

“Lessons from the Life of David” – Pastor Jim Ruddy

Study # 24 – 2 Samuel 6:1-10

“How Shall The Ark of the LORD Come To Me?”

I. THE ARK OF THE LORD 6:1-10 Note: 1 Chr. 13:1-13

A. A VISIBLE EXPRESSION

1. THE ARK DESIRED

- Soon after securing Jerusalem as his capital, David was eager to make it the religious center of national life by establishing God’s throne in the midst of the city.
- Foremost in David’s mind is the most venerated object of Israel’s past and present, the Ark of the Covenant. cf. Ex. 25-27

2. THE ARK DESCRIBED

- The Ark was an oblong chest made of acacia wood, gold-plated inside and out and rimmed with a border of gold. Its pure gold lid – the mercy seat – held two cherubs of hammered gold, with wings outstretched over the cover. Four rings were placed in the sides of the Ark and poles were placed through the rings for use in carrying. cf. Ex. 25
- The Ark was a visible symbol of the presence of God and of His covenant with Israel. It was the repository of the covenant, the place of atonement, and the throne of the invisible Yahweh.
 - cf. Heb. 9:1-7; 1 Sam. 4:4; 1 Chr. 28:2
- David consulted with the leaders

3. THE ARK DISPLACED

- During the days of Eli the priest / judge, the Philistines had captured the Ark in battle. cf. 1 Sam 4:1-11
- Because it brought them only trouble and embarrassment, (1 Sam 5), they returned the Ark to Israel. cf. 1 Sam 6:1-9
- The men of Beth-shemesh committed sacrilege by looking into the Ark and were struck down. cf. 1 Sam 6:10-20
- The survivors of Beth-shemesh asked the men of Kariath-jearim to take the Ark away, and it was brought to the house of Abinadab.
 - cf. 1 Sam 6:21-7:1; 2 Sam. 6:1,2

B. AN HONORABLE DESIRE v1-2

- Since the worship of God had been sadly neglected during the reign of Saul (cf. 1 Chr. 13:3), David sought to restore the Ark, and thus worship, to its rightful place. cf. 1 Chr. 10:13-14
- David conferred with his officers before announcing to the people his desire to undertake this grand venture. cf. 1 Chr. 13:1-4
- There would now be at the center of Israel, a Tabernacle that hosted the presence of God, and within, an Ark of testimony to the covenant God had made with His people, and a mercy seat that made it all possible.

C. A FATAL MISTAKE v3-7

- A great procession accompanied the moving of the Ark “on a new cart,” identical to what the Philistines had used. cf. 1 Sam. 6:1-14
- David ecstatically lead the way, as the people rejoiced “with all their might” with songs of thanksgiving. cf. 1 Chr 13:5-8
- As the procession reached “Nachon’s threshing floor” (note: 1 Chr. 13:9 says “Chidon”), the unthinkable happened. When the oxen stumbled, and the Ark began to topple, Uzzah touched the Ark to steady it and was instantly struck dead. cf. Num. 4:15

D. AN UNDERSTANDABLE RESPONSE v8-10

- David was greatly confused and was afraid of God that day.
 - Fear always follows where faith is not fully exercised and when we fail to walk in the ways of God.
- The “LORD of the breakthrough” who had routed the Philistines had now “broken-out” against His own people. cf. 2 Sam. 5:20
- Having experienced God’s disfavor, David takes no further risks, but orders that the Ark should be brought to the house of Obed-Edom, a Levite from Gath who lived in the region. cf. 1 Chr. 15:17-18
- Under the circumstances, Obed-Edom was probably concerned and not especially overjoyed to take custody of the Ark.
- The tremendous crowd then returned to Jerusalem in consternation and dismay!

II. THE LORD OF THE ARK

A. GOD’S ORDER

- In his zeal to bring the Ark to Jerusalem, David overlooked God’s command on how to move it properly. cf. Deut. 17:14-20
 - There is a wrong way of doing a right thing!
 - The Ark was not to be hauled around on an ox-cart but to be carried on the shoulders of the Levitical priests.
 - cf. Num. 3:6-10; 27-31; 4:15; 7:9; 10:21
- David later admits that the breach had been caused because he had not done things according to “the proper order.” cf. 1 Chr. 15:13
 - David had followed a Philistine precedent rather than the Levitical procedure!

B. GOD’S HONOR

- In light of his good intentions Uzzah’s punishment seems severe and excessive. Yet, because the majesty of the Holy One was firmly associated with the Ark, God was enforcing the sanctity of all that pertained to the service of the Most High. cf. 1 Chr. 13:10
- Anything that is introduced into the worship of God that is contrary to His requirements is deserving of His judgment. (Threshing floor!)
- David learned that if he desired to go forward in peace and in effective fellowship with God, he must always inquire of His Word and be governed thereby.