

(The Path of the Ark #5) Touching Christ Through Revelation

by Ed Miller

Ed Miller's sermon explores the journey of the Ark of the Covenant as a metaphor for God's desire to dwell within us and the importance of worship in our spiritual lives.

Duration: 1:15:36

Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:6

Topics: "Spiritual Progress", "Divine Presence"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the journey of the Ark of the Covenant and its significance in the spiritual progress of the Israelites. The Ark moves from one territory to another, symbolizing God's movement in our lives. The speaker highlights four steps that have been covered so far, including the importance of sacrifice and the role of consecrated priests. The sermon also emphasizes the need for continual spiritual progress and the desire to find a place for the Lord in our lives, as expressed by David in Psalm 142.

Transcript

...beautiful, and he's fragrant, and we just ask, by thy Holy Spirit, that we would not destroy him by analysis. And they ask to appreciate him, and to admire him, and turn our eyes this evening again unto him. Thank you for the Word of God, every part of it.

Thank you for all of these scriptures on the Ark. And we pray that we might see the counterpart of that Ark, and just see our Lord Jesus. We ask thee, Lord, to take the very reality, and enable us to see beyond just the letter.

And may we hear your voice, and be sensitive to your Spirit. Thank you now that you're going to over-answer this prayer, because we claim it in the all-prevailing name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Well, welcome again. I'll ask you to open to 2 Samuel 6, please. Welcome again to our little study on God coming to rest in the heart of his temple.

A big portion of the Bible, of spiritual reality in the Old Testament, rewound around tabernacle truth. Rewound around temple truth. It would appear that more than any other picture in the Old Testament, probably with the exception of marriage, that God put more care into instituting the tabernacle, and then

the temple, which was just the tabernacle grown up, than any other picture.

There's so much of our Lord Jesus that he wanted us to see in this marvelous picture of the tabernacle. So much he wanted us to believe. So much of him he wanted us to enjoy.

We've only focused in this little series on one teeny, little piece of that glorious picture in the tabernacle. In the tabernacle, God ordained six pieces of furniture. Each one would show a different aspect of the beauty of our Lord Jesus.

And the very first piece that God talked about was the Ark of the Covenant. It was in the shape of a king's throne, and it symbolized the presence of the king. The invisible presence of the king.

Now that precious Ark led them into battle and victory. That precious Ark was encamped in the center of their camp as they camped together. That precious Ark marched before them to show them the way and to lead them.

And all the way through the story, there's no question about it, this isn't one of the things we wonder about. Because God has spelled this out. The Ark was a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And especially in terms of his kinship. Through the Ark we see his heart, his desires. Through looking inside the Ark, we see all we have in Christ.

Because all these things were pictures and we have them in Him. Well it's important to realize that the Ark, picture of Christ, was on the move for a very long period of time. It moved from point A to point B. From here to there.

One place to another. And it's not an accident that God the Holy Spirit has traced the path of the Ark. He tells us when it started.

He tells us as it stops. He tells us where it went, how long it stayed and why. And what God had accomplished in those various places.

And that's really what this little series is all about. We're following the path of the Ark. We're following the trail of the Ark because the path of the Ark is the path of Christ.

It's exactly the same path. Now of course it's in picture form. And we're trusting God to give us the reality.

But it's the same path. And the Ark had a goal. The Ark had a destination.

The Ark wasn't just moving around the trail and randomly around the wilderness. It was heading some place. It was deliberate.

It was persistent. It was alive. And the Ark was moving toward the goal.

And the Bible calls the goal of the Ark the resting place. Interestingly enough, the Ark wanted to settle down. The Ark wanted to rest.

The Ark wanted a home. A dwelling place. A place where it could just settle down.

And from this chosen place, the Ark would rest. From this chosen place, the Ark would reign. Christ would reign.

And from that place, God would release his glory. Now in the picture, where was the goal of the Ark? Where was that resting place? Where would the Ark rest? And from where would the Ark reign? From where would the Ark release the glory? And the answer is, in the Holy of Holies, the heart of the Temple. And all through this wandering, the Ark was looking for the Holy of Holies.

In the Holy Temple, the God. And next time, when the Ark finally arrives there, in the Temple. And in the heart of the Temple, the Holy of Holies.

And then God released his glory. And from that time on, the glory of God would govern the Temple. And actually, the Church would be driven out by the glory of God.

Now obviously, I'm spending time sketching the picture, because of this wonderful spiritual counterpart. It has a reality in your life, and in my life. I don't need to throw a truckload of proof text at you, for you to realize you're the Temple.

And I'm the Temple. And you have a heart to your Temple, just like the Holy of Holies was the heart of that Temple. And you have the Holy of Holies in your Temple as well.

And they were so accustomed to looking at things in a man-centered way. From man up to God. Rather than God down to man, as he sees them.

And one of the things that he constantly emphasized, and I'm the one that emphasizes it as much as anyone else, and that is, rest in the Lord. Rest in the Lord. He wants you to rest in the Lord.

He's called you to rest in him. But there's a more foundational truth, than resting in Jesus. And that is, the Lord wants to rest in you.

The Lord wants to rest in his Temple. The earth wants to come to the Holy of Holies. There's a place in your life, where he will find and set it up.

Where he'll be happy, where he'll be satisfied, where he'll rest, where he'll release his glory and fill your life. And from that point on, where he'll raise King from you as his throne. And to the entire world.

Now toward that, in your life, God is ever moving. He's always heading in that direction. That's his goal.

That's his destination. And so you see why it's exciting, to study the path of Yah. Because to follow the path of Yah, is to follow the path the Lord takes, as he moves through your life.

