

1 Chronicles 19-21

We're in the midst of this section of scripture that discusses David's decisive victories. At this point he's really at the pinnacle of his prime as it pertains to both his personal and political position in the nation. His fall (with Bathsheba) would come soon but as for now he's stepping in stride with the Spirit, seeking the Lord, being used *by* the Lord, gaining ground for the kingdom. We left off looking at David's administrative team, we realize that no great leader gets where he is, or remains where he is alone. One of the huge secrets of David's success lie in his ability to facilitate leadership, he had this ability to take these ragtag renegade type guys and make of them lean mean fighting machines who were dedicated and devoted both to him personally and the people nationally/collectively.

So having taught them, trained them, invested himself into them, he then entrusted to them various areas of responsibility and then he didn't lose any sleep over it. Sure they reported to him, kept him informed, there was communication, but David didn't feel like he had to do it all, because no one can do it all. Remember that was Moses' problem, he was trying to do it all, up early everyday, staying up late every night because trying to handle every persons problem by himself. Finally his father in law said, "Dude you can't do this, you're going to kill yourself. Find some guys upon whom the Spirit rests and let them share in the responsibility, if there's something that's too much for them they can always come to you, but the congregation of the nation will suffer if you're always tending to every little thing." and So Moses listened and problems were solved, David delegated responsibility and things were going well. Now we read in Ch 19

Vs1-2

This is another great quality that we see exemplified in the life of David. He wasn't only a war-faring, blood-shedding, military kind of a guy; there was also a side of great compassion to him, tenderness and mercy. The Chronicles doesn't record it but what you find in the parallel passage to this in 2nd Samuel is that just prior to him seeking to show kindness to Hanun, he showed kindness to Mephibosheth, one of the grandsons of Saul even causing him to dine with him at his table from the point that he discovered he was alive onward, continually. But here we discover that not only was David gracious and kind to those of the house of Israel, but also to those neighboring nations around him who weren't people of the covenant. Translation, believer, nonbeliever, didn't matter David would extend common grace to all.

Jesus said, *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* Matt 5:43-46 Or another way to understand that is that God extends common grace to everyone, He doesn't cause rain to come to the believers, provide a way for them to be taken care of but everyone else is just out of luck. No, He's gracious to all; He extends mercy and compassion to mankind in general.

We're to do the same, and it doesn't matter how they may respond, or how they may react, we're to show them the love of God. You see there will be those who receive it, are taken in and drawn to the Lord by it, but then there'll be those who reject it, those who seek to embarrass you and humiliate you through it. Their reaction isn't your responsibility; showing them the love of God and the person of Jesus Christ is. So whether they be open and receiving, or hostile and rejecting, we're just to show people the love of God, the kindness of God.

Now as for when Nahash was kind to David we don't know, probably when he was in exile on the run from Saul. But be that as it may here he says, "You know what, I really want to do something for this guy who's lost his dad. I want to show him kindness." and This word kindness speaks really of "lovingkindness" or "favor" it speaks of good deeds. In other words David wasn't content to simply feel compassion for the guy, or think kindly about him, he didn't just have sympathy in his heart towards him but that's where it all came to an end. No, he wanted to do something that would express his heart in a personal way. and So he sends his personal ambassadors, that they might be a source of genuine comfort to him in his time of need.

The bible tells us that we're to, "...*be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*" Eph 4:32 and Again, "*What is desired in a man is kindness,*" Prov 19:22 Hey, this is a huge key in life, lovingkindness, being nice, doing good things. Be it in your marriage relationship, with your kids, or with your parents, I'm not saying there's never a need for discipline (obviously) but we're to show kindness one to another, the people you work with or go to school with. God wants to demonstrate His lovingkindness *to* others, *through* you, and the ultimate desire in that is not only their reciprocating of that if they're believers but their repentance if they're not. The bible tells us, "...*the goodness of God leads you to repentance.*" Rom 2:4 I'll give you one guess as to what other word could've been inserted there in the place of the word "goodness." "Kindness." God's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, and so He pours out His mercy, His compassion, His lovingkindness upon man that they might respond in repentance. Now, does that always happen? No, as I mentioned a minute ago, there will be those who reject God's kindness, rather than receive it, that's between them and the Lord, we just want to be those instruments that *display* and *portray* His kindness.

