David Numbers the Fighting Men

Temple Site Selected

1 Chronicles 21:1-30

1 Chronicles 22:1
David Numbers the Fighting Men

Text:

1 Chronicles 21:1-30,

1. An adversary opposed Israel, inciting David to count how many warriors Israel had.
2. David told Joab and the leaders of the army, “Go, count the number of warriors from Beer Sheba to Dan. Then bring back a report to me so I may know how many we have.”
3. Joab replied, “May the Lord make his army a hundred times larger! My master, O king, do not all of them serve my master? Why does my master want to do this? Why bring judgment on Israel?”
4. But the king’s edict stood, despite Joab’s objections. So Joab left and traveled throughout Israel before returning to Jerusalem.
5. Joab reported to David the number of warriors. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 sword-wielding soldiers; Judah alone had 470,000 sword-wielding soldiers.
6. Now Joab did not number Levi and Benjamin, for the king’s edict disgusted him.
7. God was also offended by it, so he attacked Israel.
8. David said to God, “I have sinned greatly by doing this! Now, please remove the guilt of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly.”
9. The Lord told Gad, David’s prophet,
10. “Go, tell David, ‘This is what the Lord says: “I am offering you three forms of judgment from which to choose. Pick one of them.”’”
11. Gad went to David and told him, “This is what the Lord says: ‘Pick one of these:
12. three years of famine, or three months being chased by your enemies and struck down by their swords, or three days being struck down by the Lord, during which a plague will invade the
land and the Lord’s messenger will destroy throughout Israel’s
territory.’ Now, decide what I should tell the one who sent me.”
13. David said to Gad, “I am very upset! I prefer to be attacked by
the Lord, for his mercy is very great; I do not want to be attacked
by men!”
14. So the Lord sent a plague through Israel, and 70,000 Israelite
men died.
15. God sent an angel to ravage Jerusalem. As he was doing so, the
Lord watched and relented from his judgment. He told the angel
who was destroying, “That’s enough! Stop now!” Now the Lord’s
angel was standing near the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
16. David looked up and saw the Lord’s messenger standing
between the earth and sky with his sword drawn and in his hand,
stretched out over Jerusalem. David and the leaders, covered with
sackcloth, threw themselves down with their faces to the ground.
17. David said to God, “Was I not the one who decided to number
the army? I am the one who sinned and committed this awful deed!
As for these sheep—what have they done? O Lord my God, attack
me and my family, but remove the plague from your people!”
18. So the Lord’s messenger told Gad to instruct David to g
o up and
build an altar for the Lord on the threshing floor of Ornan the
Jebusite.
19. So David went up as Gad instructed him to do in the name of the
Lord.
20. While Ornan was threshing wheat, he turned and saw the
messenger, and he and his four sons hid themselves.
21. When David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David; he
came out from the threshing floor and bowed to David with his face
to the ground.
22. David said to Ornan, “Sell me the threshing floor so I can build
on it an altar for the Lord—I’ll pay top price—so that the plague
may be removed from the people.”
23. Ornan told David, “You can have it! My master, the king, may
do what he wants. Look, I am giving you the oxen for burnt
sacrifices, the threshing sledges for wood, and the wheat for an offering. I give it all to you.”
24. King David replied to Ornan, “No, I insist on buying it for top price. I will not offer to the Lord what belongs to you or offer a burnt sacrifice that cost me nothing.
25. So David bought the place from Ornan for 600 pieces of gold.
26. David built there an altar to the Lord and offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings. He called out to the Lord, and the Lord responded by sending fire from the sky and consuming the burnt sacrifice on the altar.
27. The Lord ordered the messenger to put his sword back into its sheath.
28. At that time, when David saw that the Lord responded to him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there.
29. Now the Lord’s tabernacle (which Moses had made in the wilderness) and the altar for burnt sacrifices were at that time at the worship center in Gibeon.
30. But David could not go before it to seek God’s will, for he was afraid of the sword of the Lord’s messenger. (NET)

