

David's Census of Israel (c. 973 BC)

2 Samuel 24	1 Chronicles 21
<p>1 The LORD's anger again raged against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go count Israel and Judah."</p> <p>2 The king told Joab, the general in command of his army, "Go through all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beer Sheba and muster the army,</p> <p>so I may know the size of the army."</p> <p>3 Joab replied to the king, "May the LORD your God make the army a hundred times larger right before the eyes of my lord the king!</p> <p>But why does my master the king want to do this?"</p> <p>4 But the king's edict stood, despite the objections of Joab and the leaders of the army. So Joab and the leaders of the army left the king's presence in order to muster the Israelite army.</p> <p>5 They crossed the Jordan and camped at Aroer, on the south side of the city, at the wadi of Gad, near Jazer.</p> <p>6 Then they went on to Gilead and to the region of Tahtim Hodshi, coming to Dan Jaan and on around to Sidon.</p> <p>7 Then they went to the fortress of Tyre and all the cities of the Hivites and the Canaanites. Then they went on to the Negev of Judah, to Beer Sheba.</p> <p>8 They went through all the land and after nine months and twenty days came back to Jerusalem.</p> <p>9 Joab reported the number of warriors to the king. In Israel there were 800,000 sword-wielding warriors, and in Judah there were 500,000 soldiers.</p> <p>10 David felt guilty after he had numbered the army. David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly by doing this! Now, O LORD, please remove the guilt of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."</p> <p>11 When David got up the next morning, the LORD had already spoken to Gad the prophet, David's seer:</p> <p>12 "Go, tell David, 'This is what the LORD says: I am offering you three forms of judgment. Pick one of them and I will carry it out against you.'"</p> <p>13 Gad went to David and told him,</p> <p>"Shall seven years of famine come upon your land? Or shall you flee for three months from your enemy with him in hot pursuit? Or shall there be three days of plague in your land?"</p> <p>Now decide what I should tell the one who sent me."</p> <p>14 David said to Gad, "I am very upset! I prefer that we be attacked by the LORD, for his mercy is great; I do not want to be attacked by men!"</p> <p>15 So the LORD sent a plague through Israel</p>	<p>1 An adversary opposed Israel, inciting David to count how many warriors Israel had.</p> <p>2 David told Joab and the leaders of the army, "Go, count the number of warriors from Beer Sheba to Dan.</p> <p>Then bring back a report to me so I may know how many we have."</p> <p>3 Joab replied, "May the LORD make his army a hundred times larger!</p> <p>My master, O king, do not all of them serve my master? Why does my master want to do this? Why bring judgment on Israel?" [cf. Exod 30:12]</p> <p>4 But the king's edict stood, despite Joab's objections.</p> <p>So Joab left and traveled throughout Israel before returning to Jerusalem.</p> <p>5 Joab reported to David the number of warriors. In all Israel there were 1,100,000 sword-wielding soldiers; Judah alone had 470,000 sword-wielding soldiers.</p> <p>6 Now Joab did not number Levi and Benjamin, for the king's edict disgusted him.</p> <p>7 God was also offended by it, so he attacked Israel.</p> <p>8 David said to God, "I have sinned greatly by doing this! Now, please remove the guilt of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."</p> <p>9 The LORD told Gad, David's prophet,</p> <p>10 "Go, tell David, 'This is what the LORD says: "I am offering you three forms of judgment from which to choose. Pick one of them.'"</p> <p>11 Gad went to David and told him, "This is what the LORD says: 'Pick one of these:</p> <p>12 three years of famine, or three months being chased by your enemies and struck down by their swords, or three days being struck down by the LORD, during which a plague will invade the land and the LORD's messenger will destroy throughout Israel's territory.'</p> <p>Now, decide what I should tell the one who sent me."</p> <p>13 David said to Gad, "I am very upset! I prefer to be attacked by the LORD, for his mercy is very great; I do not want to be attacked by men!"</p> <p>14 So the LORD sent a plague through Israel,</p>

from the morning until the completion of the appointed time.
Seventy thousand men died from Dan to Beer Sheba.

16 When the angel extended his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD relented from his judgment. He told the angel who was killing the people, "That's enough! Stop now!" (Now the LORD's angel was near the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.)

17 When he saw the angel who was destroying the people,

David said to the LORD,

"Look, it is I who have sinned and done this evil thing!
As for these sheep—what have they done?
Attack me and my family."

18 So Gad went to David that day and told him, "Go up and build an altar for the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite."

19 So David went up as Gad instructed him to do, according to the LORD's instructions.

20 When Araunah looked out and saw the king and his servants approaching him, he went out and bowed to the king with his face to the ground.

21 Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?"

David replied, "To buy from you the threshing floor so I can build an altar for the LORD, so that the plague may be removed from the people."

22 Araunah told David,

"My lord the king may take whatever he wishes and offer it. Look! Here are oxen for burnt offerings, and threshing sledges and harnesses for wood.

23 I, the servant of my lord the king, give it all to the king!" Araunah also told the king, "May the LORD your God show you favor!"

24 But the king said to Araunah, "No, I insist on buying it from you! I will not offer to the LORD my God

burnt sacrifices that cost me nothing."

So David bought the threshing floor

and the oxen for fifty pieces of silver.

25 Then David built an altar for the LORD there and offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings.

and 70,000 Israelite men died.

