

# 1 Chronicles 15 Commentary

PREVIOUS

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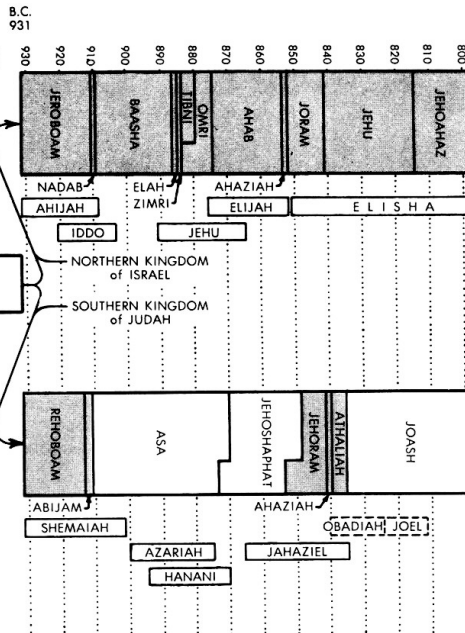
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TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES									
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1 Chronicles 10		1Chr 11-19		1Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		
<p><b>Legend:</b> B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931 BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that <b>after the division</b> of the Kingdom in 931 BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as "<b>Judah</b>" and the Northern Kingdom as "<b>Israel</b>." Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.</p>									

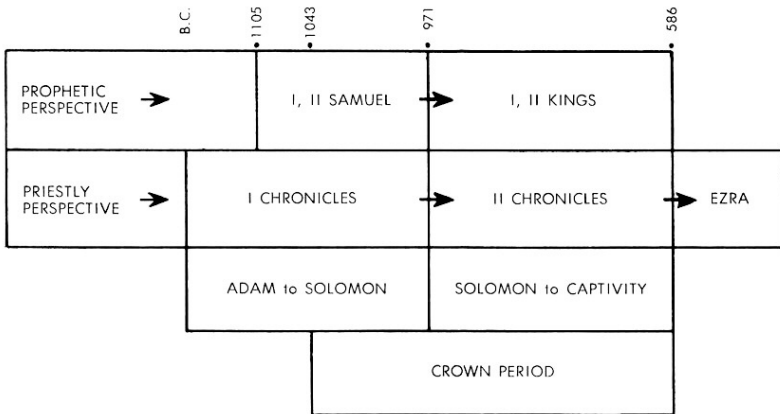
# Chart of Kings and Prophets

## Explanation

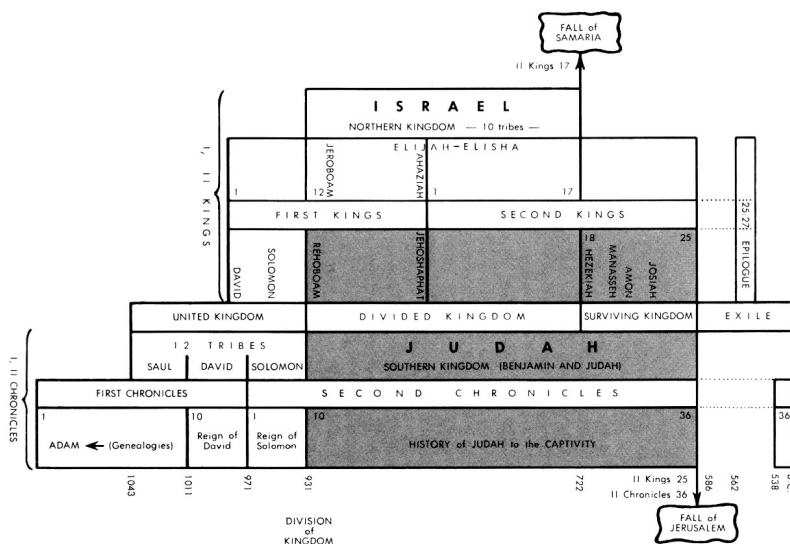
1. This chart represents the period of Israel's history from the crowning of Saul to the captivity of Judah.
2. Each space between the dotted lines represents ten years.
3. Notice these three divisions of this period of Israel's history:  
 First, the United Kingdom—from 1043 to 931 B.C.  
 Second, the Divided Kingdom—from 931 to 722 B.C.  
 Third, the Surviving Kingdom—from 722 to 586 B.C.
4. The reigns of the kings are identified as evil (shaded) or good (unshaded). Notice that in some instances two kings reigned at the same time within a kingdom.
5. The names in the smaller boxes are those of the contemporary prophets. Those who are authors of biblical books are indicated thus: **NAHUM**.
6. The dates of the kings are those of John C. Whitcomb's chart, *Old Testament Kings and Prophets*.



Click to Enlarge



Comparison of 1 Samuel thru 2 Chronicles



## FIRST CHRONICLES SUMMARY CHART

1 Chronicles 1-9:44	1 Chronicles 10:1-39:30
Royal Line of David	Reign of David
12 Tribes of David's Reign	Highlights of David's Reign

Genealogies	History
Ancestry	Activity
1000's of Years	Circa 33 Years

**1 Chronicles 15:1 Now David built houses for himself in the city of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it.**

- A.M. 2962, B.C. 1042
- **houses:** 2Sa 5:9 2Sa 13:7-8 14:24,
- **and he prepared,** 1Ch 15:3 1Ch 16:1 1Ch 17:1-5 Ps 132:5 Ac 7:46

#### Related Passages:

2 Samuel 6:1-13+ (**THIS PASSAGE GIVES THE TRAGIC EVENT THAT PRECEDED THE BRINGING OF THE ARK IN 1 CHRONICLES 15**) Now David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name, the very name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned above the cherubim. 3 They placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart. 4 So they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Ahio was walking ahead of the ark. 5 Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of instruments made of fir wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals. 6 But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen nearly upset it. 7 And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God. 8 David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzzah, and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. 9 So David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" 10 And David was unwilling to move the ark of the LORD into the city of David with him; but David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 11 Thus the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household. 12 Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, on account of the ark of God." David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness. 13 And so it was, that when the bearers of the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fattling. 14 And David was dancing before the LORD with all his might, and David was wearing a linen ephod.

1 Chronicles 13:9-11 When they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, because the oxen nearly upset it. 10 The anger of the LORD burned against Uzza, so He struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark; and he died there before God. 11 Then David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzza; and he called that place Perez-uzza to this day.

1 Chronicles 16:1 **And they brought in the Ark of God and placed it inside the tent which David had pitched for it,** and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God.

1 Chronicles 17:1 And it came about, when David dwelt in his house, that David said to Nathan the prophet, **"Behold, I am dwelling in a house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under curtains."**

**Background for 1 Chronicles 15** - First Chronicles 13-16 forms a unit about the ark coming to Jerusalem with chapter 13, the desire and first failed attempt, chapter 14, David settles into his new capital, chapter 15, the ark is successfully brought to Jerusalem with appropriate ritual, chapter 16, a Psalm of thanksgiving about its arrival.

**J Vernon McGee** - At least eleven of the psalms were composed around the great event of bringing the ark to Jerusalem. You can be sure of one thing: David did not have some peculiar superstition about the ark. He knew where the Lord was, and he knew He was not in that box. In Psalm 123:1 David says, "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens." David knew where God was, but he knew that the approach to God was made through the ark which spoke of a mediator between God and man.

**Eugene Merrill:** At last David prepared once more to relocate and house the ark of the covenant in Jerusalem. Though he planned to place the ark in a substantial temple (1Ch 17:1-4), for the present he set up a tent (1Ch 15:1), perhaps similar to the Mosaic

tabernacle. Then, careful to observe proper protocol (1Ch 15:2, 13, 15), he gathered the priests and Levites and commanded them to transport the ark from the house of Obed-Edom (cf. 13:14) to its new shrine in Jerusalem. . . One cannot . . . understand the theology of Chronicles without understanding the centrality of worship and its formal apparatus to the life of the theocratic people.

**J.A. Thompson:** The most arresting feature of this narrative is not obvious to the modern reader. The Chronicler was devoting great time and attention to describing incidents surrounding the ark and the need to treat it as a holy object even though by the time of the Chronicler it had already ceased to exist. In other words, the original readers of this book had no more opportunity to worship God before the ark than we do. Why would the Chronicler stress the joy and holiness associated with it if his readers would never have opportunity to emulate David's obedience? The answer must be that for the Chronicler it was not the object itself but what the object represented that mattered. The ark represented two great truths. - First, God was with them and would go with them wherever they went. The ark traveled with the exodus generation, was with Joshua's generation as they entered Canaan, and had been in various locations now in their land. - Second, the ark represented the holiness of God. It contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments—the essence of the law—and they had seen for themselves that God's ark was not to be trifled with (13:10). These two truths, that God is with us and that God is holy, are what really mattered to the Chronicler. We need to keep this in mind lest we think of the Chronicler simply as one full of nostalgia for the good old days. Finally, the chapter teaches God's compassionate forgiveness in allowing Israel a second chance. Israel's initial failure was not final and God's judgment was not just positive but instructive.

