**A Man Who Knew How to Repent**

2 Samuel 24:1-25

Key Verse 17

“When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the Lord, “I have sinned; I, the shepherd, have done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family.”

**Introduction)**

They say that nobody is perfect. This passage shows how David fell into his sin to count his people. It is quite understandable for a powerful king to do so. But the problem was that it was against God’s word. (Exodus 30:12) However thankfully David knows how to repent when he is conscience-stricken. David’s life is characterized by sincere repentance whenever he was rebuked by a servant of God. May the Lord help us to learn how to repent before God.

**1. Read verses 1-4.  What had happened in Israel? (1, 1 Chronicle 21:1, Exodus 30:12) What does David ask Joab? (2)  What does Joab say upon hearing David's request? (3) How does the King prevail over others? (4)**

**1-1) Read verses 1-4.**

Again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, “Go and take a census of Israel and Judah.”

**2** So the king said to Joab and the army commanderswith him, “Go throughout the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and enroll the fighting men, so that I may know how many there are.”

**3** But Joab replied to the king, “May the Lord your God multiply the troops a hundred times over, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king want to do such a thing?”

**4** The king’s word, however, overruled Joab and the army commanders; so they left the presence of the king to enroll the fighting men of Israel.

**1-2) What had happened in Israel? (1, 1 Chronicle 21:1, Exodus 30:12)**

Again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and **he** incited David against them, saying, “Go and take a census of Israel and Judah.”

The pronoun ‘he’ in verse 1 may be the Lord God according to KJV (He)

However, according to 1 Chronicles, it is shown that he is ‘Satan.’

“Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel.”

Satan must have moved David’s heart to be motivated to count his people.

Still God is the Sovereign Lord and allowed Satan to do so like the case of Job or the case of Peter. (Mark 8:33)

But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!”he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

Exodus 30:12 reads, “When you take a census of the Israelites to count them, each one must pay the Lord a ransom for his life at the time he is counted. Then no plague will come on them when you number them.”

It is a warning about taking a census of the Israelites.

This verse shows how serious it is to count the Israelites for God himself is the owner of His people. If one count them without God’s approval, plaque will follow.

The Israelites do not belong to David.

The Lord God is only entitled to count His chosen people if He wants to.

So the bottom line is that David could count only at God’s command.

**1-3) What does David ask Joab? (2)**

So the king said to Joab and the army commanderswith him, “Go throughout the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and enroll the fighting men, so that I may know how many there are.”

Who knows? He may plan to show his military power.

He might have had his own blueprint to be like Alexander the Great conquering the whole world for God gave him great victories continually.

It seems that David was tempted to take some of the glory in himself. He looked at how Israel had grown and prospered during his reign. It could have made him feel good. We could understand his desire to seek his own glory in this world.

David’s life was full of trouble as a fugitive and a chastisement due to his sins.

Now late in his reign, David could’ve been tempted to rob some of God’s glory instead of remembering 2 Samuel 7:12-16 and live as a faithful man to the rest of his days.

When we forget God’s grace and love, we will eventually fall.

No doubt his heart is now off track as a man of God.

May the Lord help us to be faithful and focus on serving His will.

**1-4) What does Joab say upon hearing David's request? (3)**

But Joab replied to the king, “May the Lord your God multiply the troops a hundred times over, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king want to do such a thing?”

Joab may have reasoned why David commanded a census.

At least Joab was not afraid of saying before the king when he felt to do so.

With the best interest of both David and Israel in mind, Joab and the other commanders of Israel’s army asked David to reconsider his order to take a census.

**1-5) How does the King prevail over others? (4)**

This shows how strong David’s desire was. He has already determined to do so.

It is unusual for David to force someone to do it. Most of time he yielded himself and listened others when their advices were legitimate for he maintained his humility before the Lord his God.

It is ‘sin’ that drove him to the point where nobody was able to stop him.

This sin could be his pride.

**2. Read verses 5-12. How many men does Joab find in Israel? (5-9, 1 Chronicle 21:5) What happens to David after he hears the report? (10) What does God tell David through the prophet Gad? (11-12)**

**2-1) Read verses 5-12.**

**5** After crossing the Jordan, they camped near Aroer, south of the town in the gorge, and then went through Gad and on to Jazer. **6** They went to Gilead and the region of Tahtim Hodshi, and on to Dan Jaan and around toward Sidon. **7** Then they went toward the fortress of Tyre and all the towns of the Hivites and Canaanites. Finally, they went on to Beersheba in the Negev of Judah.

