2 Samuel 24

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[0:00] Take your Bibles. Go with me to 2 Samuel chapter 24. This is the 24th day of the first month of 2024, and we're in chapter 24. So that's pretty good, right? It's fitting. So 2 Samuel chapter 24.

If you're keeping up with it, we'll finish 2 Samuel tonight, which is amazing. We're finishing another book of the Bibles. We just make our way through it. We started in Genesis 1-1.

Seven plus years ago, we're now in 2 Samuel 24, so we'll be finishing this up. What a powerful portion of Scripture this is. Okay, I know when we read it here in just a moment, you're not going to see the power in it, but hopefully we can connect some dots in just a moment. I'm excited to look at this with you. I'm excited because this is the things that get me.

Not only as a pastor, but as a Bible student, I love seeing things connect, right? I love seeing things come together. I love the fact that when you open up the pages of the Bible, you're reading one story, right? You're reading one grand narrative, and you're not just reading a compilation of a bunch of stories. You're not just reading some mixed accounts. You're reading one grand narrative of God's dealing with mankind throughout creation, his redemption of man, and how all those pieces fit together. Now, you're reading that story in different genres. You're reading some of it in historical writings. You're reading some of it in poetic writings. You're reading some of it in love stories. You're in your daily reading. You're, you know, Isaac has now got a wife if you're reading the same reading plan that I am, and you're in early books of pages of Genesis, and some of it are love stories, like Song of Solomon. Like, how does that fit in, right? It's one grand story. Some of it's love. Some of it's poetry. Some of it's historical. Some of it's pastoral, but it's still one great story, and the chapter we have before us tonight really just kind of reinforces that theme, and so our challenge is to read the chapter, to see what it says accurately in its context and what it's telling us, but then to also see how it fits in the story of Scripture. So 2 Samuel chapter 24, we're going to read the chapter in its entirety, and I love how Warren Wearsby says this. Warren Wearsby said, if I asked you to give me two defining moments of the life of David,

David the king, if I could ask you to give me two defining moments of the life of David, not David fighting Goliath, because he wasn't the king then, more than likely, if you are a Bible student of many, you would give two defining moments. You would say his sin with Bathsheba and his numbering and census of the people, right, and his two failures. We tend to define people by their failures and their mistakes, but I'm going to tell you, what we're going to see is how God moves in those mistakes. I'll go ahead and give you the title. The title tonight is From Failure to Future. From Failure to Future, The Beauty of Redeemed Mistakes. The Beauty of Redeemed Mistakes. Okay, 2 Samuel 24, now again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and it incited David against them to say, go number Israel and Judah. The king said to Joab, the commander of the army who was with him, go about now through all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and register the people that I may know the number of the people. But Joab said to the king, now 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, but why does my Lord the king delight in this thing? Nevertheless, the king's words prevailed against Joab and against the commanders of the army. So Joab and the commanders of the army went out and from the presence of the king to register the people of Israel. They crossed the Jordan and Canton Aurora on the side of the city that is in the middle of the valley of Gad and toward Jazir. Then they came to Gilead in the land of Tahitim Hatshi, and they came to Danjan and around to Sidon, and they came to the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and of the Canaanites, and they went out to the south of Judah to Beersheba. So when they had gone about through the whole land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days. And Joab gave the number of the registration 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. Now David's heart troubled him after he had numbered the people. So 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 acted very foolishly. Then David arose in the morning, and the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying, Go and speak to David, thus says the Lord, or thus the Lord says. I am offering you three things. Choose for yourself one of them, which I will do to you. So Gad came to David and told him and said to him, Shall seven years of famine come to you in your land? Or will you flee three months before your foes while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days of pestilence in your land? Now consider and see what answer I shall return to him who sent me. Then David said to Gad, I am in great distress. Let us now fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great. But do not let me fall into the hand of man. So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time, and 70,000 men of the people from Dan to Beersheba died. When the angel stretched out his hand toward Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented from the calamity and said to the angel who destroyed the people, It is enough. Now relax your hand. And the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Arunah the Jebusite. Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel who was striking down the people and said, Behold, it is I who have sinned, and it is I who have done wrong. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand be against me and against my father's house. So Gad came to David that day and said to him,