**August Konkell:** In Samuel, bringing the ark up to Jerusalem is the immediate sequel to the failed attempt to restore the ark (2Sa 6:12-19). The motivation for David to return to the ark is the blessing that comes to the house of Obed-Edom because of the presence of the ark there (2 Sam 6:12a). The Chronicler omits this half verse; blessing to David is shown in the description of the rise of his kingdom. The three-month interval when the ark was with Obed-Edom provides time to make the proper preparations for the ark as well as for the ordering and purifying of those who would carry it. First Chronicles 15:25–16:3 draws on this record of Samuel to feature the inauguration of worship in Jerusalem, including the function of the Levites in relation to the ark.

**Alan Redpath:** "For almost 70 years (**ED: THIS ESTIMATE IS PROBABLY A LITTLE HIGH AND IT IS MORE LIKE 50+ SEENOTE**) the ark had been missing from its rightful place. To begin with, it was captured by the Philistines. However, they found it a perpetual embarrassment to them, so they built a nice new cart and sent it back. For decades it had languished at the border of Judah, in the household of Abinadab, and from there David determined to rescue it. There is nothing more important in any life than the constantly-enjoyed presence of the Lord. There is nothing more vital, for without it we shall make mistakes. And without it, we shall be defeated. Without the sense of his abiding presence and a place of constant communion and fellowship, how far wrong we will go." (Pdf - [The Making of a Man of God Life of David](#))

**Youngblood** has an interesting note on how long the Ark had been "off the scene" - Since the "twenty years" of 1 Samuel 7:2+ perhaps "refers to the period between the ark's return from Philistia [1Sa 6:21–7:1] until the battle reported in" 1 Samuel 7:7–13 (Klein, 65)—or alternatively until the end of Samuel's judgeship (1Sa 7:15)—to the **twenty years** must be added at least the **forty years of Saul's reign** (see comment on 1 Sa 13:1+) plus a few years into the reign of David, leading to a grand total of **more than sixty years that the ark languished in exile** (for a similar estimate based on "the well-established view that Shiloh was destroyed about 1050 BC and that David began to reign around the turn of the millennium," see Blenkinsopp, 145)....Youngblood adds "In any event, for half a century or more the ark of the covenant had been sequestered in "the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill" (v. 3; 1 Sa 7:1), **either inaccessible to the Israelites because of Philistine control of the region or languishing in neglect** (perhaps partially because King Saul had shown no interest in it; cf. 1Ch 13:3). ([Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

## **DAVID'S PITCHES A TENT FOR THE ARK**

**Now David built houses for himself in the city of David; and he prepared a place for the ark([aron](#)) of God and pitched a tent for it** - In contrast to Saul where we never see him show reverence for the Ark ("for we did not seek it in the days of Saul." = 1Ch 13:3), David is clearly concerned to give God His place (the Ark symbolic of Yahweh's presence) in the **City of David**. Regarding the **tent David pitched**, it is uncertain was the original portable tabernacle of the wilderness (Exodus 25-27), the tent from Shiloh (1Sa 1:3, 9, 24, 1Sa 2:22) or was a new tent constructed according to Exodus 25-27. Exactly where the Ark had been housed at "**the house of Abinadab**" (2Sa 6:3; 1 Sa 7:1). Talk about a "holy house!" And as discussed above, the Ark seems to have remained at the house of Abinadab for 50-70 years!

**Alan Redpath:** Preparation for Service – The one thing above all else which David wanted was that, having assumed the responsibility of this position, he should know constantly the presence of God with him. He could not possibly rule in authority and power and victory without the Lord's guidance. . . This is the thing that matters most in the life of a Christian: that the ungrrieved Holy Spirit is indwelling his life in power and authority. (Pdf - [The Making of a Man of God Life of David](#))

**Paul Apple** - The ark of the covenant represents the holy presence of God. While God desires our worship, that worship must be in

spirit and in truth. Man must come to God on His terms. Sincerity is no excuse for failure to obey God's directives. The presence of God is no trifling matter. He should command our holy reverence and inspire unrestrained joyful celebration. This passage provides tremendous insight into how we should approach a holy God in worship and praise. Trace the phrase "and God was with him" throughout the Bible and see the blessing that accompanies the presence of God. No matter our circumstances or opposition, we are secure in God's blessing when God is with us.

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**Ark (0727)** (**aron** means a chest, a box (first use was coffin for Joseph's body - Ge 50:26), a container for funds to repair the Temple in (2 Ki 12:10-11, 2 Chr 24:8, 10-11). It is used most often of the Ark in the Holy of Holies and is first called the Ark of the Covenant in Nu 10:33.

**Jack Lewis** writes "As described in Exodus, Bezaleel made the ark of acacia wood. There were gold rings on the corners through which staves were placed for carrying it (Exodus 25:10-21; Exodus 37:1-9). In size the ark was 2 1/2 by 1 1/2 by 1 1/2 cubits, and was overlaid inside and out with gold (Exodus 25:11). It was surmounted by the mercy seat (kappōret) and cherubim with outstretched wings. The ark contained the tables of stone with the law (Deut. 10:1-5; Exodus 40:20), a pot of manna, and Aaron's rod which budded (Hebrews 9:4). The Damascus Document, fragments of which were found at Qumran, has the peculiar tradition that a copy of the Law was in the ark and it was sealed, which explains why David had not read it! (C.D.C. 5, 3). The ark was set in the most holy place in the tabernacle.

In the wilderness the ark was carried by the Levites (Deut. 10:8) before the line of march. A liturgical formula was recited when it was transported (Numbers 10:35-36). The ark was prominent at the crossing of the Jordan (Joshua 3-4) and in the capture of Jericho (Joshua 6-7). It was at Gilgal (Joshua 7:6), Shechem (Joshua 8:33), Bethel (Judges 20:27-28), and later Shiloh (1 Samuel 3:3). It was carried into battle against the Philistines at Aphek. They captured it (1 Samuel 4:3-11) but it caused plagues in the Philistine cities (1 Samuel 6:3-4). It was returned to Israel and for twenty years remained in the house of Abinadab at Kiriath jearim. Finally David brought it up to Jerusalem (1Sa 7:1-2; 2 Samuel 6:1ff.; Ps 132:8). Helping move the ark, Uzzah fell dead for touching it (2 Samuel 6:6-11). After that incident, it remained three months at the house of Obed edom. Later it was carried on a military expedition against the Ammonites (on one interpretation of 2 Samuel 11:11), but it remained in Jerusalem at Absalom's revolt (2 Samuel 15:24f.). Solomon placed it in the holy of holies of the temple (1 Kings 8). The ultimate fate of the ark is a mystery. Jeremiah 3:16-17 may imply its existence as late as the time of Nebuchadnezzar. It was the subject of later Jewish legend (2 Macc. 2:4f.; T. Sota 13:1; The Lives of the Prophets, ed. Torrey, I, p. 36). There was no ark in either Zerubbabel's or Herod's temple (cf. Josephus, Wars 5.5.5).

Often designated "the ark" (hā-'ārôn), it is also "the ark of the Lord" (Joshua 4:11, etc.) and "the ark of God" (1 Samuel 3:3, etc.). It is called "the ark of the God of Israel" by the Philistines (1 Samuel 5:2-11, etc.). The ark is most often "the ark of the covenant" ('ārôn habberît, Numbers 10:33, etc., 184 times), "the ark of the testimony" ('ārôn ha-'ēdût, Exodus 25:22, etc.; 13 times); "the ark of thy might" (Psalm 132:8), and once "the holy ark" ('ārôn haqqōdesh; 2 Chron. 35:3). (See [Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament](#))

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**City of David** - See [SPECIAL TOPIC: MORIAH, SALEM, JEBUS, ZION, JERUSALEM](#)

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**Bob Utley - the ark**" Notice how this sacred covenant box is named and characterized. [SPECIAL TOPIC: THE ARK OF THE COVENANT](#)

1. of God (the *Elohim*, vv. 3,4,6,7; of YHWH, v. 9)
2. called by the Name of YHWH of hosts
3. who enthroned *above* the cherubim

Notice how "the Name" is emphasized (cf. [Deut. 28:10](#); [1 Kgs. 8:43](#))

1. capitalized in NASB
2. called "the very name of YHWH of Hosts"

This awe and respect due to God's name is seen in the Ten Commandments, [Exodus. 20:7](#); [Lev. 19:12](#); [24:16](#).

