



*Sunday School Lesson*  
**2 Sam. 6:1-23**  
 by Lorin L. Cranford  
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**Moving the Ark**



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This second study on the life of King David focuses on the beginning of David's reign as king over all of Israel. Two more studies to come will pick up later segments of David's life. Since 1 Chron. 13 and 15 parallel 2 Sam. 6, attention will also be given to the similarities and contrasts between the deuteronomist's depiction and the chronicler's depiction of this common event.

**I. Context**

With the continuing study in Samuel/Kings in the Deuteronomic tradition of Deuteronomy, Judges, 1-2 Samuel and 1-2 Kings, much of the background material covered in the previous lesson (1 Sam. 17:1-58) remains the same for this study. Thus a summary of the relevant material is all that will be given here. Where the internal history and internal literary aspects introduce new material, more attention will be given to this.

**a. Historical**

Regarding the **external history**, the essence of last week's study is that our passage is also a part of that cohesive history of the Israelites from the exodus to the exile in Babylon of the southern kingdom. This material initially came into existence as detached oral stories that were shared and memorized, then passed down from generation to generation until assuming the finalized written form that we know. To be sure, segments most likely came into written expression early on as well, but the bulk of the material existed in oral form for many centuries. The earliest effort to begin the pulling together of large chunks of this material most likely began as a part of the reforms instituted by Josiah (ca. 640 - 609 BCE) in the southern kingdom (2 Kings 23). But it reaches the finalized form that we know either during the exile or just after it in the 500s BCE.

Our passage is a part of the David cycle of stories. The sources of material for understanding the life of David have their origin in several places, as J.M. Myers (*Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v., "David," iPreach) summarizes:

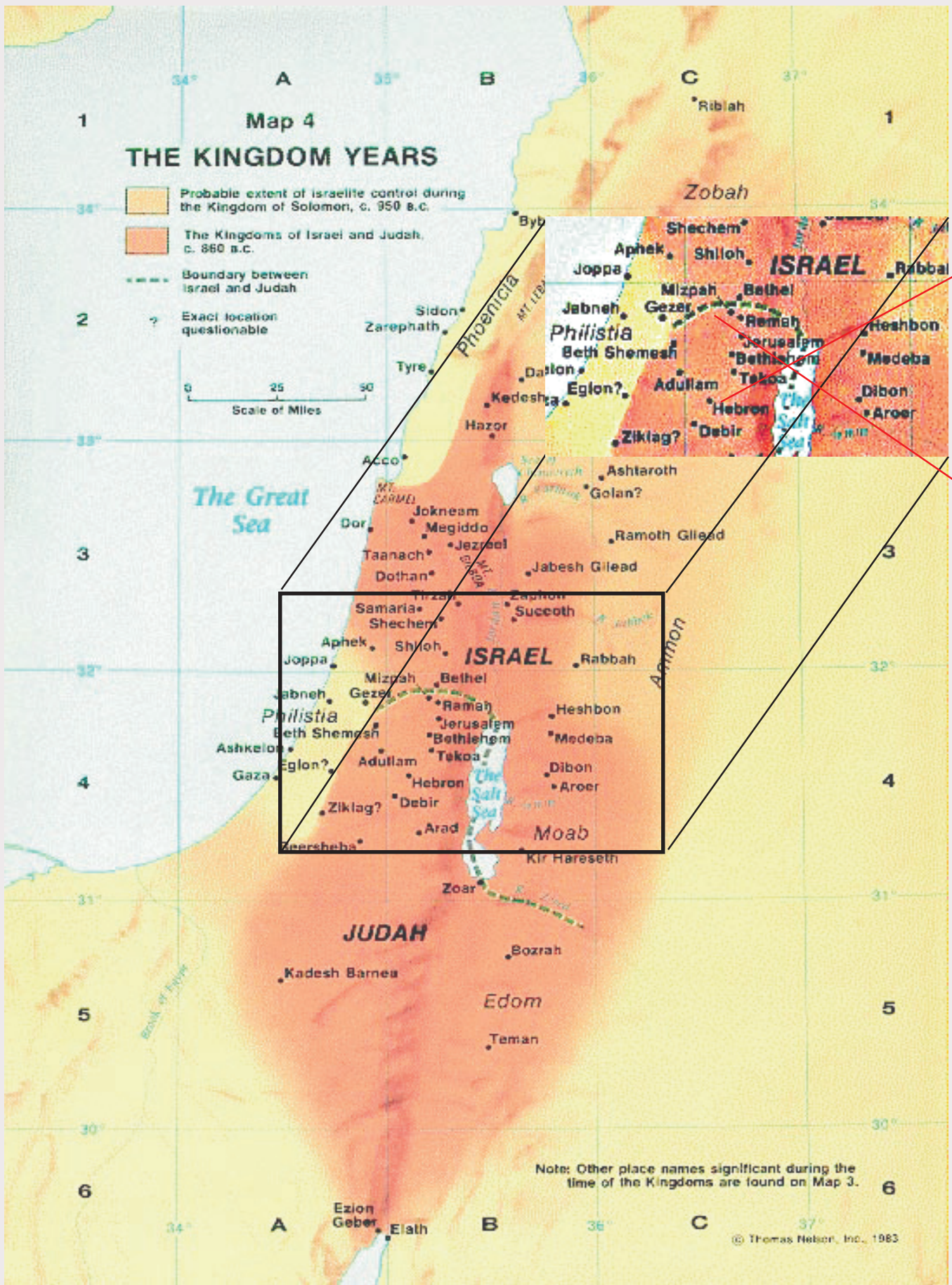
The main sources are the books of SAMUEL and I Kings 1:1-2 (see KINGS, I AND II, § 1), paralleled, with significant omissions and additions, in I Chr. 11-29 (see CHRONICLES, I AND II). Many of the materials of Samuel and Kings are contemporary, or nearly so, with the times of David -- notably the court records of II Sam. 9:1-20--and are manifestly some of the most authentic historical writings of the OT.

David ruled Israel from 1000 to 962 BCE. He began with control over the southern tribes from Hebron, then gradually consolidated his control over all twelve tribes. The move to Jerusalem, that our passage is a part of, represented the establishment of a "neutral" capital that could appeal to all twelve tribes. Additionally, it

# Map 4 THE KINGDOM YEARS

- Probable extent of Israelite control during the Kingdom of Solomon, c. 950 B.C.
- The Kingdoms of Israel and Judah, c. 860 B.C.
- Boundary between Israel and Judah
- Exact location questionable

0 25 50  
Scale of Miles



Note: Other place names significant during the time of the Kingdoms are found on Map 3.

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provided a centralized seat of power that enabled David to restructure Israel into a somewhat typical ancient near eastern monarchy. [Hebron](#) had deep roots in the Israelite heritage reaching back to Abraham. Segments of that history up through David are helpful for our study. V.R. Gold (*Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v., "Hebron (City)," iPreach) provides a useful summation:

In the fourteenth century the Hebron region was ruled for a time by a local prince, Shuwardata, who appears in several of the Amarna Letters. In the first unsuccessful attempt at conquest, by approaching Canaan from the S, Moses' spies reconnoitered around Hebron and elsewhere to determine the strength of their prospective adversaries. Three clans of the Anakim (Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai) lived at Hebron at this time, early in the thirteenth century (Num. 13:22). After about a generation the successful attack against Canaan was launched from the E.