Go up, erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Arunah the Jebusite. David went up according to the word of Gad, just as the Lord had commanded. Arunah looked down and saw the king and his servants crossing over toward him. And Arunah went out and bowed his face to the ground before the king. And Arunah said, Why has my lord the king come to his servant? And David said to buy the threshing floor from you in order to build an altar to the Lord that the plague may be held back from the people. Arunah said to David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what is good in his sight. Look, the oxen for the burnt offering, the threshing sledges, and the yokes of the oxen for the wood. Every single king Arunah gives to the king. And Arunah said to the king, May the lord your God accept you. However, the king said to Arunah, I love this. You mark this one right. No, but I will surely buy from you for a price for I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God, which cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver. David built there an altar to the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.

Thus the Lord was moved by prayer for the land and the plague was held back from Israel. We see in 2 Samuel 24 from failure to future the beauty of redeemed mistakes. You will find the parallel to this passage in 1 Chronicles chapter 21. There are some variations. I'll go ahead and tell you if you cross-reference that there are some variations in it in that it is not Arunah, but it's Ornan. You will see some variations in the counting of the people rather than there being 800,000. It's a million. You'll see some variations in the price that is paid 50 shekels of silver to 600 shekels of gold. There are things that we can do to reconcile those passages, but one thing you need to understand is scripture never contradicts scripture. So the problem is not necessarily in scripture. The problem is just in our interpretation of the original language.

We're not here to really dissect those and go into that. I just wanted to let you know because I'm going to encourage you to go look at 1 Chronicles 21 and see it and I will reference that passage in just a moment so that we can see it in its entirety of what's going on because it is such a remarkable event. But we see one of the great failures of David and unfortunately this failure is at the end of his life. We know that David's sin with Beersheba has led to great tragedy within his family. His family has suffered. His family has come down.

His family has hurt. His family has suffered loss. We saw all these things, but we also understand here that not only affects his family, but also affects 70,000 people die. One great truth that we've noticed in the life of David is that sin is never an isolated event, right? Sin always affects other individuals. Always. David is a representative of the nation as being the king and therefore as the king goes, so goes the people, but hopefully we will understand exactly what's going on. Before we get to the good news, we want to see the text and we want to see the truth that it contains therein. So the first thing I want you to notice is the sin of man. The sin of man. It tells us now again the anger of the Lord burned against Israel. You need to pay attention to that because it is only there that we can understand why so many men of Israel die. Because it says the anger of the Lord burned against Israel.

It doesn't say the anger of the Lord burned against David. It doesn't say the anger of the Lord burned against an individual. But the anger of the Lord burned against Israel. We don't know why. We don't understand what was going on. We know the ebbs and flows and ups and downs of the nation of Israel, that there were times of faithfulness, there were times of unfaithfulness. No matter who the king was, no matter who the leader was in that region, there were good times, there were bad times. Evidently, this is one of those bad times, right? God is looking at his people with discipline in mind.

He finds his avenue of discipline in the sin of the man David. David is a man after God's own heart for sure, but it does not mean he is perfect. And it says, and it incited David. Now, we have to be careful how we read this. The anger of the Lord burned against Israel and it incited David to number the people. The reason we have to be careful how we read this is because it seems to imply that God made David sin. We know that to be false because the book of James says that no man is led to sin by God. That God does not tempt any man or make any man sin, but man sins when he is carried away by his own lust and his own desires, right? No man is tempted by God to sin, yet God allows in the sovereignty of God. And we have to acknowledge this, okay? This is where we just have to say, yes, it's right, because if he doesn't, then he's not God. But in the sovereignty of God, he permits those things which will cause us to sin. In his sovereignty, he allows those circumstances that will bring about the truth that is in our heart to be played out. When we open up 1 Chronicles, it says, Satan incited David to number the people. Bible scholars will tell you there that the word Satan, which if you know anything at all about the word Satan, it literally just means adversary. But in 1 Chronicles, it's different because it doesn't have the preposition the adversary. It doesn't have the Satan. It's just