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**1 Chronicles 15:2** Then David said, "No one is to carry the ark of God but the Levites; for the LORD chose them to carry the ark of God and to minister to Him forever."

- **No one is to carry the ark of God** Nu 4:2-15,19,20 7:9 De 10:8 31:9 Jos 3:3 6:6 2Ch 35:3
- **to minister:** Nu 8:13,14,24-26 18:1-8 Isa 66:21 Jer 33:17-22

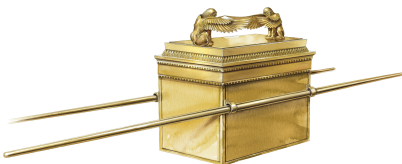
### Related Passages:

Exodus 25:14+ “You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them.

Numbers 4:5-6, 15+ “When the camp sets out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and they shall take down the veil of the screen and **cover the ark of the testimony with it**, 6 and they shall lay a covering of porpoise skin on it, and shall spread over it a cloth of pure blue, and **shall insert its poles**.....15 “When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy objects and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is to set out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them, so that they will not touch the holy objects and die. These are the things in the tent of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry.

Numbers 3:10, 38+ “So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons that they may keep their priesthood, but the layman (UZZAH WAS A LAYMAN) who comes near shall be put to death.”....38 Now those who were to camp before the tabernacle eastward, before the tent of meeting toward the sunrise, are Moses and Aaron and his sons, performing the duties of the sanctuary for the obligation of the sons of Israel; but the layman coming near was to be put to death.

2 Samuel 6:11 Thus the ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his household. 12Now it was told King David, saying, “The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, on account of the ark of God.” David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.



Poles for Carrying Ark on Shoulders

## DAVID'S ORDERS FOR CARRYING THE ARK

**Then** - Marks progression in the narrative. This was after David's mistake of carrying the Ark on a new cart and Uzzah's death in 2 Samuel 6:1-13+ and the subsequent 3 months in the house of Obed-edom which resulted in blessing on his house. Now David was convinced it was safe to move the Ark, but as the passage describes, he had learned from his mistake -- no transport on carts, only shoulders!

**David said, "No one is to carry the ark of God but the Levites; for the LORD chose them to carry the ark of God and to minister to Him forever** - Now David followed the Law stating only Levites should bear the ark of the Lord and only by the poles on their shoulders.

**1 Chronicles 15:3 And David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place which he had prepared for it.**

- **assembled:** 1Ch 13:5 1Ki 8:1
- **to bring up:** 1Ch 15:1 2Sa 6:12

**And David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place which he had prepared for it** This is David's second assembling of all Israel (first failed attempt - 1Ch 13:5). Note verb **bring up** because Jerusalem is elevated so always described as going UP to Jerusalem. The place had been prepared before the first attempt and there is nothing stated to suggest it has changed.

**1 Chronicles 15:4 David gathered together the sons of Aaron and the Levites:**

- the children of Aaron: 1Ch 6:16-20,49,50 12:26-28 Ex 6:16-22 Nu 3:4

**David gathered together the sons of Aaron and the Levites** - Now David is doing it right and "by the Book!"

**Selman** - "A major problem for many readers is the way that the narrative is interrupted by repetitious lists. For example, just at the moment when the ark is raised on to the Levites' shoulders, apparently unrelated lists of musicians and gatekeepers occur...the lists actually have an important function in anticipating the next section of narrative. The Levites who sanctified themselves are shown to have had a valid ancestry; this was a live issue in post-exilic Israel."

#### 1 Chronicles 15:5 of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and 120 of his relatives;

- **Uriel:** 1Ch 6:22-24

**of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and 120 of his relatives** - The Kohathites were the Levites who were to carry the Ark, Moses recording "When Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy objects and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is to set out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them, so that they will not touch the holy objects and die. These are the things in the tent of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry." (Nu 4:14-15+)

#### 1 Chronicles 15:6 of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and 220 of his relatives;

- **Merari:** 1Ch 6:29,30

**of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and 220 of his relatives;**

**Merarites** - The family of Merari, descendants of above, and almost always spoken of as "sons of Merari" in numerous references, such as 1 Ch 6:1,16,19,29, which only repeat without additional information the references to be found in the body of this article. We early find them divided into two families, the Mahli and Mushi (Ex 6:19; Nu 3:17,20,33). At the exodus they numbered, under their chief Zuriel, 6,200, and they were assigned the north side of the tabernacle as a tenting-place (Nu 3:34,35), thus sharing in the honor of those who immediately surrounded the tabernacle--the south side being given to the Kohathites, the west to the Gershonites, and the east--toward the sun-rising--being reserved for Moses, Aaron and his sons (Nu 3:23,29,35,38). To the Merarites was entrusted the care of the boards, bars, pillars, sockets, vessels, pins and cords of the tabernacle (Nu 3:36,37; 4:29-33). They and the Gershonites were "under the hand" of Ithamar, son of Aaron, the sons of Gershon having charge of the softer material of the tabernacles --curtains, covers, hangings, etc. (Nu 3:25,26). When reckoned by the number fit for service, i.e. between 30 and 50 years, the sons of Merari were 3,200 strong (Nu 4:42-45). Because of the weight of the material in their charge they were allowed 4 wagons and 8 oxen for carriage (Nu 7:8). In marching, when the tabernacle was taken down, the standard of Judah went first (Nu 10:14); then followed the Merarites bearing the tabernacle (Nu 10:17), and after them came the standard of Reuben (Nu 10:18). After the settlement in Canaan they had 12 cities assigned them out of Gad, Reuben and Zebulun (Josh 21:7,34-40; 1 Ch 6:63,77-81), just as the other two branches of Levi's family had their 12 cities respectively assigned out of the other tribes (Josh 21). The names of these Merarite cities are given (loc. cit.), and among them is Ramoth-gilead, one of the cities of refuge (Josh 21:38). It is evident from 1 Ch 6:44-47; 16:41; 25:1,3,6,9,11,15,19,21 f; compare 15:6,17-19 that they had charge under Ethan or Jeduthun of the temple music in the service. In David's time Asaiah was their chief (1 Ch 15:6). Himself and 220 of the family helped David to bring up the Ark. David divided the Levites into courses among the Gershonites, Kohathites and Merarites (1 Ch 23:6; compare 23:21-23; 24:26-30). The functions of certain Merarites are described in 1 Ch 26:10-19. They also took part in cleansing the temple in Hezekiah's time (2 Ch 29:12) as well as in the days of Josiah (2 Ch 34:12), helping to repair the house of the Lord. Among the helpers of Ezra, too, we find some of them numbered (Ezr 8:18,19). The family seems to have played a very important part in keeping steady and true such faithfulness as remained in Israel.

#### 1 Chronicles 15:7 of the sons of Gershom, Joel the chief, and 130 of his relatives;

- **Joel:** 1Ch 15:11 23:8

**of the sons of Gershom, Joel the chief, and 130 of his relatives;**

**GERSHON; GERSHONITES** - gur'-shon, gur'-shon-its (gereshon, written also gereshom): Firstborn of the 3 sons of Levi (Ex 6:16; Nu 3:17; 1 Ch 6:1,16 m; 23:6). He had two sons, Libni, also known as Ladan (1 Ch 23:7; 26:21), and Shimei (Ex 6:17; Nu 3:18; 1 Ch 6:17,20), and consequently two groups of descendants, enumerated in the census taken in the Wilderness of Sinai (Nu 3:21 ff) and that in the Plains of Moab (Nu 26:57). In the distribution of functions among the Levites, the Gershonites were charged with the carrying of the curtains, coverings, screens, hangings, cords and instruments of the tabernacle and the tent of meeting on the journeys in the wilderness, under the supervision of Ithamar the son of Aaron. Their function was thus more exalted than that of the Merarites, who carried the boards, and less so than that of the Kohathites, who carried the most holy utensils and symbols. The Gershonites were given two wagons with four oxen--half as many as the Merarites, according to their service (Nu 7:7). Thirteen cities were assigned to the Gershonites in Northern Palestine by Eleazar and Joshua (Josh 21:6,27-33 parallel 1 Ch 6:62,71-76).

