

Two Tragedies

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[0 : 00] chapter 6, 2nd Samuel chapter 6, as you'll find it on page 310, page number 310, it's 2nd Samuel chapter 6 in the Old Testament.

1st Samuel chapter 6 in the Old Testament.

2nd Samuel chapter 6 in the Old Testament.

2nd Samuel chapter 6 in the Old Testament.

3rd Samuel chapter 6 in the Old Testament.

[3 : 46] 3rd Samuel chapter 6 in the Old Testament.

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page 362 and sing psalms and it's psalm 100 tune his old 100 to all people that on earth do dwell sing to the lord with cheerful voice him serve with mirth that his praise forth tell come ye before him and rejoice we're going to stand to sing this psalm all people that on earth do dwell sing to the lord with cheerful voice his servant birth his praise forth tell come ye before him and rejoice know that the lord is God indeed with the power which he did us make we are his hope he doth us be and for his sheep he doth us be more enter then his gates with praise approach with joy his words unto praise God and bless his name always for it is his mercy is forever sure for why the lord our blood is true his mercy is forever sure his truth that all times firmly stood and shall promise to age and true turn with me to the new testament now to the letter to the hebrews in chapter 12 i have it as page 12 in my esv bible but it's hebrews chapter 12 and we're going to read from verse 22 to the end of the chapter that's just that short passage from verse 22 to the end of the chapter hebrews 12 verse 22 but you have come to mount zion and to the city of the living god the heavenly jerusalem unto innumerable angels in festal gathering unto the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven unto god the judge of all and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect unto jesus the mediator of a new covenant unto the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of abel see that you do not refuse him who is speaking for if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven

at that time his voice shook the earth but now he has promised yet once more i will shake not only the earth but also the heavens this phrase yet once more indicates the removal of things that are shaken that is things that have been made in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken and thus let us offer to god acceptable worship with reverence and awe for our god is a consuming fire amen and once again we have heard god's infallible and perfect word and we pray for his blessing upon it we're going to once again bow our heads in prayer our father in heaven we have just sung those words that ask that the whole earth would sing to the lord with a cheerful voice which means with a heart that has been changed through having come to know jesus christ as savior and to that extent we want to pray for the gospel this evening not just here but wherever it goes out this evening in our country and throughout the rest of europe and throughout the rest of the world lord east and west north and south we think of all the billions of people who are in the world we think of the tribes and the thousands of languages we think of the cultures all over the world we think of their histories and their expectations and different world views and different ways of thinking and our father we thank you that the gospel it has the power and is the power to break down every barrier and to take away every obstacle we give thanks that every person who is reached for jesus is a miracle because it's only by your spirit that someone can come into your kingdom it's only by your power that someone can be born again and that's what we ask for lord for men and women and boys and girls wherever they are as they hear the gospel and as they read the bible and as they listen to your people telling them of what god has done for them in jesus christ and how jesus the son of god came to give his life in this world at calvary we pray that the life-changing power of the gospel may take hold of them and bring them to know that same jesus for themselves the jesus that we know the jesus who has touched our lives this evening and we thank you lord for what he has done never let us forget who we once were and what we once were we were estranged from you dead in trespasses and sins and lord god we pray that that whatever we do that we will never lose sight of the grace of god in the gospel keep us from looking down on any person no matter what they do keep us to keep us mindful of the fact the awful fact that without jesus we are capable of anything oh lord our god we are made conscious of this so often of a sinful a world which is which is groaning a creation which is groaning and lord god we pray for for this world and we ask that that you will reach this world and that you will send out laborers into your harvest our father we once again what we want to pray for for the various places in which we have an interest we thank you for your servant who preached here this morning

