

## Day 302 - SUNDAY: December 3rd

2 Samuel 6, 1 Chronicles 13, 15, 16, Psalms 96, 105, & 106

### 2 Samuel 6:1-23 NKJV

Again David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim. So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the LORD on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals. And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God. And David became angry because of the LORD's outbreak against Uzzah; and he called the name of the place Perez Uzzah to this day. David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" So David would not move the ark of the LORD with him into the City of David; but David took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. The ark of the LORD remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months. And the LORD blessed Obed-Edom and all his household. Now it was told King David, saying, "The LORD has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house

of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness. And so it was, when those bearing the ark of the LORD had gone six paces, that he sacrificed oxen and fatted sheep. Then David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was wearing a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet. Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house. Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" So David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD. And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor." Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

### 1 Chronicles 13:1-14 NKJV

Then David consulted with the captains of thousands and hundreds, and with every leader. And David said to all the assembly of Israel, "If it

seems good to you, and if it is of the LORD our God, let us send out to our brethren everywhere who are left in all the land of Israel, and with them to the priests and Levites who are in their cities and their common-lands, that they may gather together to us; and let us bring the ark of our God back to us, for we have not inquired at it since the days of Saul." Then all the assembly said that they would do so, for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people. So David gathered all Israel together, from Shihor in Egypt to as far as the entrance of Hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kirjath Jearim. And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, to Kirjath Jearim, which belonged to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God the LORD, who dwells between the cherubim, where His name is proclaimed. So they carried the ark of God on a new cart from the house of Abinadab, and Uzza and Ahio drove the cart. Then David and all Israel played music before God with all their might, with singing, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on cymbals, and with trumpets. And when they came to Chidon's threshing floor, Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzza, and He struck him because he put his hand to the ark; and he died there before God. And David became angry because of the LORD's outbreak against Uzza; therefore that place is called Perez Uzza to this day. David was afraid of God that day, saying, "How can I bring the ark of God to me?" So David would not move the ark with him into the City of David, but took it aside into the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite. The ark of God remained with the family of Obed-Edom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that he had.

#### 1 Chronicles 15:1-29 NKJV

David built houses for himself in the City of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched a tent for it. Then David said, "No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever." And David gathered all Israel together at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it. Then David assembled the children of Aaron and the Levites: of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the

chief, and one hundred and twenty of his brethren; of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and two hundred and twenty of his brethren; of the sons of Gershon, Joel the chief, and one hundred and thirty of his brethren; of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and two hundred of his brethren; of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, and eighty of his brethren; of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and one hundred and twelve of his brethren. And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites: for Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. He said to them, "You are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites; sanctify yourselves, you and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel to the place I have prepared for it. For because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order." So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel. And the children of the Levites bore the ark of God on their shoulders, by its poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD. Then David spoke to the leaders of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy. So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of their brethren, the sons of Merari, Ethan the son of Kushaiah; and with them their brethren of the second rank: Zechariah, Ben, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel, the gatekeepers; the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were to sound the cymbals of bronze; Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with strings according to Alamoth; Mattithiah, Elipheleh, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah, to direct with harps on the Sheminith; Chenaniah, leader of the Levites, was instructor in charge of the music, because he was skillful; Berechiah and Elkanah were doorkeepers for the ark; Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, were to blow the trumpets before the ark of God; and Obed-Edom and Jehiah, doorkeepers for the ark. So David, the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands went

to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-Edom with joy. And so it was, when God helped the Levites who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, that they offered seven bulls and seven rams. David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master with the singers. David also wore a linen ephod. Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets and with cymbals, making music with stringed instruments and harps. And it happened, as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the City of David, that Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David whirling and playing music; and she despised him in her heart.