Among the Gershonites who achieved distinction in later Biblical times was the family of Asaph, the singers from the time of David to the days of the Second Temple (1 Ch 6:31-47; 25:1-7; 15:7,17,19; 16:5,7; 2 Ch 25:15; Ezr 2:41; 3:10; Neh 11:17,22; 12:35; 1 Ch 9:15). Other Gershonites named are the heads of the fathers' houses in the days of David in connection with the dividing of the Levites into courses (1 Ch 23:7-11); the superintendents of the treasuries of the house of the Lord of the same time (1 Ch 26:21,22; 29:8); and, finally, Gershonites are mentioned among those who cleansed the house of the Lord in the days of Hezekiah (2 Ch 29:12,13).

#### **1 Chronicles 15:8 of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and 200 of his relatives;**

- Elizaphan: Ex 6:22, Elizaphan
- Shemaiah: 1Ch 15:11

**of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and 200 of his relatives**

#### **1 Chronicles 15:9 of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, and 80 of his relatives;**

- Hebron: 1Ch 6:2 23:12,19 26:23,30,31 Ex 6:18 Nu 26:58

**of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, and 80 of his relatives**

#### **1 Chronicles 15:10 of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and 112 of his relatives.**

- Uzziel: 1Ch 6:18 23:12 Ex 6:18,22
- Amminadab: 1Ch 6:22

**of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and 112 of his relatives**

**J.A. Thompson:** The three Levitical groups—Kohath, Merari, and Gershon, and the numbers of their families—are mentioned along with descendants of three other families—Elizaphan, Hebron, and Uzziel, who must have attained sufficient numbers or prestige to gain independent status. They all derive from Kohath (Exod 6:18, 22). This sixfold division of Levites is otherwise unknown and may represent an updated statement nearer to the time of the Chronicler.

#### **1 Chronicles 15:11 Then David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel and Amminadab,**

- Zadok: 1Ch 12:28 18:16 1Sa 22:20-23 2Sa 8:17 15:24-29,35 20:25 1Ki 2:35
- Uriel: 1Ch 15:5-10

**DAVID GATHERS HIGH PRIESTS  
AND LEVITE LEADERS**



**Then David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests** - These were the two current two High-Priests (2Sa 20:25), Zadok from house of Eleazar and and Abiathar from house of Ithamar. Zadok served at the tabernacle in Gibeon (1Ch 16:39), and Abiathar served the temporary tent of the Ark in Jerusalem (1 Chr 18:16; 27:34). Under Solomon Abiathar was excluded from the high priesthood because of his support of Adonijah's bid for the throne (1Ki 1:7; 2:26, 27) and Zadok continued as the high priestly family in Jerusalem (1 Chr 6:1, 53).

**and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel and Amminadab**

**1 Chronicles 15:12 and said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' households of the Levites; consecrate yourselves both you and your relatives, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place that I have prepared for it.**

- **You are the heads:** 1Ch 9:34 24:31
- **consecrate:** 1Ch 15:14 Ex 19:14,15 2Ch 5:11 29:4,5 30:15 35:6 Eze 48:11 Joh 17:17 Ro 12:1,2 Rev 5:9,10

## **DAVID CALLS FOR CONSECRATION**

**and said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' households of the Levites;consecrate yourselves both you and your relatives, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place that I have prepared for it** - They were to consecrate themselves by washing (Ex. 19:10, 14), avoiding defilement (Lev 11:44), and refraining from intercourse (Ex. 19:15).

**Selman** - Sanctification required separation from every form of 'uncleanness' (Leviticus 16:19; 2 Samuel 11:4), and in the Old Testament might include temporary abstinence from sexual intercourse (Exodus 19:15), dirty clothing (Exodus 19:14), or contact with corpses (Leviticus 21:1-4), or more permanently for the priests, not marrying a divorcee, prostitute, or even a widow (Leviticus 21:13-15)."

**Andrew Hill:** The word "**consecrate**" (1Cr 15:12, 14) means to set things or persons apart from impurity and profane use and dedicate them to the service of God in holiness. Chronicles records the similar consecration of the Levitical priesthood during the reigns of Solomon (2Ch 5:11), Hezekiah (2Ch 29:5), and Josiah (2Ch 35:6). In each case, Selman has noted, God subsequently blesses the nation. The act of consecration included ritual washing and abstinence from sexual relations (Ex 19:14–15). Elsewhere we learn that priests and Levites are to avoid contact with corpses (Lev. 21:1–4) and are subject to more stringent requirements concerning marriage (Lev 21:13–15).

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**Utley** - "**consecrate yourselves**" This VERB (BDB 872, KB 1073, *Hithpael* IMPERATIVE) is used often of several groups.

1. all Israel
  1. at Sinai – Exod. 19:14,15
    - (1) wash clothes
    - (2) no sexual contact
  2. before Passover – 2 Chr. 30:17; 31:18; 35:6
  3. Levitical Law
    - (1) food laws (Lev. 11:44)
    - (2) no mediums or spiritists or fertility worship
  4. special provision of quail – Num. 11:18
  5. before crossing Jordan – Jos. 3:5
  6. mandate of Isaiah
    - (1) food laws
    - (2) no fertility worship
2. Priests and Levites
  1. initial consecration
    - (1) washings – Exod. 29:4; 30:19-21
    - (2) anointing, Exod. 29:7
    - (3) special clothing, Exod. 29:5-9
    - (4) special sacrifice, Exod. 29:10-28
  2. priest with proper attitudes – 2 Chr. 5:11
  3. take away unclean things – 2 Chr. 29:5,34

4. for priest before offering sacrifices – 2 Chr. 30:3,15

The text states "according to the word of the Lord." One would assume this refers to Exodus 19 or to unrecorded traditions.

**1 Chronicles 15:13 "Because you did not carry it at the first, the LORD our God made an outburst on us, for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance."**

- **ye did it:** 1Ch 13:7-9 2Sa 6:3
- **Lord:** 1Ch 13:10,11 2Sa 6:7,8
- **for :** 1Ch 15:2 Nu 4:15 7:9 De 31:9 2Ch 30:17-20 Pr 28:13 1Co 11:2 14:40 1Jn 1:8-10

#### Related Passages:

2 Samuel 6:8 David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzzah, and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day.

1 Chronicles 13:11 Then David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzza; and he called that place Perez-uzza to this day.

### DAVID EXPLAINS WHY HE IS DOING IT BY THE BOOK!

**Because you did not carry it at the first**- David is not blaming the Levites but explaining the procedure he should have ordered and the result of his mistake. A man after God's own heart is not perfect but he learns from his mistakes!

**THOUGHT** - David was far from perfect, but he had a teachable spirit. Do you learn from your mistakes? If so, you are on your way to being a man or woman after God's own heart.

**the LORD our God made an outburst on us**([parats](#) - 2Sa 6:8, 1Ch 13:11), **for we did not seek Him according to the ordinance** - This must have been painful for David, for he knows that ultimately the "buck stopped with him" in ordering the Ark brought up on a new cart the first time, resulting in death of Uzzah. Leadership has its perks, but also its pains!

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**Outburst** ([06555](#)) [parats](#) means to break through; burst out (qal); to spread abroad (niph'al); to be broken down (pual); break loose (hitpael). The word (parats) could be used for breaking down the wall of a captured city (2 Kings 14:13). It was also used of divine anger breaking out against those who have offended God (Ex 19:22). It can also mean to urge someone to a particular course of action (1Sam. 28:23). It (parats) is a word which speaks of power that sweeps all obstacles before it, effectively undermining and demolishing all that would resist it. It is a presentation of the LORD as a warrior overthrowing His enemies (Isa. 42:13; Jer. 9:16–19). The idea of parats is break down the hedge, break down the wall, break through a barrier or retainer, break into the house of God, tear down the wall of Jerusalem. Parats described the breaking open of a barrel of water, the breaching of a wall during a siege or the bursting of a dam. In a military context parats referred to a sudden, violent, devastating attack.

**Parats** in 1Sa-2Chr - 1 Sam. 3:1; 1 Sam. 25:10; 1 Sam. 28:23; 2 Sam. 5:20; 2Sa 6:8; 2 Sam. 13:25; 2 Sam. 13:27; 2 Ki. 5:23; 2 Ki. 14:13; 1 Chr. 4:38; 1Ch 13:2; 1Ch 13:11; 1 Chr. 14:11; 1 Chr. 15:13; 2 Chr. 11:23; 2 Chr. 20:37; 2 Chr. 24:7; 2 Chr. 25:23; 2 Chr. 26:6; 2 Chr. 31:5; 2 Chr. 32:5;

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#### Walter Kaiser - 6:6–7 Why Did God Destroy Uzzah?

