

2 Samuel 24:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people.

Analysis

For the king said to Joab the captain of the host, which was with him, Go now through all the tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, and number ye the people, that I may know the number of the people.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Census and Plague, emphasizing pride, judgment, provision. David's census represents prideful self-reliance rather than dependence on God. The plague's devastation demonstrates sin's consequences extending beyond the sinner. David's purchase of Araunah's threshing floor and sacrifice there establishes the future temple location. Theological themes include the danger of pride, corporate consequences of leaders' sins, the necessity of proper sacrifice, God's mercy in limiting judgment, and divine purpose even in disciplinary actions.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 24 occurs during David's reign (circa 1010-970 BCE) over Israel's united monarchy. Archaeological discoveries, including the Tel Dan inscription mentioning the 'House of David,' corroborate biblical historicity. Ancient Near Eastern customs regarding pride, judgment, provision provide crucial background. The geopolitical situation involved regional powers—

Philistines, Ammonites, Arameans, Moabites, Edomites—as David consolidated and expanded Israel's territory. Cultural practices concerning kingship, warfare, covenant relationships, family dynamics, and religious observance differed significantly from modern Western contexts, requiring careful attention to avoid anachronistic interpretation while extracting timeless theological principles applicable across cultures and eras.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of pride, judgment, provision?
2. What does this verse reveal about God's character, and how should that shape your worship and obedience?
3. In what specific ways can you apply this truth to your current circumstances and relationships this week?

Interlinear Text

אֶת־וְ	אֲשֶׁר	הַחַיִּל	שָׂר	יֹאָב בֶּן	אֶל	הַמֶּלֶךְ	וַיֹּאמֶר
H854	H834	H2428	H8269	H3097	H413	H4428	H559
which was with him	Go now through						
יִשְׂרָאֵל	שְׁבֵטֵי־וְ	בְּכָל־וְ	נָא				
H3478	H7626	H3605	H4994				
all the tribes	of Israel						
הָעָם:	אֶת־וְ	וּפְקֹדֹו	שָׁ בְּעַ	בְּאֵר־וְ	מִדָּן		
H5971	H853	H6485	H884	H0	H5704		
of the people	and number	even to Beersheba	from Dan				
הָעָם:	מִסְפַּר־וְ	אֵת	וַיֵּדַעְתִּי				
H5971	H4557	H853	H3045				
the number	of the people	that I may know					

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 3:10 (Kingdom): To translate the kingdom from the house of Saul, and to set up the throne of David over Israel and over Judah, from Dan even to Beersheba.

Judges 20:1 (References Israel): Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD in Mizpeh.

2 Samuel 20:23 (References Israel): Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites: