

## On God's Terms

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Glory & Presence / 2 Samuel 6; 1 Chronicles 15

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### INTRO

We've followed the Ark of the Covenant through loss, judgment, and return. The ark was not simply a religious item, gold covered box, but it represented the glory and presence of God—it was his footstool on earth, where He said He would meet with His people. Israel however, treated the presence of God casually, lost the Ark to the Philistines, and then mishandled it again when it came back – revealing that their greatest problem was never military defeat, but spiritual drift. God proved He could defend His own glory when the ark was in Philistine territory, yet His people showed they still did not know how to live rightly before His holiness when the ark was returned.

Now, years later (somewhere between 70-90 years—Samuel—>Saul—>David), King David seeks to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. But once again, zeal goes before obedience, and the holiness of God confronts the king himself. In [2 Samuel 6](#), we will see failure, correction, and finally joyful, reverent worship – as David learns that the glory and presence of God is not something to manage, but something to approach on God's terms.

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### 2 Samuel 6 ESV

<sup>1</sup> David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. <sup>2</sup> 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, which is called by the name of the LORD of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim.

### 1 Chronicles 13:2-3 ESV

<sup>2</sup> And David said to all the assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you and from the LORD our God, let us send abroad to our brothers who remain in all the lands of Israel, as well as to the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasturelands, that they may be gathered to us. <sup>3</sup> Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek it in the days of Saul."

### 2 Samuel 6 ESV

<sup>3</sup> And they carried 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, were driving the new cart, <sup>4</sup> with the ark of God, and Ahio went before the ark. <sup>5</sup> And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. <sup>6</sup> And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. <sup>7</sup> And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God.

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## **1: DAVID'S LOVE FOR THE LORD IS SEEN IN HOW HE PURSUES GOD'S PRESENCE**

NOTE: THE ARK & GOD'S PRESENCE WAS NOT SOUGHT IN THE DAYS OF SAUL

- Saul had been a proud and self-willed king
- Saul lacked the fear of God... further he feared man – he cared more about what people thought than what God required of him.
- In the cases where Saul seemed to seek God, he was not genuinely inquiring of God, but rather he sought to use God as the means to get what he wanted.
- THEREFORE, Saul WAS NOT a man after God's own heart
- Ultimately, Saul's repeated disobedience and the neglect of the ark during his reign reflected a broader spiritual drift in Israel, where seeking the Lord was no longer central to national life.

ON THE OTHER HAND, DAVID SOUGHT THE LORD AND HIS PRESENCE AND LED THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL TO DO THE SAME

- David's attempts to bring the ark to himself in Jerusalem happens early in his reign and signals a major shift.
  - His kingdom is one that seeks to honor, worship, and glorify God.
  - He was going to be a king that sought the Lord and spend time in His presence.
  - Having the ark near him would be key to this pursuit.

## **2: DAVID'S FIRST ATTEMPT REPEATED THE ERRORS OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS**

### NOTE THE REPEATED ERRORS:

- They eagerly worship, but without paying attention to the details God demanded of them.
  - Again, good motivations (love for God) don't excuse disobedience to His commands
- They put the ark back on a cart
  - This idea traces its roots back to how the philistines handled the ark, not how God instructed Israel to
  - Uzzah put out his hand to steady the ark and was struck for his irreverence
    - You might think that's extreme, but God commanded that the ark be carried... and carried by a specific clan of the Levites.
    - Further, God warned that no one was to touch the ark.
    - Putting the ark on a cart instead of carrying led to the inevitable consequences.

### **Q: Are there any areas in our lives where we are just copying the behaviors and customs of the unbelieving world RATHER than submitting to and obeying the WORD OF GOD?**

- Often times the problem is that we don't know the WORD for ourselves to observe it.
- Unfortunately, for many... we know and still don't obey.

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### **2 Samuel 6 ESV**

<sup>8</sup> And David was angry because the LORD had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. <sup>9</sup> And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" <sup>10</sup> So David was not willing to take the ark of the LORD into the city of David. But David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. <sup>11</sup> And 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. <sup>12</sup> And it was told King David, "The LORD has blessed the household 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 rejoicing.

### **1 Chronicles 15:2 ESV**

<sup>2</sup> Then David said that no one but the Levites may carry the ark of God, for the LORD had chosen them to carry the ark of the LORD and to minister to him forever.

### **1 Chronicles 15:12-15 ESV**

<sup>12</sup> and said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites.