Over the years, many have complained that God was unfair to kill Uzzah when he tried to protect the ark of God from damage or shame when the oxen stumbled and the ark slipped. Should not Uzzah have been praised for lunging forward to protect the ark of God?

There is no doubt that David's intentions in bringing the ark to Jerusalem were noble and good. Now that his kingdom was established, he did not forget his earlier vow to return the ark to its rightful place of prominence. But what began as a joyful day quickly became a day of national grief and shame. Why?

A significant omission in 2 Samuel 6:1–3 sets the scene for failure. Previously when David needed counsel, for example when he was attacked by the Philistines, the text records that David "**inquired of the Lord**" (2Sa 5:19, 23). But those words are sadly missing in 2 Samuel 6:1–3. Instead, we are told in the parallel account in 1 Chronicles 13:1–14 that David "conferred with each of his

officers.”

There was no need to consult these men. God had already given clear instructions in Numbers 4:5–6 as to how to move the ark. It should be covered with a veil, to shield the holiness of God from any kind of rash intrusion, and then carried on poles on the shoulders of the Levites (Num 7:9).

God had plainly revealed his will, but David had a better idea—one he had learned from the pagan Philistines. He would put it on a “new cart” (2 Sam 6:3). However, God had never said anything about using a new cart. This was a human invention contrary to the will and law of God.

Thus David did things in the wrong way, following his own ideas or those of others instead of God’s ways. Surely this passage warns that it is not enough to have a worthy purpose and a proper spirit when we enter into the service of God; God’s work must also be performed in God’s way. Pursuing the right end does not automatically imply using the right means.

But why did God’s anger break out against Uzzah if David was at fault? The Lord had plainly taught that even the Kohathites, the Levite family designated to carry the ark, “must not touch the holy things or they will die” (Num 4:15). Even if Uzzah were not a Kohathite or even a Levite, he still would know what the law taught in Numbers 4 and 7. God not only keeps his promises, but also fulfills his threats!

When the Philistines, who had no access to the special revelation of God, sinned by touching the ark and using a new cart to transport it, God’s anger did not burn against them (1 Sam 6). God is more merciful toward those less knowledgeable of his will than toward those who are more knowledgeable. This is why it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than it will be for those who personally witnessed the great acts of the Savior in Capernaum (Mt 11:23–24).

Uzzah’s motive, like David’s, was pure, but he disregarded the written Word of God, just as David did. Thus one sin led to another. Consulting one’s peers is no substitute for obeying God when he has spoken. Good intentions, with unsanctified minds, interfere with the kingdom of God. This is especially true of the worship of God and the concept of his holiness.

Because God is holy, he is free of all moral imperfections. To help mortals understand this better, a sharp line of demarcation was drawn between holy things and the common or profane. Our word profane means “before” or “forth from the temple.” Thus all that was apart from the temple, where the holiness of God was linked, was by definition profane. However, Uzzah’s act made the holiness associated with the ark also profane and thereby brought disrepute to God as well.

It is unthinkable that God could condone a confusion or a diffusion of the sacred and the profane. To take something holy and inject into it the realm of the profane was to confuse the orders of God. Thus in 1 Samuel 6:19 seventy men of Beth Shemesh were killed for peering into the ark.

The situation with Uzzah can be contrasted with that of the Philistines in 1 Samuel 6:9. These uncircumcised Gentiles also handled the ark of God as they carted it from city to city in what is now called the Gaza Strip, as they did when they prepared to send the ark back home to Israel on a cart. But where the knowledge of holy things had not been taught, the responsibility to act differently was not as high as it was for Uzzah, who should have known better.

In fact, in order to determine if the calamities that had struck each of the cities where the ark had gone (a calamity that was almost certainly an outbreak of the bubonic plague) was merely a chance happening unrelated to any divine wrath from the God of Israel, the Philistines rigged up an experiment that was totally against the grain of nature. They took two cows that had just borne calves, penned up the calves, and hitched these cows, who had never previously been hitched to a cart, to a new cart, and watched to see if against every maternal instinct in the animal kingdom the cows would be directed back to the territory of the Philistines. They were. The Philistines were convinced that what happened to them in the outbreak in each city during the seven months when the ark of God was in their midst was no chance or freak accident at all: it was the hand of God! And they had better not harden their hearts as the Egyptians did years ago (1 Sam 6:6).

The Philistines had enough sense for the holiness of God to use a new cart and to send back offerings of reparation, to the degree that they had any knowledge, but they were not judged for what they did not know about the distinction between the sacred and the common.

**Another case of trivializing that which is holy** can be seen in the brief reference to Nadab and Abihu offering strange fire on the altar of God (Lev 10:1–3). It is impossible to say whether the two sons of Aaron, the high priest, erred in the manner in which they lighted their fire-pans, the timing, or in the place of the offering. The connection with strong drink and the possibility of intoxication cannot be ruled out, given the proximity and discussion of that matter in the same context (Lev 10:8–11). If that was the problem, then the drink may have impeded the sons’ ability to think and to act responsibly in a task that called for the highest degree of alertness, caution and sensitivity.

The offense, however, was no trivial matter. Nor was it accidental. There was some reversal of everything that had been taught, and what had been intended to be most holy and sacred was suddenly trivialized so as to make it common, trite and secular. Exodus 30:9 had warned that there was to be no "other incense" offered on the altar to the Lord. From the phrase at the end of Leviticus 10:1, "which he did not command them" (literal translation), what was done was a clear violation of God's command.

As a result fire comes from the presence of the Lord and consumed Nadab and Abihu. Again, the fact that they are ministers of God makes them doubly accountable and responsible. Moses then used this as an occasion to teach a powerful lesson on the holiness and worship of God (Lev 10:3). ([Page 192 Hard Sayings of the Bible](#))

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**QUESTION - [Why did God strike Uzzah dead for touching the Ark of the Covenant? Watch the associated video.](#)**

**ANSWER** - The story of Uzzah and the [Ark of the Covenant](#) is found in 2 Samuel 6:1-7 and 1 Chronicles 13:9-12. As the ark was being transported, the oxen pulling the cart stumbled, and a man named Uzzah took hold of the ark. God's anger burned against Uzzah and He struck him down and he died. Uzzah's punishment does appear to be extreme for what we might consider to be a good deed. However, there are the reasons why God took such severe action.

First, God had given Moses and Aaron specific instructions about the Tent of Meeting and the movement of the Ark of the Covenant. "After Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy furnishings and all the holy articles, and when the camp is ready to move, the Kohathites are to come to do the carrying. But they must not touch the holy things or they will die. The Kohathites are to carry those things that are in the Tent of Meeting" (Numbers 4:15). No matter how innocently it was done, touching the ark was in direct violation of God's law and was to result in death. This was a means of preserving the sense of God's holiness and the fear of drawing near to Him without appropriate preparation.

Notice how David took men with him to collect the ark, rather than allowing the Levites to bring it to him. That was a great mistake, since it ought never to have been put upon a cart, old or new. It was to be borne upon men's shoulders, and carried by Levites only, and those of the family of Kohath (Exodus 25:12-14; Numbers 7:9), using the poles prescribed. Failing to follow God's precise instructions would be seen as (a) not revering God's words when He spoke them through those such as Moses, whom He had appointed; (b) having an independent attitude that might border on rebellion, i.e., seeing and acting on things from a worldly, rather than a spiritual, perspective; or (c) disobedience.

Second, the ark had stayed for a period of time at Abinadab's house (2 Samuel 6:3), where his sons, Uzzah and Ahio, may well have become accustomed to its presence. There's an old saying, "familiarity breeds contempt," that could apply in this case. Uzzah, having been around the ark in his own home, could very likely forget the holiness that it represented. There are times when we, too, fail to recognize the holiness of God, becoming too familiar with Him with an irreverent attitude.

Third, the account tells us the oxen stumbled. The cart didn't fall and neither did the Ark, just as the boat carrying Jesus and the disciples rocked fiercely in the storm, though it wasn't necessarily in danger of sinking (Matthew 8:24-27). And yet, just as with the disciples who failed to put their faith in their Master, Uzzah, for a moment, felt it was his responsibility to save the integrity of God, and that our almighty God somehow needed Uzzah's assistance. He presumed that, without his intervention, God's presence would be dealt a blow. As Job asks, "Can you fathom the mysteries of God?" (Job 11:7). "His greatness no one can fathom" (Psalm 145:3). "His understanding no one can fathom" (Isaiah 40:28). Moses lost his right to enter the promised land because he felt his intervention was needed when he struck the rock, instead of speaking to it as God had commanded (Numbers 20:7-12). We need to listen carefully to what God has to say to us, and in obedience strive to do all He commands. Yes, God is loving and merciful, but He is also holy and He defends His holiness with His power, and affronts to His holiness sometimes bring about His holy wrath. "It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Hebrews 10:31).

