

FLAMMABLE

"SURRENDER TO THE FLAMES"

2 SAMUEL 24:18-25

This Week's Core Competency

Worship – I worship God for who he is and what he has done for me. Psalm 95:1-7

- 1 Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD;
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before him with thanksgiving
and extol him with music and song.
- 3 For the LORD is the great God,
the great King above all gods.
- 4 In his hand are the depths of the earth,
and the mountain peaks belong to him.
- 5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.
- 6 Come, let us bow down in worship,
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;
- 7 for he is our God
and we are the people of his pasture,
the flock under his care.

"Worship" is a common word that occurs frequently in the Bible (254 times in the NIV). Scripture tells us others did it, commands us to do it, informs us about it, and gives us pictures of it, but nowhere does it give us a concise definition of it. As far as its etymology is concerned, in the Old Testament "the general word is 'abodah, from 'abad, to labour, to serve, and usually translated 'the service of God'. To describe the specific act of worship, the word commonly used in *hishtawah*, from *shaha*, to bow, to prostrate oneself . . . [in the New Testament] corresponding to 'abodah is *latreia*, meaning originally servitude—the state of a hired labourer or slave, and thence the service of God—divine worship. Corre-

Worship is response.

– Ralph P. Martin

sponding to *hishtawah* we have *proskuneo*—to prostrate oneself, to adore, to worship" (*A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, "Worship," by J. S. McEwen). Worship denotes service to God and humble adoration. In a nutshell, "worship is response [which] demands that worshipers offer their best. True worship yields a human response that is thoughtful, costly, and offered with a worthiness corresponding to the worth of God" (Ralph P. Martin, "The Purpose and Meaning of Worship," in *Leadership Handbook of Preaching and Worship*, ed. James D. Berkley, 141, 42, italics added).

The notion that sincere worship is costly is evident in both the Old Testament and the New. In 2 Samuel 24:24 David is negotiating with Araunah for the purchase of his threshing floor on which the king intends to build an altar to the LORD. When Araunah offers it to him for free, along with oxen for the sacrifice, David replies: "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." Moreover, in Malachi 1:6-14, the LORD condemns his people for showing him contempt by bringing blemished sacrifices of little worth. He chides them, saying: "When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" (v. 8). In the New Testament, sincere worship implies the ultimate sacrifice, the worshipper's own body. Paul tells his Roman readers: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship."

As "response," worship also implies "encounter." It implies prior perception of who God is and what he

cont. pg. 2

has done. One writer brings the ideas of "encounter" and "response" together nicely in his less academic definition of worship. He writes: "So what is true worship? Worship, I believe, is a divine encounter that touches many dimensions of my personhood. It is an encounter in which God's glory and word and grace are unveiled, and we respond, in songs and prayers of celebration" (Gary M. Burge, "Liturgical Worship," in *Experience God in Worship*, ed. Michael D. Warden, 59).

day **1** ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

2 Samuel 24:18-25

18 On that day Gad went to David and said to him, "Go up and build an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." 19 So David went up, as the LORD had commanded through Gad. 20 When Araunah looked and saw the king and his men coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

21 Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?"

"To buy your threshing floor," David answered, "so I can build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped."

22 Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take whatever he pleases him and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing sledges and ox yokes for the wood. 23 O king, Araunah gives all this to the king." Araunah also said to him, "May the LORD your God accept you."

24 But the king replied to Araunah, "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels of silver for them. 25 David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the LORD answered prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

Read verses 1-17 also

Again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go and take a census of Israel and Judah."

2 So the king said to Joab and the army commanders with him, "Go throughout the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and enroll the fighting men, so that I may know how many there are."

3 But Joab replied to the king, "May the LORD your God multiply the troops a hundred times over, and may the eyes of my lord the king see it. But why does my lord the king want to do such a thing?"

4 The king's word, however, overruled Joab and the army commanders; so they left the presence of the king to enroll the fighting men of Israel.

