

THE ARK OF GOD IS HOLY

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: 2 SAMUEL 6:1-23



God is holy.

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

God demonstrated His holiness – The ark was designed by God. It was to be carried with two poles which slid through rings attached to the sides of the ark (1 Chronicles 15:12-15). The poles were never supposed to leave the ark, but perhaps in its travels they had been removed. David did not take time to ask about how the ark of God should be transported and had it carried on a cart. His celebration was interrupted when the oxen stumbled and Uzzah put his hand on the ark of God to keep it from slipping. God struck Uzzah down at once.

God's word about how the ark should be handled was important because God's presence rested upon the ark. The ark was never to be treated casually. God's directions were disregarded. When a sinful man had touched the ark, he died. David and all of Israel were rejoicing before the Lord. But they had forgotten about his frightening holiness. That day, David and Israel grew in the fear of God. They left the ark at Obed-Edom's house until they could understand their mistake.

David returned for the ark – Later David returned with consecrated Levites to carry the ark in the prescribed fashion with poles on their shoulders (1 Chronicles 15:12-15). David only allowed the ark to go six steps before he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal. David, now aware that God's holiness cannot be treated casually, continued very carefully. He showed that he understood the need for shed blood to pay for sin. He showed great honor and respect for God's holy presence by obeying what the law commanded.

Michal confronted David about his dancing – As the ark and its happy parade entered Jerusalem, David was leaping and dancing while wearing a linen ephod. The ephod was the traditional dress of a priest. Michal, Saul's daughter, was David's wife. But she was embarrassed and bitter at her husband for his uninhibited display of joy (2 Samuel 6:16). Michal rebuked David when she should have been celebrating with him. At the end of the chapter we see God's judgment on her as we read that she was never able to have children.

David offered peace offerings and burnt offerings. These were the very same type of offerings Saul was rebuked for offering when Samuel was traveling to him (1 Samuel 13:8-12). Unlike Saul who disobeyed the command of God and offered sacrifices unlawfully in the fear of man, David studied the law and involved many Levites. Together, they offered sacrifices in the fear of God (1 Chronicles 16:1). In David's celebration we see a sure distinction between him and Saul.

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WHERE IS JESUS?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

David celebrated the return of the ark because it represented a return of the presence of the Lord. In fact the cover of the ark is called the atonement cover. This feature of the ark's design pointed forward to Jesus. Now that Jesus has come, He has made the final atonement, or covering, for the sins of men. Now there is a new dwelling place for God – in the hearts of men and in the gathered church. In a sense, every Christian and every true church is a living ark. The presence of God is in us and with us!

ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

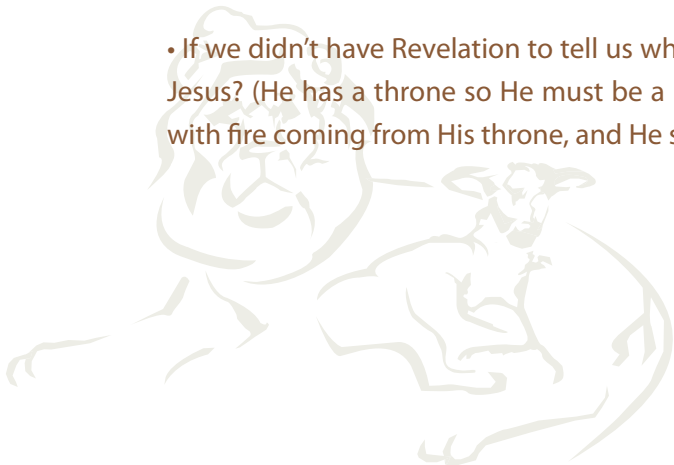
Bible Passage: Daniel 7:9-10

Connecting the passage to Christ:

Daniel is describing Jesus upon His throne. Jesus is the Ancient of Days. Revelation 1:12-14 describes the Son of Man (Jesus) in exactly the same way as the description in Daniel 7.

