

2 Samuel 6

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- [0:00] Well, we're going to crack straight on with chapter 6 of 2 Samuel.! So do be turning there. Last week I realised I was not going to be able to do both 5 and 6.
- If you listened back to the recording last week, then I do apologise for the poor quality. But I have every confidence this week that it will be crystal clear. But what we covered last week in 2 Samuel 5 was the ascension of David to the throne of Israel at last.
- So he had been installed over Judah for seven and a half years. But last week we saw him finally installed over the whole of Israel. And we talked about the amazing patience that he had exhibited.
- He didn't take anything by force. He waited until Israel, all the leaders of Israel, came to him and said, let's do this thing. And then we saw the capturing of Jerusalem.
- Jerusalem, right by Mount Moriah, which will become the capital for Israel and indeed remain so today, three and a half thousand years later.
- [1:09] Amazing. And then we also saw last week David successfully fending off the indignant Philistines who were less than thrilled at David taking the throne and consolidating power.
- Now today we're covering chapter 6, as I said, and it breaks down into five parts, the text does, which are on the screen. But before we get into it, if you look at verse 2 in the Bible, you will note that it says this, it refers to the ark of God, which is called by the name, the very name of the Lord of armies who is enthroned above the cherubim.
- So the ark is our focus today. And I thought, well, we really do need to take a moment or two or ten to talk about the ark. What is the ark?
- What is its history? Because we can't understand what happens today if we don't understand that background. So we're going to spend a bit of time on the ark first, and then we'll get into the text. So the ark, the ark of God.
- The Hebrew word Aaron just means a chest or a box or even a coffin. It's not used exclusively for this particular item.
- [2:22] In fact, it's still used in modern Hebrew today for a storage chest. And most synagogues today, I am reliably informed, will have in it Aaron HaKodesh, which means holy box.
- And in that holy box, they will have their Torah scrolls and their scriptures. So it's not an intrinsically unique word. I will say also that it's a different word from Noah's ark, interestingly.
- Now, I would have you just turn to Exodus 25 to see something there, please. Exodus 25. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, you'll remember, I'm sure, that they had many years of wandering in the wilderness, 40 years.
- And they didn't need to do that, but they did that because of disobedience. But in that time, God commanded them to build what was, in effect, a mobile temple, a mobile sanctuary.

It's known as the tabernacle. And the ark was constructed as part of the furnishings for the tabernacle. Now, in Exodus 25, it is the dramatic scene when Moses has gone up the mountain, Mount Sinai, and he is speaking with God, and he is receiving from God the Ten Commandments.

[3:38] And he had the commandments. But now he's receiving this, basically, blueprints. And the first on the list is this Aaron, this box. Verse 10, Exodus 25.

Now they shall construct an ark of acacia wood, two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. You shall overlay it with pure gold inside and out.

You shall overlay it, and you shall make a gold molding around it. You shall also cast four gold rings for it and fasten them on to its four feet. Two rings shall be on the one side of it and two rings on the other side of it.

And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. You shall put the poles into the rings on the side of the ark to carry the ark with them. The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark.

They shall not be removed from it. You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you. And you shall make an atoning cover of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide.

[4:46] You shall make the two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the atoning cover. Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end, and you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the atoning cover at the two ends.

And the cherubim shall have their wings spread upwards, covering the atoning cover with their wings and facing one another. The faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the atoning cover.

There you shall put the atoning cover. Oh, then, sorry. You shall put the atoning cover on top of the ark and you shall put, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you.

There I will meet with you and from above the atoning cover from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of a testimony. I will speak to you about every commandment that I will give you for the sons of Israel.

Okay, there's a lot there, but I wanted to read the whole thing because there's many details in there that are pertinent today. Just to aid your visualization, this is a little picture of the ark of the covenant.

[5:53] We don't really know what the cherubim looked like. We do know that it is roughly that kind of a size. A cubit, if you don't know, is the distance from the elbow to the fingertip.

