
Engage

Dear Lord, we are sinful in nature and need Your mercy and wisdom to do the right things the right way. Help us to turn away from what is wrong in our journey of faith. In Jesus' Name, Amen.





SERMON SUMMARY

Note to Word Facilitator: The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

King David: Experiencing Blessings and Brokenness

#3: Right & Wrong

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

(2 Samuel 6-7)

Reading 2 Samuel 6:1-15

David again brought together all the able young men of Israel—thirty thousand. He and all his men went to Baalah in Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the Name, the name of the Lord Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim on the ark.

They set the ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. David and all Israel were celebrating with all their might before the Lord, with castanets, harps, lyres, timbrels, sistrums and cymbals. When they came to the threshing floor of Nakon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled. The Lord’s anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down, and he died there beside the ark of God. Then David was angry because the Lord’s wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah.

David was afraid of the Lord that day and said, “How can the ark of the Lord ever come to me?” He was not willing to take the ark of the Lord to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. The ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the

Lord blessed him and his entire household.

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

Introduction

The Bible is so brutally honest about the failings of God's people. Most historians or biographers would want to omit the bad parts or minimise them. So, we learned that David had family issues, kingdom issues, and staffing issues.

Have you ever done the right things the wrong way? Some think it is okay to buy "Sports Toto" to earn and tithe to the church. Some make promises to come to church more if they close the business deal. The tithing and going to church is right but the method to require it is wrong. God doesn't owe us anything.

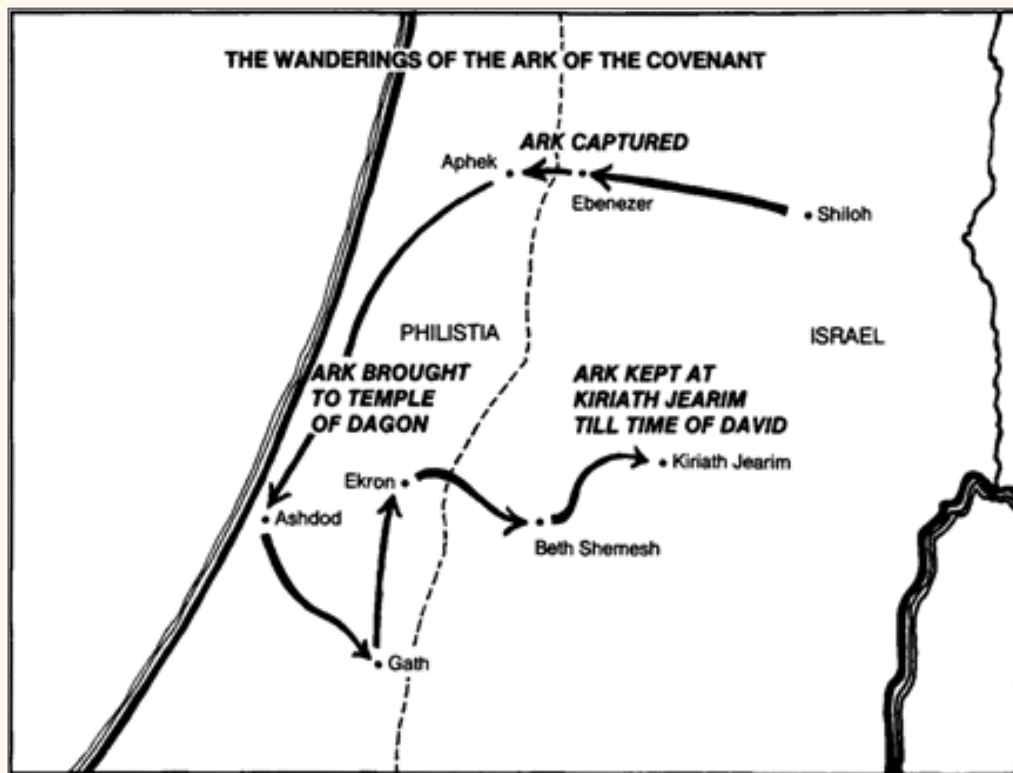
Chapter 6 is about David having good intentions. But good intentions are not good enough. He took over from Saul as king over 12 tribes. He had conquered Jerusalem from the Jebusite, made it his capital of his kingdom (city of David) but he realised that the children of Israel are more than a group of people with a king. They are God's people, and God must play a central part of their lives as a nation. They need a spiritual centre, a spiritual capital. Hence the good idea of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem came to David's mind.