Vs3-4

Talk about being subjected to a "mean streak" this was just wrong! and It's unfortunate but there are always going to be those people who are suspicious of any act of kindness that comes their way. "What's going on here? What are they up to?" and They always think there's an agenda underneath the surface, probably because *they* wouldn't do anything kind with out an ulterior motive, or in order to try and manipulate a situation in their favor. These guys are all, "C'mon, you don't really think he's just being nice do you? He's trying to take advantage of your position, you've gotta send him a message that he's barking up the wrong tree!"

David was just genuinely trying to be nice, but they're just not buying it, "What's he *really* up to?" and Think there's a lesson in here for us and that is that we would do well to

learn to simply take things at their face value. We're always trying to look under the surface of what someone says, or what they do in order to see their true motive. Maybe their true motive was just to do something nice. The bible tells us that love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Now that's not to say we go through life all naïve, but we shouldn't put on the filters suspicion every time someone is speaking to us, or somehow does something that serves as a blessing to us. You know, every now and then I'll get that, "Hey the other day you said...what did you *mean* by that?" As though what I said wasn't really what I meant, I was really seeking to send an encrypted code subliminally through it, listen, I'm not that deep. and Most people (like myself) function on a pretty simple level. So we do well to not walk around suspect all the time of every one, it's just not healthy.

These guys take David's ambassadors shave their beards, expose them to the elements and send them on their way, just utterly humiliate them.

In 2nd Samuel we learn that they shave ½ their beards, meaning they shaved ½ their face and left the other ½. and These men considered their beards to be about the most valued aspect of their person, a man with a shaved face was a slave, this was their masculinity, often times they'd make pledges by the beard on their face, I mean it was a huge deal. and Now as if shaving ½ their face wasn't a bad enough fashion statement, they cut their garments off basically at the waste and send them home embarrassed, insulted and ashamed.

Vs5

Something else commendable about David, he didn't use these guys as political pawns, slap their pictures all over the air waves, put their photos on CNN to try and rally public support to justify a war. He just said, "Hey, you guys stay under the radar for awhile and your beard will grow back." and I like that because there are times that we do things and we just wind up really ashamed, or embarrassed, humiliated, our beard has been shaved off. But hey, just lie low, don't worry about being apart of a big public profile, just give it some time, your beard will grow back. Sometimes we don't think so, but God will restore, renew, and refresh, just give it some time.

Vs6-8

You see when Nahash did that he was declaring war, and he knew it, that's why they hired 32,000 chariots, because they knew David would be insulted. Because as you know an ambassador is a representative. When he took and humiliated David's ambassadors, he was slapping David in the face as well, whatever he did to them, he did to David. "This is what I think of your kindness David, not only do I reject it but how about a little shame and humiliation in return?"

The bible tells us that we're ambassadors of Jesus Christ to this world. You remember that Jesus taught that whatever it is that happens even unto the least of the believers, it happens

to Him. So when Jesus is shamed through the despicable treatment of His own, what are we to do? We do exactly what these men did, leave it with our King, the greater than David, the Son of David Jesus Christ They didn't run out and exact vengeance, they reported what happened to their King and they left it in his hands. and You know what; he's going to take care of it, in his time and in his way. They don't have to worry about it, they serve a king who loves them, is there *for* them and will take care *of* them. The same is true for you, and the same is true for me. What does the bible say? "*Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord.*" Rom 12:19

Vs9-13

This is just an awesome scene here. Joab comes out with the troops and as he's preparing for battle he realizes he's surrounded, enemy troops both in front and behind him. and Apparently the Syrian army was the fiercer of the 2 because he selects from the best of the men and he routes them towards the Syrians and the rest he sets under his brother to face the people of Ammon. and Then he tells his brother, "If the Syrians are too strong for us, you come and help us. and If the people of Ammon are too much for you, we'll come and help you." The bible tells us to, "*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*" Gal 6:2 None of us are "Super Christian" There are times when the battle gets too much for me, and I need bro's and sisters there with me, praying for me, giving support *to* me. and Then there are other times when I note someone else that's being overwhelmed, so what do I do? I pray for them, seek to give support *to* them. We're to help one another to fight the good fight of faith. I mean I don't know if you noticed or not, but one option never seemed enter Joab's mind throughout his observation of this situation, "surrender." He immediately took the offensive position, this guy never carried a white flag in his pocket because surrender was never an option.

