

6335U

MID ATLANTIC BIBLE SCHOOL - 2005

WHEN DAVID WAS OLD AND FULL OF DAYS

Speaker: Bro. Roger Lewis

Study #1: David built there an Altar - The Census,
The Plague and the Choosing of Moriah.

Reading: 1 Chronicles 21
Psalm 30

Well, good morning my dear brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ. Good morning again! and a good morning it is on this fine and sunny day in Pennsylvania. Much bigger than Christchurch where we're having 5 degree frosts at the moment - it was such a sacrifice to come over to America and to speak to you all at this time of the seasons!

God willing, as our chairman has said, our studies in this second session each morning, is going to be on the subject of when David was old and full of days! In fact, you know, what we're going to be looking at, God willing, is what I believe is, the last 12 months of David's life. Just the last 12 months, everything we're going to look at in our studies will be compressed into those last 12 months of David's life.

In fact, our story is going to start today in 1 Chronicles 21, and if we turn to that chapter, it's a rather interesting one because you'll remember that this is the story of the plague that came upon Israel in the matter of the numbering of the nation. God willing, our studies in essence, are going to follow through the Chronicles record, and as we believe, in this chapter 21, we believe is the beginning of that last 12 months of David's life. I want you to notice something interesting about 1 Chronicles 21 verse 1, you'll remember how the record says, 'And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel'. As Christadelphians, as a community, we've been clear on the fact, that the 'Satan' of this chapter as in the corresponding parallel record in 2 Samuel 24, the 'Satan', of course, is **God Himself**, that Almighty God became an adversary to Israel; and as a community we believe and have taught that as part of our explanation of who or what the Satan of the bible is. But did you notice this? Reading the verse again carefully, 1 Chronicles 21 verse 1, I want you to notice whom God came against on this occasion, the record says, 'And Satan stood up against **Israel**', not the king, did you notice that? God didn't stand against David, says the record, He stood against Israel. Then what is going to be unfolded in this particular chapter, is that the primary purpose of this episode is for the humbling and the education of Israel not the king. In

fact, the circumstances that brought the plague upon the people, I think, already existed in the nation, before David even began to number them. But the problem with this chapter will not be the king's sin, but the peoples, all David was going to provide was the catalyst by which the sin of the people would be made manifest and known. Oh yes, Almighty God was going to stand against Israel on this occasion, and in this chapter as we see David in his oldness of age, we're going to see how the old man became the 'sin bearer' of his people in time.

Well, the record says in chapter 21 verse 1, that David numbered Israel. Now we need to understand that there was nothing intrinsically wrong with numbering the people of Israel. We're told in Numbers 1 that it was correct and appropriate to number the people to assess military strength; we're told in Numbers 26, that there was a numbering of the nation to determine the portions of the tribes in allotting the land; we're told in Numbers 3 that there was a numbering for the organization of the Levites; there was nothing wrong in the matter of actually numbering Israel itself. So the question is, of course, why do you think that David was numbering Israel on the occasion of 1 Chronicles 21? Well, let me tell you what I believe he was doing! he's an old man, you see, I don't think he was concerned about further invasion, I don't think he was concerned about the possibility of a division or a revolt in the land; I don't think he was concerned about the military strength of the army; I think David as an old man had already gone in his mind, to the things which were dearest to him and most important in his life. I think the thing of greatest importance in his life at this time, in the words of a Psalm was, 'the zeal of thine house, have eaten me up'. In David's oldness of age, all he wanted to do was to organize the nation in the matter of things of spiritual worship that would take place around the house of God, and he wanted to have it done before he died!

Now let me show you why I believe that to have been, the reason for David's numbering on this occasion in 1 Chronicles 21. You see how the record unfolds subsequently, come to chapter 22; in 1 Chronicles 22 it's going to say this in verse 2, 'And David commanded to gather together the strangers that were in the land; and he set masons to hew wrought stones to build, **to build** the house of God'. He didn't just gather the strangers, 1 Chronicles 22 verse 2, he **numbered** them, says 2 Chronicles 2 verse 17, 'he numbered the strangers to assess the manpower that was available for the temple construction. If you come to 1 Chronicles 23, one chapter later, we're told this in verse 24, 'These were the sons of Levi after the house of their fathers; even the chief of the fathers, as they were counted by number of names by their polls, that did the work for the service of the house of Yahweh, from the age of 20 years and upwards'. If we were to ask, b&s, well, who numbered the names of verse 24? the answer is verse 27, 'for by the last words of David the Levites were numbered', so he numbered the Levites, says chapter 23, for the service of the house of God. In chapter 25 verse 1 the record says, 'Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun who should prophesy with harps and psalteries and with cymbals: and the number of the workmen according to their service was'; verse 7 says, 'So the number of them, with their brethren that were instructed in

