

Bringing Up The Ark (2 Sam. 6)

To Bring Up The Ark (2 Sam. 6:1-2)

1 Again David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim.

- David’s new mission was to enthrone the Lord in Jerusalem. He would bring up the Ark to Jerusalem, and Jerusalem would be known as the Throne of the Lord.
- When the Israelites received the Ark back, they rejoiced at first. Later, men were killed for treating the Ark in a disrespectful manner. *“Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? And to whom shall it go up from us?”* (1 Sam. 6:20)
- God is greater than the Ark, of course, although it is the sign of His Presence with His people. The writer calls God YHWH of Armies, who dwells between the cherubim. (Cherubim are the mighty angels who surround God’s Throne.)

Understanding The Ark Of The Covenant

The Ark was a chest of acacia wood covered with gold. It was rectangular, about 4’ long, 2.5’ wide, and 2.5’ deep. It had rings through which poles could be inserted for carrying it. God had instructed Moses on how it should be made, handled and transported.



- The hollow Ark was covered with a “mercy seat.” A cherub was at each end.
- Unlike similar objects of other nations, there was no god carved on this Ark, for the God of Israel cannot be pictured, drawn, or carved. God is a Spirit.
- Numbers 7:89 reveals that God spoke to Moses from the mercy seat.

- Heaven was viewed as God’s Throne, the Earth His footstool (Isa. 66).
- David would say, “...*I had it in my heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and for the footstool of our God...*” (1 Chron. 28)

- The Ark was sometimes called the Ark of Testimony, because it was meant to remind the people of God’s Covenant with them. It held the tablets of the Law, a pot of manna, and Aaron’s rod which miraculously budded.

- The Ark could only be carried according to God’s instructions: it must be cloaked, and carried by Levites, using its poles. In the Tabernacle and Temple, no one could see the Ark or look at the Presence of God which rested upon it.
- Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement.

A New Cart (2 Sam. 6:3-5)

3 So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. 4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. 5 Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the LORD on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals.

- This is a picture of mixed worship: man’s religion and flesh, mixed with devotion.
- The Philistines had sent the Ark back to Israel on a cart a generation earlier. Now the Israelites themselves place the Ark on a new cart.
- Did they feel they were honoring God by putting Him on a cart? But we cannot worship God or carry His Presence any old way we choose.

God Breaks Out Against Uzzah (2 Sam. 6:6-8)

6 And when they came to Nachon’s threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. 7 Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God. 8 And David became angry because of the LORD’s outbreak against Uzzah; and he called the name of the place Perez Uzzah to this day.

- Uzzah committed sacrilege, because the Ark was not to be handled.
- David was angry... and how do **we** respond to this story?
- David called the place *Perez Uzzah*, or *breaking out against Uzzah*. After a recent battle with the Philistines, he had named the battlefield *Baal Perazim*, Lord of the Breakthrough. But now God was breaking forth against Israelites!

In The House Of Obed-Edom (2 Sam. 6:9-11)

9 David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, “How can the ark of the LORD come to me?” 10 So David would not move the ark of the LORD with him into the City of David; but David took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. 11 The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months. And the LORD blessed Obed-Edom and all his household.

- David was angry, but he also feared the Lord. Like the men of a generation ago, he must have wondered how anyone could handle the things of Yahweh.
- Obed-Edom was from Gath, but probably not the Philistine’s Gath. It’s quite possible that he shows up in 1st Chronicles as a Levite and a musician. His family carried things when Israel was traveling in the wilderness.
- Obed-Edom and all his household are being blessed while the Ark is there. God’s heart is to bless us, but we must come to Him through the way He has appointed!
- David learned this lesson: Psalm 2:11 says, *Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling*. This seems like a strange mixture, but it’s wisdom.

Seeking Out The Ways Of The Lord (1 Chron. 15:1-3, 11-15)

1 David built houses for himself in the City of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it. 2 Then David said, “No one may carry the ark of

God but the Levites, for the LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever.” 3 And David gathered all Israel together at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it...

11 And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites: for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. 12 He said to them, “You are the heads of the fathers’ houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. 13 For because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order.”

14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. 15 And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

- David concludes that God broke out against them because they did not consult Him the first time they tried this. Only the Levites could undertake this duty.
- Seeking God for guidance cannot take the place of our obedience to the Word!
- The mystery of Uzzah’s death was no mystery at all. We go astray because we don’t know the Scriptures *or* the power of God.
- Another command for kings: *Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel. (Deut. 17:18-20)*

Another Attempt (2 Sam. 6:12-15)

12 Now it was told King David, saying, “The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God.” So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness. 13 And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep. 14 Then David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

- Why sacrifice every six paces? The number **six** speaks of Man’s inadequacy in the face of God’s holiness. Our worship and enjoyment of God’s Presence *only* comes at the cost of blood. Access to God cannot be won by Man’s strength (**Uzzah**).
- *Dancing* here means whirling around!
- David wore an ephod, like a priest, and like Samuel before him, although neither was a priest. The worship God seeks is worship in spirit and in truth, not according to our heritage. One day, the way to God would be open for us all!

Set In Place (2 Sam. 6:16-19)

16 Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul’s daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. 17 So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. 18 And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name

of the LORD of hosts. 19 Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house.

- Michal was perhaps unaccustomed to undignified emotion on the part of a king.
- In Saul's house, being a king was all about worldly and fleshly power.
- Saul's daughter? Or David's wife?
- David had built a new Tabernacle in Jerusalem.
- He blessed people in the Name of Yahweh. As a good king, he showed them that God would favor them and bless them, spiritually and materially.

Michal's Reproach (2 Sam. 6:20-23)

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"

21 So David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD. 22 And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor." 23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

- David took off his kingly robes and worshiped like any other man.
- The barrenness of Michal: a spiritual picture!

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