

~ Have you ever questioned the point and purpose of reading the Old Testament? It's a common question for many believers in our age of grace; and they rightly find grace exclusively in the New Testament. Grace isn't a theme in the Mosaic System of Levitical Law. However, Paul has already told us in Romans that "*all these things happened to them as examples unto us.*" See, the Old Testament was written to us for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come. If you cannot find very valuable life lessons from the Old Testament saints, then you don't want to find them; and you'll assert it's irrelevant as an excuse to justify not studying the Bible. You aren't kidding me, friends. Only yourself.

In this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God, we're going to consider important principles from the life of King David; axioms that contain profound principles of truth for *OUR* modern lives. I hope you will pray for wisdom, judgment and discernment, and then read this section of Scripture extremely carefully in your own Bible before you read this report — it won't take very long, maybe ten minutes — and then read it in your Bible again after you read this report; if you do, it will be so much more meaningful to you.

In our previous report, we were introduced to David's mighty men; and tremendous principles were provided in that account. In this report, we start out on the wrong foot as we see David's first failed attempt to bring the Ark of the Lord to Jerusalem; and we'll see David do the right thing in the wrong way. Then, we'll see David finally do the right thing the right way — God's way — and the Ark will arrive at the place where David had prepared — in Jerusalem, of course. Remember, we're considering the history of the nation Israel from *God's viewpoint* in Chronicles; and that's why there is such an emphasis placed on this account. God not only commended David for his victories; God commended David for being wise enough to seek out the truth of spiritual matters in said victories....

XIII

¹ And David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader.

~ So, the new king has many ambitious plans, apparently. The plans were good; however, I think David made a huge mistake consulting the leaders that he had appointed. See, God was giving David *direct* leading, guidance and direction; so there was no need to consult ANY man. Today, we have a *SERIOUS* problem in most churches throughout the world with this; and that problem is that too many men have their finger in the decision-making pie. Everyone wants to be the leader these days. The boards of most churches have men on them who are woefully spiritually unequipped to make sound decisions. More times than not, they hand in an abjectly incompetent report; and it is usually one that hurts the cause of Christ more than anything. Well, David's consultation here — and subsequent acceptance of their advice — ends in pure disaster....

² And David said unto all the congregation of Israel, If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God, let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in all the land of Israel, and with them also to the priests and Levites which are in their cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us:

³ And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for we enquired not at it in the days of Saul.

~ Notice in verse two that David told them to do what seemed good to them *FIRST* — and he put God second. Anytime you do that, there will be utter and complete failure — you can just write that down, friends. We also have a sidelight into the days of Saul; which I think we might have deduced for ourselves — but God seemed fit to point it out in no uncertain terms. During the reign of Saul, the tabernacle worship was *ENTIRELY* neglected and ignored. As a result, the Levites were scattered, and corporate worship broke down and disappeared. Of course, the enemy had engineered this to happen, and was delighted it had happened. Well, word was finally sent out

they were going to make some changes; but the way it was handled was a huge mistake....

4 And all the congregation said that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

~ Again, they had put the Lord second, and they don't even consider what was right in the eyes of the Lord. Friends, you can say you love Jesus and go to church every day and give every penny you have; but, if you don't do things God's way, you are doing nothing but wasting your time. As we read on here, remember, we saw in first Samuel that the Ark was sent to Kirjath-jearim on a cart, and it stayed there as the result of that wrong act. We also do well to remember that God never dwelt in the Ark; He dwelt between the cherubim's – that means God dwelt in no physical place at all. In verse seven, the children of Israel place the Ark on *another* cart and that was another huge mistake....

5 So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor of Egypt even unto the entering of Hemath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjathjearim.

6 And David went up, and all Israel, to Baalah, that is, to Kirjathjearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of God the LORD, that dwelleth between the cherubims, whose name is called on it.

7 And they carried the ark of God in a new cart out of the house of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.

~ God had already instructed Israel clearly concerning how the Ark was to be moved; and it was only to be carried on the shoulders of the priests – *NEVER* on a cart. They had been out of the service of God for so long they didn't remember what God had commanded Moses. The law was written but they, obviously, hadn't bothered to read the law for a very long time — and had totally forgotten most of it. Now, friends, I think you can see where I'm going with this.

