God Reveals His Purpose as we Pray

We need to understand God’s Purpose for us to obey, but not to pray.

Some people need a crisis to get them to pray.

Some people see and hear very little of God’s Eternal Purpose.

2Sa 24:10 ¶ And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

2Sa 24:3 And Joab said unto the king, Now the LORD thy God add unto the people, how many soever they be, an hundredfold, and that the eyes of my lord the king may see it: but why doth my lord the king delight in this thing?

De 1:11 (The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you!)

Ge 13:16 And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.

15:5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

22:17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

24:60 And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

2Sa 24:10 ¶ And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

14 And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.

15 So the LORD sent a pestilence upon Israel from the morning even to the time appointed: and there died of the people from Dan even to Beersheba seventy thousand men.

16 And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

17 And David spake unto the LORD when he saw the angel that smote the people, and said, Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, be against me, and against my father's house.

David prayed and built an altar of sacrifice, seeking the Lord to stop the judgment being executed against the nation. These events took place on the third day of the plague that was sweeping the nation.

1. Hearing that 70,000 people were fatally stricken by the plague, David went before the Lord in prayer and confessed his sin.

David accepted personal responsibility for his sin, David begged the Lord to let His hand of judgment fall upon him and not upon the people, not any more. For the people were only as sheep.

2.  David built an altar of sacrifice in obedience to the instructions of the prophet Gad

a.  God commanded the altar to be built on the very site where the plague had been stopped, that is, on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite

2Sa 24:18 ¶ And Gad came that day to David, and said unto him, Go up, rear an altar unto the LORD in the threshingfloor of Araunah the Jebusite.

This threshing floor had been built on the future site of the temple.

1Ch 22:1 Then David said, This is the house of the LORD God, and this is the altar of the burnt offering for Israel.

b.  David personally went up to purchase the threshing floor on the hill

surprised at the king's visit, he asked why the king had come to his servant

2Sa 24:19 And David, according to the saying of Gad, went up as the LORD commanded. 20 And Araunah looked, and saw the king and his servants coming on toward him: and Araunah went out, and bowed himself before the king on his face upon the ground. 21 And Araunah said, Wherefore is my lord the king come to his servant? And David said, To buy the threshingfloor of thee, to build an altar unto the LORD, that the plague may be stayed from the people. 22 And Araunah said unto David, Let my lord the king take and offer up what seemeth good unto him: behold, here be oxen for burnt sacrifice, and threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen for wood.23 All these things did Araunah, as a king, give unto the king. And Araunah said unto the king, The LORD thy God accept thee.

24 And the king said unto Araunah, Nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

25 And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

David’s purpose was to purchase the threshing floor.

c.Araunah sensed the urgency for appealing to God to stop the plague So he offered to give the property to David, plus the oxen and wood necessary for the atoning sacrifice—all without any charge whatsoever. And in making the offer, he uttered the prayer that God would accept David's atoning sacrifice in behalf of the people.

d.  But David insisted on the basic principle for all worship and service: true sacrifice demands payment. David was unwilling to offer the Lord anything that cost him nothing. "If there is no cost, there is no real sacrifice." Consequently, David insisted on paying for the property and the animals to be used in sacrifice.

e.  As quickly as he could, fighting against time to stop the plague, David bought the property and built the altar on the hill where the threshing floor sat. Soon afterward he offered the substitute, atoning sacrifice through the Burnt Offerings and the Peace or Fellowship Offerings

3.  Accepting the substitute, atoning sacrifice offered by David, the Lord forgave David's sins and answered the prayer of His servant. The Lord stopped the hand of His chastisement and judgment.

If we approach God through the substitute sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, God will forgive our sins. No matter what we have done and no matter how terrible the wickedness, God will have mercy upon us and accept us. And He will deliver us from the judgment to come. Through Jesus Christ—through His atoning, substitutionary sacrifice upon the cross—God will save us from sin and death and the judgment to come. This is the strong declaration of God's Holy Word:

Ga 1:4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:

Ga 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. {for the: or, by the}

1Pe 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1Pe 3:18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1Jo 3:16 Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

Isa 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

David had extended Israel's territorial borders to control more land than ever before or since, including up to this present day and time. Under his brilliant leadership and military genius, David had carried Israel to the height of its glory, a glory that would be experienced and enjoyed under Solomon's leadership, but a glory that would never again be achieved by Israel.

After purchasing the land upon which the future temple was to be built and sanctifying the holy ground with the offering of atoning sacrifices, the great book of *Second Samuel* could now be closed. With his task now finished, David could die and go to be with the Lord. All things had now been prepared for his son Solomon to take up the mantle of leadership and build the temple in all of its magnificent glory. Thereafter, down through the pages of history, God's people would always look back upon the life of David and draw enormous encouragement. For in the life of David we see a man who suffered as many trials and temptations as any person who has ever lived. From the earliest days of his life as a mere adolescent threatened by the king, he bore the trials and distress of being in constant warfare and conflict, often being hunted down as a fugitive, even by his own sons who were seeking to take his life and to assume for themselves the power of the throne. In looking at his life, we also see that the promises of God are fulfilled in the life of a person whose heart is *right with God*. The life of David serves as an example of a man who had a heart *just like God's*.

*David foreshadowed the actions of Jesus, the ultimate son of David, who also gave sacrificially on a hill near Jerusalem for his people so that an even more tragic plague might be stopped. David's climactic sacrifice involved the use of wood and blood on a hill outside the city; so did Jesus' sacrifice. David's sacrifice stopped a physical plague that had taken the lives of many Israelites; by Jesus' wounds the new Israel likewise has "been healed" because "he himself bore our sins in his body".*

*Christ is our altar, our sacrifice; in him alone we may expect to find favour with God, to escape his wrath, and the sword, the flaming sword, of the cherubim who* keep the way of the tree of life.