To finally come to that place, where he can rest. Now we've concentrated our study, we really picked up at the end of the story. The Ark's been around for 400 years.

We've been following the early trail of the Ark. That's instructive too. Now we've actually picked it up, in about the 400th year, when the Ark started to move again.

Now the reason he's saying this course, is because I was meditating this afternoon. If I wanted to show you, a beautiful flower. Probably the worst thing I could do, is take six weeks, like I'm doing on this Ark.

Take six weeks, and every week show you a piece of the flower. Show you the rim leak, and then show you the stem, and then show you the stem, and then show you the petal, and then show you the pistil, and so on. And at the end of the time say, here now that is a beautiful flower.

I've destroyed it. I've destroyed it. You might know a lot about the flower.

You might be an expert on the flower. But you know the flower belongs to the artist. Not the botanist.

The flower belongs to the one, we can just enjoy its beauty. We can stand back and just smell it, and feel its tenderness, and enjoy the flower. And I'm afraid, as an instructor of the truth, I may have to destroy the very thing I've taught you to enjoy.

And sometimes by analysis, I only look at step one, step two, this principle, the next stage, and so on. And sometimes that can get so cold, and by breaking it down into steps, and stages, and principles, and points, we can lose something. But quite honestly, I don't know how else to do it.

And so pray for me, and trust in the Holy Spirit, to keep the beauty of Christ, and the fragrance of Christ alive, as we have to analyze. We break it down just so that we can, God has given us analytical knowledge. And so we need to look at it that way.

So what we've done is, we've actually tried to trace out the steps that the Ark has taken. And God has, I think, He's made them quite clear. I remind you once again, that all of the movement of the Ark in the history, as God moved in physical geography, that's all a picture of your life.

You see, you have an Israel in your heart, you have a Philistine territory in your heart, there's an Ashdod there, there's a Gath there, there's an Ekron there, you have in your life, a Beth Shemesh, and a Kiriath-Jerim, you have an Obed-Edom, you have an Abinadab, and so on, as you have a Temple, and a Holy of Holies. And so it's all in there. So when we follow the Ark around the landscape, and all over the lot, you can understand that God's all over the lot in your life too.

And He has to go to these places in order to get to His place of rest. And one other thing I'd like to point out, and then we'll pick up where we left off, God moves in your life, the Ark moves in your life, more like a moving pilgrim than a track star. He's not just running through your life on His way to the Temple.

And He's just going to throw you through. The fact is, as you can see in the record, God seems to take His time. And He doesn't seem to be in a great hurry.

And He comes to one territory in your life, like the Philistine territory, and He sets up camp. And He stays there sometime for years. And so you finally learn that great truth, and then He picks up His baggage and says, now you'll move to the next place.

And then He sets up His camp again. And sometimes it's a long, hard wrestle as God begins to move through these areas in our life, heading for that place where He can rest. We've looked at four steps so far.

It would take up all of our teaching time if I just review everything. Let me just mention the four steps and the principle connected with it, and then we'll pick up the Muscat. Step number one.

What started the Ark moving again? After 350 years of just sitting there, all of a sudden it started to move again. And the answer is, hunger, desire, appetite. You see, the story begins in the first three chapters of 5th Samuel.

It begins with the cry of a burning wound. Hannah crying out for fruit from God. Fruit from God that she can turn around and give back to God.

Fruit from God, fear not. After they had hunger and desire and wanted issue and life and fruit, then God began to build a wall with what He saw as public enemy number one. They thought He would rule with the Philistines, but He had to rule with the corrupt priesthood.

The Philistines represent the carnal man, the flesh side, that which I do. But before God ever deals with the Philistines, He's got to deal with the corrupt priesthood, which is what He does. And the third step, the Ark actually moved into Philistine territory.

And God set up camp there for seven months. And during that time, God taught His people that He would never be satisfied, He would never rest in any part of the Philistine territory. The Philistines kept trying to make God comfortable and rest here, rest there, and put Him anyplace.

And God rejected everything until finally by a miracle they were convinced that God had rejected the flesh. Every time they tried to make God comfortable, He blasted them with mice and hemorrhoids and convinced them convincingly that He'll not settle in the flesh. Last week we looked at step number four, when the Lord went to Bethshemesh, the city of the priests, 1 Samuel chapter 6. And one lesson they learned in Bethshemesh, actually it took them 20 years to learn it, and that is that the Lord Jesus Christ must be preeminent.

Not prominent, one among many, but preeminent of one and only. Looking unto Christ means nothing if I don't look away from everything that is not Christ. And you remember the story with the discovery that Christ was all.

While they worshipped Him, while they prayed, while they looked to the Lord, suddenly they were attacked by the Philistines, God fended on them. And for the first time in their experience, they realized the way to be delivered from the Philistines is through worship. And the more they worshipped, the more God fought the Philistines.

And that's where the ark's been so far. It begins its move toward rest with hunger. First He comes against the corrupt priesthood.

Then He teaches the Philistine part of me that He's rejected it all. Then He shows me He will not rest and I will not have victory until Christ is all in all, until He's in one and only. Now there's one more big truth that we need to see and that we're going to look at tonight by an open arms.

And then God will rest in His temple. I'd like us to look at that final principle and then later next week we'll follow the ark to its destination and see what happens when He finally reaches that wonderful place. Now don't read these truths la la la.

As it was in the history of Israel, it's in the history of every Christian. Each time God taught them a principle, they thought they were right. Each time God taught them anything, they thought God taught them everything.

And with each lesson they said, I see it. That's it. I'm alive.

And now I'm there. Hunger. That's it.