Numbers 4: ¹⁵ *And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation ~*

Only the sons of Kohath were to carry the Ark on their shoulders; and even *THEY* weren't permitted to touch it! The Ark of God speaks of Christ – the Word of God – and, today, the Word of God is to be carried on the shoulders of individuals – and not tampered with. Do you have any idea what an undertaking it really is to take the entire Word of God to the entire world? Even with modern technology it is a daunting, time consuming and arduous task; not to mention the un-motivating criticism and hate responses – and a general lack of responsiveness.

Let me just be personal for a moment if I may. Behind every report you read in this so-called safari is more preparation than you can imagine. First, there is prayer; then, there is Bible reading. After that there is reading and listening to commentary by men who believed God and who loved the Lord. After that, more prayer. Next, there is the writing of the report. Then proofreading, editing and formatting. Every report you read has many hours of labor in it. If it weren't done that way, all you would get from me are the same shallow, disconnected and short-circuited verse grabs and peanut theology that you get from modern religion.

Quite frankly, most modern Scriptural teaching is pathetic – even from some well-meaning Christians. This safari isn't some cut and paste theology I throw together in a few minutes like everyone else. No, it's altogether different. To make matters worse – no one seems to really care about sound doctrine being taught. They certainly don't support it. Then, some tell me I need to study the Bible more – and that's true – but it would be physically impossible for me to invest any more time in the research, Bible study and prayer than I already do. See, while you are taking selfies and posting pictures of the fecal matter you're going to digest later that day I am preparing a proper, correct and complete Bible teaching for you. Of course, those who say those mean and hurtful things to me don't spend

any more than about five minutes in their useless devotionals — which do not teach them anything — they just become more and more confused as they roll along. You know that is true, friends — you can continue to lie to yourself if you want to; that's your problem — not mine.

Why not get serious with God and show Him you mean business in your relationship with Him? God means business with *YOU!* We expect everything from Him, but we give Him *NOTHING* — and then, when we receive nothing in return, we wonder where the Lord is. I cannot think of anything more hypocritical, mixed-up or hopelessly confused than that, my friends. But that's a picture of modern religion. God isn't going to write His Word in the sky with two or three mono-syllabic words so you can understand it; the Word of God is carried on the shoulders of His people — never on some wagon. Most people just want to do it the easiest way possible. But it never has been done that way, and it never will; it's going to require some real work and dedicated effort to get the Word of God out to the world in a manner that glorifies Christ....

⁸ And David and all Israel played before God with all their might, and with singing, and with harps, and with psalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.

⁹ And when they came unto the threshingfloor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark; for the oxen stumbled.

¹⁰ And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzza, and he smote him, because he put his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.

~ They had a marching band for the Ark, but the good times were quickly dashed. God never asked for a parade. The priests struggled to carry the Ark through the desert wilderness. It may seem harsh that Uzza was struck dead just for trying to stabilize the Ark; however, we need to realize the Ark shouldn't have been on a cart. If it had been handled properly, according to God's instruction, Uzza wouldn't have had to steady it. We have a whole lot of people placing their hands on the work of the Lord when they ought not be touching it. They're interfering with God's plan. I wish I could tell you the

number of times men likely meant well but didn't do it God's way. As a result, God intervened; sometimes in a very harsh way. Blessing doesn't come that way, friends.

In this account, Uzza was removed, and David was shaken to the core with fear — which turned to indignation! Perezuzza means the breach of Uzza. Too often people attempt to do things their own way; and then, when they fail or they are taken out, they blame it all on God! That's why we have so many Christian Tragedies running around the church. They're beating out their music one day, and hopelessly depressed the next – I see it ALL the time. Stop trying to stabilize the Word of God, friends; handle it correctly and the Word of God will stabilize YOU....

11 And David was displeased, because the LORD had made a breach upon Uzza: wherefore that place is called Perezuzza to this day.

12 And David was afraid of God that day, saying, How shall I bring the ark of God home to me?

13 So David brought not the ark home to himself to the city of David, but carried it aside into the house of Obedom the Gittite.

14 And the ark of God remained with the family of Obedom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obedom, and all that he had.

XIV

1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and timber of cedars, with masons and carpenters, to build him an house.

