

WHO IS PROVOKING YOU? (1 CHRON CHAP 21)

By Don Krider

God has laid on my heart such a real desire to be ready for whatever God wants to do. He keeps reminding me of **Matt 5:8** "*Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.*" Not the wealthy, not the wise, not the intellectual, but those that have a pure heart and just want to be used of God; just desire to be whatever God wants them to be.

I believe that David was that kind of man. Acts 13:22 says that David was a man after God's own heart. He was not only king, but more important than being the king, or having a position in the kingdom, was the fact that he was a man after God's own heart.

I believe that is what it is going to take today - people after God's heart. Not after His blessing, not after side issues, but zeroing in on a relationship with Christ. David, like a lot of us, made a few mistakes. We major on the one with Bathsheba because of the murder that took place, but I believe that there is one sin that is greater than another. This sin is far beyond that. Let's look at **1 Chron. 21:1** *And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.* David, here, is in a lot of trouble; Israel is in a lot of trouble. Things are not looking good. David's messed up. David made a mistake, didn't he? Satan moved against David and provoked him.

When we are provoked to do evil, it's not God. We are to be provoking one another to love and to good works. When we are provoked to do evil, we need to stand up and stop what we are doing. We need to get hold of ourselves and begin to realize that the enemy is trying to make me sin. It may seem right, it may sound good, it may be the thing that I really want to do, but it is sin.

David had just gone to war again, he had won the victory, but he is getting older. So he said, "Now, I want you to number Israel." Joab counseled him and said, "This is not a good thing." When we are provoked to sin, we do not heed counsel. David had already been provoked to the point that he was going to do whatever he wanted to do, regardless of who said not to do it.

Have you ever been there? "I'm so mad I could chew the head off a nail. I'm going to tell you something, I'm going to knock him plumb across the street." It may sound funny, but that thinking is provocation from Satan. He's trying to get you into the flesh realm and begin to murmur, complain, gossip, backbite, grumble, or gripe. But let me show you the danger of this thing, even doing something that you think is a good thing to do. We need to stop and listen to Godly counsel.

David wanted to number Israel, being provoked by Satan; Joab counseled against that. The seventh verse says that God was displeased with this thing and smote Israel. In the eighth verse we find that David acknowledges his sin. It's not enough to just acknowledge your sin. David acknowledges his before God because things are not going well, but penalty begins to happen for that sin, doesn't it.

1 Chron. 21:10 *Go and tell David, saying, Thus saith the LORD, I offer thee three things: choose thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee. (11) So Gad came to David, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, (12) Choose thee either three years' famine; or three months to be destroyed before thy foes, while that the sword of thine enemies overtaketh thee; or else three days the sword of the LORD, even the pestilence, in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. Now therefore advise thyself what word I shall bring again to him that sent me.*

David got himself into the situation. God is showing him the seriousness of sin. What would

you do if you had those options? There are not many preachers preaching against sin any more; it's not really a popular subject. It won't sell a whole lot of books, and it won't get a whole lot of crowds, but it got David's attention. "All right, David, what would you like me to do to Israel? It's your choice." The ball is in your court.

We find in the fourteenth verse that seventy thousand men died. Seventy thousand men died because of David's sin. ***When you sow to the flesh, you of the flesh shall reap corruption (Gal 6:8).*** When we sin against God, it is not pleasing in the sight of God and it's not going to be pleasing very long in our sight. David has acknowledged this is his sin. It's a real problem that he is dealing with. The seventeenth verse is the beginning of the turning point; David intercedes and confesses his own sin.

I could be walking around and saying, "Well, we are all sinners." That doesn't mean a lot to me. Let's get specific: what is holding me up, what is besetting me. Paul said in **Heb 12:1** ***"Laying aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us."*** He was writing to the church; he wasn't writing to a bunch of lost people. So, as sometimes happens in our life, a sin besets us or gets us off the track. Now if we could say, "Well, all of us are sinners," that just lumps us into a big lump, doesn't it. We need to stand before God like David did here, and say, "God, I have sinned; deal with me."

