

STUDIES IN SAMUEL  
A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 6

- Vv. 1-11 *Uzzah smitten.* David wanted to bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. It was in captivity in Philistia for a number of years, but had been returned by the Philistines and was kept by the men of Kiriath-Jerim. The venture was ill-fated. Uzzah stuck out his hand to steady the ark, and the Lord smote him.
- Vv. 12-19 *The ark brought to Jerusalem.* David was nonplussed by the death of Uzzah. He left the ark in the house of Obed-Edom. Later he learned that God had blessed the house of Obed-Edom. He also learned that he had been careless in trying to move the ark on an ox cart. God had ordained that the ark should be carried by the Levites. David followed God's directive and moved the ark without further mishap. He put it in the special tent which he had erected for it in Jerusalem.
- Vv. 20-23 *Michal cursed.* David had insisted that Michal be sent back to him from Gilead when he was negotiating with Abner and Ish-bosheth. Michal's pride overcame her. She was ashamed of David as he took part in the public ceremonies attending the return of the ark. When she upbraided David, she was evidently smitten of the Lord. At least she had no child unto the day of her death.

LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *God's servants must not be careless.* It may seem a small thing to us that David tried to move the ark on an ox cart instead of having it carried by the Levites. Ultimately this carelessness led to the death of Uzzah. Too many people today become overly familiar with

## SECOND SAMUEL

the things of God. His ordinances and services should be observed with care.

2. *Man needs a place to worship.* God had ordained that there would be one central sanctuary for Israel (Deuteronomy 12). He told the people that He would choose a place to put His name there. They were instructed that they were not to offer sacrifices on every high hill. God chose the city of Jerusalem. He has given us a church as the center of our worship.

### II. THE PROSPEROUS PERIOD OF DAVID'S REIGN, 6:1—9:13.

1. David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem, 6:1-23.

#### *Uzzah Smitten.* 6:1-11

Again, David gathered together all *the* chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

2 And David arose, and went with all the people that *were* with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth *between* the cherubim.

3 And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that *was* in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart.

4 And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which *was* at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord on all manner of *instruments made of* fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals.

6 And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth *his hand* to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook *it*.

7 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for *his* error; and there he died by the ark of God.

8 And David was displeased, because the Lord had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perez-uzzah to this day.

9 And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me?

10 So David would not remove the ark of the Lord unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

11 And the ark of the Lord continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the Lord blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

*1. How many people went to fetch the ark? 6:1*

David gathered the chosen men of Israel to accompany him down to the west border of the land of Judah to get the ark. Thirty thousand are mentioned as being the number of these. The passage of I Chronicles 13:1 says only that David consulted with the captains of thousands and of hundreds. It goes on to declare that he consulted every leader and that he gathered all the people from throughout the land. If there was a full assembly of the people, there would be more than thirty thousand men. David evidently did invite all to be in attendance for this auspicious occasion, but he did his work largely through the thirty thousand chosen men. David had thirty captains over these; each would then be the captain of a thousand and were sometimes called a chiliarch (II Samuel 24:13).

*2. Where was Baal-Judah? 6:2*

The title Baal-Judah signifies "Lords of Judah." It was a city of Judah, from which David went out to bring the ark into Jerusalem. It is probably the same as Baalah; a city on the northern border of Judah (Joshua 15:10).

One of the religious centers of the ancient Gibeonites was here, and the name is evidently given to the same spot that is elsewhere called Kirjath-jearim (I Chronicles 13:6). This spot was out on the western border of Judah near the Philistine territory. The ark had been left here when it was brought back by the kine prepared by the Philistines (I Samuel 6:21).

3. *Why did David prepare a new cart? 6:3*

David evidently wanted to give the best for God's service. He prepared a new cart in similar fashion to the way in which the Philistines had made a new cart when they sent the Ark back to Israel (I Samuel 6:7). David was not careful enough. He should not have made a cart at all. He learned this later, much to his regret.