So it's about that, which means it is an approximation. It's roughly half a meter. So the dimensions of the ark would have been around one and a quarter meters long and around 75 centimeters wide and tall.

So about that. And you can see there that the ark has these gold rings at the base and the poles that are meant to be permanently installed. And indeed it will contain the testimony, which means the two stones of the Ten Commandments.

And then you've got on the top that atoning cover. This is a lid. It's traditionally called the mercy seat. It's a single Hebrew word, *kaporet*.

And that word derives from the word for ransom or atonement, which is why atonement cover is a better way. It's a good way to express the meaning of that word. The day of atonement, Yom Kippur, *Kipporet*, Kippur, it's the same root.

[7:01] Atonement, day of atonement. And there are these two cherubim or cherubim, as we butcher it in English on the top. What is a cherub?

Honestly, we don't know what they look like. I mean, we sang about them today, right? Cherubim and seraphim. But they're angelic beings and they've got wings. And much more than that, we can't say.

Yes, we do have Ezekiel. Good luck understanding that. And those visions. They are very, very incredible creatures.

Spiritual beings. Angels. Angels. So now, the ark. So it goes into a place called the most holy place or the holy of holies. That is, it goes into the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle, the temple of God.

And God says, there I will meet with you, Moses. There I will meet with you between the two cherubim. I will speak to you about every commandment. Not everyone can go in.

[8:02] Moses was able to go in. But in general, going forwards, the answer is that only the high priest can go in. And he can only go in once a year, indeed, on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

I just wanted to give a quick reading from Hebrews here. Hebrews 9 is gold, by the way, for connecting all this together. Really, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of Hebrews will help you massively.

But let's read this bit. Now, when these things have been so prepared, those furnishings, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle, performing the divine worship.

But into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

So that's clear. In fact, actually, we can read that bit next. This is Numbers 4, verse 20. They shall not come in to see the holy objects, even for a moment, or they will die.

[9:02] So this is the holiness of that place. You don't just go in. One does not simply walk in to see the Ark of God. Not even if you are the high priest.

How then was it moved? How... I've said that it was a portable temple. A portable temple. How was it moved? Well, Numbers 4 actually has the instructions for that.

And to save on reading, I will say, to summarize, it was done only by a division of the Levites, the Kohathites. And they did it without ever looking at it.

They took down the veil that separated the most holy place, and they carried it in, and over the Ark it went. And they never looked at the Ark.

The poles were already there, and it says how they would take the poles, they would adjust them, make sure they're ready, and up it would go. They'd never look on the Ark. Amazing.

[10:00] Holy, holy, holy. Though the eye of sinful man, thy glory may not see. And indeed, we could talk about the Day of Atonement.

Leviticus 16 has the full instructions. That one day when the high priest would go in. But the summary is, a very holy item, it represents the presence of God.

God is conceived of as dwelling between those cherubim, and from there he would speak. Extremely, extreme reverence was required.

So that's by way of introduction for the Ark. Now, where has it moved? So we're reading in our chapter today that David is bringing up the Ark to Jerusalem. And the obvious question is, from where?

So they made the Ark. They made the Ark in the wilderness. And you may remember from Sunday school, that it then came across the Jordan, and it was marched around Jericho, and they all stomped their feet, and there was a humpy grumpy camel, if I remember from the song.

[11:03] But they marched around Jericho, and the Ark went ahead. And that is highly unusual, given that I've just said you wouldn't see the Ark. It really, it did.

Amazing. It would have been covered, of course. And they had a big distance between the Ark. Anyway. After that, it went to a place called Shiloh, which became a semi-permanent home for it, Shiloh.

And if you remember when we opened the book of 1 Samuel, that is where Eli was ministering, Eli the priest. That is where Elkanah and his wives would go up, and that is where Samuel, the young boy, was ministering before the Lord.

We read how Elkanah would go up there once a year to worship. Now, we saw the Israelites foolishly take the Ark into battle, and it was captured by the Philistines.

