



What does it look like when God judges people? Pastor leads his family in today's "Hopewell @Home" passage. 2Samuel 24:1–10 prepares us for the evening sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these ten verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that we all deserve God's wrath—including to be given over to our sin, to be stubborn against correction, and to ignore your conscience. But God, Who was establishing the location of the temple and sacrifice that would look forward to the atonement of Christ.

Friday, November 5, 2021 • Read 2Samuel 24:1–10

Questions from the Scripture text: What was aroused (v1)? Against whom? Whom did Yahweh move against Israel? What did He move him to do? Whom did David task with this (v2)? From where to where? With what blessing does Joab initially reply (v3)? And with what question does he follow? What does this imply about Joab's position on numbering the people? Whose word wins (v4)? Against whose? So who go out from where to do what? Over what do Joab and the captains cross (v5)? Where do they camp? To what places do they come in v6? And where in v7? How long does it take them to complete the task (v8)? What does Joab do when they return(v9)? How many of what kind of man were there in Israel? How many in Judah? Who condemned David (v10)? When? To Whom does he speak about this? What does he say he has done? What does he ask Yahweh to do?

Because we have "short" sermons on the Lord's Day afternoons, we really can't tackle the entire chapter at once, like we would want to do for a sermon. This chapter sits squarely at the end of 2Samuel because the site of this altar would become the site of the temple (cf. 1Chr 21:28–22:5). David's story is not so much about what he did for Israel during his life as it is about his preparation for the temple, and for Him to Whom both David and the temple pointed forward. David's story is about the God Who displays Himself by bearing wrath in the place of sinners. So the main part that our ten verses play in this is showing how very much we are in danger of the wrath, which God Himself has borne in Christ.

Yahweh is angry with sinners, v1a. Scholars spend a lot of time trying to figure out why the Lord was angry in this particular instance. But it's precisely because the Lord doesn't give us that information, that when "scholars" try to do so, they have to spend so much ink on it. If we're familiar with Old Testament Israel, we don't really need specifics. They were constantly sinning in abominable ways. And so are we, if have only the eyes and the honesty to see and admit it to ourselves. Perhaps the real question isn't "why was Yahweh's anger aroused in this instance," but rather, "why wasn't Yahweh's anger *always* thus aroused against Israel?" The answer, generally speaking, is grace and mercy. The answer, specifically speaking, is that it was through this nation that He intended to bring that grace and mercy in the Person of Jesus Christ.

Our sinfulness is itself a judgment against us, v1b. It seems that many are troubled by the providence of Yahweh's anger inciting David against Israel. How can the Lord punish for that which His providence provoked? Satan's involvement in 1Chr 21:1 doesn't really provide much relief; that comes, after all, in the intentional providence of God in v1 of our own chapter. The reality is that, like Pharaoh, David didn't need help mistrusting God's faithfulness to multiply Israel beyond number (cf. v3, 1Chr 27:23). Apart from grace, David's heart is full of that mistrust. It was only God's grace that ever gave David a moment of believing the promise and not feeling the need to number the people. And the same is true of us and our sinfulness. We perpetually have within ourselves the "raw material" for God to use as a judgment upon us. And when He leaves us to ourselves, it is in fact a provocation and hardening and judgment... and one that we justly deserve.

Inability to receive correction is indicative of judgment, v2–4. One of the ways that it comes out that this sticks out as a judgment against David and against Israel is that he does not receive correction. Joab tried to talk to David out of it. Evidently (v4) the captains of the army tried too. "The king's word prevailed" because God's judgment was prevailing. Perhaps you have been in situations where you were glad that your word prevailed. Perhaps you will be in future situations where you would like your word to prevail. Keep in mind that getting your way isn't necessarily a good thing. In this case, it was a positively bad thing. Ask God to give you a soft heart, so that others' correction can be a means of sparing you from following your own sin.

