

# David's Mistake in Numbering Israel

by Chuck Smith

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*David's mistake in numbering Israel led to a pestilence that killed 70,000 men, but God's mercy and David's repentance resulted in the construction of the temple on the Mount of Moriah.*

**Duration:** 25:05

**Scripture:** 1 Chronicles 21:14, Psalm 119:11, John 13:34-35, John 14:26, Romans 12:2, 1 Peter 3:15, 1 John 2:17

**Topics:** "David"

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## Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith emphasizes the importance of being prepared as a Christian to share the message of Jesus Christ with others. He encourages believers to know and memorize the scriptures in order to be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks about Jesus. Pastor Chuck announces the release of the long-awaited through the Bible commentary C-3000 edition, which provides in-depth study tools for understanding the Bible. He also continues his verse-by-verse teaching through the book of First Chronicles, focusing on David's mistake in numbering Israel and the consequences that followed. Throughout the sermon, Pastor Chuck emphasizes the need for God's presence, guidance, and wisdom in every endeavor we undertake for Him.

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## Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul  
Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole  
David's mistake in numbering Israel As we pick up in 1 Chronicles 21, verse 14 And now, here's Pastor Chuck Smith with today's message  
So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel And there fell of Israel 70,000 men Now the pestilence could have been in the form of a bubonic plague Or some other type of, you know, viral kind of infection or whatever That wiped out 70,000 men Here he had numbered, to boast in the army And God's going to start cutting it down to size And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it And as he was destroying, the Lord beheld and Repented him of the evil, and he said to the angel that destroyed, it's enough Stay now your hand, and the angel of the Lord stood by the threshing floor Of Ornan the Jebusite  
Now, we have great difficulty Describing the actions of an infinite God with finite language But language is all we have, and thus we have to use language As inadequate as it is, to express the activities or the actions of God The word that is used here, repented God of the evil In our thought of the word repentance, we think of it as a change In fact, the word basically in our definition of repentance is a change If there is no change, there is no real repentance For repentance leads to change It creates the change And the change is the sign of true repentance Now, when God is moving in a

direction and it seems that God changes The angel is coming and is smiting, and then God stops the angel There is a change of activity All we've got is human language to express the infinite character of God And so we have to say, God repented, but yet we read that God is not a man That he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent Hath he not spoken, and shall he not make it good?

But that's again the weakness of language And especially when you try to describe the activities of God In human language It should be noted that no doubt God all the time intended to stop the angel where he did It would seem like the angel is going to destroy all of Jerusalem God says, stop right there Now, from our viewing it, it would look like, well, God changed his mind from destroying the whole city And so it repented of the Lord of the evil and he said to the angel, stop there But that's only using human language to describe the activities of God In which you always have a problem, a weakness So the Lord said, it's enough Stay now your hand Now the reason why I say this Is from the subsequent things that take place David lifted up his eyes And he saw the angel of the Lord standing

between earth and 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 on their faces Boy, don't you know that must have been something awesome They know that the pestilence is going through the land They know that people are dropping like flies all over the land And so David puts on sackcloth Ashes on his head It's a sign of affliction, afflicting himself Wearing that rough camel's skin backwards So that the irritating hair is against your body Scratching, miserable Ashes on your head, it's a sign of great mourning and repentance And David and the elders are there before the Lord repenting And David looks up in the sky and he sees this angel of the Lord Between earth and heaven, standing and his sword

is stretched out over Jerusalem 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 this evil indeed But as for these sheep, what have they done Let thy 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 played How heavy that must have come upon David My sin has caused such grief Of course that's the price of leadership But that's also the cost of sin I have heard so many people say, well It only hurts me Yeah, I do drugs a bit, but it only hurts me It hurts all of those around you It hurts your family And the hurt goes out and out and out And everyone suffers for what you do No man really sins unto himself Your sin has an effect that goes out and out And others

are hurt and affected by what you do Don't deceive yourself into thinking Well, I'm the only one that is hurt by this Many, many, many are touched and hurt by it And David's sin caused hurt to so many And David said, Lord, I'm the guilty one I was the one that did this, Lord These poor sheep, don't take it out on them And David is willing now to give himself Lord, take it out on me, I'm the guilty party As for these people, they're not guilty They weren't the ones that were wrong That they should be plagued And then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad To say to David That David should go up and set up an altar Unto the Lord in the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite Now, Gad no doubt was with David The elders were with him, they all saw the angel But the Lord spoke to Gad and said,