the songs of the LORD'; so David numbered the singers, says 1 Chronicles 25 verse 1, he numbered the singers to set them in their courses in the house of God. In 1 Chronicles 27 and verse 1 the record says, 'Now the children of Israel after their number, to wit the chief fathers and captains of thousands and hundreds and their officers that serve the king'; so 1 Chronicles 27 verse 1 says that David numbered the captains and officers that the organization of the kingdom might be administered properly after his death.

In fact, if you come to chapter 27 and verses 23 and 24, the record says this, verse 23, 'But David took not the number of them from 20 years old and under because Yahweh had said he would increase Israel like to the stars of heaven', and I think that this very reference to David's census in the midst of all his numbering tells us why he was doing all this. Why did he number all Israel in chapter 21? and the answer is, for the same reason as chapter 22, 23, 24, 25, and 27, he was numbering the nation for the proper organization of the spiritual objectives of the house of God, and he wanted it done, if at all possible before he died. He wanted to know the tally of those that were capable for the service of the administration, and so you notice what the record says in chapter 27 verse 23, that he deliberately did not count those who were under the age of 20, because he felt it irreverent to count what God Himself had promised should be countless. No, he just numbered the ones that were able to be involved in the work of the house of God in one way or another. You see what verse 24 of 1 Chronicles 27 says, 'Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finished not because there fell wrath for it against (not David) no, against Israel', says the record. 'Neither was the number put in the account of the Chronicles of king David'.

So coming back to 1 Chronicles 21, I believe that David's motives on this occasion were pure and excellent, in the matter of the numbering of the nation for the service of the house of God. But whilst the king's objectives were pure, the nation's weren't, and verse 3 of 1 Chronicles 21 said, 'Joab answered, Yahweh make His people a 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?' You know, b&s, Joab's comments were not prompted, I believe, by any spiritual concern! There was treachery afoot in the nation at this very moment of time; why the revolt of Adonijah was soon to manifest itself and Joab was deeply involved in that very thing. Better that David not know the exact state of the nation at the moment; it might have been that Joab misunderstood David's intention, and he thought he merely wanted a tally of the fighting men. That's certainly what he brings back, as the record is going to tell us in verse 5, but it's not what David asked for in the parallel record. In the parallel record in 2 Samuel 24 verse 2, David expressly asked that they go and number **all Israel** and bring the tally of all the people back to him. On the other hand, if Joab did know David's true motive, then he probably also knew, that the heart of the nation was not with their king. Israel had no interest or desire to devote their resources to the building of a house for God. But Joab the ever pragmatic realist sought to dissuade David from his commitment to a cause, that he knew the nation did not share.

But David was resolute, says verse 4. 'Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against

Joab and therefore, Joab departed and went throughout all Israel and came to Jerusalem.' And you see, I think David had another reason: if you come to the book of Exodus and chapter 30, I think in addition to numbering those in the nation for the purposes of the house of God, David had another reason for asking for this numbering. Do you see what it says in Exodus chapter 30 and verse 11 for connection, 'The LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 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 Yahweh', and that ransom says verse 13, 'was a half shekel of the sanctuary. Verse 15 says, 'The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel', no, each person numbered must give half a shekel! For what purpose was the half shekel given or devoted? the answer is given in verse 16, 'thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation'. So every time Israel was numbered, they all had to pay a half shekel, and it was devoted to the matters of the tabernacle. I think **that David saw a practical benefit in swelling the funds for the building of an house for God**. That in numbering the nation, they would also give their half shekel for the sanctuary to be built. At least that was his intention! But as the story unfolded, David would find that the spirit of his people were not with him.