Something of God's presence in the Ark of the Covenant seems to be lost in the church today. In the time of Moses, the people knew the awesomeness of God's absolute holiness. They had witnessed great miracles when the ark was with them. They respected that God's ways and thoughts are much higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8-9). In truth, the more we try to bring God down to our worldly way of thinking or reasoning, the further away He will seem to us. Those who would draw near to God and have Him draw near to them are those who approach Him in reverence and holy fear. Uzzah forgot that lesson, and the consequences were tragic. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Chronicles 15:14 So the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel.**

- **consecrated themselves:** Lev 10:3 2Ch 29:15,34 Joe 2:16,17

## PRIESTS AND LEVITES CONSECRATE THEMSELVES

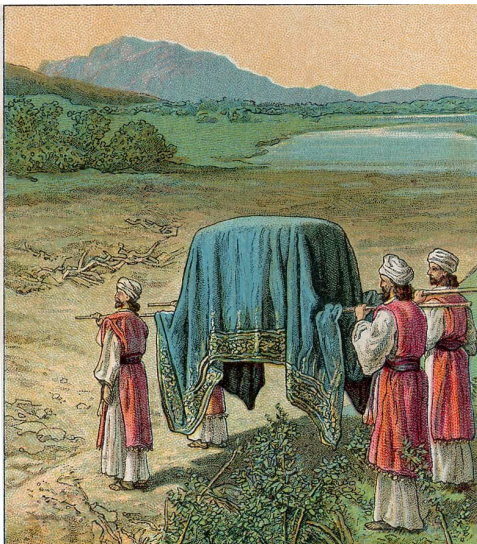
**So the priests and the Levites consecrated themselves to bring up the Ark of the LORD God of Israel-** The Ark symbolized the Holy God and called for holiness in those who ministered to Him.

**THOUGHT** - Beloved, the pattern has not changed, so if you are not being used in ministry to the LORD like you think you should be used, one thing to examine is whether you have unconfessed sin and/or secret sin.

**Frederick Mabie:** In addition to the involvement of "all Israel" (1Ch 15:3), David summons key individuals representing the priests and Levites. A similar group will be convened by Solomon to bring the ark to the newly constructed temple (2Ch 5:4-6). The Chronicler's emphasis is that the individuals who had particular responsibility in the holy things of God (priests and Levites) needed to be consecrated (1Ch 5:12-13), reflecting the Chronicler's broader work that deeper internal issues such as faithfulness, obedience, and personal purity must coincide with external acts of worship (cf. 2Ch 29:11; 35:5-6; Eph 4:1).

**1 Chronicles 15:15 The sons of the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles thereon, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.**

- **the ark:** Ex 25:12,12-15 Ex 37:3-5 Ex 40:20 Nu 4:6,15 7:9 1Ki 8:8 2Ch 5:9



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**ISRAEL ENTERS THE LAND OF PROMISE**

Josh. 8:5-17.

**GOLDEN TEXT:**—And he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.  
Ps. 107:7.

**The sons of the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles thereon, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD**

**Utley** on "**as Moses had commanded according to the word of the Lord**" This is a recurrent theme in Chronicles (cf. 2 Chr. 8:13; 23:18; 30:16; 35:6). The post-exilic community wanted to be faithful and reflect the Mosaic covenant (RECALL THAT 2 CHRONICLES WAS WRITTEN TO JEWS WHO HAD RETURNED FROM THE EXILE TO ENCOURAGE THEM). This assured them they were the restored covenant people, successors of the Patriarchal promises.

**Alan Redpath** - "During the three months the ark stayed in this man's house, David seems to have learned at least two things: First, he learned that he had tackled the situation in the wrong way, attempting to get God's presence without recognizing God's holiness. Therefore, eh the king, had been dealt with in judgment. But then he heard how apparently this very significant man who had the awesome presence of God in his home was being blessed. In other words, the ark of God was, as Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 2:16, 'To the one the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life.' I think David learned something else too: "Those three months gave him time to think and to pray. Just to make it simple, I will put it this way: Apparently David had been reading his Bible. He had taken these three months to get alone with God and say, 'Now Lord, what has gone wrong? You know that I want your presence with me. I need your power for my testimony and service. But look what has happened. What is the matter?' As he thought and prayed about it, the Lord evidently directed his mind to the books of Moses (ED: DAVID WAS DOING WHAT A KING WAS

**1 Chronicles 15:16 Then David spoke to the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their relatives the singers, with instruments of music, harps, lyres, loud-sounding cymbals, to raise sounds of joy.**

- **David:** 2Ch 30:12 Ezr 7:24-28 Isa 49:23
- **chief:** 1Ch 15:12 Ac 14:23 1Ti 3:1-15 2Ti 2:2 Tit 1:5
- **the singers:** 1Ch 15:27,28 6:31-38 13:8 16:42 23:5 25:1-6 2Ch 29:28-30 Ne 12:36,46 Ps 87:7 149:3 150:3,4
- **lifting up:** 2Ch 5:13 Ezr 3:10,11 Ne 12:43 Ps 81:1 92:1-3 95:1 100:1 Jer 33:11

**Then David spoke to the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their relatives the singers, with instruments of music, harps, lyres, loud-sounding cymbals, to raise sounds of joy.** Music in the procession of the Ark was both instrumental and vocal (Dt 31:19-22). In addition to their responsibility of caring for the ark of the Lord (vv. 2, 12-15), the Levitical families were charged with attending to the music and other services used in worship (1Ch 16:4-43).

**Utley** summarizes "Several functions of Levites are: (1) singers (1 Chr. 15:11,19,22), (2) instrumentalists (1 Chr. 15:16,20,21,24) (3) gatekeepers (1 Chr. 15:18,23,24) of the tent (shrine) and of the ark (inner tent, holy place, Holy of Holies)

**Andrew Hill:** The concluding section of the report summarizing David's extensive preparations for the transfer of the ark to Jerusalem (1Ch 15:16–24) showcases the priests and Levites as musicians, another theme in Chronicles. The purpose in David's appointments is simple: The Levitical corps is to provide appropriate music for the processional (1Ch 15:16). The occasion of installing the ark in Jerusalem is to be celebratory and festive—the ark and God are to be “serenaded” into the city with joyous music. The king instructs the leaders of the Levites to divide their group into singers and musicians (1Ch 15:16). The musicians are sorted into divisions on the basis of the instrument played (lyre, harp, or cymbal). The citation of Kenaniah as a musical director of sorts references his “skill” (or perhaps “musical knowledge”), suggesting the appointments of the Levites as singers and musicians may have been based on some type of audition (1Ch 15:22). . .

**1 Chronicles 15:17 So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel, and from his relatives, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and from the sons of Merari their relatives, Ethan the son of Kushaiah,**

- **Heman:** 1Ch 6:33 25:1-5 1Sa 8:2
- **Asaph:** 1Ch 6:39 25:2 Ps 73:1 83:1 \*titles
- **Ethan:** 1Ch 15:19 6:44, son of Kishi

**So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel, and from his relatives, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and from the sons of Merari their relatives, Ethan the son of Kushaiah - Heman** was a Kohathite (cf. 1Ch 6:33-38), **Asaph** a Gershonite (cf. 1Ch 6:39-43), and **Ethan** a Merarite (cf. 6:44-47) and should not be confused with the sages compared to Solomon in 1Ki 4:29-31 for those individuals were Ezrahites (cf. 1Ki 2:6-7; Ps. 88; 89).

**Jamieson, Fausset and Brown:** These eminent Levites were instructed to train the musicians and singers who were under them for the solemn procession. The performers were ranged in three choirs or bands, and the names of the principal leaders are given, 1 Chron 15:17-18, 21, with the instruments respectively used by each [psalteries, and harps, and cymbals].

**Josephus** says that these instruments were made of electrum, a precious alloy of gold, of a pale yellow color].

**August Konkel:** Heman, Asaph, and Ethan are appointed as leaders of the musical guilds (1Ch 15:17). They are named again as the singers sounding the bronze cymbals in 1Ch 15:19. The three led three sections of the accompanying musicians, each assigned with particular responsibilities. Musicians of second rank listed in 1Ch 15:18 appear again in the list of singers in 1Ch 15:20, 21, which includes the additional name of Azaziah. These fourteen were also gatekeepers. The multiple functions of gatekeepers result in the complicated presentation of three lists (1Ch 15:18, 23, 24). Musicians with harps set to the alamothe refers to the role of female musicians (from 'almah, meaning “young woman”), either as singers or women trained to play stringed instruments. Female musicians are found as important participants throughout the world of the Bible. Another group of musicians led with lyres set to the **sheminith** (1Ch 15:21). This term means “eighth,” though it is entirely ambiguous as to whether this indicates “octave” (in the lower register) or “an instrument with eight strings.” The term appears in the titles of certain psalms (e.g., Ps 6; Ps 12), which might indicate a term for musical directions.

