

The Price of His Presence

Acts 15:14-17

¹⁴Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. ¹⁵And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

¹⁶After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

¹⁷That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.

- Why would God want to rebuild THAT tabernacle, instead of Moses' tabernacle or Solomon's temple?
- David's makeshift tent barely qualifies as a Tabernacle!
- **BUT DAVID'S TABERNACLE WAS GOD'S FAVORITE HOUSE** (because God has wonderful memories of what happened there!)
- David's tabernacle was LESS STRUCTURE AND MORE EVENT; church today is MORE STRUCTURE AND LESS EVENT!
- What is impressive to God and what is impressive to man are obviously two different things!

Acts 13:22

And when he had removed [Saul], he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.

- The most powerful component of David's tabernacle began long before it was built, in the heart of a worshipping shepherd boy!
- **DAVID HAD AN UNUSUAL HUNGER FOR GOD, ALWAYS PURSUING GOD'S PRESENCE, CHASING "AFTER" GOD'S HEART! HE HAD A "PASSION FOR THE PRESENCE!"**
- When David began to talk about bringing the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem, he wasn't interested in the gold-covered box with the artifacts inside. He was interested in the BLUE FLAME that hovered between the outstretched wings of the cherubim on top of the ark – the Shekinah presence of God!
- In Moses' Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple, the Ark resided behind a veil. **GOD NEVER DID LIKE THAT VEIL!** He had to have it to preserve the life of sinful humanity as they came to worship Him, but He didn't like it.

- When Jesus died on Calvary, God ripped the veil from top to bottom in such a way that it could never be rewoven again! **God doesn't want to be separated from us!**
- This is why God loved David's Tabernacle – there was no veil or walls of any kind to separate mankind from His presence.
- **The only thing encircling God's presence was the worshippers!** They ministered non-stop to the Lord 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year for nearly 36 years!
- **In David's Tabernacle, the glory was seen by everyone!**
- Perhaps it was one night during this time that David wrote ...

Psalms 134:1-3

Behold, bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand in the house of the LORD. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD. The LORD that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

- This humble tent became God's favorite house simply because of David's desire for God's presence!
- Somehow, David learned something during his attempts to bring the Ark back to Jerusalem that helped him step beyond the limitations of the Aaronic priesthood and the deadly separation of the veil into a whole new realm of intimacy with God.

1 Samuel 6:1-11 (The First Attempt)

¹Again, David gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. ²And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the ark of God, whose name is called by the name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims.

³And they set the ark of God upon a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. ⁴And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab which was at Gibeah, accompanying the ark of God: and Ahio went before the ark.

⁵And David and all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals. ⁶And when they came to Nachon's threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it.

⁷And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God. ⁸And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzzah: and he called the name of the place Perezuzzah to this day.

⁹And David was afraid of the LORD that day, and said, How shall the ark of the LORD come to me? ¹⁰So David would not remove the ark of the LORD unto him into the city of David: but David carried it aside into the house of Obededom the Gittite.

¹¹And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obededom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obededom, and all his household.

- Christians around the world are saying “We want revival,” but unfortunately we haven’t learned from David’s mistakes!
- We try to cram the holy things of God on a new cart of man’s making, thinking that God will be pleased!
- But God won’t let oxen pull on carts carrying his glory!
- We expect someone or something else to “sweat” out the hard part of revival – all we want to do is sing and dance in the procession!
- These man-centered revivals go smoothly until we hit a “GOD-BUMP” at the threshing floor!
- **GOD SAYS, “YOU CAN’T HANDLE ME CASUALLY – YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE TO SWEAT IT OUT! YOU CAN HAVE YOUR CART OR MY ARK, BUT NOT BOTH!”**
- Uzzah died when he tried to stabilize what God had shaken! We can only create an “Uzzah-friendly” environment as long as it doesn’t interfere with our “God-friendly” environment!
- **THE ARK WAS ONLY TO BE TRANSPORTED ON THE SHOULDERS OF SANCTIFIED LEVITES! HARD WORK!**

1 Samuel 6:12-17 (The Second Attempt)

¹²And it was told king David, saying, The LORD hath blessed the house of Obededom, and all that *pertaineth* unto him, because of the ark of God. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obededom into the city of David with gladness.

¹³And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings. ¹⁴And David danced before the LORD with all *his* might; and David *was* girded with a linen ephod.

¹⁵So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet. ¹⁶And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul’s daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

¹⁷And they brought in the ark of the LORD, and set it in his place, in the midst of the tabernacle that David had pitched for it: and David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

- David wanted the blessing that had been poured out on the house of Obed-Edom, and he was willing to do things God’s way to get it!
- Every six paces, they would sacrifice an ox, as if to let both God and man know – NO MORE OXEN! The ox is a symbol of strength, but it is the weakness of man that will carry the ark of God’s presence!
- They carried that heavy ark for nearly 15 miles – they didn’t walk through the gates of Jerusalem “looking their Sunday best!”
- SWEAT is the means by which value is transferred here on earth – it requires “sweat” to worship! Our lazy humanity tries to use “no-sweat” methods, and just get excited about “transporting the glory!”
- David was so passionate for God’s presence that he began to dance as the ark entered Jerusalem.
- David began to value the things that God values, but his wife Michal valued dignity over Deity! God cursed her with barrenness!
- **You can’t seek His Deity and maintain your dignity! It is time to abandon spectator services and become a participator!**
- Are we willing to pay the price for God’s presence?
- Immediately when they set the ark down, David demanded that the Levites begin offering 24-hour-a-day worship to the Lord!
- **The worshippers became the veil around the ark – they had to turn their back on man to worship the God in their midst!**

Ezekiel 22:30

And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

- God wants to see all men saved, but He depends on you and me!
- We are called to become bridges between darkness and light – we are intercessors, gap-standers!
- The world doesn’t need better sermons or songs. They need “gap people” who can reach for God with one hand and for the world with the other. We “prop open the heavens” with our upraised hands!
- David kept heaven open for nearly 36 years ... and God wants to rebuild the tabernacle of David that fell when they got tired!!

Psalms 84:10

For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

- David, you’re a king – why would you want to be a doorkeeper? A doorkeeper AT THE RIGHT DOOR has more influence!
- Obed-Edom became a doorkeeper for the ark – he was so passionate for God that he moved to Jerusalem! (1 Chron. 15:24)