

## **“God is With Us! That’s Dangerous and Delightful”**

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Continuing a series *A King for God’s People*

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 5:1-10; 6:1-23

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*This Sunday was our annual outdoor worship service. Since everyone was together for the reflection, we asked the children’s help to act out parts of the story as it was being told. They helped with Parts 2 and 3. What you’ll find here are the key points to the story that we told. It concluded with a brief reflection about something this episode can teach us about worshipping God.*

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### **Part 1: A New King**

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 5:1-10

See the Scripture by clicking [here](#).

Who would be the next king?

King Saul was dead. Three of his sons were dead. So who would be king now?

Would it be the king’s one remaining son, Ishbosheth? That would make sense; he was from the royal family.

Would it be the commander of the king’s army, Abner? That would make sense; he had a lot of power.

Or, would it be Dave? That made no sense. Dave was not a prince from a palace, but a shepherd from the fields. Sure, Dave had become a great champion for God’s people. Sure, many people liked Dave. Sure, Dave had been very close to King Saul, had married one of the king’s daughters, and had been best friends with the king’s son. But King Saul turned against Dave. Dave had to leave town, and had been on the run, hiding from King Saul.

Who would pick Dave to be the next king?

God did. God picked Dave to be the king. God wanted Dave to lead God’s people.

The leaders of all the people came to Dave and said, “You are our new king.” Once he was a shepherd in the fields. Now Dave was the shepherd for God’s people, Israel.

King David!

David was new. He wanted to do things in new ways. He made a city, Jerusalem, into his new home. Jerusalem is also called “Zion.” David made Zion his new capital city: the City of David.

## **Part 2: How to Kill a Parade**

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 6:1-11

See the Scripture by clicking [here](#).

King David wanted to bring something very special into his new city. So with a huge crowd, he went to get the Ark.

The Ark was a box. (Our box is plastic, but imagine it is made of wood.)

The Ark was covered with gold. (Our box is blue and grey, but imagine it is golden.)

Inside the Ark were

- the stone tablets of the Ten Commandments
- the rod that belonged to the first priest, Aaron
- some of the manna God gave for Israel to eat when they were hungry.

The Ark told the people that God was with them. It reminded them of God's promises. The Ark was so very, very, very special, no one was allowed to touch it.

To carry it without touching it, they used long poles. (We're using canoe paddles and rope.)<sup>1</sup>

Be very careful that nobody touches the Ark!

We need 4 people to carry the Ark: two on each pole, one in front of the Ark and one behind. And don't touch the Ark!

We need a crowd of people to go in front. But don't touch the Ark!

And a crowd to go behind. Make sure nobody touches the Ark!

And we need someone play a guy named Uzzah. His job is to walk beside the Ark. But he can't touch it!

We need those who are carrying the poles to lift them up. Don't touch the Ark!

We need everyone to start marching ahead. Don't touch the Ark!

*After a few moments marching. . . . Shhh!! Listen to what happened.*

Someone carrying the Ark tripped. It wasn't a big trip, just enough to shake the Ark.

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<sup>1</sup> In the story, the Ark is carried on a cart, pulled by oxen. We decided to change that so the Ark would be carried by the children. Children are easier to find that oxen!

Without even thinking about it, Uzzah reached out his hand to keep the Ark steady.

He touched the Ark.

And he died. Right there, Uzzah dropped to the ground. Dead.

Remember, this was supposed to be a very important day. King David was so excited to bring the Ark into his new city. Everyone was happy. Everyone was celebrating.

Then Uzzah touched the Ark and died.

How do you think David felt?

David was angry. David was angry with God, because Uzzah had died.

After that, no one wanted a parade. No one felt like a party. For sure no one dared get close to the Ark. So they left it in someone's yard, and went home.

### **Part 3: Dancing Up a Storm**

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 6:12-15,17-19

See the Scripture by clicking [here](#).

For 3 months, the Ark stayed in that guy's yard.

