

# 2 Samuel 06 - David Mishandles the Ark; David Relocates the Ark to Jerusalem; Michal Disrespects David's Worship

I. David's faith (2 Sam 1:1—10:19)

(2) Spiritual victory (6:1—7:29)

(A) David returns the Ark to Jerusalem (6:1-23)

## 2 Samuel 6

(2) Spiritual victory (6:1—7:29) (Cf. 1 Chr 13)

(A) David returns the Ark to Jerusalem (6:1-23)

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1 After this, David gathered together again 30,000 men from all of the choicest men of Israel.

1 Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

- David desired the highest purpose for Israel's unity—to worship the One True God as one body

— He yearned to elevate the "city of David" to the "city of God" by establishing Jerusalem as the center of Israel's worship, which meant bringing the symbol of God's presence, the Ark, to Jerusalem

2 And David departed from **Baale-judah**, with all the people who were with him, to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name, the *very* name of the LORD of armies who is enthroned *above* the cherubim.

2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name, the *very* name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned *above* the cherubim.

2 Then David and all the people with him set out from Baal-judah to bring up from there the Ark of God, who is called the Name, the name of the LORD of the Heavenly Armies, and who is enthroned on the cherubim.

2 And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.

- "...Baale-judah" - "masters of Judah"; aka "Baalah"; this was a later name of Kiriath-jearim (Cf. Joshua 15:9-10; 1 Chr 13:6)

— This was where the Ark had rested for 20 years, since the Israelites had removed it from Beth Shemesh (1 Sam 6:12–7:2; Cf. Ps 132:6-8)

For 100 long years the Ark had been separated from the Tabernacle and other places of worship. After its capture by the Philistines at Aphek (1 Sam 4:11) it remained in Philistia for seven months, then briefly at Beth Shemesh, and the rest of the time at Kiriath Jearim. David wanted to bring the Ark into his capital because it symbolized the Lord's presence. As we have seen, David did not believe superstitiously that the Ark for its own sake would bring blessing wherever it went. He viewed Yahweh as the real source of blessing. However, he wanted the people to see that it was important that Israel's God, and what represented Him, should be at the center of national life.

David first went with 30,000 men to Baalah of Judah to bring the Ark from the house of Abinadab, its custodian. Described as that which bore the name of God Himself, the Ark represented the presence of God who dwelled among His people in a special way (Cf. Ex 25:22). As such, it was to be handled with reverence, even in its transportation from place to place. The Law specified that it be carried by Levites who would bear it on their shoulders by means of poles passed through gold rings attached to the Ark (Ex 25:14; Cf. Num 4:15, 20). Even the Levites could not touch the Ark or even look in it because of its holiness.

3 They had mounted the ark of God on a new cart and moved it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart.

3 They placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart.

3 They mounted the Ark of God on a new cart and brought it from Abinadab's home in Gibeah, with Abinadab's sons Uzzah and Ahio driving the new cart.

3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drave the new cart.

- Unfortunately, David did not move the Ark according to the specifications of the Mosaic Law, but according to customary practice (as the Philistines had done, Cf. 1 Sam 6:7-8)

— The Israelites were so far removed from the Mosaic Law at the time that not even the priests and Levites thought to consult God's Law

— The Law stated that Levites were to carry it on poles, not on a cart. His commands in the Law came with a gracious warning of the consequences for disobedience (Ex 25:14-15;

Num 3:30-31; 4:1-15).

This incident teaches us that God's work must be done in God's way to secure God's blessings.

J. Vernon McGee labeled this chapter: Doing a Right Thing in the Wrong Way.

4 So they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Ahio was walking ahead of the ark.

4 So they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Ahio was walking ahead of the ark.

4 As they left Abinadab's house in Gibeah accompanied by the Ark of God, Ahio was walking ahead of the ark.

4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

5 Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of *instruments made of* juniper wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.

5 Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of *instruments made of* fir wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals.

5 David and the entire assembly of Israel were dancing in the presence of the LORD with all of their strength, accompanied by all sorts of wood instruments, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.