Questions for reflection:

- Compare Revelation 1:12-14 with Daniel 7:9-10. Who is Daniel talking about? (Daniel is talking about Jesus returning to judge the earth.)
- If we didn't have Revelation to tell us whom Daniel is talking about, what clues would tell us that it is Jesus? (He has a throne so He must be a king, a great multitude serves Him, He is bright white (pure) with fire coming from His throne, and He sits in judgment.)



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SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

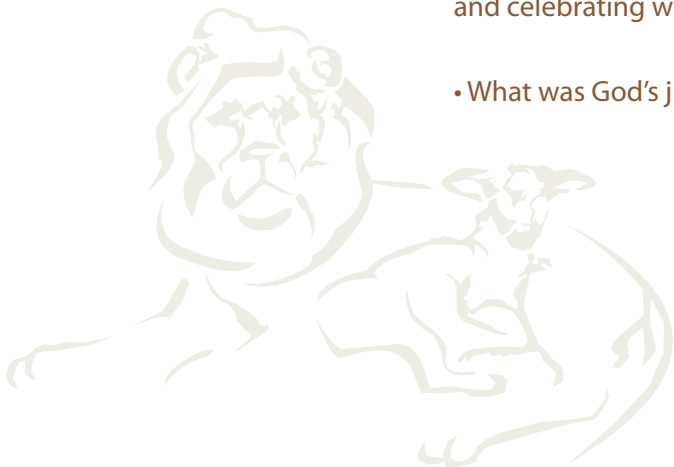
Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

HONORING HER HUSBAND AND GOD

Read 2 Samuel 6:16-23.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Who was Michal? (Most are likely going to say the daughter of Saul rather than the wife of David.)
- Would it surprise you to find out that Michal was David's wife? (They will likely be surprised. If not, simply continue with the questions.)
- Why is it shocking to find out that Michal is David's wife? (Michal is bitter and does not show David love.)
- What should Michal have been doing? (Michal should have been honoring David and celebrating with the rest of Israel before the Ark of God.)
- What was God's judgment against Michal? (She remained barren until her death.)



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TREAT IT WITH CARE AND RESPECT

Supplies

- a decorative, delicate Christmas ornament
 - a pipe wrench
 - a crystal wine glass
 - a ceramic figurine
 - a boot
 - a light bulb
 - a framed wedding photo
- (Be careful to not bring in anything you couldn't afford to lose, as passing these items around may result in their breaking.)

The object of this lesson is to help the children understand holiness and why the Ark had to be carried in a certain way.

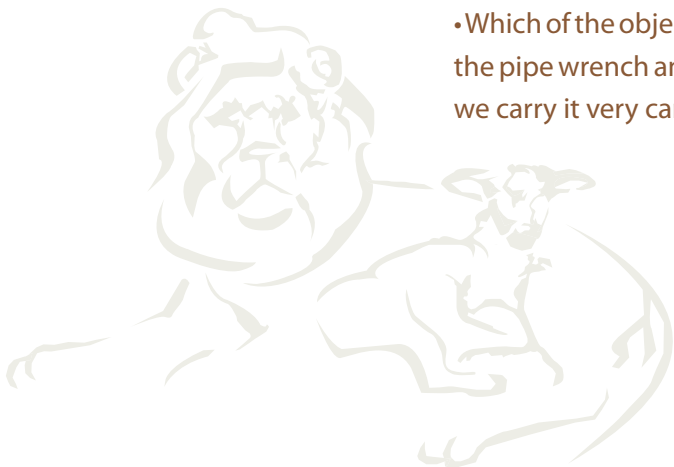
Divide the class up into groups and give each group an object. (Take note of any cautionary statements that come from within the groups like, "Be careful, you'll break it".) Ask the class to come up with any special directions on what to tell movers who were to move that item.

Have each group appoint a spokesman who tells the entire class the results of their discussion and what they would tell a mover.

