

(2 Samuel) in God's Hands

by David Guzik

David Guzik's sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, personal choice, and the spirit of sacrifice as demonstrated in David's response to sin and God's mercy.

Duration: 38:59

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9:6

Topics: "Godly Decision Making", "Surrender To God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the choices we make in our lives as Christians. He highlights the power and authority that God assigns to our choices. The sermon focuses on the story of David in 2 Samuel chapter 24, where David is given three choices as a consequence of taking a census. The choices are seven years of famine, three months of attack from an outside enemy, or three days of plague from the hand of the Lord. The preacher encourages the audience to consider the significance of their choices and to surrender their lives to Jesus Christ.

Transcript

Second Samuel chapter 24. We're going to begin at verse 10, but let me sort of give you a preview of where we were last time, or I guess a review, not a preview, of where we were last time in Second Samuel, just so you know the context of what we're coming into. This is a slice of life, not from the very end of David's ministry, but towards the end.

The last few chapters of Second Samuel are not strictly chronological. They sort of give us different vignettes of things that happened in the latter part of David's reign. And this story at the end of Second Samuel chapter 24 is here chronologically or in the arrangement of the book for a couple important reasons.

First of all, it sort of gives us a transition into the book of First Kings, because one of the great themes of the early chapters of the book of First Kings is the building of the temple. And before you can build a building, you have to have the land for it. And this shows us how the land was obtained for the building of the temple.

But secondly, it's very appropriate to put this at the end of Second Samuel, because this event that we're going to take a look at in Second Samuel 24 shows us so much about the character of David. It's just one of those occasions that that gives different prominence to certain aspects of his character and nature that

that remind us of what kind of man we're dealing with. Now, to review what happened in the first nine verses of this chapter, David was moved in his heart to take a census.

Now, that may seem like no big deal to you. The Constitution of the United States requires that there be a census made every 10 years. But in Israel, taking a census was a different thing, because to count the people was to say something not just about statistics and population.

It was to say something about your attitude towards the nation very much in the ancient world and particularly in Israel. They have the idea in your mind, in their minds that you only count what belongs to you. Now, we have this attitude in some things in life today.

You only count your money. It's not appropriate for you to count your neighbor's money. Do you ever get mail delivered to you that really supposed to go in your neighbor's mailbox and you have to go over to their house and give it to them? Well, what would you think if your neighbor came to you and they come and they bring you a piece of mail that accidentally ended up in their mailbox and it was a financial statement from some, I don't know, a mutual fund or some portfolio that you have in your house, some investment.

And when they come and bring you the statement, you notice that it's been open. You think, well, you know, I've done that before. I've opened up a piece of mail that was really for my neighbor.

But then when you take it out, you notice that there's like, I don't know, chicken grease, fingerprint stains over it. It's very evident that they took it out and they were reading it. You'd probably be a little bit offended, wouldn't you? You're like, hey, this is my money.

This is my account. What are you doing looking over my statement? I don't want you to count my money. Count your own money.

Well, in Israel, even when it came down to counting the population of the nation, this thought was there. And so when David said, let's count the people, it was a way of him saying that the idea was in his heart. This nation belongs to me.

When, in fact, it did not belong to David, did it? It didn't belong to the king. It didn't belong to the people themselves. Israel belonged to the Lord.

And so a census should have only been made at the express command of God. And David had no express command. And his his friends tried to talk him out of it.

Joab, the captain of his army, and other leaders of the military came and said, David, are you sure you want to do this? And David said, yes, I do. And so they went out and they made the count over all Israel. And they came back with the statistics.

But look at what David's reaction was now in verse 10. And David's heart condemned him after he had numbered the people. So David said to the Lord, I have sinned greatly in what I have done.

But now I pray, O Lord, take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have done very foolishly. Here we see one of the characteristics right off the bat in verse 10, one of the characteristics of something that made David a great man of God, and it was his humility. You see how quick David is to confess his sin.