1 Chronicles 22:1, David then said, “This is the place where the temple of the Lord God will be, along with the altar for burnt sacrifices for Israel.” (NET)

Introduction:
I. 2 Samuel 24:1-25 and 1 Chronicles 21:1-30 are parallel passages although 1 Chronicles 21 “gives the story a new context as well as a new ending.” (Hicks)

A. 2 Samuel 24:1-25, Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, “Go count Israel and Judah.” The king told Joab, the general in command of his army, “Go through all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beer Sheba and muster the army, so I may
know the size of the army.” Joab replied to the king, “May the Lord your God make the army a hundred times larger right before the eyes of my lord the king! But why does my master the king want to do this?” But the king’s edict stood, despite the objections of Joab and the leaders of the army. So Joab and the leaders of the army left the king’s presence in order to muster the Israelite army. They crossed the Jordan and camped at Aroer, on the south side of the city, at the wadi of Gad, near Jazer. Then they went on to Gilead and to the region of Tahtim Hodshi, coming to Dan Jaan and on around to Sidon. Then they went to the fortress of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went on to the Negev of Judah, to Beer Sheba. They went through all the land and after nine months and twenty days came back to Jerusalem. Joab reported the number of warriors to the king. In Israel there were 800,000 sword-wielding warriors, and in Judah there were 500,000 soldiers. David felt guilty after he had numbered the army. David said to the Lord, “I have sinned greatly by doing this! Now, O Lord, please remove the guilt of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly.” When David got up the next morning, the Lord had already spoken to Gad the prophet, David’s seer: “Go, tell David, ‘This is what the Lord says: I am offering you three forms of judgment. Pick one of them and I will carry it out against you.’” Gad went to David and told him, “Shall seven years of famine come upon your land? Or shall you flee for three months from your enemy with him in hot pursuit? Or shall there be three days of plague in your land? Now decide what I should tell the one who sent me.” David said to Gad, “I am very upset! I prefer that we be attacked by the Lord, for his mercy is great; I do not want to be attacked by men!” So the Lord sent a plague through Israel from the morning until the completion of the appointed time. Seventy thousand men died from Dan to Beer Sheba. When the angel extended his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the Lord relented from his judgment. He told the angel who was killing
the people, “That’s enough! Stop now!” (Now the Lord’s angel was near the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.) When he saw the angel who was destroying the people, David said to the Lord, “Look, it is I who have sinned and done this evil thing! As for these sheep—what have they done? Attack me and my family.” So Gad went to David that day and told him, “Go up and build an altar for the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.” So David went up as Gad instructed him to do, according to the Lord’s instructions. When Araunah looked out and saw the king and his servants approaching him, he went out and bowed to the king with his face to the ground. Araunah said, “Why has my lord the king come to his servant?” David replied, “To buy from you the threshing floor so I can build an altar for the Lord, so that the plague may be removed from the people.” Araunah told David, “My lord the king may take whatever he wishes and offer it. Look! Here are oxen for burnt offerings, and threshing sledges and harnesses for wood. I, the servant of my lord the king, give it all to the king!” Araunah also told the king, “May the Lord your God show you favor!” But the king said to Araunah, “No, I insist on buying it from you! I will not offer to the Lord my God burnt sacrifices that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty pieces of silver. Then David built an altar for the Lord there and offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings. And the Lord accepted prayers for the land, and the plague was removed from Israel. (NET)

B. Hicks further stated that the new context provides a transition from David’s victories to preparations for building the temple.

C. The temple takes precedence over David’s being presented as an exemplary person.

1. The Chronicles, therefore, references David’s sin of taking a military census. (See Hicks.)
II. David sinned and sought forgiveness at the site on which the temple would be built, the place at which Israel would also seek forgiveness through the years.