5 After crossing the Jordan, they camped near Aroer, south of the town in the gorge, and then went through Gad and on to Jazer. 6 They went to Gilead and the region of Tahtim Hodshi, and on to Dan Jaan and around toward Sidon. 7 Then they went toward the fortress of Tyre and all the towns of the Hivites and Canaanites. Finally, they went on to Beersheba in the Negev of Judah.

8 After they had gone through the entire land, they came back to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.

9 Joab reported the number of the fighting men to the king: In Israel there were eight hundred thousand able-bodied men who could handle a sword, and in Judah five hundred thousand.

10 David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing."

11 Before David got up the next morning, the word of the LORD had come to Gad the prophet, David's seer: 12 "Go and tell David, 'This is what the LORD says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.'"

13 So Gad went to David and said to him, "Shall there come on you three years of famine in your land? Or three months of fleeing from your enemies while they pursue you? Or three days of plague in your land? Now then, think it over and decide how I should answer the one who sent me."

14 David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into the hands of men."

15 So the LORD sent a plague on Israel from that morning until the end of the time designated, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died. 16 When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD was grieved because of the calamity and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand." The angel of the LORD was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

17 When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD, "I am the one who has sinned and done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall upon me and my family."

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* Circle "altar" in v. 18.

* Bracket "Araunah the Jebusite" in v. 18.

* Box "as" indicating *comparison* in v. 19.

* Circle "threshing floor" in v. 21.

* Box "so" indicating *purpose* in v. 21.

* Circle "plague" in v. 21.

* Circle "burnt offering" in v. 22.

* Circle "threshing sledges" in v. 22.

* Highlight v. 24a.

* Circle "fellowship offerings" in v. 25.

day **2**

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Why did David need to build an altar?
2. Why was this altar to be built on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite?
3. Why did David have to "go up" to negotiate with Araunah?
4. Doesn't David's purpose for buying the threshing floor (v. 21) fly in the face of what had already happened (v. 16)? Explain.
5. Put Araunah's generous offer to David in a nutshell.
6. Why might he be so quick to be so generous?
7. How would you characterize his final words to David?
8. Why did David refuse such a generous offer?
9. **Discussion:** A sacrifice that costs nothing, i.e., a "free sacrifice," is an oxymoron, is it not? Talk about your takeaway from this passage.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

The account of David's negotiation with Araunah the Jebusite over the purchase of his threshing floor, recorded in 2 Samuel 24:18-25, ends the story of David's sin and Israel's punishment that begins in 24:1. Why the author would end the book with this story is a bit puzzling.

On the one hand, one commentator says: "At first glance, our historian appears to have chosen a peculiar way in which to conclude 1-2 Samuel. David conducts a census against Joab's advice, and the nation suffers a bitter plague as a result. Under the direction of Gad the prophet, David acquires a new piece of land in Jerusalem, builds an altar, and offers a sacrifice to Yahweh. The books of Samuel conclude with a brief statement that Yahweh answers David's prayer and stops the plague. Technically, the story of David continues into the first two chapters of 1 Kings, making this chapter especially odd as a conclusion to 1-2 Samuel" (Bill T. Arnold, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Samuel*, 643). On the other hand, a different commentator says: "Chapter 24 provides a fitting conclusion to the story of David by calling attention, once more and finally, not only to his ambition and pride, but also to his humility and remorse" (Ronald F. Youngblood, "1 and 2 Samuel," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 3:1095), making him the archetypal king of Israel. To which another adds: "Every spiritual leader would do well to read this story once a year!" (Charles R. Swindoll, *David: A Man of Passion and Destiny*, 282).

The story through verse 17 can be summarized as follows: David wanted to know how many "fighting men" were available to him in Israel and Judah, so he ordered Joab and his officers to take a census and enroll them. Joab, his commander-in-chief, tried to dissuade the king from doing "such a thing," pointing out that the Lord could multiply the number "a hundred times over," whatever it might be. But David refused to listen, and Joab carried out his order.