A heart that doesn't condemn you is indicative of judgment, v5–10. There's a significant amount of effort and a significant amount of traveling in vv5–7. One might wonder why give us the route and order in these three verses. v8 makes it plain: to slow down the text so that we can feel the full "nine months and twenty days" of the numbering task. Not "approximately ten months" but exactly "nine months and twenty days." Some 295 days during which David's heart might have slain him, as it once had done in just a few seconds (cf. 1Sam 24:4–7). Only, the self-smiting function of his heart was out of order for nine months and twenty days.

Coming right off of the mention of Uriah at the end of last chapter, this reminds us a bit of how David's sin against him had just kept snowballing until Nathan the prophet finally visited with the story about the old man and the ewe lamb. O how desperately we need hearts that are kept tender and ready to condemn us! Ask God for a tender, swift conscience; listen to it, and keep it in good condition by quickness to repent! But we have often ignored the complaints of conscience and even fallen altogether out of the habit of listening to it. And we have often shown ourselves difficult to correct. And we have often given in rather easily to temptations that our remaining sinfulness was just waiting for an opportunity to take. All of this shows us how rightly God's wrath might fall upon us apart from Christ. All of this shows how grateful we ought to be that He has provided a sacrifice!

What are you doing in order to maintain a tender conscience? How do you respond to correction? What are some indicators that you realize how badly you need Christ and His sacrifice?

Sample prayer: O Lord, truly You are constantly patient with us. How rightly Your anger might be aroused against us at any time, but we enjoy mercy upon mercy from the goodness of Your hand! Because You have loved us and given Christ for us, grant unto us to be quick to see our need for forgiveness; and, make us quick to see, in Christ, Your provision for that forgiveness. Do not let us become means of our own judgment, or judgment upon our family, church, or nation. For, we ask it through Christ, Who is our Righteousness, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP51AB "God, Be Merciful to Me" or TPH51C "God, Be Merciful to Me"

For more Hopwell @Home devotionals, please visit bit.ly/harpcHAH

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Second Samuel 24 versus 1 through 10. These are God's words Again. The anger of Yahweh was aroused against Israel and he moved David against them to say, go number Israel. In Judah. So the king said to Joab, the commander of the army who was with him. Now go throughout all the tribes of Israel from Dan de Beersheba and count.

The people that I may know the number of the people Job said to the king. Now may Yahwe your God add to the people a hundred times more than there are, and may the eyes of my Lord, the king, see it, But why does my Lord? The king desire?

This thing, Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against Job, and against the captains of the army, Therefore, Joab. And the captains of the Army, went out from the presence of the king to count, the people of Israel and they crossed over the Jordan and Kempton area. Right side of the town which is in the midst of the ravine of God, and toward Jaser, Then they came to Gilead.

And to the land of Takim Hachi They came to Dania and around Poseidon, They came to the stronghold of Tire and to all the cities of the Hibites and the Canaanites Then they went out to South Judah. That's far as bear sheba. So when they had gone throughout all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and 20 days.

Then Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to the king and there were in Israel. A hundred thousand valiant men who drew the sword and the men of Judah were \$500,000. Men And David's heart. Condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to all, I have sinned greatly in what I have done.

Now I pray. Oh, we always take away the iniquity of your servant for I have done. Very foolishly So far. The reading of God's inspired and inherent weren't The next few weeks. Lord willing will be in second Samuel 24. Ideally we would take the whole chapter together. It's here at the end of first and second Samuel.

Because this is how the site for the temple that Solomon would build came to be selected and the David, the king looking forward to the Lord Jesus Christ pointing forward to the Lord. Jesus Christ is paired up here with the temple as the place of God's worship and the place of sacrifice.

Also pointing forward to the Lord Jesus Christ, especially in this case, its priesthood and David actually ends up appointing other divisions of the priests for things like being doorkeepers and musicians and choir singers and so forth. So there's much that looks forward to the priesthood of our Lord, Jesus.

The one through whom, we can come to God the one through whom were worshiping. God even now and who sacrifice puts away our sins, and the blood of that sacrifice consecrates. Our worship makes our way into heaven and his flesh and to purifies us by his blood. And so that's what second Samuel 24 is all about.