And that's probably around the time that we see alluded to in Psalm 78:60, for your notes. In Psalm 78:60, we read this allusion to the Lord abandoning his dwelling place in Shiloh.

[12:10] And it's our inference that that is when that happened. So then what happened? Well, God himself had to intervene to bring the Ark back from the Philistines. And you'll remember the condition that was inflicted upon the Philistines.

And they returned it on a new cart. And that's a key detail. You can see that in 1 Samuel 6, verse 7, which, for the interest of time, we are skipping for today.

But they returned it on a new cart. And then it was received into a place called Beth Shemesh, where they actually dared to look into the Ark.

And we read about how God's wrath was poured out, and there were many deaths. That is recorded at the end of 1 Samuel 6. In fact, that is here on the screen.

After that, they said, the men of Beth Shemesh said, who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? And so they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-Jerim.

[13:12] And that is where the Ark went. And it says there, it says next, that the Ark stayed in Kiriath-Jerim for 20 years.

It says it was there for 20 years. Now, after this, there's a little bit of ambiguity. We're going to read that David took the Ark from Kiriath-Jerim, but Paul the Apostle tells us that Saul's reign was 40 years, not 20.

And it's not clear how we reconcile those two details. We do know there is one verse, interestingly, which is 1 Samuel 14, 18. This is the only other reference to the Ark I could find, where it says that the Ark in Saul's reign was with the sons of Israel.

But what that means, I don't know. All we can say for sure is it went back, or it remained at Kiriath-Jerim, for 20 years, plus the reign of Saul, in the house of Abinadab.

That's it, Abinadab. Kiriath-Jerim is an interesting place. We could talk about that at length, but I will say only this. It is interesting in that it was one of the four city, four Gibeonite cities that duped Joshua, if you remember, into making this oath of peace, so that the inhabitants were not killed, and they became slaves.

[14:32] It was almost like it wasn't, unlike Beth Shemesh, which was, in fact, that was a Levitical city. It was kind of almost, well, I don't know what else to say.

It was a Gibeonite city that became, it was part of the land, but the inhabitants were never removed. In terms of tribal divisions, it was a city in Judah, on the border with Benjamin.

It's about somewhere between 9 and 14 miles to the west of Jerusalem. All right, that's probably enough. Let's get into our reading.

We're back in 2 Samuel 6. Reading from verse 1, it says this, Now David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000, and David departed from Baal-i Judah, with all the people who were with him, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name, the very name of the Lord of Armies, who is enthroned above the cherubim.

They had mounted the ark of God on a new cart, and moved it from the house of Abinadab, which is on the hill, and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart.

- [15 : 45] So they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, and Ahio was walking ahead of the ark. Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the Lord with all kinds of instruments made of juniper wood and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.

Now an important parallel passage is 1 Chronicles 13. If you're taking notes, it's worth reading that together with this. What you will see there that's very interesting is that David consulted with the leaders from across the whole of Israel, including priests and Levites, and they all agreed to do it, saying, we didn't seek it in the days of Saul, and they want to make it right.

So off they go. They all depart off to Kiriath-Jerim. Now our Bible said there, Baal-i Judah. 1 Chronicles 13 says, Kiriath-Jerim. What's going on there?

Well actually, Chronicles says that they went up to Baal-ah, that is to say, Kiriath-Jerim. So we know that they're the same. It does appear that in the Masoretic text for that passage in Samuel, there's a bit of corruption.

Not a big deal though. It's the same place, and Kiriath-Jerim does have a few different names. So they pop it on a cart, a new cart. They put the ark on a new cart, led by Ahio and driven by Uzzah, these two sons, or probably descendants, of Abinadab.

- [17 : 21] So I hope that you can immediately see that things are seriously wrong. Seriously wrong. We've read the instructions. God said nothing about a new cart.

All they are doing is copying what they saw the Philistines do many years prior. Where's the covering cloth? Where are the Kohathites who are supposed to bear it?

If you don't, I want you to be very clear on the fact that this is completely wrong, because otherwise, as we read on and we see the death of Uzzah, you might think, well, that was a bit of an escalation.

Where would that come from? No, it's all wrong. And what we're seeing is the forbearance of God, even though this is completely not what God had said.

And again, from Chronicles, we know that this wasn't just David's plan. The Levites whom he met with did not instruct correctly either. So there is an ignorance on the word of God.

- [18 : 19] Well, let's see what happens then. Verse 6, And so David was afraid of the Lord that day, and he said, how can the ark of the Lord come to me?

And David was unwilling to move the ark of the Lord into the city of David with him. But David took it aside to 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. Now, we don't know exactly where the threshing floor of Nahon is, also known as Perez-Uza.

It's one of those things that they put on the map within somewhere around here. So we don't know how far they got. We don't know how far the Lord permitted them to proceed so badly wrong.

But it was, the moment when someone was going to touch the ark, in fact, it says he did touch the ark, bam, the Lord strikes him dead right there. And as I say, I think that was just forbearance and grace on God's part, but touching the ark was just too far.

- [20 : 02] And we read that David was angry and then afraid. And we've said before how David is a man who does show his emotions.

We see him expressing his emotions and we've talked about that quite a lot in our studies. It reminded me, with David's anger, it reminded me of Jonah to whom God said, do you do well to be angry?

Or in the New American it says, do you have a good reason to be angry? You know, and God, I think God only asks questions that he already knows the answer to, right?

No, you don't. And I think God would say the same thing of David. Why are you angry? David is angry at what God has done.

Do you ever get angry at what God has done? Or what God has allowed? Why does that happen? Why do we get angry? Well, I think it's one of the reasons is because we just don't have perfect knowledge and understanding.

[21:08] We see only in part. And that was very much on my heart when I chose the songs today. You could probably tell. We don't see all things. We don't have the understanding of God.

And in our ignorance and lack of understanding, like David, he didn't understand just how far removed he was from what God had said. In his ignorance, he was angry.

He didn't understand that the holiness of God had been violated all day. You know, David loved the Lord. We know that from his songs. He loved the Lord. He had such respect for God and his holiness.

And he didn't know how much he had sinned and fallen short of God's holiness. And it came out in anger. And I think that often when we do feel that anger towards God, we should reflect on the fact that we don't know everything either.

God has his reasons. Eternal God, unchanging, mysterious, and unknown so often. But what we do know is he always does good. And then we read that David is afraid.

[22:13] The fear of the Lord, it is the beginning of wisdom. He says, how can the ark come to me? And that question shows that he now goes, he realizes, I do lack knowledge.

I don't know how the ark can come to me. Because of my ignorance, things have gone wrong. Now, if he had done his homework, his Bible study, and then I thought as I wrote that, it's not even study, it's just read.

Just read it. Straightforward. The instructions are there. This is how you carry the ark. Do not touch the ark. Anyway, in his fear then, the ark turns aside, he takes it aside to the house of Obed, Edom, an interesting guy.

Obed, Edom, servant of Edom. But Edom isn't a proper name. We might see that and think of Esau. But it just means red. The guy's name just means red.

Servant of red. Redness. Anyway, and he's also noted as a Gittite, which is interesting because that would normally mean he's from Gath, a Philistine city, so you think.

[23:19] Unlikely. There were a few places like Gath, Rimmon. I think if memory serves, Gath means forest. But what we can say from future texts is that Obed, Edom, is a Levite and he will be very heavily involved in the ministry towards the ark and indeed bringing it into Jerusalem.

But I would like you to put yourselves in the shoes now of Obed, Edom, who is probably at home and there's a knock on the door. There's a man just died because of this box.

Can we leave it with you? We don't know why. We don't know why he died. It's all a bit of a mystery but can we just leave it here?

What would you do? What would you do? However that conversation went, Obed, Edom, makes room for the ark and that is very commendable and as a result, Obed, Edom, is blessed.

Obed, Edom, is blessed. And we read that the ark remained there for three months and the Lord blessed him. And if you just read the next verse there, verse 12, it says that it was reported to King David saying the Lord has blessed the house of Obed, Edom, and all that belongs to him on account of the ark.

[24:43] And I thought, it's been there for three months. How much blessing can be poured out in just three months that is so remarkable that they're going to the king to talk about it?

And needless to say, the rabbis have some very fanciful ideas as to what that took. I think I'll skip it just for the sake of this.

But what we can say is this. If you note down 1 Chronicles 26, verse 4 and forwards, then what you will learn is that Obed-Edom had eight sons and his sons had sons who were strong.

Strong and mighty men. 62 men in his house in total. Strength for the service. And in that passage it then said, God indeed had blessed him.

And that would seem to call us back to today's passage. So certainly, an aspect of that blessing was incredible fertility. But again, in three months?

[25:49] How was it seen? I don't know. 1 Chronicles 13, 14 adds also that God blessed all that he had. So it was a comprehensive blessing. But here's one thing to ponder.

The ark was with Obed-Edom for three months and he received this incredible blessing. The ark was with Abinadab for 20 years or more. But where was his blessing?

And as you ponder that, I think where you land is it cautions you against entitlement and earning a blessing. If I have this thing, then I will get blessed. If I do this thing for God, I will get blessed.

I don't think that there was any reason for Obed-Edom to expect a blessing. Everywhere the ark has gone, right? The Philistines. Beth Shemesh.

And now here at Perez Uzzah there's been death. Can we bring it to your house? I don't think that Obed-Edom would have expected a blessing necessarily.

[26:53] But I think what he wanted to do is be a servant. Obed. He wanted to be a servant and he said, yes, I will serve the Lord. I will.

And because of it, the Lord was gracious and blessed his service because we cannot outgive God. Right. Verse 12 then.

So it was reported to King David saying, the Lord has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that belongs to him on account of the ark of God. So David went and brought the ark of God up from the house of Obed-Edom to the city of David with joy.

And so it was when those carrying the ark of the Lord marched six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened steer or a fatling.

And David was dancing before the Lord with all his strength. And David was wearing linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with joyful shouting and the sound of the trumpet or shofar.

[28:00] So once David had come to know the extent of the blessing or that this blessing had come, he immediately turns his attention to bring the ark again to Jerusalem. Now if I would just, I wouldn't have you just turn to 1 Chronicles 15 because I want you to see an important detail that isn't in 2 Samuel.

1 Chronicles 15 please. We're just going to read a few verses here. 1 Chronicles 15 from verse 1. It says this, Now David built houses for himself in the city of David and he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it.

Then David said, No one is to carry the ark of God except the Levites. For the Lord chose them to carry the ark of the Lord and to serve him forever.

And David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the Lord to its place which he had prepared for it. And if you glance down to verse 11 please of that same chapter.

Then David called for the priests Zadok and Abiathar and for the Levites for Uriel Asaiah Joel Shemaiah Eliel and Aminadab and he said to them, You are the heads of the fathers households of the Levites.

[29:17] Consecrate yourselves you and your relatives so that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. Because you did not carry it at the first the Lord our God made an outburst against us since we did not seek him according to the ordinance.

So the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel. The sons of the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles on them just as Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of the Lord.

So very clear that they were very careful to be fully obedient to the word of God. David's fear as I said was the beginning of wisdom and he was rightly fearful because our God is an awesome God and it was his lack of fear that caused the missteps and when he rightly had a fear of this holy holy holy God he followed the instructions and the Lord prospered his way.

We did read that David sacrificed an ox and a fattened calf after six steps. Sometimes that's interpreted to mean every six steps. That isn't what it says. It says they went six steps and they sacrificed.

It could be that he did it every six steps which isn't impossible if they were close. But the Torah says nothing about that. There was no need for sacrificing in that way.

[30:50] this is a free will offering. And there is joy. There is joy and great celebration. Fantastic. Verse 16 then back to 2 Samuel 6 and we'll read on from verse 16.

Yeah, verse 16. Then it happened, as the ark of the Lord was coming into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked down from the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord and she was contemptuous of him in her heart.

Now they brought in the ark of the Lord and set it in its place inside the tent which David had pitched for it. And David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord. When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of armies.

Further he distributed to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a cake of bread, one of dates, and one of raisins to each one. And then all the people left each to his house.

We'll come back to Michal again at the end of the chapter. So she's referenced for now and we see that. But the ark is brought in and it's placed into this temple that David has set up. It's a new tent.

[32:07] It's not the original tabernacle. According to 1 Chronicles 16, 39, the original tabernacle that Moses made was set up at Gibeon.

Now, I won't say any more than that because I think it will be a subject for next chapter and I don't want to steal anything that Tony may have to say next so I will leave it there for now.

But it was a new tent. And this wonderful obedient time of worship concludes with this distribution of food is great to see that our practice of fellowship lunch has a solid biblical foundation I think.

And I will also note that these are luxury goods. Raisin cakes. This is the good stuff. This is the Marks and Spencers food right here.

But note that we saw David wearing a linen ephod which he wore over a linen robe. And all of these details, David offering these sacrifices, David wearing this ephod which is just basically an apron, a symbolic apron that priests would wear.

[33:17] He's blessing the people. All of these paint him as something resembling a priest which is a detail that I want to come back to you when we conclude. But hopefully you saw that in the text.

Let's finish the chapter now then. Verse 20. When David returned to bless his own household, Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet David and said, how the king of Israel dignified himself today.

For he exposed himself today in the sight of his servants' female slaves as one of the rabble shamelessly exposes himself. But David said to Michal, I was before the Lord who preferred me to your father and to all his house to appoint me as ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel, so I will celebrate before the Lord.

And I might demean myself even more than this, and be lowly in my own sight, but with the female slaves of whom you have spoken with them, I am to be held in honour.

And Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child to the day of her death. Wow. It's a bit of a downer, right, the ending of this chapter. David returns with joy to bless his household, and he has met with his wife Michal with this mix of disgust and sarcasm.

[34:40] Interesting to do a Bible study on sarcasm. There's a few places where you see it in the scriptures, and this is one. I will say this, Michal has had a rough ride. Michal, as we've seen, is the daughter of Saul.

She was married to David, and she loved him. She loved David. And when her father started his campaign against David, she helped him escape.

She preferred her husband over her father, and thus she fell out of Saul's favour, and when David was out of the way, Saul married her off to some bloke, which Saul did not have the right to do.

She very much, in my mind at least, is pictured as just chattel that is pawned off. David then moved on, marrying not one or two, but six other women.

And then in chapter 3 of 2 Samuel, David asks for her back, not because he loved her, I don't think, but because he wanted to test the loyalty of Abner, and see whether he was loyal to Saul, the house of Saul, or him.

[35:46] And we saw the tears of her new husband, which I think would imply that she was loved, and she's forcibly removed to be made number seven. And that list only grew last week, right, when we read chapter five.

So I have a lot of sympathy for Michal. Sucks for her. But I think the picture that we're being painted here is that she is a daughter of Saul.

She is daughter of the King Saul. And although King Saul was initially a humble man, what we saw in his reign is that the kingship seemed to puff him up, and his priority became himself and his reign and his household and his progeny, rather than protecting his people.

Do you remember how he would continually prioritize trying to beat up David rather than deal with the Philistine threat? And we've touched on before how it was David, while fleeing from Saul, he was the guy who rescued Kyla.

He was the guy who was acting like a king and protecting the people, which was not lost on the people of Israel. Hence, last week, when he says, it was always you, it was always you who was our king. Saul was a man who seemed to prefer the office and the role of king and the robes and the honour, rather than just being a person who led and protected and served the people.

[37 : 13] And David, in contrast, we see him amongst the people today. We see him wearing linen, not robes, linen. and we see him blessing the people and giving them gifts.

David was the king of the people, unlike Saul, who was this exalted man who loved the pomp. And I think that Michal, I think we're meant to see that Michal wants that kind of king.

She's a daughter of Saul and she wants a king like Saul who is set apart from the laity and honoured. But David isn't that kind of king. And she doesn't have children again.

We don't know why, whether that was a judgment of God or whether it was simply because the relationship was fractured. But I think what it is meant to do for us is underscore that is the end of this branch of Saul.

Okay, how do we summarise? It's a significant milestone. The coming of the ark. Jerusalem established as the capital we saw and now the centre of worship, the dwelling place of God.

[38 : 17] I've got a couple of themes that I want to highlight as we close. The first one is the theme of acceptable praise and worship. The message that rings clear throughout is that there are acceptable ways to praise and worship God and then there are unacceptable ways.

There are ways that God finds acceptable, there are ways that we are free to practice, and then there are ways that we are not free. sincerity is not the question.

I am no doubt that David and Israel were completely sincere when they loaded the ark up onto the new cart and said, let's go. Sincerity is not the matter. The thing is, and this is the thing, God has things he likes and things he prefers.

God is a person. He isn't a if-then-else kind of a thing. He has things and he has expressed them in the word. We aren't free to approach God however we like.

We must, must follow the scriptural practices. But things are different for us. Jesus taught on this topic very clearly, and this is from John 4, reading from verse 20.

[39 : 35] This is when Jesus was speaking to the woman of Samaria, you remember. And the woman says to Jesus, our fathers worshipped on this mountain. And yet you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one must worship.

Here or there, Jesus. Here or there, here or there. And Jesus said to her, believe me, woman, that a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know because salvation is from the Jews. But a time is coming, and even now has arrived when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

For such people, the Father seeks to be his worshippers. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.

So the woman was speaking of location, and Jesus said there is a change coming, and it's here now. Location is not the issue anymore. And I'm glad we don't have to go up to Jerusalem, or Shiloh, or Gibeah, or wherever it is, wherever the ark is.

[40 : 50] What is the location now? It is in spirit and truth. It's not in Jerusalem, it is in spirit and truth. I have to cut a whole bunch of stuff out here from Hebrews 8 verse 5, and it makes the point that the ark, the tabernacle, and everything there, all of those furnishings, they were a quote, copy and shadow of the heavenly things.

We worship a spiritual reality. The Jews only ever worshipped, or they worshipped at physical copies.

They did it in faith, and when they did it in faith, and they did it in obedience, it was acceptable. But we go beyond that. Jesus said a time is coming and now is here, where we will worship in spirit and truth.

Philippians 3 verse 3 says that we worship in the spirit of God, and glory or boast in Christ Jesus, and put no confidence in the flesh, or no confidence in the physical, it is spirit and truth.

I think David was celebrating with joy, but he certainly wasn't celebrating in truth, was he? God says, thy word is truth, and the scriptures are clear on what the requirements were.

[42 : 07] So, what does that mean for us? Well, it means that we need a balanced diet of spirit and truth in our worship. Our practices as Christians, in our seeking of God, in our praise, in our prayer, all of it must be spirit and truth led.

And that is why here, it's sad that we're unusual in doing this, but that is why we give such time and space to the word of God. I can't imagine doing anything, if any other thing in our Sunday morning was given longer space than God's word, I would struggle with that.

How else are we going to get the truth? We give out the majority of our time here. Now, from a song worship perspective, what should be in our praise and in our worship?

Well, if you look at the Psalms, then you will find that there is a broad range of subject matter and themes that are acceptable and indeed should be used in our song worship. In the Psalms, you see everything from exuberant joy to repentance and sorrow and everything in between.

You see Psalms that express trust in God, you see longing for God, you see encouragement, may my soul bless the Lord, and you also see a lot of Psalms that reflect history, specifically the Exodus as well.

[43 : 27] Seven of the Psalms focus very heavily on the Exodus and many others, I think it was between 10 and 15% by one count, allude to the Exodus.

Why? Because we must celebrate afresh and remind our hearts what God has done and for us, our Exodus is the death and the burial and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that is why every week without fail, and you can check me on this, there will be a song or two that will focus on the cross and the death and the resurrection because we must, we must remember it, we must celebrate it, we must.

And after that, after we've got the spirit and truth down, everything else is optional. You know, in bigger churches there'll be multiple instruments and there'll be lights, we have lights, there'll be smoke machines and there'll be tight instrumentation and those things are not good or bad per se.

You know, they're good if they encourage hearts to connect with God and if they enable the worshipper's heart in some way. But if they obstruct or if they take the place of the spirit or if they're done in place of fidelity to the truth, if we're preferring a melody over truth in our words, there is a problem.

[44 : 53] There is a problem. And again, a well-polished musical performance is not good or bad per se. In fact, Psalm 33 specifically says that we should play music skillfully.

I'll let you be the judge whether we have that here or not. And a worship leader should practice and I should hone my craft, but not at the expense of cultivating spirituality, understanding the truth of the word.

We worship in spirit and truth. And then, finally this. Jesus Christ, the king and the priest.

I already mentioned how in those key chapters in Hebrews, 7, 8, 9, and 10, and what they do is they show how everything that is in the law and the Torah and all they did was foreshadowing.

But one of the important things that's there is that Jesus is a priest. priest. He's a priest, but not after the Levitical order. Jesus is better than that.

[46 : 00] Now, as I said, David exhibits some of those priestly roles, some of those aspects. And I think that that is a hint that the son of David, although he will be a king, the king, he is also a priest.

I did have a reading from Psalm 110, snip, in the interest of time. But if you read that, then you will see that David himself speaking of my Lord.

The Lord said to my Lord, you remember, it's a messianic Psalm. Verse 4 says, you are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. After the order of Melchizedek.

As opposed to the order of the Levites. The Levites offered regular sacrifices once a year. Yom Kippur. Now, I will just read this real quick.

I can't remember if I've got, no, I haven't. So, if you want to note these down, Hebrews 10 verse 3 and 4. The writer to the Hebrews says, in those sacrifices, Yom Kippur, in those sacrifices, there is a reminder of sins every year, for it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

[47 : 05] Can't be done. All it would do is cover. Verse 10 of Hebrews 10, by this will, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time.

every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

But he, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until his enemies are made a footstool for his feet.

For by one offering, he has perfected, I love that's past tense, hallelujah, he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

When Jesus died on the cross, the temple veil was torn top to bottom. That was the veil that separated that most holy place that nobody can go in.

[48 : 07] And it was torn by God himself, top to bottom. And in that tearing, God is saying, the death of Jesus Christ, the Son, his blood, has at last taken away sins.

Not merely covered, taken away, and the entrance into the holy place is finally open. Hebrews 10, 19. Therefore, brothers and sisters, this is a word to us, and we close with this.

Since we have confidence to enter the most holy place, wow, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let's approach God with a sincere heart and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water, which we will see later today.

Let's hold firmly to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let's consider how to encourage one another in love and good deeds, not abandoning our own meeting together as is the habit of some people, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Oh, amen. Lord, we praise you and thank you that that which was so holy that no one could go in but once a year. You have made a way.

[49 : 39] Oh, God, we marvel. We are in awe, Lord, when we consider the holiness of God and that you made a way to welcome sinners, wretches like us.

Lord, it's just incredible, Lord, and I thank you for this truth, this timeless truth, and we praise you. We praise you indeed. Lord, I do pray, God, that you would encourage our hearts, that we would celebrate as they did indeed in those days.

We would celebrate. Lord, how much more reason do we have to celebrate than when the ark came into Jerusalem? because we don't have a, we don't have the presence of God locked away over there that we know is there but can't see.

We worship you in spirit and truth, and your word says your spirit is within us. Oh, man. Lord, we praise you. It's incredible. These things are beyond, and words fail me to thank you.

But we do thank you, and we praise you in Jesus' name. Amen.