

1 Chronicles 13

Bringing Back the Ark

13 David conferred with each of his officers, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds.

2 He then said to the whole assembly of Israel, “If it seems good to you and if it is the will of the Lord our God, let us send word far and wide to the rest of our people throughout the territories of Israel, and also to the priests and Levites who are with them in their towns and pasturelands, to come and join us.

3 Let us bring the ark of our God back to us, for we did not inquire of it during the reign of Saul.” **4** The whole assembly agreed to do this, because it seemed right to all the people. **5** So David assembled all Israel, from the Shihor River in Egypt to Lebo Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim. **6** David and all Israel went to Baalah of Judah (Kiriath Jearim) to bring up from there the ark of God the Lord, who is enthroned between the cherubim—the ark that is called by the Name.

7 They moved the ark of God from Abinadab’s house on a new cart, with Uzzah and Ahio guiding it. **8** David and all the Israelites were celebrating with all their might before God, with songs and with harps, lyres, timbrels, cymbals and trumpets.

9 When they came to the threshing floor of Kidon, Uzzah reached out his hand to steady the ark, because the oxen stumbled. **10** The Lord’s anger burned against Uzzah, and he struck him down because he had put his hand on the ark. So he died there before God.

11 Then David was angry because the Lord's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah.[c]

12 David was afraid of God that day and asked, "How can I ever bring the ark of God to me?" 13 He did not take the ark to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. 14 The ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house for three months, and the Lord blessed his household and everything he had.

1 Chronicles 15

The Ark Brought to Jerusalem

15 After David had constructed buildings for himself in the City of David, he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it.

2 Then David said, "No one but the Levites may carry the ark of God, because the Lord chose them to carry the ark of the Lord and to minister before him forever."

3 David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the Lord to the place he had prepared for it. 4 He called together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites:

11 Then David summoned Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel and Amminadab the Levites.

12 He said to them, "You are the heads of the Levitical families; you and your fellow Levites are to consecrate yourselves and bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of

Israel, to the place I have prepared for it. 13 It was because you, the Levites, did not bring it up the first time that the Lord our God broke out in anger against us. We did not inquire of him about how to do it in the prescribed way.”

14 So the priests and Levites consecrated themselves in order to bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel.

15 And the Levites carried the ark of God with the poles on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of the Lord.

16 David told the leaders of the Levites to appoint their fellow Levites as musicians to make a joyful sound with musical instruments: lyres, harps and cymbals.

22 Kenaniah the head Levite was in charge of the singing; that was his responsibility because he was skillful at it.

23 Berekiah and Elkanah were to be doorkeepers for the ark.

24 Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah and Eliezer the priests were to blow trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-Edom and Jehiah were also to be doorkeepers for the ark.

25 So David and the elders of Israel and the commanders of units of a thousand went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the house of Obed-Edom, with rejoicing.

26 Because God had helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the Lord, seven bulls and seven rams were sacrificed.

27 Now David was clothed in a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and as were the musicians, and Kenaniah, who was in charge of the singing

of the choirs. David also wore a linen ephod. ²⁸ So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the Lord with shouts, with the sounding of rams' horns and trumpets, and of cymbals, and the playing of lyres and harps.

²⁹ As the ark of the covenant of the Lord was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David dancing and celebrating, she despised him in her heart.

2 Samuel 6:12ff

¹² Now King David was told, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-Edom and everything he has, because of the ark of God." So David went to bring up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with rejoicing. ¹³ When those who were carrying the ark of the Lord had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. ¹⁴ Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, ¹⁵ while he and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

¹⁶ As the ark of the Lord was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she despised him in her heart.

¹⁷ They brought the ark of the Lord and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the Lord. ¹⁸ After he had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name

of the Lord Almighty. 19 Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each person in the whole crowd of Israelites, both men and women. And all the people went to their homes.

20 When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!”

21 David said to Michal, “It was before the Lord, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the Lord’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the Lord. 22 I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”

23 And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

David wants to bring the Ark into Jerusalem, which embodies the presence of God.

He is **an extraordinarily masculine figure**: he is the king, an extraordinarily gifted warrior, a man’s man.

And yet, he has very tender feelings for God. He exercises spiritual leadership by initiating bringing the Ark into the City of David.

We men want to bring the presence of God into the life of our family.

Like David, we are called to be spiritual leaders, to be priests in our home.

We are spiritual heads of our homes. There is a special blessing that runs through a man when he owns his special position before God as spiritual priest in his home.

We should feel a holy responsibility **to bring the Ark**, the fire of the presence of God, into our homes and family.

We should feel empowered to do this by virtue of the position we occupy before God. Like David as king of Israel.

If we own this responsibility, and accept it, then we can be sure that God will back us up in this role. We will have his blessing and empowerment.

In many men there has to come this moment of conversion and conviction, when we “convert” to our real position and calling as priests of our home.