It didn't take long for the king to recognize that he had sinned and to ask for forgiveness. In the words of the text: "David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the LORD, 'I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, O LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing'" (v. 10). It's

a prayer worth memorizing! Gad then went to David and announced he could have his choice of punishments. He could "pick his poison," so to speak, so he chose "three days of plague," deeming it wiser to fall into the hands of a merciful God than into the hands of men.

David got what he asked for when God sent a plague, which took 70,000 lives (or perhaps 70 military units) throughout the land from Dan to Beersheba. Jerusalem, however, was spared. When the death-angel stretched out his hand to destroy the city, the Lord was grieved over the calamity and cried: "Enough! Withdraw your hand" (v. 16). The prayer of David that follows in verse 17 is remarkable in that he admits his fault again and invites God's judgment on himself rather than his people. One writer comments: "The imagery of the king as shepherd of his people alerts David to responsibility rather than privilege, and to self-sacrifice for the sake of others" (Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, TOTC, 297).

Where the calamity ended was also where Gad directed David to build an altar—which brings us to verses 18-25. David went up to the threshing floor overlooking his city to negotiate with Araunah for his threshing floor. When asked the purpose behind his visit, David told the Jebusite: "To buy your threshing floor . . . so I can build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped." His words are a little confusing since it appears that the plague had already stopped (cf., v. 16). In any case, Araunah offered to give the king what he asked for along with oxen and wood for the sacrifice. But David would have none of it. His memorable words are recorded in verse 24: "No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." The offerings David sacrificed were voluntary offerings of worship, personal dedication, thanksgiving, and fellowship.

If this scene has its own *upper* story, we might say that it's about God who is worthy of the best we have to give in worship. If it has a *lower* story, it's about David, a man after God's own heart, who refused to sacrifice to the LORD offerings that cost him nothing.

The Message of the Passage

*Acknowledge who God is and what he has done for you
by offering him the best you have to give in worship.*

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the three "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

- **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

“Surrender to the Flames”

(Use the space below for Sunday's message notes)

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 18 **Gad** Cf., v. 11. The prophet was formerly called a "seer" (1Sa 9:9). "He acted as a kind of chaplain to the king, communicating to him the message of the Lord, and in this case putting to him three possible disasters, of which he was to choose one" (Baldwin, 296), and telling him to build an altar (v. 18).

v. 18 **altar** After the plague stopped (v. 16), David was to build an altar in order to sacrifice to the LORD. "David needed to commit himself again to God (the burnt offering) and to renew his fellowship with God (the peace offering, v. 25). God instructed him to present these sacrifices at the place where He had shown mercy (v. 16). David willingly obeyed (v. 19). According to Jewish tradition, 'Abraham came and offered his son Isaac for a burnt-offering at that very place . . .'" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 2 Samuel," 2016 ed., 100, www.soniclight.com).

v. 18 **Araunah the Jebusite** At the very least, Araunah was a citizen of Jerusalem (Eugene H. Merrill, "2 Samuel," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 482). Perhaps he was much more. One commentator writes: "Araunah is likely a title rather than a personal name, and many assume he was the last Jebusite king of Jerusalem" (Arnold, 646). "Araunah (Ornan, 1 Chron. 21) was a native Jebusite, so probably his land had never been sanctified (set apart) to Yahweh as other Israelite land had (cf. v. 23; note 'Yahweh your God,' though Araunah may simply have been speaking politely)" (Constable, 100).

v. 21 **threshing floor** "Threshing floors were usually on a height, in order to catch every breeze; some area to the north of David's city is indicated, and the site of the Temple, overlooking the Kidron valley, would certainly make good sense, though in this account no mention is made of the Temple (contrast 1 Ch. 22:1)" (Baldwin, 297).