~ Well, that was an abrupt change of subject! God did it that way because He is through with this; the Ark isn't going to be brought up to Jerusalem at this time. God blessed the family that had the Ark, but David is sent to mind other matters. David was prevented from doing the one thing he truly desired to do. God preoccupied David with building a house. As we learned

back in the Book of Kings, Hiram, king of Tyre, loved David. David was a man greatly beloved throughout the known world at that time. Well, Hiram wanted to help David in his preoccupation; that's, actually, not a good thing – although I'm sure it seemed good to David at the time. See, friends, it's possible to get completely mixed-up with what God wants you to do when you don't handle His Word His way....

² And David perceived that the LORD had confirmed him king over Israel, for his kingdom was lifted up on high, because of his people Israel.

³ And David took more wives at Jerusalem: and David begat more sons and daughters.

~ Many people erroneously believe God approved of all the wives David had. Some say God permitted it; but, no, this is the one thing that will be a *huge* problem for David; and these wives and children are what ultimately bring judgment and heartache. Having all those children, particularly Absalom, are the one thing that is going to bring David sorrow for the rest of his life. What we are reading is wrong – but – it is recorded because this is what David did. The record is not given to show God approved of it; it's given because this is factual history. When we follow that history correctly, we find nothing but judgment in the life of David as a result of willful disobedience in polygamy....

⁴ Now these are the names of his children which he had in Jerusalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon,

⁵ And Ibhar, and Elishua, and Elpalet,

⁶ And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,

⁷ And Elishama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet.

⁸ And when the Philistines heard that David was anointed king over all Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David. And David heard of it, and went out against them.

9 And the Philistines came and spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim.

10 And David enquired of God, saying, Shall I go up against the Philistines? and wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto him, Go up; for I will deliver them into thine hand.

11 So they came up to Baalperazim; and David smote them there. Then David said, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place Baalperazim.

12 And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burned with fire.

13 And the Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.

14 Therefore David enquired again of God; and God said unto him, Go not up after them; turn away from them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees.

~ In other words, God told David to retreat and draw the Philistines to a place where it would be more advantageous to fight. I am certain there are many Christians who unwittingly tempt the Lord repeatedly; because they don't trust Him – they challenge Him. Maybe they enter into some sort of business deal or personal arrangement where they bite off more than they can chew. It's always something with them. They claim to trust the Lord; but they don't trust the Lord. Here, one time, God told David to go out and fight — and God gave David the victory; another time, God told David not to go against the Philistines. God wants you to combine sanctified common horse sense with a right understanding of His Word. Many people do many things in the name of faith, and they fall flat and break their necks — and then they blame God.

I have seen people utterly shipwrecked in their faith – and they destroy the faith of others in the process – by acting in total and complete ignorance and by giving advice that God never instructed them in ANY way about. Well, these people always look at me and say, “... you’re so wrong, Andrew!” They claim God is going to heal them physically, for example; by recklessly and irresponsibly citing Isaiah chapter fifty-three. Then, God doesn’t heal them – because there are a lot of people God has no intention of healing – and they just can’t understand it. That takes them to the place where they lose all faith, and they completely turn their backs on God as a result. They say God has let them down. Well, of course, God didn’t let them down – they did something foolish that they never should have done. They don’t know what to do because **THEY NEVER STUDY THE WORD OF GOD!** Let’s get this right, friends; and let’s cease from our filthy external religion perpetrated in the name of Christianity. There are many times you and I need to wait on the Lord – wait until we hear the wind going through the tops of the mulberry trees. Most of what people call “stepping out in faith” is really just acting foolishly....

15 And it shall be, when thou shalt hear a sound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee to smite the host of the Philistines.

16 David therefore did as God commanded him: and they smote the host of the Philistines from Gibeon even to Gazer.

17 And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.

XV

1 And David made him houses in the city of David, and prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.

2 Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the LORD chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever.

~ David was a great world ruler. Verse seventeen of the last chapter proves that unequivocally. God was with this man and his nation was made into a great world power. If you don't quite understand all of this, I have one word for you: Miraculous! Now, God has brought David and Israel to world prominence.

So, David had a chance to think about things, pray about them; and David obviously *FINALLY* read the Word of God to decide what God wanted him to do. Chapter fifteen was a stark realization by David that was straightened out *IN THE WORD OF GOD!* David had one serious "*aha*" moment here. Having learned by a sad experience of defeat, David had a great sermon to give now. Well, we're going to leave it at that for this report; but, as our Spiritual Safari moves forward in our next report, we're going to see David doing the right thing in the right way ~

