

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 28.8%

Weekly Readings will cover: 2 Samuel 20 through 24,

Sunday: 2 Samuel 20

Monday: 2 Samuel 21 & 1 Chronicles 20:4-8

Tuesday: 2 Samuel 22 & Psalm 18

Wednesday: 2 Samuel 23:18-39 & 1 Chronicles 11:20-47

Thursday: 2 Samuel 24 & 1 Chronicles 21

Friday: 1 Chronicles 22 & Proverbs 4:1-9

Saturday: 1 Chronicles 23

Current # of email addresses in the group: 605

I'm sending next week's study out early this week.

This week we will finish 2 Samuel, our eleventh book of the Bible! I hope you have enjoyed the book as much as I have and I hope you are enjoying reading the parallel accounts. May God bless you for your diligence in seeking Him through studying His Word, and bless you in growing in knowledge, understanding and wisdom.

Website archive location for audio files & PDFs:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/san-francisco-bay-area-ca/posts/audio-links-re-three-year-chronological-deep-dive-reading-program-circa-2022-2025-903711>

3-YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 49

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 316 - SUNDAY: December 17th

2 Samuel 20

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "Whenever there are divisions among a people, inevitably someone will attempt to assert himself over others into a position of authority. Such is the case with the Benjamite Sheba. Taking advantage of the situation that exists in Israel, with the northern tribes in general rebellion (verse 2), Sheba calls for the army of Israel to follow him against Judah and the king.

David sends Amasa to gather the men of Judah before him. When he does not return in the prescribed time, David places Abishai over the men of Judah to pursue Sheba. Joab is serving under Abishai at this point.

Upon meeting Amasa, Joab kills him—his own cousin—with no established guilt. Joab's self-justification was probably based, in part, on the fact that Amasa had previously joined Absalom and had served as his general. Yet that crime was pardoned. And in the present situation, it is not known why Amasa was late. Joab didn't even ask him! As we've seen, Joab is a man who continually takes matters into his own hands, sometimes breaking the law or violating direct orders in the process. Worse, Joab may have killed Amasa out of spite for taking his job—or as a political move to regain his position. Eventually these sins will catch up with him (1 Kings 1:5-6; 1 Kings 2:28-35).

Joab and his men come to "Abel of Beth Maacah" (2 Samuel 20:15), in northern Galilee four miles west of Dan, where Sheba is holed up. In seeking peace for her city, a wise woman dealing with Joab is able to convince her city to deliver the head of Sheba to Joab, thus resolving the conflict.

In the end, Joab ends up back over the army (verse 23).” [END]

Verse 3 – Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “He could not well divorce them; he could not punish them, as they were not in the transgression; he could no more be familiar with them, because they had been defiled by his son; and to have married them to other men might have been dangerous to the state: therefore he shut them up and fed them - made them quite comfortable, and they continued as widows to their death.” [END]

The JFB commentary states: “Jewish writers say that the widowed queens of Hebrew monarchs were not allowed to marry again but were

obliged to pass the rest of their lives in strict seclusion. David treated his concubines in the same manner after the outrage committed on them by Absalom. They were not divorced, for they were guiltless; but they were no longer publicly recognized as his wives; nor was their confinement to a sequestered life a very heavy doom, in a region where women have never been accustomed to go much abroad.” [END]

Verse 5 – Remember that Amasa was the head of the soldiers of Abasom and that David made him the head of his army in a move to create peace and unity, however, now that the ten northern tribes have again broken off from Judah, it makes sense that Amasa may have a hard time rallying the troops of Judah. He was never their leader and they may not have wanted to follow him. This is my speculation.

Day 317 - MONDAY: December 18th

2 Samuel 21 & 1 Chronicles 20:4-8

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “God allows a famine in the land for three years during David's reign because of the sins of Saul. Saul, in an incident not recorded elsewhere, had broken the sworn treaty Israel had made with the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:16-20), thus violating the law of God (Numbers 30:1-2). In order to settle the matter with the Gibeonites, David agrees to give them seven of Saul's descendants to be executed.

Yet why would David do such a thing? After all, Old Testament law is quite clear that a son is not to be punished for his father's sins (Deuteronomy 24:16; compare 2 Kings 14:6; Ezekiel 18:1-4, Ezekiel 18:14-20). But since David is not condemned in the text, and since God honors the action by ending the famine (2 Samuel 21:14), David has apparently done the right thing. Perhaps the answer to this matter is hinted at in verse 1, which mentions Saul and his "bloodthirsty house." The original King James has "bloody house" while the NIV has "blood-

stained house." Saul, then, was not the sole perpetrator in this case—so were others of his house. Thus, it would seem that the seven men chosen had played some part in Saul's war against the Gibeonites, making them personally guilty. Therefore, it would appear that justice is served.

