**Repentance by David (1 Chronicles 21:22-27)**

 Repentance often entails a payment – sometimes you have to pay a price as you repent. Greetings dear brothers and sisters in Christ, as we examine an interesting episode in the life of David. We’ve heard so much about David’s good works that we have not thought about the fact that he also made his fair share of mistakes too. Today’s passage is taken from 1 Chronicles, where David has already committed a sin against the Lord by taking a census without inquiring of the Lord. God had given him a choice of a punishment for the sin (due to his willingness to repent), and the king had preferred to be punished directly by God’s hand by choosing a three-day pestilence to strike the nation by the angel of the Lord. After the punishment had run its course, the angel had shown David the means by which he needed to express his repentance. David needed to build an altar in the field of Ornan the Jebusite and offer up a burnt offering there. So, he immediately made his way there, and we suddenly notice that the owner of the land is cowering and hiding from the angel of destruction. It is exactly at this point that an important conversation takes place in the passage. Thus, today we’re going to focus on these few verses to see how God’s most famous king performed the deeds connected to his expression of repentance. Repentance often entails a payment – sometimes you have to pay a price as you repent. Let us move onto our topic of repentance…

 If you have repented for your sin, then do the work that the Lord has placed on your heart. David could have very easily accepted Ornan’s field for free. But David had always been generous in his sacrifices to the Lord, and he used to approach God’s presence with fear and trembling. Yes, there were a number of times when he had been careless about following the Lord’s commandments, but in general, he respected the Lord greatly – especially the three prophets Samuel, Nathan, and Gad and their messages from the Lord. David found himself in the middle of a great tragedy. He wanted to show that he knew that his sin was not a light instance of disobedience - rather, that having used his kingly authority forcefully upon his general, he had forced Joab to do the census against the will of the Lord. The deed was such an abomination to the general that he did not even do it completely. So, David’s sacrifice needed to correspond to that, (somehow)…

 Of course, we know that the price of sin is death, and at that time (under the law of Moses) an animal had to die; but David wanted to give more than just that. His nation had paid a severe price for his sin. Seventy thousand people had died in the three-day plague. He had grieved God’s heart by his disobedience. And he, personally, because he was a man that was always living or attempting to live according to God’s heart, wanted to show as much as he could that he was ready to sacrifice up to everything for that relationship (with God) to be on solid ground again with his Creator.

Congo News tells of a very old woman who was being examined recently by the native pastor for baptism and showed by her testimony that she fully understood the plan of salvation. When the day for baptism arrived, the old lady hesitated at the church door and said that she must go and fetch something from her house. When she came back, she walked right to the front of the church, laid a small fetish on the ground, and then quietly took her place with the other women. Serious looks were on every face, for they all knew that the "medicine" she had put there was "lightning medicine," the last that any of them is willing to give up. Her father had been killed by lightning years before, and never had she been without her fe­tish to protect her from the same fate. Having found Jesus as her Lord and Savior, she was willing to trust Him for all.

So, what about us? How do we act in repentance? Or do we simply say, to the Lord, “I repent! I turn away!” and then go straight back to our old ways… Or, do we, with sacrifice, sometimes even with the readiness to burn and annihilate idols, turn back to our Savior and Lord? Let’s think for a moment: What idols or spiritual obstacles do we have in our lives? Is it entertainment, or a bad relationship? Is it a material bondage, or a psychological one? Is it fear, or is it anger?

When we intend to repent and turn from our sins, it is necessary to take a practical step in order for the repentance to be more than just an emotional game we play. Otherwise, we are fooling ourselves with our comfortable habits. If our bondage is a material one, then let us get free of it by sacrificing and prayerfully becoming generous. If our bondage is a bad or unhealthy relationship, or a broken one, be it in the family or among friends, let us revisit our boundaries, our approach, or even the relationships themselves as a practical expression of our repentance. If our bondage is an addiction, let us first make a decision, going to the Lord, to cut off and throw away from our lives that which leads us to sin, and if necessary, get medical and Christian leadership involved in order to renew and revive ourselves. Whatever the sin may be, we can defeat it because Jesus has crushed the power of sin, and He has given us the ability to defeat it. Therefore, may our repentance be a genuine antidote for us. May we realize that repentance has a practical application. Repentance comes with a price to be paid. Let us not be afraid to repent. Let us not be late in coming back to the Lord – because our relationship with God is the factor that decides life and death. If you have repented for your sin, then do the work that the Lord has placed on your heart. Repentance often entails a payment – sometimes you have to pay a price as you repent. The Lord bless you. Amen.