This time Hoham, king of Hebron, died at the hand of Joshua and his forces in the latter's victory over the S Canaanite coalition led by Adonizedek of Jerusalem in the Battle of Makkedah (Josh. 10:1-27). Hebron itself was destroyed and its population devoted to the sword along with Debir, Ahab, and other hill-country cities (Josh. 10:36-37; 11:21-22). Archaeological evidence indicates immediate Israelite occupation of Debir (cf., however, Judg. 1:11-12), but Hebron seems to have been reoccupied by the three clans of the Anakim and was not effectively controlled by the Israelites until its recapture by Caleb's forces after Joshua's death (Josh. 14:13 ff; 15:13-14; Judg. 1:10, 19-20; cf. Josh. 10:36-39; 11: 21-22). The biblical account is not entirely clear on this matter, however. The account of Caleb's capture of Hebron could simply be one phase of the campaign of occupation under Joshua's general leadership--or a continuation of it after Joshua's death. Hebron was designated a Levitical city and a city of refuge (Josh. 20:7; 21:10-13; I Chr. 6:57). In the royal administrative reorganization, it became a district capital (Josh. 15:54).

Hebron is prominent in the story of David's early career. It was one of the cities to receive a gift from David for services rendered him and his men; the gift was taken from the booty captured from the Amalekites after David's successful pursuit of them, in reprisal for their sack of Ziklag (I Sam. 30:31). He was anointed "king of Judah," and for the first 7½ years of his reign it was capital of the S kingdom; while Ishbosheth (Ishbaal), Saul's son, ruled the N from Mahanaim. Several of David's sons, including Absalom, were born at Hebron. As a result of a personal affront, Ishbosheth's general, Abner, defected and was in the process of bringing the N into David's camp when he was treacherously killed by Joab and his brother for Abner's slaying of their brother in the course of an engagement which had begun at the Pool of Gibeon. Abner was buried in Hebron. After Abner's death, two of Ishbosheth's captains assassinated him, decapitated him, and took his head to David at Hebron, hoping for a bounty. Instead, David had them killed for their treachery, and had Ishbosheth's head buried in Abner's grave. After Ishbosheth's death, the N was united with the S, and the capital moved to the newly captured Jerusalem, from which David ruled the remaining 33 years of his reign (II Sam. 2:1-5:5; I Kings 2:11; I Chr. 3:1-4; 29:27).

The problem with Hebron for David's objective of a unified kingdom was its deep association with the tribes in the south. This presented an obstacle to uniting all twelve tribes. Thus David captured the Jebusite city of Jerusalem some 14 miles northeast of Hebron and began the process of turning it into the capital. As a non-Israelite city previously, it had no connection to either set of tribes and thus represented a "neutral" site to establish the capital.

Our passage describes one stage of that process where David begins to move the ark from [Baale-judah](#) (only in 2 Sam. 6:2; elsewhere called [Baalah](#) and [Kiriath-jearim](#)) to Jerusalem. It was located on the northern border of the tribe of Judah in the south and north of Jerusalem.

The early significance of Jerusalem reaches back to Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac there (Gen. 22:1-19; cf. hill of Moriah in 2 Chron 3:1). Eventually Solomon would build the temple on this spot. David's capture of Jerusalem is described in 2 Sam. 5:6-9 and 1 Chron 11:4-8.

#### **2 Sam. 5:6-9**

6 The king and his men marched to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who said to David, "You will not come in here, even the blind and the lame will turn you back"—thinking, "David cannot come in here." 7 Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, which is now the city of David. 8 David had said on that day, "Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates." Therefore it is said, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house." 9 David occupied the stronghold, and named it the city of David. David built the city all around from the Millo inward.

#### **1 Chron. 11:4-8**

4 David and all Israel marched to Jerusalem, that is Jebus, where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land. 5 The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You will not come in here." Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion, now the city of David. 6 David had said, "Whoever attacks the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander." And Joab son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief. 7 David resided in the stronghold; therefore it was called the city of David. 8 He built the city all around, from the Millo in complete circuit; and Joab repaired the rest of the city.

A Jebusite stronghold until David captured it, the city was turned into a heavily fortified place that provided a basis for the expansion of his power over all the tribes of Israel, and beyond, as 2 Sam. 5:10 declares: “And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him” (cf. 1 Chron. 11:9).

**b. Literary**

The literary **genre** of our passage is straightforward narrative. Historically, modern scholars have tended to glean two episodic narratives from chapter six: the moving of the ark (vv. 1-15, 17-19) and the criticism by Michal of David (vv. 16, 2-23). Although differing conclusions exist, a major viewpoint is that the ark section belongs to a larger unit of material labeled the *Ark Narrative*. This material, 4:1b - 7:1, came together very early as a unit of material and was incorporated into this text by the Deuteronomic writer. Additionally, the Michal episode is seen by some as the beginning of the *Succession Narrative*, which traces the background for the passing of kingship from Saul to David. Both these views see the origin of this material in at least oral, if not in written form, much earlier and thus used by the Deuteronomic writer as two of the many sources for the composition of his Israelite history. Several writing traits in the Hebrew text point in this direction: vocabulary, writing style shifts etc.

The literary setting of our passage appears to be as a part of a chiasmus extending from 5:13 to 8:18. Several Old Testament scholars have argued the pattern as follows:

- A 5:13-16, list of David’s family
- B 5:17-25, defeat of the Philistines; kingdom secured
- C 6:1-23, the ark brought to Jerusalem
- C’ 7:1-29, Nathan’s oracle of dynastic promise
- B’ 8:1-14, defeat of Israel’s neighbors; kingdom expanded
- A’ 8:15-18, list of David’s officials

The second set (C’, B’, A’) represents a “step” forward moving the David story from the initial phase of securing power to the next level of establishing his role as a powerful ruler to Israel. As Bruce C. Birch (*New Interpreter’s Bible*, iPreach) describes the second set:

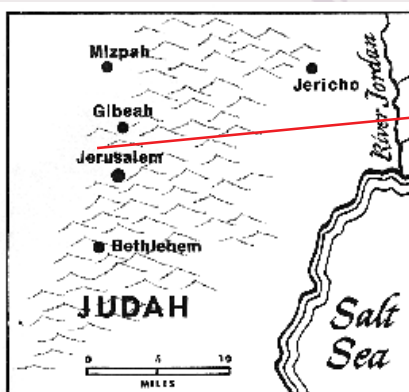
In the last three units of the section, David’s story moves to new horizons. New bases of security are established for Israel’s future. Kinship gives way to royal bureaucracy as the basis of power (5:13-16; 8:15-18). Security from a threatening enemy gives way to royal conquest and expansion of borders and the security of territorial domination (5:17-25; 8:1-14). At the center of the section, the theology of God’s presence symbolized by the ark gives way to a theology of God’s promise that makes Davidic dynasty itself a theological symbol of God’s care for Israel (6:1-23; 7:1-29). Kingdom is theologically wedded to God’s continuing guidance of Israel’s future.

**II. Message**

The above analysis provides a basis for assessing the **internal literary structure** of chapter six. Two sections can be identified revolving around the ark and Michal, Saul’s daughter and David’s first wife. We will approach the understanding of the passage from that structural view.