tell David To go and to make an altar there on the threshing floor Below where the angel is standing Now, Ornan turned back and saw the angel So it wasn't something that just David and his elders saw This fellow was threshing wheat Looked up and saw this angel Standing there with a sword drawn And he turned back And saw the angel and his four sons were with him And they hid I think I would have too He was in the process of threshing wheat And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked And he saw David and he went out of the threshing floor And he bowed himself to David with his face to the ground Then David said

to Ornan Grant me the place of this threshing floor That I may build an altar therein unto the Lord For thou shalt grant it me for the full price That the plague might be stayed from

the people Sell this to me Sell it to me for the full price That this plague might be stopped And Ornan said to David, take it Let my Lord the King do that which is good in his eyes Lo, I'll give it to you And the oxen also for the burnt offerings And the threshing instruments for the wood And the wheat for the meal offering I'll give it all And King David said to Ornan No, I will truly buy it for the full price For I will not take that which is yours for the Lord Nor offer burnt offerings without cost For I will not give unto the Lord that which cost me nothing So David gave to Ornan for the place 600 shekels of gold by weight Now, in the account in Samuel It talks about 50 shekels of gold For the 50 shekels of gold he bought the cattle And the instruments that he used in the plowing and

all For the altar, that was 50 shekels But for the property itself He gave him 600 shekels of gold Those that like to find discrepancies in the Bible Often point this as to one of the discrepancies But it's cleared up in the Hebrew language For in the Hebrew language The threshing floor is the goren And so, here He's buying the area This is the magom Is the property itself The gorem are the things that were on the property So, the total price of 650 shekels But divided, one speaks of the property itself The other speaks of the things that were on the property So, David built there an altar unto the Lord He offered the burnt offerings and the peace offerings And he called upon the Lord And he answered him from heaven By fire upon the altar of the burnt offering And the Lord commanded the

angel And he put up his sword in the sheath At that time, when David saw the Lord had answered him In the threshing floor of Orn and the Jebusite Then he sacrificed there For the tabernacle of the Lord Which Moses made in the wilderness And the altar of the burnt offering Were at that season in the high place at Gibeon But David could not go before there to inquire of God For he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord So, up until this time All of the sacrifices that were made to God Were made in Gibeon That's where the tabernacle was And the place of the sacrifices But the Lord commanded David To buy the threshing floor of Ornan And to build an altar there And to offer sacrifice unto the Lord And so, the first verse of chapter 22 Then David said, this is the house of the

Lord God In other words, this is the place for the temple God had ordered That on this spot The altar be built And the sacrifice made They had been doing that only in Gibeon up to this point There at the tabernacle But God is signifying By the building of the altar and the offering of the sacrifice here That this is where the house of the Lord is to be built Now God's hand behind the scenes all the way It is this place On Mount Moriah About a thousand years earlier Abraham had come With Isaac To offer a sacrifice unto God And as Abraham and Isaac were coming To this Mount Moriah This very place that David Is now purchasing And his son Isaac said, Dad We have the fire and we have the wood But where is the sacrifice?

And Abraham said, Son The Lord will Provide himself a sacrifice In the Mount of the Lord, he said It shall be seen And You remember the story how that He bound Isaac, placed him on the altar And he raised the knife and the Lord said, that's enough, Abraham Behold, there's a ram caught by its horns in the thicket Take and offer it And Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh The Lord will provide And he responded, for in the Mount of the Lord It shall be seen This is the place where the sacrifices are to be made This is the place That God had chosen for the temple back at the time of Abraham And he makes the prophecy of it then It doesn't end there About a thousand years after David Jesus Was led to the top of Mount Moriah A place called Golgotha And there he was crucified So

this holy mount that God chose As a place of sacrifice He directed Abraham to it Abraham prophesied over it God stopped the angel Above the threshing floor there on Mount Moriah David recognized God said, offer the sacrifice there And David by that recognized that this is the place God has chosen for the house of God to be built And the prophecy was then completely fulfilled When Jesus Made the sacrifice for sin And God Offered his only begotten son For our sins On the Mount of Sacrifice So David recognized, hey This is the place for the house of the Lord And David commanded To gather together the strangers that were in the land of Israel And he sent masons To begin to hew these stones to build the house of God He can't build the house But the Lord didn't say he couldn't prepare for the