III. The Pulpit Commentary states that 1 Chronicles 21 falls into five sections; viz.,

   A. David’s command to number the people, with Joab’s remonstrances (vs. 1-6).

   B. The means taken to rouse David to a sense of his sin, and his confession thereof (vs. 7, 8).

   C. The choice among punishments presented to David and his prayer under the drawn sword of the angel (vs. 9-17).

   D. The accepted propitiatory sacrifices and offerings of David and the consequent stay of the plague (vs. 18-27).

   E. David’s grateful establishment of that same spot as the place of sacrifice (vs. 28-30).

Commentary:

1 Chronicles 21:1, An adversary opposed Israel, inciting David to count how many warriors Israel had. (NET)

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

   A. Hicks observed that other censuses in Chronicles were positive while this one was sinful and raised the question as to why this census displeased God.
1. 2 Chronicles 14:8, Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Judah, equipped with large shields and spears. He also had 280,000 men from Benjamin who carried small shields and were adept archers; they were all skilled warriors. (NET)

2. 2 Chronicles 17:12-19, Jehoshaphat’s power kept increasing. He built fortresses and storage cities throughout Judah. He had many supplies stored in the cities of Judah and an army of skilled warriors stationed in Jerusalem. These were their divisions by families: There were a thousand officers from Judah. Adnah the commander led 300,000 skilled warriors, Jehoachanan the commander led 280,000, and Amasiah son of Zikri, who volunteered to serve the Lord, led 200,000 skilled warriors. From Benjamin, Eliada, a skilled warrior, led 200,000 men who were equipped with bows and shields, and Jehozabad led 180,000 trained warriors. These were the ones who served the king, besides those whom the king placed in the fortified cities throughout Judah. (NET)

3. 2 Chronicles 25:5, 6, Amaziah assembled the people of Judah and assigned them by families to the commanders of units of a thousand and the commanders of units of a hundred for all Judah and Benjamin. He counted those twenty years old and up and discovered there were 300,000 young men of fighting age equipped with spears and shields. He hired 100,000 Israelite warriors for a hundred talents of silver. (NET)

B. Clarke wrote that on this occasion David may have placed more confidence in himself and in his fighting men and less in God and more in extending the boundaries of his kingdom beyond what God had provided.
1. Of course, Satan was the one who put these ideas in David’s head.

C. Satan, always envious of the righteous, and ever looking for opportunities to lead the faithful into sin, here attacked both Israel and David.

1. Genesis 3:1-7, Now the serpent was more shrewd than any of the wild animals that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Is it really true that God said, ‘You must not eat from any tree of the orchard’?” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit from the trees of the orchard; but concerning the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the orchard God said, ‘You must not eat from it, and you must not touch it, or else you will die.’” The serpent said to the woman, “Surely you will not die, for God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open and you will be like divine beings who know good and evil.” When the woman saw that the tree produced fruit that was good for food, was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise, she took some of its fruit and ate it. She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (NET)

2. Job 1:6-12, Now the day came when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord—and Satan also arrived among them. The Lord said to Satan, “Where have you come from?” And Satan answered the Lord, “From roving about on the earth, and from walking back and forth across it.” So the Lord said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? There is no
one like him on the earth, a pure and upright man, one who fears God and turns away from evil.” Then Satan answered the Lord, “Is it for nothing that Job fears God? Have you not made a hedge around him and his household and all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his livestock have increased in the land. But extend your hand and strike everything he has, and he will no doubt curse you to your face!” So the Lord said to Satan, “All right then, everything he has is in your power. Only do not extend your hand against the man himself!” So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. (NET)

3. Numbers 22:21-23, So Balaam got up in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab. Then God’s anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the Lord stood in the road to oppose him. Now he was riding on his donkey and his two servants were with him. And the donkey saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with his sword drawn in his hand, so the donkey turned aside from the road and went into the field. But Balaam beat the donkey, to make her turn back to the road. (NET)

