

17.24 Attempting to Bring Back the Ark (2 Samuel 6:1–11; 1 Chronicles 13:1–14; Deuteronomy 17:14–20)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

Brackets [. . .] indicate a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud, or they show answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- Tambourines, castanets, harp, cymbals
- Pictures of the ark being carried

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *ark*: a container as in Noah’s ark; in today’s story, the ark of the covenant, which contained the tablets of the law; it had been in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle
- *threshing floor*: a flat surface of land, usually smooth and sometimes on a hill, used during the harvest of grains

Scripture: (ESV)

2 Samuel 6:1 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 from Baal-judah to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim. 3 And they carried the ark of God on a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart, 4 with the ark of God, and Ahio went before the ark.

5 And David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the Lord, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals. 6 And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. 7 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God. 8 And David was angry because the Lord had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. 9 And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and he said, “How can the ark of the Lord come to me?” 10 So David was not willing to take the ark of the Lord into the city of David. But David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 11 And 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.

1 Chronicles 13:1 David consulted with the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, with every leader. 2 And David said to all the assembly of Israel, “If it seems good to you and from the Lord our God, let us send abroad to our brothers who remain in all the lands of Israel, as well as to the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasturelands, that they may be gathered to us. 3 Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek it in the days of Saul.” 4 All the assembly agreed to do so, for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

5 So David assembled all Israel from the Nile of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. 6 And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim that belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the Lord who sits enthroned above the cherubim. 7 And they carried the ark of God on a new cart, from the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio were driving the cart. 8 And David and all Israel were celebrating before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets.

9 And when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to take hold of the ark, for

the oxen stumbled. 10 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark, and he died there before God. 11 And David was angry because the Lord had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzza to this day. 12 And David was afraid of God that day, and he said, “How can I bring the ark of God home to me?” 13 So David did not take the ark home into the city of David, but took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 14 And the ark of God remained with the household of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the Lord blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he had.

Deuteronomy 17:18 And when he [the king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. 19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

Introduction/Review:

I have a question for you: If there’s a difference between what you think and what God says about anything, which should you believe and do? The obvious answer is to believe and do what God says rather than what I think.

When Israel was traveling from Egypt to Canaan, how did they carry the furniture of the tabernacle? [On poles that were put through rings on the furniture; the poles were carried on the shoulders of Levites.] Did they touch the ark? [No.]

Remember when the Philistines captured the ark? What happened to the Philistines and their god, Dagon? [They had troubles, sickness, and death. Dagon fell over before the ark.] When the Philistines sent the ark back to Israel, it did not go back to the tabernacle in Shiloh but ended up in Abinadab’s house on a hill in Kiriath-Jearim [locate]. There it stayed forty years.¹

If Mom calls, “Get your hands washed for supper,” but you want to play, what does God say you should do? [“Children obey your parents in every thing,” and “Honour thy father and thy mother.”] What if Mother showed you how to wash your hands (first, get your hands wet; second, take a little bit of soap and lather your hands, rubbing them; third, rinse; fourth, dry on a towel) but your idea of washing hands is to hold them under the water a bit and then dry them. You are, in your mind, washing your hands, but are you doing it the way Mom instructed you? Are you really obeying? [No.] Why not? Because even though you’re basically washing your hands, you’re not washing the way Mom wants you to wash.

Story:

David’s desire

Now that David was king over all Israel, he wanted to bring the ark from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem. Would this be something God would want? [Yes.] Why? It would be in the center of the kingdom, close to the king. David was going to bring the ark to Jerusalem with great ceremony and rejoicing. He gathered 30,000 of his leaders from all Israel—from the Nile way to the north—to go to Kiriath-Jearim in order to “bring up from there the ark of God, which is called . . . by the name of the Lord Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim that are on the ark” (2 Samuel 6:2).

Think of 30,000 men! That is 10,000 more than the population of all southeastern Colorado from LaJunta to Holly to Springfield. It’s the population of Pueblo West or Fountain, Colorado. [Teacher, compare to an area near you.] This sounds like a great celebration. Yes, sir!

To prepare to carry the ark, ✓David might have had his thoughts on the way the Philistines had sent back the ark to Israel—on a cart. So he had someone make a brand-new cart especially constructed for this great occasion.