So to with you, so to with me, there are going to be times when the enemy is upon you like a flood, hard pressed on every side, you'll feel overwhelmed and out numbered. What are you going to do when the pressure is on? Think, "Man this isn't worth it, it was never this bad in the world, I give up." God forbid! It's not about giving up when we don't see the way out, why? Because man's *impossibilities* make for God's *opportunities*, God can make a way, when there's no way. We do well to take Joab's advice here in Vs 13, #1 Be of good courage and be strong. Don't get *discouraged*, be of *good* courage, and be strong, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. #2 Be strong for our people and for the cities of our God. In other words realize that things are bigger than we are, what we do, the decisions we make will have an impact and bring ramifications into the lives of all kinds of people around you. You throw in the towel and a whole host of people will suffer as the result of that, so be strong for our people, and for the cities of our God. and #3 May the Lord do what is good in His sight. Translation, we're going to do our absolute best, and commit the rest into the hands of the Lord.

Vs14-15

We don't even read where a single sword was swung, they just stood their ground in the Lord, kept moving forward and the enemy crumbled right in front of them, God was just doing the work.

Vs16-19

So they fled momentarily, but it was only to regroup and launch another attack even more powerfully. and Often times that's the way the enemy works, don't think the war is over after a single battle, if David had sent his army home it'd have been disastrous, but because he was aware of the way warfare worked he was ready for the 2nd wave. Don't lower your guard when it comes to warfare, the bible tells us to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation because the spirit is indeed willing, but the flesh is weak.

Ch 20

Vs 1

Unlike today when we'll war at anytime, in this day there were seasons given to war. They didn't generally fight in the dead of winter, so when spring came they commenced to fighting again for their particular cause. So at the end of Ch 19 it was too late in the year for them to pursue the country of the people of Ammon, but when spring time came they got back to business. But you'll note that David stayed at Jerusalem, this is when the whole Bathsheba incident took place. He should have been in the conflict, in the thick of things, fighting the good fight, but instead he chose to kick back and stay out of the battle. and It would be a pivoting point in his life that would change him and his family for the rest of his life. Be careful about kicking back and staying away from the battle, I understand that we all need a little spiritual Rand R now and then, but be mindful of God's call on your life and don't neglect it. Right there in what takes us about a second to read over, adultery, scandal, murder, and deception took place in the life of David. It was in this battle here at Rabbah that David had Uriah (Bathsheba's husband) murdered. Now had he been in the battle none of that would've taken place, but because he chose to stay back and relax, irreparable damage was done.

Because so often it's when we're kicking back that we don't keep our guard up, we become susceptible to the subtleties of the enemy. As for why it isn't recorded here...again David confessed it, repented of it and God forgave it. This was written in the post exile period, so we don't read of it here, it's not even brought up, because it's under the blood as far as the east is from the west.

Vs2-3

How could David be there to take his crown if he stayed back at Jerusalem? Well you find in 2nd Samuel that just before the city fell Joab sent word to David so that he could come and take the credit for it lest the people name the city after Joab. So after the battle was all but over, David came and mopped up. and By this point David had repented, and been restored and so much like having your beard shaved, we note that he found himself still usable by God in time. It wasn't over because he fell into a shameful situation, God will forgive, restore and renew, but we have to repent. Turn from our sin *unto* the Lord.