5 And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

- The use of musical instruments was common in Israel's worship as may be seen, for example, in Psalm 150 where most of the same instruments are listed

6 But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, because the oxen nearly overturned *it*.

6 But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen nearly upset *it*.

6 When they arrived at Nacon's threshing floor, Uzzah reached out and grabbed the Ark of God because the oxen had stumbled.

6 And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.

- Along the way they passed over a rough outcropping of stone, a threshing place belonging to Nacon (or Kidon; 1 Chr 13:9), and the oxen stumbled, threatening to throw the Ark from the cart

— Instinctively Uzzah, one of the attendants, laid hold of the Ark to prevent its fall, an act of irreverence that cost him his life

7 And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his **irreverence**; and he died there by the ark of God.

7 And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God.

7 Just then, the anger of the LORD blazed against Uzzah, and God struck him down right there because of his failure, and he died there beside the Ark of God.

7 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.

- "...irreverence" - "rashness"; the harshness of the LORD's discipline must be seen in the light of His absolute holiness, which requires that sacred tasks be done in a sacred manner (Cf. notes on 1 Sam 6:19—7:2)

— Joy was immediately replaced by terror, confusion and anger. How could God do such a thing? Did God not care that the people meant well?

— These questions are asked when we determine that "bad" things happen to "good" people. Yet when we look at the Ark instead of Uzzah, we ask what caused a generation of people to neglect the same Ark that a previous generation had experienced and enjoyed in God's full glory.

— Why does God let people ignore His obvious presence? How did God's Law about revering His holy name slip the minds of people in their worship?

8 Then David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzzah; and that place has been called Perez-uzzah to this day.

8 David became angry because of the LORD's outburst against Uzzah, and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day.

8 David flew into a rage because the LORD had killed Uzzah. That's why that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day.

8 And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perez-Uzzah to this day.

- Since God had "broken out" in wrath on Uzzah, David named that place Perez-Uzzah ("outbreak against Uzzah")

— David was angry, but God taught him that obedience is more important than good intentions and religious ritual (Cf. 1 Sam 15:22)

— David also learned a lesson about God's holiness

He who had experienced wonderful protection over the years from the Lord his God, and had known unusual intimacy with him, had to come to terms with the fact that he had overstepped the mark, and presumed upon the relationship, by failing to observe the regulations laid down to safeguard respect for God's holiness. Though Jesus taught us to call God our Father, he also taught us to pray "hallowed be thy name," implying the need to pay careful attention lest privilege becomes presumption.

The death of Uzzah was a lesson similar to the deaths of Nadab and Abihu (Lev 10:1-2), Achan (Joshua 7), and Ananias and Saphira (Acts 5:1-11). All these people failed to take God seriously at the beginning of a new phase of His kingdom program. What we do is important, but how we do it is also important. Coming close to doing God's will is not enough even though we have the best of motives; David wanted to honor God. We need to practice radical obedience; we need wholehearted commitment to God's will as His disciples.

9 So David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?"

9 So David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?"

9 But David feared the LORD that day, and asked, "How can the Ark of God come to me?"

9 And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?

- David's initial rage quickly turned into fear

10 And David was unwilling to move the ark of the LORD into the city of David with him; but David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite.

10 And David was unwilling to move the ark of the LORD into the city of David with him; but David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

10 As a result, David was unwilling to take the ark of the LORD into his care in the City of David. Instead, David left it at the home of Obed-edom the Gittite.

10 So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite.

11 The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite for three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

11 Thus 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.

11 So the ark of the LORD remained for three months in the household of Obed-edom the Gittite while the LORD blessed Obed-edom and his entire household.

11 And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obed-Edom, and all his household.

- During the three month the Ark stayed with Obed-edom the Gittite, David evidently did some Bible study and discovered how God had instructed His people to move the Ark (Cf. 1 Chr 15:1-13)

**12** Now it was reported to King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, on account of the ark of God." So David went and brought the ark of God up from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with joy.

**12** Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, on account of the ark of God." David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

**12** Later on, David was informed, "The LORD has blessed the home of Obed-edom and everything he has since he's in possession of the Ark of God." So David went out joyfully and brought up the Ark of God to the City of David from Obed-edom's home.