So coming back to 1 Chronicles 21, the record says in verse 5, 'Joab gave the sum of the number of the people unto David', then verse 6 says and strangely so, that for some reason when Joab took the census, Levi and Benjamin were not there, they were omitted from the tally. I think we know why Levi was omitted because they were left out on the basis of the precedence of Numbers 1, which said that Levi had no inheritance amongst the tribes, and so they weren't counted on an earlier census, Numbers 1 verses 47 to 50. Perhaps Joab omitted them for the same reason here, and certainly David is going to number them separately himself in chapter 23. But why did he omit Benjamin, do you think, b&s, did Joab in his census? I'd answer the question but unfortunately we don't have time to answer it today, but God willing, we shall perceive the reason by and by, as our studies unfold on the morrow. So do you know what the result of this census was? there was an imperfect tally taken by a commander who wished to frustrate its purpose, and counted among a people who did not enter into its spirit or share its objective. What David had not realized, b&s, was that the heart of his people, was not with him in this matter!

Verse 7 says, and read it carefully, 'And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He smote Israel (not the king) - Israel'. Where would be the justice, b&s, in God smiting 70,000 people for something that the king had sinned concerning? Oh no, the judgment in this chapter is going to fall fairly and squarely upon those with whom the fault lay; and the fault was not with the king, b&s, but with the people of the king who did not share his spirit of dedication to the truth.'

'David said unto God, verse 8, I have sinned greatly, because I have done this thing: but now, I beseech Thee, do away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly'. You see, I think before the judgment fell, that David already had a

premonition of woe, he felt a sense of guilt in the matter. Isn't that typical of David's spirit? it wasn't his fault, b&s, but he was prepared to take the blame nevertheless, on behalf of his people. It's the spirit of an old man who knew only too well, the weakness of sin in his own life, and who readily assumed responsibility for the offence. 'I'm the shepherd, he says, it's all my fault! I shouldn't have done this', he says, in his prayer to God. But it wasn't David's fault, was it really? the main fault didn't lie with the king. I'll tell you why we know that, because you see, it's what the record goes on to say!

Verse 9 says, 'that Gad the king's seer came to speak to him the words of God and said, verse 10, 'Thus saith Yahweh, I offer thee three things; choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith Yahweh, Choose thee! Either, 3 years famine, or 3 months to be destroyed before thy foes, while the swords of thine enemy overtake thee; or else, 3 days the sword of Yahweh even the pestilence in the land and the angel of Yahweh destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore, advise thyself what word I shall bring again to Him that sent me!' Did you notice that all the judgments offered, b&s, are **national judgments, not individual**, Either 3 years famine for the nation, or 3 months before their enemies for the nation, or a pestilence through all the coasts of Israel. It's not an individual judgment against an individual man; they're **national** judgments for a national sin, for Yahweh was displeased with Israel on this occasion. If there was a sin on David's part, and I think there was perhaps in a sense, b&s, the only sin that David had committed in this matter was this; verse 30 (right at the end of this story), 'David could not go to the tabernacle to enquire of God', ah you see, that's the one thing he hadn't done before this matter of the numbering, **he had not enquired of God** before proceeding, and of course, he's done this on an earlier occasion - remember when he wanted to bring the ark to Zion, he began before he enquired of God, says the record in 1 Chronicles 15 verse 13, and again now in his eagerness to further the divine purpose, he began before he asked God, and if that was a sin then David had committed that, but nought else had the king done!

Let me just finalize that for you by coming to 1 Kings 15 (hold your hand in Chronicles) and come back to 1 Kings 15, because here is the divine summary upon the life of David. 1 Kings 15 verses 4 and 5, the record says this, 'Nevertheless for David's sake did Yahweh his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem. Because David did that which was right in the eyes of Yahweh, and turned not aside from any thing that He commanded him, all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite'. There is nothing laid to the charge of David in the summary of his life, is there? b&s, concerning the numbering of Israel! Oh no, this wasn't David's sin on this occasion, it was the peoples'.

You see, what happens back in 1 Chronicles 21 and reading from verse 13, because this is what the record says, ' David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD; for very great are His mercies: but let me not fall into the hand of man'.

