

Session 19 David Brought the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6)

I. THE LORD CHOSE JERUSALEM AS THE PLACE FOR HIS TEMPLE AND THE ARK

- A. After David conquered Jerusalem and built the city up, next he cut off the Philistines who had gathered against them in the Valley of Rephaim about one mile outside of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5). Once Jerusalem was secured, the first act of David as recorded in the Scripture was epic—he brought the ark to Jerusalem. I believe that David understood the significance of bringing the ark to Jerusalem; it was the divinely chosen city. Jesus called it the city of the great King (Mt. 5:35).
1. The Lord spoke to Moses about a place where He would choose to put His name (Deut. 12:5).
⁵But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go. (Deut. 12:5)
 2. God confirmed to Solomon He had chosen Jerusalem as the city in which to build His temple. Jesus will establish the millennial temple on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem. (Jer. 3:17; Zech. 6:17).
⁵“Since...I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have chosen no city...in which to build a house [the temple], that My name might be there...⁶I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people...” (2 Chr. 6:5-6)
- B. The ark was associated with God’s manifested power and presence. It was a symbol of God’s throne and a type of the Lord Jesus, the ultimate King of Israel.
- C. I believe that from his youth David understood that Jerusalem was the city chosen by God even though the Jebusites were still in control of it. David grew up in Bethlehem which was only about five miles south of Jerusalem. After David killed Goliath in the valley of Élan, he cut Goliath’s head off and walked about 10 miles to place his head in Jerusalem. This was a prophetic act.
- D. As a young man, David vowed to dedicate his life to finding a “dwelling place” (Ps. 132:5, 13) for God. His vow included establishing a building in Jerusalem for the ark to be placed. David grew up in Ephrathah (Bethlehem), hearing “revival stories” of God’s power associated with the ark (v. 6).
¹LORD, remember David...²How he...vowed to the Mighty One of Jacob: ³“Surely I will not... go up to the comfort of my bed; ⁴I will not give sleep to my eyes...⁵Until I find a place [a temple to house the ark] for the LORD, a dwelling place for the Mighty One of Jacob.”⁶Behold, we heard of it in Ephrathah [Bethlehem]; we found it in the fields [Kirjath Jearim]. (Ps. 132:1-6)
- E. The ark sat in the small forest village of Kirjath Jearim (lit. *the fields of the forests*) in the house of Abinadab, where it lay neglected for about 70 years. Ephrathah and Bethlehem are the same place (Ruth 1:2; 4:11; 1 Sam. 17:12; Mic. 5:2). Ephrathah was the name of a family in Bethlehem; their importance made their name synonymous with Bethlehem (1 Chr. 2:19; 2:50; 4:4). Bethlehem was about 10 miles from Kirjath Jearim.
- F. David sought to bring the ark to its rightful place of honor in the center of Israel’s life in Jerusalem. The first thing David did after he put the ark in Jerusalem was put singers and musicians in place.

- G. One of the most important lessons seen in 2 Samuel 6 is that “*the end does not justify the means.*”
- H. **The ark:** About 70 years before David brought the ark to Jerusalem, the Philistines captured it from Israel. The ark remained with the Philistines for seven difficult and dramatic months (1 Sam. 5-6). First they put it in the temple of Dagon located in the Philistine city of *Ashdod*. The image of Dagon fell before the ark. They set the Dagon idol back in its place, and the next day it again fell before the ark. Then the Lord struck the people of Ashdod with tumors. They moved to ark to *Gath*; the Lord also struck that city with destruction and tumors. Then they sent the ark to the city of *Ekron*. Again, the Lord sent destruction on that city and those who survived were stricken with the tumors. Finally the Philistines put the ark on a new cart and sent it to Israelite city of *Beth Shemesh*. There the Israelites looked into the ark, whereupon the Lord struck them, killing over 50,000 people. They said, “Who is able to stand before this holy God?” They sent the ark to *Kirjath Jearim*.

II. DAVID SOUGHT TO BRING THE ARK TO JERUSALEM (1 SAM. 6:1-5)

- A. David organized a national gathering that included 30,000 leaders to bring the ark to Jerusalem (6:1-2). David gathered the leaders to Baale Judah (also known as Kiriath Jearim), a small town in Judah where the ark had been kept in the house of Abinadab for about 70 years (1 Sam. 7:1-3).
- ¹David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. ²And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah [Kirjath Jearim] to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts... (2 Sam. 6:1-2)**
- B. They set the ark on a new cart, and Ahio led the procession with his brother Uzzah (6:3-4). This violated the way in which the God commanded Israel to transport of the ark—to carry it on their shoulders (Num. 4:15; 7:9). Years earlier the Philistines transported the ark on a cart (1 Sam 6:7).
- ³So 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. (2 Sam. 6:3)**
- ⁷Now...make a new cart... ⁸Take the ark of the LORD and set it on the cart... (1 Sam 6:7-8)**
- C. **New cart:** We need to understand this because the Scripture emphasizes it as a significant event in David’s life. Even David as God’s chosen and anointed one had to honor God’s ways.
1. God commanded Israel that the Levites transport the ark, carrying it with the poles on their shoulders (Num. 4:15; 7:9). Because the ark was holy, it was to be covered and carried on poles to keep it from the gaze and touch of men who were not consecrated to handle it.
- ⁵When the camp prepares to journey...they shall...cover the ark...⁶They shall put on it a covering...and they shall insert its poles... ¹⁵When the camp is set to go, then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them; but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. (Num. 4:5-15)**
2. David’s zeal and motives were good, but he approached what was holy in a wrong way.
- ¹³...God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order”... ¹⁵So...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. (1 Chr. 15:13-15)**