But the second Samuel, every week were, that's the evening sermon. And those little sermons are too short to try to do this entire chapter. So we're going to have several sermons in this, in this chapter. And this coming week, we're going to have the first 10 verses. And the first thing that we're going to see, is that we need the sacrifice of the Lord, Jesus, we need a mediator.

The Lord is always angry with sinners and God is angry every day. Says Psalm 7, and that's because we sin every day. The way we see that here is in the very first verse again, the anger of Yahweh was aroused against Israel and he moved David against them to say, go number is real in Judah.

Well, scholars commentators, breachers, spend a lot of time trying to figure out what was the incident that caused the anger of the Lord to rise against Israel. And you know why it's so difficult to figure out is because Israel is so continuously. Wicked. And so the, the interesting thing or the amazing thing there are others who say, who complain against this providence, the Lord that he should give David over to to sin.

That he should give over the people's king to ascend in which they are held federally responsible with the king, is their representative as their head which of course happens to us. First and foremost in Adam, The first Adam But I don't think it's so unique or interesting or amazing that the Lord judged or condemned Israel at this point or Israel and Judah.

At this point, I think it's amazing that there was ever a time that the Lord wasn't didn't put as heavy hand of judgment and condemnation upon his people. What we see here or by this righteous and just act of God's judging and punishing and disciplining his people as how marvelously continuously patient.

He is all the time and we too would do well, not to marvel. As we come every family worship time and we confess that we have deserved for the Lord to lay his hand heavily upon us since the last family worship. And we marvel at the patients with which he has born with us, the love in which he is born with us, the forgiveness, He is extended to us the grace of God in our lives.

So, the first thing that we see here is that Yahweh is angry with sinners and therefore by contrast or corollary that the Lord is marvelously patient. Even as much as he is righteously and greatly angry, and full of wrath against and said, The second thing we see is that when the Lord judges a person Part of that judgment can be to give him over to, His sin Again, the anger of you always rising against Israel and he moved David against them to say, go number, Israel, and Judah.

Now we know by the parallel passage then in chronicles, that Satan was the one who tempted David. Satan didn't need any incentive to do it. Oh he needed was permission. We see that dynamic in the book of Job, that Satan hates those who belong to the Lord and whom the Lord is working by his grace, and he will go every bit as far as the Lord will ever give him permission in attacking them.

This is one of the reasons why it's such a frightful thing to come under church discipline and to be excommunicated. Even because in that case the New Testament calls that being handed over to Satan for the destruction of the soul or for the destruction of the flesh that the soul may not be destroyed in the last day At the judgment.

Well even though it was even though Satan didn't need any help per se to tempt, David David didn't need any help either because we by nature, by our sinful nature from Adam, our wicked and we don't trust God. That's probably the reason that this was sinful David, A not trusting that the Lord had given him and would continue unto him rest on every side.

But B putting his hope in the numbers of Israel rather than in the power of God. You remember when the Lord used Gideon to deliver the to deliver the Israelites, and there were too many too many too many, and he cut them all cut them all the way back to 300.

And so there's there's the issue of not believing or not trusting A that God would give them rest on every side and be that God could save by many or by few. But perhaps there's also the fact that C he's not trusting God's promise that he would multiply his people to be innumerable according to the sand on the seashore.

Yes. When the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, he numbered them. And there were a little more than 600,000 and then marvelously after he judged the entire generation and the wilderness and their children had risen up and their place. The Lord had had them number the people then and it was almost exactly the same a little more than 600,000.

And so he showed Israel's beginnings and showed his mercy to Israel, even to the wicked generation in the wilderness. But the promise was that they would be multiplied beyond number and so the idea of numbering them may be not just failing to trust that God would give him rest failing to trust.