That's all we need. We are hungry. We have food.

We've arrived. And the first thing they did, 1 Samuel chapter 4 and on, they attacked the Philistines because they thought they had it. They just had it.

And as soon as they attacked the Philistines, those two, Israel was defeated before the Philistines. And so finally God taught them step two. And they're going to deal with the Philistines first and then to deal with the corrupt priesthood.

And they said, oh yes, of course. I see it. I have arrived.

And they found very sadly to their own hurt that they hadn't arrived. Do you remember in real life? Don't answer, just think. Do you remember in real life when God taught you it's not by the works of the flesh.

God will never settle in the Philistine part of you. He will not settle in death next to your favorite God. He will not settle in, no, not death.

What's the first one? I forgot. I don't know. He will not settle, we weren't there.

Where David was, he will not settle where the giants are. He's not going to settle there. I remember when God showed me that it's not by works.

And my response was, okay, I'll quit everything. And I did. I quit on everything.

I didn't quit Bible reading. I quit everything. So nothing's going to get in the way between me and Christ.

It's not by works, not what I did. In fact, the president of the Bible school I was at had to talk me into not quitting the school. Because I really quit school.

Paul never did. She went through all of this. And I just said, that's it.

It's not by works. He's not going to settle. I still didn't know what to do with the ark.

But I was so free because I knew what it was. And I thought I lied. Well, every time God taught them, they thought they lied.

When they left off last week, God had taught them when He's preeminent, when they look away from the gods and the Christ, that He brings a great victory. And they said, aha, that's it. Now I said, it's not just hunger.

It's not just dealing with the priesthood part of me. It's not just rejection of the Philistine part. It's Christ preeminent.

And then the Philistines are defeated. First Samuel 7, 12. Samuel took a stone, set it between Mizpah and Shem, and he named it Ebenezer, saying, thus far the Lord helped us.

You've got to remember in the story, that was their first real taste of victory. After this time, they were bumped back and forth, and didn't really have a taste of victory. And now they'd moved from hunger to purification, away from legalism, and now into the preeminence of Christ.

And they said, where can we go from here? And we arrived. It's just Christ. The next step, they had to live.

May God help us. Now this step I'm going to show you tonight must be very important in the eyes of God, simply because he gives so much inspired space to the story. Sometimes it's just four or five verses.

But you realize there are 129 verses connected with this next principle. And I understand that David also wrote some psalms in connection with this principle. I might even call them psalms that he wrote, like Psalm 24 and so on, in connection with this.

The chief passages, let me give you those. 2 Samuel 6, 1 Corinthians 13, and then 1 Corinthians 15 and 16, all 72 verses, have to do with this one thing. Now, with God's help, I'd also like to take those many, many verses and isolate just the heart of it.

Obviously, we've got to jump through the good things. But I want us to see the main direction. And there's so much here, I really had a hard time knowing where to begin and where to leave out.

I'm going to ask you to turn to 2 Samuel 6, please. And if you have a marker of some kind, you're going to be back and forth for a while. 2 Samuel 6 and 1 Corinthians 13.

So I'm going to help you if you just put something there. If you don't have anything, you always have a figure. And so just stick that in there.

Psalm sheets. Psalm sheets. You have, with words of shame, you can put in there.

Follow along, please. I'm going to read the first 10 verses of 2 Samuel 6. This will give you the beginning of the story anyway. Now, David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000.

David arose and went with all the people who were with him to build Judah. That's another name for King Jim. 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 in heaven above the cherubim.

And he placed the ark of God on a new cart, that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Israel and Ohio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart. And so they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill.

And Ohio was walking ahead of the ark. Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the Lord, with all kinds of instruments made of full wood, with wires and harps, tambourines, cassocks, cymbals. But when they came to the threshing floor of Napan, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God, took hold of it from rocks and nearly upset it.

And the Lord burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence. He died there by the ark of God. David became angry because of the Lord's outburst against Uzzah in the places called Perezuzzah to this day.

And so David was afraid of the Lord that day, and he said, How can the ark of God come to me? David was unwilling to move the ark of the Lord into the city of David with him. David took it aside to the house of Abed-Edom the Gittite. First Chronicles 13 tells the same story.

Now let me quote a couple of verses from that chapter. First Chronicles 13, verse 3. Let us bring back the ark of our God to us. For we did not seek it in the gains of Saul.

That's an important expression. Verse 8. David and all Israel were celebrating before God with all among them, even with songs, wires, harps, tambourines, cymbals, and with trumpets. Last week we looked at 1 Samuel 6. Tonight we are in 2 Samuel 6. Now that's not many pages, but that's a lot of years.

There's a long time has gone by between 1 Samuel 6 and 2 Samuel 6. The ark has been in the house of Abed-Edom now for about 70 or 80 years. 20 years, that's what we looked at last week. They had the crisis after 20 years.

They were under Philistine pressure. Then they learned how to deal with the Philistines by dealing with God. After that 20 years, they had 40 or 50 years through Samuel and all the days of Saul.

Saul didn't do anything with the ark. He just sort of ignored it. Then when we come to 2 Samuel 6, don't forget David was a fugitive from Saul for 10 years.

That was about 10 years deep into his reign. So you can see a lot of time has gone by. That counted in 70 or 80 years.

Now as far as the spiritual progress of the story is concerned, so far we've learned Christ is pre-eminent. And if Christ is the one and only, we have victory. And with that as a burden on David's heart, like in every stage, he thought that was the final step.

Now we know. Now we know why. We know how to have victory.

