

THE LIFE OF DAVID

SHEPHERD. WARRIOR. POET. KING.

WEEK 5: DANCING BEFORE A DANGEROUS GOD

Today's Text: 2 Samuel 6

I. GOD IS HOLY AND HIS PRESENCE IS POWERFUL

- **Read 2 Samuel 6:5-11**

The deep tragedy about this passage is that it reveals how far in decline Israel's spiritual life was. David and his men were so far removed from God's regulations for worship that they didn't even know how the ark of the Lord was supposed to be handled. As shocking as the consequences were, it was not something new that God had put in place. They were solely to blame. It was a deeply sobering moment for them to be confronted with the unchanging holiness of God. David's initial response was anger, followed by fear and withdrawal. He was genuinely angry with God and felt as though he was totally in the wrong. We have the exact same reaction when things we do not anticipate, or agree with, happen to us. Our immediate response is anger and judgement of God's character. After our anger lashes out, we do not know what to do, because we become afraid of God's profound power, and our lack of ability to control anything. Then we hide, knowing it could happen again because God is holy and powerful, and we are not.

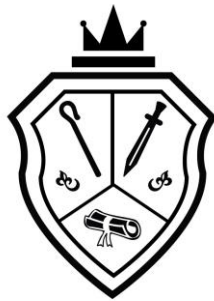
God's holiness means that he is:

- i. Distinct and Separate
 - ii. Morally Pure and Right
 - iii. *Totally* Holy in all Things
- ❖ Q: Why was the judgement on Uzzah only a symptom of the bigger issue that faced Israel at this time in their history?
 - ❖ Q: Why do you think that David reacted first in anger, and then in fear and withdrawal, even though he had a real relationship with God?
 - ❖ Q: Why do you think we struggle so much with the concept of God's holiness and what does this reveal about our hearts?

2. GOD IS HOLY, AND YET HE GRANTS GRACE TO SINNERS

- **Read 2 Samuel 6:12**

Instinctively, we tend only to focus on the shocking nature of God's judgement on Uzzah in this passage, and we don't look at what else God was doing that also reflected his character. God extended grace to Obed-Edom and to David, despite the previous failure to uphold God's laws.



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Obed-Edom received God's blessing, and he allowed David to have another chance to return the ark to where it belonged. David recovered from the shock and anger, and was once again able to joyously worship God. God's grace enabled David's heart to return to its right posture.

- ❖ Q: Why do you think that we tend to dwell on the shocking judgement on Uzzah, rather than on the continuing grace of God, as the narrative unfolds?
- ❖ Q: What do you think this teaches us about the way we view God, and the way in which we view his decisions?
- ❖ Q: Why do you think we struggle so much with the idea of God's holiness and subsequent judgement on people?

3. GOD IS HOLY, AND SO MEDIATION IS REQUIRED

- **Read 2 Samuel 6:13, 1 Timothy 2:5-6 & Hebrews 9:11-15, 24-28**

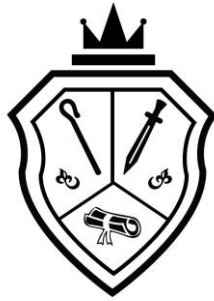
The judgement of Uzzah reoriented David's posture, as he came to grips with the holiness and justice of God. As a result, he no longer treated God as tameable, and learned to revere him, and thus made the appropriate sacrifices in order to deal with the sin that stood in the way. David realised that worship of God was dependent on God's standards, and not his own. This remind us that we are only able to come into the presence of God, because of the sacrifice that Christ made on our behalf. It reminds us to remain humble and grateful in our worship of God.

4. GOD IS HOLY, AND SO WE SHOULD WORSHIP HIM PASSIONATELY

- **Read 2 Samuel 6:14-15**

God's grace and holiness evoked an authenticity to David's worship. He put his heart and soul into expressing that which he felt for God, and he was not ashamed of it. How different this is to religion that so often 'performs' in order to be noticed and esteemed by others, and yet lacks true authenticity towards the one being worshipped.

- ❖ Q: What was it that shifted David's posture from anger, fear and withdrawal to one of rejoicing and celebrating?
- ❖ Q: The point here is not to emulate David's style or way of worshipping God, as this was culturally appropriate and probably very much part of his personality. The point is that we are to emulate and embrace his *posture* and heart towards God. What does authentic worship look like for you?



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5. GOD IS HOLY, AND SO HE MUST HAVE PRIORITY

- **Read 2 Samuel 6:16-23**

David put God first in his worship and was not going to be bullied into acting differently. His first allegiance was to the Lord. Michal, his wife, on the other hand was not concerned about David's heart for the Lord, but concerned for how he appeared before others. Her heart was self-centred. His was God-centred.

❖ *Personal Reflection Q: How God-centred are you? Is God first and foremost in your life?*