Consecrate yourselves, you and your brothers, so that you may bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. <sup>13</sup> Because you did not carry it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not seek him according to the rule." <sup>14</sup> So the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>15</sup> And the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

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## **3: DAVID RESPONDED TO HIS FAILURE CORRECTLY**

### HIS ANGER WAS AIMED AT HIMSELF FOR BEING FOOLISH

- Scholars note his anger was not directed at the Lord
- It's possibly that he was frustrated at Uzzah, but ultimately the responsibility fell to David and it was there his anger was directed.
- David as the king and orchestrator of the event should have ensured proper protocols

### HE HAD A PROPER FEAR OF THE LORD

- V9: He fears God, but He still longs for his presence.
- He still wants to bring the ark to himself
  - Compare to the response of Beth-Shemesh—send the ark away
- But his holy fear of God prevents him from taking one more step in disobedience
  - Can we say the same for ourselves?
  - When we fail, do we run to God OR continue unrepentant away from Him?

### HE PLACED THE ARK WITH OBED-EDOM

- This wasn't a random placement.

- Obed-edom was a Levite of the family of the Korahites, who sprang from Kohath (compare [Ex. 6:21](#); [18:16](#), and [1 Chron. 26:4](#)), and belonged to the class of Levitical doorkeepers, whose duty it was, in connection with other Levites, to watch over the ark in the sacred tent ([1 Chron. 15:18, 24](#)).
- This is his first step of correction: take the ark out of Abinadab's household and back into the proper Levitical/Kohathite household to care for the ark.
- But he doesn't leave it there, upon hearing God blessing Obed-Edom's home, he seeks again to bring it to Jerusalem (where he lives)
  - (by the way, what a message of grace and mercy after judgment)
    - God, doesn't withhold his blessings and mercies after judgment.
    - Rather, He's quick to show them toward those who fear Him.

#### DAVID CORRECTED HIS ERRORS ON THE SECOND ATTEMPT

- Only the proper Levites can carry the ark (sorry sons of Abinadab)
  - No more carts and oxen/cows
  - Only authorized Levites with proper ancestry could carry it
- Further, he has them consecrate themselves—prepared properly to show God the honor he is worthy of.
  - This speaks to the diligence David observed to obey and honor the Lord.

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#### **2 Samuel 6 ESV**

<sup>13</sup> And when those who bore the ark of the LORD had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal. <sup>14</sup> And David danced before the LORD with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod. <sup>15</sup> So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn. <sup>16</sup> As the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, 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. <sup>17</sup> And they brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. <sup>18</sup> And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts <sup>19</sup> and distributed among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins to each

one. Then all the people departed, each to his house.<sup>20</sup> And David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' female servants, as one of the vulgar fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!"<sup>21</sup> And David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD—and I will celebrate before the LORD.<sup>22</sup> I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in your eyes. But by the female servants of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor."<sup>23</sup> And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

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#### **4: DAVID HUMBLER HIMSELF BEFORE THE LORD IN WORSHIP**

##### HIS WORSHIP WAS FIRST ROOTED IN OBEDIENCE

- He sought to honor the Lord through diligent obedience first
- Then he proceeded to honor the Lord in song, dance, and rejoicing

##### DAVID OFFERED SACRIFICES FREELY TO THE LORD

- They carried the ark six steps and then he sacrificed an ox and fattened animal.
- No one was compelling him to do this, he gave to the Lord freely in joy.
- This is the mark of true sacrificial giving—its not compelled by others, but done in joy and worship

##### DAVID DANCED BEFORE THE LORD IN A LINEN EPHOD

- The ephod was the garment that priests wore, but its noted that the one David wore was fairly simple.
- David dancing with all his might before the ark wouldn't necessarily be out of place except he was the king.
- He was setting aside his royal garments and dignity in order to take up the clothes and attitude of a servant.
  - I think this is what pleased the Lord that day.
  - This is also what fueled Michal's disgust towards David—that he would humble himself rather than walk in stately pride (like her father).

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## **CONCLUSION | RESPONSE**

### **A: ARE WE MORE LIKE SAUL OR DAVID IN OUR APPROACH TO GOD?**

- Are we self-willed and prideful OR faithful and humble?
- Do we harden our hearts in disobedience OR keep our hearts tender towards God?

### **B: CAN WE KEEP OUR HEARTS TENDER IN FAILURE? WHAT ABOUT IN DISCIPLINE?**

### **C: DO WE WEAR THE GARMENTS OF A HUMBLE, FAITHFUL SERVANT WHEN WE WORSHIP OR DO WE KEEP OUR DISTANCE FROM THE LORD BY DONNING OUR PRIDE (RATHER THAN PRAISE)**

### **D: REMEMBER THAT OUR GOD IS A GOD WHO IS:**

- Quick to forgive and show mercy to those who fear Him.
- Delights to be with us—to be near and not far