David wrote a psalm about this time which expresses his heart's desire. It's Psalm 132. And listen as I read verses 3 to 5. Listen to where David was spiritually.

Surely I will not enter my house, nor will I lie on my bed. I will not give sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, until I find a place for the Lord, a dwelling place for the mighty one of Jacob. He was talking about God.

And David said, I'm going to lay aside my rest until God has his rest. And David at this point was saying, I'm going to bring him to Zion. I'm going to bring him to Jerusalem, city of rest.

And I'm going to let God rest. This is what he wanted. This is what he yearned for.

And so they went to get the ark because David feels like now they've won the story. And now they've learned the principles. They know about hunger.

They know about purification. They know about legalism. They know about the commandments of Christ.

It's time now for God to rest. First Chronicles 13-2. David said to all the assembly of Israel, If it seems good to you, and if it is from the Lord our God, let us send everywhere to our kinsmen who remain in all the land of Israel, also to the priests, the Levites who are with them in their cities, pasture lands, that they may meet with us.

Let us bring the ark of God to us. Look at David's heart here. Remember David, he said, I'm not going to rest until God rests.

God wants to rest. Let's bring that ark back. This was not an act of selfishness.

This was not an act of religion on David's part. It was a sincere desire. David said, I want God to rest.

Behind the scenes was, we know all the principles. We know our God won't rest until He arrives. And so he said, I want God to rest.

Grant that 2 Samuel 6 men, what a parade you have here, as they get the ark and proceed to Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 6 says 40,000 chosen men, those are soldiers. Those are men of bare arms.

The Greek translation of the Hebrew, the Septuagint, the Old Testament, doesn't say 40,000. That says 70,000. There's some discrepancy how many soldiers were actually there.

But you've got to add to that number all the multitudes of men, women, and children. 2 Chronicles 13 gives the full account. David consulted with the captains of the thousands and hundreds.

You never hear it. David said to all the assembly of Israel, if it seems good to you, if it's from the Lord your God, let us send everybody our kinsmen. We will name them the land of Israel, to the priests, to the Levites.

We will lift them in their cities and pasture lands. If they may meet with us, let us bring back the ark of our God to us. We do not seek it in the days of Saul.

Thus have David assembled all Israel together, from the Shire of Egypt even to the entrance of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-Jerim. Two times we have the record, that's in 2 Samuel 6-5, they celebrated before the Lord. David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the Lord.

This will be a glorious day in the history of Israel. It's a day of sinning. It's a day of mirth.

It's a day of rejoicing. Party time. These people are rejoicing.

Actually the Hebrew word for celebrating that is the word sporting. They sported before the Lord. They played.

They enjoyed it. They danced and they sang. 2 Chronicles 13 adds, David and all Israel celebrated before God with all their might.

Don't answer this out loud. I know everybody in this room, this room that are listening to me. I know you've already praised God in your life.

No question about it. I hope those listening back to you have also praised God. Have you ever praised God with all your might? Just think about that.

You ever praised God with all your might? That's what they did. They praised the Lord with all their might. And they thought that they had the right to.

They had the right to sing. They had the right to dance. They had the right to jump.

They had the right to shout. And they had cymbals and trumpets and all kinds of instruments. Because they finally learned.

Honor Him. The spiritual part. It's not egoism.

Praise God in them. That's where they rest. And so, they began their little journey with the ark.

Nothing wrong with David's desire. Verse 3. Chapter 6 of 2 Samuel. 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.

2 Samuel. First Chronicles 13.7. Tells the same thing. They carried the ark of God on a new cart in the house of Abinadab and usually in Ohio drove the cart.

Well, you heard the story as we read it. Something went terribly wrong. The heart went there.

The music was there. The enthusiasm was there. The intentions, the desires were certainly there.

The ark of God wasn't mistreated in that sense. It was held in high esteem. Listen to how the ark is described in verse 2. To bring 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.

It's not like they had a low view of God. But as they went everything went sour at the threshing floor of Lachan. Verse 6. 2 Samuel 6. When they came to the threshing floor of Lachan Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it but Lachan nearly upset it and he nearly went bearing against Uzzah and God struck him there for his irreverence.

He died there by the ark of God. First Chronicles 13 describes it in almost the same words. Now I'd be understating this situation if I couldn't communicate to you that this was a spiritual shock to the people of God.

They just did not expect this. Unbelievable. Absolutely unbelievable.

It got everybody's attention. 30,000 armed soldiers stopped dead in their tracks. Hundreds of thousands of worshippers.

Stopped dead in their tracks. The musicians. We don't hear a trumpet anymore.

We don't hear a cymbal. Everything stops. And everyone looks toward the ark of God and there lands Uzzah dead on the ground.

Now I know it's an interesting study a little off the track to meditate exactly what it was that displeased the Lord in Uzzah's action. Verse 7 says God struck him down for irreverence. First Chronicles 13.10 says The Lord of the world burned against Uzzah.

He struck him down because he put his hand to the cart. But if you're like me and you just want to know what happened and want to know the truth and you're certain to read it, it's a puzzle. And it actually looks a little more like reverence than irreverence when you think about it.

His action was one of precaution. The oxen evidently stumbling in a hurry and the ark began to topple and he didn't want the ark to fall down to the place of dishonor on the ground. And so he reaches out to study the ark.

The King James Version says God smote him for his error. Error indeed, no doubt. Something went wrong.

Something went terribly wrong. And it turned this day of singing and joy and rejoicing into a day of sadness and mourning. So much for the parade.

So much for the celebration. So much for the jubilation. Verse 8 And David became angry because of the Lord's outburst against Uzzah.

Once again, there's a temptation to sort of read over that, you know. This is a spiritual crisis. For Israel, for David.

