



October 5, 2014  
2 Samuel 6  
*“Worshiping God”*  
Pastor Gary Hamrick

David, when he finally became king of the nation of Israel, did two important things: he established Jerusalem as the capital city, because he wanted God to be displayed (last week’s study), and he brought the ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, and thereby established Jerusalem as the center of worship.

In this study we will learn the importance of understanding and participating in God-centered worship. Pastor Gary also mentioned other ways we can worship God, which include joyful singing, holy living, generous giving, and offering continual thanksgiving.

### Historical Background

1. The Ark of the Covenant.
  - a. Details about the construction of the ark are found in [Exodus 37:1-9](#).
  - b. The ark was made of acacia wood and was overlaid with gold.
  - c. Its dimensions were 3 ¾’ x 2 ¼’ x 2 ¼’.
  - d. The lid was made of solid gold, and figures of cherubim (angels) were mounted on top, facing each other with the tips of their wings touching.
  - e. Inside the ark were kept three things from Israel’s history: the Ten Commandments, Aaron’s budding staff, and a sample of manna.
  - f. The ark represented the very presence of God, who chose to hover by his Spirit over the ark.
  
2. Where was the ark and why wasn’t it in the possession of the Israelites to being with?
  - a. [2 Samuel 6:2](#) tells us the ark was in Kiriath Jearim (Baalath of Judah).<sup>1</sup>
  - b. The ark had been at the home of Abinidab almost 70 years!

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<sup>1</sup> Kiriath Jearim was about 13 miles from Jerusalem.

- i. It was there 20 years before Saul became king, and it would remain Abinadab's home another 40 years during Saul's reign.
  - ii. At the time of this account, David had been king about eight to ten years.
3. David gathered 30,000 men for what was supposed to be a joy filled celebration of bringing the ark to Jerusalem, which included *"harps, lyres, tambourines, sistrums, and cymbals."*
4. It's interesting to note that everyone in this story is doing the right thing.
  - a. David was doing the right thing by bringing the ark to Jerusalem.
  - b. It was right that the people celebrated *"with all their might"* when they moved the ark from Kiriath Jearim to Jerusalem.
  - c. Uzzah did the right thing when he reached out to keep the ark from falling off the ox cart.
5. The point is that this account helps us understand that it's possible to do the right thing the wrong way.
6. If the right thing had been done the right way, no one would have died!
7. David decided to stop the proceedings and he instructed that the ark should be moved to the home of Obed-Edom, where it would remain for three months, while he tried to figure out the Lord's will.
8. **1 Chronicles 15:13** - *"[These things happened because] 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 of him about how to do it in the prescribed way."*
  - a. The wrong way to transport the ark was to put it on a cart drawn by oxen.
  - b. The right way to transport the ark was to put poles through the rings mounted on all four corners so four Levites could carry it upon their shoulders.
  - c. **1 Chronicles 15:14-15** - *"So the priests and Levites consecrated themselves in order to bring up the ark of the Lord, the God of Israel. And the Levites carried the ark of God with the poles on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded in accordance with the word of the Lord."*
9. So, what's the big deal that someone had to die because of the way the ark was transported?
  - a. The idea for transporting the ark on a cart came from the Philistines, who sent the ark off on a cart not long after they were afflicted with hemorrhoids.

- b. David, who was ultimately responsible, and the Israelites simply mimicked the secular pattern they'd observed, so they comingled the secular with the sacred, and that's what made God angry.
10. Pastor Gary said, "The danger today is that worship can become nothing more than an ark on a cart, if we aren't careful."
- a. It's a sad commentary on the state of worship in the Church today, when you consider that many churches consider it to be a matter of routine to include secular music in their services, and Pastor Gary cited several examples, including:
    - i. During a baptism service, a church in Loudoun County played a song by secular recording artist, Katy Perry.
    - ii. Perry Noble, a mega-church pastor at New Spring Church in South Carolina, started a new sermon series by playing a song by KISS, titled *Rock and Roll All Nite*, as the lead-in to the message, and this song includes the lyrics: "I wanna rock and roll all night and party every day."
      - 1. Pastor Noble also opened up the 2010 Easter service at New Spring Church by playing the song, *Highway to Hell*, by AC/DC.
    - iii. Pastor Gary and his son, Austin, visited a United Methodist Church in NW Washington, DC, and they were stunned when the service ended with the band playing *Benny and the Jets*, by Elton John.<sup>2</sup>
  - b. The problem is that these are attempts to be deliberately edgy, "cool and hip," as these churches try to appeal to people who would not otherwise be willing to attend a church service.
11. There's plenty of room for differences when it comes to the singing of traditional hymns or contemporary music in all of its various forms.
12. Pastor Gary, with particular emphasis, said, "We better be in agreement about one thing, and that is worship must be God-centered or it is not worship at all."
13. Bringing secular music into a worship service is a blatant and intentionally designed thing, and the result is that it's no different than placing an ark on a cart.
14. A subtle thing can happen in worship when we aren't careful.
- a. **2 Samuel 6:3-4** - "*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*

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<sup>2</sup> Pastor Gary's grandfather was the pastor at this church when the new building was erected in 1953.

