

David Numbers the People**The Sinful Census**

1. (24:1) The anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and so the LORD sent punishment against them by way of _____ sin.¹
2. (24:2-3) The sinfulness of David's desire to take a census was plain to Joab who asked, "why will [the king] be a cause of _____ to Israel?" (1 Chr. 21:3) Various reasons have been suggested to explain the sinfulness of this action. Here's my guess:
 - (a) When a census was taken, every man was commanded to give a _____ to "ransom his soul."

TEXT: 2 Samuel 24:1-25;
1 Chronicles 21:1-30

STORY ELEMENTS:

Setting: circa 970 B.C.

Main Characters: God, David, and Joab.

Plot: David's census angers the LORD.

Key word(s): "_____ floor"

Climax: 2 Samuel 24:10 *And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.*

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. 13 This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD.

- (b) The fact that David paid no mind to this Mosaic requirement suggests he was motivated out of _____ or some other godless motive.

3. (24:4-9) Reluctantly, Joab and his men set out on the monumental task of assessing Israel's combat readiness. _____ months and twenty days later they returned to Jerusalem with a tally of Israel's military readiness (minus the tribes of Benjamin and Levi, cf. 2 Chr. 21:6, 27:24)
 - (a) Joab counted 800,000 combat veterans, including 500,000 from _____ alone (2 Sam. 24:9)
 - (b) The number recorded in 1 Chr. 21 (1,100,000) included the _____ army of 288,000 men (1 Chr. 27)

¹The discrepancy between 2 Sam 24:1 and 1 Chro. 21:1 is resolved when we understand that the LORD permissively uses Satan to accomplish his divine decrees, such as in His punishment of the disobedient and the purifying trials of believers (Job).

Famine, Foes, or Pestilence

4. (24:10) David's heart was _____ for his rebellious act and he readily saw the foolishness of it and confessed his error to the LORD.
5. (24:11-14) The next day, the LORD sent the prophet Gad to offer David his choice of three punishments: three² years of famine, three months of war, or three days of pestilence. David chose the last of the three because he was more willing to be at the mercy of God than of his _____.
6. (24:15-17) The LORD sent a destroying angel into Israel whose path seemed to follow the very course Joab took, stopping finally near _____. Seventy thousand men perished.
7. (24:18-25) Gad the prophet was sent to David to instruct him to build an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah (or Ornan). This David did, and there an altar was built, sacrifice made, and the plague was stayed. Later, the entire property would be purchased (Mt. Moriah) and used for the site of the future _____. (1 Chr. 21:25; 2 Chr. 3:1)

Application

8. The area of Mt. Moriah has incredible significance. It was near there that Abraham offered Isaac, where David stopped the plague, where Solomon's Temple was built, and later where the Messiah would be crucified. Ornan's threshing floor was a place where wheat is separated from the chaff, and then a place where sacrifice was made for people's sins. How appropriate that faith in the Messiah's sacrifice separates the "wheat from the _____."

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: 12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

²Seven years total, including the previous three years famine because of the Gibeonite injustice and the current year the narrative took place, cf. 1 Chr. 21:11