

# June 21, 2026 - 2 Samuel 24:1-25 - "God's Great Mercy"

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[ 0 : 00 ] Please turn with me to 2 Samuel chapter 24. Again, the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, Go, number Israel and Judah.

So the king said to Joab, the commander of the army who is with him, go through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and number the people, that I may know the number of the people. But Joab said to the king, May the Lord your God add to the people a hundred times as many as they are, while the eyes of my lord the king still see it.

But why does my lord the king delight in this thing? But the king's word prevailed against Joab, and the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out from the presence of the king to number the people of Israel.

They crossed the Jordan and began from Aror, and from the city that is in the middle of the valley, toward Gad and on to Jazer. Then they came to Gilead and to Kadesh, in the land of the Hittites, and they came to Dan, and from Dan they went around to Sidon, and came to the fortress of Tyre, and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites, and they went out to Negeb of Judah at Beersheba.

[ 1 : 34 ] So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. And Joab gave the sum of the numbering of the people to the king.

In Israel there were eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand. But David's heart struck him after he had numbered the people.

And David said to the Lord, I have sinned greatly in what I have done, but now, O Lord, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly.

And when David arose in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, Go and say to David, Thus says the Lord, Three things I offer you, choose one of them, that I may do it to you.

So Gad came to David, and told him, and said to him, Shall three years of famine come to you and your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you?

[ 2 : 40 ] Or shall there be three days pestilence in your land? Now consider, and decide what answer I shall return to him who sent me. Then David said to Gad, I am in great distress, Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great, but let me not fall into the hand of man.

So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel from the morning until the appointed time. And there died of the people from Dan to Beersheba 70,000 men.

And when the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented from the calamity and said to the angel who was working destruction among the people, It is enough.

Now stay your hand. And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Arana, the Jebusite.

Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel who was striking the people and said, Behold, I have sinned and I have done wickedly, but these sheep, what have they done?

Please let your hand be against me and against my father's house. And Gad came that day to David and said to him, Go up, raise an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Arana, the Jebusite.

[ 3 : 59 ] So David went up at Gad's word as the Lord commanded. And when Arana looked down, he saw the king and his servants coming on toward him. And Arana went out and paid homage to the king with his face to the ground.

And Arana said, Why has my lord the king come to his servant? David said, To buy the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to the Lord, that the plague may be averted from the people.

Then Arana said to David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seems good to him. Here are the oxen for the burnt offering and the threshing sledges and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. All this, O king, Arana gives to the king. And Arana said to the king, May the lord your god accept you. But the king said to Arana, No, but I will buy it from you for a price.

I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord, my God, that cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver.

[ 5 : 05 ] And David built there an altar to the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the Lord responded to the plea for the land and the plague was averted from Israel.

This is God's word. Thanks be to God. Good morning. Good morning. Please join me in prayer before we get into the text.

Our Father, Lord, we pray for your presence this morning. We pray that your glory would be felt in a way that stirs us, Lord.

We do pray for your word as a two-edged sword to pierce us. Lord, to give our minds a focus on you, to give our hearts direction, Lord, that would move our feet.

We thank you for your word. Lord, we thank you for its inerrancy and we pray, Lord, that though this text would be preached through unclean lips, Lord, that the words would not fall to the ground, that you would teach us, you would give purpose to what is spoken today, Lord.

[ 6 : 26 ] May it be in spirit and truth. Lord, lead us, guide us this morning, that your glory would be known, your name would be made great, and that we would be a more pleasing people to you.

It's in Christ we pray. Amen. So what do we do with a text like 2 Samuel 24? Because as we read through the book, particularly this epilogue that we've been in over the last several weeks, we get to chapters 22 and 23, and we feel like this is the end, right?

We get this song from David in 23, we get the oracle, or sorry, in 22, and then we get his oracle in 22 with an account of his mighty men, and these are all clues that this story is coming to an end.

And there's nothing left to say about this kingdom which was birthed in the stories of 1 and 2 Samuel. But then chapter 24 comes along, and it's another narrative, it's another event that happens that is tacked on to the end here, and it's not necessarily chronologically placed.

And so we're kind of wondering why this is happening. But all things in Scripture we know are purposeful. There's nothing out of place in God's Word.