**a. Moving the Ark, vv. 1-15, 17-19**

**NASB**  
1 Now David again gathered



**NRSV**  
1 David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. 3 They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons

**NLT**  
1 Then David mobilized thirty thousand special troops. 2 He led them to Baalah of Judah to bring home the Ark of God, which bears the name of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim. 3 They placed the Ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the hillside home of Abinadab. Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, were guiding the cart 4 with the Ark of God on it,

all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name, the very name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned *above* the cherubim. 3 They placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart. 4 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. 5 Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of *instruments made of fir wood*, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals. 6 But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen nearly upset *it*. 7 And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God. 8 David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzzah, and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. 9 So David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" 10 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. 11 Thus the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household. 12 Now it was told 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." David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David

of Abinadab, were driving the new cart 4 with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. 5 David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. 6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it. 7 The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God. 8 David was angry because the Lord had burst forth with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day. 9 David was afraid of the Lord that day; he said, "How can the ark of the Lord come into my care?" 10 So David was unwilling to take the ark of the Lord into his care in the city of David; instead David 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 three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household. 12 It was told King David, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; 13 and when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. 14 David danced before the Lord with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought



with Ahio walking in front. 5 David and all the people of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all their might, singing songs and playing all kinds of musical instruments – lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals. 6 But when they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah put out his hand to steady the Ark of God. 7 Then the LORD's anger blazed out against Uzzah for doing this, and God struck him dead beside the Ark of God. 8 David was angry because the LORD's anger had blazed out against Uzzah. He named that place Perez-uzzah (which means "outbreak against Uzzah"). It is still called that today. 9 David was now afraid of the LORD and asked, "How can I ever bring the Ark of the LORD back into my care?" 10 So David decided not to move the Ark of the LORD into the City of David. He took it instead to the home of Obed-edom of Gath. 11 The Ark of the LORD remained there with the family of Obed-edom for three months, and the LORD blessed him and his entire household. 12 Then King David was told, "The LORD has blessed Obed-edom's home and everything he has because of the Ark of God." So David went there and brought the Ark to the City of David with a great celebration. 13 After the men who were carrying it had gone six steps, they stopped and waited so David could sacrifice an ox and a fattened calf. 14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might, wearing a priestly tunic. 15 So David and all Israel brought up the Ark of the LORD with much shouting and blowing of trumpets.



with gladness. 13 And so it was, that when the bearers of the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. 14 And David was dancing before the LORD with all *his* might, and David was wearing a linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouting and the sound of the trumpet.

17 So 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. 18 When David had finished offering the burnt offering and the peace offering, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. 19 Further, he distributed to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a cake of bread and one of dates and one of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed each to his house.

**Notes:**

The Ark Narrative served evidently as the basis for an annual ritual in celebrating the establishment of David's reign at Jerusalem. [Psalm 132](#) became, over time, an important part of that liturgical celebration, in that it celebrates the establishment of the ark at Jerusalem. The story here falls into two basic parts: (1) the first stage of moving the ark, vv. 1-11; (2) the final stage bringing the ark to Jerusalem, vv. 12-19. The Chronicler also divides out the story roughly into the same two segments ([1 Chron. 13](#) and [15](#)) with the insertion of additional material between (chap. 14).

In the first stage, vv. 1-11, the story begins with an elaborate ritual involving several thousand soldiers traveling the nine miles northwest of Jerusalem to Baale-judah in order to fetch the ark, vv. 1-5. The Chronicler has a slightly different interpretation of this event.

**2 Sam. 6:1-5**

1 David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. 3 They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart 4 with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. 5 David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

**1 Chron. 13:1-8**

1 David consulted with the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, with every leader. 2 David said to the whole assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you, and if it is the will of the Lord our God, let us send abroad to our kindred who remain in all the land of Israel, including the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasture lands, that they may come together to us. 3 Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us; for we did not turn to it in the days of Saul." 4 The whole assembly agreed to do so, for the thing pleased all the people. 5 So David assembled all Israel from the Shihor of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. 6 And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim, which belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, the Lord,

up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

17 They brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord. 18 When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts, 19 and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

17 The Ark of the LORD was placed inside the special tent that David had prepared for it. And David sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings to the LORD. 18 When he had finished, David blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. 19 Then he gave a gift of food to every man and woman in Israel: a loaf of bread, a cake of dates, and a cake of raisins. Then everyone went home.



The ark had been under the care of Abinadab, David's oldest brother. The ark was intended to be a protecting box (appx. 4' long by 2 1/2' wide and 2 1/2' high) for various sacred objects when the tabernacle was set up in Sinai and then was located in the holy of holies in the temple that Solomon built. Symbolizing the presence of God, the ark led the procession of Israelites after they departed from Sinai. Joshua brought it to Shiloh where it remained until the two sons of Eli wrongly carried it into a battle with Philistines where it was captured. Eventually, it was returned and came under the care of Abinadab until David decided to bring it to Jerusalem in our narrative. Its religious significance by all of Israel made it an important part of David's unifying strategy to bring together all twelve tribes under a unified rulership at Jerusalem. The entire procession was caught up in the joy and celebration of escorting the ark to Jerusalem. They danced and sang intensely before the Lord as the procession moved along the road back to Jerusalem.

Unfortunately, the procession was marred by an accident. We discover a dark scene that both the deuteronomist and the chronicler describe:

#### 2 Sam. 6:6-11

6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it. 7 The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God. 8 David was angry because the Lord had burst forth with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day. 9 David was afraid of the Lord that day; he said, "How can the ark of the Lord come into my care?" 10 So David was unwilling to take the ark of the Lord into his care in the city of David; instead David 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 three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

#### 1 Chron. 13:9-14

9 When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen shook it. 10 The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark; and he died there before God. 11 David was angry because the Lord had burst out against Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. 12 David was afraid of God that day; he said, "How can I bring the ark of God into my care?" 13 So David did not take the ark into his care into the city of David; he took it instead to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 14 The ark of God remained with the household of Obed-edom in his house three months, and the Lord blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he had.

Near the field of a Nacon where grain was threshed, the oxen pulling the cart carrying the ark made a move that shook the ark. Uzzah, a son of Abinadab (v. 3) who was driving the cart, reached back to stabilize the ark and to make sure it didn't fall off the cart. In so doing, he touched the sacred ark, which was not supposed to be done under any circumstance. Consequently, he was punished with immediate death. This in turn both angered and scared David. So much so, that he decided not to bring the ark into Jerusalem. Instead, he took the ark to an Obed-edom where it remained some three months. The Lord blessed this man who was taking care of the ark.

Both narratives follow one another very closely in this segment of the story. One basic issue here is what was so bad about Uzzah's action? Both texts provide very few clues as to why the divine punishment was so swift and so severe. A.A. Anderson (WBC, v. 11) offers a summation of various attempts to explain this:

The Uzzah incident raises the question, "What was his error or transgression?" Hertzberg (279) notes that Uzzah had disregarded "the usual precautions taken when serving the ark" but since Uzzah acted on the spur of the moment to protect the ark, the punishment may appear rather harsh, irrespective of the possible meaning of *על השל* (see Mauchline, 224). A plausible explanation is that Uzzah, like Eleazar before him (1 Sam 7:1), may have been consecrated to have charge of the ark, and therefore he ought to have realized that the falling of the ark was really a sign, namely, Yahweh's way of stopping the procession (cf. the remote parallels in 1 Sam 5:1-5; 6:10-15). If so, not only the sacredness of the ark was an important factor but also the attempt (unintentional?) to frustrate or disregard the will of Yahweh; therefore also the consequences were so severe. Thus Dus (TZ 17 [1961] 7) has remarked that Uzzah sinned in that he did not grant Yahweh the freedom to choose his own resting place. This incident could have been regarded also as a warning to David, especially if Yahweh was not consulted at the

beginning of this undertaking.