- of Abinadab, were guiding the new cart with the ark of God on it, and Ahio was walking in front of it.”*
- b. In Hebrew, Ahio means, “friendly one,” and it was “Mr. Friendly,” who was out in front of the ark, almost like the leader of a high school marching band!
  - c. The problem with this is that the ark represented God, and God always belongs in the front!
    - i. When the ark was transported, no one was in front of it!
    - ii. When the Israelites went into battle, the ark was always out front!
    - iii. When the Israelites crossed the Jordan River, the ark was out front!
  - d. One thing is certain; Ahio had absolutely no business putting himself in God’s rightful place.
15. Worship can be corrupted when songs become “me-centric” than “God-centric.”
16. False doctrine says worship is no longer about God; it’s about the person.
17. Pastor Gary said, “Whether blatant or subtle, we have to guard ourselves against corrupting true and pure worship to God.”
- a. In [John 4:24](#), Jesus said, *“God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”*
  - b. Worship must be genuine, heartfelt, and God-centered.
18. David realized what went wrong and he made the necessary corrections so they would have the proper reverence for God, and worship of God alone.
- a. [2 Samuel 6:12-15](#) - *“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 down and brought 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. David, wearing a linen ephod, danced before the Lord with all his might, while he and the entire house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouts and the sound of trumpets.”*
19. The remarkable thing about this account is that every *“six steps, [David] sacrificed a bull and a fattened calf.”*
- a. In the original Hebrew language, the meaning is that these sacrifices were an on-going thing, which means they sacrificed *“a bull and a fattened calf”* every six steps over the course of their approximate six-mile journey!
    - i. Kiriath Jearim is about 13 miles from Jerusalem, and it’s believed that the occasion of the death of Uzziah and the home of Obed-Edom was about halfway in between.

- ii. If the average person takes 2,000 steps per mile, that means they took 12,000 steps, which in turn means they stopped 2,000 times in order to sacrifice 4,000 animals!

#### Worship The Lord With Joyful Singing

20. **Psalm 100:1-2** - *“Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.”*
21. **Colossians 3:16b** - *“... sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”*

#### Worship The Lord Through Holy Living

22. **Romans 12:1** - *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

#### Worship The Lord Generous Giving

23. **Philippians 4:18** - *“I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.”*
24. **2 Corinthians 8:7** - *“But just as you excel in everything - in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us - see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”*

#### Worship The Lord Through Continual Thanksgiving

25. **Hebrews 13:15** - *“By [Jesus] therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”*

#### Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.

2. Read [2 Samuel 6:1-11](#) to provide an overview for this study.
3. Allow the people in your group to share their experiences about times when they attempted to do the right thing the wrong way. (See #4 above)
  - a. Read and discuss [1 Chronicles 5:13-15](#).
4. Are there other examples you can think of in which Christians and/or the Church comingles the secular with the sacred?
5. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's statement: "The danger today is that worship can become nothing more than an ark on a cart, if we aren't careful."
  - a. Provide an overview of the examples of churches using secular music in their services. (See #10 above)

NOTE: The subject of worship music preference is one that can create strong differences of opinion, so monitor the discussion carefully!

6. Read and discuss [2 Samuel 6:3-4](#).
  - a. What was your reaction when Pastor Gary pointed out that Ahio was leading the way in front of the ark?
  - b. How have you been influenced by "me-centric" Christian songs?
  - c. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's statement: "Whether blatant or subtle, we have to guard ourselves against corrupting true and pure worship to God."
7. Read and discuss [2 Samuel 6:12-15](#), and focus on the incredible fact that David and the Israelites stopped every six feet - approximately 2,000 times - to offer sacrifices to the Lord.
  - a. What are some of the ways, as you've continued to grow in the Lord that your worship of the Lord has changed?
8. Read and discuss [Psalm 100:1-2](#) and [Colossians 3:16b](#).
  - a. How often do you actively participate in the worship service?
  - b. Share other examples of ways you worship the Lord with music?
9. Read and discuss [Romans 12:1](#).
  - a. What are some of the ways the Lord has changed you so that you live a more holy, Christ-like life?
10. Read and discuss [Philippians 4:18](#) and [2 Corinthians 8:7](#).
  - a. Would you say you are a generous giver?
  - b. Share examples of times when the Lord prompted you to give sacrificially or generously.

- c. Spend time talking about this quote from Corrie ten Boom: “Hold everything in your hands lightly, otherwise it hurts when God pries your fingers open.”
11. How have you changed since you’ve been walking with the Lord when it comes to living a life of continual thanksgiving?
  - a. Read and discuss [Hebrews 13:15](#).
12. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: be continually reminded to put the worship of God at the center of their lives; approach worship with a genuine, heartfelt attitude; sing joyfully unto the Lord; purpose in their heart to be a generous giver, a person who lives a life of continual thanksgiving, as well as being a person who lives a more holy, Christ-like life.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).