

### David Successfully Brings the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem

#### 1 Chronicles 15

**1 Chronicles 15** - *“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. <sup>2</sup> Then David said, “No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the Lord has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever.” <sup>3</sup> And David gathered all Israel together at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the Lord to the place he had prepared for it. <sup>4</sup> Then David assembled the children of Aaron and the Levites: <sup>5</sup> of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and one hundred and twenty of his brethren; <sup>6</sup> of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and two hundred and twenty of his brethren; <sup>7</sup> of the sons of Gershon, Joel the chief, and one hundred and thirty of his brethren; <sup>8</sup> of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and two hundred of his brethren; <sup>9</sup> of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, and eighty of his brethren; <sup>10</sup> of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and one hundred and twelve of his brethren.*

*<sup>11</sup> And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites: for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. <sup>12</sup> He said to them, “You are the heads of the fathers’ houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. <sup>13</sup> For because you did not do it the first time, the Lord our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order.”*

*<sup>14</sup> So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel. <sup>15</sup> And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders by its poles, as Moses had commanded, according to the word of the Lord.*

*<sup>16</sup> Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy. <sup>17</sup> So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of their brethren, the sons of Merari, Ethan the son of Kushaiah; <sup>18</sup> and with them their brethren of the second rank : Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers; <sup>19</sup> the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were to sound the cymbals of bronze; <sup>20</sup> Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with strings according to Alamoth; <sup>21</sup> Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah, to direct with harps on the Sheminith; <sup>22</sup> Chenaniah, leader of the Levites, was instructor in charge of the music, because he was skillful; <sup>23</sup> Berechiah and Elkanah were doorkeepers for the ark; <sup>24</sup> Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God; and Obed-Edom and Jehiah, doorkeepers for the ark.*

*<sup>25</sup> So David, the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the house of Obed-Edom with joy. <sup>26</sup> And so it was, when God helped the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, that they offered seven bulls and seven rams. <sup>27</sup> David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master with the singers. David also wore a linen ephod. <sup>28</sup> Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps.*

*<sup>29</sup> And it happened, as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the City of David, that Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David dancing and playing music; and she despised him in her heart."*

## Background Notes

In 1 Chronicles 13 we read the sad story of the death of Uzzah who wrongly touched the Ark of God. Even though Uzzah was sincere and zealous, and he meant well, God's Law clearly said that His people were not to touch the Ark. The death of Uzzah would have been a lesson to all Israel then, and it's a lesson for all of us today. A Doctrinal Point in chapter 13 was: God always expects His people to know and follow His Word.

Chapter 14 tells us how God blessed David and gave him victories over the Philistines, because he inquired of the Lord, and followed His directions. And David did the right thing with the idols that the Philistines abandoned when they retreated - he burned them! *"When they left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire"* (14:12). His troops weren't allowed to take any "souvenirs." David didn't want to risk idolatry creeping into the nation in any way, shape or form.

It's a good lesson for us today, too. Many associations with the occult have begun with the naïve purchase of an actual idol or cult item as a gift or souvenir, or occult symbols on jewelry. Burn these items!

When David heard that the Lord had blessed Obed-Edom and his family because the Ark of the Covenant was in his home, David must have reasoned that it was now OK to bring the Ark to Jerusalem - as long as it was transported in the right way. So David prepared a tent in Jerusalem to receive the Ark (v1). Notice - this tent was not the Tabernacle. At this time the Tabernacle was in Gibeon (2 Chronicles 1).

The tent in Jerusalem was only a temporary dwelling for the Ark. King David's intent was to build a Temple in Jerusalem to house the Ark (2 Samuel 7; 1 Chronicles 17). But God told David he was not to build the Temple, so the Ark remained in the tent for the rest of David's reign, and his son, King Solomon, built the Temple of the Lord.