Might I say that that's a real hallmark of humility. There is a such thing as a false humility, a pseudo humbleness that can be in us or among us. You know, it's kind of that aw shucks kind of thing that that

really has a self-interest and a desire to be perceived as humble, but it's not genuinely marked by humility within.

But one thing that I look for in myself and in others to see whether or not they're genuinely humble is how quick they are to see that they're wrong. And when they do see that they're wrong, do they make excuses for it? Is there a lot of yeah, but in their justification for it, or do they have the kind of attitude that David had? Look at it again with me at verse 10. I have sinned greatly in what I have done, but now I pray, oh, Lord, take away the iniquity of your servant.

But I've done very foolishly. There's no yeah, but in there, right? No trying to explain it, no trying to say somebody else was responsible for it. It's just I'm a fool.

I've sinned. I'm wrong, Lord. Let me tell you, that kind of humility puts you on God's side.

The Bible says that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. I don't want God to resist me. I want his grace.

And this humility we find characteristic of David's life throughout his entire walk with the Lord as he walked this earth. Humility, very big. And so David is confessing his sin before the Lord.

He's humble, he's repentant. And now in verse 11, now, when David arose in the morning, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Gad, David, seer saying, go and tell David. Thus says the Lord, I offer you three things.

Choose one of them for yourself that I may do it to you. So Gad came to David and told him and he said to him, shall seven years of famine come to you in your land or shall you flee three months before your enemies while they pursue you? Or shall there be three days plague in your land? Now, consider and see what answer I should take back to him who sent me. This is remarkable, isn't it? I can't think of many other occasions like this in the scripture where a godly man did something wrong and God's going to bring chastisement upon him.

That doesn't surprise us. But when the chastisement comes, God sends a prophet and the prophet says, well, I couldn't help but think about let's make a deal. When I saw this, you know, of three curtains and behind curtain number one, seven years of famine behind curtain number two, three months of attack from an outside enemy.

And you have to flee before your enemies. I mean, curtain number three, three days of plague from the hand of the Lord. Now, David, which curtain do you want? Well, it's not like let's make a deal because there was only one bad choice on that program.

But this one has three bad choices behind three different curtains. And I can't think of another place in the scriptures where God basically says, here's a menu, pick your punishment. It's a remarkable thing.

Now, why would God do this for David? I think God is trying to emphasize something to David and something to us. It's the whole aspect of the importance of our personal choice. Our choices mean something before God.

Sometimes I find Christians, perhaps myself, is what I'm speaking of, but I'm sure it's true for some of you as well. We almost get into this fatalistic attitude before God. It's sort of this case.

Sarah, Sarah, whatever will be will be attitude, you know. Well, you know, I'll either put my hand to serve the Lord or I won't. But God will do his work and doesn't really matter one way or the other.

The Lord will do his thing. Now, it's true in the big picture. And the big picture, God's kingdom is moving forward and the big picture, the gates of hell will not prevail against God's church and the big picture, Jesus' promise will be fulfilled where he said, I will build my church.

There's no doubt about that. But there's also a smaller picture to see, and it's a smaller picture of your life and of mine. And then that smaller picture, your choices matter a great deal, don't they? God assigns great power, great authority to your choice.

And I trust that you've made the greatest choice of all, and that's to surrender your life to Jesus Christ, to allow him to convert you and to transform you into you've been born again, as I guess what I'm saying. But after that, your Christian walk with the Lord is a series of choices beyond that. Will you choose to be obedient? Will you choose to serve him? Will you choose to die to self? And your choices make a great deal of difference.

I think God is impressing that upon David. Here's three choices. You're going to make a choice of one of these three.

I offer you three things. The first choice was of seven years of famine. Think about it, seven years.

Now, that would be a long time. This was the longest period of time involved in the three choices. And for seven years, Israel would have famine and would have to rely on neighboring nations around them for food.

Now, people would surely die in this famine, wouldn't they? But who would it be? Would it be the rich? Would it be the privilege? No. The wealthy and the resourceful, they always have a way to get around such times of tragedy. They would suffer, but they wouldn't die.