That God could use however many they had, but perhaps the the great part of this sin was directly against that promise that God would multiply them like the sand on the shore like the stars in the sky and that could be behind what Joab says in verse 3. Now may all lay your God, add to the people a hundred times more than there are and may the eyes of my Lord, the king, see it.

And it might also be behind The connection between verse 9 and verse 10, where there's 800,000 in the north and there's 500,000 in the south and that's roughly taken together. Roughly double what it was when they had entered the land and perhaps the math, there was a means by which the Lord pricked David's conscience to realize what he had done Here.

He had not trusted the promise about the multiplication and God had literally multiplied, Israel, multiplied them by two and and hearing that math. Verse 10, David's, heart. Condemned him after he had numbered the people. But all of that sin was already in David's heart and the difference when God brings this judgment into Israel's life and to David's life, was, he allowed David sin to come out and to express itself?

One of the things that we need to constantly be asking God is that he would graciously mercifully restrain our sin. And when we do commit sin and we confess that the sin that we have committed as come out of our corrupted hearts, we need to confess that God was just and right to permit that to happen and to thank him for his mercy toward us in it because although he is good and right to permit it to happen, he's not doing it.

According to what we deserve is he because he's punished Jesus. According to what we deserve and now when he lets our sin come out, it's not like what he did to Pharaoh. When he hardened Pharaoh in his sin, withdrew, the restraining hand of his grace and a loud Pharaoh more and more completely to express the wickedness of his own heart.

He wasn't sanctifying Pharaoh, but for a believer in Jesus Christ. When God does this, he is giving us opportunity to see that in which remains that we may turn from it. Freshly that we may rejoice in his forgiveness freshly and that rather than walking according to the flesh, we can buy the spirit put to death, the deeds of the body, as those whom the Lord is bringing into everlasting life.

The way he talks about in Romans 8. So, first thing we see, is that the Lord is always angry with sinners. Second thing we see, is that one of the ways that God judges is by giving people over to their sinfulness, third thing. We see is that inability to receive correction is indicative of judgment.

One of the things here as Israel was under judgment and David was being given over as part of that judgment is Joab and all the captains of the army and we find that out. We hear Joab oppose, the king and his sin in verse 3, but notice also verse 4.

Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against Joab and against the captains of the army. It seems that the only person who wasn't recognizing that this was wicked, was David. And everybody was telling him. Everyone was saying it. One of the things that we need to seek from God, and that is a grace from God, and when he gives it to you, you can thank him that he is giving you according to Jesus, instead of according to yourself, is the ability to receive correction, the ability to receive instruction.

Now, you my children have built-in correctors and instructors in your life. Mom and dad and this is good training for your heart. You know your mom and dad love you. You know that we are instructed by the Lord. We're very imperfect and yet the Lord has started you off as it were gently in life.

That you may have a high level of confidence of our good intentions towards you and that that may help you perceive correction and instruction. I know that receiving correction as one of the hardest things in life and making good use of it and seeing us as your allies, as gifts from God, to help you hate sin and love him.

And love righteousness. That these are hard things, but this is something that we need to be able to do not just with our mom and dad, but with our elders in the church and even David has been a good example of this. Sometimes, You remember Shamay leveling curses and Abishai saying, you know, mouths don't level curses anymore.

If you detach read from the shoulders And David being willing to receive it's not that Shamay was right to do it but he was willing to receive as from the Lord, the correction that came on Shamay's lips and you may receive criticism in your life, Lord knows. If you end up being a pastor or a pastor's life, you may get more than your share a humanly speaking of criticism in your life and yet you may still make good use of it.

If you are willing to hear and give a good hearing, see if there's any truth and it not take it to heart as an attack of your enemy. But take it as God giving you a merciful opportunity to reflect upon whether what you're doing is according to his word, doesn't mean that every criticism is right?

But it doesn't mean that every criticism is an opportunity And that humility to receive opposition or criticism. Well, is a gift from God and when he, when he was going to judge Israel, and he was going to judge David, he took David who had displayed that humility and other situations and he withdrew a little bit that hand of restraining grace that hand of supplying grace that would in other situations have enabled him to receive correction.

