

BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL
DAVID'S SIN OF PRIDE
2 SAMUEL 24:1-10

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Introduction

As we come to the end of 2 Samuel, we might logically expect to read of David's peacefully dying in his bed or of some great victory for Israel.

Instead we find David in trouble with the LORD. We see here that late in David's reign he decided to number the people (that is, to take a census of the people under his reign!) From what we will see written here, we'll come to understand that David did so out of pride rather than dependence.

We'll see that this course of action on David's part not only affected him but it caused great harm to the people of Israel as well.

I. WE SEE THAT SOMETIMES THE LORD ALLOWS US TO MAKE WRONG CHOICES! (Vs. 1)

For reasons not stated, *verse 1* tells us that **the Lord was angry against Israel**. So God **allowed** Satan to tempt David into this sin of pride because Israel needed punishing. A parallel passage says: *1 Chronicles 21:1 "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."*

Satan was the one who stirred up David's heart in pride to assess the military strength of his kingdom here.

Up to this point we've seen David **totally rely on the LORD in his battles!** Often **the numbers had been against him rather than for him!** Nevertheless, he just maintained his trust in God's strength and protection and **the LORD brought him through it all!**

God is said here to have caused the action, but understand that it is in the sense of **permitting Satan to put David to the test!**

There is no contradiction here between verse 1 in our text and the parallel passage in 1 Chronicles 21:1 because **the Lord simply allowed Satan to prompt David to an improper course of action in order that Israel might be punished and that David might be instructed through this!**

This is similar to the Lord's permitting Satan to trouble Job (Job 1:12; 2:6) and His allowing an evil spirit to torment Saul (1 Samuel 16:14).

In any case, **the LORD Himself did not incite David to do evil** for we know *James 1:13* says "*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:*"

But the LORD is in control of all human activity, especially as it pertains to His people. I, for one, am glad that **the LORD controls what Satan both can and cannot do!** Can you imagine if Satan were left totally unrestrained by the LORD!?

II. WE SEE THAT PRIDE CAUSES US TO DO SOME STRANGE THINGS! (Vs. 2-3)

It is **not clearly stated** here in *verse 2* why David wanted to number his people, but when *verse 2* is compared with *verse 9*, **we get the idea that he was trying to determine his military strength.**

And that is where the sin appears to have been—David was numbering his military so he could boast in the human might that he ruled over. This is further supported by what Joab said to David in *verse 3*.

Joab saw what was going on and told David here that God was able to multiply their troops as much as was necessary when necessary, so why did he feel this need to assess his strength?

But David wasn't listening here.

III. WE SEE THE DETAILS OF THE NUMBERING. (Vs 4-9)

Now understand that numbering is not necessarily wrong. Moses numbered the fighting men of Israel in preparation for battle! (*Numbers 1:1-4*)
Moses also numbered the Kohathites in *Numbers 4:2* and the Gershonites in *Numbers 4:22* for priestly service.

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Saul numbered the Israelites to defend the people of Jabesh-gilead by fighting the Ammonites! (*1 Samuel 11:8*)

Even David numbered those loyal to him in preparation for defending himself against an attack by his son, Absalom! (*2 Samuel 18:1*)

In none of these cases was numbering wrong. The problem that we see in David's numbering here seemed to stem from his heart! The WHY!

The real sin here is trusting in man's power, instead of in God's power! It is walking by sight, rather than by faith! And we know that without faith it is impossible to please God. (Hebrews 11:6)

So, how do we go about in our lives today? Are we counting on our own strength or do we constantly look to God for our strength?

Do we think that we must win the battles we face in this life by our strength, or by our numbers, or are we going out with what we have, no matter the odds and looking for God to deliver us?!

**IV. WE SEE DAVID'S CONVICTION, ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND REPENTANCE OF HIS SIN! (Vs 10)
One of the hardest things for any of us to do is to admit that we are wrong! That stems from pride in our heart too!**

But here in *verse 10* we find David smitten in his heart with conviction and we see his genuine repentance and confession of his sin.

God sees each of our hearts and he is displeased with the sins we harbor there! But perhaps no sins are greater against our LORD as believers than **when we have pride in our hearts and we become self-sufficient!**

David got what he wanted (a census) but there was no joy in it, only sorrow. It is the same way with us! There is no real joy in sin!

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Now God was not against census taking. He was against David counting on his strength which came from his sight, instead of His strength which comes from faith in Him!

So God's Spirit convicted David of his sin. And instead of being allowed to glory in his own strength David sees his sin and cries out to God to take the iniquity of his evil away.

David finally realized that he had begun trusting in the size of his empirethe military number and strength RATHER THAN leaning on God and trusting on HIS DIVINE Protection and Care! **AND GOD WANTED DAVID AND ISRAEL TO TRUST IN HIM!**

Thank God for His convicting Spirit that can break through our self will and cause us to realize the error of our ways! Oh that we would see the error of our ways quickly and get back right with God! Many times though we resist the convicting of God's Spirit to our own detriment!

It took David 9 months and 20 days to acknowledge he'd messed up! That's how long the numbering took! (*Verse 8*)

Things would go much better for us if we learned early to obey His voice quicker and more often?

The lesson in this is this: **God prefers our trust in Him over our own numbers or ideas or power, knowledge and strength!**

Conclusion

Be careful that your pride and your own self will doesn't get the best of you!

Because pride can cause you to do some strange things that are not in your best interest or the LORD'S interest!

Listen to God's Holy Spirit and learn to obey the LORD's voice quickly for your own benefit and for the sake of the LORD!