

## **CALVARY PANDAN BIBLE- PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

[Adapted from Bethel Bible-Presbyterian  
Church, 10 Downing St. Oakleigh, Vic., 3166]

### **DHW BIBLE CLASS LESSON 4 SECOND SAMUEL CHAPTER 6**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

David had been crowned king over all Israel. The LORD had fulfilled His promise to him that he would be the next king after Saul. With the resounding defeat of the Philistines on two consecutive occasions, the enemies who had the last claim on the land had been silenced. There was peace in the land and David set out to build the nation. In this chapter, David realized that the worship of the LORD God was central to the life of the nation. His attempts to transfer the Ark of the LORD, which had been in obscurity for 20 years, to Jerusalem were described in detail.

Jerusalem was not just a political capital. Israel was first, last and always a spiritual nation. Israel must put the LORD first and foremost in all her dealings with foreign nations as well as with her own people. The best way to do that was to bring the most important item in The Tabernacle into the new capital city.

It was time to bring the Ark of God back “home.” The Ark represented the presence of God in Israel. It was the heart and soul of Israel’s worship and the Levitical sacrificial system.

This was more than just a symbolic gesture on the part of David. He really wanted God to be in the heart of his kingdom. The blessings,

equity of rule and justice must emanate from Jerusalem where God was present as signified by the Ark.

How to bring the Ark properly into the capital city is the thrust of this chapter. Many precious lessons can be learned from this episode. First, God is no respecter of persons. Second, our sincerity alone without action is meaningless in the eyes of God.

#### **COMMENTARY**

##### **The Worship of God Central to the Nation Israel—6:1-2**

The central theme of this chapter revolves around the transfer of the Ark of the LORD (also known as the Ark of God) to Jerusalem. The Ark of God was mentioned no less than 13 times in the chapter. David wanted to bring it to Jerusalem. He had taken the city Jerusalem from the Jebusites and made it the capital city of Israel. To David, it was pointless to have the capital without the Ark of the LORD. The Ark of the LORD symbolized the presence of God. Israel was a theocratic nation and what could be more important than to have the Ark of the LORD in their midst. The Jews from the various tribes could then make their annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem to worship the LORD their God, as required by the Mosaic Law. Israel was a nation of people who worshipped the one living and true God!

There was also another advantage. The Ark of the LORD in Jerusalem would be a unifying factor. This unity was vital to Israel’s stability and growth. Before David (his name means “beloved”) became king over all Israel, the nation was divided. There had been a long civil war between the house of Saul and the

house of David. Now that David was the sole king over all Israel, it was imperative that the various tribes be united if there was going to be stability, peace and prosperity. Bringing the Ark into the new capital Jerusalem would symbolize a new beginning for all the tribes with no particular tribal favouritism.

### **David's First Attempt to Move the Ark to Jerusalem—6:3-5**

David's desire to bring the Ark of the LORD to Jerusalem was honourable. He saw the need to heal the divisiveness of the people and to get them together to the capital to worship the LORD their God. Indeed, he had seen the evil of a divided nation. The problem was how to transfer the Ark of the LORD from its present resting place. The Ark of the LORD was laid in the house of Abinadab ("my father is noble") who lived in Kirjath-jearim or Baale of Judah as it was named here (Joshua 15:9).<sup>1</sup> The town was about eight miles (10 kilometres) west of Jerusalem. The ark had been there for 20 years.<sup>2</sup> It was in the care of Eleazar ("God has helped"), the son of Abinadab. David sent word to all the tribes and asked all who were minded to bring the Ark of the LORD to Jerusalem to assemble in

---

<sup>1</sup> Joshua 15:9 And the border was drawn from the top of the hill unto the fountain of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of mount Ephron; and the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjathjearim:

<sup>2</sup> 1 Samuel 7:1 And the men of Kirjathjearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD. 2 And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjathjearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.

Jerusalem. He chose 30,000 men. He wanted it to be a national affair done with pomp and pageantry. It was wise on David's part to have the whole nation involved.

They set out for the house of Abinadab. The Levites carried the Ark placed on a new cart. For the last 20 years, they had not worshipped before the presence of the LORD. They must have forgotten that putting the Ark of the LORD on the cart, even though it had never been used, was not the LORD'S prescribed way of moving it.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps they learned this from the Philistines who returned the Ark to Israel via a new cart (cf. 1Samuel 6). Uzzah ("strength") and Ahio ("brotherly"), the sons of Abinadab, drove the cart. Eleazar was not mentioned and it was not clear what had become of him. David and all his men made a joyful noise before the LORD singing with all manner of musical instruments—harps, cornets, psalteries, timbrels and cymbals as the procession moved along. Ahio was in the front of the cart implying that Uzzah was at the rear of the cart. There was great rejoicing with music and much celebration. It was a blessed time of thanksgiving for the establishment of the first capital city of the new Davidic kingdom. The Ark of God would be placed there to signify that God would be in the midst of His kingdom!

