

Plan and Purpose Bible Lesson #III-35—II Sam. 19-24; I Chron. 21

We have been studying the story of the life of King David. The rest of the story is found in II Sam. 19-24, I Kings 1-2, and I Chron. 21-29. I suggest that you read all of these Scriptures. We will summarize some of these and read some in this lesson. It will be hard to put all of these stories in their chronological order as some of what these Scriptures talk about we have already discussed and some indicate that this is the end of the story and then continue on with another event.

In our last lesson, Joab, David's captain of the host had killed Absalom, one of David's sons after he tried to usurp the throne. Though David had shunned Absalom because he had killed his brother Amnon, when word came to David that Absalom had been killed, David mourned greatly for his son Absalom. His grief was so great that his servants were slipping away to get out of his presence. Finally Joab came into the king and basically shamed him into going out and facing the people. This may have been a near mutiny by the army led by Joab and Abishai, and Joab's coming to the king might be regarded as a threat as we will see that David took action to put Joab out of his position.

David is still in exile from Jerusalem at this point. Once David ceased from his mourning the people of Israel asked him to return to Jerusalem to his throne. However, the men of Judah had not yet asked him, so he sent word by the priests Abiathar and Zadok asking the men of Judah why they had not asked him to return. This swayed the heart of the men of Judah and they too asked him to return. As part of David's request of the men of Judah, he appointed Amasa to take the place of Joab.

David then returned crossing over the Jordan to Jerusalem. Shimei, the Benjamite who had cursed David as he fled from Jerusalem met him as he crossed the Jordan and asked that David forget what Shimei had done. Though Abishai, brother of Joab, told David that Shimei should be put to death, David was lenient with Shimei and told him that he would not cause him to be put to death.

Mephibosheth, son of Saul, also came to meet David as he crossed the Jordan. David asked him why he had not gone with David. Mephibosheth answered that he had ordered his servant to saddle a donkey for him to ride, but instead Ziba, his servant, went on his own and Mephibosheth said he slandered him to the king. If you recall, when Ziba approached David as he was fleeing the city, he told David that Mephibosheth had stayed in the city thinking that if David left the throne, the throne would revert back to the house of Saul, meaning him. Mephibosheth had not changed clothes nor trimmed his beard from the day that David fled the city and he was now telling David that it had never occurred to him that there should be any king but David. David basically told him that he need not worry and that he had already told him and Ziba to divide the land that belonged to Saul. Mephibosheth told him to let Ziba have it all since David had returned in peace.

Barzillai the Gileadite also came to conduct David over the Jordan. If you recall, Barzillai was one of those who brought food and supplies to David and his company as David was fleeing Jerusalem. David invited him to go back to Jerusalem with him and told him that he would feed him in Jerusalem. Barzillai refused saying that he was an old man (80 years old) saying he did not want to be a burden to David. However, he recommended a man by the name of Chimham be taken by David with him as he returned, a recommendation that David acted upon and took him with him.

An argument erupted between the men of Israel and the men of Judah as to had the most interest invested in David. The men of Judah apparently won the argument which opened the door to a

man named Sheba, a Benjamite, who then led a revolt against the king. The king commanded Amasa to gather together the men of Judah and prepare to fight against Sheba. It took him longer than it should have to gather the men. The King James says that the king told Abishai to pursue after Sheba. This may be an error on the part of a translator as it was probably Amasa that David sent to do the job. Amasa was a mighty man, but apparently a little careless. His sword fell out of its sheath. Joab took advantage of the situation asking him if he felt all right and acted as if he was going to kiss him but instead thrust him through with the sword and killed him. Joab then took command again of the army. However the army refused to move until they had taken the body of Amasa out of the way and covered him with a cloth. Joab continued on in pursuit of Sheba who had by this time gone into the city of Abel of Bethmaachah. As they besieged the city and were preparing to break down the walls, a wise woman called out to Joab from the wall and basically asked what they could do to keep Joab from destroying the city. Joab told her that he only wanted Sheba. The woman told him they would throw the head of Sheba over the wall. She went to the men of the city and they cut Sheba's head off and threw it over the wall. This satisfied Joab and he and the army returned to Jerusalem.

(Read II Sam. 21:1-9) So far as I can find, we don't have a record of when Saul killed these Gibeonites. It was the Gibeonites that came to Joshua pretending to be from a far country and asking Joshua to not harm them only later to be found to be part of the Amorites of the land of Canaan. However, Joshua and the elders of Israel promised not to harm them, but made servants of them when they found out who they really were. Apparently Saul broke that promise at some time and this is the ultimate result.

