Was it 50 shekels or 600 shekels? Does this mean the Bible contradicts itself?

Answer:
Let’s read the two verses in question:

> *2 Samuel 24:24*
> “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.”

> *1 Chronicles 21:25*
> “So David paid Araunah six hundred shekels of gold for the site.”

At first glance, this seems like a contradiction. But when we look more closely, we see that both accounts are correct—they’re just describing different parts of the same event.

In 2 Samuel, the focus is on the immediate purchase of the threshing floor and the oxen used for sacrifice. That smaller portion cost 50 shekels of silver. David urgently needed this to build an altar and offer sacrifices to the Lord to stop the plague that had struck Israel because of his sin in taking a census (see 2 Samuel 24:10–15).

In contrast, 1 Chronicles 21 speaks of the entire site—a larger area that would later become the location for Solomon's Temple. David paid 600 shekels of gold for the whole property. This larger purchase likely happened after the immediate crisis, ensuring that the place would belong fully to the Lord for future use in worship.

This passage shows David's heart for genuine worship. He said, *"I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing"* (2 Samuel 24:24). This reveals a key principle of true worship: it must come with personal cost and sincere devotion.

Additionally, by securing the entire site (as recorded in 1 Chronicles), David was not just solving a temporary problem but also laying the foundation for the future temple, where generations would come to seek God. This reflects a long-term,

covenantal perspective—worship isn’t just about the moment, but about building a lasting place for God’s presence among His people.

The fact that two writers (Samuel and the Chronicler) highlight different costs only enriches our understanding. One emphasizes the sacrificial heart in the moment; the other emphasizes the permanent dedication of sacred space to God.

There is no contradiction. David paid 50 shekels of silver for the threshing floor and oxen (2 Samuel 24:24), and later 600 shekels of gold for the entire site (1 Chronicles 21:25). Each verse simply highlights a different part of the transaction.

This teaches us that in worship, God deserves our best—both in the immediate and in the long-term. True sacrifice costs us something, and honoring God sometimes means going beyond what is required, to what is truly worthy of Him.

May the Lord bless you as you seek to worship Him in truth and sincerity.

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Do the accounts in 1 Chronicles 21:25 and 2 Samuel 24:24 contradict each other regarding the amount King David paid for Araunah’s land?

GROUP….

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