Saul's concubine Rizpah, mother of two of the men, "remained near the bodies, protecting them from scavengers, from the barley harvest to the early rains (late April to October)" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verse 10). When David is later told of Rizpah's remarkable example of dedication and self-sacrifice, he is moved to gather the bones of those men and arrange for a decent burial. He also retrieves the bones of Saul and Jonathan from their burial place, brings them to Zelah, and buries them in the tomb of Saul's father, Kish (verses 11-14).

We then read about the killing of Goliath's relatives. Here, the account of Chronicles finally joins back up with the book of Samuel. Had we been reading only Chronicles, we may not have noticed the jump of many years between verses 3 and 4 of 1 Chronicles 20. Yet we would have skipped all the way from the conquest of Rabbah to this destruction of the giants—without any mention of David's great sin, the infighting within his house, the rebellion of Absalom, the rebellion of Sheba and the three-year famine. As stated before, it is evident that Chronicles was compiled with a different purpose in mind than Samuel and Kings—that purpose apparently being to show the positive side of the line of David for others to emulate and to point out tabernacle and temple worship as the focus of David's kingdom." [END]

Verse 1 – This is a tremendous example that God expects us to keep our word, even under extenuating circumstances.

Verse 3 – An example that when we know we have wronged someone, we should seek to make amends and fix the situation to the best of our ability.

Verse 8 – John Gill’s commentary states: “Michal had no children to the day of her death, nor was she the wife of Adriel, but Merab her sister, 1Sa 18:19; wherefore these sons were not whom she "bare", as the word used signifies, but, as we rightly render it, whom she "brought up" or educated”

Verse 9 – This would be around Passover.

Day 318 - TUESDAY: December 19th

2 Samuel 22 & Psalm 18

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “The song of David recorded in 2 Samuel 22 is repeated with nearly identical words in the book of Psalms. Some small differences occur, notably the addition of "I will love You, O Lord, my strength" at the beginning of Psalm 18. This song is a wonderful ode to God's great deliverance from enemies and His divine protection. It is also, as are many of the psalms, prophetically applicable to Jesus Christ. Indeed, 2 Samuel 22:3 (Psalm 18:2) is quoted in Hebrews 2:13, and 2 Samuel 22:50 (Psalm 18:49) is quoted in Romans 15:9 as applying directly to Jesus.

Here David expresses thanks to God for delivering him from trials with all his enemies, including Saul.

In the opening three verses, David compares his strength in God to a rock, fortress, deliverer, shield, horn of salvation and stronghold. Confident in this security, David states, "So shall I be saved from my enemies"—even impending death (verses 3-5). In verses 7-15 David poetically describes the power of God in word pictures recalling God's

description of Himself to Job (Job 38-39). *The Nelson Study Bible* states: "Underlying these poetic words is the understanding that the Almighty will turn the universe inside out, if necessary, to deliver His servant.... All of the Lord's fearsome power is used to save the one who worships Him" (notes on Psalm 18:7-9, 15).

This is not to imply that believers will be spared—"saved from"—every painful trial in life, although God undoubtedly holds up His hand against many things that would otherwise batter us. But we can have every confidence that He is working toward our ultimate salvation in the spiritual sense, saving us from perishing forever to instead live in eternal spirit existence.

Verse 10 gives us the imagery of God riding a cherub. In one sense, this recalls the imagery of Ezekiel 1 and 10, where the throne-chariot of God is shown being transported by four cherubim. Yet the riding of a single cherub seems more akin to Revelation 19, where Jesus is shown returning on a white horse. While white horses are symbolic of victory, this may also represent a literal cherub.

When stating that God intervened "according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands" (verses 20, 24), David isn't boasting about any inherent goodness. His righteousness—meaning his pursuit of the right way, God's way, and his efforts to please God—he contrasts with the goals and activities of the wicked. They turn from godliness to practice evil.

David observes that God deals with people on the terms they themselves set: with the merciful, God is merciful; with the blameless, God shows Himself blameless; with the pure, God shows Himself pure; with the devious, God shows Himself *shrewd* (as God is never devious Himself). The humble He will save, and the haughty He will bring down (verses 25-27).

