



2 Samuel 6:12-16, 20-23

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

13: And it was so, that when they that bare the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, he sacrificed oxen and fatlings.

14: And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.

15: So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16: And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.

20: Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, 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!

21: And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play before the LORD.

22: And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.

23: Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death

Subject: Praise Is What I Do...

1. Bringing Back The Presence of God

Israel had lost its worship...and what do you do when you have lost your worship? I am convinced that even though we as a church are shouting, and rejoicing, and having wonderful services, and great conferences, and collecting and spending great sums of money, the church has lost its worship. Yeah, we're singing and dancing, just like we did in the slave quarters, just like we did in the club, and everybody knows that 'ain't no party like a Holy Ghost party 'cause a Holy Ghost party don't stop.' But I am convinced that those very things, the dancing and the singing, the buildings, and the cars, and the conferences, and the money are the very evidence that the church has lost its worship. But even so, I am also convinced that God is raising up some people who are going to be mightily used to restore true worship to the church. We are the ones who have been chosen to bring back the presence of God...

Israel had lost its worship...

The passages that I have read in you hearing cause us to focus our attention upon David... the worshiper...the warrior...the newly crowned king of Israel. And his first assignment as king was to bring home the Ark of the Covenant. To bring back the presence of God.

The true worship of God had been neglected during the reign of Israel's previous king, because Saul had not been concerned with God as much as he had been about himself. Israel had forgotten the Ark, and even before they had forgotten the Ark, they had long forgotten what the Ark represented. There is much that we can learn from what Israel forgot, for if we are not careful, we can find ourselves doing the exact same thing that Israel did. Even before Saul had come on the scene, during the time of Samuel's administration as

prophet, the Israelites showed that they had forgotten the most important lesson of all. They forgot that the Ark of the Covenant was *not* God. They forgot that the Ark was merely *symbol* of God's presence among His people. Therefore, as long as Israel followed the Ark, things went well for them, not unlike what happens when a believer follows the leading of the Holy Spirit, as opposed to being led by his flesh. When Israel's enemies came up against them, the presence of the Ark assured them that God was with them, and so they won their battles. As long as they obeyed God, as long as they followed God, they were assured of victory.

And so the time had come when Israel's mentality had begun to change. They probably didn't even *notice* the subtle shift in their thinking, but I believe that that is what happens when we begin to take God and the things of God for granted. It is what happens when we begin to think that all there is to walking with God is being in church on Sunday morning, and performing our duties out of habit, or obligation. Israel had begun to develop the mind-set of the idolatrous nations around them, the nations who worshipped gods of wood and of stone. For I hear them, in 1 Samuel the 4th Chapter, verse 3 saying, "Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when *it* cometh among us, *it* may save us out of the hand of our enemies." Look at somebody, if you will, and ask them, "what's your it? They had already been defeated once by the Philistines. And why were they defeated?"

1. Spiritual blindness

1 Sam 3:1-3- 1: And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.

2: And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see;

3: And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

- **The Word was precious (rare)- no vision**
- **The priest was blind- the leadership was in darkness**
- **The lamp had gone out- no light,**

Ex. 27:20- 21- God had commanded that he lamp of the Lord (Menorah) was to always burn...

20: And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.

21: In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel.

2. Religiosity

1 Samuel 4:1 (Turn to...)

1: And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched BESIDE Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched IN Aphek.

Ebenezer- "The Lord Helps"

Aphek- a fortified place; strength; STRONGHOLD

It is not enough to hang around (BESIDE) the things of God; we must be IN him...

Ps. 91:1- "He that dwelleth IN..."

John 15:4- "Abide IN me

Eph. 1:3- "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places IN Christ. 4: According as he hath chosen us IN him before the foundation of the world..."

Eph 2:6- "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together IN heavenly places IN Christ Jesus..."

1 Samuel 4:5-10- The Israelites SHOUTED...

...And because their enemies had beaten them, they did what many of us do when things don't go our way. They blamed God. "Wherefore", they cried, "hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines?" "Why, God, did You allow them to whip us?" They forgot that it was *they* who had allowed the lamp of the Lord to go out. It was *their fault* that there was no word from God in those days. It was their fault that it had been a time of spiritual blindness. They forgot how they had allowed a weak man, Eli, to serve as prophet and priest, and how Eli failed to correct his nasty and hypocritical sons, who committed abominations and robbed God's people right in the house of God. So they ran and got the Ark of the Covenant, in other words, they went to church, thinking that it would save them...