Satan. It's just a general term. It's not referring to a particular adversary. It's just referring to adversary in general, which leads many Bible scholars to think that this isn't Satan, the enemy of our soul, but rather there was an adversary who rose himself up, probably a political foe, probably a king of that land. And David saw that and decided that if he wants to have a battle, I'll fight a battle with him, but I want to know how many people are going with me first. And so what we understand from this text, because we want to know how David got into this sin, right? Is that evidently there's an enemy that came to light and David decided to number his people. God permitted that because it showed the problem that was already resident in David's heart. And the problem is pride. Counting the people was not a sin. As a matter of fact, we find in the book of Exodus that Moses is commanded to count the people, but he numbers the people for the purpose of a tax for the temple, for the promotion of the things of the Lord.

David is numbering the people just so he knows how big his army is. That's pride. And rather than being content to go to battle, knowing that God is going with him, he wants to know how many people are going with him as well. So that's doubt. These things that are in David's heart are brought to light because of the circumstance that God permits. God doesn't cause man to sin, but the truth is he absolutely allows the situation that will reveal to us who we are.

That is, he doesn't wrap us in a bubble and make sure nothing ever tempts us or carries us away or circumstance never presents itself. Those instances are there so that we know who we are because God already does. And this adversary, whether it be Satan in particular or an enemy, really doesn't matter, was allowed to move David in such a manner that he responded not in faithfulness of God's presence, but rather in the certainty of how many people were going into battle with him.

And this sin is a sin of pride that is highlighted in the moment. Now that's the failure. The failure is the sin of man is realized in a moment. And it is a moment that David even regrets instantaneously. The moment was so pressing. The moment was so tempting that the only thing David knew to do was to count and see how many people would fight with him. Even Joab. Now we don't base our theology and our faithfulness on Joab. You remember that, right? Joab, he's like the waves of the sea tossed to and fro, right? He's double minded in all of his ways. He's, he's killing people over here and he's giving good counsel over there. So we understand, but even Joab's like, we don't need to do this. Something doesn't seem right. But yet David decides in that moment, the best thing to do is to know how big his army is. And he fails. And we're like, man, this is just like the moment with Bathsheba when he's there and he's isolated and he's alone. And in a moment he fails.

But isn't it great? We have this promise in scripture. Now we're not name it and claim it, theologians. But the book of Romans tells us in Romans 8, 28, God causes all things to work together for the good, for those who are called according to his purposes. So we would have the tendency here to highlight David's sin. The reality is, is God's still sovereign. It doesn't excuse the sin because in case we think that it excuses the sin, we have to get to the second thing. And the second thing is the suffering consequences. The sin has consequences and those consequences are suffering and, and pain and misery with his sin with Bathsheba. His sin is forgiven before the consequences ever set in. We know that the child dies and, and we know that he's remorseful and he worships God after the child dies. But then we see the tragedy that goes into his family. And we, we see the number of other kids in his family that die, the heirs to the throne die. We see that. But here in this one, from the moment Joab gets back and reports the number, it says that David's heart within him is sick. If you ever want to know why David's a man after God's own heart, it's because he's also a man with a soft heart, right? His heart within him troubled him and he knew that he shouldn't have done this. He said, I shouldn't have done that. But this admittance or this confession, he said, Lord, I've sinned. I've messed up. I shouldn't have done this. I shouldn't have counted the people. And he felt bad about it. Don't ever dismiss that. David genuinely felt terrible about it. It literally means his heart was sick because what he did, he knew was wrong and he confessed it and he admitted it and he acknowledged it before a holy God. But confessed sin doesn't remove consequences.

For the wages of sin is, right? So David confesses this and it says that the next morning he gets up and Gad, David's seer, comes to him with a message. I'm glad you've confessed it. Now here's the message.