4. Satan is ever our accuser and adversary.

5. 1 Peter 5:8, 9, Be sober and alert. Your enemy the devil, like a roaring lion, is on the prowl looking for someone to devour. Resist him, strong in your faith, because you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are enduring the same kinds of suffering. (NET)
1 Chronicles 21:2, David told Joab and the leaders of the army, “Go, count the number of warriors from Beer Sheba to Dan. Then bring back a report to me so I may know how many we have.” (NET)

I. So David said to Joab and the commanders of the troops, . . .

II. “Go and count the Israelites from Beersheba to Dan.

A. Include all Israel in this census, from north to south.

III. Then report back to me so that I may know how many there are.”

1 Chronicles 21:3, Joab replied, “May the Lord make his army a hundred times larger! My master, O king, do not all of them serve my master? Why does my master want to do this? Why bring judgment on Israel?” (NET)

I. But Joab replied, “May the Lord multiply his troops a hundred times over. My Lord the king, are they not all my Lord’s subjects? Why does my Lord want to do this? Why should he bring guilt on Israel?”

A. Joab knew that all the troops in Israel were David’s and that they were adequate, whether may or few, to achieve any goal set by the Lord.

1. 1 Chronicles 27:23, David did not count the males twenty years old and under, for the Lord had promised to make Israel as numerous as the stars in the sky. (NET)

2. Selman via Hicks suggests, “The arena of David’s transgression appears to be that taking a census impugns the faithfulness of God in the keeping of his promises.”

3. Dillard via Hicks, “Proposed that David’s sin was his intent to expand his territory beyond the promised land.”
4. Hicks wrote, “The sin of the census was that of the preparation for further military activity that was beyond David’s legitimate right as the Shepherd of Israel.”

5. “In other words, the census was a sign of territorial greed.” (Hicks)

B. The Pulpit Commentary suggests that David may have regarded the people as being too much his and not enough God’s.

1. David was involving all Israel in his presumptuous sin.

1 Chronicles 21:4, But the king’s edict stood, despite Joab’s objections. So Joab left and traveled throughout Israel before returning to Jerusalem. (NET)

I. The king’s word, however, overruled Joab; so Joab left and went throughout Israel and then came back to Jerusalem.

A. 2 Samuel 24:4-8, But the king’s edict stood, despite the objections of Joab and the leaders of the army. So Joab and the leaders of the army left the king’s presence in order to muster the Israelite army. They crossed the Jordan and camped at Aroer, on the south side of the city, at the wadi of Gad, near Jazer. Then they went on to Gilead and to the region of Tahitim Hodshi, coming to Dan Jaan and on around to Sidon. Then they went to the fortress of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went on to the Negev of Judah, to Beer Sheba. They went through all the land and after nine months and twenty days came back to Jerusalem. (NET)

1 Chronicles 21:5, Joab reported to David the number of warriors. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 sword-wielding soldiers; Judah alone had 470,000 sword-wielding soldiers. (NET)
I. 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.

A. 2 Samuel 24 gives the total count as 1,300,000 while 1 Chronicles gives the count as 1,100,000.

1. It should remembered that Joab in 1 Chronicles 21 did not count Levi and Benjamin.

1 Chronicles 21:6, Now Joab did not number Levi and Benjamin, for the king’s edict disgusted him. (NET)

I. But Joab did not include Levi and Benjamin in the numbering, because the king’s command was repulsive to him.

A. Joab went through the motions, but he did not have his heart in this task.

B. The king’s command to take this census was abominable to Joab.

1 Chronicles 21:7, God was also offended by it, so he attacked Israel. (NET)

I. This command was also evil in the sight of God; so he punished, smote Israel.

A. David sinned. Why was Israel punished?

B. “The actions of the king affected the lives of his people,” Hicks wrote.
1 Chronicles 21:8, David said to God, “I have sinned greatly by doing this! Now, please remove the guilt of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly.” (NET)

I. There David said to God, “I have sinned greatly by doing this. Now, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.”