And then the second choice was three months of fleeing before your enemies. This would mean that an invading nation would come in and attack Israel and not overwhelm them, but. But harass them and bother them for a period of three months, and certainly people would die in this, but it would just be soldiers.

It would just be people from the military, not David, not his family. David was taken out of the field of battle at this time. He's an old man.

He's not going out to the to the campaigns. And so surely people would die, but just soldiers. The third choice was three days of plague.

This would be a plague directly from the hand of the Lord that would sweep over the nation. And let me say in that plague, anybody might be struck that the palace would be struck as well as the simplest shack there in Jerusalem. So David thinks about it, he says, you know, which choice will I have? And so he's going to give a message back to the prophet Gad.

This is in verse 14. And David said to Gad, I'm in great distress. Please let us fall into the hand of the Lord for his mercies are great, but do not let me fall into the hand of man.

Now, when David said that in verse 14, he was making his choice. He was choosing door number one or door number two or door number three. And you say, well, I don't get it.

Which choice did he make? Why didn't he just come out and say it? Famine, war or plague? Well, he was saying it. And God understood him, the prophet. Because if you're subjected to seven years of famine, you have to rely on your neighbors for food.

David said, I don't want to be thrust into the hand of dependency upon man. If you're have to endure three months of warfare, well, then it's on dependence upon your neighbors, then, you know, how are they going to attack me and how am I going to deal with the attack from a neighboring nation? But in the plague, no neighboring nation was involved in any way. This was straight from the hand of God.

And David knew something about God. He knew. He knew that God could show mercy when man doesn't.

So he said, no, give me. Give me this choice, the third one, the three days of plague, it wasn't because David thought that it would be the easiest, but because he knew I want God's hands in it, not man's. This was a way that David surrendered himself and the situation to God where he said, I want to be in God's hands.

Friends, can I tell you that that is absolutely the safest place for you to be in your life is in God's hands. The safest place for you to be is in radical obedience to God. Of course, this is very much pressed upon my heart right now, because God has called me to obey him in an unusual way.

God has called me to step aside from this church and to obey him by going and doing ministry in Germany to become the director of a Bible college out there. This isn't something I was looking for. It wasn't something I was searching for.

But I don't have any doubt whatsoever. That this is from the hand of God. God has confirmed it seven times over.

It'd be rank unbelief for me to say that this isn't the hand of God, that this isn't the moving of the Holy Spirit. So far as as difficult as it looks to be ahead of me or as challenging. I know without a doubt that the safest thing, the best thing for me and for you is for me to radically obey God.

It would do no good for this church to have a pastor who's disobedient to the Lord. How could God's hand be upon this work? No, God, God has called us to surrender ourselves and to lay ourselves in an outstanding way into his hands. Do you have that sense of abandonment to God's will? David had that attitude throughout his whole life.

This isn't the first time it crops up. David knew how to say, Lord, I'm abandoned into your hands. I don't want to be given over to the hand of man.

I want to be in your hands. I don't know if I can trust man, but I can trust you. I remember a few years ago, I was.

Speaking to a gentleman, I wanted to do kind of ministry project around here. I was concerned because it didn't seem like he was very attentive to the project. And so I was kind of going over things with him and he was trying to, you know, just sort of comfort me.

And he was saying, hey, well, don't worry about it, Pastor. Hey, just trust the Lord. And my response to him, he says, listen, I got no problem trusting God, it's trusting you that I'm having a problem with.

And isn't that how we often feel? I trust God, it's man that makes me nervous. Well, with David, that's how he felt. He said, I want to trust the Lord, and so I'm going to choose the plague.

I don't want to fall into the hand of man. By the way, let me say as well, this showed great self-sacrifice on David's part, too. Because if there was seven years of famine, do you think David or his household would be touched? No.

If there were three months of an attacking army invading Israel, do you think David or his family would be touched? No. But with three days of plague, that plague might fall upon anybody. And David says, I'm not going to accept a chastisement from the Lord that has no chance to fall upon me.