Vs4-8

Again what I'd have you note here is how David's example in warfare, and staying the course, taking men, teaching them, training them, discipling them, enabled them and emboldened them to take on, and take *down* giants. You remember there was a day when *no one* would take on the giant, Goliath defied the whole army of Israel. Then a little shepherd boy stepped out on to the field with a sling and 5 stones and killed the giant in the name of the Living God. and That type of faith is contagious, people will be emboldened by your example to step out and trust the Lord for themselves, if He can give you victory, then He can give *me* victory to. No matter how big the giant I face may be.

Ch 21

Ok, we're going to read of probably the greatest sin that David committed here. The question comes up, "Why is this sin recorded, if the others weren't? Was this one not forgiven?" Of course God forgave him, we'll see that in the account, but this event actually sets the backdrop as to how David discovered the location upon which the temple would be built. and I love the thread that's finely woven throughout the fabric of this Ch because it demonstrates how that God can take those things that Satan means to work destruction and ruin in our lives, and redeem them in such a way as to bring good out of it. Satan wants to destroy your life, and every now and then he beats us down, wins the battle, and we feel crushed. But God is able to take that and somehow turn it so that it works out for our good and His glory, it's a mystery, but only God could do such a thing.

Vs1-2

Now in 2nd Samuel we're told David did this because the anger of the Lord had been aroused against Israel. Obviously what's taking place here is that the Lord was angry with Israel, removed that hedge and allowed Satan some room to move much like in the situation with Job. and It's just always healthy to remember that the strongest of us can't hold a candle to the enemy apart from the protective hedge of the Lord. When the Lord isn't intervening we don't stand a chance, 1/2 the time we stumble when He *is* intervening, we just choose to circumvent his warnings, or His hedge and sin anyway. But when that hedge is lifted, we're just dead in the water. Now why was the Lord angry with Israel? We're not told, speculation is that perhaps it had to do with the treason towards David when Absalom revolted and a significant chunk of the nation followed him.

But what's wrong with numbering the people? Well, nothing I suppose if it has to do with *protective* purposes, Jesus spoke of having 100 sheep, then having only 99 and leaving the 100 to search out the 1. You aren't going to know the difference between 99 or 100 sheep by just looking at them, there's some counting going on there. But if it's for *prideful* purposes, trying to see how powerful you've become in all your strength then it's a problem.

Now there was provision made in the law for a census. We read in Ex 30:12, "*When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them.*" and Of course we don't read of any ransom that was taken here, it was to be ½ a shekel according to the measure of the temple and it was to be an offering to the Lord for the sustaining of the ministry. But it seems that David was beginning to take notice of all the work that had been accomplished and rather than staying in that place that he'd come to know so well, "*Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God.*" Ps 20:7 He wavered just a bit here and began to take stock in his military might, he wanted to know just how powerful of a force he was to be reckoned with. and Rather than just looking back and realizing the great things God had done, he slipped into that mode of trusting in the arm of flesh.

Vs3-8

You know invariably before you press on in to sin God will always give you a warning, a way out. Joab (who wasn't the most reputable of guys believe me) says, "David, you should really reconsider this, God's not going to be pleased with this." That was a warning, David should've been placed in check right then and there, but he pressed on.

But what we appreciate about David is the way he owned up to his sin, once the blinders were removed and he found himself exposed before God, he never tried to justify it or rationalize it, he was quick to confess it and repent of it. He says, "God I've sinned greatly in doing this, now I pray that You would take away my iniquity, for I have done very foolishly."

Vs9-13

This is interesting to me. David sins, prays for forgiveness and God says, "What's it going to be, I'll give you 1 of 3 choices." and He has 3 different options each taking less time but becoming more severe in their order. 3 yrs famine, 3 months being driven by their enemies, or 3 days under the sword of the Lord in the form of a plague. and I've of the persuasion that David did the right thing. He says, "I don't want to fall into the hands of man because man is ruthless, I want to fall into the hand of the Lord because His mercies are great." and So David chooses the 3 days plague. But I think that often times as we pray and are seeking the Lord for direction, certainly there are times when God has a very specific way He'd desire us to go, but often I think that God gives us a choice. Hey, you can do this, or that, or perhaps even the other thing, you choose and we're not in sin should we choose one thing over the other.

