ADULT UNIT III: Special Offerings and the Sanctuary ADULT GENERAL LESSON TITLE: David's Sacrifice ADULT TOPIC: It'll Cost You Everything

LESSON 10 DATE: May 4, 2025

DEVOTIONAL READING: 2 Peter 3:11-18
BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: 1 Chronicles 21:1-22:1
PRINT PASSAGE: 1 Chronicles 21:14-30

Home Daily Bible Reading

Apr. 28	- IVI	Psaim 86:1-7,10-17	Answer Me, O Lord
Apr. 29	, 7	1 Peter 5	Be Alert
Apr. 30	W	Lamentations 3:21-36	The Lord Will Not Reject Forever
May 1	Th	2 Peter 3:1-10	God Patiently Waits for Repentance
May 2	F	2 Peter 3:11-18	Live the Godly Life
May 3	Sa	1 Chronicles 21:1-13	A Presumptive King
May 4		1 Chronicles 21:14-30	

EXALT!

Invocation - Teacher or Learner

Celebration - "Are Ye Able, Said the Master" - #473 AME Zion Bicentennial Hymnal

Declaration - 1 Chronicles 21:14-30. (Read together by the class, by a volunteer or responsively.)

¹⁴ So the Lord sent a pestilence on Israel, and seventy thousand persons fell in Israel. ¹⁵ And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it, but when he was about to destroy it, the Lord took note and relented concerning the calamity; he said to the destroying angel, "Enough! Stay your hand." The angel of the Lord was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁶ David looked up and saw the angel of the Lord standing between earth and heaven and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell on their faces. ¹⁷ And David said to God, "Was it not I who gave the command to count the people? It is I who have sinned and done very wickedly. But these sheep, what have they

done? Let your hand, I pray, O Lord my God, be against me and against my father's house, but do not let your people be plaqued!"

David's Altar and Sacrifice

¹⁸ Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to tell David that he should go up and erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁹ So David went up following Gad's instructions, which he had spoken in the name of the Lord. ²⁰ Ornan turned and saw the king, and while his four sons who were with him hid themselves, Ornan continued to thresh wheat. ²¹ As David came to Ornan, Ornan looked and saw David; he went out from the threshing floor and prostrated himself before David with his face to the ground. ²² David said to Ornan, "Give me the site of the threshing floor that I may build on it an altar to the Lord–give it to me at its full price–so that the plague may be averted from the people." ²³ Then Ornan said to David, "Take



it, and let my lord the king do what seems good to him; see, I present the oxen for burnt offerings and the threshing sledges for the wood and the wheat for a grain offering. I give it all." ²⁴ But King David said to Ornan, "No, but I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." ²⁵ So David paid Ornan six hundred shekels of gold by weight for the site. ²⁶ David built there an altar to the Lord and presented burnt offerings and offerings of well-being. He called upon the Lord, and he answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering. ²⁷ Then the Lord commanded the angel, and he put his sword back into its sheath.

The Place Chosen for the Temple

At that time, when David saw that the Lord had answered him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he made his sacrifices there.
For the tabernacle of the Lord that Moses had made in the wilderness and the altar of burnt offering were at that time in the high place at Gibeon, ³⁰ but David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was afraid of the sword of the angel of the Lord.

Affirmation – It costs to serve the Lord, and I am willing to pay the price. (*Spoken together by class and teacher*).

ENGAGE: (5-10 min.)

Today, we begin the final unit in this quarter. Unit III, entitled "Special Offerings and the Sanctuary," explores the unique relationship between the sanctuary and offerings or sacrifices. Lesson 10 from 1 Chronicles 21 relates to David's refusal to accept a gift from Ornan for a sacrifice to the Lord because David would not "offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." In lesson 11, we consider Solomon's Temple dedication and lavish sacrifices, as described in 2 Chronicles 7. Lesson 12 examines the laying of a new temple foundation by the people who had returned from exile to Jerusalem in Ezra 3. Lesson 13 concludes the quarter with covenant renewal and the people's pledge to observe the commands of the Torah and reject the abuse and neglect of the Temple.

Serving God should cost us something. In Luke 14:23-33 NRSV, Jesus taught about the cost of discipleship. He warned that being a disciple may cost us our families, saying, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple (v. 26).") Wow! That is a heavy price to pay to follow God. But didn't God give his one and only Son for us and for the world. So, we owe God everything, even our families. Jesus also made clear that he expected his followers

to "carry the cross and follow me" (v. 27). The cost of being a disciple of Christ is a heavy one, and for this reason Jesus admonishes those who would follow him to "estimate the cost" (v. 28). Jesus even expects us to "give up our possessions" to follow him (v. 33). It is the one thing that a rich man mentioned in scripture apparently was unwilling to do. (See Mark 10:17-27)

Break into small groups and discuss with one another the following issues and questions: 1. Has serving God cost you anything? If so, what has serving God cost you? 2. Discuss God's sacrifice of his one and only Son, including how it may have felt to God and of what benefit it was to you. 3. Are you willing to pay the continuing cost associated with following Jesus? If so, what additional costs could you pay to be a more devote follower of Christ?