He became angry. Angry at what? Angry at the situation? Angry at himself? It was his idea by his friend Uzzah why he's dead on the ground. Was he blaming himself for that? I don't believe it's unfair to say that David was angry at God.

I don't believe he was angry at the Lord. Listen to Proverbs 19.3 in this regard. The foolishness of man subverts his way and then his heart rages against the Lord.

Now, David, uh, King James says his heart fretteth against the Lord. Now, believe it or not, he blames God. And it's not the kind of anger that curses God.

It's not the kind of anger that shakes its fist in God's face and says, you're just unfair. You're wrong. David's not declaring, hey, I'm God, look at this line.

So David was afraid of the Lord that day. And he said, how can the ark of God come to me? Chronicles says the same thing in verse 12. David was afraid of God that day, saying, how can I bring the ark of God home to me? Before we look at the principle, try to get into the situation through this.

David was angry at the Lord, but it was the kind of anger, not that curses God, but the kind of anger that quits. The kind of anger that throws you in the car. The kind of anger that says, there's no way, Lord.

Give us a break. We tried. And you're too early.

The only place you'll ever be happy is in heaven with the angels that never sin. It's not possible to touch you and live. There's just no way to do it.

David is so close now to a firm understanding. He is so close to seeing the final principle, how God will rest in him. He's got another truth to learn, and God is a patient teacher.

God's going to teach him. Don't forget, God is going to the temple. He's not waiting for man to bring him to the temple.

Verse 10, 2 Samuel 6. David was unwilling to move the ark of the Lord into the city of David. And I have an idea, David. You trace it out in your own spiritual biography.

I think David just said this. I give up. I quit.

I don't, I can't. Every plan I've ever had has failed. All my desires to make God happy have come to nothing.

It's not working. It's not working. It's a fake.

All my own indecision. What do I get from it? Vice. Hamlet.

Judgment. And now look. What did we do wrong? We heard him.

We sang. We praised. At the top of our lungs, we're all men.

We worship God. Zap. He judges us.

David just says, I have had it. I'm not going to try anymore. It's over.

It's done. I'm through. And he just gave up.

David at this point is completely puzzled. He thought he had had all his principles. Honor after God.

Deal with the priesthood. Reject leaderism. The preeminence of Christ.

What else do I need to know? And so he throws in the towel. Nothing works. And he sends the ark to the home of Abel Edom.

The Gittai. This little background on him. Obed even was a Levite.

He was a priest. The family of Merari. Levi's oldest son.

He's called a Gittai because he came from Gath women. Which were part of the inheritance of Manasseh. Evidently, he married a Korhite.

Which was the second of Levi's seven. The priestly family. Anyway, the ark stayed.

Look at verse 6. Or rather, verse 11. The ark stayed there for three months. The ark of the Lord remained in the house of Abel Edom.

The Gittai. Three months. Then the Holy Spirit adds this little sentence.

The Lord blessed Abel Edom. And all his household. I lived out my mind.

When David released the ark to Abel Edom. He released it forever. He said, I don't want it.

It's impossible. Forget it. Every time we try it, we've been judged.

I'm done. It's over. Through.

Finished. Abel Edom keeps the thing. I don't want it.

But in the wisdom of God, something wonderful happened. Verse 11. The Lord blessed the house of Abel Edom.

First Chronicles 15 or 14 reads. Once the ark of God remained with the family of Abel Edom. In his house three months.

The Lord blessed the family of Abel Edom. And all that he had. Now, if you just read the Samuel account.

It's too fast. It doesn't happen that way. These verses just come together.

Looks like it happened in a moment. The Lord blessed the house of Abel Edom. Verse 12 and then verse 13.

At the end of 12. David went and brought the ark of God from the house of Abel Edom. That's not how it happened.

It isn't that he heard about the blessings. Oh, good. Let's try again.

That's too fast. You need the Chronicle record to see what's in between. There's an awful lot of heart searching going on.

David begins to meditate. David did something now as far as the record goes. Which he hadn't done before.

He went up into his little chambers. And he took the Bible. And he started reading the Bible.

He started looking in the Old Testament. Because that's what he had. And he began to look up some passages.

About the ark. Should have done that a little earlier I think. He had a lot of questions running through his heart.

Like carrying the towel. Losing his bed. David had some pretty hard thoughts about God.

He feared God was too holy to be happy. But then all of a sudden somebody came running to David and said. Have you heard about Abel Edom? What? Tell me.

That David is getting blessed out of his socks. Look at him getting blessed. His family is getting blessed.

His kids are blessed. His wife is blessed. His job is blessed.

His farm is blessed. His garden is blessed. David says you got to be kidding.

Any mice up there? Any humans? Any lightning? And that was a turning point for David. Because when he heard about Abel Edom. And when he heard about the blessing of God in Abel Edom.

Way down deep in his new man. In his new nature. He sighed and he said.

There must be a way. There must be a way to touch God and not die. He still didn't know how.

But he felt like there was hope. He felt like there was a possibility. Because here's a guy touching him and he's not dying.

So there has to be a way. A little side path here. A rabbit trail.

You ever notice how God does that in your life? You're grappling with some Bible truth. Surrender. Rest.

Refrain. And you come to the end. You're like.

It's not going to work. Nevertheless I read all the hard truth books. I listened to all the tapes.

Followed all the formulas. It's not going to work. And then all of a sudden God brings in Abel Edom in your path.

And you look at them and they got it. You say. There must be a way.