**12** And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obed- Edom, and all that pertaineth unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom into the city of David with gladness.

- David recognized God's blessing upon the house of Obed-Edom while the Ark resided there, which made him all the more eager to bring the Ark to Jerusalem

— Overcoming failures through faithful obedience multiplies thanksgiving and praise

Most scholars place David bringing the Ark into Jerusalem at the beginning of his reign, because of where the writer placed this incident in the text. However, a few have argued that this event occurred toward the end of David's reign. The basis for this view is 1 Chr 15:1, which says David pitched a tent for the Ark after he built houses for himself. These houses likely were David's palace structures that Hiram helped him build (5:11). Since Hiram reigned in Tyre only during the last part of David's reign, the building of his palace must have occurred late in David's reign (980-978 BC). After that, David built a tent for the Ark and brought the Ark into Jerusalem, as the writer recorded in this chapter (977 BC).

13 And so it was, that when those carrying the ark of the LORD marched six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened steer.

13 And so it was, that when the bearers of the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling.

13 After those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed oxen and fattened animals,

13 And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

- The procession began again, this time according to divine requirement

— As the Ark was carried along, David offered sacrifice, dressed in priestly attire (a linen ephod), and dancing and shouting for joy with the Israelites

14 And David was **dancing** before the LORD with all *his* strength, and David was wearing a linen ephod.

14 And David was dancing before the LORD with all *his* might, and David was wearing a linen ephod.

14 dancing in front of the LORD with all of his strength and wearing a linen ephod.

14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.

- "...dancing" - literally, "whirled"; there is no NT evidence that dancing as a form of worship was used in the Jewish synagogue or in the early church

— The Greeks introduced dancing into worship in the post-Apostolic church, however it was difficult to distinguish "Christian dances" from those honoring pagan gods, so the church abandoned the practice

Why did God not express His wrath over David functioning as a priest? Were not the priests the only individuals who could offer sacrifices to the Lord?

According to the Mosaic Law, individual Israelites were to bring their sacrificial animals to the sanctuary and slay them themselves (Lev 1:3-5; 3:2; 1 Chr 16:1-2). Only the priests were to place the blood and other parts of the animals on the altar (Lev 1:5; 3:2,5). David did this as a priest after the order of Melchizedek, fulfilling the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant, rather than as an Aaronic priest serving under the Mosaic Covenant. David realized he was the king promised to the patriarchs (Gen 17:6; 49:10; et al.) for whom Israel had been looking (Cf. 1 Sam 2:10).

As for the sacrificing of oxen and fatlings, one need not think that David offered these himself. It was he who ordered this done, but the work certainly was performed by priests and Levites that he had invited to be on hand. After all, considerable work is involved in sacrificing, and a large number of animals were sacrificed. The work of many men would have been required (Cf. 1 Kings 3:4).

Some other Davidic kings functioned religiously as well, though not always properly (1 Kings 3:4; 8:62-63; 2 Chr 26:16-19).

15 So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with joyful shouting and the sound of the trumpet.

15 So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouting and the sound of the trumpet.

15 So David and the entire assembly of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and trumpet blasts.

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.

- David's disobedience the first time brought anger and fear (v8-9); obedience (the second time) resulted in him experiencing and expressing great joy

— People often think that complete obedience to God will make them less happy, but the opposite is true: we only experience full joy when we follow God's will completely

David wrote Psalm 68 to celebrate God's conquest of Jerusalem and the triumphal ascent of God up to Mt. Zion when David brought the Ark up to Jerusalem.

**16** Then it happened, as the ark of the LORD was coming into the city of David, that Michal the **daughter of Saul** looked down through the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and **she was contemptuous of him** in her heart.

**16** Then it happened as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

**16** As the ark of the LORD was coming into the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal was peering out a window, watching King David jumping and dancing in the LORD's presence, and she despised him in her heart.