[ 7 : 50 ] And Hebrew literature is quite unique in this way, because the style of writing here, it kind of offends our sensibilities as Westerners, because we are used to a lot of detail and a lot of drama in our stories.

When we tell stories, our aim is to get people on the edge of their seats, right? But the Hebrews didn't really care about the drama of the stories in which they told.

The Hebrews were concerned about God and the character of God and preserving their history and the relationship of God and His people.

There's always a deeper layer of theological consciousness to the Hebrew writing. So when we read some of these epic stories of the Old Testament, it's important that we understand that the author was never really trying to write an epic story.

That's why when we look at these grand events of the Old Testament that we all know and love, like the story of David and Goliath, it's bad preaching and it's bad exposition to say that this is an exciting story of how God took a small boy and through courage and strength of his faith, he defeated a giant and so you now can have that same faith to slay your giants.

[ 9 : 14 ] That's not the point. The author didn't want to write an exciting underdog story. No, the author instead wanted us to see that God will not be mocked by His enemies.

And that He would shame His enemies and their strongest men by using the weakest of people to defeat them without sword and without spear.

Now that is deep. That's God exalting. But we don't just apply that to these most well-known stories in the Old Testament. Every passage is like that.

And further, for us as Christians living on this side of the cross, we see these deeper theological truths and how they point to Christ as their ultimate fulfillment. Like in that story of David and Goliath, we see how God used David's victory to shadow the victory of Christ, who destroyed the enemy of humanity without sword and spear, but on a cross.

Thus rescuing His cowardly people from the death that was certain to them. So because the Hebrews were much more concerned with developing concepts and frameworks for how to

highlight how God interacts with His people, they often set aside some of the more Western essentials of literature, like specific details and chronology.

[10:45] And we see this kind of disregard, if you will, of chronology here in our text today. Because the author is trying to communicate a theological truth, not just telling a story.

So it doesn't really care about a tidy resolution to the climax of the story of Samuel. The author wants his audience to know something about the kingdom of God that he is establishing in Israel at this time.

So I want us to look back, actually, before we really dive into 24. Let's look back at 1 Samuel. And I want us to turn to chapter 8, where we have this interaction between Samuel, who is the judge of Israel at the time, and the elders who represented the people of Israel.

Now, if you've read the book of 1 Samuel before, you know that chapter 8 is a pivotal chapter, probably the most pivotal chapter in the entire story of 1 and 2 Samuel. In this, we have the catalyst which led to the birth of the monarchy in Israel.

Now, up to this point, Samuel had been faithfully leading the people of Israel. He had brought them back from their apostasy, back from idolatry, to right worship with God.

[12:05] And things were well, but people have this funny thing that they do where they get old. And Samuel got old. And so the people come before Samuel and they have this on their mind.

Who's going to lead us next? Because Samuel's not going to live forever and he's close to the end. And so they come to Samuel and they say this in chapter 8. They say, Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways.

Now appoint for us a king. Now that's a fair request. But the sentence doesn't end there. It goes on. It says, Appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations. Those seven words changed Israel forever.

Israel was to be set apart. They were God's people. They were given specific laws that separated them, that made them holy. from all the nations.

[13:11] Now they desire to, in a sense, erase that characteristic and become like all the nations. But it's actually God's response to the people in their request that I believe helps us understand the purpose for why this book exists.

And when I say this book, I mean 1 and 2 Samuel together. If you aren't aware, this book is not written to 21st century Christians. It's written to Israel.

It's written to Israel at a very particular time because they would have received this letter or this book probably just before the Assyrian invasion that overthrew the northern kingdom of Israel.

So the audience would have been living in a time where it's not so peachy in Israel. The kings are wicked. Apostasy is everywhere. There's idolatry and worship of false gods going on around all the country.

They needed to know something about their God and what His kingdom truly looked like because what they were living in was not it. It could not be it.

[14:23] They needed the hope that God's promises for Israel were still alive and still going to be fulfilled. Let's read what I believe is that pivotal verse in chapter 8 that the author uses to bring these truths that they need to understand and have a hope in God's promises.

It's in verse 7 here. It says, That is the problem that must be resolved that carries us all the way to the end here in 2 Samuel 24.

God had said from the inception of Israel that He will be their God and they will be His people. In other words, He will be their king and they will be His subjects.