15 God sent an angel to ravage Jerusalem.

As he was doing so,

the LORD watched and relented from his judgment. He told the angel who was destroying, "That's enough! Stop now!"

Now the LORD's angel was standing near the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

16 David looked up and saw the LORD's messenger standing between the earth and sky with his sword drawn and in his hand, stretched out over Jerusalem.

David and the leaders, covered with sackcloth, threw themselves down with their faces to the ground.

17 David said to God,

"Was I not the one who decided to number the army?

I am the one who sinned and committed this awful deed!

As for these sheep—what have they done?

O LORD my God, attack me and my family,

but remove the plague from your people!"

18 So the LORD's messenger told Gad to instruct David to go up and build an altar for the LORD on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

19 So David went up as Gad instructed him to do in the name of the LORD.

20 While Ornan was threshing wheat, he turned and saw the messenger, and he and his four sons hid themselves.

21 When David came to Ornan,

Ornan looked and saw David;

he came out from the threshing floor and bowed to David with his face to the ground.

22 David said to Ornan, "Sell me the threshing floor so I can build on it an altar for the LORD—I'll pay top price—so that the plague may be removed from the people."

23 Ornan told David,

"You can have it!

My master, the king, may do what he wants.

Look, I am giving you the oxen for burnt sacrifices,

the threshing sledges for wood,

and the wheat for an offering.

I give it all to you."

24 King David replied to Ornan, "No, I insist on buying it for top price. I will not offer to the LORD

what belongs to you or

offer a burnt sacrifice that cost me nothing.

25 So David bought the place

from Ornan for 600 pieces of gold.

26 David built there an altar to the LORD and offered burnt sacrifices and peace offerings.

He called out to the LORD,

<p>And the LORD accepted prayers for the land,</p> <p>and the plague was removed from Israel.</p>	<p>and the LORD responded by sending fire from the sky and consuming the burnt sacrifice on the altar.</p> <p>27 The LORD ordered the messenger to put his sword back into its sheath.</p> <p>28 At that time, when David saw that the LORD responded to him at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he sacrificed there.</p> <p>29 Now the LORD's tabernacle (which Moses had made in the wilderness) and the altar for burnt sacrifices were at that time at the worship center in Gibeon.</p> <p>30 But David could not go before it to seek God's will, for he was afraid of the sword of the LORD's messenger.</p>
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David Makes Preparations for the Construction of the Temple (c. 972 – c. 969t BC)

1 Chronicles 22

Materials Needed for the Construction of the Temple

1 David then said, "This is the place where the temple of the LORD God will be, along with the altar for burnt sacrifices for Israel."

2 David ordered the resident foreigners in the land of Israel to be called together. He appointed some of them to be stonemasons to chisel stones for the building of God's temple.

3 David supplied a large amount of iron for the nails of the doors of the gates and for braces, more bronze than could be weighed, 4 and more cedar logs than could be counted. (The Sidonians and Tyrians had brought a large amount of cedar logs to David.)

5 David said, "My son Solomon is just an inexperienced young man, and the temple to be built for the LORD must be especially magnificent so it will become famous and be considered splendid by all the nations. Therefore I will make preparations for its construction." So David made extensive preparations before he died.

David's Private Charge to Solomon

6 He summoned his son Solomon and charged him to build a temple for the LORD God of Israel.

7 David said to Solomon: "My son, I really wanted to build a temple to honor the LORD my God.

8 But the LORD said to me: 'You have spilled a great deal of blood and fought many battles. You must not build a temple to honor me, for you have spilled a great deal of blood on the ground before me.

9 Look, you will have a son, who will be a peaceful man. I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. Indeed, Solomon will be his name; I will give Israel peace and quiet during his reign.

10 He will build a temple to honor me; he will become my son, and I will become his father. I will grant to his dynasty permanent rule over Israel.'

11 "Now, my son, may the LORD be with you! May you succeed and build a temple for the LORD your God, just as he announced you would.

12 Only may the LORD give you insight and understanding when he places you in charge of Israel, so you may obey the law of the LORD your God.

13 Then you will succeed, if you carefully obey the rules and regulations which the LORD ordered Moses to give to Israel. Be strong and brave! Don't be afraid and don't panic!

14 Now, look, I have made every effort to supply what is needed to build the LORD's temple. I have stored up 100,000 talents of gold, 1,000,000 talents of silver, and so much bronze and iron it cannot be weighed, as well as wood and stones. Feel free to add more!

15 You also have available many workers, including stonemasons, masons, carpenters, and an innumerable array of workers who are skilled

16 in using gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Get up and begin the work! May the LORD be with you!"

David's Charge to the Leaders of Israel

17 David ordered all the officials of Israel to support his son Solomon.

18 He told them, "The LORD your God is with you! He has made you secure on every side, for he handed over to me the inhabitants of the region and the region is subdued before the LORD and his people.

19 Now seek the LORD your God wholeheartedly and with your entire being! Get up and build the sanctuary of the LORD God! Then you can bring the ark of the LORD's covenant and the holy items dedicated to God's service into the temple that is built to honor the LORD."

Chronological Notes

- 1) Merrill argues: “After the revolutions of both Absalom and Sheba it would have been reasonable for David to reassess his military situation against the possibility of similar uprisings or other emergencies.”¹ In support of this hypothesis is the fact that Joab and the army commanders were able to take over nine months to gather the population statistics (v. 8). This suggests a very peaceful condition in Israel that characterized David’s later reign but not his earlier reign.

¹ Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests*, 272.