It's interesting, b&s, I sort of thought about these plagues and I think there's something interesting about what David decided. If the matter of a famine had come into the Land,

would David personally have been affected by a famine, do you think? he in the royal palace, with charge of the royal orchards and the royal herds? You do think David in the palace would have suffered for the famine that came upon the people? Or even if they had had 3 months before their enemies, why, David had already retired from the field of battle by this time, being too old because of the fading of his powers. We're told that in the book of Samuel, he had already left the army, he was fighting no longer, do you think the king in his palace would have been in danger from the sword of the enemies? But why did he chose the plague? Ah, the plague could reach out and touch anybody! couldn't it? even the king. The choice that David makes in falling into the hands of God, he says, 'I choose the plague if it be me, Almighty God, might the pestilence touch me also', and he casts his lot with his people, as their sin bearer, he shares with them in the calamity.

1 Chronicles 21 verse 14 says, 'So Yahweh sent pestilence upon Israel and there fell of Israel 70,000 men'. The parallel records says, 'from Dan to Beer-sheba, 70,000 men'. Do you know, 70 is the number of the Gentiles; you see, these weren't Israelites in faith, they were behaving like Gentiles. They hadn't shown the spirit of Israelitish faith, they hadn't responded to the matters of giving generously for the work of the sanctuary, and I believe, by the way, that the 70,000 that fell in verse 14, fell in sequence. I think the angel of God began where the tally had begun, and I think the angel of God travelled through the Land to every place where the census had come. City by city, town by town, village by village, tribe by tribe, the angel travelled on the same journey and the 70,000 that fell were selected by the angel, one by one, expressly, deliberately, individually. I think in the exquisite providence of God, the 70,000 that fell were, no doubt, everyone of them, those who had not paid the shekel, the half shekel of the sanctuary, and not entered into the spirit of the king on this occasion. Oh yes, I think the judgment fell in the right place on every man or woman that fell; and by the time the journey of that angel had travelled thus far, David knew that it would end in Jerusalem where the tally had finally come!

That's why verse 15 says, 'God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it; and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld and repented Him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. The angel of the LORD stood by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite', and verse 15 becomes like a summary of what's going to happen and then from verse 16 onwards we're going to have the expanded story of how all that occurred. It says this in verse 16, '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' (I think the king was in sackcloth before the angel came to the city, he knew it was on its way), He'd heard the reports of death in the Land, and by the time the angel came, the king was on his face in prayer.

This is what he said, verse 17, '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 thy hand I pray Thee, O Yahweh my God, be

on me and on my father's house, but not on thy people, that they should be plagued'. 'It's all my fault, says the king, I accept the blame; I'm the shepherd, these are but the sheep!' You know, when he says that, b&s, I think he's referring back to Exodus 30, (now just hold your hand in 1 Chronicles 21, and come back to Exodus 30) because you see what it says in the matter of the numbering of the nation, there's just one little phrase that I think connects with David's language here, 'I have sinned, but these sheep, what have they done?' Did you notice how that in Exodus 30, in the matter of the numbering of Israel, the record says this in verse 13, it says, 'This they shall give, every one that passeth among them', and again, verse 14, 'everyone that passeth among them', now do you see that word, **passeth among them**, it's a word that means, in fact, the Hebrew word is quite wide in its application, but one of the ways in which it's used is 'of the flock of sheep' (5674) being tallied under the rod of the shepherd that counts them. It's used that way in Ezekiel 20 verse 37, in Leviticus 27 verse 32, in Jeremiah 33 verse 13, the flock of sheep under the rod of the shepherd who counts them, (those that pass by, one by one) So when David says these sheep, what have they done, it's all my fault, and 1 Chronicles 21. Don't lose Exodus by the way, in effect he says, 'well, I counted them it's me to blame!'.

But it wasn't really David to blame, was it? And did you notice what Exodus said in chapter 30, b&s, in verse 12, just reading again a little more carefully. 'When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall **they** give every man a ransom for his soul', they all had an individual responsibility, the king shouldn't pay, it was the people's responsibility and look what happens if they didn't! 'They will 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'. In the exquisite providence of God, b&s, in 1 Chronicles 21, the divine judgment which fell upon the nation was, why! the plague promised. In Exodus 30 verse 12, because each man and each woman in Israel had not lived up to their **individual responsibility** to pay the half shekel as the LORD bid them to do. So the plague fell, and rightly so, but on the people **not the king!**