---

<sup>3</sup> Exodus 25:12 And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in the four corners thereof; and two rings *shall be* in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it. 13 And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold. 14 And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.

### Tragedy Strikes—6:6-10

At Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah touched the Ark of the LORD in a spontaneous action to prevent it from falling off because the cart was shaken. Uzzah was struck dead. The reason was because he had touched the Ark of the LORD. God had given detailed instructions for the moving of the Ark.<sup>4</sup> The penalty for touching the Ark of the LORD was death. This incident might seem unreasonable to some readers. However, the fact that it was recorded is evidence of the supernatural origin and trustworthiness of the Bible. The incident revealed the awesome power and holiness of God. Man must never be presumptuous in his understanding of God. God loved and cared for His people but they must never take him for granted. This incident demonstrated that God is true to His word. He is no respecter of person. Our motives may be pure and good and may even be for the glory of God but if it is not done according to God's revealed and perfect Word, the transgressor will pay the price. Ignorance is no excuse. The Word of God is there for us to study and find out the proper and biblical way to do God's work.

David's reaction reflected that of the modern reader. He was "displeased." This word had the idea of a mixed feeling of anger and displeasure. He called the place

---

<sup>4</sup> Numbers 4:15 And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear *it*. but they shall not touch *any* holy thing, lest they die. These *things are* the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.

where the incident happened "Perez-uzzah" ("breach of Uzzah").

But David was also fearful of the LORD that day. He asked himself the question, "How shall the ark of the LORD come to me?" He really wanted the Ark of God inside Jerusalem with him when he ruled. But he was frightened at the same time due to the death of Uzzah. He had tasted the greatness and goodness of the LORD in his time as a fugitive but now he had also tasted another side of the LORD and it frightened him. In his own testimony, the LORD had delivered him from all his enemies, protected and provided for him. But he had not experienced the swift judgment of God in this way. He wondered how he should bring the Ark of the LORD to Jerusalem and decided for the moment to carry it aside and place it in the home of Obededom, the Gittite. This would be the temporary but new resting place of the Ark until David learned the right way to carry the Ark into Jerusalem.

### David's Second Attempt to Move the Ark to Jerusalem—6:11-19

The Ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom for three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and his family (6:11). Perhaps this meant physical as well as spiritual blessings for the family including their land, crops, livestock, health and peace of mind. David was informed that the LORD had blessed Obed-edom and all that he possessed because of the Ark of the LORD. This blessing meant that the issue was not that the LORD was not happy with the presence of the Ark inside Jerusalem but that the method for the transportation of the Ark was wrong. This had resulted in the death of Uzzah. His death was caused by the breaking of God's law when he

touched the Ark and not due to the relocation to Jerusalem.

So, David decided to try again. One might think that David was being selfish and wanted the blessings for himself. This was definitely not the case. David now understood the point concerning the LORD's displeasure. He was now prepared to bring the Ark into Jerusalem with gladness, that is, rejoicing.

David made a second attempt to transfer the Ark of the LORD to Jerusalem. He had learned his lesson and had by now found out the proper way to bring the Ark. 1 Chronicles 15:2, "*Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.*" The list of people involved in the transportation was recorded in detail in 1 Chronicles 15. He had built a tent in Jerusalem for the Ark. He involved thousands of people: the priests and the Levites, and the elders and leaders to bring the Ark of the LORD to Jerusalem. This time they "bare the Ark of the LORD" (6:13). They did it in the prescribed manner. When they had moved six paces, David sacrificed "oxen and fatlings". The Levites performed this task by offering seven bullocks and seven rams. David danced before the LORD with all his might. It was a ritual dance. He had taken off his royal robes and put on a linen ephod, a commoner's dress. He now realized that enthusiasm and sincerity which he had in the first instance, was not enough. He must also pay attention to the ritual requirements which God had laid down clearly in the Holy Scriptures.

He brought the Ark of the LORD to the tabernacle which he had set up in the city. He offered burnt offerings

and peace offerings before the LORD. These offerings expressed his complete commitment and thanksgiving to the LORD. The peace offerings or fellowship offerings, unlike the burnt offerings, were not consumed at the altar but much of it was returned to the offerer (Leviticus 7:11-18). The meat was then used for a communal feast as part of the rejoicing. Having done that, David blessed the people in the name of the LORD. Perhaps he used the benediction which God gave in Numbers 6:24-26: *The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* David then distributed food to the people, after which the people returned to their homes. It was a blessed and most wonderful event and sight to behold.

