

Exegetical Notes – 2 Samuel 6:1-23

Prepared by Charles H. Jensen for Cornerstone Fellowship

101 Kyllies Road, Coatesville, PA 19320

610-384-1375

charleshjensen@aol.com

2 Samuel 6:1-23

Verses 1-5

¹ David again brought together all the able young men of Israel—thirty thousand. ² He and all his men went to Baalah in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name, the name of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim on the ark. ³ They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart ⁴ with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. ⁵ David and all Israel were celebrating with all their might before the LORD, with castanets, harps, lyres, timbrels, sistrums and cymbals.

- David assembled Israel's army, composed of 30,000 young men. He took Israel's army to Baalah, also known as Kiriath Jearim, to bring the Ark of the Covenant from there to Jerusalem.
- For information about the Ark of the Covenant see Exodus 25:10-22 and Deuteronomy 10:1-5. The Ark was considered to be the most holy object Israel possessed. The mercy seat on top of the Ark was considered to be God's throne on earth. The Ark was lost in battle to the Philistines (see 1 Samuel 4:1-5:12). When it was returned to Israel it was placed at Kiriath Jearim (see 1 Samuel 6:1-7:2) It had been there until David decided to bring it to Jerusalem.
- David and the priests put the Ark on a new cart. Specific instructions had been given regarding the moving of the Ark and the other furniture in the Tabernacle (see Numbers 3). The furniture, including the Ark was to be carefully covered by the priests and carried by them from place to place. They were warned not to touch the objects they were moving under threat of death. Apparently, David and the priests were unaware of these instructions. They placed the Ark in a cart which had never been used before. This shows great respect for it, but they ignored the word of God in how to move the Ark.

- Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of the High Priest, Abinadab, had been sent by their Father to accompany the Ark on its journey to Jerusalem. Ahio was leading the oxen pulling the cart and Uzzah was walking beside the ark to be sure nothing happened to it.
- David and his men were accompanying the Ark. They were singing and praising God as the procession moved towards Jerusalem.

Verses 6-7

⁶ When they came to the threshing floor of Nakon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. ⁷ The LORD's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down, and he died there beside the ark of God.

- (See Numbers 4:15) The oxen stumbled, and the Ark seemed to be about to fall out of the cart. Uzzah put his hand on the Ark to steady it. The Lord's anger broke out against Uzzah because he had touched the Ark in violation of the word of God. Uzzah died beside the Ark for his offense.

Verses 8-11

⁸ Then David was angry because the LORD's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah.

⁹ David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, "How can the ark of the LORD ever come to me?" ¹⁰ He was not willing to take the ark of the LORD to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. ¹¹ The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the LORD blessed him and his entire household.

- In David's mind, he was trying to do a good thing. However, he had not asked God about doing this, nor had he done it according to the instructions God had given. David named the place "Perez Uzzah" which means outbreak against Uzzah. He, apparently, thought that God's punishment of Uzzah was his fault and unfair.
- David resolved that he should not attempt to move the Ark to Jerusalem. He placed it in the house Obed-Edom and left it there for three months. Obed-Edom was a Levite; one of those into whose care the Ark had been placed by the command of God. While the Ark was in his house, Obed-Edom was noticeably blessed by God.

Verses 12-15

¹² Now King David was told, “The LORD has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God.” So David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those who were carrying the ark of the LORD had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the LORD with all his might, ¹⁵ while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

- David heard of God’s blessing on the household of Obed-Edom. So he decided to renew his efforts to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. He, apparently, wanted God’s blessing on his capitol city.
- “Those who were carrying the Ark,” apparently, some research had been done and, this time, the Ark was being moved according to God’s instructions.
- Every six steps, the procession stopped and a sacrifice was made to God.
- David, stripped of all his kingly robes, danced in praise to God, without restraint, as the procession made its way to Jerusalem.
- All those with David praised God as they made their way to Jerusalem with the Ark.

Verse 16

¹⁶ As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart.

- As the Ark entered the city, David was dancing before it without restraint.
- One of David’s wives, Michal, King Saul’s daughter, was watching the procession from a window in the palace. She was embarrassed by David’s unking-like behavior and despised him for so lowering himself before the people.

Verses 17-19

¹⁷ They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD. ¹⁸ After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. ¹⁹ Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of

raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.

- David placed the Ark in the place prepared for it. He made appropriate sacrifices in gratitude to God for allowing the Ark to be brought to Jerusalem. He gave gifts to the people and then sent them home.

Verses 20-23

²⁰ When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!”

²¹ David said to Michal, “It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”

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

- David also went home. Michal met him before he arrived at the palace. She confronted him with her disgust. She accused him of being a vulgar man because he had danced, “half-naked,” in front of slave girls.
- David reminded her that he had danced in praise to God. He reminded her that God had rejected her father and his household and chose him to be king of Israel.
- David declared that his praise to YHWH would not be limited to that which Michal and other people deemed acceptable. He declared that his praise would be “even more free and undignified” in the future.
- Michal had no children. This was considered God’s curse on her for upbraiding the king for the way he worshiped, but may mean that David did not visit her as his wife after this.

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon based on 2 Samuel 6:1-23. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. All rights are reserved by Cornerstone Fellowship & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)