Abinadab, who had kept the ark in his house all these years, had two sons, Ahio and Uzzah. They had the special privilege of driving the oxen pulling the new cart; Ahio was in front, and ✓Uzzah was probably behind. Oh, what a celebration they had as they all paraded down the road. The 30,000 men played harps, tambourines, castanets, cymbals, and trumpets. [Teacher, take time to be “merry before the Lord with all your might” with the children as in 2 Samuel 6:5. Pretend to be going down hills, up hills, *etc.*]

“Here we go. Oh, there’s a nice flat place to go, over the threshing area of Nacon (also called Chidon [‘KY don’]). Let’s go.”

God’s displeasure

As they crossed Nacon’s threshing area in the field, the oxen stumbled a bit. Uzzah, walking near the ark, ✓perhaps thought the ark would fall off the cart when the oxen stumbled; so he put his hand on the ark of God. What happened next startled everyone, for Uzzah died right there. God was angry with Uzzah and smote him in that very place.

Why did Uzzah die? [Pause for thinking.] Why was God angry? Was David doing what God wanted by bringing the ark to Jerusalem? [Yes.] Was he doing it the *way* God wanted him to bring it? No, for God had said the priests were to put poles through special rings made on the ark for the purpose of carrying it. God did not say to carry it on a cart but on the poles.²

David’s unawareness

David had thought his own way was good enough, and now he was angry. After all, he was seeking to honor God. Wasn’t he doing God’s will? Not really because he wasn’t doing it God’s way. Wasn’t being joyful in the Lord with all his might what God wanted? Generally, yes; but this time no. Why? Because he was not carrying the ark the way God had said to carry it and because no one was to touch it.

David would have remembered God’s instructions if he had been reading God’s law in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy as kings were to do. Listen to what David should have been reading in Deuteronomy 17:17–20: “[The king] must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray.” (David already had disobeyed this law.) “He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold [and horses]. When he takes the throne of the kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law. . . . It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the Lord his God and follow carefully all the words of this law . . . and not . . . turn from the law to the right or left.”

The ark’s temporary home

Well, with the tragedy of Uzzah’s death, David couldn’t continue taking the ark all the way to Jerusalem. Nearby was the house of Obed-Edom, a Gittite (meaning he had formerly lived in Gath of Philistia) and also a Levite. David took the ark there, and there it stayed three months. What happened to Obed-Edom? God blessed him and all his family while the ark was at his house.

¹See [How Long Was the Ark of the Covenant at Abinadab’s House? | Between Two Cultures](#) for a discussion about a supposed contradiction in the amount of time the ark had been at Abinadab’s house.

²Numbers 4:5 When the camp is to set out, Aaron and his sons shall go in and take down the veil of the screen and cover the ark of the testimony with it. 6 Then they shall put on it a covering of goatskin and spread on top of that a cloth all of blue, and shall put in its poles. . . . 15 And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, as the camp sets out, after that the sons of Kohath shall come to carry these, but they must not touch the holy things, lest they die. These are the things of the tent of meeting that the sons of Kohath are to carry.

Exodus 25:12 You shall cast four rings of gold for [the ark] and put them on its four feet, two rings on the one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. 13 You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. 14 And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the ark by them.

Lessons from This Lesson:

- We see Jesus:
“The ark was both the token of God’s presence and a type of Christ. . . . Christ is our ark. In and by him God manifests his favour and communicates his grace to us, and accepts our adoration and addresses” ([2 Samuel 6 Commentary - Matthew Henry Commentary on the Whole Bible \(Complete\)](#) ([biblestudytools.com](#))).
- Do God’s will in God’s way. Half my way and half God’s way is not good enough. We must obey God completely.

Activities:

- Play dough: poles, cart, oxen
- Snack: When the ark of the covenant had first been made, a pot of manna had been in it. Part of the description of manna is “white (or pale yellow) like coriander seed, and tasting like wafers made with honey” (Exodus 16:31; Numbers 11:7). Although they are not white nor pale yellow, serve honey graham crackers.
- Sing “Obedience” by Mike and Ruth Greene, found in *Praises I* songbook, published by Majesty Music.
- Learn the definition of *obedience*: Doing what I’m told to do, when I’m told to do it, cheerfully.
- Review questions: (Game: On card stock, print the small picture of the ark on a cart and “Abinadab’s house” and “Obed-edom’s house” found below. Place “Abinadab’s house” on the left of the pocket chart vertically and “Obed-edom’s house” on the right vertically. Lightly mark six evenly distributed lines between the two “houses.” Place the ark picture in the pocket below these words and marks. For each correct answer, a student may move the cart to the next mark until reaching “Obed-edom’s house.”)
 1. Why did David take 30,000 chosen men up to Kireath-Jearim? [To fetch the ark of the covenant.]
 2. In whose house had the ark been for about forty years or more? [Abinadab’s.]
 3. How did the men transport the ark? [On a new cart.]
 4. How did the people celebrate before the Lord as they accompanied the ark? [With all their might; with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals and trumpets.]
 5. Why did Uzzah touch and steady the ark? [Because the oxen stumbled.]
 6. What happened to Uzzah? [God struck him down there beside the ark.]
 7. Instead of continuing to take the ark to Jerusalem, what did David do with it? [Took it to Obed-Edom’s house.]

Memory Verse[s]: (KJV)

- Psalm 100:1 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. 5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

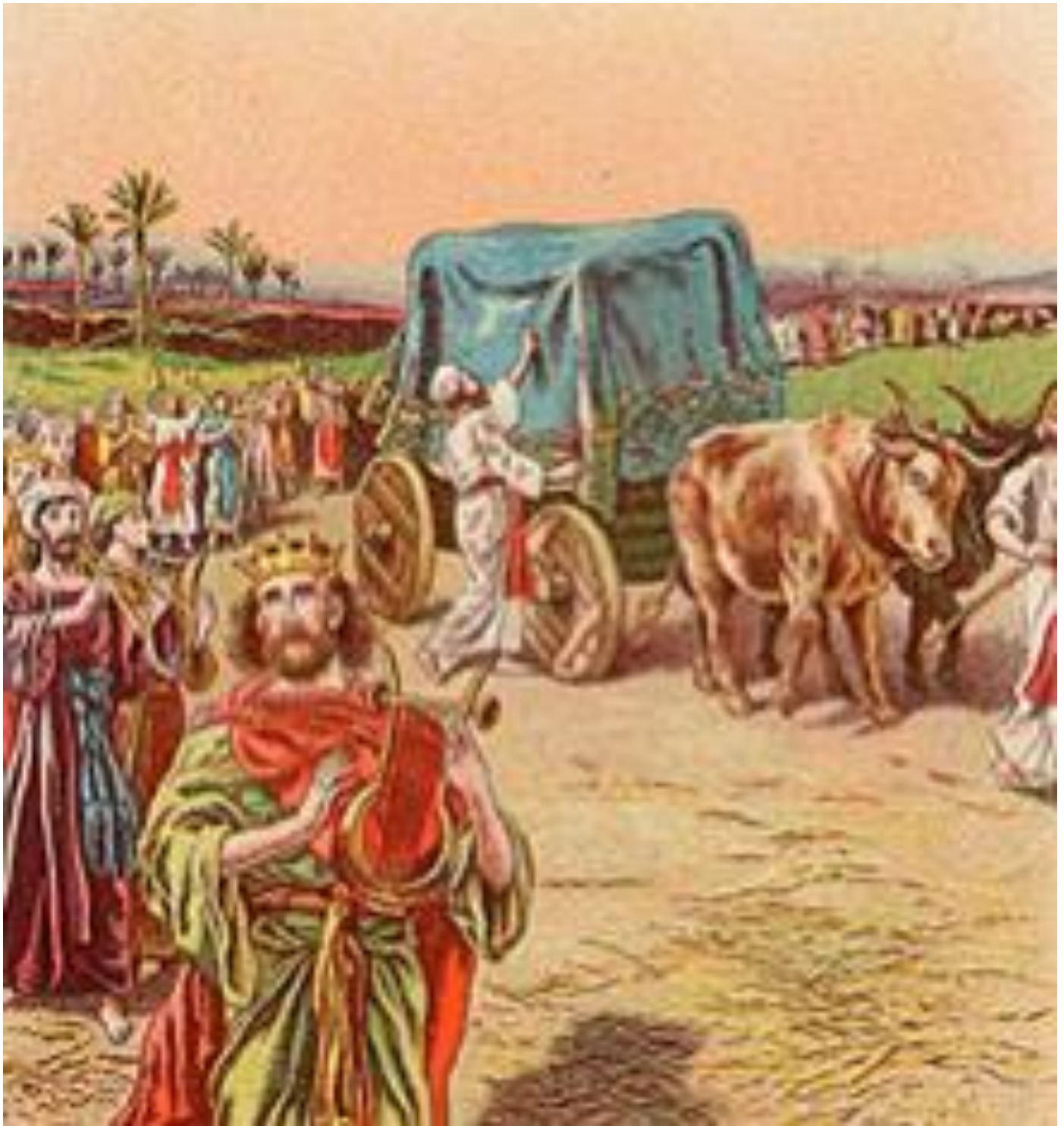
Handwork:

