

2Samuel 24:1–10

"Symptoms of Judgment/Discipline"

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¹ Again the anger of the LORD was aroused against Israel, and He moved David against them to say, "Go, number Israel and Judah."

² So the king said to Joab the commander of the army who was with him, "Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, and count the people, that I may know the number of the people."

³ And Joab said to the king, "Now may the LORD your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king desire this thing?" ⁴ Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. Therefore Joab and the captains of the army went out from the presence of the king to count the people of Israel.

⁵ And they crossed over the Jordan and camped in Aroer, on the right side of the town which is in the midst of the ravine of Gad, and toward Jazer. ⁶ Then they came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi; they came to Dan Jaan and around to Sidon; ⁷ and they came to the stronghold of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went out to South Judah as far as Beersheba. ⁸ So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. ⁹ Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king. And there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword, and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men.

¹⁰ And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done; but now, I pray, O LORD, take away the iniquity of Your servant, for I have done very foolishly."

Main Idea: We all deserve God's wrath—including to be given over to our sin, to be stubborn against correction, and to ignore our conscience. But God, was establishing the location of the temple and sacrifice that would look forward to the atonement of Christ.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Second Samuel, 24 versus 1 through 10. These are God's words Again. The anger of Yahweh was aroused against Israel and he moved David against them to say, go number, israel and Judah.

So the king said to Joab, the commander of the army who was with him Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel from Dan to beer, Sheba and count. The people that I may know the number of the people and Joab said to the king. Now, may Yahweh your God.

Add to the people a hundred times more than there are and may the eyes of my Lord, the king. See it. But why does my Lord? The king desire. This thing, Nevertheless, the kings word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army, Therefore, Joab, and the captains of the Army, went out from the presence of the king to count, the people of Israel and they crossed over the Jordan and Kent and eraware on the right side of the town, which is in the midst of the ravine of Gad and towards Jaser.

And then they came to Gilead and to the land of Tahtim Hodshi, they came to Dan Yan and around Poseidon and they came to the stronghold of tire and to all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites, Then they went south out to South Judah as far as Bear Sheba.

So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and 20 days. Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king and there were in Israel. 800,000 valiant men who drew the sword and the men of Judah were 500,000 men and David's, heart, condemned him after he had numbered the people.

So David said to Yahweh, I have sinned greatly in what I have done but now I pray oh Yahwe. Take away the iniquity of your servant for I have done. Very foolishly So far. The reading of God's inspired and innerrant word.

Well, the beginning of this passage gives people problems or they have a problem with it. The anger of you always roused against Israel and he moved David against them to say. Go number Israel and Judah and say, how could the Lord move David against Israel? And how could the Lord move David to a sin?

Especially when he says, excuse me in verse 10, I have sinned greatly in what I have done and now I pray. Oh Yahweh take away the iniquity of your servant For I have done. Very foolishly. Well, the answer to that question is that the sin was not in the Lord and the Lord did not himself even tempt David to send.

In fact, we find out. If you look at the passage in Chronicles, that Satan was the providential agent who stirred David up to follow after the sin of his own heart. One of the things that we're reminded about here is that God in His grace and mercy to believers.

Whenever we don't sin it's because he is restraining. The remaining sinfulness in our hearts. In fact, even unbelievers are shun goodness by the fact that God is restraining them from committing as wickedly as they otherwise would. Now a difference between a believer and unbeliever is the unbeliever never does anything but sin and yet God in his in his restraining grace keeps them from expressing their sin as completely as they might otherwise do We see this?

Of course. And that part of Exodus that we've been in for a long time now God hardening Pharaoh's heart, God didn't add a single wickedness to Pharaoh's art. That wasn't already there But when God withdraws, that common grace goodness in which he, he permits even out of their self-interest which is wicked to the unbeliever to do that, which is more according to his word or not to do that, which violates His word.

God is being just, God is being righteous. That's what Pharaoh deserves is to be given over to his sin. That's what Israel deserves to be given over for its sin which solves part of the problem here. That a lot of ink is spilled and Bible scholars, trying to figure out the passage, they all want to figure out what was it.

Israel had done that. God would respond to by judging his people. Problem is God doesn't tell us what it is. Problem. Number two is if, you know, Israel from the whole Old Testament. They're so continuously wicked that it could be almost anything from their smorgasbord of not trusting, God, and worshiping other gods and, or worshiping the true God.

And the way that they feel like worshiping instead of the way that God has said or committing all manner of perversion that the the Hivites and the Canaanites that are mentioned in verse 7, had done and Israel out did them as it were You remember even towards the end of the book of Judges things getting as bad in Benjamin as they had been in Sodom and Gomorrah and the horror of all of the wickedness of Israel.

And so when God doesn't give you enough information and one of the ways to know that is, if you read, many ordinarily, faithful and reliable commentators and you know, five guys, have nine explanations, then probably, it's not plain. What the answer to that question is, what sin did Israel?