A. Sin is foolish! To recognize, confess and forsake our sins is prudent.

1 Chronicles 21:9, 10, The Lord told Gad, David’s prophet, “Go, tell David, ‘This is what the Lord says: “I am offering you three forms of judgment from which to choose. Pick one of them.”’” (NET)

I. The Lord said to Gad, David’s seer, . . .

A. Samuel, Hanani and the person referenced in Isaiah 30:10 are referred to as seers.

1. Isaiah 30:10, They say to the visionaries, “See no more visions!” and to the seers, “Don’t relate messages to us about what is right! Tell us nice things, relate deceptive messages. (NET)

II. “Go and tell David, ‘This is what the Lord says: I am giving you three options.

III. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.””

1 Chronicles 21:11, 12, Gad went to David and told him, “This is what the Lord says: ‘Pick one of these: three years of famine, or three months being chased by your enemies and struck down by their swords, or three days being struck down by the Lord, during which a plague will invade the land and the Lord’s messenger will
destroy throughout Israel’s territory.’ Now, decide what I should tell the one who sent me.” (NET)

I. So Gad went to David and said to him, “This is what the Lord says: ‘Take your choice: . . .

II. three years of famine, . . .

III. three months of being swept away before your enemies, with their swords overtaking you, or . . .

IV. three days of the sword of the Lord – days of plague in the land, with the angel of the Lord ravaging every part of Israel.’

Note: Hicks observed that the descending punishment durations ranged from three years, to three months, to three days and related to economic (famine), military and health penalties.

Note: Famine, sword and pestilence are found elsewhere in scripture as means of God’s retribution in Scripture.

A. Deuteronomy 28:21-25, The Lord will plague you with deadly diseases until he has completely removed you from the land you are about to possess. He will afflict you with weakness, fever, inflammation, infection, sword, blight, and mildew; these will attack you until you perish. The sky above your heads will be bronze and the earth beneath you iron. The Lord will make the rain of your land powder and dust; it will come down on you from the sky until you are destroyed. “The Lord will allow you to be struck down before your enemies; you will attack them from one direction but flee from them in seven directions and will become an object of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. (NET)
B. Ezekiel 14:21, “For this is what the sovereign Lord says: How much worse will it be when I send my four terrible judgments—sword, famine, wild animals, and plague—to Jerusalem to kill both people and animals! (NET)

C. Revelation 6:4-8, And another horse, fiery red, came out, and the one who rode it was granted permission to take peace from the earth, so that people would butcher one another, and he was given a huge sword. Then when the Lamb opened the third seal I heard the third living creature saying, “Come!” So I looked, and here came a black horse! The one who rode it had a balance scale in his hand. Then I heard something like a voice from among the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat will cost a day’s pay and three quarts of barley will cost a day’s pay. But do not damage the olive oil and the wine!” Then when the Lamb opened the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, “Come!” So I looked and here came a pale green horse! The name of the one who rode it was Death, and Hades followed right behind. They were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill its population with the sword, famine, and disease, and by the wild animals of the earth. (NET)

V. Now then, decide how I should answer the one who sent me.”

Note: David had sinned. He confessed his sin. Why, then, was all Israel to be punished?

1 Chronicles 21:13, David said to Gad, “I am very upset! I prefer to be attacked by the Lord, for his mercy is very great; I do not want to be attacked by men!” (NET)

I. David said to Gad, “I am in deep distress.

A. Sin puts people in deep distress sooner or later. That is certain!
II. Let me fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercy is very great; . . .

A. Knowing God’s mercy, David chose option three.

B. God did not have to give David a choice.
   1. He could have brought all three punishments upon David . . .
   2. and much more as well!