- Make an ark. Find instructions and a pattern on pages 5 and 6 at [Joseph Helps Pharaoh \(weebly.com\)](#). This link title is incorrect, but it takes you to “The Ark Is Brought Home.”
- Or do “The Challenge” (rearranging words) and “The Super Challenge” (finding the 17-mile path to Obed-edom’s house) on page 7 at the above link. Answer key is found below.



[bethshemeshmap.gif \(500x358\) \(bibleistrue.com\)](#)





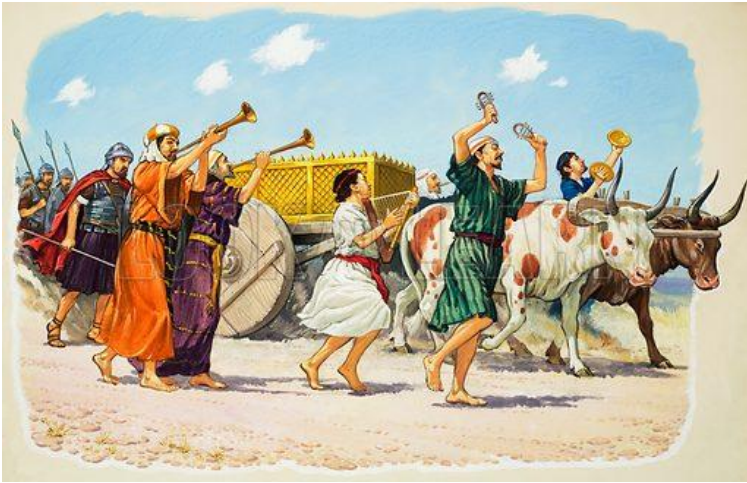
[469A-Image+Ark+of+Covenant.jpg \(487x236\) \(bp.blogspot.com\)](#)



http://fhbcgr.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/IMG_1223.jpg



https://hisstillsmallvoice.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/2-sam-uzzahs_death_1193-100.jpg



Abinadab's house

Obed-edom's house

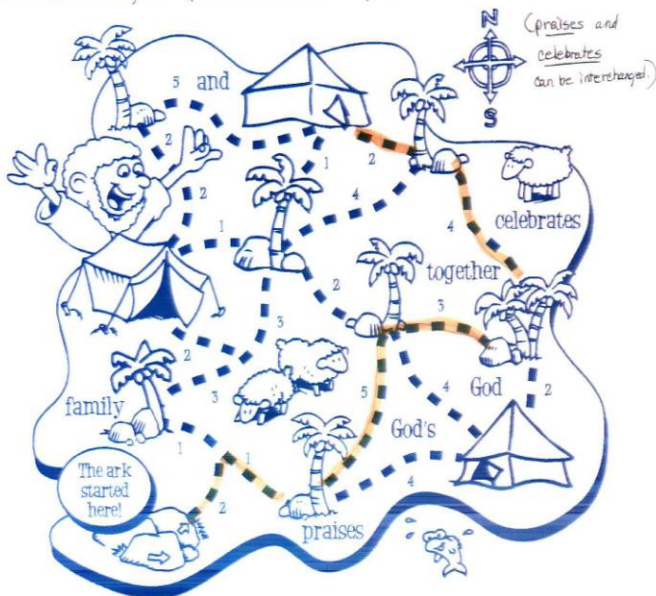
THE ARK IS BROUGHT HOME

2 Samuel 6:1-19



Order the seven words found in the puzzle below to write a sentence about what believers do when they get together.

God's family praises God together and celebrates.



King David brought the Ark of the Covenant to the tent of Obed-Edom. Identify which tent is Obed-Edom's by tracing a route that is exactly 17 miles long. Don't pass through any other tents on the way!