for adam and we thank you for the work in which he's involved we pray that as he interacts with people on a personal basis as he brings your word to people who we will never meet in places we will never go to we pray for him lord as he undertakes that work we pray that he may be deeply conscious of your help and your power leading him and guiding him opening doors that he never expected would be opened and bringing him to conversations with people who don't know you and who need to be brought to to know you we pray lord for the people amongst whom he works and we ask lord for their difficulties as they are brought to know jesus and are disowned by their families and are brought into danger and persecution because of their faith in jesus our father in heaven we pray for those who are persecuted right now because of who they believe in lord we think of of those who we've been hearing about in iraq and in syria and in sudan and various parts of the world our father in heaven we pray for them and ask that they may be upheld and that they may be given to know that their labor and even their suffering is not in vain in the lord and we pray lord that as at other times in the history of the church that those times of suffering although we know so little about it will be made effectual to the witness of your gospel and that others will be brought in and brought to you lord god in heaven we pray that you will bless your word to us this evening and bless us as a congregation we thank you lord for everyone who's here for those who regularly come here and for those who are here as visitors we thank you for them and that this time of year we can welcome them amongst us we pray that you will bless them and keep each one of us lord and teach us by your word we want to turn to your word now we want to sing from it and we want to learn from it we want to be challenged by it and we want our soul to be uplifted by hearing your voice speaking to us lord may we say with samuel of old speak lord for your servant hears in jesus name amen we're going to sing together once again this time from psalm number two it's the sing psalms version it's on page two i'm going to sing from verse six to the end of the psalm the tune is rockingham the second psalm psalm number two verse six the lord has made it known to them my chosen king i have installed on zion my own holy hill he is the one whom i have called six to the end of the psalm five verses i'm going to stand to sing the lord has made it known to them my chosen king my father has made it known to them on zion my own holy hill he is the one whom i have called the king that solemnly declares i will proclaim the lord's decree today your father i've become

[16 : 35] you are my son he said to me as me and for your heritage i'll give you nations near and far you'll make them with an iron rod and smash them like a potter's char but therefore king to wisdom who judges all the earth give year with red best come and serve the lord fire and fire down with joy and trembling fear give homage to the royal son let you in rough outside your crust

For swiftly come, his anger blazed, blessed are all who in him trust.

Let's turn to 2 Samuel chapter 6. Reading at the beginning of the chapter once again, 2 Samuel 6, I have it as page 310.

From the beginning, David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, 30,000. And David rose and went with all the people who were with him from Baal Judah.

And that's another name for Kiriath-Jerim, 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.

[19 : 23] I suppose most of us have had the experience of being in a strange town somewhere in the world, and becoming suddenly aware of a crowd gathering and going in one direction.

And there's something inside you that says, my curiosity is killing me. I need to find out where this crowd is going.

There's obviously something happening, and I want to know what it is. I want to see what it is, because it might be something of immense importance. So, it's happened to me a few times, and you sort of tag along when you see people going in the one direction.

And then at some point, you ask somebody, if you know the language, you ask somebody what's happening, and then if that person's friendly, they'll tell you what's happening. It could be some kind of event that's taking place.

Obviously, it's an event that's taking place, but it might be something that has huge importance or significance, or symbolical significance, to one extent or another.

[20 : 31] Sure, we've all had that experience. Well, I want you to imagine that you are in Kiriath-Jerim, or somewhere on that road between Kiriath-Jerim, you can look it up on the map, and Jerusalem on the day when 30,000 of David's chosen people, they gathered and they walked in procession, in one almighty, noisy procession, from that little town, back to, or they were heading back to Jerusalem.

And I want you to imagine that you tag on to the crowd, and you're asking, what is going on? Perhaps it's some annual event. Perhaps it's the Lord Mayor's birthday, or some other kind of, some kind of historical event that takes place.

But you find out that, no, no, this is not some small, obscure, annual thing. This is of momentous importance for the whole country.

That was what was happening here. In fact, this event was never going to be repeated, ever, ever again, in the history of Israel.

And if you talk to somebody who really knew what they were talking about, they would tell you that this was nothing less than a coronation. That's what it was.

[22 : 03] I hope that will become clear a little bit later on. That's exactly what it was. Now, you're part of something big. You're witnessing something that, that you really are feeling privileged to be there.

And you edge your way, because you want to know what's at the very centre of this coronation. And you're expecting to find the king himself.

But once you work your way to the very centre of the crowd, and you discover what is being carried to Jerusalem, you discover that it is a box.

Now, that's intriguing, isn't it? And that's where the mystery of the Old Testament, once again, we're brought face to face with the mystery that lies in the Old Testament.