**8** After they had gone through the entire land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

**9** Joab reported the number of the fighting men to the king: In Israel there were eight hundred thousand able-bodied men who could handle a sword, and in Judah five hundred thousand.

**10** David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the Lord, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, Lord, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.”

**11** Before David got up the next morning, the word of the Lord had come to Gad the prophet, David’s seer: **12** “Go and tell David, ‘This is what the Lord says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.’”

**2-2) How many men does Joab find in Israel? (5-9, 1 Chronicle 21:5)**

After crossing the Jordan, they camped near Aroer, south of the town in the gorge, and then went through Gad and on to Jazer. **6** They went to Gilead and the region of Tahtim Hodshi, and on to Dan Jaan and around toward Sidon. **7** Then they went toward the fortress of Tyre and all the towns of the Hivites and Canaanites. Finally, they went on to Beersheba in the Negev of Judah. **8** After they had gone through the entire land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

**9** Joab reported the number of the fighting men to the king: In Israel there were eight hundred thousand able-bodied men who could handle a sword, and in Judah five hundred thousand.

Joab reported the number of the fighting men to David: In all Israel there were one million one hundred thousand men who could handle a sword, including four hundred and seventy thousand in Judah. - 1 Chronicles 21:5

Although there are some discrepancy between 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicle, still they are a lot of soldiers.

2 Samuel - 800,000 able bodied men who can handle a sword

1 Chronicle-1,170,000 men who can handle a sword

It took almost 10 months to count them all. I think that it might be difficult to come up with accurate number.

**2-3) What happens to David after he hears the report? (10)**

David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the Lord, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, Lord, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.”

David’s heart was sensitive to sin when it was committed.

Thank God that he now saw through the problem in his heart.

He must’ve realized that his pride prompted him to do such a foolish thing.

**2-4) What does God tell David through the prophet Gad? (11-12)**

Before David got up the next morning, the word of the Lord had come to Gad the prophet, David’s seer: **12** “Go and tell David, ‘This is what the Lord says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.’”

God is working to give his words to the prophet Gad.

“Go and tell David” also indicates that God is willing to send his servant to help David.

God could have spoken to David directly through dream. But he chose to send his servant and have him deliver the message to David.

**3. Read verses 13-17. What consequence does David choose among the three options given to him? (13, 14) What happens to the Israelites? (15)  What does God do when his angel reaches out his hand to destroy Jerusalem? (16) What does David say to God? (17) What do you think there is to learn from the interaction between God and King David in this passage?**

**3-1) Read verses 13-17.**

**13** So Gad went to David and said to him, “Shall there come on you three years of famine in your land? Or three months of fleeing from your enemies while they pursue you? Or three days of plague in your land? Now then, think it over and decide how I should answer the one who sent me.”

**14** David said to Gad, “I am in deep distress. Let us fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into human hands.”

**15** So the Lord sent a plague on Israel from that morning until the end of the time designated, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died. **16** When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the Lord relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, “Enough! Withdraw your hand.” The angel of the Lord was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

**17** When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the Lord, “I have sinned; I, the shepherd,**[**[**c**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Samuel%2024&version=NIV#fen-NIV-8710c)**]** have done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family.”

**3-2) What consequence does David choose among the three options given to him? (13, 14)**

**13** So Gad went to David and said to him, “Shall there come on you three years of famine in your land? Or three months of fleeing from your enemies while they pursue you? Or three days of plague in your land? Now then, think it over and decide how I should answer the one who sent me.”

**14** David said to Gad, “I am in deep distress. Let us fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into human hands.”

There are three choices:

1. 3 years of famine

2. 3 months of fleeing from enemies

3. 3 days of plague

David chose the third one because he preferred to not fall into the hands of his enemies and he knew that God’s mercy is great.

Both 3 years of famine and 3 months of fleeing are longer than 3 day plaque.

Anyone could be vulnerable to plague for it maybe mysterious disease caused by unknown microorganisms.

In contrast rich people could escape famine. Also if his neighboring nations want to help them, they could survive a famine.

Shrewd/opportunistic people could survive by fleeing.

So plague could be the one that David can ask God’s mercy.

Anyway David put trust in the Lord for His mercy and grace.