That would be selfish and ungodly. And so David showed a great attitude, a real shepherd's heart in this. Verse 15.

So the Lord sent a plague upon Israel from the morning until the appointed time. From Dan to Beersheba, 70,000 men of the people died. And when the angel stretched out his hand over Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord relented from the destruction and said to the angel who was destroying the people, it is enough.

Now restrain your hand. You see, that's what David was hoping for, wasn't he? That mercy from God. David was wise.

Now, even though 70,000 people in Israel died in three days of plague, which is staggering. I mean, when we suffered a great attack on our nation more than a year ago and many thousands died in one day, it didn't come close to 70,000 perishing in those few days. This was a catastrophe from Israel, severe chastisement from the hand of the Lord.

At the same time, it could have been much worse, but he knew that God would be merciful and God was merciful. So now when we pick it up at verse, well, I guess it's verse 16. We're at.

It says in the angel of the Lord was by the threshing floor of Arunah, the Jebusites. Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel who was striking the people and he said, surely I have sinned. And I have done wickedly.

But these sheep, what have they done? Let your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house. Oh, this gives us another great characteristic of David, something that made him a great man of God. Was the spirit of sacrifice, do you see David standing before the angel, the Lord at the threshing floor of Arunah saying, please stop if there's any more judgment, if there's any other person to perish from this plague.

Let it be me. Let it be someone from my household. We've been spared thus far.

Don't spare us any longer. The next person to be struck by this. Let it be me.

What a spirit of sacrifice on the heart of David. Friends, this is a hallmark of all great ministry before the Lord. It's that person who will step forward and say, I will pay the price.

If there's a price to be paid, let me pay it. I don't expect other people to pay a price that I won't. I will sacrifice.

This is connected very much with the idea of simple death to self. David was willing to die to self right there on the threshing floor of Arunah, wasn't it? My life isn't important. I'll lay my life down that others may be spared.

That death to self, that's something that each one of us have to come to, if we'll ever be used in the hand of God. I think sometimes the Christians are far too concerned about Satan. And not concerned enough about self.

Well, of course, Satan seeks to inflame self. He works through self. So I don't want to imply a radical separation between the two.

But but the great enemy of our progress with God is self. And that's why we must die to self. And why David shows such great godliness when he says, let me pay the price.

We tend to want great things from God, but we want them on the cheap. We don't want to die to self. We don't want to lay down our agenda, our heart, our self.

Well, but death to self, that's what David had right here. And, you know, in that he was simply walking in the footsteps of his God. Wasn't it Jesus who told us? Of course, it was said you can only find your life by losing it.

You only gain it when you give it up for me. And that's where David was out, he said, I'm willing to die to self, I'm willing to lay it down. We can't hang on to both.

We can't hang on to self and reach out to God at the same time. David understood this deeply. It's one of the things that made him a great man of God.

And so there he is in this dramatic scene pleading for the judgment to come upon himself. You saw it there, didn't you see the shadow of Jesus and the cross cast across the threshing floor of Aruna right there? You saw the same heart that was later manifest in God's own son, Jesus Christ, who went to the cross and he said, let the price fall on me. Let the guilt, let it be put upon me.

He said, well, Jesus, it's not your price. You didn't sin. I know, he says, but let their sin fall upon me.

It's as if you went out to the restaurant and someone who didn't even eat the meal picked up the check. He didn't even charge anything to the account, but he's going to pay the bill. That sacrifice, it's so wrapped up in the heart of God that that's what Jesus came to do.

And so David reflects that here in a remarkable way. Well, verse 18, and Gad came that day to David and said to him, go up, erect an altar to the Lord on the threshing floor of Aruna, the Jebusite. So David, according to the word of Gad, went up as the Lord commanded.

Now, Aruna looked and saw the king and his servants coming towards him. So Aruna went out and bowed before the king with his face to the ground. And Aruna said, why has my lord, the king, come to his servant? And David said to buy the threshing floor from you, to build an altar to the Lord, that the plague may be withdrawn from the people.