It's got to work. They're enjoying the Lord. They're victorious.
They're enjoying Christ. They're seeing the Lord in the book. They're living a holy life.
And you still don't know what to do. But way down deep. You say.
I'm going to. Brother. I'm going to fight.
I'm going to fight on. I'm not going to give up. I'm not going to throw in the towel.
Because there must be a way. Somebody's doing it. It's working.
And therefore it's got to be a way for me. And your heart begins to. To get excited because it's working for Joe Schmuck.
And Sue's got it. And Fred's enjoying it. And so you say.
Oh man. Alright. God did that bad away from my enemy.
Number ten years. She was away from. The house of bread.
And then in Luke chapter one verse six. It says. She heard in the land of Moab.
That the Lord had visited his people. And giving them bread. And then she packed her bags.
And she said. I'm going back to the house of bread. And how often God does that.
So David gets fired up again. Not with light. Because he's still in the darkness.
But with hope. But with possibility. He doesn't throw in the towel.
And say. You know. Old David took the ark.
And God didn't blast him. And God didn't kill him. So there must be a way.
And he says. Let's try again. And so David begins to try again.
But this time. You see. That's why we need the chronicle record.
He didn't just jump in. And say. Let me try again.
He'd been studying the bible this time. That's different. He'd been studying descriptions.
And he found a revelation. That was going to change his life. The second time.
He decided to try it. He decided to move by revelation. And not by man's wisdom.
First Chronicles 15. Verse 12. Let's pick up the story there please.
And he says to them. He's talking to the priests. You are the heads of your father's households.
The Levites. Consecrate yourself. Both you and your relatives.
That you may bring up the ark of the Lord. Of God of Israel. To the place I've prepared for it.

Now notice what he says in verse 13. Sheds light on what happened to Israel. Because you did not carry it at first.

The Lord God made an outburst on us. We did not seek him. According to the ordinance.

Verse 2. First Chronicles 15. David said. No one is to carry the ark of God.

But the Levites. For the Lord God chose them to carry the ark of God. To minister to them forever.

We already learned that. Numbers 1. Numbers 4. Numbers 7. Numbers 10. And other places.

David was a busy boy. Pouring over the scriptures. Studying the scriptures.

And said Lord. You show us. I don't know.

You show us. We don't have an answer. And David acknowledged his great mistake.

And the mistake was that they tried to bring the ark up on a cart. Instead of on the shoulders of the Levites. Why did God strike down Israel? Not primarily for something Israel did wrong.

Of course he's to share in the blame. It was against God's religion. To carry the ark that way.

It had to be carried on poles. On the shoulders of the priests. The consecrated priests.

What is this heart of Jesus' sin of irreverence? Let me state it as a principle. And then try to develop it a little. Jesus dared to touch God.

Apart from the revelation. You can't touch God. Apart from the revelation.

Or you die. Jesus tried to touch God apart from the revelation. 2 Timothy 2.5 says.

If anyone competes as an athlete. He doesn't win the prize unless he strives lawfully. They didn't get the prize.

Because they didn't go according to the rules. According to the revelation. But David even taught him a wonderful lesson.

There must be a way to touch God and live. And then God broke in on David's heart. I can touch him.

Through the book. I can touch him. Through the evolution.

And not die. There must be a way. Through the evolution.

See, David had slipped into Philistine mentality. He had already learned. He couldn't satisfy God in the land of the Philistines.

But now he had slipped into Philistine mentality. What do I mean by Philistine mentality? When did David get the idea to move the Ark on a cart? Remember, that's the way the Philistines did it. And since that was 80 years before, anything that's done 80 years ago, that's tradition now.

That's a talk of our ancestors. And we just went by human reason. We didn't seek the Lord or the revelation of God.

He just went by Philistine mentality. The ways that it is. The programs that it is.

The ideas that it is. The whole psychology of the world. And he just tried to follow that.

Psalms is right. Same right. Worked in the past.

Talk of our ancestors. It'll probably work. But if it's not according to the revelation, it's not according to the book.

And so God used those two things. He used the testimony of one man blessed who did it right. And he used the unveiling of the scriptures to teach that Christ must be carried on the shoulders of the priest.

And when David learned of God's method of transporting him, that's when he said, let's try it. Let's try it again. There's a living way to touch him and not die.

So David, under a new light now, under a new hope, according to the truth of God, according to his heart from the Bible, decides to try again to touch God and live. The second trip, brothers and sisters in Christ, is so different than the first trip. Remarkable preparation.

The priests were told by David to consecrate themselves according to Genesis 35 and Exodus 19. The prepared priest would then carry the ark in the prescribed way. The first account is not in Samuel.

It's in the Chronicles, 1 Chronicles. If you read 1 Chronicles 15, you'll see the caution and the reverence by which they moved. This was one of the most remarkable parades of all time.

Second only to the one I'll tell you about next week, when they finally bring the ark to rest. Let me just tell you the facts. You can read it in the Chronicles record.

I'll ask you to trust me on it just to save time. But then check it out. Never trust me on anything.

Check it out. Three choirs and bands led the big parade. Second in line was the military team.

And they went before the priests who carried the ark. Then followed the temple servants. And then right in front of the ark and around the ark and surrounding the ark and behind it, white-robed priests with trumpets.

Then came the king right after the ark. Not with hundreds of thousands, but they mustered all Israel. Millions, folks.

This is a parade. You haven't seen this in Bristol. This is a parade.

2 Corinthians 6.13 And so it was when the bearers of the ark of the Lord had gone six places. He sacrificed an ox and a fat one. Don't forget now, you've got a million people in the parade.

They take six steps. They stop and offer a sacrifice to Him. And they stop and they offer a sacrifice.