A lot of times we freak out thinking that if we miss it we're blowing life, but I think God is much more gracious than that. He knows your heart and should I err in seeking His will and

His way for my life His grace is more than sufficient to cover me, but often times it may not even be a matter of right or wrong, more just personal choice because God will use you or do the work either way you go.

Vs14-15

David was wise in choosing the Lord, because He *is* merciful and did relent. and When we read of 70,000 men dying that doesn't include any women or children so this was no small thing. When the trade center went down our nation was buckling under the loss of a couple thousand which is tragic indeed, here we're talking 70,000 men alone. But again notice where it came to an end, at the threshing floor of Ornan, that place where the wheat is separated from the chaff.

Vs16-17

Of course this is an awesome shepherd's heart we're seeing here in David realizing his personal responsibility and wanting the people spared, but what's the lesson here? My sin has an impact that goes far beyond just me, and God help us to consider these things, the severity of our sin as we're contemplating the act of it, whatever it may be.

Vs 18-24

You might underline the last ½ of Vs 24 because that's what worship is all about. Giving to the Lord, not out of your excess, but out of your substance. Ornan was gracious, "Here king, take it all you can have it, it's an honor that you'd have a desire for my property." David says, "It doesn't work that way, I'm not offering the Lord what is yours, and I won't call it mine till it's cost me something, because how can I truly offer to God that which cost me nothing?" If it costs nothing it means nothing, there's no real value or worth to something that's just passed over to me. But where your treasure is, there your heart will be also, if it cost me something and I offer it to the Lord, then it comes from the heart. Its shame how many people will give to the Lord if they have something leftover, God really isn't in to our leftovers, our cast offs, He desires the 1st fruit, our very best. He says, "Hey if you wouldn't give it to your president, or your king, don't give it to Me." How much greater is God than man, yet some of the things we'll dump off on God, that's not worship, that's not making an offering to God from the recesses of your heart, that's a cast off.

I'm not in reference to any certain amount, or monetary value, you might give a million bucks, but if you're worth a 250 million, that doesn't mean much. However if you only give 2 or 3 dollars but it leaves you wondering where a meal or 2 is going to come from; in God's economy you gave more than the guy who doled out a million. Remember the scene there in Mk 12?

We read there, "*Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them,*

‘Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.’” Mark 12:41-44 and That’s what David is getting at here, he doesn’t want to just make an offering of no value to the Lord, he desires to have a vested interest in it so that he can truly give from and worship from his heart.

Vs25-27

So David offered burnt offerings (sin offerings) and peace offerings (fellowship offerings) marking his sacrifice for sin and renewed fellowship with God. and His sin having received a sacrifice sheathed the sword of judgment. Before David had confessed but the sword was still out even though the judgment had been temporarily stayed, why? Because there’s no atonement apart from sacrifice.

Vs28-30

In other words after the powerful encounter he’d had with the Lord there he knew in his spirit and in his heart that that was where the Lord desired to meet with him. You see I mentioned at the beginning of this Ch how God can take those things that were meant for destruction and devastation and turn them for good. Right where the angel stopped, right where David had the altar built, the threshing floor of Ornan had both a rich history, and it had a rich future. 2nd Chronicles Ch 3 tells us that this threshing floor was on Mt Moriah which was the hill upon which Ab brought Isaac as a sacrifice. It’s the same place where Solomon would build the temple. and It was on this same set of hills upon which Jesus would sacrifice Himself for the sin of the world, out of death comes life, salvation, regeneration and renewal.

Prayer Points

God we thank You that You are rich in Mercy, slow to anger and eager to pour out your grace and lovingkindness. Teach to walk in holiness before You, we want to worship You, not from the excess, not from the cast-offs, but from the heart, the 1st fruits of all that we are. Help us that we lead our lives placing You as the primary priority of all that we are. We thank You for the fullness of Your forgiveness, that when You forgive, You remember our sin no more. Help us Lord that We fight the good fight of faith, for Your glory, and Your name’s sake.