

Having conquered Jerusalem as a physical capital for Israel, David now brings the Ark to Jerusalem to make it a spiritual home.

### THE RETURN OF THE ARK (2 SAMUEL 6:1-5)

David selected 30,000 elite men to return the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. The Ark, symbolizing God's covenant with Israel, had been captured by the Philistines in a battle, but later returned due to the misfortunes it brought them. The Ark stayed in Kirjathjearim, at Abinadab's house, for over 40 years spanning Samuel's judgeship and King Saul's reign. As king, David decided to transport the Ark to Jerusalem, establishing the city as the spiritual and political center of Israel, and consolidating his power. However, they moved the Ark on a new cart, contrary to the Mosaic Law which required Levites to carry it on their shoulders, a deviation that would later prove dangerous. This grand procession, with music and jubilation, was not just a historic event, but a deeply spiritual moment highlighting God's presence and favor.

### UZZAH'S DEATH AND DAVID'S REACTION (2 SAMUEL 6:6-11)

During a procession, a violation of God's instructions regarding the Ark led to Uzzah's death when he instinctively reached out to steady the stumbling Ark. His well-meaning act was a breach of God's command, halting the procession. David, angered, named the place "Perez-Uzzah," signifying God's breakout against Uzzah. David temporarily placed the Ark in Obed-Edom's home, where it brought blessings for three months, indicating that its respectful treatment would bring blessings, not calamity. This reassured Israel that proper reverence for the Ark and God would bring His blessings.

### THE ARK IS BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM (2 SAMUEL 6:12-19)

When David heard about the blessings that Obed-Edom's household was receiving because of the Ark's presence, he interpreted it as a divine sign that it was safe to resume the journey to Jerusalem. Before the Ark was moved, David made sure to offer a sacrifice to God every "six paces" (approximately 36 feet). This act of reverence and devotion likely served as a public affirmation of his faith and a reminder to the Israelites of the sacredness of their mission.

One of the most memorable parts of this journey, particularly for those familiar with the Bible, was David's dance before the Ark. Wearing a "linen ephod," David danced with all his might in a display of sincere and uninhibited worship. The ephod was a garment associated with the priests of Israel and was made of fine linen. It was a sleeveless, apron-like garment that was worn over the clothes. David wearing the ephod symbolized his role not only as a king but also as a spiritual leader leading his people in worship.

Finally, the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the City of David, also known as Jerusalem. This momentous occasion was marked by shouting and the sound of trumpets, a grand celebration fitting for such a significant event. The Ark's arrival in Jerusalem symbolized the fulfillment of David's ambition to establish Jerusalem as the spiritual center of Israel, reinforcing his leadership and the nation's covenant with God.

Psalms 87, a song of celebration of Jerusalem, is believed to have been composed either for or in light of this significant occasion of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. The Psalm extols the city of Jerusalem, reflecting the joy and reverence associated with making it the spiritual center of Israel.

As the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the city, David, in his joy, danced and celebrated before the Lord with all his might. This celebration was not only a religious ceremony, but also a public festival for all the people of Israel, regardless of their gender or social status. Everyone was included in this celebration. David distributed among the entire population, to every man and woman, a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, a bottle of wine, and a cake of raisins. It was truly a day to remember, a day of joy and unity, a day of spiritual significance.

However, this scene of joy and celebration was marred by one person's disdain - Michal, the daughter of Saul and David's wife. As she looked out of the window and saw David's uninhibited and ecstatic dancing, she despised him in her heart. This is recorded in verse 16, which says, "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."

It seems not everyone was happy.

### MICHAL CONFRONTS DAVID (2 SAMUEL 6:20-23)

Michal, Saul's daughter and David's wife, confronts David after the celebration. She sarcastically remarks, "How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!" (v. 20). This comment paints a picture in the public imagination that David was dancing nearly naked before the Lord, a notion that has often been chosen over the actual description provided in the scriptures. Contrary to this belief, we know that David was wearing a linen ephod (v. 14), which was not an immodest garment. This is an example of how sensational interpretations can sometimes overshadow the actual text.

It's likely that Michal, still smarting from past events, resented the victory celebration for David and believed that he should have been more dignified and royal in his behavior. She probably disapproved of David discarding his royal attire in favor of the humble garment of a priest and worshiper, thus aligning himself with the common man. This was not how her father, Saul, would have conducted himself.

David, deeply hurt by Michal's disrespect, let her know who was the real king. The text suggests that this confrontation had such a profound impact on their relationship that David never had relations with her again.