#### **A Cloud over the Celebration — 6:20-23**

As the procession was entering Jerusalem, Michal the daughter of Saul, David's wife, was watching through the window of the palace. She saw David leaping and whirling before the LORD and in her heart she despised (held in contempt) David (6:16). This was the same word used by the LORD on Eli and his sons after they had sinned greatly against Him in their duties as priests. This was recorded in 1 Samuel 2:30, "Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

David, after he had blessed the people, returned to his palace and blessed his household. Michal came

out to greet him and said, “How glorious was the king of Israel today who uncovered himself today in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!” (6:20). Michal’s statement dripped with sarcasm. She preferred David to show himself with his royal regalia, a high and mighty warrior instead of a humble, worshipping king who stripped off his kingly robes. She looked to the outward appearances rather than the inward aspirations. The king’s humility would also mean Michal’s humility. She could not accept this undignified behaviour. The fact that David honoured God was not in her mind at all. She cared only for herself.

David was hurt. He responded to Michal’s scathing condemnation by declaring that it was all done before the LORD, who had chosen him before her father, Saul, to rule over all Israel. He deemed himself dishonourable and lowly in his own sight. Of the maidservants (female slaves) whom Michal referred to, he would indeed be highly esteemed by them for what he had done (6:21, 22). David had taken the LORD’s promise to him to be king over all Israel seriously. David’s reply showed that he did not in any way regret what he had done. Surely he was more concerned in honouring the LORD than to promote his own glory and reputation. David knew that he was nothing before God. His entire kingdom and life came from God.

Michal’s insensitive contempt of David marred the joyful celebration in bringing the Ark of the LORD into Jerusalem. The effect of this confrontation was that Michal had no child till the day of her death (6:23). This could mean that David’s marital relationship with her was finished. Her

childless condition was a punishment for her contempt of David, the anointed king. She was deprived of the joy of mothering a successor to the throne.<sup>5</sup>

### PRACTICAL VALUE

David did not forget God when he became king over all Israel, He remembered that God was faithful to His promises and he wished to honour Him. For many years, the Ark of God had been lying in an obscure place. David wanted to bring it into Jerusalem so that the people of Israel could resume their proper worship of the LORD. This was indeed an act of godliness and gratitude. How often we forget God’s faithfulness and kindness after He has answered our prayers and blessed us. We do not show our gratitude to Him. Many of us do not care.<sup>6</sup> Let us learn from David to be always thankful and grateful to the LORD.

Uzzah’s death was regrettable. Any historian would have excluded such an incident from the reader in order to hide the “injustice”. But the fact that it was recorded showed the trustworthiness of the Bible. It also gives us some idea of God’s holiness, which so many of us take for granted. God is no respecter of persons. The Lord Jesus Christ teaches Christians to address God as “our Heavenly Father”. That does not mean that He is our buddy-buddy. The Lord Jesus

---

<sup>5</sup> Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 & 2 Samuel*, p. 211.

<sup>6</sup> Luke 17:17 And Jesus answering said, Were **there** not **ten** cleansed? but where **are** the nine? 8 **There are** not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

Christ also teaches Christians to hallow His name. Is it not true that when God is too nice and friendly, others tend to take advantage of him and become presumptuous? This is not pleasing in the sight of God. Worship God in spirit and in truth.

David had shown us what attitude we should have toward the LORD. He testified that he was willing to humble and humiliate himself if it brought honour and glory to God. This is a lesson for us all. It is scary when a person whom God has used to advance His kingdom uses the name of God to exalt himself. That is robbing God of His rightful glory. Such a person fails to recognize that he is only a servant whom God condescends to use in order to achieve His purpose. The Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that when a servant has done everything that he ought to do for the master, he should say (Luke 17:10): *So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are **unprofitable** servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.*

Michal's scathing condemnation of David was undiscerning and unjust. It is always easy to criticize and condemn. We should exercise great care when we judge others. Like Michal, we might find ourselves guilty of going against God instead.

AMEN

**DAILY READINGS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Daily Readings**

**Monday:** 2 Samuel 6:1-10; Isaiah 6:1-5.

**Tuesday:** 1 Chronicles 13:1-14; Isaiah 55:8-9

**Wednesday:** 2 Samuel 6:11-23; Psalm 97:1-12.

**Thursday:** 1 Chronicles 15:1-16; Luke 17:11-19.

**Friday:** 2 Samuel 6:1-23; Psalm 15:1-5.

**Analysis:**

Text	Practical Value
2 Samuel 6:1-10	
2 Samuel 6:11-19	
2 Samuel 6:20-23	

**Discussion Questions**

1. Why is sincerity not good enough for God when it comes to doing the work of God?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Who was David displeased with after the death of Uzzah; himself, God or Uzzah?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. Why was the touching of the Ark so deadly? Was it because there was something inherently supernatural about the Ark?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

4. What did David learn about God in his first failed attempt to bring the Ark of the LORD to Jerusalem (6:8-16)?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

5. Do you think Obed-edom was delighted that the Ark of God was left in his house? Would you be delighted?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

6. How did David show his reverence toward God in his second attempt to bring the Ark of God to Jerusalem?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

7. How would you evaluate David's character from his reply to Michal?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---