4. *What was the sin of Uzzah? 6:6*

Uzzah was the son of Abinadab, the man in whose home the Ark had been kept. He became overly familiar with sacred things. God had ordained that the Ark should be cared for only by the Kohathites, out of the tribe of the Levi. God had said that they were not to touch any holy thing, lest they die (4:15). Directions were given to indicate that when the camp of Israel set forward, Aaron was to come with his sons, take down the covering vail, and cover the Ark of Testimony with it. They were to put over the Ark a covering of badger's skins and spread over that a cloth made only of blue. They were then to put the staves in the ark. Only the sons of Kohath were to carry these sacred articles of the tabernacle furniture. These directions were not followed by David at all. Had the Ark been carried by Levites, it would not have been sitting on the oxcart in the first place. There would have been no danger of its falling when the oxen stumbled if it had been moved in the correct fashion. As the Scripture says, "God smote him there for his error" (verse seven).

5. *Why was David afraid?* 6:9

David was afraid of the Lord because of the ill-fated venture of moving the Ark. I Chronicles 13:11 says that David was displeased. He was naturally disappointed that his attempt to move the ark had resulted in tragedy. Later on David admitted his fault and carried the Ark in the correct fashion. He came to this conclusion as he said, "None ought to carry the Ark of God but the Levites" (I Chronicles 15:2). For the time being, however, he was distressed and carried the Ark aside and left it there.

6. *Who was Obed-edom?* 6:10

On the first attempt to bring the Ark of God up to Jerusalem, Uzzah put forth his hand and took hold of it; for the oxen stumbled. God's anger was kindled against Uzzah; God smote him there that he died.

David was afraid of Jehovah that day and refused to continue his attempt to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. Therefore he turned aside and placed the Ark in the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite.

Obed-edom was a Philistine. The fact that he was called a Gittite signifies that he was formerly a resident of that city of Gath in Philistia. Many of the Gittites emigrated to Judah. Six hundred of them formed a bodyguard to David (II Samuel 15:18 ff.). The Gittites seem to have been remarkable for their great stature (II Samuel 21:19; I Chronicles 20:5 ff.).

*The Ark Brought to Jerusalem.* 6:12-19

12 And it was told king David, saying, The Lord hath blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

13 And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

14 And David danced before the Lord with all *his* might; and David *was* girded with a linen ephod.

15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16 And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

17 And they brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

18 And as soon as David had made an end of offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts.

19 And he dealt among the people, *even* among the whole multitude of Israel, as well to the women as men, to every one a cake of bread, and a good piece of *flesh*, and a flagon of *wine*. So all the people departed every one to his house.

#### 7. How was the Ark brought to Jerusalem? 6:12

Having moved forward six paces with the Ark, the procession halted to make a sacrifice, so thankful were they that they had been permitted to make a start. By their leaping and dancing the members of the procession showed the Lord that they were pleased. Of course, all of this is known to be an expression of joy—a religious service.

When the procession reached Jerusalem, all the multitude that had gathered to witness the sight received presents of bread, flesh, and raisins. Inasmuch as the Levites had borne the Ark, God was pleased with all the respect that was shown for His commandments and blessed the day's activities. David had prepared a tent to house the

Ark, and the people must have returned to their homes that night with a feeling of God's blessings resting upon them and abiding with them.

The account of the day's activities as it is given in Chronicles contains more of the history of religious matters. This account also gives a table of numbers and goes more into detail than the account in Samuel.

8. *Why did they sacrifice after only going six paces? 6:13*

The men carrying the Ark were just starting their journey. It was a respectable distance from the point of debarkation. David evidently ordered the company to stop because they had made a successful beginning. On the first attempt they had met with tragedy, but now they were moving successfully. No doubt they stopped to give thanks to God for this successful beginning of the journey.

9. *Who bore the Ark this time? 6:13*

The Levites carried the Ark as God had ordered on the second attempt. David realized that God had smitten Uzzah because they had not made proper arrangements in the first place. The Levites who carried the Ark are listed by name in I Chronicles 15:5-11. Six chieftains from among the Levites are mentioned by name; and in that reference in addition Zadok and Abiathar, the chief priests, were summoned by David and given specific instructions with regard to the effort.