What does it take to wake us up? Do we cover it, hide it, and go on like nothing ever happened and never deal with it and yet our life is not a victorious life realm continually. It's not that life that is full of abundance and joy. It's not that life that's exciting to live. That sin is always there, it's always eating on us; it's always gnawing away at us. Yes, we have told the Lord; we have acknowledged our sin but we haven't dealt with it. Our life does not prosper until we deal with besetting sin. I want to tell you something: the church has kind of gotten used to living with sin. I'm talking about the church as a whole. It kind of lives in there where there is nothing really wrong and nothing really good. David was a mighty man after God's own heart, and it cost the nation of Israel 70,000 men because of his besetting sin that he would not deal with. Now here he comes down to healing with this sin. God didn't talk to him either. Let's look at the eighteenth verse, ***"Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David..."***

It's bad when you have to get it second-hand, isn't it. Don't ever assume that because today you are after God's heart, that you can just drift off and not study, and not pray, and not seek God's will daily. A lot of us do that, you know; we seek God for a year at a time. We chart a course; we just keep going on that course. We never correct it by daily prayer, daily examination.

David finally came to the point where he said, ***"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting"*** (Ps. 139:23-24). We don't know our heart.

So David is going to be talked to, but not by God now; it's going to be Gad. He said David

should go and set up an altar for the Lord in the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite. Look at **verse 22**; we are going to deal with this for a few minutes. ***Then David said to Ornan, "Grant me the place of this threshing floor, that I may build an altar thereon unto the Lord: thou shalt grant it me for the full price: that the plague may be stayed from the people."*** David is an intercessor now; he's come to the point of interceding. He's confessed his sin and now he's interceding for the nation of Israel.

You can't really intercede unless your heart is pure. You will blame people for your sin. "The reason I don't prosper, I can tell you right now, it's the Pastor's fault." I have news for you; it's not the Pastor's fault. If I'm not prospering in God I need to examine myself. All the reading of the Bible, and all the quoting of scripture, is not going to get it done until I deal with whatever it is in my life that needs to be dealt with.

So David begins to deal with Ornan about his threshing floor. In the twenty-third verse, ***"Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my Lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give you the oxen also for burnt offerings and the threshing instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat offering; I give it all."***

Probably we would have said, "Well now, that's God's blessing. I'm going to take somebody else's stuff and sacrifice it." But here's another opportunity now to not be involved with that sin.

Verse 24 has always impressed me: ***"And King David said to Ornan, Nay; but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings without cost."***

True repentance costs you something. Do you remember the group that came to John the Baptist? They wanted to be baptized; and he wouldn't do it. He said, ***"Go, and bring forth fruits worthy of repentance"*** (Matt 3:7-8). When a man has really repented, there is a change that happens. Now, I can acknowledge my sin but that doesn't mean I am going to deal with it.

God is going to have a pure-hearted people. It will be the pure-hearted - those who have dealt with their sin. The twenty-four hours a day won't mean anything to them. Going to church at three o'clock in the morning will be exciting. It won't be a job; it won't be a sacrifice.

In Rev. 2:5 God deals with the church at Ephesus. He didn't just say, "Well, go ahead and say a nice little prayer." He said, "Do your first works." Something has to be involved in repentance. When a person gets saved, when they repent, they begin to give up the old life. They begin to give up the old friends. They begin to move into a new realm where it's fellowship with the body of Christ; where it's fellowship with God; where it's fellowship with the Lord. I think we make things so easy that nothing means anything. Salvation costs something. Even though it's free to you, it's going to cost you something. Jesus simply says the same thing in Revelation that John told the people in Matthew.

David's finding out it's not enough to acknowledge I've got a sin, or I've got a problem. We never call it sin; it's always a problem. "I don't have any sin; I've got a lot of problems. But sin, No, No, No, No! My major problem why I'm not prospering in God is the Pastor, of course. Also others in the body." God said, "NO, NO, NO." It's not enough to acknowledge you have it; it's going to cause death as long as you just acknowledge it. But He said, "When you deal with it, when you confess it, when you turn from it..."

David was so caught up in this thing, he said, "I'm going to pay the full price. I'm not going to let somebody else do it for me." Nobody else can do it for you. Nobody else can repent for you. They can pray for you; they can counsel you. Now this is a man of God; this is a man after God's own heart. If you think that Satan is not going to provoke you, you are mistaken. If you fall into it, get out of it. Don't wait for somebody to come and rescue you; you've got to get involved with the rescue. You've got to come to a place where you are not only going to acknowledge this thing, you are going to do something about it before 70,000 people die. Don't say: "I'm not going to deal with it - nobody knows about it." Instead say: "Before the victory is totally stolen from me, I'm going to do something about the situation in my life; the thing I've been hiding."

