

**Recap of 5/17/26 message by Steve Plank
("Merciful & Just") 2 Samuel 24:1-25**

The events of this final chapter of 2 Samuel are an excellent summation of David's reign. We see 1) that he is a flawed but faithful follower of Yahweh, 2) when he realizes his mistakes, he is quick to offer up confession and ask forgiveness, 3) he has a deep understanding of God's character, and 4) he is a solid leader.

Much like in Job's life, we see God removing His restraining hand, allowing Satan to tempt David into sin (1 Ch 21). God doesn't approve of evil, but He is able to use it to accomplish His purposes. While God invites us to work alongside Him, when we make mistakes, He works even our failings into His divine plan. In this instance, David's mistake ends up allowing him to procure the land on Mount Moriah upon which the temple will be built by Solomon.

David's sin is putting his trust in military might instead of God. Though David knows and has demonstrated that his trust is to be in God, not military might (1 Sa 17:47, Ps 20), he succumbs to Satan's temptation and orders a census of the "valiant men who drew the sword." His military commanders try to talk him out of it, but David ignores their counsel.

Upon realizing His mistake, David confesses his sin and asks for forgiveness. He then submits himself to God's punishment, knowing that God is just and merciful. John Lange described the process David goes through as 1) reproving conscience, 2) penitent confession, 2) hearty prayer for forgiveness, 4) humble bowing beneath the punishment imposed, and 5) unreserved submission to the divine mercy. David knew that God is merciful and just so he placed himself into God's hand instead of into the hands of men. We should follow David's example each time we sin.

We know that God's perfect mercy and justice are displayed in Jesus Christ who, in God's mercy, willingly took our punishment upon Himself to satisfy God's justice. We are redeemed not because God overlooks sin, but because God justly punished sin in Jesus' crucifixion.

Finally, David showed his solid leadership by taking responsibility instead of shirking. He asked God to punish him instead of the people of Israel. God stayed His hand and did not destroy Jerusalem because of David's prayer (2 Sa 24:25). David also displayed excellent leadership in the purchase of the land and threshing floor from Araunah; showing that our service to God must cost us something. Though he was king and could have taken the land by force (1 Ki 21) or as a gift (2 Sa 24:22-23), David paid a fair price knowing and declaring that he would not sacrifice to the LORD that which cost him nothing. In our lives, are we offering "sacrifices" to God what is easy and convenient instead of that which is costly?