What is the Ark of the Covenant? God made a conditional covenant with the children of Israel through His servant Moses. He promised good to them and their children for generations if they obeyed Him and His laws. But He also warned them of despair, punishment and dispersion if they were to disobey Him. So, the Ark was a reminder to them that God is always present and we have to obey him always.

The Ark was made of Acacia wood. The mercy seat was placed under 2 cherubims. Once a year, the high priest would sprinkle blood on the mercy seat but anyone else who touches it will die because of God's holiness and Presence. The Ark was portable and could be set up anywhere during their journey.



Throughout the Old Testament, we see stories of how God provided safety and success with the presence of the Ark. In the Book of Joshua, the Israelites crossed over the Jordan River with the Ark into the Promised Land with worshippers. It was carried around the city of Jericho for 7 days until the wall collapsed. After the Israelites conquered the Promised Land and divided the territory according to the tribes, the Ark and tabernacle ended up at Shiloh (capital city of the Promised Land) and stayed there for about 400 years.



20 years before 2 Samuel 6, in 1 Samuel 4, there was a battle. The Philistines were at Aphek and the Israelites were at Ebenezer. In the battle, when it was clear that Israel would lose, the Israelites sent for the Ark from Shiloh, superstitiously thinking that the presence of the Ark was like a good-luck charm that could turn the tide. They thought they had a chance in winning their battles.

Sadly, the Israelites not only lost the battle, and they also lost the Ark to the Philistines. The Ark was captured by the Philistines and brought into their town called Ashdod and they put the Ark in Dagon's temple (1 Samuel 5). Man-made idols fell down two straight days, with their head and hands broken. The idols fell and bowed towards the Ark. The people protested and moved the Ark to Gath. The same thing happened, and the Ark was sent to Ekron.

After 7 months, they decided to send the Ark back to Israel on a new cart, with two cows pulling it, if the cows followed the direction of Israel. It arrived in Beth Shemesh – but 70 died because they looked into the Ark. They cried out to the people of Kiriath Jearim – went to Abinadab's house – whose son Eleazar guarded the Ark for 20 years. He looked after it respectfully.

20 years later, David became king and thought that it would be a good idea to bring the Ark back to the main city life of the people of Israel and eventually build a temple where they can worship God there. He wanted Jerusalem to be the capital. David again brought together all the able young men of Israel—thirty thousand. He and all his men went to Baalah in Judah to bring up from there the Ark of God, which is called by the Name, the name of the Lord Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim on the Ark.

David did not completely understand about treating God seriously in the matter of the Ark. They set the Ark of God on a new cart and brought it from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart with the Ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it. David and all Israel were celebrating with all their might before the Lord, with castanets, harps, lyres, timbrels, sistrums and cymbals. The cart was not meant to be treated as cargo pulled by cows. The Ark was to be carried by priests on their shoulders with two poles placed through the rings. (Numbers 7:9) Only one tribe can handle the Ark. Levi. One family – the Kohathites. No amount of celebration and praise can replace sin.

When they came to the threshing floor of Nakon, Uzzah reached out and took hold of the Ark of God, because the oxen had stumbled. The Lord's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; therefore God struck him down, and he died there beside the Ark of God. Then David was angry because the Lord's wrath had broken out against Uzzah, and to this day that place is called Perez Uzzah (*Outbreak against Uzzah*).

BIG IDEA: Doing the Right Thing the Wrong Way

We must aim to do the right thing the right way.

1. Flippant about God *Judges 2:10*

Many today are borrowing the method of the world to do the work of God. Every generation faces a similar challenge. John Wesley observed, "What one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace." In Judges, we see that after that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what He had done for Israel.

Being flippant is not showing a serious or respectful attitude. The Malaysian definition is "cincai". Sometimes it is as simple as attending Celebrations in church or watching it online. The latter was necessary during the pandemic but now, some has *Tolerated* while some *Embraced* and stopped coming to church.

The Prosperity Gospel preaches prosperity and success when we follow God. God does not owe us anything when we serve. We only deserve the wrath of God. We lost it all. He did it all. We gain it all.