And God is in agreement with you. What you've done is wrong and God in his grace, don't ever miss this. This is a gracious God given David the choice of punishment. God is sovereign. He doesn't have to give you the choice of how to be punished. But he says, as parents, we know that, right? You give your children, well, you know, would you like this or this? Something's going to happen. Which one would you like? My personal preference is when they say, well, I don't have to do that. Well, you might not have to do it. You're either going to do it, you know, after being disciplined or you're going to do it before being disciplined. But the choice is yours. You're still going to do it, right? If you want to be literalist, you're either going to do it with a sore rear end or you're going to do it without one. I don't care how you do it, but you're going to do it. That's the choice. And so God in his grace comes to David through Gad and says, give him a choice. Tell him it's either seven years of famine.

Again, when you open up first Chronicles, you're going to read, it says three years. And you're going, was it three or was it seven? More than likely it was three, but seven is a whole number and seven is seen as a complete number. So seven is, it is a picture of a full famine, right? So is it seven years of famine? Is it, you know, three months of, of being pursued by your enemies? Or is it three days of pestilence? Which one do you want? I mean, could you imagine?

He said, well, I acknowledge my sin. I admitted my sin and God's like, okay, well, that's good. I'm glad you did. Now here's the consequences for it because this is going to bring about suffering. This is exactly what happens. And David says very wisely, by the way, he says, I don't want to fall into the hands of man. Let me fall into the hands of God. And he does. And the pestilence comes in 73.

70,000 people die. 70,000 people die. Friend, listen to me. Sin always brings suffering. David's still sitting in the palace, but 70,000 men die. You may not feel it, but somebody's feeling it.

And those consequences are burdensome. And those consequences are real. You're like, yes, but I admit it. And I acknowledge that. Right. David did too. Now we're not done with the story. So stay with me. But yet the consequences came 70,000 men, you know, those men he was counting on those men, he was literally counting so that he could go fight this adversary. Well, now he made the Lord an adversary, right? Now, now he's, he's got this, uh, Tony Evans says it this way. When God is your problem, you got a problem, right? So when, when he showed up the angel, now this is not a Christophany or a theophany. So this isn't a picture of Christ. This isn't, this is just an angel, a messenger of God who's going around rendering this judgment. The reason we know it's not a Christophany is because this angel of the Lord stops. Nobody ever worships him. He never declares anything. He never says anything. Anytime we find an angel of the Lord, which is an appearance of Christ in the old Testament, he always is worshiped. He always declares the truth. He always says something, right? Here's just an angel and he's on his way to Jerusalem. And again, God in his mercy stops him and says, it's enough. And he has him just standing there, right? Sword drawn, standing with his hand down. Angel never says anything. He just stops. But don't miss the reality that even after David confessed it, acknowledged it and admitted the suffering still took place.

[21:00] And it's sin does not live in isolation, right? People die. But this brings us to the third thing that we see in the passage. There is the sin of man. There's the suffering consequences.

There's the shedding of blood. Because a confessed sin is fine, but no sin is forgiven without the shedding of blood. Gad comes back to David because the angel of the Lord is there. You know where he's at. He's over the threshing floor of Arunah, the Jebusite. The Jebusites are important because Jerusalem was captured from the Jebusites, right? Jebus. Jerusalem is also known as Jebus in the portions of the Old Testament and the people who lived there were Jebusites.

So he's actually one of the holdover of the people of there. Now, if you're reading King James, I'm not trying to pick apart passages or translations or anything like that. But if you're reading the King James, it seems to imply that Arunah was a king of the Jebusites. And I don't believe that's right because it says when he comes, David comes and he goes, but you, oh, king, some translation said, king, Arunah gives this. And it seems to imply that he was. It's not.

He is actually saying, as the new American standard says, but oh, king, Arunah says you can have it. And he's declaring that David is the king. And we can be confident in that because I can assure you that David would not allow another king to live so close. Right?

But anyway, so we have Arunah, who's the Jebusite, who's a holdover from the original inhabitants of the city of Jerusalem. David's now made it his capital. And he's there. And Gad comes back to David and tells him something. He says, go build an altar and offer a sacrifice.