The human king was supposed to be and always was supposed to be a proxy king for the rule and reign of God Himself over His people.

That's why asking for a king to make them like all the nations was so vile to God. So the rest of the story of Samuel is how God deals with that request from the people for a king like all the nations by showing them that their need is not for a human king but it is for God Himself to rule over them.

[15:59] And that's the contrast that we see brought out between Saul in 1 Samuel and David in his reign. Saul continually feared man and not God. He sought to please the people and as a result the nation suffered.

David showed in many ways the type of king that God's kingdom required. A king who submitted to God's rule who brought the nation to recognize God's kingship over his own but a bigger problem arose.

He still wasn't a sufficient king for God's kingdom. He failed greatly and there was chaos and there was disorder as a result of his failures.

Ultimately he could not give Israel what they needed most from their king. Lasting reconciliation and righteousness before their God.

And if it's lost on you at all that's still a need today. No man can come to God unless he is made righteous.

[ 17 : 03 ] And if not righteous then man cannot be under God's rule and if not under God's rule you're not in his kingdom. This gives us reason almost to despair because none are righteous not one.

Our nature is corrupt our debt is too great who can save us? From this body of death. Yet it is in this this desperate issue which was Israel's most dire problem and it is ours as well that our greatest need actually comes to light.

We must have atonement. If there's a main point I want to strike here it is that that we must have atonement.

I believe this is what we find in 2 Samuel 24. The author is putting a capstone on this story which began with if you remember in the very first opening chapters of 1 Samuel that there's these wicked priests and they're desecrating the tabernacle the leadership of Israel is corrupt they're perverting the atoning sacrifices spurning God's wrath and we see that the author kind of now brings us here to chapter 24 of 2 Samuel where we have this picture that beneath the many layers screams for a need for atonement.

It screams of the insufficiency of the king to be able to provide that atonement in of himself. But then it also points to the mercy of God to provide that atonement.

[ 18 : 44 ] So let's actually begin now in 2 Samuel 24. It begins with a rather ambiguous yet massive problem for Israel.

It says again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel. Against the people. It isn't really known what event happened or occurred that the author is talking about here.

We don't know what exactly spurned the wrath of God or the anger of God but whatever it may be the author has found it unnecessary to tell us. The point is and all that matters is that God is angry and because he's a perfect God and he's slow to anger and he's just he's right to be angry at whatever it is.

What should give us pause is not necessarily that God's angry with the people of Israel again but what should give us pause is how he decides to direct that anger at Israel. He incites David against them.

This is difficult for us to comprehend especially in the midst of today's Christian culture that separates the love of God from his wrath and his justice. But when we look back again to 1 Samuel in chapter 12 Samuel is giving a farewell address to the people and he tells them a warning about them and their king and the relationship between them and their king and he says if you are faithful to God and your king is faithful to God it will be well with you in the kingdom of God.

[ 20 : 17 ] But if you do not obey the voice of God and your king does not obey the voice of God the hand of the Lord will be against you. There was a there's always a synergistic relationship between the king and the people throughout all the monarchy even beyond the book of Samuel where the king when he was acting in unrighteousness the people were acting in unrighteousness and vice versa.

But are we now to conclude that God is causing David to sin? Absolutely not. Right? To understand what is happening we actually have to go to the parallel account in 1 Chronicles chapter 21 there it tells us that Satan incited David.

So there's a biblical truth that flies in the face of modern really sort of American Christian doctrine right? It's not a contradiction here.

Both are true. God allowed Satan to incite David. Now listen as much as we have people who want to try to tell us that Satan is behind every closed door and under every rock spoiling the will of God in your life.

Know this that the Bible tells us that Satan cannot do anything outside of God's purposes. And that's comforting to know.

[ 21 : 52 ] Right? Because if he were able to move outside of the purposes of God the world would be in so much more wickedness. But not only that because Satan only does as much as God allows.

We see that in Job of course as well. But we can trust the testimony of stories like Joseph in Genesis 50. Right? Where his brothers come to him afraid that he's going to punish them. Afraid that he's going to put them to death because of what they did to him. And he says, what you meant for evil, God meant for good. Now don't get that voice wrong because it's misquoted all the time.