v. 21 **plague** David sinned by numbering the people (vv. 1-3, 9-10); after he confessed and repented, the Lord gave him three options to be carried out against him. "David must be punished, but he may 'pick his poison' from three options (vv. 12-13) . . . David's choice of punishment is rooted in his faith: 'Let us fall into the hand of the Lord, for his mercy is great' (v. 14)" (Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, Interpretation, 353). "Required to choose between famine, military defeat, or plague (24:13), David surprises us again. He concludes that the judgment of mortals is unpredictable, where as God's judgment is consistently moderated by his mercy (24:14): 'Let us fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercy is great.' His repentance in verse 10 is genuine because he has become first and foremost a man of faith. He trusts God enough to fling himself on God's mercy rather than calculate the costs of suffering at the hands of mortals. In this again, David has become this narrative's portrait of the ideal king of Israel" (Arnold, 645).

v. 22 **burnt offerings** Cf., Lev 1; 6:8-13; 8:18-21; 16:24. Its purpose: "Voluntary act of worship; atonement for unintentional sin in general; expression of devotion, commitment and complete surrender to God" (*The NIV Study Bible*, 150). "The burnt offering symbolized the entire surrender to God of the individual or of the congregation, God's acceptance thereof, with a view to the renewal and sanctification of the entire man and consecration to a course of life pleasing to God. The law of sacrifice does not teach that the burnt offering had any reference to atonement or forgiveness of sins, provision being made therefore by the atoning sacrifices (sin and trespass offerings)" (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "sacrificial offerings").

v. 22 **threshing sledges** "Sledges were made of long planks of wood fixed side by side. Flints were sunk into the underside of the timber and fixed there by pitch. The sledge was driven over grain about eighteen inches (fifty centimetres) in depth and was a much quicker way of getting the job done. The grain fell through the straw to the hard surface beneath, but the straw was chopped up by this method. Chopped straw made excellent fodder for animals, for mixing with the grain. Later still a more sophisticated sledge was invented in which sets of toothed rollers replaced the flints" (Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*, 97).

v. 25 **fellowship offerings** Cf., Lev 3; 7:11-34. Its purpose: "Voluntary act of worship; thanksgiving and fellowship (it included a communal meal)" (*The NIV Study Bible*, 150). "The peace offerings have their root in the state of grace with its fellowship with God, and find their culminating point in the sacrificial feast. They served to establish the Hebrew more firmly in the fellowship of the divine grace; to be mindful of God when in possession and enjoyment of the divine mercies; and when adversity threatened to obscure his feeling and consciousness of God's nearness and mercy, he might be enabled, through the peace offering, to maintain this feeling and consciousness, and quicken them afresh" (*Unger's Bible Dictionary*, s.v. "sacrificial offerings").

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

In her book, *Teaching Kids Authentic Worship*, Kathleen Chapman explores the idea of "familiarity." In regards to the skills of advertisers she observes "the world is targeting our children from every possible angle—and doing it on purpose! They are extremely successful, and we can learn from their successes. Teaching must be done on purpose and over and over again." We spend a lot of time teaching our children how to develop good manners, hygiene and habits. Over time we see these behaviors become second nature as we train them consistently. Between the ages of birth and five, children are the most impressionable. Ages five through twelve are the next most valuable time slot to influence kids. After twelve years of age, many beliefs and attitudes are already formed and hard to change. "We have such a brief period of opportunity to impress children with God's character. We can't overlook this rich opportunity. If it takes familiarity, then let's saturate, immerse, soak, inundate and engulf our kids with God! Do it over and over again until the habit penetrates the heart and it becomes part of who they are." While bringing your children to church is valuable and we cherish the opportunity to partner with you, most of this training must be done at home. You have the most access to their tender hearts. I am praying for you as you make God known in your home this week!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read 2Sa 24:18-25

1. What did Gad tell David to do?
2. How did Araunah answer when David asked to purchase his threshing floor?
3. What was David's response in verse 24?

What Do You Think

1. What do you think David meant when he said "I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing"?
2. What does worship "cost" you?

What R U Going To Do

Go to the following website with your parents and look at pictures of God's beautiful creation. He is a creative, awesome God!

<http://photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photo-of-the-day/landscapes/>

Core Comp

Worship - I celebrate God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Memory Verse

Heb 12:28-29 - *Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed Scrolls _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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