C. Israel continually relied on divine mercy.
   1. Habakkuk 3:2, Lord, I have heard the report of what you did; I am awed, Lord, by what you accomplished. In our time repeat those deeds; in our time reveal them again. But when you cause turmoil, remember to show us mercy! (NET)

   2. Psalm 79:8, Do not hold us accountable for the sins of earlier generations! Quickly send your compassion our way, for we are in serious trouble! (NET)

   3. Lamentations 3:22, The Lord’s loyal kindness never ceases; his compassions never end. (NET)

   4. 2 Chronicles 30:9, For if you return to the Lord, your brothers and sons will be shown mercy by their captors and return to this land. The Lord your God is merciful and compassionate; he will not reject you if you return to him.” (NET)

III. but do not let me fall into the hands of men.”
1 Chronicles 21:14, So the Lord sent a plague through Israel, and 70,000 Israelite men died. (NET)

I. So the Lord sent a plague on Israel, and seventy-thousand men of Israel fell dead.

   A. The very men David had sought to number died in the plague. (Hicks)

1 Chronicles 21:15, God sent an angel to ravage Jerusalem. As he was doing so, the Lord watched and relented from his judgment. He told the angel who was destroying, “That’s enough! Stop now!” Now the Lord’s angel was standing near the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. (NET)

I. And God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem.

   A. The plague had ravaged Israel and was now approaching Jerusalem.

III. “Enough! Withdraw your hand.”

IV. The angel of the Lord was then standing at the threshing floor of Ornan (Araunah) the Jebusite.

   A. Threshing floors were generally circular and about fifty (50) feet in diameter, an area exposed to the wind and free of all vegetation and were used for separating wheat from the chaff.

1 Chronicles 21:16, David looked up and saw the Lord’s messenger standing between the earth and sky with his sword drawn and in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem. David and the leaders, covered with sackcloth, threw themselves down with their faces to the ground. (NET)
I. David looked up and saw the angel of the Lord standing between heaven and earth, with a drawn sword in his hand extended over Jerusalem.

II. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell facedown.

A. Sackcloth was a course material similar to burlap worn as a sign of mourning, grief and penitence.

1 Chronicles 21:17, David said to God, “Was I not the one who decided to number the army? I am the one who sinned and committed this awful deed! As for these sheep—what have they done? O Lord my God, attack me and my family, but remove the plague from your people!” (NET)

I. David said to God, “Was it not I who ordered the fighting men to be counted?

II. These are but sheep. What have they done?

1 Chronicles 21:18, So the Lord’s messenger told Gad to instruct David to go up and build an altar for the Lord on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. (NET)

I. Then the angel of the Lord ordered God to tell David to go up and build an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

A. Hicks observed that the prophet Gad was God’s agent of communication while the angel was God’s agent of divine action.

B. This sacrificial site was selected by the Lord and it was here the temple was built.

1. This may also be the place at which Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac.
a. Genesis 22:2, 9, God said, “Take your son—your only son, whom you love, Isaac—and go to the land of Moriah! Offer him up there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will indicate to you.” When they came to the place God had told him about, Abraham built the altar there and arranged the wood on it. Next he tied up his son Isaac and placed him on the altar on top of the wood. (NET)

II. So David went up in obedience to the word that Gad had spoken in the name of the Lord.

1 Chronicles 21:20, While Ornan was threshing wheat, he turned and saw the messenger, and he and his four sons hid themselves. (NET)

I. While Araunah was threshing wheat, he turned and saw the angel; his four sons who were with him hid themselves.

1 Chronicles 21:21, When David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David; he came out from the threshing floor and bowed to David with his face to the ground. (NET)

I. Then David approached, and when Araunah looked and saw him, he left the threshing floor and bowed down before David with his face to the ground.

1 Chronicles 21:22, David said to Ornan, “Sell me the threshing floor so I can build on it an altar for the Lord—I’ll pay top price—so that the plague may be removed from the people.” (NET)

I. David said to him, “Let me have the site of your threshing floor so I can build an altar to the Lord, that the plague on the people may be stopped.
II. Sell it to me at the full price.”