Some earlier commentators on this passage seek to link this episode with [Numbers 4:1-6](#) which contain instructions for moving the ark. But several difficulties surface with this connection and make it unlikely that violation of these instructions stood as the reason for the divine punishment on Uzzah.

Whatever the reason, it certainly caught David's attention. Verse 8 has an interesting pun. The verbal expression "the Lord had burst forth with an outburst..." led to the spot being called "Perez-uzzah," which means "bursting out against Uzzah." Also interesting is the phrase "to this day." Such expressions that pop up occasionally in the text signal the time of the writing of the text, which is clearly long after the event itself took place.

The third scene in this passage is found in verses 12-15 and 17-19. The chronicler has a very different account of this part in 1 Chron. 15. The motivation in 2 Sam. 6:12a is omitted, and the remainder is described in much greater detail from a very different, more liturgical perspective.

### **2 Sam. 6:12-15, 17-19**

12 It was told King David, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; 13 and when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fattling. 14 David danced before the Lord with all his might; 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.

17 They brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord. 18 When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts, 19 and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

Actually the chronicler continues this story through chapter seventeen in a very detailed presentation that gives much more significance to this event than is found in 2 Samuel. With his stronger theological focus upon the legitimacy of the southern kingdom and Jerusalem as the central capital for all the tribes, the moving of the ark to Jerusalem contains very powerful symbolism to legitimize this viewpoint.

For the deuteronomist, the motivation for fetching the ark from the house of Obed-edom is simpler: God had blessed this man for taking care of it. This reassured David that it was now safe to bring the ark to Jerusalem where God's blessings would hopefully come on the city of David.

No elaborate procession is described this time in 2 Samuel, although in 1 Chronicles 15 a very elaborate procession is described. This time the Levites are charged with the responsibility of carry-

### **1 Chron. 15:1-16:3**

1 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. 2 Then David commanded that no one but the Levites were to carry the ark of God, for the Lord had chosen them to carry the ark of the Lord and to minister to him forever. 3 David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the Lord to its place, which he had prepared for it. 4 Then David gathered together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites: 5 of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, with one hundred twenty of his kindred; 6 of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, with two hundred twenty of his kindred; 7 of the sons of Gershon, Joel the chief, with one hundred thirty of his kindred; 8 of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, with two hundred of his kindred; 9 of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, with eighty of his kindred; 10 of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, with one hundred twelve of his kindred. 11 David summoned the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. 12 He said to them, "You are the heads of families of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your kindred, so that you may bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. 13 Because you did not carry it the first time, the Lord our God burst out against us, because we did not give it proper care." 14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel. 15 And the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the Lord. 16 David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their kindred as the singers to play on musical instruments, on harps and lyres and cymbals, to raise loud sounds of joy. 17 So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; and of his kindred Asaph son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari, their kindred, Ethan son of Kushaiah; 18 and with them their kindred of the second order, Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and the gatekeepers Obed-edom and Jeiel. 19 The singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound bronze cymbals; 20 Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel,



ing the ark. 1 Chron. 15:13 assumes the reason for the severe problem at the beginning was "Because you [priests & Levites] did not carry it the first time, the Lord our God burst out against us, because we did not give it proper care." This time David was determined to "do it right."

The hesitancy still present is reflected in the statement "when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling" (v. 13). They walked just far enough to make sure everything was going to be okay and that they wouldn't be punished for moving the ark. When it was clear that God was okay with moving the ark, they paused and worshipped God with sacrifice, dancing and song. The rest of the trip was then characterized by joyous celebration. 2 Sam. 6:13-15 is paralleled by 1 Chron. 15:26-28.

Once in the city of Jerusalem the ark was placed in a tent that David had built for it, and a lengthy celebration and worship followed with the king's generosity to the people leading him to provide extensive food to everyone (vv. 17-19). 1 Chron. 16:1-3 describe this part of the story.

What we see here is the pulling together of the religious life and the political/military life of the twelve tribes into a centralized location in Jerusalem. David stands in control of all of it as king. From this time forward, even to our day, Jerusalem will occupy a place of religious importance as few other cities in human history.

How does this episode apply to our lives today religiously? The historical importance of this event is clear. But is there any religious connection to us?

Bruce C. Birch (*New Interpreter's Bible*) offers a couple of observations that may be helpful.

1. There have been many occasions when 2 Samuel 6:1 has been used as a justification for dance and bodily movement as a part of Christian worship. It is no doubt true that dance was a more natural part of Israelite worship than our own, but such a use of this text misses its main point. Dance is not here simply a neutral method for the praise of God. David's dancing before the ark as it is transferred to Jerusalem, the city of David, points to a pivotal transfer of political power and a transforming possibility for new theological understandings of God's power in relation to public power. David's intense personal involvement is either a genuine recognition and honoring of true power in the Lord (represented by the ark) or a manipulation of religious symbols for the sake of his own enhanced power. This account invites us to reflect on how thin the line is between these two possibilities.....

3. It is the death of Uzzah that most often disturbs readers of this chapter. Why should he be struck dead for what seems a helpful act? It is unlikely that any response we may give will make us comfortable with this God who brings death rather than life. But the point of this strange and disturbing episode may well be that encounter with God is a risky business—not to be taken casually or lightly, as is frequently our custom.

We know nothing about Uzzah. We do know that the ark was, by law, to be carried on poles by Levites, but it has instead been loaded on an oxcart (reminiscent of the Philistines in 1 Samuel 6:1). Was Uzzah responsible for this? Is his haste to prevent the toppling of the ark but his own attempt to avoid the consequences of poor judgment in transporting the holy presence? As a priest, did he not know that touching the ark is forbidden? Such questions cannot be answered, but the death of Uzzah can stand as a reminder of the danger of trying to manage God's holiness. What should be reverence and awe before God gives way to the notion that we can put our hands on God. That way lies death—perhaps not as dramatic as Uzzah's but just as fatal. Jesus called those who

Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play harps according to Alamoth; 21 but Mattithiah, Eliphehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azariah were to lead with lyres according to the Sheminith. 22 Chenaniah, leader of the Levites in music, was to direct the music, for he understood it. 23 Berechiah and Elkanah were to be gatekeepers for the ark. 24 Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah also were to be gatekeepers for the ark.

25 So David and the elders of Israel, and the commanders of the thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the house of Obed-edom with rejoicing. 26 And because God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the Lord, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. 27 David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers; and David wore a linen ephod. 28 So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres. 29 As the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing; and she despised him in her heart.

16.1 They brought in the ark of God, and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and they offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before God. 2 When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord; 3 and he distributed to every person in Israel—man and woman alike—to each a loaf of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins.

thought they could control God's holiness by their own efforts "whitewashed tombs . . . full of dead men's bones" (Matt 23:27 NRSV).