Because Israel forgot. And now, they were mad at God. In their minds, it was God's fault that they'd lost in the first place, so they bet on that box. If there's any lottery playing folk here, you'll understand what I'm saying.

The Ark of the Covenant was built, by divine direction, by a man named Bezaleel. Bezaleel's name means "*under the cover or under the protection, of my father*", for "he that dwelleth in the secret place shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Of all the pieces of furniture that God had had constructed, the Ark was the very first. It was to reside in the Holy of Holies, the deepest and innermost part of the Tabernacle, and that shows us that God, unlike man, who judges by outward appearance, works from the inside out. The Ark was an oblong box, made of shittim, or acacia wood. It was 4 feet long, 2 ½ feet high and 2 ½ feet wide. It was covered in gold, and on the top of it rested the Mercy Seat, with two cherubim with their wings tipped together. This was where the *Shekinah*, the glory of God, the presence of God, manifested itself in the form of a blue flame. Inside the Ark was placed the tablets that God had given to Moses, showing God is a Lawgiver, that He says '*thou shalt,*' and '*thou shalt not*'. Also inside the Ark was the pot of

man, symbolizing that He is Jehovah–Jireh, “the Lord who Provides,” and my personal favorite item, Aaron’s rod, which indicated that God is a God who can take a nobody like me, and make him somebody. Yes, the Ark was sacred. The Ark was important in the worship life of Israel. And yet, by this time, the Ark had become nothing more than a “rabbit’s foot” that Israel carried into battle, and hoped would bring them luck. And so, Israel lost, not only the battle, but they lost the Ark. And on her death-bed, even as she gave birth to a son, the wife of one of Eli’s evil sons cried- *“Ichabod!!- for the glory has departed from Israel.”*

Israel did eventually get the Ark back, but only because their enemies couldn’t deal with it. Eventually the Philistines and even their fake god, Dagon had to bow down to the true and living God. And so for twenty years, during Saul’s reign, the Ark stayed in the house of a man named Abinadab. “And all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD.” They *missed* Him, I tell you, and any true worshipper can tell you that one of the most miserable feelings in the world is to lose the presence of God. The bible says that they sanctified Abinadab’s son Eleazar, whose name means, *“the Lord has helped”* to keep the Ark, and there it remained, until David came into power, and in one of his first acts as king of Israel, David went up to Abinadab’s house to fetch the Ark of God.

2. Praise Is What I Do!!

In the midst of David’s endeavor to return the worship of God to its rightful place in the hearts of Israel, God had to teach him a lesson or two in how His presence must be carried. Therefore, the Ark had had to make a few detours. I can’t include them all here, you’ll have to read it for yourself, but one of those stops was by the house of a man whose name was Obed-edom. The Bible says that in the time that the Ark was in Obed-edom’s house, everything that he had was blessed. Obed-

edom was not an Israelite. He was a Phillistine. This was a foreshadowing of the time when the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be accepted by the Gentiles. Obed-edom was not church-folk, like we are. He didn't understand protocol. He probably didn't know any of the songs that we sing, but somehow, he knew God, and he liked having God around. Only people who like having God around get blessed. Some folk get mad because even though you might not drive what they drive or wear what they wear, or go where they go, they can't understand why you seem to be so satisfied, and they are so unhappy. If I've got God, I can drive a hoopty, and still have peace. I can take the bus, and sing to God at the bus stop. I can eat beans and biscuits, and still have a smile on my face. Oh, I like money, I need me some money, but in the end *I'd rather have Jesus, than silver and gold.* And so Obed-edom got what he needed, and a whole lot more, just because there was a soft spot in his heart for the presence of God. Somebody say "Praise Is What I Do!!"

So now, David's finally gotten himself together. And now he's on his way home...with the presence of God. One thing I like about David is that David knew how to throw a party. David knew how to have church. "Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and come into His courts with praise. When you've been away from God for awhile, and you find yourself getting back into fellowship with Him, it's a time...of celebration. I don't know about you, but that's the one thing that makes me glad. We see folks dancing, and we hear them shouting, and because we don't know what that person has been through, we don't understand that it's not about us, but it's about the love of God. It's about the *mercy* of God. "Lord, we messed up. we strayed. we got out of the Way, Lord, and we lost our fellowship with you, but now...we're coming back. We're coming home to Daddy. You could have let us die in that mess, but You didn't. So Lord, here we come!! And we're so glad, we're so grateful, that we're gonna give You some praise!! We're coming back...to the heart of worship! We're

bringing back...the presence of God!! Somebody say, “Praise Is What I Do!!”