**1 Chronicles 15:18** and with them their relatives of the second rank, Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom and Jeiel, the gatekeepers.

- **second:** 1Ch 25:2-6,9-31
- **Zechariah:** 1Ch 16:5,6
- **Jaaziel:** 1Ch 15:20, Aziel
- **Obed-edom:** 1Ch 13:14 16:5,38 26:4,8,15

## LEVITES SECOND IN RANK

**and with them their relatives of the second rank, Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom and Jeiel, the gatekeepers**

**Andrew Hill** on **gatekeepers** (doorkeepers) It was customary in the ancient world for doorkeepers to attend the various entrances of the palace complex, both to serve as guards and to welcome and announce those passing through the doors as part of the royal protocol. This may have been another way for David to show proper reverence to God as king as the ark enters the city of Jerusalem and is installed in the tent-sanctuary. On a more practical note, since the Levitical porters are carrying the ark on poles hoisted on their shoulders, the gatekeepers can see to it that another tragedy was averted by carefully directing the Levites as they crossed the thresholds of gates and doorways.

**Utley** on "**of the second rank**" This is the Hebrew term for "second" (BDB 1041). It could refer to

1. a next important chariot to the king's chariot – Gen. 41:43; 2 Chr. 35:24
2. a helper to the High Priest – 2 Kgs. 23:4; 25:18; Jer. 52:24
3. a second in command to a king – 1 Sam. 23:17; 2 Chr. 28:7; Esther 10:3
4. a helper or second in charge of Levites – here; 1 Chr. 16:5; 2 Chr. 31:12; Neh. 11:17

**1 Chronicles 15:19** So the singers, Heman, Asaph and Ethan were appointed to sound aloud cymbals of bronze;

- 1Ch 15:16 13:8 16:5,42 25:1,6 Ps 150:5

## SOUNDERS OF CYMBALS

**So the singers, Heman, Asaph and Ethan were appointed to sound aloud cymbals of bronze;**

**1 Chronicles 15:20** and Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah and Benaiah, with harps tuned to alamoith;

- **Aziel:** 1Ch 15:18, Jaaziel
- **Alamoith:** Ps 46:1 \*title

**and Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah and Benaiah, with harps tuned to alamoith;**

**Payne** - "The phrase 'according to *alamoith*' occurs also in the title to Psalm 46. Since the noun means 'maidens, virgins,' such as are mentioned as beating tambourines in ceremonial processions of singers and other musicians (Psalm 68:25), it may indicate music produced in a soprano register." (soprano voices of young women)

**1 Chronicles 15:21** and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel and Azaziah, to lead with lyres tuned to the sheminith.

- **Mattithiah:** 1Ch 15:18 16:5

- **harps:** 1Ch 25:6,7 1Sa 10:5 Ps 33:2 81:1,2 92:3 150:3
- **lead with lyres tuned to the sheminith,** Ps 6:1 12:1 \*titles

**and Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel and Azaziah, to lead with lyres tuned to the sheminith**

**Payne** - "The phrase 'according to *sheminith*' occurs also in the titles to Psalms 6 and 12. The word is derived from the root for 'eight' and is usually thought to indicate music in a lower octave, in contrast to the preceding verse, though it might indicate an instrument that had eight strings." (Payne)

**1 Chronicles 15:22** Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was in charge of the singing; he gave instruction in singing because he was skillful.

- **was in charge of the singing,** 1Ch 15:16,27
- **instruction:** 1Ch 25:7,8

**Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was in charge of the singing; he gave instruction in singing because he was skillful.**

**1 Chronicles 15:23** Berechiah and Elkanah were gatekeepers for the ark.

- 1Ch 9:21-23 2Ki 22:4 25:18 Ps 84:10

**Berechiah and Elkanah were gatekeepers for the ark**

**1 Chronicles 15:24** Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah and Eliezer, the priests, blew the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah also were gatekeepers for the ark.

- **the priests:** 1Ch 16:6 Nu 10:8 2Ch 5:12,13 Ps 81:13 Joe 2:1,15
- **Obed-edom:** 1Ch 15:18,23

**Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah and Eliezer, the priests, blew the trumpets before the ark of God. Obed-edom and Jehiah also were gatekeepers for the ark**

**1 Chronicles 15:25** So it was David, with the elders of Israel and the captains over thousands, who went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with joy.

- **David:** 2Sa 6:12,13-23 1Ki 8:1
- **captains:** Nu 31:14 De 1:15 1Sa 8:12 10:19 22:7 Mic 5:2
- **Obed-edom:** 1Ch 13:14
- **with joy:** 1Ch 13:11-12 De 12:7,18 16:11,15 2Ch 20:27,28 Ezr 6:16 Ps 95:1,2 Ps 100:1,2 Php 3:3 4:4

**Related Passage:**

**2 Samuel 6:12** Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, on account of the Ark ([aron](#)) of God." And David went and brought up the Ark ([aron](#)) of God from the house of Obed-edom into the city of David with gladness.

**So it was David, with the elders of Israel and the captains over thousands, who went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with joy**

**1 Chronicles 15:26** Because God was helping the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams.



- 
- **God:** 1Ch 29:14 1Sa 7:12 Ac 26:22 2Co 2:16 3:5
  - **they:** 2Sa 6:13 Ps 66:13-15
  - **bulls:** Nu 23:1,2,4,29 29:32 Job 42:8 Eze 45:23

**Related Passage:**

2 Samuel 6:13 And so it was, that when the bearers of the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling.

**Because God was helping the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams.**

**Guzik** on **God was helping** - It wasn't so much that the ark of the covenant was so heavy that they needed God's help to carry it. Rather, there was considerable pressure and stress in bearing a burden that had recently resulted in a sudden death. They needed God's help to deal with the spiritual pressure of this ministry.

**1 Chronicles 15:27 Now David was clothed with a robe of fine linen with all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers and Chenaniah the leader of the singing with the singers. David also wore an ephod of linen.**

- **a robe:** 1Sa 2:18 2Sa 6:14
- **Chenaniah:** 1Ch 15:22
- **singing,** 1Ch 15:22

**Related Passage:**

2 Samuel 6:14 And David was dancing before the LORD with all his might, and David was wearing a linen ephod.

**Now David was clothed with a robe of fine linen with all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers and Chenaniah the leader of the singing with the singers. David also wore an ephod of linen** - David was clothed!

**J.A. Thompson:** The question about who offered the sacrifices may be asked. This was normally a priestly act. The fact that David was clothed in "a robe of fine linen" (v. 27), which is also described as a "linen ephod," as did the Levites who carried the ark, has raised the question of whether David had assumed priestly garments. The wearing of the ephod was restricted to the high priest in the Chronicler's day (Exod 28:4ff.; Lev 8:7). In the parallel text in 2 Sam 6:14, 20 the reference may be to a loin cloth, which would explain Michal's rebuke. The occasion was special, and the full temple rituals were yet in the future when the rituals and offices could be regulated.

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**QUESTION - [Did David dance naked \(2 Samuel 6:14\)?](#)**

**ANSWER** - In one of the most effusive displays of worship recorded in the Bible, [King David](#) danced "before the Lord with all his might" (2 Samuel 6:14). The occasion was the return of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. It was a day of rejoicing as David "and all Israel were bringing up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets" (verse 15). David had set aside his royal robes and was "wearing a linen ephod" (verse 14)—a clear indication that he was not naked.

The [ephod](#) David wore was a garment usually reserved for priests and those ministering before the Lord. As David led the procession of the ark into the city, he humbly laid aside his royal garments and worshiped the Lord, in ecstatic joy, as the representative of God's "kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6).

The ephod David wore was made of fine linen and consisted of two pieces, covering both back and front (Exodus 28:6–8, 31–32). The two pieces were fastened together over the shoulders and held at the waist by a belt of some kind. The ephod worn by the high priests would have been different, as it was embroidered with gold and bright colors and somehow bore the [Urim and Thummim](#) by which God directed the people.

