

David and Araunah

The 24th chapter of 2nd Samuel holds an account that I feel is too often overlooked. The chapter begins with King David taking a census of the children of Israel, even at the protest of his personal advisors. Once the census has been taken, vs 10 tells us that David's heart condemned him and he realized his sin. The next morning, the prophet Gad came to David and said,

“Thus says the LORD: ‘I offer you three *things*; choose one of them for yourself, that I may do *it* to you.’”

Gad then gave David his options.

“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?...”

David chooses three days of plague and an angel of the Lord comes and strikes the Israelites with plague.

Gad came back to David and told him to erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite (vs 18) and David set out to do so. David arrived at Araunah's and offered to buy his threshing floor and oxen from him so that the plague could be taken away (vs21). Araunah, out of respect for David and in a well intended effort to be helpful, offered to simply give King David the threshing floor and oxen. David's response was amazing, he said,

“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.” (vs24).

David's response to Araunah should make us pause and think. What are we offering to the Lord? Have we resorted to giving Him only our free time? Are we missing services in order to partake in worldly things that we could live without? Maybe we are prioritizing work, sports, or TV watching and only giving God the energy we have left. Maybe it looks like only giving God the good days, when we feel energized and happy. When we are busy, tired, or feeling down, do we take those times to ourselves?

The point that David is making in 2nd Samuel 24:24 is that God deserves to have the things that cost us. He doesn't want the lame, blind, or blemished sacrifices of our lives. He wants the firstfruits. God deserves the time that is hard to give. He deserves our energy when we feel as though we are on our last leg. He deserves our worship when we feel anxious, sad, or lonely. He deserves our attention when we are busy at work or school. Jesus paid for us to be redeemed with His blood. We ought not give to our God that which costs us nothing.