And so the Ark of the Covenant makes its way into the city of David, Jerusalem, the city of peace, the city of praise. The Bible tells us that they began their journey...with a sacrifice. I believe that there was more than just one sacrifice, but as they went along, they continued to worship God. And that’s because sometimes, getting back to God is a *process*. Flesh cannot glory in God’s sight, so something has got to die. Six is the number of man, and if man is going to worship God, man, and all the works of his flesh must be killed. One, two, three...four, five, six...God wants to be worshipped...in spirit and in truth. Six steps, and I kill lust. Six steps, and I kill jealousy. Six steps, and ‘not *my* will...but Thine be done!!’ I can imagine...that it was a long journey. It was a painful journey. But the closer they got to the presence of God...the more it was worth the trouble. I can imagine...that they were having a good old time. They were dancing and singing. They were shouting and rejoicing...because it was time...to praise the Lord!! The choir was singing...and the band was swinging! This wasn’t some same-ole, same-ole Sunday morning service, but they were under the anointing...of the Holy Ghost! I mean, they were having some *church*, when all of a sudden, here comes...*Saul’s daughter*.

3. Saul’s Daughter

There are three places in our scripture text that refers to (David’s wife) Michal as “Saul’s daughter,” or “the daughter of Saul.” Everything that she had, she got from her daddy. Her daddy’s position. Her daddy’s prestige. Her daddy’s palace. Like many of us, she had no relationship with God, and so she had no idea who she was. She had no anointing of her own, but she was piggy-backing off of her father’s status. Therefore, she had inherited Saul’s attitude, and his outlook on life. Michal’s name in the Hebrew means “*a container*.” In other words, she

was *full* of herself. And so it was, that she opened up her mouth, and she spoke against David. She spoke against God's anointed. She said "David, you're making a *fool* out of yourself. You're not acting like a king. Why can't you be more dignified? Why don't you have more respect for your royal position? Well, I *never*..." I can imagine that she must have been one of those *nagging* wives, so she went on...and on...

Funny thing is, that Michal had started out loving David, and ended up hating him...One thing that we've got to realize is that when you are a worshiper, everybody's not going to understand your worship...

But when David answered Michal, he showed her what it was that made him a "man after God's own heart." David said, "Michal, what you don't understand is...is that it's not about you anyhow. Wasn't nobody trying to impress you. I know that's what you *thought*, with your silly self. But what you need to know is that I wasn't put here just to be no king. I wasn't put here just to sit up in a palace with you, and look down on folk. What you need to know, Michal...is that Praise Is What I Do!! I was created...to give God praise! And that's why...when I was all by myself...on the back side of the mountain...watching my daddy's sheep...when nobody wanted to be my friend...I had seven brothers, Michal...and not a buddy...in the whole house. They didn't even invite me in to eat dinner. Nobody rang my doorbell. Nobody came to see about me. It was just me...and my God. And I made up in my mind...that since there was nobody out there but me and my God...I made up in my mind...that I'm gonna give Him some praise! God, I love You! So I'm gonna write You some poetry! God, I love You...so I'm gonna sing You some songs! I was rejected...I was left alone...and I found out...that there's not a Friend...like the lowly Jesus...no! No not one! See, you wouldn't know nothin' about this, Michal...'cause this is a praise thang! This is a worship thang! You were brought up...living in a castle. You were brought up...wearing royal

robes. You were brought up...thinkin' the world owes you something. You had everything...that money could buy. But all I had was the love of my God! You were born...with a silver spoon in your mouth! But I was born...with a *praise* in mine! *Say Yeah! Say Yeah!*

It took a man like David to bring back the worship of God...

And as for Michal (the daughter of Saul), the very last thing that the Bible says about her is that she "had no child unto the day of her death". I want you to know that that meant more than that she had no offspring as far as children are concerned. It means that she bore no fruit. As long as she lived, she produced nothing. Unlike her husband, David, she did no great exploits. She was not a "Psalm 37 woman." She produced nothing. And it was people like her and her father who had caused Israel to lose its worship. They had ritual. They had form. But they started worshiping other gods, and they lost sight of who God was...

What do you do when you've lost your worship?

What have you given yourself over to? What have you dedicated your whole life to? What is your purpose? Why are you here?

It is only when we've made up our minds to bring back the presence of God...

Praise Is What I Do...