

## When

- The Book of 1 Chronicles was written several hundred years after King David's reign.

- David became king of Judah in approximately 1055 B.C, the year Saul died. David's reign spanned approximately 40 years (1055-1015 B.C.). He reigned over Judah for 7 years and 6 months, before becoming king over all Israel. His reign over all Judah and Israel lasted 33 years.

## Key Characters

- **David** – The second king over all Israel and Judah.
- **Joab** – Commander of the army of Israel.
- **Gad** – A prophet of God and David's seer. He had a previous interaction with David in 1 Samuel 22:5, when he told him to move from Moab to Judah.
- **Ornan (Araunah)** – A Jebusite who owned a threshing floor near Jerusalem.



## Where

- The phrase "Beersheba to Dan" is used in this chapter (21:2). These two cities were commonly referenced when referring to the entire nation of Israel, as they sat near the northern (Dan) and southern (Beersheba) boundaries of the kingdom.
- Ornan's threshing floor was located at the spot where the Jerusalem Temple would later be built (1 Chron 21:18; 2 Chron 3:1).

## Outline

**\*This chapter has a parallel in 2 Samuel 24.**

**- DAVID'S SINFUL CENSUS (21:1-6):**

- + Satan enticed David to take a census of Israel.
- + David told Joab to go through the nation of Israel and number of the people.
- + Joab knew David's request was not pleasing to the Lord, and he encouraged David to abandon the census and trust that God would increase his kingdom.
- + David didn't listen to Joab, and he sent him through Israel for 9 months and 20 days counting the people (2 Sam 24:8).
- + Joab returned and reported that there were 1,100,000 fighting men and 470,000 in Judah. But Joab didn't include the Levites or the people of Benjamin because "the king's command was abhorrent" to him.

**- DAVID CHOOSES BETWEEN 3 FORMS OF PUNISHMENT (21:7-17):**

- + David's conscience guilted him after completing the census ("his heart struck him", 2 Sam 24:10), and he prayed that the Lord would forgive him.
- + God was angry with David, and He sent the prophet Gad to tell David a punishment would be forthcoming.
- + David was allowed to choose the punishment from three options: (1) 3 years of famine, (2) 3 months of devastation from enemies, or (3) 3 days of disease in the land.
- + David chose the 3 days of disease.
- + God sent an angel to spread the disease, which killed 70,000 people.
- + When the angel was about to strike Jerusalem, God relented and spared the city.
- + The angel withdrew and went to the threshing floor of Ornan.

**- DAVID BUILDS AN ALTAR AT ORNAN'S THRESHING FLOOR (21:18-25):**

- + Gad told David to build an altar at Ornan's threshing floor.
- + David went to meet with Ornan, who offered to give him the threshing floor for free, but David insisted on paying.
- + David paid Ornan 600 shekels of gold.
- + He built an altar and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings to the Lord. The Lord responded to his sacrifices with fire from heaven, and the desolation of the plague was stayed.

## Application

- Why was God upset with David's census?
- David's move to take a census suggests his heart trusted more in the number of his fighting men than on the power God.
- One lesson we'll repeatedly learn as we work through the text of the Bible is that numbers mean nothing when God's power is a factor in a situation.
- Numbers don't ensure success. We've already learned this from the stories of Gideon, Samson, and David's mighty men.
- When we put our trust in numbers, we've lost sight of the power of the Kingdom of God.
- God wants our faithfulness and trust in Him. Ultimately, the numbers are irrelevant.