Now, David met the angel of the Lord at the threshing floor of Aruna. And when he came there and pleaded, take me, take my family instead of one more other citizen of Israel, the plague was stopped temporarily. But they thought, well, it might continue.

And so when David got this word from the Lord, build an altar on the threshing floor of Aruna, he says, I have to do it. And so in part, this is about a simple land transaction. Here's a piece of land that David wants to build an altar upon.

And you can't use it for a threshing floor anymore once you build an altar upon it. So David says, I need to go buy it from Aruna. And he's going to make the arrangements to purchase this piece of land.

There's a couple of notable things to consider about this land. First of all, it's a piece of land with a great history. First Chronicles tells us that this land was actually at a place called Mount Moriah.

The threshing floor of Aruna was on Mount Moriah, the same place where Abraham offered Isaac many hundreds of years before the time of David. It also tells us that this piece of land had a great future because it was on the same general hill that the temple would be built later and that Jesus would be offered on the cross as a perfect sacrifice. It all happened on this great hill of Mount Moriah.

Now, when David hears that he must have this land, he says, I've got to buy it, I've got to make a transaction here. So he goes and he goes again. It's at a threshing floor.

Do you know what a threshing floor was used for to thresh, to thresh grain? You see, when grain stocks grow, you get the little kernels of wheat, right? But around the kernels of wheat is a substance called chaff and chaff is hard and it's inedible. You have to separate the wheat from the chaff before you can use the wheat. And they would separate wheat from chaff on a threshing floor.

They would put the stocks of wheat on a stone and they would trample upon them or have an ox walk around upon them and it would break up the chaff from the wheat. But then you had to separate the wheat from the chaff. And so you would scoop it up with a shovel of some kind and you'd push it up on the end of the air and throw it up in the air.

And hopefully there'd be a slight breeze blowing and the breeze would blow away the lighter chaff and the heavier grain would sink back down to the ground. As you repetitively did it, the chaff would be blown away. And at this threshing floor, God is going to separate the wheat from the chaff.

He would do it at the temple for sacrifice, but he would do it at the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ. God loves to separate wheat from chaff. He loves to take away what's mere image.

Just the surrounding husk, and he loves to get down to the reality, to the substance of it all. And so it was going to happen right here. So David was told to build an altar.

There are alters, of course, of places of worship. It was going to worship here at the spot. So here's the little real estate transaction in verse twenty two.

Now, Aruna said to David, let my lord, the king, take an offer of whatever seems good to him. Look, here are oxen for burnt sacrifice and threshing implements and the yokes of oxen for wood. All these, O King, Aruna has given to the king and Aruna said to the king, may the Lord, your God, accept you.

Now, I want you to stop right there. Aruna did what any of us would do in the same situation. David, the king, comes and he offers this farmer, this man named Aruna, I need to buy your threshing floor.

And Aruna says, this is for the king. This is to stop a plague that has devastated the land. The king wants to build an altar here.

David, the land's yours. These oxen over here, they're good oxen. Why don't you sacrifice these? Do you need wood to make a fire for the for the altar? Here, let's chop up the yoke that these oxen use.

You know, when you sacrifice the oxen, you don't need the yoke anymore. That'll be wood for your fire. David, you can have it.

You would do the same thing, wouldn't you? This is for your king. You'd be generous to him. David, I don't want to send from you for any of this.

I want you to look at David's response in verse 24. Then the king said to Aruna, no, but I will surely buy it from you for a price, nor will I offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God with that which costs me nothing. Well, this is another great principle we touched on it before.

When we talked about sacrifice, but there in verse 24, you see David explaining a spiritual principle that I think has so much relevance to our life. It's the whole issue again of sacrifice and of giving. Here's David saying, Aruna, thank you for your offer, you're a very generous man, but you see, if you give it to me and then I give it to the Lord, I haven't given him anything.