Commit What occasion was this? And so the question then becomes not. What did Israel do but why doesn't God tell us? And part of the reason God doesn't tell us is Israel. Continuously deserved this just like we in ourselves in our sinfulness would continuously deserve his wrath and that makes us to be grateful for grace and to cry out for mercy.

And one of the things that this passage then does for us is it gives us some symptoms of what it can look like. When God comes with his chastening hand against a nation, or against a church or against a person things that he might do in our lives, not giving us as our sins deserve.

Because if you're a believer, he's given Christ as your sins deserve. But he often does give us in accord. With this, in that we have been committing to discipline to discipline us to turn us from that sin to throw us back on His mercy in Jesus Christ. As part of our, as part of his sanctifying us, That is to say, some of these symptoms can be symptoms of what happens when God is treating you as a true son.

And chasems you gives you that heavenly discipline that is not pleasant for the moment. So what does it look like when God is punishing or disciplining a people? And the first thing it looks like is actually to be given over to your sinfulness. The way he punishes Israel is by giving David over to a sin.

Now, we've spent a lot of time in the book of second. Samuel noticing, how David is a foreshadowing or is a type of Jesus Christ? Well, here is a wonderful contrast between them. Our King, our Messiah never has sinned, never will sin. Cannot sin. He has perfectly kept covenant.

And so Israel comes under guilt. Comes under punishment by David doing something wrong. We have exactly the opposite in Jesus, don't we? We calm under a reward and everlasting blessing because Jesus has done everything exactly right. In fact, he is atoned for everything that we do wrong. So being given over to sin is itself a punishment, that's something that we can see, not only in God's dealings with the church, but also his dealings with individuals and with nations, I think most famously Romans chapter 1 and the wickedness of not giving thanks to God or glorifying him as God.

And God giving giving men over in his wrath, that is revealed from heaven, against all unrighteousness. And ungodliness of men, giving them over to sin and especially giving them over to such an irrational self-destroying abominable sin as homosexuality. And that's the way that God's word talks about that particular sin, that's why that one is singled out and indicative showing the judgment of God.

Now every sin is irrational and self-destructing But that one in particular being. So contrary to all naked all nature and reason and even self-interest is an example of a display of God's judgment and then he gives you a list at the end of Romans 1 about all different kinds of sins.

And so one of the things that you and I can pray when we come like David and we realize that we have been foolish and heart and asking him to forgive us and help us. One of the things we can say is it was just that I would be permitted to stumble in this way.

There is no one righteousness in you for having let this come out of me, but forgive me for it. Turn me from it because Jesus deserves that I would not be given over to my sin. A second thing that that it looks like when God is judging, someone is not, he not only gives them over to sinning, but he makes them death to the correction and rebuke of their friends.

You know, things are bad when Joe abs. The righteous one and David's the wicked one. When David wants to commit a sin and Joab can recognize. It's a sin. There are, you know, there are some question among Bible scholars, why is this sinful in part? It's it's David not trusting in the Lord, the Lord had commanded a census before.

They went into the wilderness as they were coming out of Egypt and he had ordered and numbered the people to show the greatness of how he had multiplied them even under bondage and the greatness of how he had delivered them and then he commanded another census when they finished the wilderness wandering.

In that case to praise His mercy because an entire generation had come under judgment and got had killed them in the wilderness for wandering, in their hearts against God as some 95 tells us and in that census at the end, they're almost exactly the same number. God, had replaced them all and so that which had been a baby boom in Egypt to the point that Pharaoh became terrified of the Israelites.

God had actually reproduced or replaced the entire nation that was under his judgment in the wilderness. And so censuses could be a good thing and yet this one evidently was David wanting to know his own strength. And there is perhaps something about the number here. Because Joab's response is, you know, may all your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are.

And may the eyes of my Lord, the king, see it, But it wasn't a hundred times. It was almost exactly double. If you look at verse 9 800,000 valiant men from the north 500,000 from Judah, in the south that 1.3 million men of war, is almost exactly the six, double the 600,000 change men of war before and after the wilderness wandering, and that may be why that maybe the connection verse 10.

David's, heart. Condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David knew it was Joe Avenue, it was sinful Whether or not we can put our finger exactly on why it was sinful. They knew it was sinful and David did it anyway. And he did it over the protests of, not only Joab, but all the commanders of the Army, you can see that in verse 4, Nevertheless the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army.

So Joab and all the captains of the army didn't want to do it. They knew it was simple as a, no, King David. Let's not sin against God in this way. One of the things that is a symptom of being chastened by God disciplined, by God, for a believer or even being given over to your sin and judged by God.

And wrath is if you cannot receive correction and rebuke, One of the things to ask God to give you in His mercy, is that you would have a soft heart that you would receive rebukes. And that you would be willing to repent when somebody comes and says, this is how you're sinning that you would that for him, that Matthew 18 process would end in step one.