We are responsible for stewarding and bringing the presence of the Ark into our homes.

We cannot leave this sacred duty to our wives.

They, of course, have a significant role to play. But at the very least this is a shared role.

And I maintain that the man should have the lion’s share in this aspect of the spiritual life of the family.

The early morning prayer time on Zoom this past Friday. About four or five men and seventy-five to eighty women. That’s usually the ratio. My wife and I struggle as we lead this time to make sure that **the voice of the few men is heard among the abundant chorus of women.**

I’m not dumping on men! Just **expressing a certain sadness** that this has often been so.

Let me clarify that **this has improved greatly over the years.** Men play a significant role in the life of Lion of Judah. They are ushers, worshipers, teachers, elders, leaders of ministries. They are more active and supportive than ever.

But there could be more.

Temperamentally, men are less prone to take to heart a spiritual teaching coming from another man. That's the way we are built. Women are much more teachable and quick to internalize a spiritual lesson. That's their make up.

If we men are to give fruit, given how we're built, we will have to **act more on principle, out of sheer obedience**, rather than from **the tender feelings that propel women to be so obedient** and to react so positively to instruction

We will have to act upon **the principled acceptance of God's Word** and the special calling that we have received as spiritual leaders in our home.

We will have to **begin the process of becoming spiritual leaders out of sheer obedience**, until it becomes an integral part of us, until we begin to see the beautiful results that come from taking God's Word seriously.

If we take authority in the name of Jesus and act by faith and sheer obedience, we will see the Holy Spirit come alongside us and provide all that we need.

God cooperated with the Levites once He was invited into the party. After all, it was supposed to be for His benefit and honor!

As we act out of sheer obedience at first, that spiritual sacrifice will become an integral part of us, and will turn into pleasure and personal satisfaction.

We will experience a rewarding sense of personal authority and empowerment as we see ourselves entering into the role for which we were designed.

There will be challenges on the way to becoming a spiritual leader. **Mistakes will be made.** Sometimes costly ones.

1) **David failed miserably the first time** he tried to bring the Ark. someone even died in the middle of the celebration.

He was extremely disappointed and discouraged. He almost gave up permanently.

This is the thing about resilience. We cannot give up. We need to learn from our failures and use them to become better and stronger. If we persist, God will find a way and we will experience victory sooner or later.

2) The fact is that we men haven't had very good spiritual models often.

3) We will have to learn along the journey, by **experimenting, praying, reading** and seeking and receiving good counsel. There are **no short cuts or easy answers.**

We will make mistakes along the way, but this will be an **integral part of the growing and maturing process.**

4) We have to **consciously fight against and undo the mental models** that are playing in our mind **from our own fathers and from the culture** that we grew up in.

How do **children (male and female) benefit from a spiritually active father?** What consequence does it have on their spiritual formation?

5) We also have to fight against an inferiority complex that often plagues us men, especially when we compare ourselves to our wives or female relatives, who are often more expressive and daring than we are.

This is often an optical illusion. I have seen men grow incredibly once they start exercising their gifts, and become as equally effective as the women in their lives.

The fact is that many of the things that we have to adopt are **unnatural to our typical male psyche: singing/worshiping** is often unnatural to us. **Praying in public;** praying together with our children and wives;

even going to special events at church seems a bit forced at times. We would rather stay at home and watch a series or the football game than go to a prayer time at church.

6) We have to **imitate David's innocent, unabashed enthusiasm** and abandon before God. We men are often too self conscious.

Unless we're willing to **expand our emotional range** by becoming uncomfortable initially **we will always stay small**. David the great warrior was not afraid to make a fool of himself while worshiping God.

What was David feeling as he danced before the Lord, with everybody watching him, the great warrior and king of Israel? Was he a bit self conscious as he danced? Was he totally comfortable? Possibly not!

One of the biggest obstacles will sometimes be our relationship with our wives.

The Michal effect. Talk about this in David's life.

What had taken place in Michal's life? Why did she act the way she did? Abuse and resentment? Neglect on the part of David? Inconsistencies of David in his treatment of her and his now very spiritual actions?

How should wives encourage their men to enter into their priesthood instead of belittling them?

The fact is that women play an extraordinarily important role in the spiritual balance and health of the family.

We are dealing with a very delicate spiritual mechanism here. If the husband and the wife are not synchronized with each other spiritually, this will have a very damaging effect on the health of the family and the home as a whole. It will affect everything!

Wives can easily become nagging and critical. They can easily destroy the self esteem of the man.

If the man is not respected and given his importance and recognition, he will withdraw, give up and become passive. The woman may have a perfect right to criticize and attack, but she must understand that as she does this, she is undermining the health of her home and destroying the health of her marriage.

You can get much more from a man from encouragement than from criticism. That's just the way the psyche of a man is built.

Let's build together the altar in our home and family.

We each—male and female—have an important role to play in bringing the Ark into our homes.