building of the house And so he got the stone masons to work They started carving out the stones for the temple And of course As we go on we find that he began to gather David prepared iron in abundance For the nails For the doors of the gates And for the joinings Brass in abundance Without weight, I know there's so much You couldn't really weigh it Also there were cedar trees in abundance For the Sidonians And they that were of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David And David said Solomon my son is young and tender And the house that is to be built for the Lord Must be magnificent Exceedingly magnificent Of fame and glory throughout all of the world And I will therefore now make preparation for it So David prepared abundantly Before his death Can't build it David but hey David says I can

sure provide for it So then he called for Solomon His son And he charged him to build The house for the Lord And David said to Solomon My son As for me It was in my mind To build a house Under the name of Jehovah my God But the word of Jehovah came to me saying That you have shed blood abundantly You've made great wars Thou shalt not build a house under my name Because you have shed much blood upon the earth in my sight David you've been too bloody a man But behold a son shall be born to you He will be a man of peace or rest And I will give him rest from all of his enemies round about For his name shall be Solomon And I will give peace and quietness unto Israel In his days He shall build a house for my name And he shall be my son and I will be his father And I will establish the throne of

his kingdom over Israel forever So Solomon It was in my mind to build this house for God God rejected my desire because of my bloody past But he promised to give me you as a son Reign in my stead You're to build a house So now my son He gives to Solomon the charge The Lord be with you This is the key to the whole thing God has called you to a great task It's to be a magnificent temple It's to be noted throughout the world It's to be one of the great wonders of the ancient world This temple that is to be built So my son The Lord be with you How we need The presence of God For every endeavor That we do for God It is not enough To just know what God wants done And then to take it upon ourselves to do it We must be directed by God Strengthened by God Guided by God In every work that we seek

to do for God We need to be in prayer That God will show us how Not just what should be done But how it should be done The Lord be with you It's a great task that you're called to do You know what you're supposed to do Now may the Lord be with you to guide you To give you wisdom And to give you understanding Because of this great task that is to be done We'll return with more of our study of 1 Chronicles In our next lesson As Pastor Chuck Smith continues with The Location for the House of the Lord And we do hope you'll make plans to join us But right now, I'd like to remind you That if you missed any part of today's message Or perhaps you'd like to order a copy For that special friend or loved one You can do so by simply contacting One of our customer service representatives And they'd be

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Box 8000 Costa Mesa, CA 92628 And be sure to include the call letters Of this station with your correspondence And now, on behalf of The Word for Today We'd like to thank all of you Who share in supporting this ministry With your prayers and financial support And be sure to join us again next time As Pastor Chuck Smith Continues his verse-by-verse study Through the book of 1 Chronicles That's right here, on the next edition of The Word for Today Now once again, here's Pastor Chuck Smith Now may the Spirit of God teach you all things And bring to your remembrance Those things that He has commanded us You remember to just love God Believe on Jesus Christ And may the love of Christ be perfected in your life May it increase and may it grow And may God help you to maintain The proper perspective In the world, but not of the world Your every touch as light as possible Because the world is going to pass away And the lust thereof But he who does the will of God Will abide forever God help us to be Interested and occupied With the things that are eternal In Jesus' name I'd like to talk to you about Being ready as a Christian Ready to give an answer to anyone, anywhere Who might ask you about Jesus Christ And the only way to be prepared Is to know and to memorize the scriptures For this very reason I'm excited to present to you The long-awaited release of Pastor Chuck Smith's Through the Bible Commentary C3000 Edition Get ready to study the Bible In a whole new way Listen to Pastor Chuck As he teaches Hebrew and Greek word origins Biblical dates and history Archaeological information Church history And of course Practical applications To apply to your life On a day-to-day basis Get ready to be A great biblical scholar With the help of Pastor Chuck's Through the Bible Commentary To order your copy Call The Word for Today At 800-272-9673 That's 800-272-WORD Or visit us online At [thewordfortoday.org](http://thewordfortoday.org) This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today In Costa Mesa, California

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