**b. Michal, an angry wife, vv, 16, 20-23**

**NASB**

16 Then it happened as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

20 But when David returned to bless his household, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel distinguished himself today! He uncovered himself today in the eyes of his servants' maids as one of the foolish ones shamelessly uncovers himself!" 21 So David said to Michal, "*It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; therefore I will celebrate before the LORD.*" 22 "I will be more lightly esteemed than this and will be humble in my own eyes, but with the maids of whom you have spoken, with them I will be distinguished." 23 Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

**NRSV**

16 As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

20 David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!" 21 David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord, that I have danced before the Lord. 22 I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." 23 And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

**NLT**

16 But as the Ark of the LORD entered the City of David, Michal, the daughter of Saul, looked down from her window. When she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she was filled with contempt for him.

20 When David returned home to bless his family, Michal came out to meet him and said in disgust, "How glorious the king of Israel looked today! He exposed himself to the servant girls like any indecent person might do!" 21 David retorted to Michal, "I was dancing before the LORD, who chose me above your father and his family! He appointed me as the leader of Israel, the people of the LORD. So I am willing to act like a fool in order to show my joy in the LORD. 22 Yes, and I am willing to look even more foolish than this, but I will be held in honor by the girls of whom you have spoken!" 23 So Michal, the daughter of Saul, remained childless throughout her life.

**Notes:**

This portion of the narrative focuses upon David's wife [Michal](#) and her disapproval of David's actions. Michal's story in the Old Testament has very tragic tones. D. Harvey, "Michal," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, offers this summary:

The younger daughter of Saul (I Sam. 14: 49). Saul learned that she loved David and offered her to David, making the bride price a hundred dead Philistines, and hoping in this way to entice David to his death (18:20-25). David, however, was successful in the ordeal, won great popularity, married Michal, and aroused Saul's jealousy still more. Finally, when Saul sent messengers to kill David, Michal contrived his escape (19:11-17). Saul then gave Michal to Paltiel son of Laish (I Sam. 25:44; II Sam. 3:15). Later, when David made his treaty with Abner, one of the terms of the agreement was that Michal should be returned to him. This was done, much to the grief of Paltiel (II Sam. 3:13-16). When David brought the ark to Jerusalem, and performed the wild dancing associated with the Canaanite cult as part of the ceremony, Michal rebuked him. David apparently retaliated by giving her "no child to the day of her death" (6:16-23).

Our narrative touches on the last appearance of her in the biblical text. 2 Sam. 6:16 is paralleled by 1 Chron. 15:29: "29 As the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out

of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing; and she despised him in her heart.” This verse (as in 1 Chron.) “interrupts” the joyous return of David and his entourage to Jerusalem with the ark of the covenant. She saw her husband dancing before the crowds of people in the procession and was embarrassed that a king would conduct himself in such a demeaning manner. After the celebrations and worship had ended in Jerusalem, she “met David at the front door” to unload her anger on him: 2 Sam. 6:20-23. The chronicler omitted this part.

She accused him of impropriety before the young girls in his dancing and jubilation (v. 20): “When David returned home to bless his family, Michal came out to meet him and said in disgust, ‘How glorious the king of Israel looked today! He exposed himself to the servant girls like any indecent person might do!’” Most likely, jealousy motivated her more than shame and embarrassment about her husband’s actions. Add to that the tensions between her father’s household and David’s, and you have a witch’s brew that can only spell trouble between a husband and wife.

David’s response is found in vv. 21-22: “21 David said to Michal, ‘It was before the Lord, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord, that I have danced before the Lord. 22 I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor.’” David reminded her that God had chosen him as king over her father’s family. Secondly, he stressed his willingness to identify with his people, even in behavior that seemed unbecoming for a king. Michal’s father evidently gravitated toward a regale attitude that distanced him from the people. She felt this was the proper behavior, and that David was being “too much like the boys” in behavior that was improper for young females to witness. He rejected outright this attitude with another reminder that, although she may despise him, these very young maidens would hold him in high honor as a king they could respect and also identify with.

The punishment of Michal for her actions is set forth in verse 23: “And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.” For a married woman of that time childlessness was one of the most embarrassing and severe punishments possible, short of death. Additionally, this final declaration is one of the signals in both the deuteronomist and chronicler accounts that the household of Saul is now virtually ruined and vanishing from influence in ancient Israel.

The lessons to be learned from the Michal story? Several emerge. For one thing, the relationship between David and Michal had never been on solid footing. This episode brings it to an explosive level with the climax of divine punishment of Michal. Michal had been more a political prize for David than a woman he eventually came to love, in spite of her love for him (1 Sam. 18:20). She was a connection to Saul’s kingship while David was coming to power, but, once he reached power, relations with her began going down hill quickly. Marriages of convenience hardly ever produce healthy relationships and a happy family. Bruce Birch (New Interpreter’s Bible) has some insightful observations here:

While it is clear that the confrontation between Michal and David is intended to address matters of Davidic and Saulide claims on the kingdom, the story is also revealing of gender politics in ancient Israel. Michal had boldly dared to love David and to make that love known (1 Sam 18:20). Yet, David is never said to have loved her, although marriage to her was politically advantageous to him. Three times Michal is given to a man as wife for political reasons (David, 1 Sam 18:27; Paltiel, to spite David, 1 Sam 25:44; David again, as the price for alliance with Abner, 2 Sam 3:14-16). In all of this we lose sight of her love, for love was not allowed a role in such political matters. By 2 Sam 6:20-23, this love appears long dead. When her resentment pours out upon David, the text treats the issue as one of the legitimization of claims on the kingdom. Michal is always called the daughter of Saul, for she is used here as the representative of Saulide claims.

But that is just the point: Michal is always getting used for claims other than her own. Her claim of love was given no power in her world. Her sad and bitter story may be used by the writer to further the men’s story of kingdom and power, but it reminds us that the books of Samuel know another reality that David ignores at his peril. The books of Samuel began in the Lord’s regard for another childless woman, Hannah. Hannah’s song testified to the Lord’s commitment to reverse the fortunes of the oppressed and the exploited. David has known this reversal of grace himself in his rise as God’s chosen one, from shepherd to king. As his kingdom interests bring Michal’s story to a bitter end, David is in the dangerous position of claiming to honor the Lord while completing the final humiliation of one who had once offered him love. Michal’s story anticipates the day when David will learn that even God’s chosen king must face God’s judgment for having been preoccupied with his own power and self-interest (the Bathsheba story, 2 Samuel 11:1-12). In reading Michal’s story, we do well to examine our own refusals of love for the sake of power, our own disregard of women’s interests as irrelevant to the public interest, our own efforts to honor the Lord while not fully honoring the priorities to which the Lord has called us.

This family problem would signal the beginning of many such problems for David. Lord, deliver us from such!

