

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

When David was told to choose his punishment from God, he said, “Let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for his mercy is very great, but do not let me fall into the hand of man” (1 Chr 21:13). How wonderful to know that even when you are punishing me for sin, I can throw myself on your tender mercies. You are a God who is gracious and merciful, and you relent from disaster. I worship you today and praise your name! Hallelujah!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about David’s census of Israel. You began by saying that your anger “burned against Israel,” which tells me that there was already ‘sin in the camp’ (cf. Josh 7:1, 11; Jdg 2:11–14). When we sin, we give place to the devil, and you allowed Satan to entice David to number the people (1 Chr 21:1). Although the reason why the census was sinful is not clear (it may have been a violation of Num 1:49 and Exod 30:12), you made sure that David knew that what he was about to do was wrong (1 Chr 21:3). This teaches me that even when my own pride and stubbornness have caused me to rebel against you, you are faithful to warn me away from the path of sin. David’s word prevailed over Joab and the army commanders, and Joab spent the next nine months numbering the people (although he refused to number Levi and Benjamin). When it was over, you were angry, and you struck Israel (1 Chr 21:7). David realized that he had sinned, and he confessed and repented before you. This teaches me that repentance is always the best first step. I should never cover my sin or try to make things better on my own. You sent Gad the prophet to give David three choices for Israel’s punishment, and David wisely cast himself on your mercy. You kept your angel from destroying Jerusalem, and David built an altar where the angel had been standing. You answered with fire from heaven expressing your forgiveness and approval, and David determined to build the temple on that very spot.

Reflection

When David realized his sin, he took full responsibility, admitted he was wrong and asked you to forgive him. Do I take complete responsibility for my sins, or do I find myself making excuses for my actions? The path to peace is paved with the stones of humility and repentance.

Request

Father, I ask that you would keep me from sin in the first place, but if I do sin, give me the courage to confess my sin and kneel before you in true repentance.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for being a God who relents from calamity and says, “It is enough” (2 Sam 24:16). I want my heart to be a temple where your presence is always welcomed and honored.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “[Accepted](#)” – Charles W. Naylor.

Meditation Verse: 1 Chronicles 22:13.