It does not say that God uses evil for good. God does not react to evil. It says he meant it for good. Meaning, he knew the evil would happen and he allowed it to happen because where we could only see Joseph's imprisonment and the famine and his suffering, God saw how this would rescue Israel, how it would rescue the known world at the time, and how it would preserve the promised seed.

[ 23 : 01 ] Evil has no power against God. It is only a tool that he uses in a sinful broken world to make good and righteous ends.

So what is David incited to do? It must be something pretty grievous, right? If Satan is inciting David here, we must admittedly believe this is going to be a pretty evil thing.

And so we see it continues on, it says that he commands his men to go and number the people. That doesn't quite seem so malicious at first glance at least.

But listen to David's command as he enacts this census. He says, go through all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and number the people that I may know the number of the people.

Now, a census is not inherently wrong. It has happened in Israel before, but a census was not wrong in so much as God was the one commanding the census to be taken.

[ 24 : 15 ] Because they're his people. Now, in ancient Near Eastern culture, a person really was only supposed to be taking record, that could only count things that belonged to him.

For David to say that, go and number the people so that I may know, David is taking ownership of God's people. This is how Satan incited David, and it is subtle, but it is easy.

Because David is not, he's not spiritually well in this episode. It's not as if he was worshiping and dedicated and then Satan just tricked him. No, he's using David's pride against him in this moment. He wasn't checking himself. And listen, if we operate in spiritual weakness and sinful desire for too long, it is only a matter of time before we act on those desires.

Because Satan only has to do, all he has to do is provide a temptation or an opportunity to turn that desire into sin. That is why it is said we must be aware of three things primarily, as believers.

[ 25 : 22 ] Desire, temptation, and opportunity. Because we can survive if only two are present. If there is a temptation to sin and there is an opportunity to sin but there is no desire to sin, we can resist.

If there is a temptation and a desire but no opportunity, we can resist. But when inordinate and unsuppressed desire is met with a temptation and an opportunity, there is grave danger.

David had a prideful heart in this moment and Satan incited him by putting before him an idea of a census. There is desire and there is temptation. He has a commander with him, a man who he can tell to do anything and it will be done for him.

So there is an opportunity. But even in God allowing Satan to tempt David, we see that there is mercy for David. The first opportunity for repentance and to recognize the sin of David is through Joab, ironically enough.

Joab pleads with David, he says, may the Lord add to the number of people a hundred times while you're still here. But why do you delight in doing this thing? David, why do you want to do this? Even Joab knows that this census is wrong.

[ 26 : 47 ] It's not an innocent thing. And the fact that it is Joab that's calling him out should have been even more of a warning. Joab was a man well acquainted with pride and with wickedness. He's a murderer and a liar.

But Joab seems to have a knack for calling out sin when it's not his own. And of course, when he doesn't have anything to gain from it. But David in his pride does not listen to Joab, nor, as it says in verse 4, the other commanders of the army.

So Joab wasn't the only one. It was the commanders of the army and Joab who are telling David, don't do this. And he still doesn't listen.

It says that the word of David prevailed over them and so the census went forward. And there's another small lesson in there for us to glean. There will be times, of course, when we are accused on baseless allegations.

It just happens in a world where justice is perverted. But when witness after witness comes before you, pleading with you, do not harden your heart and your pride and say, everyone's wrong but me. [ 28 : 02 ] It's a recipe for disaster as we see with David. So the census goes forward. 800,000 valiant men of Israel are counted and 500,000 valiant men from Judah.

So that tells us right there that David's motive was his military might to number his strong men, which is ironic because in chapter 23 we just had an account of the extraordinary mighty men that he has, but that's not good enough for him.

But here's why we must read all of our Bibles. because there is something in this census that we do not immediately see in this text unless we have read the book of Exodus.

In chapter 30 of Exodus, God gives Moses the command to take a census and he gives him the parameters for how the census is to be taken. He, most notably, the census was to have a tax attached to it.

And everyone counted in the census over the age of 20, whether poor, whether rich, had to pay a flat rate of half a shekel when counted during the census.

[ 29 : 10 ] It is an offering to the Lord. And this offering had a specific purpose. It tells us in the 15th verse of chapter 30 of Exodus that this census tax, this half a shekel, was to make atonement for the lives of the people counted.

