

2 Samuel 6: The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

David again assembled all the picked men of Israel, thirty thousand in number. Then David and all the people who were with him set out for Baala of Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which bears the name “the LORD of hosts enthroned above the cherubim.” They transported the ark of God on a new cart and took it away from the house of Abinadab on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the cart, with Ahio walking before it, while David and all the house of Israel danced before the LORD with all their might, with singing, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, sistrums, and cymbals. As they reached the threshing floor of Nodan, Uzzah stretched out his hand to the ark of God and steadied it, for the oxen were tipping it. Then the LORD became angry with Uzzah; God struck him on that spot, and he died there in God’s presence.

David was angry because the LORD’s wrath had broken out against Uzzah. Therefore that place has been called Perez-uzzah* even to this day. David became frightened of the LORD that day, and he said, “How can the ark of the LORD come to me?” So David was unwilling to take the ark of the LORD with him into the City of David. David deposited it instead at the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

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. When it was reported to King David that the LORD had blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he possessed because of the ark of God, David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the City of David with joy. As soon as the bearers of the ark of the LORD had advanced six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. Then David came dancing before the LORD with abandon, girt with a linen ephod. David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouts of joy and sound of horn. As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal, daughter of Saul, looked down from her window, and when she saw King David jumping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart. They brought in the ark of the LORD and set it in its place within the tent which David had pitched for it. Then David sacrificed burnt offerings and communion offerings before the LORD. When David had finished sacrificing burnt offerings and communion offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts, and distributed among all the people, the entire multitude of Israel, to every man and every woman, one loaf of bread, one piece of meat, and one raisin cake. Then all the people returned to their homes.

When David went home to bless his own house, Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet him and said, “How well the king of Israel has honored himself today, exposing himself to the view of the slave girls of his followers, as a commoner might expose himself!” But David replied to Michal: “I was dancing before the LORD. As the LORD lives, who chose me over your father and all his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people, Israel, not only will I make merry before the LORD, but I will demean myself even more. I will be lowly in your eyes,

but in the eyes of the slave girls you spoke of I will be somebody.” Saul’s daughter Michal was childless to the day she died.

Reflection Questions:

1. David dancing before the Ark is often compared to John the Baptist “leaping” in Elizabeth’s womb in front of Mary. Do you see anything else in this passage that reminds you of Jesus’ life?
2. How does King David justify “exposing himself” in front of all of Israel? Why is Michal wrong in reprimanding him?
3. How can you be more like King David in your own prayer life?