If he repents, you have recovered your brother. And yet here Israel was under judgment was being well disciplined. And David was being disciplined. And so part of that discipline was he wouldn't listen And the last the last symptom or a third symptom that we see or not only is he given over to sin not only you know given over to sin by the withdrawing of God's restraining hand that holds back that sin not only was he uncorrectable not willing to listen to the correction, the rebuke, the opposition of Joab and the other captains.

But his heart did not condemn him. It's a mercy of God, isn't it? When you get to verse 10 and David's, heart, condemned him after he had numbered the people. And that's part of the reason why second Samuel 24 verses 1 through 10 uses a map and the calendar On the map.

He tells us, you know, that crossed over the Jordan and they camped in air aware on the right side of the tan to the midst of the ravine of Gad towards Jaser Gilead and he traces all over the map and you can imagine a map in the little tracks and all as they went to all of those places.

Still, the command. Did not come from the king? Yeah, come back. Stop the census. It was wrong. And not only is there a map, but there's also a calendar. So when they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and 20 days.

That's pretty specific. Isn't it? Nine months and 20 days? So for \$290 days, David was leading the kingdom. The entire kingdom in this sin and not turning from it. How very, very different isn't it? Then when David was in the, the cave and Saul comes in to cover his feet, which means he was going body, and he was vulnerable, and, and David cuts off the corner of his robe and gets away.

It's very, you know, David is special ops, he's a great warrior And yet what happened? When he cut off the corner of Saul's Road, he had not smitten Saul. He didn't slay Saul, but it said, David's heart smoking, a delt him, a blow. That was strong enough to kill.

That's what that word. Smite means What a mercy of God. It is when he gives us a tender conscience so that we can't commit the smallest sin without our heart smiting us. That sure would have come in handy with the Bathsheba incident. Wouldn't it right? He should have been out to war.

All the kings. Go out to war but he's not at war, he's back in Jerusalem, You should have been, you know, productive but he's not productive. He's taking a nap, he gets up from his nap. He sees a woman bathing and then he gazes upon her. And his heart.

Doesn't smite him. And his heart, doesn't smite him. And it's heart. Doesn't smite him? He asks, who is she and his servants? Say, the wife of Uriah and so on. Till finally, long time later after he's committed adultery after he's committed, murder and Nathan comes and he says, you are the man and God gives him finally for his heart to condemn him.

I've heard people say that feeling guilt is wrong for Christians. You know what, feeling guilty, the moment you sin, so that you'll turn to the God who forgives and embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, love Him, who has loved you and given himself for you. That's just a healthy pain response of your soul.

It's a mercy of God. And if you get to the point where you can send freely and your heart never condemns you, well, that's what it looks like to be David in the nine months and 20 days under discipline, not David. When the Lord has brought him to repentance, Another wonderful thing is this which David wants?

That's the point of second Samuel 24. Yeah we try and take a little bit less time in the afternoon so there was no way we were going to be able to take the whole chapter, but the function of this chapter is to identify the place of the sacrifice, that would lead to designating the the location of the temple.

The Samuel material has been mostly about looking forward to Jesus as the forever king, the son of David. But it's also looking forward to Jesus as the sacrifice and Jesus is the temple. And that's what this chapter is about as a whole. And so you can cling to Jesus, the full sacrifice.

And you could say, Lord, don't let me go on sinning, restrain my sin. Lord give me. Quickness to receive. Correction and rebuke, and Lord, give me a tender conscience. So that as I sin, my heart will condemn me, and I'll be turned back to you for the full and free forgiveness that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And may begin obeying you out of love, So may the Lord be merciful to discipline us when we need it and merciful to make us see it and respond and be restored. Let's pray. We, thank you, Lord, for this portion of your word, we thank you that, although you would have been right?

And just and holy had you condemned all men that we would receive as our sins deserve and for unending ages be full of wickedness and full of your just and righteous punishment of that wickedness, yet. Oh God, you have been merciful. We thank you for that. Mercy. We thank you that you have set a part of people to yourself in Christ that Christ our King has obeyed perfectly in our place, that he is atoned for our sin.

We thank you for the people that you send into our lives to speak, correction and rebuke. We thank you for your word. Which so often corrects and rebukes us. We pray that your spirit would keep our heart tender towards you. That we would not become habitual or heartless. Sinners.

But that our hearts would be easily provoked to condemn the sin And we pray that look that when our hearts do condemn us, you would make us to turn to you. Quickly, have a quick reflex to Jesus and rejoice in his righteousness and sacrifice. We pray that you would make us to see your love for us.

So that our love for you would be stirred up and response and that we might love you and obey your commandments and not count them. Burdensome Grant. All these things we pray by the minister of your spirit and for your glory in Christ and his name we ask it.

Amen.