And once again, you're faced with the fact that if you just simply pick on a chapter like this, all you will get is the strange details of that chapter.

[23 : 18] You have to look at it in the light of the Old Testament and the whole Bible in order to appreciate fully what is happening in this place.

A box. The most special box that was ever built. And yet, it's a box. A box that looks no bigger than an ottoman.

I'm sure that many of us have an ottoman probably handed down by a grandparent or a great-grandparent. An heirloom. That's all it was. We keep old clothes in it or books or something else.

But this was an ottoman-sized box of momentous importance. And you cannot... It's so important that you simply cannot understand if you really want to get to know the Old Testament fully, you have to get to grips with this box.

It was called the Ark of the Covenant. And like I say, it was only the size of an ottoman. 1.1 meters by 0.7 meters by 0.7 meters high.

[24 : 22] It was made of wood. And it was overlaid with gold. It was covered with gold. It had poles at all the corners of it.

And inside these poles were supposed to be rods. Or rather, I should have said at all four corners there were rings. And inside the rings there were poles by which this box was to be carried because the box was a sacred box.

It wasn't an ordinary box. In fact, if you edged your way through the crowd and tried to see the box, you wouldn't be able to because it was covered. No one was ever allowed to see the Ark of the Covenant.

That's how special it was. It was made at the time of Moses. And it was designed by God himself who gave the description in exact detail as to how Moses and his friends Bezalel and Aholiab were supposed to make this box.

But the most important part of the box was the top of it. Because the top of it was not made out of wood like the rest of it. The top of it was made out of solid gold.

[25 : 34] It must have weighed a huge amount. It was made out of solid gold and it was shaped in the form of two angels or cherubim with their wings reaching all the way across the box and touching each other and their faces looking into as it were what the box contained.

inside the box there was of course most of you know this anyway but it's never a bad thing to revisit the furniture that belonged to the tabernacle inside the box of course was the Ten Commandments the two tables of stone which Moses had taken from Mount Zinai and he had placed it in the Ark of the Covenant.

Now of course I'm not going to go into any detail I want to cover the whole of the chapter so I'm not going to go into any detail you can read about this for yourself by going all the way back to Exodus it's fascinating if you really want to get to know the Old Testament you have to come to terms with that box and what made it so important was because that was the location it was placed in the most sacred part of the tent church that Moses had to build by the command of God and the most sacred place was called the Holy of Holies some people call it the most holy place no one was ever allowed to go in there except the high priest once a year and no one was ever allowed to see the Ark of the Covenant this glorious box why was it so important I'll tell you why because this was the exact location where God chose to position himself right in the middle of his people Israel and it had never lost that significance

God in the middle dwelling in the middle of his people Israel and it was because of that and because David knew the significance of that box that one of the very first things he did after coming to the throne was to go and collect it it had been in the house of Abinadab on the margins of Israel on the outside just kept in obscurity during the reign of Saul 30 years over 30 years had passed since any word had had since any attention had been given to the Ark of the Covenant but now when David comes to the throne this is his way of saying yes you've crowned me to be your king but I want you to know that my reign will be a subservient one the real king is God the Lord

Yahweh Yahweh was the name that God gave himself in connection with his rule over his people Israel the Covenant God and David had come to know that Covenant God so intimately and so preciously that he couldn't even think of reigning and taking on this responsibility over Israel without making sure that God was at the very center of civic life and royal life and religious life and judicial life as far as he was concerned as for me and my house we will serve the Lord that was this was his way of showing of not only saying that but showing it and so he ordered that 30,000 of his chosen men should come together and they should gather together so that they could collectively take up the Ark of the Covenant and by so doing give the Lord that place of primacy and that place of royalty amongst his people this is the way of all

[29 : 46] Israel gathering and saying to the Lord we want to worship you in the beauty and the grandeur and the splendor and the glory of your holiness we want you to be our king and here is our way of crowning you to be our king Saul hadn't done that he had kept God in obscurity who knows why but as far as David was concerned God was at the center of things does that not in itself bring a powerful message to each one of us about the life of a believer God is not content to be on the margins if God is either the Lord of all or he's not the Lord at all and what holds true for David and his kingdom holds true for every believer is God at the very heart of who you are and what you are your choices your thoughts your words your actions is God at the very beginning you shall love the