[David's wife Michal](#) was horrified at her husband's public dance, but not because he was naked. Scripture says she "watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the Lord, she despised him in her heart" (2 Samuel 6:16). She was embarrassed at his lack of decorum and felt it was beneath his dignity as king. In a sarcastic rebuke of her husband, Michal accused him of "going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!" (verse 20). Other

translations render Michal's complaint as David's being "exposed" (CSB), "undressed" (ISV), and "shamelessly uncovered" (NKJV). Some of this wording makes it sound as if David danced naked, but the context is clear that he was wearing the ephod instead of the royal attire.

It should also be noted that Michal's contempt for David may have had nothing to do with his public performance; rather, it could have stemmed from the fact that he had taken her from her husband and reclaimed her as his wife—most likely without her consent (2 Samuel 3:14–16). Whatever the reason for her disgust, the Bible notes that Michal never had any children (2 Samuel 6:23), which may indicate a judgment from God or simply that David never sought to have marital relations with her again.

David was undeterred by Michal's criticism. In fact, he doubled down, telling her that it was the Lord he was dancing before, and he was quite willing to abase himself in the Lord's presence: "I will celebrate before the Lord. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes" (2 Samuel 6:21–22). David's deep passion and exuberant worship are part of what make his [psalms](#) so relatable. He expressed his adoration of God in a variety of ways: through his music, his writings, and his public displays. [GotQuestions.org](#)

**1 Chronicles 15:28 Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the horn, with trumpets, with loud-sounding cymbals, with harps and lyres.**

- **brought up:** 2Sa 6:15
- **with shouting:** 1Ch 15:16 13:8 2Ch 5:12,13 Ezr 3:10,11 Ps 47:1-5 68:25 98:4-6 Ps 150:3-5
- **with sound of the horn** Nu 10:2.

**Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with sound of the horn, with trumpets, with loud-sounding cymbals, with harps and lyres** The trumpets were, according to Josephus, made of metal, and about a cubit in length.

**Guzik** on **all Israel** - This shows that David brought the ark to Jerusalem with a big production – bigger than the first attempt. David was wise enough to know that the problem with the first attempt wasn't that it was a big production, but that it was a big production that came from man and not from God. This is essentially the same account recorded in 2 Samuel 6, except in 2 Samuel the leadership of David is emphasized, and in 1 Chronicles 15 the participation and support of **all Israel** is emphasized. Both accounts are correct; David was the leader, but it wasn't a one-man show; **all Israel brought up the ark.**

**Selman** - The primary change is that the homecoming of the ark...has become a corporate act of *all Israel* rather than an expression of David's personal faith."

See [SPECIAL TOPIC: HORNS USED BY ISRAEL](#).

**1 Chronicles 15:29 It happened when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and celebrating; and she despised him in her heart.**

- **the ark:** 1Ch 17:1 Nu 10:33 De 31:26 Jos 4:7 Jud 20:27 1Sa 4:3 Jer 3:16 Heb 9:4
- **Lord:** 2Sa 6:16
- **Michal:** 1Sa 18:27,28 19:11-17 25:44 2Sa 3:13,14
- **dancing:** Ex 15:20 Ps 30:11 149:3 150:4 Ec 3:4 Jer 30:19 33:11
- **she despised:** 2Sa 6:20-23 Ps 69:7-9 Ac 2:13 1Co 2:14 2Co 5:13

#### Related Passage:

2 Samuel 6:16+ Then it happened as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.....

2 Samuel 6:20+ But when David returned to bless his household, Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David and said, "How the king of Israel distinguished himself today! He uncovered himself today in the eyes of his servants' maids as one of the foolish ones shamelessly uncovers himself!" 21 So David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel; therefore I will celebrate before the LORD. 22 "I will be more lightly

esteemed than this and will be humble in my own eyes, but with the maids of whom you have spoken, with them I will be distinguished.” 23 Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death.

1 Corinthians 2:14+ (**A REASONABLE DESCRIPTION OF MICHAL**) But a natural man (**OR WOMAN**) does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him(**OR HER**) and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

2 Corinthians 5:13+ For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God (**REASONABLE DESCRIPTION OF DAVID**); if we are of sound mind, it is for you.

## **MICHAL'S MISTAKE DESPISING DAVID!**

**It happened when the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out of the window and saw King David leaping and celebrating; and she despised him in her heart.** - Clearly David **leaping and celebrating** is no longer afraid of Yahweh. David had taken off his royal robe and was clothed with the ephod. He was not naked! **Leaping** describes calves and rams and little children skipping about, giving us a picture of pure, uninhibited joy and exhilaration before the LORD.

**THOUGHT** - Have you ever worshipped this way? Try it, you'll like it. You can do it in the privacy of your home where no "Michals" can be giving you a critical look! I have a feeling that there will be a lot of skipping about with joy in eternity, so it would be good practice!

**Spurgeon** - No doubt, there are particularly nice and dainty people who will censure God's chosen if they live wholly to his praise, and they will call them eccentric, old-fashioned, obstinate, absurd, and I don't know what besides. From the window of their superiority they look down upon us.

**G Campbell Morgan** - "The incident illustrates the perpetual inability of the earthly minded to appreciate the gladness of the spiritual." (Morgan)

2 Samuel 6 says **And David was dancing before the LORD with all his might** which suggests a thought we should all ponder....

**THOUGHT** - Everything we do (good and bad) is **before the LORD**, for Proverbs 15:3+ reminds us "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good." (cf 2Ch 16:9) David an imperfect man, but a man God says was one after His heart, was worshiping before the LORD. Worship should not be restricted to Sunday Morning or just to the time we are singing praises to His Name, but should be our continual mindset. Indeed, is not all of our life, day in, day out, to be as worship **before the LORD**. This next week let this mindset frequently enter your heart and watch what a difference it makes in all the circumstances of your life. Indeed, worship before the LORD is the epitome of **Vertical Vision** which can mightily empower **Horizontal Living** for our good and His glory. Great Father in Heaven we ask you to bestow on all who read these words a heart of continual worship, enabled by Your Spirit and Word and made possible through our Great High Priest, Christ Jesus. Amen. Play Michael W Smith's version [Heart of Worship](#) and let it be your song all week long.

**David Guzik** - David didn't hold back anything in his own expression of worship. He didn't dance out of obligation but out of heartfelt worship. He was glad to bring the **ark of the covenant of the LORD** into Jerusalem according to God's word. This expression of David's heart showed that he had a genuine *emotional link* to God. There are two great errors in this area – the error of making emotions the center of our Christian life and the error of an emotionally detached Christian life. In the Christian life, emotions must not be manipulated and they must not be repressed.. From our knowledge of ancient and modern culture, we can surmise that David's dance wasn't a solo performance. The context clearly puts him together with the priests and Levites, and he probably danced with simple rhythmic steps together with other men in the way one might see Orthodox Jewish men dance today. In this context, David's **linen ephod** means he set aside his royal robes and dressed just like everyone else in the procession.i. It should also be observed that David's dancing was appropriate in the context. This was a parade with a marching band, a grand procession. David's dancing fit right in. If David did this as the nation gathered on the Day of Atonement it would be out of context and wrong. **And she despised him in her heart:** [2 Samuel 6:20-23](#) tell us more of Michal's complaint and of David's response to her. She sarcastically said to him, *How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today.* Michal seemed to indicate that she didn't object to David's dancing, but to what David wore when he set aside his royal robes and danced as a man just like the other men celebrating in the procession. David acted as if he were just another worshipper in Israel, and this offended Michal. In response, David told Michal that his actions were *before the LORD*. In simple terms, David told Michal: "I did it for God, not for you." He went on to explain, *and will be humble in my own sight.* What David did was *humbling* to him. He didn't dance to show others

how spiritual he was.

**Henry Morris** - Michal's sarcastic charge that David had "uncovered himself" (2 Samuel 6:20) while bringing the ark into Jerusalem was an exaggeration intended to show her displeasure at David's display of religious emotion. David had evidently divested himself only of his royal vestments to show humility before the Lord, and Michal resented this. Her judgment of childlessness (2 Samuel 6:23) was appropriate in this context. (Borrow [The Defender's Study Bible](#))

**Believer's Study Bible** - David accompanied the ark to Jerusalem, sacrificing at the outset (2Sa 6:13) and conclusion (v. 17) of the journey. David's dance was a kind of religious ecstasy in which he gave public demonstration of his joy in the Lord and of his own submission to the Lord. His participation in sacrifice points to his role as a messianic priest, one like Melchizedek, in anticipation of the priestly role of the second David, Jesus Christ (Ps. 110:4; Mark 2:26; Heb. 5:5-10; 7:1-28).