

The Cost Of Trusting In Natural Power

1 Chronicles 21:1-3 And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. (2) And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it. (3) And Joab answered, The LORD make his people an hundred times so many more as they be: but, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?

This morning we talked about ABRAHAM ON MORIAH and showed how he expected God to intervene with miracles in his walk for the Lord.

- People who WORRY do not expect miracles to occur for them.
- Or they would not worry.
- They look at their fleshly power and know it may or may not cut it.
- Abraham looked to GOD'S POWER and knew IT ALWAYS CUTS IT!

Satan does not want us to walk in the Spirit.

- He wants us to live by our natural life and natural abilities.
- He does not want us to learn to depend upon God to intervene.
- And he hardly has to push because we are already hard-wired to try that.

Counting Israel was done in order to see how powerful her armies might be.

- How many soldiers do we have in case of war?
- How much NATURAL POWER do we have?
- Let me know how much flesh we have.

There was a little law in their covenant with God that stipulated Israel must never

count the people unless each person they count pays a RANSOM.

Exodus 30:12-15 When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them. (13) This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD. (14) Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. (15) The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

Notice it was ATONEMENT for their souls.

- A ransom for their souls.
- What does that mean?

It means that God only COUNTS PEOPLE AS HIS PEOPLE when they remember THEY WERE RANSOMED by God.

- A sacrifice had to occur for them to be His people.
- Without that sacrifice they are nothing.
- It was actually a reminder of this fact.
- Each person had to give ½ shekel.
- That was a sacrifice.
- They were already ransomed by God, but this was a ransom each time they counted Israel since it SERVED AS A REMINDER THEY ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD BECAUSE GOD RANSOMED THEM.

They were already redeemed.

Exodus 15:13 KJV Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation.

We count things that are ours.

- I would never count how many books you have in your library.
- They're yours.
- One farmer would never count how many sheep his neighbor has.
- They're his.
- COUNTING in the Bible speaks of ownership.

When David counted Israel, he was acting like they were like HIS PEOPLE.

- But they were not HIS people, but God's.
- God showed HIS ownership of the people by making sure everyone remembers they were RANSOMED by God through a sacrifice.
- So to show they are God's people, you can only count them when they each pay the ransom $\frac{1}{2}$ shekel.
- So NOT receiving the $\frac{1}{2}$ shekel was like saying they are NOT God's people but the people of who ever counts them.
- This is just like us looking at how much fleshly power we have to determine whether or not we can overcome battles in life.

Abraham refused to live a life depending on his NATURAL POWER.

- His life of faith was a life that did things fully depending upon God to INTERVENE.
- God tempted Abraham.
- David was also tempted.
- But David gave in.
- David acted upon the temptation to deal with everything in NATURAL POWER.

Joab immediately protested saying such an act was against God.

- He wished Israel was 100 times bigger than what it was, but do not disobey the Word of God and give in to your flesh.
- TRUST GOD.

- GOD WILL INTERVENE no matter how many people we have.
- If we trust in God we do not need to count the soldiers.

Counting soldiers is like us figuring out what our humanity can deal with and how much we can do without God's power.

1 Chronicles 21:7-14 CEV (7) David's order to count the people made God angry, and he punished Israel. (8) David prayed, "I am your servant. But what I did was stupid and terribly wrong. Please forgive me." (9) The LORD said to Gad, one of David's prophets, (10) "Tell David that I will punish him in one of three ways. But he will have to choose which one it will be." (11) Gad went to David and told him: You must choose how the LORD will punish you: (12) Will there be three years when the land won't grow enough food for its people? Or will your enemies constantly defeat you for three months? Or will the LORD send a horrible disease to strike your land for three days? Think about it and decide, because I have to give your answer to God who sent me. (13) David was miserable and said, "It's a terrible choice to make! But the LORD is kind, and I'd rather have him punish me than for anyone else to do it." (14) So the LORD sent a horrible disease on Israel, and seventy thousand Israelites died.

Notice that David chose THREE DAYS of God's direct hand, rather than three years of famine or three months of failing warfare.

- Recall that on the THIRD DAY, Abraham saw Mount Moriah and TRUSTED IN GOD TO INTERVENE when he offered Isaac on the altar!

The ALTAR and SACRIFICE is the reason why we are God's people and are able to EXPECT God's supernatural life to intervene and help us.

- When people worry they do not realize what the ransoming death of Jesus Christ did for them!
- They live like people who are not saved and do not have God's power to help them.
- So when we consider what we each have going with ourselves, WE CANNOT CUT OFF THE IDEA OF RANSOM.

- Just like counting to see how many people there are in Israel, do not forget the LORD ransomed us, and indicate that by RANSOM OFFERING of ½ shekel.
- People who get the proper revelation of the ALTAR AND SACRIFICE know they are so much a people of God, that GOD INTERVENES for them.
- They have the faith that EXPECTS God to intervene.

Watch what happens on the third day with David.

1 Chronicles 21:15-17 KJV (15) And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. (16) And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the LORD stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces. (17) And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my father's house; but not on thy people, that they should be plagued.

Notice what grabbed hold of David!

- Atonement.
- Ransom!
- Atonement and ransom are THE SACRIFICE OF A ONE TO RESCUE THE OTHER.
- David suddenly cries out about SACRIFICE.
- While he missed the importance of sacrifice that makes us God's people so that God will INTERVENE with his power, HE SUDDENLY GOT IT THIS TIME.
- "TAKE ME! SLAY ME! Do not let Jerusalem die."
- They're sheep.
- Spare them.
- Take me.

John 10:11 KJV I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

David spoke like JESUS!

- WHEN GOD SAW DAVID CAUGHT THAT, HE TOLD THE ANGEL TO STOP!

JUST LIKE ABRAHAM.

- When God saw that Abraham had such trust in God's POWER OF RESURRECTION FROM SACRIFICE, he told Abraham to withhold the knife.
- David realized the revelation of SACRIFICE, and how wrong it was to think of FLESHLY POWER and forget God's intervening power, GOD SAW IT AND TOLD THE ANGEL TO HOLD BACK THE SWORD.

Genesis 22:10-12 KJV And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. (11) And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. (12) And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.

1 Chronicles 21:15 KJV And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

Ornan's threshingfloor was ON MOUNT MORIAH.

- Both times when God saw reliance upon HIS POWER, God stopped a sword.

2 Chronicles 3:1 KJV Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

MORIAH MEANS “what God causes one to see”

THREE DAYS TOOK ABRAHAM TO THE PLACE WHERE GOD SAID “STOP THE SWORD”.

THREE DAYS TOOK DAVID TO THE PLACE WHERE GOD SAID “STOP THE SWORD.”

Both involved SACRIFICE.

Both involved OUR NEED TO NOT DEPEND UPON NATURAL LIFE to get us through battles.

- DAVID ACTUALLY looked at the natural power he had for battles.