

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

July 10

MONDAY

Transporting the Ark back to Jerusalem, David's forces come to Nachon's farm. There, the oxen get excited and nearly upset the cart carrying the Ark. Uzzah reaches out and steadies the Ark with his hand. God immediately strikes him dead for his irreverence in touching the Ark. David was distressed at his death and re-named the place in Uzzah's honor: Perez-Uzzah.

READ: II Samuel 6:6-8

Our thinking is so different from God's. We like to justify and defend our actions (and maybe Uzzah's, too). God said that to touch the Ark meant death. And God meant it! He says lots more that He takes seriously as well. Maybe more seriously than we do. Maybe we need to think again.

TUESDAY

Because of the way God dealt with Uzzah, David was greatly afraid to move the Ark another inch. He took it to a nearby house belonging to Obed-edom, a Gittite, and left it there. It stayed there for three months during which time the Lord greatly blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

READ: II Samuel 6:9-11

God pours out his blessing onto Obed-edom and his family. The same hand that struck down Uzzah pours out blessings on another. The hand's the same: it's God's. It's the hearts that are different. It's how they regarded the Ark, and the Lord of the Ark. And to those who love, honor, and trust, God pours out His blessing: a blessing we need and want today!

WEDNESDAY

Three months later, when David heard about the great blessing which the Ark had brought upon Obed-edom, he went and brought it back to Jerusalem. But he did so very carefully: he did not want anyone else dying. Every twenty feet or so, they would stop the procession and priests would sacrifice an ox and fatlings to the Lord. David was part of the procession, dancing wildly before the Lord, wearing a linen ephod.

READ: II Samuel 6:12-14

To Uzzah, the Ark brought death. But to Obed-edom, it brought great blessing. In a way, the Ark pictures Jesus to us today. To some, He is a stumbling stone and a rock of offence. To others - those who believe - He is the Rock who is higher than I, the Rock of Ages, and the great Cornerstone of our faith. It is not a matter of perception or perspective; it's one of relationship. When we build our lives on Him, we find Him to be a rock foundation upon Whom our lives can be built: a Dock of Ages cleft for me!

THURSDAY

It so happened that as the procession bearing the Ark made its way into Jerusalem, David's wife Michal was looking out the window. She saw her husband leaping and dancing before it, and she despised him for that.

READ: II Samuel 6:15-16

How could David's wife despise him when all Israel seem to be rejoicing with him? She considered his zeal for God unbecoming his station in life. In thinking this way, Michal is a forerunner of people today, who consider the practice of holy living to be Puritanical and obsolete. David is a picture on one who knows otherwise and demonstrates that conviction by action. God is still looking for people today (that would be you and me!) to live holy lives.

FRIDAY

They carried the Ark into Jerusalem and put it under a tent. David offered sacrifices and presented offerings to the Lord before it. And he blessed all the people in the name of the Lord. And he distributed bread and dates and raisins to everyone. And then everybody went to his own home.

READ: II Samuel 6:17-19

In the middle of one of the happiest occasions of his life, David does not forget Who the giver of every happy moment is! He sanctifies the moment with praise and prayer. That is just what we want to do with the special moments and occasions which God sends to us: to sanctify them. That is, to set them apart from the mundane, and to acknowledge them as coming from God. "God gave me this special family time. God gave me this evening with believing friends. God gave me this lunch hour with my Church family," and so on. And we will praise Him and thank Him for it.

SATURDAY

When David walked into his palace, Michal met him and scolded him for his dancing around the Ark. It was unbecoming a king, she said. But David answered that he had danced for the Lord and there was no cause for shame. In fact, those who saw him dance will respect him all the more, he added. For her pride, Michal went the rest of her life without a child.

READ: II Samuel 6:20-23

Michal suggested that the people would lose their respect for their king because of his antics, but David says that even the maid-servants will, in fact, honor him for it all the more. Piety will be recognized by the pious, it's been said. David did not perform in order to be honored and until he hears Michal's criticism, thinks nothing of his own reputation. In other words, his dancing was to the Lord and for the Lord. No sense of putting on a performance at all. "Do all for the glory of God!" Whether dancing, mowing the lawn, doing dishes, or preparing a Sunday School lesson. #38