You had better acknowledge it to God; you had better confess it to God; you better get rid of it. Don't try to hide it in the background somewhere thinking nobody's going to know about it. Let me tell you something, friend: God knows. When your heart is not pure, God knows. Now this move of God is going to come quick; it isn't going to be a slow moving thing. It's going to be like a mighty wave, a tidal wave out of the ocean, which all at once rises up and the Spirit of God is going to just flow through this nation. There's going to be a people who have a pure heart.

It's not enough to just acknowledge your sin; it's only enough when you deal with it. "Listen, Brother Krider, I'm a child of the King." That's who he's talking to in Revelation, second chapter. That's who Paul is talking to when he says, "***Lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily doth beset you, and run with patience the race that is set before you***" (Heb 12:1).

You know, a lot of times we slip into attitudes. We get judgmental about one another. God didn't call me to judge you; God called me to love you. And if He showed me the problem it is so I'll come to you, in the spirit of meekness, and tell you; not go to anybody else and tell them.

There is no doubt in my mind that David was a mighty man of God. He conquered, subdued, he fought for God, he did the work of the Lord, and yet God deals with him here in this chapter, the way that the Holy Spirit deals with every believer.

I think the church makes up more sayings than anybody in the world. "Well, I'm only human you know." All these years of preaching and traveling, I've heard so many sayings that have no scriptural basis. They are just excuses.

David's excuse, I'm sure, was, "Hey, listen, I've looked out there, and I want to know how many there are for us." Joab said, "What difference does it make. God has raised up these people who are all with you, David. Not only that, God is with you. And if God is for us, who can be against us." (Romans 8:31)

"Well, I know what I am feeling like though; I'm getting a little older now. I know I used to walk by faith, but I'm getting older now and I have to start thinking about my old age. I had better start softening up this gospel a little bit and start building some friendships so they can take care of me when I get a little older."

This gospel is real. God spoke this to my heart just a few years ago. He said, "It's not enough, Son, to acknowledge sin, but you repent of it. When you confess it and deal with it, then we will go on together." David had to come to an understanding of that in his life, and I believe that the defeat of most Christians is the besetting sin they do not deal with. They will acknowledge it but they will never deal with it. Acknowledgement does not forgive you. It's confession, it's repentance, it's bringing forth works meat for repentance. David intercedes now, not only for himself, but he intercedes for the nation of Israel. He has a repentant heart and vs. 27 says the angel of the Lord put his sword back in his sheath. The angel of the Lord was destroying Jerusalem, and God repented and said, "*It's enough*" (vs. 15) because David began to repent. David began to confess. I am sure David said something like this, "The devil made me do it," and he really did. He'll make you do anything you let him make you do, and he'll make it sound so reasonable.

Haven't you ever heard that in church: "Let's be reasonable." There isn't anything reasonable about this gospel to the natural man. There is nothing reasonable about living by faith. There is nothing reasonable about loving your enemies. When sin is in my life I must not just acknowledge it, I must deal with it. I must deal with that besetting sin.

So David, a man after God's own heart, cries out in the **24th verse**, "*And King David said to Ornan, Nay, but I will verily buy it for the full price.*" Repentance takes the full price. You cannot partially repent; you can't repent a part of it and say, "I'm going to hold on to this now." How do we do that? We judge some of our sins as little ones, some are a little worse, and then there are the rotten ones. We get rid of the rotten ones, but the little ones are surely not bad. You feel you have a right to talk bad about someone who treated you wrong. You tell others because you say you want people to know, be concerned and pray for that person. Really, in your heart you are saying, "I want them to know what a louse you are."

Now here David says, "No, no. I'm going to pay the full price. Whatever it takes to stop this slaughter; whatever it takes to make peace with God again to where my heart is right with God, whatever it takes to keep the destroyer out of Israel, I will pay that price."

Somebody said to me, "Well, Brother Krider, you know you have to realize something, we are all sinners. It's just a little sin." Who made you judge! Sin is sin. God dealt with David with Bathsheba, but did David learn right away? What did it cost him for that sin? The death

of his son (2 Sam 12:14). Why? Because *the wages of sin is death*. (Romans 6:23).

Any time you are in sin and you are trying to serve God, the end product will always be death. God didn't take David's kingdom away from him. God didn't take away the ability to pray or to praise the Lord; but He took something that must have been precious to him: the fruit of that sin. He couldn't bless that child because that child was the product of sin; it was the wages that David had stored up for himself.