David sets up the highest praise: "As for God, His way is perfect.... For who is God, except the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God?" (verses 28-31). In the remainder of the psalm, David recounts the battle victories that allow him to lead without opposition. He was now king over the most powerful nation of his day (verse 43). Yet, as *The Nelson Study Bible* notes regarding verses 49-50, "David's victories are prototypes of the victories of the great King to come. The use of the word *anointed* is appropriate for David, but it points forward to the Savior who is *the Anointed One* (2:2). The words *to David and his descendants forevermore* connect the previous promises to the only Son of David who inherited an eternal kingdom, the Savior Jesus (2 Samuel 7)." [END]

I don't have anything to add to these chapters.

Day 319 - WEDNESDAY: December 20th

2 Samuel 23:18-39 & 1 Chronicles 11:20-47

Daily Deep Dive:

We already read part of 2 Samuel 23 (the section on David's mighty men) when we read 2 Samuel 5 in week 46. We will come back to the beginning of 2 Samuel 23 when we get to the beginning of 1 Kings.

The UCG reading program states: "In these sections the rest of David's mighty men are listed. One person of real interest here is Benaiah, with whom Solomon will later replace Joab. It may be surprising to find this man fighting "on a snowy day" (2 Samuel 23:20), but "a light snowfall is not unusual in the Judean hill country during the winter" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verses 20-23). We read, furthermore, that David put Benaiah over "his guard," a term literally meaning "'his obedience'—that is, those who were bound to obey and protect David" (same note). Elsewhere, we see that Benaiah was made commander of the Cherethites and Pelethites (2 Samuel 8:18)—an elite force of David's army made up of foreign mercenaries from Crete and Philistia who will later prove extremely loyal to David (2 Samuel 15:18-22). It appears

that this group, which will eventually swell to 600 men, is synonymous with David's personal guard—like the Praetorian guard of the Roman emperors.” [END]

I don't have anything else to add to this day.

Day 320 - THURSDAY: December 21st

2 Samuel 24 & 1 Chronicles 21

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “The parallel accounts of David's census give some seemingly contradictory details which, when properly understood, shed additional light on this regrettable incident in David's life. While 1 Chronicles 21:1 says that it was Satan who moved David to take the census, 2 Samuel 24:1 attributes this to God, as a result of His anger toward Israel for some unstated reason. No doubt God *allowed* Satan to act, as He did with Job, for His own purposes. But why would God be upset at anyone taking a census, when He ordered them several times Himself in the past (e.g., in Numbers 1 and 26)?

Apparently there was an attitude problem here that even Joab was able to see. Perhaps David and the rest of the people were glorying unduly in their own physical might and power, as seems to be implied by 2 Samuel 24:3. In context, the previous chapter, 2 Samuel 23, dealt with the deeds of David's mighty men, while 2 Chronicles 20 discussed wars and great deeds that had been accomplished. As we've seen, by the time of the census, God was clearly already angry with the Israelites for some reason—and the possibility that they had become swollen with pride and were beginning to put their trust in their own greatness (rather than giving glory to and trusting in God) seems to fit. Or maybe David was considering some unauthorized military expansion campaign, since all of those counted by David's chief general were "valiant men who drew the sword" (2 Samuel 24:9). The NIV says Joab and the army commanders went out "to enroll the fighting men of Israel" (verse 4).

One of the proposed punishments would have allowed David to go through with any such plans, but he would have spent three months losing his battles.

Joab and the army officers start by crossing the Jordan, counting the eastern tribes as they journey north, then coming back south among the western tribes, and taking nearly 10 months to do it (verses 5-8). The discrepancies in the counts may be attributable to a variety of reasons, including differences in age versus readiness to fight, counting or excluding those already in the standing army, and the fact that 1 Chronicles specifically excludes Levi and Benjamin (perhaps from Judah's total) while 2 Samuel does not.

Following the census, David finally realizes his error, but as is usually the case with our own sins, the consequences were still something he would have to face. In this case, through the prophet Gad, God offers him a choice of consequences, all of which would affect the entire nation. This may seem unfair, but remember the whole incident was prompted because "the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel." Israel as a nation was already guilty of something, and God is dealing here with David and the nation simultaneously according to His own divine purposes in a manner that seems to have been designed to humble all concerned.

One of the differences in the two accounts is in the number of years of the proposed famine. While Chronicles says three, Samuel gives seven. One possibility is that four years of famine had already taken place, and the Chronicles account was offering three more, for a total of seven. In any case, David does not choose that option—or the option of warfare. David's decision is implied by his confidence that God will be far more merciful than man—meaning he evidently chooses the plague. He trusts that God may be willing to not make it overly severe, or that He

will perhaps cut the punishment short, which is indeed what seems to happen (2 Samuel 24:16).