So inability, to receive correction is indicative of judgment. We should be frightened of ourselves and of the Lord's providence in our lives. If we are in a season in which we are not receiving, correction are not receiving it well. And then the last place a heart that doesn't condemn, you is indicative of judgment.

I think we saw this earlier with the Bathsheba incident, when we noted, that David used to have a very tender conscience before the Lord you remember, he cut off the corner of Saul's robe and when an immediately, his heart smothered, slew him killed him, struck him, and that wonderful gift from God, that is a tender conscience.

But then how with the Bathsheba incident, not only did he, you know, was he lazy? And he got up and he looked, and then he gazed. And then he invited, and when he asked who it was, they even kind of said, there's another man's wife, you know, it's not the wife of Uriah and so forth and even to the point of committing murder.

And then for a long time, not repenting of it until Nathan comes, and so forth, and how his heart had not smote him had not condemned him. We have, I think something similar in here. I think that's the point in verse 8. And actually the point from verse 5 through verse 8, when it gives us the logistics who follow the map, you know, Joab and the men, they go from this city to this city and you can almost like write in the margin and still David's heart.

Did not condemn him and they went from this city to this city and still his heart did not, and they went and still his heart, did not condemn him. And then in verse, it gives us the length of time. When they had gone through all the land, they came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and 20 days and still his heart had not condemned him.

And then verse 9, they give him the number, and then verse 10 and David's heart, condemned him after he had numbered the people and you see how the Lord was starting. Now, to turn to Mercy in allowing the conscience of David to wake up and condemn him a conscience that functions.

Well, not one that is always condemning us for nothing. That is can be an attack of the enemy and does not a very well-trained or well-informed conscience, but a conscience that functions, well, that doesn't let you get away with sin as soon as you do. It it breaks, you it stabs.

That's a gift from God. And having that didn't or quieted, that is a judgment from God. That's one of the dangers in sinning. Every time you ignore your conscience every time, whether it's when you're considering us in and you ignore your conscience and you go ahead and go through with it or when you have committed a sin and your conscience, breaks you and you don't repent and confess and receive that forgiveness and resolve against that sin.

Every time you do that, the conscience becomes a little more quiet, a little more dull and that is very dangerous and can be a discipline and judgment from God as David's heart, not condemning him was a discipline and judgment from God here. And so we see what our sin deserves who deserve not to have a tender conscience.

We deserve not to have humility to receive correction. We deserve not to have God, restrain our sin, but we see also that God has provided Christ that the end result of this was the place of the temple which would look forward to Christ The place of the sacrifice which would look forward to the cross.

And because Jesus has died for us, we can ask God for the sake of Jesus, to restrain our sin. Hold it back. We can ask God for the sake of Jesus to make us correctable by others. We can ask God for the sake of Jesus, to give us tender hearts, tender consciences that can quickly and easily condemn us.

And that all of these things will send us flying to the Lord. Again for forgiveness full and free full and free in the Lord Jesus Christ. So let us ask him to show us. Mercy, since Christ has taken justly our sin and our guilt from us. Let's pray. Father, we thank you again, here, we are another day.

Another family worship another passage for so much with so much good truth and instruction for us, presenting Christ to us present in your mercy to us. We see what our sin deserves We recognize in ourselves so much, that would be a judgment upon us for our sin itself. Is its own judgment and the other God you have loved us and given Christ for us while we were still sinners, he died for us and when we were dead in our sins, you made us alive together with him by the work of your spirit.

We pray. Lord that your spirit would be giving spiritual life to each of us. And that we would have tender hearts and healthy consciences before you so that we might walk continuously in the joy of those who are continuously being forgiven and helped by the Lord. Jesus stir up our resolve against our sin since you have loved us so much and you are worthy of our loving you because you first loved us.

So, help us to love you. And serve you and keep your commandments. Glorify yourself and your grace by answering this prayer in each of our lives. For we ask you through, Jesus. Amen.