

1 Chronicles 13:1-14

And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.

²And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

³And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul.

⁴And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

⁵So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim.

⁶And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

⁷And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

⁸And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

⁹And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

¹⁰ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

¹¹ And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perezuzza to this day.

¹² And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?

¹³ So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite.

¹⁴ And the ark of God remained with the family of Obededom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obededom, and all that he had.

Disaster While Moving The Ark

The ark had been gone from Shiloh for twenty years. With the ark gone, the years had been long and tiresome to Israel. Today's lesson teaches us of some dangers in our trying to move the Presence of God by our own methods. We find that new and more modern ways will not bring the approval of God. God has a means of letting us know when he is pleased or displeased with the way we handle His ark.

In our eagerness to bring the ark back, we must remember that God's ways are not our ways, and His thoughts are not our thoughts. The story of Uzzah teaches us that even with good intentions, deviating from God's instructions can lead to disastrous consequences. As we dive into this lesson, let us reflect on the importance of obedience and reverence in our walk with God.

From this lesson in 1 Chronicles 13:1-14, I hope that you can gain several key insights:

1. **Reverence for God's Instructions:** Understanding the importance of following God's specific instructions and not relying on human wisdom or modern methods that deviate from His commands.
2. **The Consequences of Disobedience:** Recognizing that even well-intentioned actions can lead to negative consequences if they are not aligned with God's will, as seen in the story of Uzzah.
3. **The Presence of God:** Appreciating the significance of God's presence and the need to approach it with the utmost respect and reverence.
4. **Obedience and Humility:** Learning the value of humility and obedience in their relationship with God, acknowledging that His ways are higher than our ways.
5. **Reflection on Personal Actions:** Encouraging self-reflection on how they handle their own spiritual responsibilities and whether they are truly seeking to honor God in all they do.

By focusing on these points, I pray that you can deepen your understanding of the importance of obedience, reverence, and humility in your walk with God.

1 Chronicles 13:1-6 The ark had been gone from Shiloh, then the center of worship, for twenty years. It had been resting at Kirjath-jearim. It was a sad twenty years spiritually for Israel. Times are always long and sad and

disastrous when a people forget God and let family altars and true worship decay. Nothing can make up for this loss, no material prosperity, or scientific progress. The bottom falls out when God is taken away. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.

David consulted . . . with every leader . . . If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the Lord. . . . This was good, but it was not the best way to arrive at a decision. (Compare 2 Samuel 2:1; and 2 Samuel 5:23.) The plan to **bring the ark of God home** was a good one. The method was unwise. The ark was important. It was the most sacred article in the tabernacle of the Lord, and was meant to rest in the most sacred place—the holy of holies. It was to be visited once a year by the high priest after he was sanctified by careful cleansings. From the mercy seat on top of the ark, God spoke to him.

In that time of the law, the ark was a vital connection between man and God. It was a symbol of the presence of God. It was a type of the closest union of God and man, which now we have in the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Israel needed the ark. God met them there.

David gathered all Israel together—representatives from all the people. From **Shihor to Hemath**—extreme south to extreme north. This large undertaking involved serious attention of all the nation.

David's desire to bring the ark back to Jerusalem was driven by a deep longing to restore the centrality of God's presence among His people. This act was not just about relocating a sacred object; it was about rekindling a nation's spiritual fervor and commitment to God. The ark symbolized God's covenant, His promises, and His guidance. By bringing it back, David was making a profound statement about the importance of God's presence in the life of the nation.

However, the method chosen to transport the ark was flawed. Instead of following the prescribed way of carrying the ark on the shoulders of the Levites using poles, they placed it on a new cart. This deviation from God's instructions led to tragic consequences, as seen in the incident with Uzzah (1 Chronicles 13:9-10). This

serves as a powerful reminder that good intentions must be coupled with obedience to God's commands.

In our own lives, we must ensure that our zeal for God is aligned with His Word. Just as David sought to honor God by bringing the ark to Jerusalem, we too must seek to honor Him in all that we do, ensuring that our actions are in accordance with His will. The presence of God is not just a symbol but a reality that we must cherish and uphold with reverence and obedience.

1 Chronicles 13:7-10 The important task was carefully planned. It must be done in the best way. (God's plan for moving the ark was given in Exodus 25:10-16.) They provided a **new cart** never before used. Uzza and Ahio drove the oxen. Organized musicians brought music with instruments and singing in which all joined, including King David. They praised God as they went to Abinadab's house, placed the ark on the cart, and started back to Jerusalem. Joy and enthusiasm ran high as they **played before God with all their might.**

Then—the **oxen stumbled**, the cart shook, and the ark tipped dangerously. Uzza naturally reached to steady the ark.

Immediately, God struck him dead in anger. Why? (**Read Numbers 4:15, 19, 20.**) To touch God's ark today, except in accordance with His instruction, brings spiritual death. God will not tolerate new, modern ways that men choose to carry His ark. He counsels us to stay in the old paths (**Jeremiah 6:16**).

David and his people were reverent and sincere in moving the ark. It was a self-planned, natural, human reverence. It seemed good, but it was disobedient to God's plan. God had not asked for a new cart. The Philistines had done well in moving the ark without fear, but the Philistines did not have the Word of God.