Now what He did is not clear. Some people said, Take six steps. They offer the sacrifice.

And that's it. But He did this over now. Every six steps, they stopped the parade and offered a sacrifice.

My heart tends to that. I think that's how it was. It was about ten miles from Jericho to Jerusalem.

Now can you imagine this parade? Take six steps. Stop. Offer a sacrifice to the Lord.

Take six more steps. Stop. Offer a sacrifice to the Lord.

Six more steps. Stop. Ten miles.

Of that. All along the way, the King advanced on the blood of the sacrifice. This is different than the last time.

Oh, I'll tell you. There's something here a whole lot different than the first time. The throne of God is being transported on the shoulders of the consecrated priests and on the basis of the blood of the sacrifice.

Oh, something is wonderfully different. I think one of the most amazing verses describing this entire procession. If you can explain it to me, I'll appreciate it.

5 Corinthians 15, 26. I don't understand this verse. But it's marvelous.

And it came about because God was helping the Levites. We are carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord that they sacrifice seven bulls and seven lambs. What does that mean? Because God was helping the Levites, we are carrying the Ark.

How do you help them? Do you give them strength? Make their arms strong? Do you make the Ark lighter? Will they be scared to death that they were going to give that? Do you help their heart and make them feel brave? Do you help them be at night and not blunder with the sacrifice or something like that? Whatever it is, it's a marvelous picture of grace. They're doing it and God's helping them and they're moving now towards the city of peace. This is the Old Testament word saying I can't touch God and live.

I can't bear His throne and live. But God helping me, I can. And that's what the Levites did.

Here's the truth connected with this carrying of the Ark. I must not, I dare not, fall into Philistine mentality, must not rely on human wisdom, their methods, their programs, their philosophy, their ideas, their worldly thinking. No matter how sincere it might be, I've got to live by revelation.

I've got to live by the unveiling of Christ in this book. And if I don't, it's gross irreverence. No matter how sincere it might be, gross irreverence.

All the way to the holy city, the sacrifices were slain and finally they get near the place. A couple of points I want to make before we close. Let me give you the Chronicle record first.

Verse 27 and 15. David was clothed with a robe of fine linen. But all the Levites who were carrying the Ark and the sinners, and Chennaniah the leader of the sinners, David also wore an ephod of linen.

Verse 14, 2 Samuel 6. David was dancing before the Lord with all his might. David was wearing a linen ephod. Once again, we can just sort of read this la, la, la.

David came to this new principle. God must be touched in the living way by the revelation of the book. When he saw that, he was transformed.

He was transformed, illustrated by the fact that on this day he was not the king. You see, the first time King David was leading the way, and he had on his royal robes. But not this day, because he'd learned to touch God through the book.

And when you touch God through the book, you've got to be transformed. And today David wore no crown. And today David had no sceptre.

And today David had no royal robes on. Because David was changed, and in David's heart and mind, he was a priest. And so he put on the linen ephod, and he dressed like a priest.

He was changed. Now we're moving by revelation. Revelation produces reverence, according to Psalm 119, 38.

It humbles and it transforms. Verse 14, David's dancing before the Lord with all his might. What happened to 2 Samuel 6, 9? David was afraid of that day.

How come he's not afraid anymore? How come he's jumping up and down, and no more fears? There's a song that says, I've discovered the red gladness. That's what David did. He discovered the red gladness.

He discovered how to touch God and not die. He discovered how to make God happy. No words could be stronger than this.

David danced before the Lord with all his might. And you say, have David the king danced? No, David the priest danced. There was only one king.

And that was Christ. And David was saying by his dance, I'm so glad I'm not king. I'm glad Christ is king.

I'm not king. And he danced before the throne of God, the ark of God, leaping and jumping and shouting and praising God. That's the kind of joy that comes to a person who learns to touch God through the revelation and live.

He had come now to his final secret. In his previous attempts to go to Zion, he got publicly angry at the Lord. And now it's fitting that he should publicly praise God and inspire all the multitudes to worship the Lord.

Touching God through the book not only transforms, does something else. It puts you outside the camp, folks. You start touching God through the book, you're outside the camp.

He illustrated it through David's wife, Michelle. 2 Samuel 6, 16. It happened as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David.

Michelle, the daughter of Saul, looked out the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord. And she despised him in her heart. Despised him.

She should have been rejoicing. He discovered how to touch God and live. How to touch God and not die.

2 Samuel 6, 20. When David returned to bless his household, Michelle, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet David and said, How the King of Israel distinguished himself today. He uncovered himself in the eyes of his servants, Midge, one of the foolish ones.

Shamelessly uncovered himself. You see, her problem was David wasn't acting like a king. She wanted prestige.

She wanted recognition, real attention. She didn't like the change in her husband. She didn't like him dancing before God as a priest.

She wanted him to be above the people. Later on in Samuel, 2 Samuel 16, you read of the cursing of Shimelei. Remember, he cursed David.

And he threw dirt at David. And he threw stones at David. But I don't think the cursing of Shimelei touched the heart of David any more than what Michelle said.

His life partner. He came home, remember, to bless his family. He came home to bless that woman.

Instead, she accuses him of immodesty. What a bad construction to put on his actions. This is his life partner.

Never in David's spiritual history was his heart more inflamed with love to God. He had thoughtfully learned, through all his lessons, he had learned contortion through the book. Contortion through the revelation.

Michelle didn't understand spiritual things at all. David, in her eyes, he just degraded himself. He was supposed to be dignified as a king.

Here he was put on a public exhibition. Verse 29, It happened when the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the city of David. Michelle, the daughter of Saul, looked out of the window, saw King David leaping and making love.