Lord your God that was the first commandment he gave to Israel you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind and all your strength that was the very first commandment and it still is that hasn't changed the only way that we can love the Lord is by accepting Jesus by faith in Jesus by coming to know and to discover what he's done for us and through Christ we our hearts can be turned to love him once again now so we're on a journey tonight we're on a journey from this little town of Kiriath Jerom or Baal Judah to Jerusalem and it's a journey that is littered with all with several different kinds of events two of them are tragic you may be surprised that I'm saying two of them are tragic you say well I don't understand what the second one was

I understand that it's a tragedy what happened to Uzzah I could never you're perhaps saying I can't understand why this happened but I understand it was a tragedy but I want to say there's another tragedy in this chapter as well and that comes at the end of the chapter where Michal David's wife she pretty much rejects him for what he is and by rejecting him she's rejecting God at the same time it's a sad example of a person who's content to look at things from the outside without really discovering what it means to love and to serve the Lord for herself we'll get to that I hope in a few moments time whatever the tragedies exist in this chapter I want us to concentrate on on what the what this passage tells us about how God reveals himself to us what does God say about because this this ark this box if you want to call the ark of the covenant it doesn't just it wasn't just a location it was a revelation it was a way in which God showed Israel the kind of being he was and that message still exists today

God hasn't changed that's the God we worship same God as David worshipped here in this great grand procession is the God that we worship what do we find out then about this God from this chapter well first of all he is the God who is present among his people the ark of the covenant it was a symbol of the reality of God's present now this was hugely different from all the other nations round about Israel they were all pagan nations and for them their gods were gods that were far off they were aloof they were impersonal and they were represented by idols and they had to please their idols in order for the gods to answer them and to give them good crops and fertility and all the rest of it but right and away Israel the difference that existed in Israel in comparison with the other nations was that Israel didn't have to do anything to reach

God because their God was the living and the true God who reached them and who came down to where they were and made his dwelling place amongst them he was present with them indeed it's the presence of God that's the message the central message that runs all the way through the Bible from the garden of Eden all the way through to Revelation I will be their God he said to Abraham and you shall be my people at the very end of the Bible itself it tells us that God will create a new heaven and a new earth and the dwelling the dwelling of the Lord will be with men that's the central message of the Bible that's what God wants to do despite the fact that Adam and Eve rebelled against God God was determined to overcome their sin and to dwell amongst the people that he had created where he could transform them and redeem them by sending his own son into the world which means that if you're a redeemed person by Jesus

[35 : 16] Christ tonight God dwells among us we don't have to do anything to reach him or to win his favor it's already been done we're already in favor he's loved us with an everlasting love nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus not only that he's the God who's come all the way down and he's present dwelling in every one of us he's also present this evening accepting our worship what do you do what do you think you do when you come to worship God on a Sunday or on a Wednesday you think that by spending more time that's more chance of earning God's presence and his favor no that's not the way it works at all when we come in and when we sing together we're actually singing to the Lord who's with us do you remember that do I remember it when we gather like we are tonight right now God is right here it's an awesome thought isn't it because he's invisible it takes faith to believe that it takes faith also to believe that he actually is receiving our worship gladly why is glad why is

God so glad to receive our worship perhaps you're surprised that I'm even using that language how can God be glad I'm a sinner he's holy how can God be glad especially after reading a chapter like this where God's anger bursts out against somebody because they put our foot wrong how can you talk about God being glad yes I can because the Bible tells me that God is pleased with his people why is he pleased with his people because we live perfectly no but because of Jesus Christ because we're identified with Jesus Christ because when God looks at us he sees us in Jesus Christ he sees us being attached to Jesus and so his death becomes ours and we are transformed and we have been renewed and we have been forgiven and we have been made into a new creation in Jesus Christ a creation which comes boldly into his presence and we can rejoice we can rejoice in him tonight one thing about this chapter is the amount of rejoicing there is isn't it it really was a most extraordinarily joyful occasion it was deafening the people were absolutely ecstatic at what they were doing and you might say oh well they were too joyful they weren't too joyful it wasn't their joy that got them into trouble the joy was what they did right they had every entitlement and the chapter ends with

