

Bringing the Ark Home – 2 Samuel 6:1-23

Introduction:

David has established Jerusalem as his military capital, as well as his political capital. Jerusalem would be the most important city in all Israel. Even this was not enough. Jerusalem must also be established as the religious center of the nation. The Jewish nation was formed by God, by his design and calling. The symbol of God's presence was the Ark of the Covenant, so it must be brought to the new capital city of the nation. For seventy years the Ark had rested in Kirjath-jearim. It was time to bring the Ark to a new home. Was David ready for what this might imply? This is the theme of chapter 6.

The Ark Located and Readied for Transport – 2 Samuel 6:1-4

1. What does David do according to verse 1? How many men does he have with him? How does this number compare to the number of soldiers lost when the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:10)?
2. Where has the Ark been "resting" for the past many years (v. 2)?
3. What in verse 2 helps us to know the Ark of the Covenant is a sacred and important item for the nation?
4. How is the Ark transported according to verse 3? Compare that with how it got to Judah in 1 Samuel 6:7.
5. Who are Uzzah and Ahio (vss. 3-4)? What are we to assume their role was?

The Death of Uzzah – 2 Samuel 6:5-11

6. Verse 5 describes the atmosphere as the Ark was being moved to Jerusalem. What was it like that day as the journey began?

7. What happens as the procession comes to the threshing floor of Nacon (v. 6)? What was Uzzah's natural response to this situation?
8. What happens to Uzzah according to verse 7? Why? (ref. 1 Chronicles 13:1-14)
9. What is David's initial response to what happens to Uzzah (v. 8)? What name is given to this spot where this happened?
10. David has a second response to this event, which is quite different from that described in verse 8. What is it (v. 9)? What does David feel about the Ark now?
11. What course of action does David take at this point (v. 10)? What seems odd about David's choice of who would be the caretaker of the Ark?
12. How long did the Ark stay at Obed-edom's place? What happened while the Ark was resting there? Why might this happen?

The Ark is Moved to Jerusalem – 2 Samuel 6:12-15

13. What message does David receive about the Ark (v. 12)? What is his response to this message?
14. The last time David was in contact with the Ark he was fearful (v. 9). What is the mood this time when he is moving the Ark (v. 12)? What changed?
15. In verse 13 we appear to have a different mode of transport for the Ark. Earlier we were told about a new ox cart. How does the Ark appear to be moved here (cf. 1 Chronicles 15:2)? Has David learned something?
16. What else did David do as the Ark was being moved along (v. 13)?
17. In verse 14 we read of David's participation in the procession. What is he doing? David is wearing a linen ephod, the garments of the priests, and not his battle gear. Why?
18. David is certainly in a jubilant mood as the Ark comes into Jerusalem. In 1 Chronicles 14 we are told the tabernacle has been built and made ready to receive the Ark there. How do the people respond to this event (v. 15)?

David and Michal – 2 Samuel 6:16-23

19. What is Jerusalem called in verse 16? Who is living there? What is her response to David's enthusiasm for God?
20. What provision had David made for the Ark (v. 17)?
21. In verse 17 it says that David is offering burnt offerings and peace offerings to God. Why would we question the literal understanding of that verse (cf. 1 Samuel 9:9-14)? We read in 1 Chronicles 15 & 16 that David offered sacrifices but we also read that he was establishing the worship according to God's instructions. What do you think happened that day?
22. What did David do in verse 19?
23. What gifts did David give to all the people who gathered to celebrate the arrival of the Ark of the Covenant (v. 19)? Why might he do this?
24. David had blessed the people, and now he returns home to bring the blessing to his household. He is met at the door by Michal, daughter of Saul. What is her response to all that has happened that day (v. 20)?
25. David reminds Michal of an important truth in verse 21. What is it? What will David's response be to the God who chose him?
26. What seems to be at the heart of the issue according to verse 22? What is David's response?
27. In verse 27 we seem to have God's opinion on who acted correctly that day. What happens?

Conclusion:

David is at the pinnacle of his career. He is now king of both the northern and southern kingdoms. He has established a capital city for his armies and his throne, and now he also establishes it as the center of worship for the nation. This move to bring the Ark into Jerusalem is very significant, as it is a confession that the

presence of God is necessary for there to be good government. David was not boasting in what he has done, but is drawing the attention of the people to God, the One who called them as a nation, gave them this land, and now established David as their king.

The glory was to go to God. The celebration was in honour of God's victory, not David's. This event is an event of worship, complete with sacrifices for atonement of sins and thanksgiving. It is about the community celebrating together.

Sadly Michal does not share this passion for the God of Israel. In fact, she does not see that David is worshipping God, even in his exuberant dancing, but instead she sees him flaunting himself to the women of the city. She does not share his passion for God, and this rift in their marriage resulted in barrenness for Michal. She might have had aspirations of being part of a dynasty where her father ruled first, then her husband and then her son. But she would have no son, because she had nothing in common with her husband. They had drifted too far apart.

David said he was willing to be humbled before God. He would soon enough understand what that truly felt like. But this day, God is honoured and worshipped by the king, and the people followed after their king. It was a good day for the kingdom – for all but Michal.