You're making the gift and God told me to make this gift. So no, Aruna, I'm going to buy it off of you. You see, David knew that it would not be a gift, it would not be a sacrifice unto the Lord if it didn't cost him something.

David was not looking for the cheapest way possible to please God and isn't this convicting? Isn't the Holy Spirit speaking to our hearts right now? That's so often that is exactly what we look for, the cheapest way possible to please God. You know that God wants to spend time with you every day, that you should be in the word and in prayer, and so what does our carnal heart kind of instantly gravitate towards? OK, what's the minimum amount of time I can spend with the Lord and make him happy? Come on, God, just tell me what's the minimum daily requirement. Can I get along with five minutes? Can I get along with, you know, the 10 minutes in my car on the way to work? Whatever.

What's the minimum, God? Now do that. What's it? That's a heart looking for the cheapest way possible to glorify God. Oh, it shows up other places, too.

You know, I know I need to serve you. I know I need to be your servant. What's the cheapest way possible I can do it, God? It shows up especially or might I say oftentimes in our giving.

Oh, you see it there, don't you? OK, Lord, I know I should give to you and I do hope, you know, that you should be giving unto God from your financial resources. You know, we need to get in touch with this of the Lord, that God is a giving God. He's the greatest giver in all the universe.

And that's the God we serve. If you don't want to be a giver, if your heart is stubbornly set against it, I don't know, maybe you should find a different God, because the God you serve is a giving God. He's the greatest giver.

And those who follow him should be givers. It's really that simple. But we know this, we sense it in our hearts, it's something almost automatic in the Christian life.

But what do we do there? I mean, I know my own heart. It's it's oftentimes, OK, how little can I give God and make him happy? For example, you know that the scriptures say that we should give unto the Lord

proportionally. The Bible says that in 2nd Corinthians, Paul said, as each one has been blessed, so let him give to God.

In other words, you give to God proportionally as you've been blessed. But what do we often do? It's OK. Well, what's the smallest proportion I can give him, please, God.

And then you start going to calculations, OK, net or gross, net or gross. And, you know, I mean, we have to deal with these things in our heart and our mind, but you sense the heart that's there. It just kind of says, well, how what's the cheapest I can do to satisfy God? David was not going there at all.

Here was somebody offering him something free. And we all love bargains, don't we? I love a bargain. You're going to go home now to the Sunday newspaper and it's as thick as a telephone book and it's filled with advertisements all over this Christmas season with retailers wanting to sell you something.

And you're going to go into the store and compare prices and you're going to look for the bargain. And we all do. But friends, you can't treat God that way.

Treat your Christmas shopping that way. Great. You can call that good stewardship.

But when it comes to the Lord, you can't look for the cheapest way possible to please him, to serve him. So David said, it's striking there in verse 24, isn't it? I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord, my God, with that which costs me nothing. David says, if it didn't cost me nothing, it's not sacrifice.

There's a principle I've tried to remember through my life and my ministry, and I think it's a fairly ironclad principle. And it's simply this. You will sacrifice for your God.

In other words, whatever you are making sacrifices for in your life, that's your God. We will make great sacrifices for our comfort, won't we? You know, buy things all about our comfort, avoid things all about our comfort. Well, if that's the place where you're making your most significant sacrifices, then make no mistake about it.

Comfort is your God. You may sacrifice a tremendous deal for your career. That's where your real place of sacrifice is in your life.

Well, then let's not fool ourselves that that is your God or make sacrifices for your family. Well, then that that may be your God. Friends, if you will not sacrifice things in your life unto the Lord, then he's not your God.

Whatever is your God, you will sacrifice unto that God. So David was saying, well, of course, I'm going to sacrifice. One old commentator named Adam Clark says this.

He says he who has a religion that costs him nothing has a religion that is worth nothing, nor will any man esteem the service of God if that service costs him nothing. I agree. But here's the I don't know if you call it irony or twist at all.