## Doctrinal Points

## **1. There was a great celebration when the Ark was brought to Jerusalem.**

The priests and the Levites consecrated themselves, in accordance with God's Law, in order to properly transport the Ark of the Covenant: *"So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the Lord God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as Moses had commanded, according to the word of the Lord" (v14-15).*

In His Law, the Lord gave detailed instructions about the proper way to carry the Ark: *"You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its four corners; two rings shall be on one side, and two rings on the other side. And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them. The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it" (Exodus 25:12-15).*

David made arrangements for music to be played as part of the celebration of bringing the Ark of the Covenant up to Jerusalem (v16-24). Under the leadership of Asaph, Ethan and Heman, singers and musicians were appointed. Along with the choir there was a praise band with harps, lyres, and loud cymbals. I might have asked David to drop the loud cymbals, and just have the harps and stringed instruments. And David would have probably told me to stop complaining, get with the program, and just praise the Lord!

The loud praise band's purpose was to encourage the voices of the people to raise their voices with songs of joy! *"Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy" (v16).* So we read in verse 25, *"So David, the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the house of Obed-Edom with joy."* And verse 28, *"Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps."*

Along with the music, proper sacrifices were made as part of the celebration. *"When God helped the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of the Lord, they offered seven bulls and seven rams."* There was a great celebration when the Ark was brought to Jerusalem.

## **2. There will be a great celebration when the Lord returns to Jerusalem!**

As you know from our Old Testament studies, the Ark of the Covenant is a spiritual picture of Christ. The blood of the atoning sacrifice was brought to the Mercy Seat on the Ark, so the Holy God could continue to dwell in the midst of His sinful people. It is the blood of Christ that is the basis of our salvation, and the basis of our fellowship with a holy God.

In our studies of the book of Joshua we saw that the Ark of the Covenant represented Christ leading His people as they marched around Jericho. Here again, on this great and joyous occasion of bringing the Ark up to Jerusalem, we have a spiritual picture of Christ in the midst of His people. The Ark was the **focus** and the **basis** of the people's joyous

celebration! This is a prophetic glimpse into the future, when our Lord will return to earth to set up His kingdom. According to Zechariah 14 and other Scriptures, the Lord will return to Jerusalem to reign as King. What a coronation day that will be! There will be a great celebration when the Lord returns to Jerusalem!

## Practical Applications

### 1. Use your skills for the Lord!

*“Kenaniah, leader of the Levites, was instructor in charge of the music. That was his responsibility, because he was skillful” (v22).* Kenaniah was chosen to lead and teach the choir because he was skillful in music and singing! He wasn't chosen because he had connections, or because he lobbied for the job, or just because he had a good voice, or was willing to do the job. He was a **skilled** musician, he was **available**, and he **dedicated** his talents and skills for the Lord.

What about us? What skills do we have? Do you have an outstanding proficiency or ability? Have you been trained in some area that could be offered to the Lord for His service? Maybe it's in the area of music. Maybe it's in the area of construction. Maybe it's in the area of writing, or computer, or technological skills. Kenaniah used his musical skill and training for the Lord - and so can you. Use your skills for the Lord!

### 2. Don't despise the worship of other believers.

*“And it happened, as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came to the City of David, that Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David dancing and playing music; and she despised him in her heart” (v29).* Michal, David's wife, despised David's joyful emotional display. I must admit, if I had seen David leaping and dancing, I might have sided with Michal. Was this appropriate behavior for a king? But on this occasion, this was how David worshiped the Lord - and nothing in God's Law says that this was improper worship.

From a parallel account in 2 Samuel 6 we learn that Michal was **wrong** for judging David, so there's a spiritual lesson here for us. We may worship the Lord in different ways than other believers. We may worship with different musical styles. Maybe we don't worship with the same emotional displays as other believers. But let's not criticize or despise the worship of other believers! For example, because of my emotional make-up, I sing with my hands at my sides, and I am not big on spontaneous outbursts of praise. But I dare not judge or despise the worship style of my fellow believers!

**Don't despise the worship of other believers.**