As a group, rate the object they feel needs the most careful special instructions.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Why does the Ark of God need special instructions to move it? (Although the Ark could be physically broken, God especially commanded that the Ark be carried with poles and rings because the Ark was the resting place for God's glory and could not be handled carelessly by sinful men.)
- Did the Israelites follow God's instructions? (No, they put the ark on a cart lead by oxen. It should have been carried by Levites with poles, as God instructed.)
- Why did God kill Uzzah for touching the Ark? (God killed Uzzah because the Ark was Holy – very special and set apart for a sinless God who is completely different than men. To touch the ark was to disregard God's holiness.)
- Which of the objects you evaluated would you set on a cart led by oxen? (Maybe just the pipe wrench and boot because they are not special. If there is something special we carry it very carefully and an oxcart is not a careful method of transportation.)



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IT CANNOT BE GOOD TO FEAR

Supplies

- iron
- ironing board
- a hankie or bandanna

The object of this activity is to help children to understand the fear of the Lord.

Plug in the iron but turn it off so that it is cold.

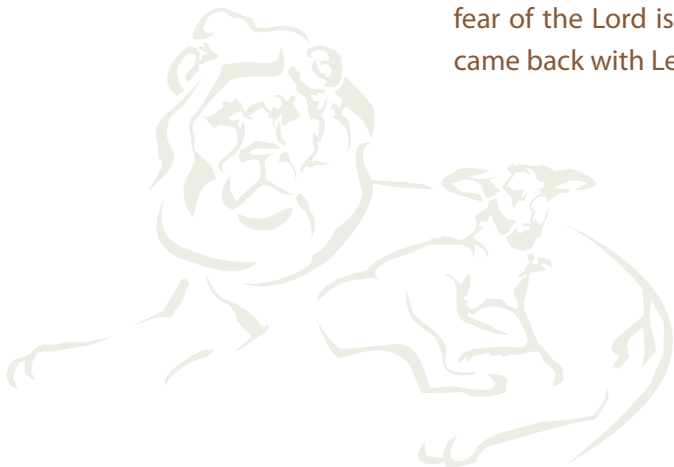
When the children come in, read 2 Samuel 6 aloud.

Pick up the iron and touch it very quickly saying, "That will do just fine". Shake your finger as if the iron is very hot.

Ask the children what you do with an iron as you iron something (choose something with no wrinkles to add to the charade). When the children explain what an iron does pick up the cloth and show them how good of a job it does. Tell them it works by getting very hot. Unplug the iron then quickly take it to the front row and put it close to the children so they pull themselves away. (Remember the iron is cold this whole time.)

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Why are the children close to the iron moving back? Are they afraid? (They are afraid of getting burned.)
- Why is fear a good thing sometimes? (It protects us from foolish behavior and saves us from hurting ourselves.)
- Was it good that David was afraid of God the day Uzzah died? (Yes, the Ark was not being treated with the respect God intended. The Ark represented the presence of God who is Holy and must destroy all sin. In fact, all of us would be killed if God came right here and did not protect us from His presence. The Bible tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. After the mishap with Uzzah, David came back with Levite priests and carried the Ark properly.)



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PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children draw a picture of Uzzah falling dead after touching the Ark.

FOR OLDER GRADES

Compare David's peace (fellowship) offering in 2 Samuel 6:10-23 with Saul's offering in 1 Samuel 13:5-15. What is different about the two men's offerings?

See comments in the last point of the "Teaching Points for Class Discussion" section above. Also note that at the end of Saul's disobedience Samuel announces God's reason for choosing David – he is a man after God's own heart.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Barren – To be without child and unable to have children. God is clearly portrayed in scripture as the one who opens and closes a woman's womb, see Genesis 20:31 and Exodus 23:26. Fruitfulness in childbirth was a promised blessing to Israel if they would worship the Lord, see Exodus 23:26. God sometimes allows a woman to be barren to that His blessing of children might bring Him glory, as in the lives of Sarah, Abraham's wife, or Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. For Michal, God is clearly bringing a consequence of her actions because her barrenness is recorded after scripture records her contemptuous behavior.