A census of Israel was not to be done as a way for the king to number his subjects. It wasn't a display of the might of the nation. It was to display the glory of God in his blessing upon the nation and the fruitfulness that he has given to it.

To be numbered among the people of God in this census required an atonement because citizenship in God's kingdom required atonement. It was to humble the people to recognize that they are owned not by the king, not by the nation, but by God.

It says that this atonement tax was for their lives. It was to bring them low and to bring to their remembrance their need to be covered by an offering in order to be a member of the kingdom of God.

God. I hope we are seeing that David's sin is actually much more grievous and massive than we were initially led to believe.

[ 30 : 31 ] And this is a punishment on the people, right? Because they're the ones who spurn the anger of God. And he's using David's sin to now punish them by taking the census and not taking atonement, thus not making them in right relationship with the Lord.

The king is rejecting God in a sense in this moment. And the people now without atonement have no claim in God's kingdom to rightly stand before their God.

And those outside of God's kingdom we know is a dangerous place to be because there's no hope outside of God's kingdom and especially no hope from the wrath of God. In Exodus 30, there's also another thing attached to this census.

And this is what would happen to the people if the census tax was not taken. We're told in Exodus verse 12 of chapter 30 that if a census tax was not taken or that the census tax was to be taken so that there would be no plague in Israel.

That's an important detail as we move forward as we've read. Perhaps, though, after the census, the results of the census come to David, this law from Exodus 30 comes to David's remembrance.

[ 31 : 53 ] We see this in verse 10. Now, David, for all his faults that we have seen over the last half of this book of 2 Samuel, he never lost his position as a man after God's heart.

When he realizes his sin, he never does what Saul did. Saul blamed all those around him and he made excuses.

David doesn't do that. David understood something about his nature that few do, even today. And that is, it is sinful and without excuse. Verse 10 tells us that David's heart was stricken.

Again, this is the mark of a man after God's own heart. If you remember, Saul's heart was only ever stricken to repentance and only ever stricken to realize his sin after he was punished for it, after he faced the consequences for what that sin brought.

But David sees his sinfulness before any consequences and he grieves it. He doesn't need to be punished for the misery of his sinful estate, for the burden of it, to bring him to his knees in repentance.

[ 33 : 04 ] And this is what should be the disposition of every believer. This is the work of the Spirit in us. This is how we know we are dwelled with the Spirit because we're convicted of our sin and

brought to repentance.

But here's a beautiful truth that should cause us to rejoice because in our election in Christ, man has both a condition before God and a position before God.

Now our condition changes as David's did here. Like we can be content and overflowing with thankfulness one day and despairing the next.

We experience depression. We experience grief. We experience anger. We experience anxiety. And it is easy in those conditions to neglect our faithfulness to God and maybe even start to question if God is not abandoning us.

Our condition changes, but listen, our position is fixed eternally. Peter tells us that our election is not only secured and our inheritance is stored up for us in heaven already, but that the Holy Spirit is the protector of that salvation, of our position in Christ before God.

[ 34 : 36 ] That is the glorious joy that we have in the gospel because Christ has purchased us. He didn't lease us. He didn't just wipe the slate clean to give us a do-over so that we can try that whole righteousness thing again to be right before God.

He made a purchase that we would be His forever through faith alone. And if Christ purchased your soul, nothing in all of creation, as Romans 8 tells us, nothing in all of creation can take us from Him, can snatch us from His hand.

Now David exemplifies this, this idea of our position being fixed before God despite our condition changing. As he turns to God and he cries out, not just in fear of consequence, but in genuine sorrow over his sin.

He says, remove this iniquity from me. He doesn't say, Lord, please don't punish me, but take this sin from me. And God responds through the prophet Gad in a fascinating way.

He cannot let the sin of David and Israel go unpunished. David had ample time to repent. This repentance is long overdue. Nine months it took them to do the census.

[ 35 : 50 ] David had all that time to repent. God was gracious in giving him that time. He was gracious in sending Joab and the commanders to him to try and plead with them to tell him it was wrong. So it must be punished.

No atonement was made as well, remember, during that census. Therefore, his justice must come. But he gives David the choice in how he's going to carry out this punishment. Famine for three years, war for three months, or pestilence or plague for three days.