David dancing before the Lord no wonder because David knew the God before whom he was dancing it was because he perceived the love and the grace of God the freedom and the liberty that David knew in the Lord Jesus Christ and it was that liberty that brought about that joy that was unspeakable says the apostle an indescribable joy so it wasn't the joy that got them into trouble and neither is it the joy that gets them into favour with God it's not their happiness that makes God happy I don't know how many of you follow some of the blogs that are on Facebook I came across this blog this week and this thing went viral this week it was a lady called Victoria Osteen I don't know if you ever heard of Victoria Osteen she's the wife of the pastor of the world's biggest congregation Joel Osteen there's a church in

Houston Texas and so you may watch him sometimes well his wife gets to play her part as well and this is what she said this week and this went viral she says when we obey God we're not doing it for God we're doing it for ourselves because God takes pleasure when we are happy that's the thing that gives him the greatest joy so just do good for your own self she said do good because God wants you to be happy when you come to church when you worship him you're not doing it for God really you're doing it for yourself because that's what makes God happy I'm sorry that is utter nonsense there's no other word for it she's got it wrong David and his people are not happy so that they'll make

God happy they are rejoicing in the Lord they've got it right David's got it right poor Mrs Osteen has got it wrong because it's all so man centred it's her centred it starts and finishes with her happiness and somehow or other God is out there depending his happiness depends on whether she's happy or not that's not the way it works the Christian life is God centred but the fact tonight is that we're able to rejoice in the Lord because Jesus has changed us he's removed our sin and he's opened our eyes and our understanding and he's placed within us a joy which no one else has but it's a joy that is centred not in ourselves it's a joy that's centred in the Lord and so the joy we know as God's people is a joy that we can never get anywhere else and cannot be replaced but where the people went wrong that day was that they lost sight in all their joy and in all their celebration they lost sight of the holiness of the

[41 : 30] God whom they worshipped and it's always the problem isn't it wherever you get sinful human beings you get imbalance and this whole thing went pear shaped because they lost sight of the balance that there always ought to be between the fear of the Lord and the joy of the Lord these two things have to be kept in tension the fear of the Lord and the joy of the Lord and I'm going to ask in a moment how do you how do you keep these two things in the right place but just let's look at what happened they were carrying the ark of the Lord on a cart bad news the wrong thing to do so that when the oxen 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 verse 6 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 and David was angry because the

Lord had burst forth against Uzzah now you're possibly reading that and thinking well I don't understand why what did this man do wrong he was only acting in the interests of keeping the ark of God if it was such a precious object surely you don't want it falling off the cart and into the mud so all he was doing was steadying the ark he was only trying to help things out he was acting in his favour why in the world did God act so irrationally against it God never acts irrationally he never ever acts precipitously without thinking God in anything that he does and in everything that he does always does the right thing and so when you start by saying I don't agree with what God did you are in the wrong I'm afraid but that's what we do isn't it as sinful human beings we read a passage like this we say I don't like this it's not that you just don't just understand it it's that you actually don't like it you react something same way as David reacted but David was wrong in being angry against the

Lord because whatever God does you might say well it's not surely it's not such a big deal I mean this this poor man is only doing something small it's insignificant it's not insignificant because the very fact that God put him to death means it's not insignificant now where did he go wrong well they went wrong in that they were not carrying the ark of God the way that God commanded if you look all the way back to Exodus and Numbers where all of these instructions are given you will notice that not only did God design all of these objects but he gave careful instruction as to how they were to be carried because of their significance and because of their holiness so that meant that if you chose to disobey his instructions then you only had yourself to blame and God gave them these instructions because he is because he has to act according to his nature he cannot act against his nature it's a bit like the laws of physics you cannot nobody ever rebels against the law of physics to say that shouldn't be imagine you touch the live wire 240 volts with both hands and you were given a shock you can't say that's terrible the laws of physics are evil and they shouldn't happen you can't say that you just don't go near the live wire you know not to because there's probably a sign saying live keep away and if you choose in your foolishness to put your hands out and touch it then you've only got yourself to blame for whatever happens it was the same here