A. Genesis 23:9, if he will sell me the cave of Machpelah that belongs to him; it is at the end of his field. Let him sell it to me publicly for the full price, so that I may own it as a burial site.” (NET)

1 Chronicles 21:23, Ornan told David, “You can have it! My master, the king, may do what he wants. Look, I am giving you the oxen for burnt sacrifices, the threshing sledges for wood, and the wheat for an offering. I give it all to you.” (NET)

I. Araunah said to David, “Take it! Let my Lord the king do whatever pleases him.

1 Chronicles 21:24, King David replied to Ornan, “No, I insist on buying it for top price. I will not offer to the Lord what belongs to you or offer a burnt sacrifice that cost me nothing. (NET)

I. But king David replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on paying the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, or sacrifice a burnt offering that costs me nothing.”

1 Chronicles 21:25, So David bought the place from Ornan for 600 pieces of gold. (NET)

I. So David paid Araunah (Ornan) six-hundred shekels of gold for the site.

A. 2 Samuel 24:24, But the king said to Araunah, “No, I insist on buying it from you! I will not offer to the Lord my God burnt sacrifices that cost me nothing.” So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty pieces of silver. (NET)
B. Coffman ventured the opinion that the threshing floor itself cost fifty (50) shekels of silver, but the adjacent property adequate for the temple construction raised the price to six-hundred (600) shekels of gold.

C. The Pulpit Commentary ventures the opinion that the fifty (50) shekels of silver was payment for the sacrificial animals only.

1 Chronicles 21:26, David built there an altar to the Lord and offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings. He called out to the Lord, and the Lord responded by sending fire from the sky and consuming the burnt sacrifice on the altar. (NET)

I. David built an altar to the Lord there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings.

A. Burnt offerings were sacrificed for the atonement for sins and consecration to God. (Youngblood)

1. This sacrifice, offered every morning and evening, involved the burning of the “whole” or entire animal on the altar.

2. As sins were continual, the sacrifice was continual and complete.

3. Absolute forgiveness was achieved through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross.

B. Fellowship or Peace Offerings, also called heave offerings and wave offerings, were offered with a view to forgiveness and restoration of a right relationship with God, others and life itself. (See Youngblood.)
II. He called on the Lord, and the Lord answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering.

A. Judges 6:19-24, Gideon went and prepared a young goat, along with unleavened bread made from an ephah of flour. He put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot. He brought the food to him under the oak tree and presented it to him. God’s messenger said to him, “Put the meat and unleavened bread on this rock, and pour out the broth.” Gideon did as instructed. The Lord’s messenger touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of his staff. Fire flared up from the rock and consumed the meat and unleavened bread. The Lord’s messenger then disappeared. When Gideon realized that it was the Lord’s messenger, he said, “Oh no! Master, Lord! I have seen the Lord’s messenger face to face!” The Lord said to him, “You are safe! Do not be afraid! You are not going to die!” Gideon built an altar for the Lord there, and named it “The Lord is on friendly terms with me.” To this day it is still there in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. (NET)

B. 1 Kings 18:36-39, When it was time for the evening offering, Elijah the prophet approached the altar and prayed: “O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, prove today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, O Lord, are the true God and that you are winning back their allegiance.” Then fire from the Lord fell from the sky. It consumed the offering, the wood, the stones, and the dirt, and licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they threw themselves down with their faces to the ground and said, “The Lord is the true God! The Lord is the true God!” (NET)

C. Leviticus 9:24, Then fire went out from the presence of the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat parts on the
altar, and all the people saw it, so they shouted loudly and fell down with their faces to the ground. (NET)

1 Chronicles 21:27, The Lord ordered the messenger to put his sword back into its sheath. (NET)

I. Then the Lord spoke to the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath.

1 Chronicles 21:28, At that time, when David saw that the Lord responded to him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there. (NET)

I. At that time, when David saw that the Lord had answered him on the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan) the Jebusite, he offered sacrifices there.

A. David sacrificed at this site on this occasion and subsequently.

1 Chronicles 21:29, Now the Lord’s tabernacle (which Moses had made in the wilderness) and the altar for burnt sacrifices were at that time at the worship center in Gibeon. (NET)

I. The tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses had made in the desert, and the altar of burnt offering were at that time on the high place at Gibeon.