She despised him in her heart. Now David tries to explain, but when you're outside the tent, all the explanations in the world aren't going to help. In verse 21, chapter 6, 21, 2 Samuel, David said to Michelle, It was before the Lord.

You chose me above your father, above all his house, to appoint me ruler over all the people of the world. Therefore I will celebrate before the Lord. Verse 22, And I will be more rightly esteemed than this.

I will be humbled in my own eyes with the names of whom you've spoken. With them I'll be distinguished. And in fact, David said, Sweetheart, you haven't seen anything yet.

You haven't seen anything yet. I've learned the secret of living. I've learned the secret of touching God and not dying.

I've learned how and how to make God happy. You don't like it when I'm transformed. You think I should be way up here in the worldly eyes.

I'll tell you what, I'm going to increasingly identify with the humble servants of the Lord. I'll be distinguished in their eyes. I'll be numbered with them.

Michelle had Philistine mentality. With all the flesh, all the roots, and all the prestige. See, you come to the end of the story and what God says.

I mean, look at the end of, it's not end to this chapter. Verse 23, Michelle, the daughter of Saul, had no child till the day of her death. You know why that comes at the end of the Ark story? Because she ended up like Hannah began.

You see, God's trying to learn this thing together. Hannah began with a burn wound, crying out, I want fruit. And David begins now to produce fruit.

And Michelle, she ends up with a burn wound. So much in these shadows. David now is transformed.

He's learned to touch God and live. He knows what the revelation is. His heart is being changed.

He's becoming more and more humble. He's outside the camp. He's being rejected by those who love him the most.

One final principle. 2 Samuel 6, 18 and 19. The day ended up so gloriously.

And then David had finished offering the burn offerings and the peace offerings. He blessed the people in the name of the Lord and the hosts. Further, he distributed to all people, to all multitudes.

You gotta understand, we're talking women. Both to men and women, a cake of bread, one of dates, one of raisins to each one. And all the people departed each to his house.

Chronicles 15 says, and a portion of meat. David's blessing the people. David's giving gifts.

David is experiencing fruit, passing on fruit to others. And then in verse 7 of 1 Chronicles 15, it says, On that day, David first assigned Esau and his relatives to give thanks unto the Lord. You know what that means practically? See, we're so used to it, because we've done it again.

Not here, where this is the most non-sinning group I've ever seen. But in places where we worship, where we sing, we fellowship in music. You know where it all started? It started that day.

David assigned Esau for the first time. Now in your Bible, for the first time, music will come into the church. That's when music was introduced.

Right here, when David discovered how to touch God and learn, through the renovation, he said, that's a time for giving gifts. That's a time for fruit. That's a time for sharing.

That's a time for overflow. That's a time for singing. And he assigned Esau, and he said, from now on, you start writing some psalms here.

And you start singing. And they introduced worship, now, into the temple of God. Blessing for everyone.

In fact, remember Obed-Eden and his family? 1 Chronicles 16, 37, and 38 says that David was so thrilled with him because of the blessing of his life that God took him and his 68 relatives and he gave him a full-time job just taking care of the ark. He says, you deserve this. And he gave him this high honor.

And so we've seen this ark now come to the place where he can rest. Don't answer, did you get lost in the history? I know there's a lot here. I don't want you to get lost in the facts.

You see the spiritual principle? It's saying Christ through the book. It's not saying the Christ that's in my heart. It's more or less that.

It's the revelation of Christ through the book. You touch him through the book and you live. That's the only way.

And when you learn that it's hunger, when you learn that it's spiritual, when you learn that it's not egoism, when you learn that Christ is preeminent, and when you learn to move by the revelation of Christ in this book, he says, okay, now I'm ready. And next time you'll follow the ark all the way to the holy of holies.

You say, well this is the end.

This is the goal. Now you see, according to the record, the temple hasn't even been built yet. The temple can't start being built.

Until this principle is learned. Now this is the beginning. And now you can go through the whole teaching on the temple being built and the stones being carried and silently brought together and fitted.

Now there's a whole bunch of temple keys. We're going to jump over that and move right into the holy of holies. But what I want you to see is this is not the final principle.

This is the first principle. This is the starting point. This is the threshold.

This is the beginning of blessing. When you understand that your heart must hunger for reality, that God will work in the spiritual part, that it's not by the works of flesh, that Christ is preeminent, and that you want to see him through the book, know God says, I rest in you and I'll fill you with my glory and your life will be governed by my glory. We'll look at that part next time.

If you've seen that principle, saying Christ through the book, I promise you, you're going outside the camp to the place of rejection. Those who love you the most will take a rugged stand against you when you start saying Christ in this book. Comments or questions? Yes.

Father, we thank you so much for your word and we thank you for the Holy Spirit who helps us understand and helps us apply all of these great truths. We do desire that the Lord Jesus have his rest in our hearts, that he reign in our heart, that he fill us with his glory and through us that the Lord would have his renown, his reputation. And so Lord, with those principles in our heart, we wouldn't ask you to spare us because you spared not the angels that sinned and you spared not your own son, but we would ask you to keep us and instruct us and to take us through and teach us these great truths so that we would learn the living way to touch thee and not die.

Oh, may we be men and women of this book. Not just the letter, but a heart and knowledge of God through the progressive unveiling of Christ through this book. Thank you that you're going to work it in us.

And now God, our fellowship together and enable us to minister unto each other and see Christ in each other and thank you for the refreshments and all of those who have lovingly provided them, nourish our bodies, and we just give you the rest of this evening that we might enjoy you and that you might enjoy us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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