We're told that a granddaughter of Saul's covered the bodies of these seven men that were hung until the end of the harvest. When David heard what she had done, he sent and had the bones of Saul and Jonathan brought up and all the men were then buried in the country of Benjamin in the sepulcher of Kish, Saul's father.

Then follows the story of war with the Philistines in which the rest of the giants were killed. We already covered this in reading portions of I Chronicles.

Chapter 22 is a song of thanksgiving written by David and spoken unto the LORD by him. We won't read it here, but be sure to read it as it helps give us an idea as to why God says that David was a man after His own heart.

Chapter 23 says that **"these be the last words of David."** We still have some more events to cover in David's life, so I am assuming that this chapter is out of chronological order. In these last words, David acknowledges the everlasting and unconditional promise that God made to him and his house that one of David's descendants would sit on the throne forever, or for the age. Then we have listed again the mighty men that David surrounded himself with throughout his career.

Chapter 24 and I Chronicles 21 tell us the same story. We need to read both accounts that we might better understand what took place. (Read II Sam. 24) (Read I Chronicles 21) There is a major difference and some minor differences between the two accounts. The major difference is in the first verses of the two chapters. Note that in II Samuel 24 we're told **"And again the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah."** In I Chronicles 21, we're told, **"And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."** I think we have to take the literal meaning of the word "satan" which is "adversary." "Satan" is a transliterated word, meaning that it is a Babylonian word that was never translated, but rather was

continued in a particular passage in its original form. In this case, clearly God became adversarial to Israel and moved David to number the people. Numbering here probably meant determining how many men there were of the age to go to war based on the context of the chapter.

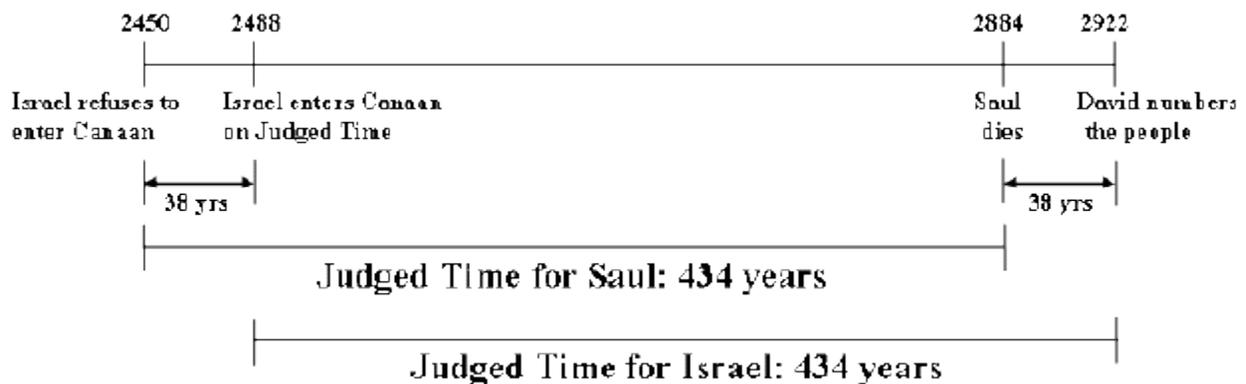
As we see, Joab objected to doing this, apparently because he saw no need for more soldiers. However, since David was king, Joab did as he was told and it took him and the captains of the host 9 months and 20 days to take this census. The numbers given in the two Scriptures varies but the totals are close. There were approximately one and one-half million men that drew the sword. These would have been men 20 years old and upward. The Levites would have been excluded, but we are also told in I Chron. 21 that Joab, being a Benjamite, also excluded the Benjamites. Then we're told that God was displeased with what had happened. This seems strange in that it appears that He moved David to do this. Dr. Stephen Jones offers an explanation in his book, "Secrets of Time." His explanation is a kind of Bible study seldom, if ever, found in most churches. Instead of offering an excuse for the way the Scripture reads, he searches to find a reason for the way it reads. This makes sense to me and I would like to quote from his book to show you how I believe we can better understand God's Word if we follow the rules that God lays down. I offer this for your own thinking and reasoning. The following quote is from his book "Secrets of Time."

In [Chapter 1](#), we defined Judged Time as indicative of *late obedience* and dominated by 434-year cycles. Israel entered the Promised Land 38 years late (Deut. 2:14), and thus, their history is marked by three periods of 434 years. The first extends from the time Israel refused to enter the Promised Land to the year of king Saul's death (2450 + 434 = 2884).

This time cycle links the two events, showing that Saul died on Judged Time. (See the chart on page 65.) But Israel's Judged Time also affected king David, as we shall now see.