**16** And 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 dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

- "...daughter of Saul" - by referring to Michal in this way, the writer linked her attitude with her father's

— She apparently did not understand, appreciate, or approve of David's reasons for bringing the Ark into Jerusalem

— She seems to have looked at kingship in the same way as her father: she believed the human king was the ultimate authority, and everyone should honor him

- "...she was contemptuous of him" - Michal seemed to believe that the king should avoid mixing with the people; she despised David for the qualities that made him great

— Michal's barrenness was a blessing from the Lord as it prevented Saul's family from continuing in Israel and threatening the throne of David

17 Now they brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent which David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

17 So they brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent which David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

17 They brought in the ark of the LORD, set it in place inside the tent that David had erected for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings in the presence of the LORD.

17 And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

- The tent David pitched for the Ark in Jerusalem was not the Tabernacle of Moses (1 Chr 21:28-30; 2 Chr 1:3-6)

— We don't know why David did not move the Tabernacle from Gibeon to Jerusalem

18 When David had finished offering the burnt offering and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of armies.

18 When David had finished offering the burnt offering and the peace offering, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.

18 After David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of the Heavenly Armies

18 And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts.

19 Further, he distributed to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a cake of bread, one of dates, and one of raisins to each one. Then all the people left, each to his house.

19 Further, he distributed to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a cake of bread and one of dates and one of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed each to his house.

19 and distributed to all the people—the entire multitude of Israel, including both men and women—a cake made of bread, one made of dates, and one made of raisins to each one. Then all the people left, each headed for home.

19 And he dealt among all the people, even among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine. So all the people departed every one to his house.

- David's blessing of the people (v18) and giving them cakes made with fruit was a sign to them that God, who was in their midst, would bless them as He promised
- Fruit was a common symbol of fertility

**20** But when David returned to bless his *own* household, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel dignified himself today! For he exposed himself today in the sight of his servants' female slaves, as one of the rabble shamelessly exposes himself!"

**20** But when David returned to bless his household, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel distinguished himself today! He uncovered himself today in the eyes of his servants' maids as one of the foolish ones shamelessly uncovers himself!"

**20** When David returned to bless his household, Saul's daughter Michal came out to meet him and called out, "How the king of Israel honored himself today by undressing himself right in front of his women staff members, just like any pervert would dare to expose himself!"

**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 to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!

- The people responded positively to David's leadership, but Michal rejected it
- She rebuked him for removing his kingly robes and identifying with his people as their priestly, servant leader
- She despised David for his humility before the Lord
- She evidently believed that he should have behaved in a more distinguished manner
- The Lord blessed Obed-Edom with a large number of descendants (v12), however David's intended blessing on his own household was nullified by Michal's criticism of her husband

**21** But David said to Michal, "*I was* before the LORD, who preferred me to your father and to all his house, to appoint me as ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. So I will celebrate before the LORD!

**21** So David said to Michal, "*It was* before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; therefore I will celebrate before the LORD.

**21** But David replied to Michal, "It was in front of the LORD, who appointed me to replace your father and his entire household by selecting me as Commander-in-Chief over Israel, the people of the LORD, that I danced in front of the LORD.

**21** And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD.

22 And I might demean myself *even* more than this and be lowly in my own sight, but with the female slaves of whom you have spoken, with them I am to be held in honor!"

22 I will be more lightly esteemed than this and will be humble in my own eyes, but with the maids of whom you have spoken, with them I will be distinguished."

22 I'm going to act more shamelessly than this, even to humbling myself in my own eyes. Now as to the women staff members about whom you have spoken, they are to hold me in honor!"

22 And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.

- David defended his actions, affirming that he had done nothing wrong. Michal had impugned his holy zeal to be nothing but exhibitionism, a charge which hurt him deeply.

23 And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

23 Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

23 And Saul's daughter Michal bore no children from that day on until the day she died.

**23** Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.

- David apparently separated from her and she never had any children

— This was God's judgment on Michal, and prohibits any possibility that David and Michal would produce an heir who would unite the families of David and Saul

### **Application**

(1) Does anger at God's wrath show we want only part of God—His grace, but not His perfect Law or holy character?