2 Samuel 6:1 WTT וַיִּסַּף עוֹד הַיּוֹד אֶת־כָּל־בְּחֹר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל

שְׁלֹשִׁים אֶלֶף

2 וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיּוֹד וְכָל־הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ מִבְּעַלְיֵי יְהוּדָה

לְהַעֲלוֹת מִזְבֵּחַ אֶת אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר־נִקְרָא שֵׁם שָׁם

יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת יֹשֵׁב הַפְּרָכִים עָלָיו

3 וַיִּרְכְּבוּ אֶת־אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־עֲגֹלָה חֲדָשָׁה וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ מִבַּיִת

אֲבִינֹדָב אֲשֶׁר בְּגִבְעָה וְעִזָּא וְאֲחִיו בְּנֵי אֲבִינֹדָב נְהַגִּים

אֶת־הָעֲגֹלָה חֲדָשָׁה

4 וַיִּשְׂאֶהוּ מִבַּיִת אֲבִינֹדָב אֲשֶׁר בְּגִבְעָה עִם אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים

וְאֲחִיו הַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי הָאֲרֹן

5 וְדוֹדוֹ וְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל מִשְׁחָקִים לִפְנֵי יְהוָה בְּכָל עֲצֵי

בְּרוֹשִׁים וּבְכַנְרוֹת וּבְנִבְלִים וּבְחַפְּזִים וּבְמִזְמָנִים וּבְצִלְצְלִים

6 וַיָּבֹאוּ עַד־גֶּרֶן נָכוֹן וַיִּשְׁלַח עִזָּא אֶל־אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמְרוּ

בּוֹ כִּי שָׁמְטוּ הַבָּקָר

7 וַיַּחֲרֹאֲף יְהוָה בְּעִזָּה וַיִּכְהוּ שָׁם הָאֱלֹהִים עַל־הַשָּׁל וַיָּמָת

שָׁם עִם אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים

8 וַיַּחֲרֹ לְדוֹד עַל אֲשֶׁר פָּרַץ יְהוָה פָּרַץ בְּעִזָּה וַיִּקְרָא

לַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא פָּרַץ עִזָּה עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה

9 וַיִּרְא הַיּוֹד אֶת־יְהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיֹּאמֶר אֵיךְ יָבֹא אֵלַי

אַרְוֹן יְהוָה

10 וְלֹא־אָבָה הַיּוֹד לְהִסִּיר אֵלָיו אֶת־אַרְוֹן יְהוָה עַל־עֵיר הַיּוֹד

וַיִּטְהוּ הַיּוֹד בַּיִת עַבְד־אָדָם הַגִּתִּי

11 וַיֵּשֶׁב אַרְוֹן יְהוָה בַּיִת עַבְד־אָדָם הַגִּתִּי שְׁלֹשָׁה חֳדָשִׁים

וַיִּבְרַךְ יְהוָה אֶת־עַבְד־אָדָם וְאֶת־כָּל־בֵּיתוֹ

12 וַיִּגְדַּל לַמֶּלֶךְ הַיּוֹד לֵאמֹר בְּרַךְ יְהוָה אֶת־בַּיִת עַבְד־אָדָם

וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ בְּעַבְדֵי אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וַיֵּלֶךְ הַיּוֹד וַיַּעַל

אֶת־אַרְוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים מִבַּיִת עַבְד־אָדָם עֵיר הַיּוֹד בְּשִׁמְחָה

13 וַיְהִי כִּי צָעְדוּ נְשָׂאֵי אַרְוֹן־יְהוָה שְׁשֵׁה צְעָדִים וַיִּזְבַּח שׁוֹר

וּבָדִיא

14 וְדוֹד מִכְרַכַּר בְּכָל־עֵז לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְדוֹד חָגוּר אֶפֶוד בֶּדֶן

15 וְדוֹד וְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל מֵעַלִּים אֶת־אַרְוֹן יְהוָה בְּתִרְוַעָה

וּבְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר׃

16 וְהָיָה אֲרוֹן יְהוָה בְּאֵי עִיר הַדָּוָר וּמִיִּכָל בַּת־שָׂאוֹל נִשְׁקָפָה׃  
בְּעַד הַחֲלוֹן וַתֵּרָא אֶת־הַמֶּלֶךְ הַדָּוָר מִפְּנֵי וּמִכַּרְכַּר לִפְנֵי  
יְהוָה וַתִּבְזֹ לוֹ בַּלְבָּהּ׃

17 וַיָּבֵאוּ אֶת־אֲרוֹן יְהוָה וַיִּצְגּוּ אֹתוֹ בְּמִקְוָמוֹ בְּתוֹךְ הָאֶהָל  
אֲשֶׁר נִטְהַלּוּ הַדָּוָר וַיַּעַל הַדָּוָר עֲלוֹת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְשִׁלְמִים׃  
18 וַיִּכַּל הַדָּוָר מִהַעֲלוֹת הָעוֹלָה וְהַשְּׁלָמִים וַיִּבְרַךְ אֶת־הָעָם  
בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת׃

19 וַיַּחֲלֵק לְכָל־הָעָם לְכָל־הַמּוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל לְמֵאִישׁ וְעַד־אִשָּׁה  
לְאִישׁ חֶלֶת לֶחֶם אַחַת וְאֶשְׁפָּר אַחַד וְאִשִּׁישָׁה אַחַת וַיִּלְךְ  
כָּל־הָעָם אִישׁ לְבֵיתוֹ׃

20 וַיֵּשֶׁב הַדָּוָר לְבֵרֶךְ אֶת־בֵּיתוֹ וַתֵּצֵא מִיִּכָל בַּת־שָׂאוֹל  
לְקִרְיַת הַדָּוָר וַתֹּאמֶר מִה־נִּכְבַּד הַיּוֹם מֶלֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר  
נִגְלָה הַיּוֹם לְעֵינַי אֲמֵהוֹת עֲבָדָיו כִּהְגִּילוֹת נִגְלוֹת אַחַד  
הַרְקִים׃

21 וַיֹּאמֶר הַדָּוָר אֶל־מִיכָל לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר בְּחָר־בִּי מֵאֲבִיךָ  
וּמִכָּל־בֵּיתוֹ לְצוֹת אֹתִי נִגִּיד עַל־עַם יְהוָה עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְשִׁחַקְתִּי לִפְנֵי יְהוָה׃

22 וּנְקַלְתִּי עוֹד מִזֹּאת וְהָיִיתִי שֹׁפֵל בְּעֵינַי וְעַם־הָאֲמֵהוֹת׃  
אֲשֶׁר אֲמַרְתָּ עַמָּם אֶכְבְּדָהּ׃