So when David says in 1 Chronicles 21 verse 17, 'It is I that has sinned 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'(tape turned)..... 'forgive them, for they know not what they do'. Oh yes, I think the spirit of David here is the spirit of Christ, you see, he becomes the sin bearer for his people; and just as David was to become the sin bearer, so he was to become the saviour and the deliverer of his people on this occasion, as the record is going to unfold! He's told to go to the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite as the record tells us. We're told in 1 Chronicles 21 and verse 22, 'David said to Ornan, 'Grant me the place of this threshing floor, that I may build an altar therein unto Yahweh'; again in verse 25, 'So David give to Ornan for the place 600 shekels of gold'. Mind you, that wasn't before Ornan said this in verse 23, 'Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes; I give thee not only the place but the oxen also for burnt offering and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meal offering; **I give it all**', says Ornan, and here, b&s, was a Gentile who gave

generously for the work of the truth, the very spirit that Israel had failed to show on this occasion. The nation would not respond to the request of the king, but here was a Gentile who put them all to shame in terms of the generous spirit that he would show for the work of the truth; and David said 'no, I will pay, and he gave him 600 shekels of gold by weight, says verse 25, for the place'.

Oh, did you notice that, by the way? **The place**, he paid for the place, and again in verse 22, 'grant me the place'; you know, I think that's an allusion and a very clear one to the book of Deuteronomy 12 (now we don't really have time to look at this, but let's just do it anyway) Deuteronomy 12 but just very briefly, we can't savour the fullness of the passage but did you notice this in Deuteronomy 12, for here's a revelation being given to David even in the midst of the calamity of the moment. It says in Deuteronomy 12 verse 5, that when they were to come into the Land it says, 'unto **the place** which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto His **habitation** shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come'; verse 13, 'Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest: But in **the place** which Yahweh shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings', and David is now being shown by revelation that the place of Deuteronomy 12 where the habitation of God shall be, is none other than Mount Moriah where the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite has been! and it's been revealed to David on the occasion of this national calamity where the place of God's house and altar shall be.

Coming back to Chronicles, the record says in verse 26, 'David built there an altar and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and called upon the LORD; and He answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt offering'. Then it says, 'God commanded the angel and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof'. You know, we're told in the Samuel record, in 2 Samuel 24 verse 25, that the pestilence fell from the morning till the time appointed, and I think that time appointed, as best as we can ascertain, was the time of the evening sacrifice; and it's my personal belief, b&s, that because of the prayers of the king, although the pestilence was to fall for 3 days, that it ceased at the end of the very first day, because of the intercession of the king on behalf of his people. It began in the morning but by nighttime it had stopped, and although there was weeping for that period of time, by the next morning it was clear to all Israel, that the plague had been stayed, and the nation had been saved. Yahweh in His mercy had shortened the judgment and asked the angel to cease, 'it is enough'. The prayers of the king had saved his people.

Do you know, that in the course of these studies, b&s, one of the things that we're going to try and do is to try and enter into the very spirit and mind of David himself, and how we're going to do that is, we're going to try and find the psalms that David composed at this time, and in each of our studies we're going to discover a psalm, that I believe, David wrote at this precise moment of time, as a revelation of his mind. I think that David wrote a psalm just at the moment of 1 Chronicles 21, would you like to see that then? Well, of course, we would, so hold your hand in 1 Chronicles 21 and come to Psalm 30, because I think this is the moment when David composed this particular

psalm to the Father.

Now do you see what it says in Psalm 30 at the heading of the psalm. Psalm 30 says, 'a psalm and song at the dedication of the house of David'. The NASB alters the heading slightly and I think correctly when it says this, 'a psalm, a song at the dedication of the house' (full stop), Then it says, 'of David', meaning that the psalm is of David, but not the house. It's not the house of David that's being dedicated on this occasion, it's the dedication of God's house and it's David's psalm concerning the dedication of that house. You know the word 'dedication' in the heading of Psalm 30 is the Hebrew word 'chanukkah' (2598) and it means literally 'to consecrate by the offering of dedicatory sacrifices'. We're told for example in Numbers 7 verses 87 to 88, that the altar of Moses was dedicated (chanukkah) by the offering of sacrifices; we're told in 2 Chronicles 7 verses 4 and 5, that the house of Solomon was dedicated (chanukkah) by the offering of sacrifices; we're told in Nehemiah 12 verse 27 and 43, that the wall of Nehemiah was dedicated (chanukkah) by sacrifices; and now we have a psalm at the 'chanukkah' of the house of God. But those sacrifices, aren't they what David offers in 1 Chronicles 21 (read again) verse 26, 'And David built there an altar unto the LORD and offered **burnt offerings and peace offerings** and called upon God'; verse 28, 'At that time, when David saw that Yahweh had answered him in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there', and those sacrifices were the offerings of dedication. What was he dedicating? b&s, just the altar, you think? Oh, more than the altar, this was the place of God's habitation of Deuteronomy 12, and do you see what 1 Chronicles 22 verse 1 says, 'Then David said, **this is the house of the LORD God, and this is the offering of burnt offering for Israel**'. Although that house was never built in David's lifetime, David had been revealed where the house should be, and had dedicated that house with the sacrifices of 1 Chronicles 21. Oh yes, I think this psalm was written at the moment of the dedication of 1 Chronicles 21, when the place on Mount Moriah was sanctified by David's offerings.

