

May 3 Answers

- 1) David's census of Israel. The story begins by saying that God's **anger** "burned against Israel," which means 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 God 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), God made sure that David **knew** that what he was about to do was wrong (1 Chr 21:3). This teaches us that even when our own pride and stubbornness have caused us to rebel against God, He is faithful to **warn** us 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, God was angry, and He struck Israel (1 Chr 21:7). David realized that he had sinned, and he **confessed** and repented before God. This teaches us that **repentance** is always the best first step. We should never cover our sin or try to make things better on our own. God sent Gad the prophet to give David **three** choices for Israel's punishment, and David wisely cast himself on God's **mercy**. God kept the angel from destroying Jerusalem, and David built an altar where the angel had been standing. God answered with **fire** from heaven expressing forgiveness and approval, and David determined to build the temple on that very spot.