23 וּלְמִיכָל בַּת־שָׂאוֹל לֹא־הָיָה לָהּ יֶלֶד עַד יוֹם מוֹתָהּ׃ פ

LXT **2 Samuel 6:1** καὶ συνήγαγεν ἔτι Δαυὶδ πάντα νεανίαν ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ ὡς ἑβδομήκοντα χιλιάδας <sup>2</sup> καὶ ἀνέστη καὶ ἐπορεύθη Δαυὶδ καὶ πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ὁ μετ' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων Ἰουδα ἐν ἀναβάσει τοῦ ἀναγαγεῖν ἐκεῖθεν τὴν κιβωτὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐφ' ἣν ἐπεκλήθη τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου τῶν δυνάμεων καθημένου ἐπὶ τῶν Χερουβιν ἐπ' αὐτῆς <sup>3</sup> καὶ ἐπεβίβασεν τὴν κιβωτὸν κυρίου ἐφ' ἄμαξαν καινὴν καὶ ἤρειν αὐτὴν ἐξ οἴκου Ἀμινάδαβ τοῦ ἐν τῷ βουνῷ καὶ Οὔζα καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ υἱοὶ Ἀμινάδαβ ἤγον τὴν ἄμαξαν <sup>4</sup> σὺν τῇ κιβωτῷ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπορεύοντο ἔμπροσθεν τῆς κιβωτοῦ <sup>5</sup> καὶ Δαυὶδ καὶ οἱ υἱοὶ Ἰσραὴλ παίζοντες ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἐν ὄργανοις ἡρμωμένοις ἐν ἰσχύϊ καὶ ἐν ᾠδαῖς καὶ ἐν κινύραις καὶ ἐν νάβλαις καὶ ἐν τυμπάνοις καὶ ἐν κυμβάλοις καὶ ἐν αὐλοῖς <sup>6</sup> καὶ παραγίνονται ἕως ἄλλω Νωδαβ καὶ ἐξέτεινεν Οὔζα τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν κιβωτὸν τοῦ θεοῦ κατασχεῖν αὐτὴν καὶ ἐκράτησεν αὐτὴν ὅτι περιέσπασεν αὐτὴν ὁ μύσχος τοῦ κατασχεῖν αὐτὴν <sup>7</sup> καὶ ἐθυμώθη κύριος τῷ Οὔζα καὶ ἔπεισεν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖ ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἀπέθανεν ἐκεῖ παρὰ τὴν κιβωτὸν τοῦ κυρίου ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ <sup>8</sup> καὶ ἠθύμησεν Δαυὶδ ὑπὲρ οὗ διέκοψεν κύριος διακοπὴν ἐν τῷ Οὔζα καὶ ἐκλήθη ὁ τόπος ἐκεῖνος διακοπὴ Οὔζα ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης <sup>9</sup> καὶ ἐφοβήθη Δαυὶδ τὸν κύριον ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ λέγων πῶς εἰσελεύσεται πρὸς με ἡ κιβωτὸς κυρίου <sup>10</sup> καὶ οὐκ ἐβούλετο Δαυὶδ τοῦ ἐκκλίνειν πρὸς αὐτὸν τὴν κιβωτὸν διαθήκης κυρίου εἰς τὴν πόλιν Δαυὶδ καὶ ἀπέκλινεν αὐτὴν Δαυὶδ εἰς οἶκον Ἀβεδδαρα τοῦ Γεθθαίου <sup>11</sup> καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἡ κιβωτὸς τοῦ κυρίου εἰς οἶκον Ἀβεδδαρα τοῦ Γεθθαίου μῆνας τρεῖς καὶ εὐλόγησεν κύριος ὅλον τὸν οἶκον Ἀβεδδαρα καὶ πάντα τὰ αὐτοῦ <sup>12</sup> καὶ ἀπηγγέλη τῷ βασιλεῖ Δαυὶδ λέγοντες ἠυλόγησεν κύριος τὸν οἶκον Ἀβεδδαρα καὶ πάντα τὰ αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν τῆς κιβωτοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐπορεύθη Δαυὶδ καὶ ἀνήγαγεν τὴν κιβωτὸν τοῦ κυρίου ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου Ἀβεδδαρα εἰς τὴν πόλιν Δαυὶδ ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ <sup>13</sup> καὶ ἦσαν μετ' αὐτῶν αἴρουτες τὴν κιβωτὸν ἑπτὰ χοροὶ καὶ θῦμα μύσχος καὶ ἄρνα <sup>14</sup> καὶ Δαυὶδ ἀνεκρούετο ἐν ὄργανοις ἡρμωμένοις ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ ὁ Δαυὶδ ἐνδεδικώς στολὴν ἕξαλλον <sup>15</sup> καὶ Δαυὶδ καὶ πᾶς ὁ οἶκος Ἰσραὴλ ἀνήγαγον τὴν κιβωτὸν κυρίου μετὰ κραυγῆς καὶ μετὰ φωνῆς σάλπιγγος <sup>16</sup> καὶ ἐγένετο τῆς κιβωτοῦ παραγινομένης ἕως πόλεως Δαυὶδ καὶ Μελχολ ἡ θυγάτηρ Σαουλ διέκυπτεν διὰ τῆς θυρίδος καὶ εἶδεν τὸν βασιλέα Δαυὶδ ὀρχούμενον καὶ ἀνακρουόμενον ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ ἐξουδένωσεν αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς <sup>17</sup> καὶ φέρουσιν τὴν κιβωτὸν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀνέθηκαν αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν τόπον αὐτῆς εἰς μέσον τῆς σκηνῆς ἧς ἔπηξεν αὐτῇ Δαυὶδ καὶ ἀνήγγεικεν Δαυὶδ ὀλοκαυτώματα ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ εἰρηνικάς <sup>18</sup> καὶ συνετέλεσεν Δαυὶδ συναναφέρων τὰς ὀλοκαυτώσεις καὶ τὰς εἰρηνικάς καὶ εὐλόγησεν τὸν λαὸν ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου τῶν δυνάμεων <sup>19</sup> καὶ διεμέρισεν παντὶ τῷ λαῷ εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἀπὸ Δαν ἕως Βηρσαβεε ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς ἕως γυναικὸς ἐκάστῳ κολλυρίδα ἄρτου καὶ ἐσχαρίτην καὶ λάγανον ἀπὸ τηγάνου καὶ ἀπῆλθεν πᾶς ὁ λαὸς ἕκαστος εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ <sup>20</sup> καὶ ἐπέστρεψεν Δαυὶδ εὐλογῆσαι τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐξῆλθεν Μελχολ ἡ θυγάτηρ Σαουλ εἰς ἀπάντησιν Δαυὶδ καὶ εὐλόγησεν αὐτὸν καὶ εἶπεν τί δεδόξασται σήμερον ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰσραὴλ ὃς ἀπεκαλύφθη σήμερον ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς παιδισκῶν τῶν δούλων ἑαυτοῦ καθὼς ἀποκαλύπτεται ἀποκαλυφθεὶς εἰς τῶν ὀρχουμένων <sup>21</sup> καὶ εἶπεν Δαυὶδ πρὸς Μελχολ ἐνώπιον κυρίου ὀρχήσομαι εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὃς ἐξελέξατό με ὑπὲρ τὸν πατέρα σου καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντα τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ τοῦ καταστήσαι με εἰς ἡγούμενον ἐπὶ τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ παίξομαι καὶ ὀρχήσομαι ἐνώπιον κυρίου <sup>22</sup> καὶ ἀποκαλυφθήσομαι ἔτι οὕτως καὶ ἔσομαι ἀχρεῖος ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς σου καὶ μετὰ τῶν παιδισκῶν ὧν εἶπάς με δοξασθῆναι <sup>23</sup> καὶ τῇ Μελχολ θυγατρὶ Σαουλ οὐκ ἐγένετο παιδίον ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας τοῦ ἀποθανεῖν αὐτὴν

## NASB

1 Now David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name, the very name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned *above* the cherubim. 3 They placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart. 4 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. 5 Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of *instruments made of fir wood*, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals. 6 But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen nearly upset *it*. 7 And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God. 8 David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzzah, and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. 9 So David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" 10 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. 11 Thus the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household. 12 Now it was told 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." David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness. 13 And so it was, that when the bearers of the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. 14 And David was dancing before the LORD with all *his* might, and David was wearing a linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel were bringing up the ark of the LORD with shouting and the sound of the trumpet.

16 Then it happened *as* the ark of the LORD came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

17 So 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. 18 When David had finished offering the burnt offering and the peace offering, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. 19 Further, he distributed to all the people, to all the multitude of Israel, both to men and women, a cake of bread and one of dates and one of raisins to each one. Then all the people departed each to his house.