You can't give to God without him giving back to you. And so it really, in a sense, it does cost us nothing. Oh, it costs us initially because we lay it out as a sacrifice.

But God will bless you all the more in return. Jesus promised this. You have the solemn promise of Jesus that anybody who gives up anything for the sake of his kingdom will be rewarded a hundredfold, both in

this life and in the life to come.

That's straight from the mouth of Jesus unto you. You cannot give anything unto the Lord, your time, your attention, a relationship, your financial resources. You can't give any of that unto the Lord without him giving you far more in return.

It's an absolute spiritual law. I remember years ago, there was a fellow who he's moved away since at that time, but God was dealing in his heart about these things. And he came to me one day and he said, David, I want to try something with God.

I want to try to outgive God. You know, he meant financially because he wanted to try this in his own life. And so I said, I want to outgive God.

And so he started giving in a way that would reflect that. And from time to time I would ask him, I would say, well, is it working? Are you out giving God? And he would just smile and say, no way, the more I give, the more God blesses me. So I'll still try.

I'll try to outgive God, but he just couldn't, because God promises that he will bless you far more in return. You see, David didn't leave thinking about the cost. When he left the threshing floor of Aruna, it wasn't just like 50 shekels of silver, I could have given him 20 pieces of silver, he wanted to give it away to me, I should have got him for less money.

No, he wasn't thinking about that at all. And that's the best money I ever spent. It's unto the Lord.

Finally, now, verse 25. So end of verse 24 says, so David brought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 shekels of silver and David built there an altar to the Lord and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the Lord heeded the prayers for the land and the plague was withdrawn from Israel.

Let me conclude with just noting that prayers were offered up for the land. And once David bought this and once David offered the sacrifice, once David did what God told him to do, then the prayers for the land were heeded. Two things I want you to take away from this in conclusion.

Number one, pray for the land. Oh, I listened by tape to Pastor Tim's sermon last Sunday, and what a great message on prayer. Did you leave there with an encouragement to pray with a compulsion to say, I must pray and I must pray more? Well, let me tell you what to pray about.

You pray that God would pour out his spirit on this congregation and that he would pour out his spirit on this community and that he would pour out his spirit and bless our land. You pray for that and pray mightily for it. Pray unceasingly for it.

Pray passionately for it. We're given here a pattern in verse twenty five to pray for the land. So pray for this congregation, pray for this community, pray, pray for this land.

But secondly, I want you to see that the prayers were answered in verse twenty five when David did what the Lord wanted him to do. In other words, there was something hindering the prayers before this, but David's obedience took the hindrance out of the way, then the prayers were heard by God. It's not enough for you to pray.

You need to look to your life and say, is there anything hindering my prayers before God? Would you be bold enough to ask the Lord this morning, Lord, remove anything in my life that makes my prayer

ineffective. Anything, Lord, show me what those things are, I'll remove them or Lord, you sovereignly move them either way. Lord, I want anything that hinders my prayer to be removed.

You look around you in the number of people in this room and if you think what would happen in this congregation, in this community, in this land, if every person in this room offered up diligently and passionately before God and absolutely unhindered prayer. For God's blessing and the outpouring of the spirit upon this congregation, this community and this land. Oh, how that would prevail before God.

So pray. Make it the passion of your heart to pray an unhindered prayer before God. Let's pray.

Father, that is what we call upon you now. Lord, we've seen so much in the character of David in this chapter, his humble heart, his giving heart, his sacrificial heart. The Lord, we we also want to remember, we we want to remember that you can work these things in us by prayer, by the moving of your Holy Spirit.

So, Lord, we pray to put upon our hearts a great burden for prayer, to pray for this congregation, to pray for this community, to pray, Lord, for this land. And we ask God that you would deal with us and we would deal with ourselves to cast out every hindrance to effective prayer. You say, Lord, that the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Lord, make us righteous men and women before you, effective in prayer, and then we will see an even greater work of God done in our midst. Do it, Lord, by your grace and for your glory. We pray this in Jesus name.

Amen.

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