David did, and could have looked into it. We, too, have it. We must measure our worship by it. We read that we must worship Him in spirit and in truth in John 4:23. Worship is the pouring out of the heart to God. We have not worshiped by merely attending a church service. Quietness, soft lights, music, and stained glass windows are not worship. These are outside of us. Worship is not in programs, forms, knowledgeable language, trained skills, or bowed heads and bent knees. These also are on the outside. A worshiping heart is a true, obedient heart.

In our journey of faith, it is crucial to remember that **obedience to God's instructions** is paramount. Just as David and his people learned, our intentions and efforts, no matter how well-meaning, must align with God's commands. This incident serves as a powerful reminder that **God's ways are higher than our ways** (Isaiah 55:8-9).

When we approach worship, we must do so with a heart that seeks to honor God in the way He has prescribed. **True worship** is not about the external trappings or the grandeur of our efforts, but about a heart that is **fully surrendered and obedient** to God. As Jesus said in John 14:15, "If you love me, keep my commands."

Moreover, this passage challenges us to examine our own worship practices. Are we following God's instructions, or are we creating our own methods that seem right to us? Proverbs 3:5-6 reminds us to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

Let us strive to worship God in **spirit and in truth** (John 4:24), ensuring that our hearts are aligned with His will and our actions reflect His commands. In doing so, we honor God and experience the fullness of His presence and blessings in our lives.

1 Chronicles 13:11-14 David was displeased. Noting David's reverence at other times, we conclude that his displeasure was not with God, but with the death of Uzza. He was troubled. **David was afraid of God**—a right fear. **How shall I bring the ark . . . ?** So he began to search for the reason of Uzza's death and for the correct way to bring the ark—a very wise consideration on his part. He left the ark at Obededom's house while he searched for God's blessing. **The Lord blessed the house of Obededom.** God had not changed His purpose to bless through the ark. It would have been much better if David had sought God's pleasure in the beginning.

David's displeasure and fear highlight the importance of approaching God with reverence and seeking His guidance in all matters. This incident serves as a reminder that our actions, even with good intentions, must align with God's instructions. David's decision to leave the ark at Obededom's house while he sought God's blessing demonstrates humility and a willingness to learn from his mistakes.

The blessing that came upon Obededom's house is a testament to God's unwavering desire to bless His people when they honor Him and follow His ways. It underscores the principle that God's presence brings blessings, but it must be approached with the right heart and in accordance with His will.

In our own lives, we can learn from David's experience by seeking God's guidance in all our endeavors, ensuring that our actions align with His will, and trusting that His blessings will follow when we honor Him.

Furthermore, this story teaches us about the importance of patience and seeking God's timing. David's initial haste led to tragedy, but his subsequent patience and careful consideration

brought blessings. In our own lives, we must remember to wait on the Lord and seek His timing, trusting that His plans are perfect.

Additionally, the incident with Uzzah serves as a powerful reminder of the holiness of God. It calls us to reflect on our own attitudes and actions, ensuring that we approach God with the reverence and respect He deserves. This reverence is not just about fear, but about recognizing God's majesty and sovereignty in our lives.

In conclusion, David's experience with the ark teaches us valuable lessons about obedience, reverence, patience, and the blessings that come from aligning our actions with God's will. As we apply these lessons to our own lives, we can grow in our faith and experience the fullness of God's blessings.

It was right for David to feel this way. A man had died while doing what he thought had God's blessing. Why? God did this to put fear into the hearts of these men. How does this compare today to men who claim to be preaching "thus saith the Lord," but yet we see folks dying spiritually all around them? What end did this act of God serve? In the next lesson we shall see how it served David.

In today's context, we must be vigilant and discerning about the messages we receive and the leaders we follow. Just as God used this event to instill a reverent fear and respect for His holiness and commands, we too must ensure that our actions and teachings align with God's truth. When leaders stray from God's word, it can lead to spiritual death and confusion among their followers. This serves as a reminder that God's standards are unchanging, and His desire for obedience and reverence remains paramount.

Furthermore, this incident underscores the importance of humility and accountability in leadership. David, despite being a man after God's own heart, was not exempt from the consequences of

disobedience. This teaches us that no one is above God's law, and that leaders must constantly seek God's guidance and correction.

In our churches today, we must foster an environment where truth is upheld, and where leaders are held accountable to God's word. This means being open to correction and willing to admit when we have strayed. It also means encouraging our congregations to study the Bible for themselves, so they can discern truth from falsehood.

Ultimately, this act of God served to remind David and his men of the seriousness of their calling and the holiness of God. It was a call to return to a place of reverence and obedience. For us, it is a call to examine our own lives and ministries, to ensure that we are walking in alignment with God's will.

CLOSING

As we reflect on 1 Chronicles 13:1-14, we are reminded of the importance of reverence and obedience to God's commands. David's intention to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem was noble, but the tragic incident with Uzzah underscores the necessity of following God's prescribed ways. This passage teaches us that our actions, even when well-intentioned, must align with God's instructions.

Let us take this lesson to heart and strive to honor God not only in our intentions but also in our actions. May we seek His guidance in all that we do, ensuring that our steps are in accordance with His will. As we go forth, let us remember that God's presence brings blessings, as seen in the household of Obed-edom, and that our obedience to Him is a testament to our faith and devotion.

May we be encouraged to walk faithfully, trusting in God's wisdom and adhering to His commands, knowing that His ways lead to life and blessing.

JUST A THOUGHT

The most important piece of furniture for the home is the family altar.