),
- **when he saw the angel who was striking the people,** in the air over Jerusalem, with a drawn sword in his hand, which made him appear terribly fearsome:

- *and said, "Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; in numbering the people:*
- *but these sheep, what have they done?* David looked upon himself as the only transgressor, and his people as innocent, and as harmless as sheep, He thought of no sins but his own, which were uppermost in his mind, laying heavy on his conscience. It grieved him extremely that his people should suffer on his account. But were not so innocent as he thought and suggests; and it was not only for his, but their sins, this evil came; he was suffered to do what he did, to bring upon them deserved punishment for their rebellion against him, and other sins; however, this shows the high opinion he had of them; the great affection he had for them, and his sympathy with them in this time of distress!
- *Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house."* Let me and mine die, and not they; a type of Christ, the good Shepherd, willing to lay down His life for the sheep, and suffer in their stead, that they might go free.

SUMMARY:

Some practical lessons from this chapter:

- **We never outgrow temptation** - David was not an inexperienced youth when he committed this sin! Had he been "watching and praying" he would not have entered into temptation and sin so easily. Note David's apparent prayerlessness!
- **God graciously gives time to repent** - He gave David more than nine months to deal with his sins and make matters right. "Seek the Lord while He may be found."
- **Sins of the spirit do great damage** - All sin is wicked and should be avoided, to be sure, but we must realize that the Bible repeatedly condemns stubborn pride. Once David got on his evil course, he was too proud to turn around. His predecessor, King Saul, made the same mistake. We may not be guilty of adultery and murder, but a hard heart and a proud look will lead to perhaps greater evils.
- **Our sins involve others** - Seventy thousand people died because David disobeyed the Lord.
- **True confession is a costly thing** - Do we realize the high cost of sinning? A true confession is more than a quick prayer and a quoting of **(1Jn 1:9)** True confession involves facing sin honestly and obeying God's Word regardless of the price we must pay.
- **God will forgive and bring blessing** - Let us put ourselves into the hands of the Lord, for great are His mercies toward us!
- **Watch out for pride! The ugliness of pride! It always manifests itself in prayerlessness.** - There is no sin that has in it more of contradiction and therefore more of offence to God than pride. Nor is anything more humbling, and grieving, and mortifying to a gracious soul, than to see itself under God's displeasure.
- **But God is merciful!**

JESUS PAID IT ALL – (1865) Elvina Hall; John Grape – Gaither/Ivan Park (4:38)

I hear the Savior say, Thy strength indeed is small; Child of weakness, watch and pray, Find in Me thine all in all. Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow.

For nothing good have I Whereby Thy grace to claim I'll wash my garment white in the blood of Cal'vry's Lamb Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow.

And when before the throne I stand in Him complete, Jesus died my soul to save, My lips shall still repeat Jesus paid it all, All to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow. He washed it white as snow.