As the plague is halted at Jerusalem, David pleads for mercy with God, stating that he should really be the one to suffer from the plague, and not the people. It is interesting to note that David wrote quite eloquently about sickness in some of his psalms, especially in Psalms 41, 38, 39 and 6. While many of these passages could be figurative of sin, most seem to imply a literal, dread disease that David may have had at some time in his life. It is entirely possible that he may have contracted this plague himself and that these psalms constitute prayers for deliverance from the disease, as well as the sin that brought it about.

The angel stops at the threshing floor of Ornan (or Araunah), a Jebusite, located on the top of Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1), and gives a command through Gad for David to erect an altar there (1 Chronicles 21:18). David asks to purchase the site to build the altar and offer burnt offerings. Ornan offers to give David the site, and the animals for the offerings, but David states that he would not "offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God with that which costs me nothing." It is a valuable principle for all of us that our offerings to God of service or money require a certain amount of sacrifice from us, or they are not really sacrificial offerings." [END]

Verse 1 of both chapters – I would like to dive a bit more into the apparent contradiction of verse 1 of both chapters. The NKJV of 2 Samuel 24:1 states "Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah." The NKJV of 1 Chronicles 21:1 states "Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel."

Did God do this or Satan? First, there are problems with understanding that God caused David to number Israel. One, why would God be angry with David if He caused David to do sin? That doesn't make sense. Two, why would David later have a conscience issue in 2 Samuel 24:10 if God led him to do it? Third, James 1:13 states: "Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone."

Applying the scripture in James, 1 Chronicles 21 seems to align more accurately and be more clear on who is responsible for tempting David. So how do we reconcile this apparent contradiction in 2 Samuel 24? Let's look a bit closer at the NKJV wording; "and He moved David against them to say". "HE" is not in the Hebrew. It's inserted. So what words are in the Hebrew?

Moved – Hebrew word meaning "to prick, to entice, to provoke"

A word not translated – Hebrew word indicating that "self" did the verb.

David – Hebrew word meaning David's name.

To Say – Hebrew word meaning "to say, to speak to utter"

When we really break down the words here, nothing indicates or says that God moved David to say anything. What it really says is that "David himself was moved to say...". Combining this with 1 Chronicles 21, we can easily understand that Satan tempted David and David fell for the temptation and moved himself to say "Go, number Israel and Judah."

This now also fits with James 1:14 "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

Satan was responsible, but so was David himself. Lastly, I looked at two different literal translations to see if they agreed with how I was reading the Hebrew.

Literal Standard Version: 2 Samuel 24:1 And the anger of YHWH adds to burn against Israel, and [*an adversary*] moves David about them, saying, "Go, number Israel and Judah."

Young's Literal Translation: 2 Sameul 24:1 And the anger of Jehovah addeth to burn against Israel, and [*an adversary*] moveth David about them, saying, 'Go, number Israel and Judah.'

Notice how both of the literal translations do not attribute God to moving David. Both show that there is no Hebrew word showing who moved David to say anything. While the NKJV chose to insert that God was the one responsible, both literal translations chose to assume and insert that "an adversary" moved David. That would fit with 1 Chronicles 21.

This is a long answer to say, there is no contradiction in the Hebrew words of the Bible. Satan is clearly responsible and David himself was responsible as well.

Verses 9 (2 Samuel 24) & Verse 5 (1 Chronicles 21) – Well which is it, 800,000 + 500,000 or 1.1 million + 470,000? Let's first look at the 800,000 versus 1.1 million: It appears, that the book of Chronicles includes the 300,000 men who are already enlisted in the military (See 1 Chronicles 27:1-9 = 288,000 troops + 12,000 separate attachment of the 12 princes of the tribes of Israel) in the number where the book of Samuel does not, and only records men who could be enlisted if necessary. In comparing 500,000 to 470,000 it's possible that the book of Samuel includes the 30,000 men stationed on the Philistine front (see 2 Sam 6:1) whereas the book of Chronicles does not. The long and short of it is, that we can get different numbers depending on who we

include in the number or don't include. Just because we see a difference in the count, could simply be an issue of "definitions" and not a Bible "mistake".