[22:40] Why? Because just because you've confessed it, no blood has been shed yet. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. Even under the law. Right? Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness. So Gad says, you've done wrong. God's brought the consequences of those wrong. We cannot have full restoration until there is a shedding of blood.

So David goes up. When you read Chronicles, you see that his sons are with him too. And they go up this little hill, this little rise, and they make their way there. And he builds an altar. He buys it. I love that. It's one of the things that's always stood out to me in this passage. Arunah or Ornan, however you want to refer to him, either name you want to call him, does the same thing. He does it. He says, you can have it, King. I mean, you know, here you take it. Here's the oxen. Here's the sledges. Here's the wood. You just take it. And I love what David says. I will not offer a sacrifice to the Lord my God, which costs me nothing.

You know, the reality is that so many people want to offer something to God, it doesn't cost them anything. David had the opportunity. And the reason David would not offer something which cost him nothing is because his sin had already cost so many others so much. When we understand how much our sin costs, we are willing to offer whatever we can afford. We want to give as much as we can because we don't want to offer that which cost us nothing. Another way of saying that is to him who has been forgiven much loves much. I found people who are very, very, very poor in their theology, but they're super excited about the Lord and they're serving him and they're doing things and they're ministering. I was actually on the phone with one last night and they're just so excited.

Their theology may be weak, but all they know is this. I don't deserve to be set free from what I was set free from. I know how bad I was, but Jesus set me free and I can be used by him and I'm going to be used by him as much as I can. And they can't get enough of it. But then I found people who have great theology and they have so much understanding, but they do so little because they don't see how bad they were. David says 70,000 people died and you want me to offer something to God which costs me nothing. That's not going to happen. Friend, listen to me. When we rightly understand who we are, we will be like David and say, I don't want to offer him something that costs me nothing. If I have to sacrifice, great. The more I can sacrifice, the more I want to do it because it's something that I ought to do. Right? And he builds this altar and he has it there and he makes this, he brings his sacrifice. He says he gives us two sacrifices, right? It tells us in the passage that he gave a burnt offering and a peace offering. Peace offering was a fellowship meal.

They ate there too. That's pretty cool. Right? So, so they offer it. First Chronicles tells us that when he built this and don't miss this, right? Don't miss this. He built the altar.

He put the sacrifice on the altar and it said God rained fire down and consumed the sacrifice. God answered David by fire. That ought to click our attention because we see God answers by fire when he approves of something, right? Now blood has been shed. Restoration is made possible. And it tells us in our passage, then the Lord was moved by prayers for the land and the plague was held back from Israel.

Why? Because blood has been shed. Confession has been made. The consequences have been paid, but now blood has been shed. And everything's done. What a tragedy. What a tragedy. Right? But we're looking at moving from failures to future. So now I want you to see the fourth thing. I want you to see the sight of such great significance. David walks up a hill and buys the threshing floor of Arunah, the Jebusite. And he buys it. And he builds an altar. And when he builds that altar, he lays his sacrifice. He sheds the blood of the burnt offering and he lays it on the altar. And it tells us in 1 Chronicle 21 that God answered by fire. Fire came down and consumed that. And David cried out, this is the house of the

Lord God. And David made a declaration. He could not go to where the altar of the Lord was. He couldn't go because of the fear of God, but he could worship there. David owns it, right? He bought it. Don't miss that. And he bought it because of his sin. So he makes this astounding declaration in 1 Chronicles 22, 1, that since God has answered here in 21, and then it spills over into the 22nd chapter, this is the house of God. And he began to make preparations that that's where Solomon built the temple. We know it as Temple Mount. It's also the threshing floor of Arunah, the Jebusite, also now known as Mount Moriah. If you want to see its Genesis in Scripture, its beginning in Scripture, you got to go back to the book of Genesis. And you have to go back to the book of Genesis into the 21st chapter of Genesis, 22nd chapter, excuse me, of Genesis chapter 22. And you see that God calls Abraham from where he was residing and tells him to go into the land of Moriah and to go up on a hill and offer his son Isaac. And Abraham and Isaac ascend this same hill, except for they didn't go up with a sacrifice. Remember, they had the wood, they had the fire, they had the knife, and Isaac said, where's the sacrifice? And he said, where the Lord will provide, right? So he gets up there, and on this hill, Abraham builds an altar, probably, I always say, it's probably one of the best altars ever built, because you know he took his time. I mean, because who's going to be in a hurry there, right? He's about to put his son on it, and he's on this hill, this same hill, and he builds him. He lays Isaac, and you remember, God stops him. But do you remember what Abraham told Isaac on the way up? Because Isaac asked, where's the lamb for the sacrifice?