Syncretism is when we take on the ways of our previous religion or superstitions and mix them up with Christianity. Eg: Wearing a cross and treating the cross as a charm. God is looking for a heart of worship. It is hard to get the world out of a man. Truth does not change you. Applied truth changes you.

We can make the same mistake in the church. It is always a temptation to take strategies and things the world does and try to apply them to the work of God.

2. Fear of God *2 Samuel 6:9-11*

David was afraid of the Lord that day and said, "How can the Ark of the Lord ever come to me?" He was not willing to take the Ark of the Lord to be with him in the City of David. Instead, he took it to the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. The Ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite for three months, and the Lord blessed Obed-Edom and his entire household.

The fear of God is a good thing. David was asking what went wrong? David became so fearful that he left the Ark at the house of Obed-Edom. If you were there, you could have said to David, go read Numbers chapter 4. Maybe David did go back to Jerusalem and did a little Bible/Torah study. Maybe he asked the priest, "What did I do wrong here? Why did Uzzah die?" Because of fear, David inquired of the Lord. Holy

fear is not a bad thing.

Context will help us better understand Uzzah's death. In the Bible (see Numbers 4:15) God made it clear that there were certain rules for moving the ark:

1. God said that it must be carried with two poles. (Not on a cart)
2. The Ark had to be carried by a group of people called the Kohathites under the family of the Levitical priests.
3. Don't touch it.

3 months later, David attempted one more time to bring back the Ark. He brought it the right way. 2 Samuel 6 does not describe how David did it in the right way, but we can find this account in 1 Chronicles 15:13. Which says "It was because you, the Levites, did not bring it up the first time that the Lord our God broke out in anger against us. We did not inquire with Him about how to do it in the prescribed way."

When David brought the Ark a second time. **Nobody died that day.** The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom which comes from the Word of God. Do what is right, not just what we think is right.

3. **Forge ahead with God** *2 Samuel 6: 13-15*

A couple wanted to migrate and met Pastor Chris to advise them. Pastor then spent about 45 minutes talking things out with the couple. They covered family, education and the job prospects as part of their discussion. When asked, "In all the decisions you made, where is God?", they confessed that they did not think much of it.

Put God in the equation and make the decision. The best place in the world is where God is. Where is God in your decision?

Before you do anything, pause and ask God. "Good morning Holy Spirit! What would You have me do today?" Don't go places where God is not there or wants you to be there. Always ask yourself, "Where is God in all these?" We find true joy when we walk rightly with God in His terms and not our terms.

When those who were carrying the Ark of the Lord had taken six steps, he sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf. Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the Lord with all his might, while he and all Israel were bringing up the Ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets.

The sacrifice was not convenient at all. 6 steps and stop to sacrifice. With extreme reverence, King David brought the Ark to Jerusalem (9 miles). If we calculate roughly 2000 steps in 1 mile, 3,000 bulls and 3,000 fattened calves were sacrificed that day. It was worth it for David. Pause every 6 steps and worship. He was not the best man but he was a man after God's heart.

Salvation is costly. It cost God His Son. These sacrifices were a mere shadow of the cross where the Son of God died. But it is at the mercy seat of the Ark (the cross) that we see the promise of **“There I will meet you.”** (Exodus 25:22)

Conclusion

What is the reason that David worshipped with such joy? He sought God, repented and made sure that he did everything right the second time. There is such a joy in David’s worship that we must emulate him. David knew he was worshipping the **most worthy One** in all of the universe.

John Newton did not live a good life. Newton went to sea at a young age and worked on slave ships in the slave trade for several years. In 1745, he became a slave of Princess Peye, a woman of the Sherbro people in what is now Sierra Leone. He was rescued, returned to sea and the trade, becoming Captain of several slave ships. After retiring from active sea-faring, he continued to invest in the slave trade. *Amazing Grace*. After accepting Christ, he went on to become a cleric and strived to abolish slavery.

The process is more important than the goal. God is far more interested in who I am in Him than what I can do for Him. How do we experience this level of intimacy, safety, and security with God? By walking rightly with Him, not in fear nor in perfection, but in honour and worship of Him. David lived a life of daily repentance. Not in sinless perfection, but with sincere progression. God called David a man after God’s heart despite not being perfect.