I don't share the blame for your sin. You don't share the blame for mine. If I have some, I need to take it to Him and say, "Lord, I confess this rotten, lousy thing, and I want it over with, right now."

I believe that there is going to be a sudden move of the Holy Spirit. I believe that we haven't even seen the beginning of the move of the Holy Spirit. He's going to come suddenly with a mighty moving of the Spirit. We must be ready and that means that we must have a pure heart. It means that we cannot entertain sin in our lives any longer. We are the children of the light and if God would deal with a man after His own heart, don't ever think that He won't deal with you and me.

When you look to the word of God you find principles. And when you find a principle in the word of God that works, stick with it, because from Genesis to Revelation, God builds His body on working principles. If He wouldn't let David get away with something, He will not let me get away with it. That's why Paul wrote "***Let a man so examine himself*** (not his neighbors) ***to see whether he be in the faith...***" (2 Cor. 13:5).

If it's not of faith, it's sin, and I have to deal with the sin. Oh me! "What is the answer, Brother Krider?" The same thing David did; pay the full price; confess it all to God. Take the blame and put it where it belongs. He did not say to God that day, "The devil provoked me to do what I did; now kill him, find him, do something with him." He said, "I sinned and 70,000 people died. God, it was me; all the time it was me. Lord, it was me, not Israel, not Satan. It was me."

Let me tell you something: my problem isn't any of you; my problem is me. When people try to provoke me to get mad and angry and stupid, sometimes they succeed. I find I start losing the peace; I start losing the joy; I start losing that right relationship where I can just have a great time with God. Now I can tell God on them and usually that's the first shot. "Teach them better, God." And God says, "I want to teach you." Then I said, "Lord, it was me."

Isn't it amazing how we think that we just surprise God with that news? "Lord, I'm the guy; I'm guilty, I'm the one." Instead of waiting until 70,000 people die, wouldn't it be good to repent right then and say, "God it's me."

We can all be provoked. The only way we can keep great peace is having our mind stayed upon the Lord. The only way we can keep from being offended is by loving His laws (Ps. 119:165).

I'm growing; I haven't attained yet. To be in this great move of God means there is more responsibility. That means if you are going to come into a leadership realm, it is imperative that you deal with any sin in your life immediately. Murmuring, grumbling, complaining, backbiting, devouring, anything, deal with it. It's like the coming of the Lord; there won't be time to deal with it once the trumpet sounds.

God is speaking to the church and He is warning me to keep a right heart. Don't cover the sin because he that covers his sin shall not prosper. **Prov. 28:13 *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*** The man that confesses it prospers. He stayed the hand of the destroyer and saw the angel put his sword back in its sheaf. I'm sure David had all these years to think about the death of Uriah and now he had 70,000 more to think about. God always deals first with the leadership. No wonder David's life was not really a happy life. He was not allowed to build the one thing he wanted to build more than anything else: the temple (1 Chron. 22:6-11).

Could you imagine the memories that must have gone through his mind when he saw Solomon, his child, get ready to take the throne. "Uriah is dead; I had him murdered. Seventy thousand are dead because I sinned against the Lord." Sin is a serious thing.

We love to teach courses on prosperity, on healing, on deliverance but we seldom hear anybody teaching a course on sin, yet Jesus did. We don't teach it because nobody would come. Yet it's the one thing that will really put the shout in your heart. It's the one thing that will restore you back to a right walk with God. It's the one thing that will make you know God even better than you have ever known Him, when everything in your heart is open and the enemy has no place to get a hold on you.

God, I thank you because I believe the mighty move of your Holy Spirit will come like a mighty tidal wave; all of a sudden it will be here. And God, we want to have a pure heart. Lord, having examined our selves, as far as we know we have no spot, blemish or wrinkle. Our hearts are crying out; Lord, help us to walk always in truth and in the light because the first one it will show upon is us.

I thank You for your miracle love restoring and bringing us into a closer and more wonderful fellowship with You than we have ever known in all of our lifetime, God, having a pure heart, having a heart that has been purged of everything but the love of God.

We are going to serve You. God, we are going to give our life to You, working in Godly fear. Lord, help us to realize the lateness of the hour. God, help us to realize that we are only limited by the vision that we allow ourselves to have. Help us to have an ever-increasing vision. Help us to have understanding of that vision. Bring us into revelation truth in Jesus' precious name. In the mighty name of Jesus, thank you for speaking straightforward to us, speaking to our spirits and our hearts. Amen!