A. Coffman observed that, since God had sent fire to consume David’s sacrifice at the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan), he regarded that as God’s designated sacrificial site and this caused David to discontinue to offer sacrifices at Gibeon for fear of God’s possible punishment by the sword of the Lord’s angel.

1 Chronicles 21:30, But David could not go before it to seek God’s will, for he was afraid of the sword of the Lord’s messenger. (NET)
I. But David could not go before it to inquire of God, because he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the Lord.

1 Chronicles 22:1, David then said, “This is the place where the temple of the Lord God will be, along with the altar for burnt sacrifices for Israel.” (NET)

I. Then David said, “The house of the Lord God is to be here, and also the altar of burnt offering for Israel.

A. In view of the remarkable events associated with this place, David determined that this would be the place for the building of the temple.

Conclusion:

I. This time David’s heart was not right with God.

A. This led to his sinning and involving all Israel in his wrong doing.

B. All were made to suffer because of their sins.

II. David saw the error of his ways, repented and offered sacrifices to God.

A. The place at which David offered his sacrifice became the site of the temple where sacrifice for sin was made in perpetuity.
Questions

1 Chronicles 21:1-30

(Questions based on NIV text.)

1. 1 Chronicles 21:1-30 and __________________ are parallel passages.

2. What facts are found in Chronicles that are not found in Samuel? ___
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

3. What facts are found in Samuel that are not found in Chronicles? ___
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

4. What factual differences are there in these two chapters and how are these differences resolved? ________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

5. The events of 1 Chronicles 21 provide the transition from David’s _________ to __________ for __________ the ____________.

6. ______________ ______________ and sought ______________ at the _________ on which the _________ would be ____________,
the ___________ at which ____________ would also ____________
________________ through the ____________.

7. Into what five sections can 1 Chronicles 21 be divided? __________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

8. Why was this census sinful, a thing instigated by Satan? __________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

9. Why did Joab object to taking this census? How did he respond to
the king’s census order? How should we respond to laws we believe are
wrong? ________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

10. Why were both Israel and David punished for taking this census
when David took full responsibility for the sin? _________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
11. _________ is ___________. To ___________, ___________ and ____________ our _____________ is ____________.

12. What was a seer? ____________________________________________________________

13. Record here all you can learn about Gad from a study of all Bible references to this prophet. __________________________________________________________

14. What three options or punishment for his sin were presented to David? __________________________________________________________

15. Which one did David choose? Why did he make this selection? ___

________________________________________________________
16. Who suffered more, David or Israel? Explain your reasoning. 

________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

17. __________ said to __________, “____________ am in __________
______________.” __________ puts __________ in __________
in __________ __________ __________ or __________.
That is certain!

18. How did God show himself to be merciful to sinful David and Israel? 

________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

19. Describe a typical threshing floor and specify its use. 

________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

20. What is sackcloth? For what purpose was it worn? 

________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
21. What kind of person accepts responsibility for his own sins? What kind of person blames others for his own sins?

22. Why did David ask God to punish him and his family for his sins? Why didn’t he just ask God to punish him?

23. Give examples of innocent family members suffering for the sins of guilty family members.

24. Who were the Jebusites?

25. How was the place of David’s sacrifice selected? What had happened at this site previously? What happened at this site subsequently?
26. How did Araunah feel toward David? ________________________

27. Why didn’t David accept Araunah’s land and the oxen as a gift? Why was paying full value for this property important to David? ______

28. What were burnt offerings? What were fellowship offerings? _____

29. Why was David afraid to subsequently offer sacrifices at Gibeon where the tabernacle was located? ____________________________
30. This time ___________’s ______________ was ____________
        ______________ with _______________. This led to his ____________
        and involving _______________ ______________ in his ______________
        __________ ___________ saw the ___________ of his ____________,
        ______________ and offered ______________ to ______________.