Well, here's a breakup for the psalm, don't lose Chronicles but do keep Psalm 30. The breakup for the psalm is as follows:

verses 1 to 3 - thanksgiving for deliverance. Now why do you think, b&s, in a psalm commemorating the dedication of God's house, would David need to offer thanks for deliverance, unless the nation had at that very time, experienced a calamity for which deliverance was necessary. Yet that's the theme of the psalm.

verses 4 and 5 - joy in forgiveness. This was the very experience of the nation! after the prayers of the king.

verses 6 to 10 - supplication for help.

verses 11 and 12 - gladness in praise.

Do you know what this psalm is all about, b&s? It's the bitter sweet mixture of two

things. David's awe and amazement at the revelation of the place of God's house, and the grief and anguish that accompanied that revelation, since it followed on the calamity of the death of so many people in the nation. All those bitter sweet emotions woven together in Psalm 30 at the dedication of the house of God.

Now, let me just show you the psalm in the chapter. So you see how 1 Chronicles 21 says in verse 16 at the end of the verse, 'Then David and the elders of Israel, who were clothed in sackcloth, fell upon their faces', and so they were until the plague was stayed. But then that would be Psalm 30 verse 11, wouldn't it? 'Thou hast turned for me, my mourning into dancing, Thou hast put off my sackcloth and girded me with gladness'. Then when David offered the offerings of 1 Chronicles 21 verse 26 and we're told that God answered him, spoke to the angel and cut short the calamity, well, isn't that the words of Psalm 30 verse 5, 'For His anger endureth but a moment; in His favour is life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning'. And on the next morning, on the second morning when the plague ought to have still been there, the nation awoke to find the plague was ended and over and joy had come despite the weeping of the day before and of the night that followed. Oh yes, I think this is the very psalm of the deliverance of the nation after this dreadful calamity.

Do you see what verse 4 says of Psalm 30, 'Sing unto Yahweh, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness', the margin says, 'give thanks at the **memorial** of His holiness. Do you know that Exodus 30 verse 16 says, that that half shekel that was paid was to be offered as a memorial before God. You know, the nation would never forget again, the memorial of God's holy requirements after the calamity of this occasion had come upon them.

So when Psalm 30 verse 8 says, 'I cried to Thee, O Yahweh; and unto Yahweh I made supplication', David's cry was not just for himself, b&s, but for the nation who were in such desperate trouble at that time! Yes, he prayed on behalf of all of them, this is the bitter sweet story of Psalm 30, when so many in the nation lost their lives, and yet at the very same time, to David was given the revelation of the place of God's house where forgiveness would finally be found for all people.

Psalm 30 verse 2 says, 'O Yahweh my God, I cried unto Thee, and Thou hast healed me. O Yahweh, Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit', and of course, we know, do we not? b&s, in the plague of 1 Chronicles 21, that the king was spared, was he not? 70,000 perished of Israel, but not the king, it didn't touch the king! and yet the words of Psalm 30 verse 2 and 3 imply in some way that the king himself experienced, well, it says, 'Thou hast healed me', 'Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; Thou hast kept me alive', there's something very personal about the words of David on the occasion of this psalm. I think that's true! I think what actually happened, b&s, was that although the king's life was spared, I think that David himself was afflicted in this calamity so profoundly that he was brought to the very dust of death himself. So how did that happen then? Well that, God willing, is our study for tomorrow!