How Judged Time Affected King David

Israel actually had two Judged Time cycles running almost concurrently. The first affected Saul, the second affected David. The first began when Israel refused to enter the Promised Land (2450). The second began when Israel actually entered the Promised Land late (2488). The two events are 38 years apart, and so their end points are likewise 38 years apart.



Saul died in 2884, the end of the first 434-year period.

David's test came 38 years later, toward the end of his reign when he numbered the people. Israel's entry into Canaan on Judged Time meant that God would balance the ledger in 434 years-in the 38th year of David. The story is found in 2 Samuel 24 and in 1 Chron. 21. The Scriptures do not tell us specifically when David numbered the people. All we know is that this occurred toward the end of his reign. Once we are familiar with the way Judged Time works, we can see that this event occurred 434 years after Israel crossed the Jordan river. 2 Sam. 24:1 reads,

¹ And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.

We are not told why God's anger was kindled against Israel. Many have offered their speculations. It is easily explainable once we understand the principle of Judged Time. The people were on Judged Time, because they had refused to enter Canaan on the 50th Jubilee from Adam. Had they been obedient, they would have fulfilled the Feast of Tabernacles, and they would have received the glorified bodies which were lost through Adam's sin. To enter the land late meant that they would receive an alternative "rest." Their inheritance would be the land of Canaan-real estate-rather than the glorified body. They would not be perfected. Consequently, they could not keep the rest years and Jubilees in the way God required, even if they had tried.

Each rest year that passed simply added another year of "debt" to the nation's account. Finally, God foreclosed on Israel's "national debt" (sin) after 434 years had passed. By that time, Israel owed God 62 land-rest years plus 8 Jubilees, for a total time debt of 70 years.

This explains why God's anger was kindled against Israel in the 38th year of David. They had never observed a land-rest year and had never declared a Jubilee. They owed God 70 years, and it was time to foreclose on their time debt. But before God could do this, He had to move David to number the people. Why? Because Israel was still under God's protection on account of the previous census that Moses had taken just before Israel went into the land.

Many preachers and teachers today teach from this story of David. Unfortunately, they usually do so without a basic knowledge of God's law. And so, they put forth unscriptural theories about how David sinned. Many say that God judged David for the sin of "pride." Well, certainly, there is pride in all of us, including David; but God never seems to judge anyone specifically for their pride. Their pride causes them to sin, and then God judges them for their sin. Moreover, the Bible specifically makes God responsible for motivating David. If He moved David to number the people by instilling "pride" into his heart, then there are other theological difficulties with which we would have to wrestle.

Others tell us that it was a sin for David to number the people. No, it was not a sin. Moses did it twice in the wilderness, and God never judged him for it. In fact, God told him to number the people (Num. 1:2), even as He told David to number the people. God does not tell people to

sin. The problem came when David numbered the people *in an unlawful manner*. The law of census-taking is found in Exodus 30:12-16,

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 shall they 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. ¹⁴ Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the Lord. ¹⁵ The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls. ¹⁶ And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the Tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.

Take note in verse 12 that the penalty for not collecting the half-shekel offering was that God would send a plague among them. This is precisely what happened when David numbered the people. 2 Samuel 24:15 tells us,

¹⁵ So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed [i.e., the time of the evening sacrifice]; and there died of the people from Dan even to Beer-sheba *seventy thousand men.*

To summarize, we see that Israel owed a time debt of 70 years after spending 434 years in the land of Canaan. God could not lawfully bring judgment of this kind against Israel, because the people had all given the half shekel to the sanctuary when Moses took his census. That half shekel bound God by legal contract to protect them from the plague or pestilence. Therefore, God had to call for a new census before He could bring such judgment upon Israel. This is why He moved David to number the people.

David numbered the people without collecting the half shekel. This released God from His lawful obligation, allowing Him to bring pestilence that would kill 70,000 men. In this way, God was able to foreclose upon Israel's time debt—a thousand men for every year of their debt.

This balanced the account and gave Israel a clean financial slate, spiritually speaking. It was like declaring a Jubilee, but not without cost. Such is the disadvantage of being on Judged Time. Nonetheless, this disaster ultimately worked out for good, because this was the incident by which David purchased the Temple site from Ornan the Jebusite. Note the contrast with Saul's death on Judged Time. With David, the type of Overcomer, this judgment was actually the

beginning of the time of preparation for the outpouring of the Spirit when the Temple was dedicated. This dedication was the high point of Israel's history and the main type that foreshadows the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles in our own day.

I suggest reading his book for a complete explanation of how he arrived at what he refers to as "Judged Time." He lists three major time cycles that he has determined by looking at similar events and the times associated with them.

I had thought we would finish the story of David with this lesson, but there is still quite a bit more that we need to discuss and study, so we will finish the story of David in our next lesson and begin our study of King Solomon and his reign. JRL