Now David's response in hearing this is absolutely appropriate. I am in great distress. That's a heavy burden to be placed on him.

How can he choose? Now it's not entirely clear why God decided to give David options, but I think context and David's relationship to God gives us clues as to why this might be.

Making David choose the punishment would do two things. It would show David just how insufficient he is to protect his people in of himself, but it would also point to how vulnerable Israel is against the wrath of God apart from atonement.

[ 37 : 04 ] David answers brilliantly in this moment. He says, let us fall into the hand of the Lord for his mercy is great, but let me not fall into the hand of man.

This is what the king of God's kingdom is to be like. Complete acknowledgement Complete acknowledgement that the hand of the Lord is greater both in power and in mercy.

But it is much more than that because David is communicating what he is really communicating here is that whichever one of these punishments God promises or that promises God as the direct agent of it, that is what I want.

I don't want the punishment where God uses man to interfere and where God uses man's agency because I know the heart of man. I know how much it perverts God's will and I know how much it seeks to promote evil.

but I know that God even in the midst of the terribleness of his wrath is abounding in steadfast love and mercy. Give me the punishment where God is against me.

[ 38 : 14 ] Another thing David's communicating here is that he understands that he also is guilty and he also must be punished. This punishment must create risk for him as much as it does for the people because a famine would not have caused much pain for David.

He had the wealth and he had the resources to survive a famine. Even war, fleeing his enemies, David would, we've already seen in chapter 21 how he was essentially banned from going back out to battle so his physical well-being would not have been in much danger here.

He had the means to evade as well but a pestilence, a plague he and his family are just as vulnerable as anyone else in Israel. So the Lord does send a pestilence and the results are devastating.

70,000 lives lost before God ends up staying in the hand of the angel bringing the pestilence to an end. But where God stops the angel, the actual physical location is important.

It says he stops him at the threshing floor of Araunah. And we'll see why that's important in a moment. But first, we are told that David sees the angel and he sees how close the angel is to Jerusalem which is where David is.

[ 39 : 37 ] And of course, David in this moment does not know that God has stayed his hand. He just sees this angel, he knows what's going on and he cries out, I'm the one who sinned and done wickedly but what have these sheep done?

Please let your hand be against me and my father's house. There it is again. This is the king of God's kingdom. One who would make atonement for the people as a substitute to take their punishment because remember, Israel was guilty despite David's question here.

But like David's greater son, he sees the helplessness of his people and he says, if I don't offer up myself, they have no hope of survival against the wrath of God.

God. It's beautiful. But ultimately, David offering himself up is meaningless because David is just as guilty as the people.

He cannot make a satisfactory atonement for the people. That is the point of all these failed leaders, of all these failed kings and queens is that they cannot do for the people what God can do.

[ 40 : 50 ] This is why even to this day we do not put our hope in life and death in the hands of people, parents, presidents, pastors even.

They cannot give us what truly matters in the end. That's the beauty of the gospel. That is why we preach it every Sunday and every day to ourselves.

That God himself humbled himself in human flesh to obey the law in full, living in sinless perfection, keeping himself spotless so that mankind could have a representative worthy of making atonement that satisfied the demands of God's justice.

Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant. A king who would rule and reign forever because he's still alive. He arose from the grave and ascended to heaven.

But he is the king of God's kingdom whose perfect atoning sacrifice brought final reconciliation between those in the kingdom and their king in perpetual righteousness that they may forever be worthy of that kingdom.

[ 42 : 05 ] If this story of the kingdom in Israel points us to anything, let it be that. God had promised to be king of his people and in the God-man Jesus Christ, he ratified that promise forever.

No more need for human proxies to establish God's rule. It exists now by the ministry of the Spirit in putting the law into our hearts, clothing us with righteousness because of the atonement of the cross.

I mention the threshing floor of Arauna because that was not the throwaway detail. God commands David in verse 18 to go to that threshing floor and build an altar, raise an altar and make an offering.

This man, this Arauna of the Jebusite was a pagan man, a Gentile, if you will. The Jebusites were the Canaanite inhabitants of the land of Jerusalem before David conquered it.

many believe that this man likely has been proselytized because he does pay homage to David here. He seems to have some level of godliness.

[ 43 : 23 ] He actually offers to give the land to David outright. No price required. I'll give you the land. Not only will I give you the land, David, but I'll give you an ox to sacrifice and I'll give you wood to make the offering.