- D. David led the procession of the ark to Jerusalem with many different kinds of instruments (6:5). They sang and played music with *stringed instruments* like the harp and lyre, and *percussion instruments* as tambourines, sistrums [a rattle], cymbals, and trumpets (2 Sam. 6:5; 1 Chr. 13:8).

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. (2 Sam. 6:5)*

⁸*Then David and all Israel played music before God with all their might, with singing, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on cymbals, and with trumpets. (1 Chr. 13:8)*

III. THE LORD RELEASED HIS JUDGMENT ON UZZAH (1 SAM. 6:6-9)

- A. The oxen stumbled as they were pulling the cart down a hill, and Uzzah put his hand on the ark to steady it so it would not fall (6:6-7). God had commanded Israel not to touch the ark—it was their holiest possession (Num. 4:15). The Lord’s anger burned at Uzzah’s presumptuous action that violated God’s word. This was the third example of God protecting the ark (1 Sam 5:3-12; 6:19-20).

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. ⁷Then 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. (2 Sam. 6:6-7)*

- B. **Leadership lesson:** Obviously new covenant believers will not die for touching a “holy” article in a worship service. But the principle is clear that it is important to approach worship and ministry in a way that the Word instructs us as we seek the fullness of God’s purpose and blessing. Practically, the platform ministry style in some ministry settings today resemble secular pop artists, movie stars, or cultural icons who draw attention to themselves without regard for God’s Word or for God-centered worship or ministry. They are focused on being popular and getting people to respond to them without paying attention to God’s Word in their content, ministry style, or public expression.

- C. David became angry and then fearful because Uzzah was struck dead by the Lord (6:8-9).

⁸*And David became angry because of the LORD’s outbreak against Uzzah...⁹David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, “How can the ark of the LORD come to me. (2 Sam. 6:8-9)*

IV. THE ARK WAS PLACED IN THE HOUSE OF OBED-EDOM (1 SAM. 6:10-12)

- A. David put a pause on his plan to bring the ark with him to the City of David (6:10-12a). He did not want to risk the danger of the ark entering Jerusalem. Later David was told that Obed-Edom was being blessed, not judged as Uzzah. This is the blessing that David wanted for the City of David.

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. ¹¹The 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. ¹²Now 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.” (2 Sam. 6:10-12)*

- B. The ark as a type of Christ was honored in home of Obed-Edom, bringing blessing to his family.

V. DAVID BROUGHT THE ARK TO THE CITY OF DAVID IN JERUSALEM (1 SAM. 6:12-19)

- A. David brought up the ark from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David (6:12b-15). He moved the ark according to the instructions in the Scripture, not on a cart. God's ways are to be done with gladness, but also with reverence and obedience to His leadership and Word.

¹²David...brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness...¹⁴David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod...¹⁶As the ark...came into the City of David, Michal...looked through a window and saw David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. (2 Sam. 6:12-16)

²⁵David...went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-Edom with joy...²⁷David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master with the singers. David also wore a linen ephod. (1 Chr. 15:25-27)

1. **Robe of fine linen:** David laid aside his royal robes to wear a linen ephod that was the ordinary garment of a priest, yet also used by those who were not priests (1 Sam 2:18).
 2. **Despised him:** Michal did not participate in the procession, but watched it from a palace window (6:16). It seems that Michal was offended at David and at God for what happened to her family and so she viewed David and his activities through the critical lens of bitterness.
- B. David set the ark in the tent erected in Jerusalem, then blessed the people and celebrated (6:17-19).

¹⁷So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle [tent] that David had erected for it...¹⁸he blessed the people in the name of the LORD...¹⁹Then he distributed among all the people...a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. (2 Sam. 6:17-19)

VI. MICHAL MOCKED DAVID (1 SAM. 6:20-23)

- A. As David blessed his household, Michal mocked him for his devotion to God (6:20-23). Because David laid aside his royal robes to wear a plain linen ephod she falsely charged him with immodesty. She misrepresented David's actions. She looked on David's zeal as degrading to his high office and therefore to her status. It is common for people to exaggerate situations when they are offended.

²⁰Then 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!"²¹So 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.²²I 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."²³Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death. (2 Sam. 6:20-23)

- B. He was accustomed to being criticized for his zeal for God (Ps. 69:7-10). This is part of his calling.
- C. **Leadership lesson:** When serving in ministry, we must be committed not to overlook our families.