Sermon summary contributed by Abbey Thangiah



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficiently. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Activity/Questions

- Role play time: Act out one of the scenes found in 2 Samuel 6:1-15. How would you title your play?
- What movie or book do you think of when you see the words “right” and “wrong”?



Photo by Andrea De Santis on Unsplash

Suggested Word Introductory Questions

- Reread 2 Samuel 6:1-15 and identify what were the right things done in the wrong way.
- What other examples in the Bible can you think of that people did the right thing in the wrong way?

Suggested Questions linked to the Sermon:

- Now, moving away from the Bible, in what ways have you done the right thing in the wrong way?
- Syncretism describes how religious beliefs or cultural practices are mixed up with what the Bible says. Share some examples of this happening today. How can we as individuals or as the church avoid or overcome syncretism?
- Proverbs 9:10a says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom". In what ways do you show or give reverence to God? How would we know that we have become wiser?
- King David eventually started to do the right things the right way. In what ways can we learn from him in doing the right thing in the right way? How do we ensure that we will continue to stay on the right track?
- 2 Samuel 6:12-15 describes how King David celebrated with joy upon the return of the Ark. How do you usually celebrate an accomplishment or success? Was there an occasion that the celebration was out-of-the-world or extravagant? Share your experience with the CG.

Question Bank (*Extra questions that you can use to bring your discussion further as you see fit*):

- Do you agree that the Bible is *brutally* honest? How so? What if someone quotes from the Bible to rebuke you in a scenario that you were wrong, how would you respond to that person, and to God?
 - Do you agree that 'the end justifies the means'? At what cost is 'success'?
 - "What one generation tolerates, the next generation will embrace." (John Wesley). Give examples on how you would cultivate non-flippant values or practices to your children.
 - Are you in a situation where you are faced with huge or difficult decision-making? [eg. marriage, relocation, career jump, medical emergency, etc.] What questions arising from these issues bother you most? Is God even in the equation at this moment? Would it make a difference if He is in it or not?
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SERMON REFLECTION



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The Engage team is taking a break from sermon reflections based on the
2 Samuel: *Experiencing Blessings & Brokenness* series.

We are open to having new writers / huddlers join us. You may consider starting out
as an observer.

If you are interested, please email one of us:

Pr Benny Liew (benny.liew@dumc.my) or
Wendy ML Tan (minlitt76@gmail.com) or
Darren Lim Jit Aun (darrenjalim@gmail.com)



MISSIONAL

Note to CGL: Inspire and encourage the Cell Group members to participate in the activity suggested below (from our CrossFields, Missions department) together to cultivate a culture of being a missional church.

CrossFields

MOBILISATION FOR SHORT-TERM MISSIONS



Vietnam

5 - 10 December 2024



Japan

18 - 26 December 2024

Sign up here

bit.ly/crossfields_stm

Step out in faith on a mission trip. Choose to serve in either Vietnam or Japan, spread the message of Christ, and grow in your faith

Sign up here: bit.ly/crossfields_stm



PRAYER

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

Praying for guidance and strength in our Christian walk can help us make the right choices and live according to God's will. Here are some prayer items to consider:

1. **Wisdom and Discernment:** Pray for the ability to discern God's will in various situations and to make wise decisions.
2. **Faith and Trust:** Ask for a deepening of faith and trust in God's plan, even when the path is unclear.
3. **Strength and Courage:** Seek God's strength to resist temptations and courage to stand up for what is right.
4. **Love and Compassion:** Pray for a heart filled with love and compassion for others, mirroring Christ's love.
5. **Patience and Perseverance:** Ask for patience in difficult times and perseverance in following God's path.
6. **Forgiveness and Humility:** Pray for a humble heart that seeks forgiveness and extends it to others.
7. **Guidance and Clarity:** Seek God's guidance and clarity in understanding His purpose for your life.

8. **Peace and Contentment:** Ask for peace in your heart and contentment with God's provision.

9. **Obedience and Commitment:** Pray for a spirit of obedience to God's Word and a commitment to living a Christ-centred life.

10. **Gratitude and Praise:** Thank God for His blessings and continually praise Him for His goodness.