EDUCATE: (10-15 min.)

Overall, 1 Chronicles 21:14-30 advances David's ultimate purchase of the threshing floor of Ornan where the Temple and altar of burnt offering would be located. The writer of Chronicles "presents an innocent David offering his life to save his people, Israel, from divine judgment. David's self-giving love establishes the site for the [T]emple." David was willing to sacrifice his life for his people. Does David sound like any biblical character who would manifest his presence in the future? Perhaps Christ?

1 Chronicles 21:1-6: Israel finds itself under attack by an adversary. (Some Bible translations refer to this adversary as "Satan." However, recent scholar-ship suggests that it would be more appropriate to refer to this enemy as "an adversary.") No matter the name of the enemy, Israel is under attack. As any military leader might do, David decides to count the number of men available to fight this enemy. He delegates the task to Joab (v. 2). Contrary to David's orders, Joab excludes the tribes of Levi and Benjamin from the count (v. 6). Joab's disobedience results in divine judgment being visited upon Israel.

What lesson can we learn from David and Joab? Perhaps, when it comes to the things of God, we should not delegate what has been assigned to us. Perhaps David should have more closely supervised Joab. Ultimately, David will take responsibility for Joab's failure. There are costs to following God, and sometimes they don't seem fair. But we must always remember that God is sovereign.

1 Chronicles 21:7-13: Joab's disobedience to David's directive resulted in God's divine judgment being visited upon Israel. As Israel's leader, David takes responsibility for Joab's disobedience. Would you have done the same thing as a leader? In this instance, is David modeling one of the sacrifices that god-

¹ The Wesley Study Bible (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2009), 513-514.

² The Wesley Study Bible, 514.

ly leaders have to be willing to make? Ultimately, David takes on the sin that resulted from Joab's disobedience and asks God for mercy (v. 8a). God still judges David and Israel but stops short of having David fall into the hands of the enemy.

As you read theses verses, God gave David three choices in terms of his punishment. It might remind you of an experience when your parent(s) would let you pick your own punishment – no TV for a week, no telephone for a week, or no weekend activities for a month. "Pick your poison," they would say. Ultimately, David chose a punishment that kept him in God's hands and not the hands of an enemy. David's predicament teaches us that it is better to be in God's hands than those of an enemy. God's judgment and mercy can go hand in hand.

1 Chronicles 21:14-22:1: Israel still was punished – 70,000 persons fell from the pestilence sent by the hand of the Lord (v. 14). In fact, God sent an angel with the assignment of destroying Israel (v. 15a). However, by the "threshing floor" God relented and released the angel from their assignment of destroying Israel. (v. 15b). Able to see the angel, in an act of worship, David and the elders of Israel clothed themselves in sackcloth, fell on their faces, and David said:

"Was it not I who gave the command to count the people? It is I who have sinned and done very wickedly. But these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, O Lord my God, be against me and against my father's house; but do not let your people be plagued!" (v. 17).

David was commanded to build an altar at the sight of the threshing floor (v. 18) David is obedient. Perhaps he's learned his lesson. David offers to pur-



chase the threshing floor owned by Ornan (v. 22). Ornan offers the threshing floor, as well as the oxen for burnt offering, wood, and the wheat for the grain offering, to David all for free. David does not accept Ornan's offer, he doesn't cut any corners. David is willing to pay full price for what Ornan had agreed to give him for free (vv. 24-25)

David has learned that it costs to lead God's people. In these verses, David offered both himself as a substitutional sacrifice for the sins being attributed to Israel, as well as full price for price for the threshing floor, the location of the altar to God. Following God is costly.

At the threshing floor, David built an altar and worshiped God, and the angel "put his sword back into his sheath" (v. 27). In addition, David made the threshing floor the location for the future altar and Temple in Jerusalem (1 Chron. 22:1). As a result of David's costly sacrifices, Israel's place of future worship would result.

ELEVATE: (5-10 min.)

Break into small groups and respond to the following: 1. What benefits do you see from the sacrifices that you have made for God? How costly were your sacrifices? 2. Reflect on your commitment to God. Does it cost you anything? What if it were to cost you everything? 3. Consider a figurative or spiritual threshing floor. In a moment of self-scrutiny, separate the wheat from the chaff in terms of your relationships and decisions. How can your figurative/spiritual threshing floor become a place of worship and sacrifice?

iTHINK: (5-7 min.)

- 1. David selected the Temple's future location based on his experience of grace triumphing over judgment. Name ways your congregation's sanctuary and rituals have mediated grace to you. In what ways have you mediated grace to the world?
- 2. Create an audio or video history of surprising grace moments in your life. Share with loved ones.
- 3. Gather several friends and have a frank discussion about the future. What vision of the future gives you hope? Is the church a part of that hopeful vision? Why? Or why not?

KEY VERSE: King David said to Ornan, "No; I will buy them for the full price. I will not take for the Lord what is yours, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." 1 Chronicles 21:24.