It reminds me of 2 Samuel 22:51, “God shows his unfailing kindness.”

May the Lord help us to follow David’s example in seeking God’s help instead of human support.

Hezekiah in the recent Daily Bread was a good king. But he almost lost his life and nation for he relied on human hands such as Egyptian empire.

Later when he relied on God, he was able to get help from the Lord.

**3-3) What happens to the Israelites? (15)**

**15** So the Lord sent a plague on Israel from that morning until the end of the time designated, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died.

There was no exception for those who died from Dan to Beersheba.

God’s word works as he had said!

**3-4) What does God do when his angel reaches out his hand to destroy Jerusalem? (16)**

**16** When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the Lord relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, “Enough! Withdraw your hand.” The angel of the Lord was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

God is like a loving father who chastise his sons but with a broken heart.

It reminds me of what Jesus did in John 11:35.

“Jesus wept!”

It is the shortest verse in the Bible but it shows Jesus’ broken heart well.

**3-5) What does David say to God? (17)**

**17** When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the Lord, “I have sinned; I, the shepherd,have done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family.”

David called himself the shepherd of his suffering people.

He really cared his people. He must have hoped that he would suffer instead. He was very sorry for 7000 who died due to his sin.

“I have sinned.” “I, the shepherd, have done wrong. These are but sheep.”

“What have they done?” “Let your hand on me and my family.”

He prayed to the Lord with a contrite heart as a sinner and asked God’s mercy again.

He wanted to take full responsibility. It is his greatness to repent of his sins.

May the Lord raise up many servants like David in our generation.

**3-6) What do you think there is to learn from the interaction between God and King David in this passage?**

I could find the fact that Angel had implemented the command of God.

He followed God’s command.

\*But God relented and said, “Enough, Withdraw your hands.”

\*David also prayed earnestly by calling his people as **sheep** and himself as  **shepherd**.

(Now David thinks of God’s flocks and this is desirable mindset before God)

(Then David knew that the Lord had established him as king over Israel and had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel. - 2 Samuel 5:12)

We could see through both God’s heart and David’s heart.

\*Interaction is a kind of action that occurs as two or more entities (objects or people) which have an effect upon one another. The idea of a two-way effect is essential in the concept of interaction, as opposed to a one-way [causal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Causality) effect. (Wikipedia)

God’s heart and David’s heart are mutually influenced. It is a reciprocal reaction.

The Angel is more of a messenger of God’s will.

It reminds me of Ephesians 3:10-12:

**“10** His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, **11** according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.**12** In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.”

We are blessed to be inherit God’s kingdom and will rule together with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Angels are agents who serve the Lord and those who believe in Jesus.

Hebrews 1:13-14:

To which of the angels did God ever say, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet”? **14** Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

It is possible for angels who were proud and were jealous about human beings created in Jesus’ image to be perfect(Matthew 5:48).

Satan was an angel who did not repent of his sin.

But thank God for helping us to know how to repent of our sins through Jesus Christ and His great mercy.

**4. Read verses 18-25. What does God say to David through Gad? (18). What did David do? (19-21) What does Araunah offer David? (22-23) How does David respond to this offer? (24). What does God do in acceptance of David's offerings?  (25, 1 Chronicle 21:26) What do you think we can learn from David and what do you think we can learn about God from this?**

**4-1) Read verses 18-25.**

**18** On that day Gad went to David and said to him, “Go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” **19** So David went up, as the Lord had commanded through Gad. **20** When Araunah looked and saw the king and his officials coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

**21** Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?”

“To buy your threshing floor,” David answered, “so I can build an altar to the Lord, that the plague on the people may be stopped.”

**22** Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxenfor the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. **23** Your Majesty, Araunahgives all this to the king.” Araunah also said to him, “May the Lord your God accept you.”

**24** But the king replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels**[**[**e**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Samuel%2024&version=NIV#fen-NIV-8717e)**]** of silver for them. **25** David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the Lord answered his prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

**4-2) What does God say to David through Gad? (18).**

On that day Gad went to David and said to him, “Go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.”

Araunah ([Hebrew](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language): אֲרַוְנָה) was a [Jebusite](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jebusite) who owned the [threshing floor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Threshing_floor) on the summit of [Mount Moriah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Moriah) where Solomon later built the temple.