David knew it belonged in Jerusalem. So after 3 months, he took the huge crowd back to where they had left it.

They picked it up, extra, extra, extra carefully this time, making sure no one touched the Ark. They brought it into the city.

It was a big party!

They played instruments: trumpets and drums, cymbals and castanets and tambourines.

They shouted and sang.

They danced!

Kings usually walk slowly and very seriously, with a lot of dignity. But King David danced up a storm. He shook and shimmied. He waved his hands, wiggled his hips, and stomped his feet. David *ponied like Bony Maronie. He did the mashed potato and the alligator. He put his hands on his hips and let his backbone slip. He did the watusi.*<sup>2</sup> He Y.W.C.Aed!

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from the lyrics of "Land of a Thousand Dances" by Chris Kenner. The best-known version was recorded by Wilson Pickett. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land\\_of\\_a\\_Thousand\\_Dances](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_of_a_Thousand_Dances)

Everyone — almost everyone — danced with him.

Dancing mightily, they brought the Ark of God into Jerusalem.

#### **Part 4: Malice in the Palace**

2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 6:16,20-23

See the Scripture by clicking [here](#).

Michal did not dance.

Her father was the old king, King Saul. She had grown up a princess in the palace. She knew how kings should act.

King David was Michal's husband. She liked being married to David. He was smart and handsome. He sang songs and wrote poetry. He was brave. Even though he had been a plain, ordinary shepherd, maybe she thought she could help him be a good king, and act like kings are supposed to act, smoothing off his rough edges. She knew kings should always set a good example. Kings should always be regal and serious. When kings dance, they should dance with dignity and grace. Kings never, ever dance up a storm.

But Michal looked out her window and saw her King David dancing up a storm.

She did not like it. Not. One. Bit! She did not like David anymore. Not. At. All!

When King David came back home to the palace, she told him how ridiculous he looked. How much unlike a king he acted. How he was embarrassing.

What did David say back to her?

He didn't care how he looked to her, or anyone. He wasn't dancing for her, or anybody else. He was dancing for God. He was glad to look like a fool, if it made God happy.

#### **Reflection: Dangerous and Delightful**

That whole story teaches me at least two things.

First, worshipping God is dangerous.

Uzzah touched the Ark and he died. Don't worry, we don't have anything like that in our churches. In some important ways, Jesus became God's Ark for us. Jesus is God's presence. Jesus is God's promise. Jesus is God's holiness (that means very, very special). And Jesus loved people to touch him. He invited people, especially children, to get close to him. When they touched Jesus, he made people better.

But we must never take Jesus for granted. Or think that worshipping God is an ordinary thing. Think about it! When we worship, we are attuning ourselves to the Creator of the

cosmos, the Redeemer of our souls, the Spirit of Life. Doesn't that make us nervous, at least a bit? Won't we be afraid, at least a little? Not with a terrified fear, but with a fear like this. . . .

Suppose there is a lion here. You know the lion loves you and will never hurt you. Would you want to get close? Maybe. Pet it? Maybe. Hug it? Maybe. But would you take your eyes off the lion? Or forget it's there? No way! Would that lion still be scary: its teeth, its claws, its roar? Yah! A good kind of scary.

That's how it is with God.

The second thing this story teaches me that worshipping God is delightful.

David was so filled with excitement, so bursting with joy, so happy to be leading a parade for God's Ark, that he danced. He danced up a storm. He let loose and celebrated.

Do you think we should let loose in worship?

When we know how good God is, how much God loves us, what wonderful things God has done, and is doing now, and will do tomorrow . . . doesn't letting loose with joy seem like the right thing to do? Could we help it?

Of course, people let loose in different ways. Some are like King David: dancing, leaping, running and jumping. Some shout and sing. Some smile and laugh. Some sit quietly, while bursting with joy inside. There is not a right way to "let loose."

God is delightful! God's Holy Spirit fills us. Praise God!