But David will not take this land for free. And he settles the matter of this land and the purchase of it in verse 24. He says, no, meaning no, I'm not going to take this for free, but I will buy it from you for a price.

I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God that cost me nothing. Had David accepted the free offer from Arauna, as generous as it was, it would have cheapened the offering.

It is ultimately to distrust God if we have faith that cost us nothing. We distrust God because we don't believe that those things which we can renounce in our offerings to God will be regained and will be regained in greater measure as Christ had promised, right?

With the measure given or with the measure that you give, it will be given to you. But not only given, but returned, purified, and transfigured, and pouring over.

[ 44 : 47 ] That's not to mean that if we give money, we'll get more money back. this is a heavenly, spiritual reality that when we give in this life, we will be rewarded with imperishable, unfading treasures in the next life.

When we look to make our faith easy, as in keeping it so isolated from the rest of our lives that it really costs us nothing, not even the most minute intellectual discomfort, you are communicating that you don't believe God.

not to say that you don't believe in God. You can profess that all day, every day, and twice on Sunday. But what I mean here is that you don't believe God.

Abraham, if you remember, was justified because he believed God, not believed in God. What are you doing that is so essential to your life that you cannot interrupt it with a cost to the Lord?

Your relationships, your family, your friends, don't you know they'll all pass away? Your possessions and your money will go to someone else when you die.

[ 46 : 08 ] You don't take them with you. You will not stand before God on the day of judgment talking about your offerings that cost you nothing and boasting in them.

Not before God who gave his son for the salvation which you seem to have not cared for. It won't happen. Let's finish this.

David buys the land, he makes a sacrifice and tells us that the Lord responds by averting the plague from Israel and 2 Samuel ends. Now it's not necessarily how this book ends but where it ends that I want to note before we finish.

The threshing floor of Ereuna is not just a random location God picked. To know that we actually have to go to 2 Chronicles 3. You don't have to go there but when we look at 2 Chronicles 3 we see Solomon beginning the construction of the temple and it tells us that he begins construction of the temple on Mount Moriah.

Now we know Mount Moriah because of its fame in the days of Abraham as the mountain where he took his son Isaac up to sacrifice him to the Lord. But 2 Chronicles 3 gives us a very important detail about Mount Moriah that connects us here to 2 Samuel 24.

[ 47 : 35 ] It says this that this Mount Moriah where the Lord had appeared to David his father at the place that David had appointed on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

Ornan just being another name for Ereuna. 2 Samuel ends on the site where the temple would be built. The temple which David desired to build in chapter 7 that preceded the Lord making his covenant with him.

The connections here are incredible. Mount Moriah is also known by another name that Abraham had given to it after he had brought Isaac to sacrifice and the Lord provided a ram caught in the thicket.

He names it Jehovah Jireh. The Lord will provide. And it is on Mount Moriah the place where the Lord provides that David says in Chronicles chapter 22 here shall be the house of the Lord God and here the altar of burnt offerings for Israel.

It's atonement. The temple was where God fixed himself among his people no longer to be dwelling in a tent that can be moved but its main function this temple was where God where the people would make atonement before their God to be made right with their God.

[ 48 : 54 ] where man would be reconciled in God's presence. Now I don't know your heart. I don't know what you think about yourself and I don't know what you think about God.

But what I do know is that unless your sins have been atoned for eternally by the blood of Christ you're not in the kingdom of God. You can't get there from here and you can't get there from yourself.

No matter how hard you work and you can work your fingers to the bone it does not matter. The only thing that can make you worthy before the throne is that your sins were atoned for and righteousness was imputed to you.

The good news is that atonement was made. It is real. Enacted on Friday. Ratified on Sunday. You don't need half a shekel to obtain it either. You submit to the king of kings for who he is and what he has done. And you give him everything.

[ 50 : 05 ] Not by compulsion out of a love that says not out of compulsion but out of a love that says anything I have that takes my attention away from Christ away from the Lord I do not want.

I lose joy when the things of this world distract me from my savior. I want him and I want the fullness of him because nothing is sweeter and nothing is better than this king who purchased me that I may be worthy to be a citizen in his kingdom.  
Let's pray. Thank you.