10. *Who officiated in the sacrifices? 6:17*

No doubt the priests officiated at the sacrifices; Saul had been rejected from ruling because he had presumed to offer sacrifices after Samuel had told him to wait for his coming (I Samuel 13:11). Specific mention is made of the fact that David called for Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, to be with him when he brought the Ark to Jerusalem (I Chronicles 15:11). These men were probably in charge of the sacrifices.

11. *Where was the old tent of meeting?* 6:17

David had pitched a new tent for the Ark in Jerusalem. The old tent of meeting had been located in Shiloh. The tabernacle had been moved from that point to Nob in the days when David was fleeing from the presence of Saul (I Samuel 21:1). Because the Ark was not there, the people evidently did not feel that it was a permanent location, and it was finally located in Gibeon. Solomon had gone to Gibeon to sacrifice because it was the great high place (I Kings 3:4). It was necessary for him then to bring up the articles and furniture of the tabernacle to Jerusalem when he built the temple (I Kings 8:4).

12. *Why did David provide bread, flesh, and raisins?* 6:19

Everybody was involved in this momentous occasion. David had provided that every woman, as well as every man, should have a cake of bread, a sizeable piece of meat, and a flagon of wine to drink. There had been no festive occasion like this in Israel for many years. David saw it as a time for celebrating and made provisions for all to have a part of it.

*Michal Cursed.* 6:20-23

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel today, who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!

21 And David said unto Michal, *It was* before the Lord, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel: therefore will I play before the Lord.

22 And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor.



23 Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.

13. *Why did Michal reprove David? 6:20*

Michal had seen David as he danced before Jehovah in the body of people that accompanied the Ark to Jerusalem. She thought he had lowered himself by mingling with the people. This was not her idea of a king. Michal had been raised at the king's court. She had pride that David did not have. Although the narrative might indicate that Michal's barrenness was a punishment for her pride, the writer does not actually say that such was the case.

14. *Was David vile and base? 6:22*

Michal had said that David uncovered himself in the eyes of the handmaidens of his servants. She said that he had been as one of the vain fellows who shamelessly uncovered themselves (verse 20). David simply repeated her accusation and said that he would be more vile than this. He was glad to be base in his own sight and in the sight of the maidservants who were despised by Michal. He knew that he was held in honor by his people. David had not been naked; his uncovering himself amounted only to his taking off his kingly garments. David had worn an ephod as he danced before the Ark among the people (verse 14). A linen ephod was the distinctive garment of the priests. It was an abbreviated garment having no sleeves and reaching only to the thighs. It was much in the fashion of a jumper and enabled David to leap and dance about freely. Michal had thought this beneath the king's dignity and had rebuked David for this kind of action. He was glad to be counted among his people and made this defense of his actions.

## CHAPTER 6 IN REVIEW

1. On what means of conveyance did David try to move the Ark?

## SECOND SAMUEL

2. Out of whose house did he take it? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Near what town did the man live? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who stuck out his hand to steady the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What happened to the man who touched the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What name was given to the place? \_\_\_\_\_
7. In whose house did David leave the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
8. How long was it left in his house? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What did David wear as he danced before the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who carried the Ark when it was brought to Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_

## A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 7

- Vv. 1-11 *David's desire to build a temple thwarted.* David wanted to build a temple as a place of worship for God's people. Nathan the prophet was in favor of this at first but God told him that this was not to be David's privilege.
- Vv. 12-17 *God's covenant with David.* Nathan the prophet came to David with the announcement that it was not to be his privilege to build the temple. He also told him that God would bless his house for generations to come. It was promised of David that there would not cease to be a man out of his loins to sit on the throne of Judah as long as there was a kingdom of Judah.
- Vv. 18-29 *David's response to the Lord's will.* David went in and sat before the Lord when he heard of His will for his life (v. 18). His disappointment over not being able to build a temple did not keep him from accepting God's will for his life.