God had given careful instruction why did he do that because he loves his people it was the same at the very beginning when God at the top of Mount Zinai he said to Moses put a fence around the mountain make sure nobody comes near the mountain everybody has to keep away from the mountain because if you touch it you're going to die why did he say that because he's cruel because he's unreasonable not at all it's the reverse it's because he loved his people he didn't want them to die he didn't want Yuzah to die he didn't want anybody to die but you see there's a picture there of the message of the Bible isn't there he has given us his ten commandments they're given to us to describe for us what God requires of a world a world that he has created and what does sinful man do what do we do men and women we just say well it's not important

I'll decide what's important I'll decide which commandments I want to keep and the other ones well yeah I agree with the sixth one you shall not murder yeah it's a terrible thing to murder but really the seventh commandment well come on why is that in a modern world in a world where we're all free to make our own choices no you see that's the way in which we think we pick and choose what we want well God has given us his commands because it showed because by them we get to find out what God is and who God is and it was the same here it is important because God says it's important and even amongst God's people it was important indeed especially amongst people because they should have known better they knew his word they knew the book of Exodus and the book of Leviticus and the book of Numbers and there's a lesson here isn't there even for our worship and our daily we must never become so familiar with God that we forget that we lose sight that he burns with holy fire the hymn puts it like this be still for the presence of the Lord the Holy

[48 : 13] One is here come bow before him now with reverence and fear in him no sin is found we stand on holy ground be still for the presence of the Lord the Holy One is here be still for the glory of the Lord is shining all around you can't have one without the other you have to take God as he is how do you make sure you maintain that balance then of the joy of the

Lord and the fear of the Lord well you do it by making sure you know the Bible because he's given us instructions he's told us how to approach him we can't just approach him any way we want to we have to do it through Jesus Christ Jesus came into the world as the way and the truth and the life there's only one way to approach God and that is through Jesus there's only one way for our sin to be forgiven that is through his death and his resurrection there's only one way to worship and that is by faith in Jesus Christ any other way is a sinful way it's the wrong way he's made it perfectly clear for us to us but later on in the chapter he shows to David that the God who punishes is also the God who blesses because when the ark was when everything was put on hold after Yuzah died and the ark was put into the house of this man called

Obed-Edom nobody's quite sure for certain who this man Obed-Edom was was he a Gittite was he a Philistine or did he come from a place in Israel the scholars are divided as to who Obed-Edom was but in any case he was a man he seemed to be like Joseph of Arimathea or rather Simon who happened to be just in the right place at the right time his house was near the place where Yuzah had been put to death and they left the ark in his house but what happened was the very opposite to what was expected instead of punishing the house God blessed the house because God is the God of blessing as well as the God of punishment and that's where the gospel lies today tonight we don't have an ark of the covenant we don't have holy furniture we don't have things that you can't or can touch that you're not allowed to touch we're not we don't have a do's and don'ts in that kind of way and yet we worship exactly the same God why is that

God because God we can come tonight boldly and confidently to worship God because he has turned his anger on someone else this chapter tells us about how God turned his anger on Yuzah because he broke God's law we've all broken God's law haven't we every one of us deserves the same punishment that Yuzah got and yet here we are worshipping God in freedom and in joy and in faith why is that because God has turned his anger on someone else and someone else has taken the punishment instead of us and you know who that was Jesus on the cross when he suffered God's anger and when he suffered God's wrath not for his own sin because he didn't have any sin but for our sin and because God chose to make his own son sin for us we have been raised to newness of life and we can know and enjoy confidently

God's nearness and God's presence and God's fellowship that doesn't mean that we can be flippant or cavalier when it comes to God but it means that we can have that joy as well as that healthy fear in relating to God and speaking to him and singing to him and walking with him and living with him we can know that the God who is a consuming fire is also a God who loves with an extraordinary love that we can never ever that we can never find anywhere else and that no one can separate us from and it was because David grasped that on that occasion that when he came to the ark give me a couple of minutes more when he came to the ark the second time to complete the journey this time presumably he did it right they carried the priests carried the ark by themselves because he probably went all the way back to Exodus and he read again what they should have done in the first place and so they got it right this time they put the ark on their shoulders and off they went to