\*A different version ‘RSV’ shows that his name as Ornan

22 And David said to Ornan, “Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to the Lord—give it to me at its full price—that the plague may be averted from the people.”23 Then Ornan said to David, “Take it; and let my lord the king do what seems good to him; see, I give the oxen for burnt offerings, and the threshing sledges for the wood, and the wheat for a cereal offering. I give it all.” 24 But King David said to Ornan, “No, but I will buy it for the full price; I will not take for the Lord what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings which cost me nothing.” 25 So David paid Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the site. 26 And David built there an altar to the Lord and presented burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the Lord, and he answered him with fire from heaven upon the altar of burnt offering. 27 Then the Lord commanded the angel; and he put his sword back into its sheath.

\*\*2 Samuel 5 shows how David had acquired Jerusalem.

David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. **5** In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Israel and Judah thirty-three years.

**6** The king and his men marched to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, who lived there. The Jebusites said to David, “You will not get in here; even the blind and the lame can ward you off.” They thought, “David cannot get in here.” **7** Nevertheless, David captured the fortress of Zion—which is the City of David.

**8** On that day David had said, “Anyone who conquers the Jebusites will have to use the water shaft to reach those ‘lame and blind’ who are David’s enemies.**[**[**a**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+samuel+5&version=NIV#fen-NIV-8141a)**]**” That is why they say, “The ‘blind and lame’ will not enter the palace.”

**9** David then took up residence in the fortress and called it the City of David. He built up the area around it, from the terraces**[**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+samuel+5&version=NIV#fen-NIV-8142b)**]** inward. **10** And he became more and more powerful, because the Lord God Almighty was with him.

**4-3) What did David do? (19-21)**

**19** So David went up, as the Lord had commanded through Gad. **20** When Araunah looked and saw the king and his officials coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

**21** Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?”

“To buy your threshing floor,” David answered, “so I can build an altar to the Lord, that the plague on the people may be stopped.”

David followed God’s instruction through the prophet Gad.

When a Jebusite named Araunah went out, he could have asked him for favor in building an altar.

However David kept his integrity and insisted on buying his threshing floor.

Also David explained the reason why in detail.

**4-4) What does Araunah offer David? (22-23)**

**22** Araunah said to David, “Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. **23** Your Majesty, Araunahgives all this to the king.” Araunah also said to him, “May the Lord your God accept you.”

Araunah is willing to offer whatever David needs.

**4-5) How does David respond to this offer? (24).**

**24** But the king replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekelsof silver for them.

So David paid Araunah six hundred shekelsof gold for the site. (1 Chronicle 21:25)

According to the Books of Samuel, David paid 50 silver [shekels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shekel) for the location; Chronicles states that David paid 600 gold shekels.

However, some explain this by saying that the book of Samuel only talks about the price of the floor and oxen; Chronicles adds in the price of all the things that were sacrificed.

Here a point can be made that love is costly. God has sent his one and only Son to die on the cross to love us. It is priceless!

**4-6) What does God do in acceptance of David's offerings?  (25, 1 Chronicle 21:26)**

**25** David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the Lord answered his prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

Burnt offering is to surrender himself completely while fellowship offering is to give thanks and have fellowship with the Lord.

Despite the death of 7000 people, his sin was not forgiven.

So approved offering through the blood of the animals could only atone his sin.

Likewise we are forgiven through the blood Jesus Christ who was chosen as the Lamb of God.

David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. He called on the Lord, and the Lord answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering. - 1 Chronicles 21:26

God approved his offering by sending fire from heaven. God honored David’s desire to be right with the Lord.

Thanks to Jesus Christ and His blood, we can come close to the Lord our God to have peace and fellowship.

**Romans 3:22-26**

This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**24** and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. **25** God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— **26** he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

**4-7) What do you think we can learn from David and what do you think we can learn about God from this?**

David obeyed the Lord and His command. As a result he could resume his relationship with the Lord. God wants to restore love relationship with him despite his sins.

Praise the Lord our God who gives us the way to reconcile with him in and through the blood of Jesus Christ.

**In Conclusion)**

David committed a sin before God at his old age. But he confessed his sins and asked for God’s mercy. He identified himself as the shepherd of God’s people. God helped him through His word that was given to the prophet Gad. When we repent like David, we can experience the same grace through the blood of Jesus Christ. We are thankful to the Lord who opens the way to be forgiven and reconciled with our eternal Father through His Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

**One Word) I have sinned!**