

# **THE COST OF SACRIFICE**

Sacrifice Series 4:  
**THE COST OF SACRIFICE**

May 4, 2014

**Sermon in a sentence: What we offer in sacrifice to God is a great indicator of His importance to us.**

**Scriptures: 2 Sam. 24 (\*18-25)**

**Our main scripture reading details events at the end of King David's life when he was old and not all-together what he should have been. His last public words were recorded in 2 Sam. 23, after which there was yet one more thing he wanted to do, as recorded in Ch. 24.**

**Although there is some confusion regarding the motivation behind David's command to take a census of his warriors, it seems to have been a willful act of pride and vainglory (for which he later took full responsibility).**

**As a result of his actions, 70,000 people were killed, and when the angel of death came to Jerusalem, David actually saw him standing by the threshing floor of a man named Araunah. David confessed his sin to the Lord and the prophet Gad told him that he needed to make a sacrifice to the Lord.**

**Although Araunah was more than willing to give David his threshing floor, wood and oxen for the sacrifice, David's response was very clear:**

**2 Sam. 24:24 NASB "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price, for I will not offer burnt offerings to the Lord my God which cost me nothing...."**

**In effect, David was saying: “I need God to see how important this is to me. The situation is serious and demands an appropriate response. Borrowing a sacrifice to offer to God is definitely *not* an appropriate response in the middle of this crisis.”**

**Here we see a flawed, imperfect man trying to deal with the aftermath of his sin. (He definitely had a heart for God, although he routinely found ways to displease Him!)**

- Parental and judicial discipline sorely lacking: (no punishment to Amnon for raping his sister)
- Parental indulgence toward the usurper Absalom
- Fighting against Judah while living as a mercenary in Philistia
- Committing adultery with Bathsheba
- Having her husband killed
- Pridefully taking a census of his army
- Parental favoritism (appointing Solomon king, instead of Chileab his 2<sup>nd</sup> born (if we can agree that the 1<sup>st</sup> born Amnon had disqualified himself)

**David had to make an altar and offer a sacrifice of value to God. There had to be a significant, (albeit symbolic) act to say: “I am sorry and truly repentant”.**

**It is clear that we cannot buy forgiveness or make personal atonement for our sins, but we do need to offer significant sacrifices to God. They demonstrate His lordship, power and preeminence *over* our lives, and *in* our lives.**

**The following are some contemporary examples of significant sacrifice decisions people may be called upon to make:**

- Foregoing a career promotion that would necessitate giving up ministry
- Selling / giving away something we greatly treasure to help someone in need

- Restricting our personal freedoms so as not to offend 'the weaker brother' (Romans 14)
- Sacrificing our personal plans for the future to fulfill God's purpose for our life
- Giving sacrificially to the work of God, laying aside our own needs and desires
- Refraining from marrying an unbeliever so as to obey the word of God

These are costly sacrifices. Not necessarily financial, but also societal and emotional. David's sacrifice was likely not financially burdensome to him as the king, (50 shekels of silver), but the principle underlying it was very significant.

These are sacrifices we must make reverently, in the fear of God – with great joy! God is looking at us and observing the lengths we are willing to go to express our love, honour and respect for Him, His work and His kingdom. We cannot offer worthless or borrowed sacrifices to Him. He knows the cost of our sacrifices. Cheap sacrifices are offensive to His holiness, His lordship, His majesty.

**Illustration: Story of Chuck Colson.** He refused to accept a plea bargain that would have involved pleading guilty to a crime he hadn't committed. He chose rather to plead guilty to a much greater crime that would entail jail time *and* the loss of his law license. As a new Christian, he willingly sacrificed his career to avoid lying.

Yes, there are times we suffer hardships and persecutions at the hand of others; unpleasant experiences brought upon us from outside of ourselves.

However, our present focus is on the cost of the *personal* sacrifices we are willing to offer to God of our own volition. Things we sacrifice to Him with the spoken or implied

**statement: “Lord, I give everything to You. I am Yours and all I have is at Your disposal. There is nothing I will withhold from You. I willingly and joyfully offer my best to You – whatever the cost of my sacrifice!”**