[53 : 51] Jerusalem and this time David had discovered something about God that he never discovered before even amidst the tragedy and by the way the fact that Yuzah died on that occasion doesn't mean that Yuzah wasn't a believer I believe there's every likelihood that Yuzah was a believer he just made a tragic mistake one that cost him his life many as a person did the same thing but there was someone else in this chapter who gives every indication that she's not a believer that's the real tragedy at the end of the chapter because Michal who was David's wife and who had been reconciled to her husband after he came to the throne we read about that earlier on she was looking at what David was doing with disdain and with contempt why was that because she was a simple observer observer she was simply an observer she was content to just sit or stand up in the upstairs window and look at what was going on and you know if all you are as an observer you will never ever understand what it is to know

Jesus for yourself and there are plenty of observers the problem is when you are content to be an observer when you don't want to take that step of faith and actually come to know God for yourself but you are content to make judgments on other people and many a judgmental person has never I have met dozens of people in my lifetime and some of them are the biggest critics of the church and the gospel and what we are not doing and what we are doing that is wrong and what you people should be doing is this and that and they will tell you exactly how they think that you should be and the church should be and the gospel should be and they've never themselves come to that place of personal commitment to Jesus Christ are you one of those maybe so

Michal Michal was only concerned about what she saw David doing on the outside she never wanted she never understood what was going on because she never tried to understand because for her if she was to understand fully herself what was going on she would have to come to know the Lord for herself and that means facing yourself as you really are there's only one way of coming to know the Lord and that is by confessing your sin your own sinfulness she was quite happy to see the sinfulness in others she was quite happy to see the indignity in David to tell him what he was doing wrong but not for herself he was just so fanatic about this God I mean I don't mind you believing in God David I don't mind you as long as you're dignified about it you're a king I mean after all look at what happened to you what gives you the right now to start dancing before these common people you're a king you should be elevated above them you should be acting in a totally different way and you're just so extreme what is there about God to rejoice in in any case what is it that makes you so happy about

God I mean alright we're prepared to worship him I'll bring the sacrifices every morning and I'll dress the right way and I'll go to all the right events but all this joy that's just too extreme are you like that I wonder if you are you know somebody and that's exactly what you think of them they're just so obsessed with Jesus I mean why does he have to take a part in everything it's okay to worship Jesus on a Sunday but why does he have to be involved in everything why does my whole life have to be revolved around him because that's what he demands and that's what it means to be a Christian and I wonder tonight if you know somebody and that's the way they are and the reason you're so angry is because you know they've got something that you don't that was what was wrong with

Michal David had something but she didn't and it looks as if she lived the rest of her life in emptiness and in misery and in unbelief because she refused to come to know the God of Israel what a tragedy make sure that that same tragedy doesn't happen with you Jesus calls us to himself personally and promises us that forgiveness and that newness of life that only he can give by his blood let's bow our heads in prayer our father in heaven we thank you then this evening that we've been brought here to listen to your word we pray that you will reach into our hearts we pray that your spirit will move amongst us and that we'll make your word effective we pray that we will see ourselves and see our own need to know

[59 : 37] Jesus for ourselves we ask these things in his name amen we're going to close by singing together in psalm number 68 and it's a traditional version it's on page number 303 it's verse 18 we're going to sing to verse 20 page page 303 in sing psalms the traditional version of psalm 68 thou hast o lord most glorious ascended up on high and in triumph victorious led captive captivity thou hast received gifts for men for such as did rebel and yea even for them that god the lord in midst of them might dwell the psalm it's thought that it may have been written on this occasion the occasion we've been reading about this evening psalm 68 verse 18 four verses we're going to stand to sing thou hast o lord most glorious ascended upon high and in triumph victorious led captive captive captive covetous past receive gifts for men for such as did rebel kidding for them back of the lord in midst of and might dwell.

Blessed be the Lord who is to us of our salvation God.

Who did he with his benefits a glad just we can go?

The of salvation is the God who is our God most strong.

And unto the Lord from heaven the issues to be of salvation.

[62 : 31] Now may the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ the love of God the Father and communion fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest on and abide with each one of us both now and always. Amen. Thank you.