And Abraham, the Lord will provide the lamb. But then you also know that he didn't find a lamb. He found a goat caught in a thicket. So what he offers on the altar is not what he was anticipating God to provide, because God will provide a lamb, but he found a goat. There's a big difference in lambs and goats. Don't miss that in scripture, right? And then he names that place Jehovah-Jireh.

The Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will provide, we know that, but it literally means, in the original language, God will see to it. And then he makes this great declaration standing on this hill, for in the mount of the Lord, God will provide. Fast forward. That's a promise that Abraham gives standing on this hill, that in the mount of the Lord, it will be provided. We fast forward to when David fails, and he has to go buy a piece of land to offer a sacrifice, and he buys the same piece of land that Abraham had stood on and said, in the mount of the Lord, it will be provided.

God answers by fire. He so determines that this has to be the house of God, so he gives it to Solomon. Solomon builds the temple there. We know there's renovation after renovation after renovation. Zechariah's temple, you have all these temples. Then you have Herod's temple that's built essentially over the same place. And then there walks in a lamb and presents himself on that hill. He rode a donkey in. And the first place he went was to the temple.

And he had seven days before his crucifixion, and he presented himself for seven days in the temple every day because that's what you did. You made sure the lamb was perfect before you sacrificed it.

And he made a public presentation of himself at the temple. Jesus, the last time that he leaves the temple, he says, the glory has departed, and he walks away.

Why? Because he's the lamb. See, what Abraham was promising in Genesis 22 doesn't find its fulfillment until Jesus stands there as the lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

But before we could get to Abraham, to Jesus, we had to have David mess up. And David had to have a hill to build an altar on, and that's that hill.

[31:31] The two great failures of David is sin with Bathsheba and a numbering of people. From Bathsheba comes Solomon. From the numbering of the people comes the threshing floor of Arunah, the Jebusites.

Solomon builds the temple on the hill that eventually becomes the site where Jesus shows up. Friend, listen to me. The plans and purposes and promises of God will come about.

And what's so astounding is not that David had a right to sin. It's that God used David's sin for his glory.

And this was the very avenue that was determined by sovereign God to purchase the site where the Son of God would stand and shed his blood for us.

And in the mount of the Lord it was provided. God will see to it. You and I mess up all the time. The beauty of serving a God the way we have the God we own the God that owns us that redeems us that has bought us with his blood is that what God has promised he sees to it.

[32:58] It doesn't remove our failures it doesn't there's consequences for that and it should chill us to the bone and call us and lead us to walk in holiness and faithfulness and righteousness.

But in those moments of failing in those moments of mistakes in those moments of stumbling friend listen to me God takes it from a failure to a future because he redeems the mistakes.

God causes all things to work together for good for those who love him and are called according to his purposes. David was called according to the purpose of God. David and his family felt every sin the pain and the suffering and the misery yet David's God fulfilled every promise.

And we see that right? How amazing that the two big mistakes that define David are the very two things that God uses to push forward his promise.

Solomon standing on the hill building a temple because we're not looking for a David we're not looking for a Solomon we're about to go into the book of Kings right?

[34:17] All these lineage of David maybe this one's it maybe this one's it maybe this one's it and each one of them is going to let us down until we open up the book of Matthew and we find one from the family of David that won't let us down.

But yet God's promises and plans are coming about. You know what this shows us? We can trust him even when we can't trust ourselves because he knows what he's doing and we see it here in 1 Samuel chapter 24 as God redeems the mistakes of all of his people for his glory.

Thank you, very much. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[37:01] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[39:31] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.