20 But when David returned to bless his household, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel distinguished himself today! He uncovered himself today in the eyes of his servants' maids as one of the foolish ones shamelessly uncovers himself!" 21 So David said to Michal, "*It was before the LORD*, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; therefore I will celebrate before the LORD. 22 "I will be more lightly esteemed than this and will be humble in my own eyes, but with the maids of whom you have spoken, with them I will be distinguished." 23 Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

## NRSV

1 David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 David and all the people with him set out and went from Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who is enthroned on the cherubim. 3 They carried the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart 4 with the ark of God; and Ahio went in front of the ark. 5 David and all the house of Israel were dancing before the Lord with all their might, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.

6 When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen shook it. 7 The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God struck him there because he reached out his hand to the ark; and he died there beside the ark of God. 8 David was angry because the Lord had burst forth with an outburst upon Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day. 9 David was afraid of the Lord that day; he said, "How can the ark of the Lord come into my care?" 10 So David was unwilling to take the ark of the Lord into his care in the city of David; instead David 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 three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household.

12 It was told King David, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; 13 and when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. 14 David danced before the Lord with all his might; 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 As the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

17 They brought in the ark of the Lord, and set it in its place, inside the tent that David had pitched for it; and David offered burnt offerings and offerings of well-being before the Lord. 18 When David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the offerings of well-being, he blessed the people in the name of the Lord of hosts, 19 and distributed food among all the people, the whole multitude of Israel, both men and women, to each a cake of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins. Then all the people went back to their homes.

20 David returned to bless his household. But Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How the king of Israel honored himself today, uncovering himself today before the eyes of his servants' maids, as any vulgar fellow might shamelessly uncover himself!" 21 David said to Michal, "It was before the Lord, who chose me in place of your father and all his household, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the Lord, that I have danced before the Lord. 22 I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased in my own eyes; but by the maids of whom you have spoken, by them I shall be held in honor." 23 And Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.



## NLT

1 Then David mobilized thirty thousand special troops. 2 He led them to Baalah of Judah to bring home the Ark of God, which bears the name of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim. 3 They placed the Ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the hillside home of Abinadab. Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, were guiding the cart 4 with the Ark of God on it, with Ahio walking in front. 5 David and all the people of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all their might, singing songs and playing all kinds of musical instruments – lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.

6 But when they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah put out his hand to steady the Ark of God. 7 Then the LORD's anger blazed out against Uzzah for doing this, and God struck him dead beside the Ark of God. 8 David was angry because the LORD's anger had blazed out against Uzzah. He named that place Perez-uzzah (which means "outbreak against Uzzah"). It is still called that today. 9 David was now afraid of the LORD and asked, "How can I ever bring the Ark of the LORD back into my care?" 10 So David decided not to move the Ark of the LORD into the City of David. He took it instead to the home of Obed-edom of Gath. 11 The Ark of the LORD remained there with the family of Obed-edom for three months, and the LORD blessed him and his entire household.

12 Then King David was told, "The LORD has blessed Obed-edom's home and everything he has because of the Ark of God." So David went there and brought the Ark to the City of David with a great celebration. 13 After the men who were carrying it had gone six steps, they stopped and waited so David could sacrifice an ox and a fattened calf. 14 And David danced before the LORD with all his might, wearing a priestly tunic. 15 So David and all Israel brought up the Ark of the LORD with much shouting and blowing of trumpets.

16 But as the Ark of the LORD entered the City of David, Michal, the daughter of Saul, looked down from her window. When she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she was filled with contempt for him.

17 The Ark of the LORD was placed inside the special tent that David had prepared for it. And David sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings to the LORD. 18 When he had finished, David blessed the people in the name of the LORD Almighty. 19 Then he gave a gift of food to every man and woman in Israel: a loaf of bread, a cake of dates, and a cake of raisins. Then everyone went home.

20 When David returned home to bless his family, Michal came out to meet him and said in disgust, "How glorious the king of Israel looked today! He exposed himself to the servant girls like any indecent person might do!" 21 David retorted to Michal, "I was dancing before the LORD, who chose me above your father and his family! He appointed me as the leader of Israel, the people of the LORD. So I am willing to act like a fool in order to show my joy in the LORD. 22 Yes, and I am willing to look even more foolish than this, but I will be held in honor by the girls of whom you have spoken!" 23 So Michal, the daughter of Saul, remained childless throughout her life.

### **1 Chron. 13:1-14 NRSV**

1 David consulted with the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, with every leader. 2 David said to the whole assembly of Israel, "If it seems good to you, and if it is the will of the Lord our God, let us send abroad to our kindred who remain in all the land of Israel, including the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasture lands, that they may come together to us. 3 Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us; for we did not turn to it in the days of Saul." 4 The whole assembly agreed to do so, for the thing pleased all the people. 5 So David assembled all Israel from the Shihor of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. 6 And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim, which belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, the Lord, who is enthroned on the cherubim, which is called by his name. 7 They carried the ark of God on a new cart, from the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio were driving the cart. 8 David and all Israel were dancing before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets.

9 When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen shook it. 10 The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark; and he died there before God. 11 David was angry because the Lord had burst out against Uzzah; so that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. 12 David was afraid of God that day; he said, "How can I bring the ark of God into my care?" 13 So David did not take the ark into his care into the city of David; he took it instead to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 14 The ark of God remained with the household of Obed-edom in his house three months, and the Lord blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he had.

### **1 Chron. 15:1-29 NRSV**

1 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. 2 Then David commanded that no one but the Levites were to carry the ark of God, for the Lord had chosen them to carry the ark of the Lord and to minister to him forever. 3 David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the Lord to its place, which he had prepared for it. 4 Then David gathered together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites: 5 of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, with one hundred twenty of his kindred; 6 of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, with two hundred twenty of his kindred; 7 of the sons of Gershom, Joel the chief, with one hundred thirty of his kindred; 8 of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, with two hundred of his kindred; 9 of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, with eighty of his kindred; 10 of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, with one hundred twelve of his kindred. 11 David summoned the priests Zadok and Abiathar, and the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. 12 He said to them, "You are the heads of families of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your kindred, so that you may bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel, to the place that I have prepared for it. 13 Because you did not carry it the first time, the Lord our God burst out against us, because we did not give it proper care." 14 So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel. 15 And the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the Lord. 16 David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their kindred as the singers to play on musical instruments, on harps and lyres and cymbals, to raise loud sounds of joy. 17 So the Levites appointed Heman son of Joel; and of his kindred Asaph son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari, their kindred, Ethan son of Kushaiah; 18 and with them their kindred of the second order, Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and the gatekeepers Obed-edom and Jeiel. 19 The singers Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound bronze cymbals; 20 Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play harps according to Alamo; 21 but Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah were to lead with lyres according to the Sheminith. 22 Chenaniah, leader of the Levites in music, was to direct the music, for he understood it. 23 Berechiah and Elkanah were to be gatekeepers for the ark. 24 Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah also were to be gatekeepers for the ark.

25 So David and the elders of Israel, and the commanders of the thousands, went to bring up the ark of

the covenant of the Lord from the house of Obed-edom with rejoicing. 26 And because God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the Lord, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. 27 David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers; and David wore a linen ephod. 28 So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres. 29 As the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing; and she despised him in her heart.