Verse 24 (2 Samuel 24) & verse 25 (1 Chronicles 21) - Again, which is it, 50 shekels of silver or 600 shekels of gold? That seems like a big difference. 2 Samuel clearly states that David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver. 1 Chronicles tells us that David paid 600 shekels of gold for the place.

Jamieson-Faucet-Brown commentary states: "At first he bought only the cattle and the threshing instruments, for which he paid fifty shekels of silver (2Sa 24:24); afterwards he purchased the whole property, Mount Moriah, on which the future temple stood."

Albert Barnes commentary states about the difference: In explanation, it is supposed - that the fifty shekels here mentioned were gold shekels, each worth twelve silver shekels, so that the fifty gold shekels are equal to the 600 silver; that our text should be rendered, "David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for money," namely, "fifty shekels;" and that the passage in Chronicles should be rendered, "David gave to Ornan gold shekels of the value" (or weight) "of 600 shekels." What is certain is that our text represents the fifty shekels as the price of the threshing-floor and the oxen."

I share both of those commentaries explanations to say, I'm not sure how these two numbers agree, but I trust (have faith) that they do.

Day 321 - FRIDAY: December 22nd

1 Chronicles 22 & Proverbs 4:1-9

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: "The threshing floor David purchases from Ornan the Jebusite eventually becomes the site of the temple

Solomon builds. How did David know to choose that site for the temple? In our last reading, we were informed that this is where God directed that a new altar be built (1 Chronicles 21:18)—one that He miraculously sanctioned by fire from heaven (verse 26). The passage in 1 Chronicles 22:1 sounds like a light suddenly came on in David's mind as he mentally connected the dots. "By the miraculous sign of fire from heaven, and perhaps other intimations, David understood it to be the will of God that the national place of worship should be fixed there, and he forthwith proceeded to make preparations for the erection of the temple on that spot" (*Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown Commentary*, note on verse 1). "...This is to be the house because this is the altar. The temple was built for the sake of the altar" (*Matthew Henry's Commentary*, note on verse 1).

It is interesting to consider the fact that the site was a threshing floor, where chaff was separated from grain. Speaking of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist said, "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire" (Luke 3:17).

Although David is not allowed to build the temple himself (1 Chronicles 22:8), he has not been prevented from conducting preparations for it—and these he carries out thoroughly and abundantly (verse 5). David instructs Solomon on what to do regarding this temple, points out his need for wisdom—which Solomon remembers at a critical point (2 Chronicles 1:7-10)—and admonishes him to obey God (instruction he will not continue to do so well with over the course of his life).

David also makes it quite clear that Solomon is to be the next king. He recounts God's original promise concerning Solomon in 1 Chronicles 22:9-10. These verses are dual in application, referring to both Solomon and the future Messiah. Solomon's name means "Peaceful." And note that God specifically and specially calls him "My son." Solomon's mostly

peaceful reign is a definite type of the coming peaceful reign on earth of David's descendant Jesus Christ, the ultimate Prince of Peace and Son of God—who is commissioned by God the Father to build a spiritual temple, the Church.

In Proverbs 4:1-9, we find Solomon passing David's instructions about obedience and the pursuit of wisdom and understanding on to his own children. In this passage, we have words of David recorded outside his psalms or the accounts of his life. And they are words we would all do well to heed.” [END]

I don't have anything to add to this day's readings.

Day 322 - SATURDAY: December 23rd

1 Chronicles 23

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading program states: “In addition to his preparations for the building of the temple, David also organizes the temple duties and personnel. This chapter introduces that organization. It deals primarily with those Levites who were to assist the priests in "the work of the service of the house of God" (verses 24, 28, 32), and gives a brief description of the work they were to do. It also points out specifically that the descendants of Moses were not given any special job beyond that of their fellow Kohathites (verses 14-17).

Note in verse 27 that David makes a change in how the Levites are to be numbered. Previously the Levites were not counted for service until age 30, apparently because the work of breaking down, transporting and setting up the tabernacle was considered too demanding and meticulous for younger men (verse 3; compare Numbers 4:2-3, Numbers 4:22-23, Numbers 4:29-30). At the end of his life, David points out that this constant moving of the tabernacle will no longer be necessary (1 Chronicles 23:25-26), and he allows the Levites to enter

into the temple service at age 20, the age of "adulthood" for the rest of the tribes." [END]

Verse 1 – According to the John Gill commentary, David is now about 70 years old.

Verse 5 – I don't know what instruments David designed, but according to scripture, he designed new instruments that were used to praise God (compare Amos 6:5 & 2 Chronicles 29:26).