#### 1 Chronicles 16:1-43 NKJV

So they brought the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. And when David had finished offering the burnt offerings and the peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. Then he distributed to everyone of Israel, both man and woman, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of meat, and a cake of raisins. And he appointed some of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, to commemorate, to thank, and to praise the LORD God of Israel: Asaph the chief, and next to him Zechariah, then Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, and Obed-Edom: Jeiel with stringed instruments and harps, but Asaph made music with cymbals; Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests regularly blew the trumpets before the ark of the covenant of God. On that day David first delivered this psalm into the hand of Asaph and his brethren, to thank the LORD: Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore! Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, O seed of Israel His servant,

You children of Jacob, His chosen ones! He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth. Remember His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac, And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant, Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance," When you were few in number, Indeed very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one nation to another, And from one kingdom to another people, He permitted no man to do them wrong; Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm." Sing to the LORD, all the earth; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and gladness are in His place. Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Give to the LORD glory and strength. Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth. The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved. Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; And let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; Let the field rejoice, and all that is in it. Then the trees of the woods shall rejoice before the LORD, For He is coming to judge the earth. Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. And say, "Save us, O God of our salvation; Gather us together, and deliver us from the Gentiles, To give thanks to Your holy name, To triumph in Your praise." Blessed be the LORD God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! And all the people said, "Amen!" and praised the LORD. So he left Asaph and his brothers there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD to minister before the ark regularly, as every day's work required; and Obed-Edom with his sixty-eight brethren, including Obed-Edom the son of Jeduthun, and Hosah, to be gatekeepers; and Zadok the priest and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place that was at

Gibeon, to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering regularly morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the Law of the LORD which He commanded Israel; and with them Heman and Jeduthun and the rest who were chosen, who were designated by name, to give thanks to the LORD, because His mercy endures forever; and with them Heman and Jeduthun, to sound aloud with trumpets and cymbals and the musical instruments of God. Now the sons of Jeduthun were gatekeepers. Then all the people departed, every man to his house; and David returned to bless his house.

#### Psalms 96:1-13 NKJV

Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! Sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples, Give to the LORD glory and strength. Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts. Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness! Tremble before Him, all the earth. Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns; The world also is firmly established, It shall not be moved; He shall judge the peoples righteously." Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; Let the sea roar, and all its fullness; Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the woods will rejoice before the LORD. For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.

#### Psalms 105:1-45 NKJV

Oh, give thanks to the LORD! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name; Let the hearts of those

rejoice who seek the LORD! Seek the LORD and His strength; Seek His face evermore! Remember His marvelous works which He has done, His wonders, and the judgments of His mouth, O seed of Abraham His servant, You children of Jacob, His chosen ones! He is the LORD our God; His judgments are in all the earth. He remembers His covenant forever, The word which He commanded, for a thousand generations, The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac, And confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant, Saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan As the allotment of your inheritance," When they were few in number, Indeed very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one nation to another, From one kingdom to another people, He permitted no one to do them wrong; Yes, He rebuked kings for their sakes, Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm." Moreover He called for a famine in the land; He destroyed all the provision of bread. He sent a man before them—Joseph—who was sold as a slave. They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons. Until the time that his word came to pass, The word of the LORD tested him. The king sent and released him, The ruler of the people let him go free. He made him lord of his house, And ruler of all his possessions, To bind his princes at his pleasure, And teach his elders wisdom. Israel also came into Egypt, And Jacob dwelt in the land of Ham. He increased His people greatly, And made them stronger than their enemies. He turned their heart to hate His people, To deal craftily with His servants. He sent Moses His servant, And Aaron whom He had chosen. They performed His signs among them, And wonders in the land of Ham. He sent darkness, and made it dark; And they did not rebel against His word. He turned their waters into blood, And killed their fish. Their land abounded with frogs, Even in the chambers of their kings. He spoke, and there came swarms of flies, And lice in all their territory. He gave them hail for rain, And



flaming fire in their land. He struck their vines also, and their fig trees,  
And splintered the trees of their territory. He spoke, and locusts came,  
Young locusts without number, And ate up all the vegetation in their  
land, And devoured the fruit of their ground. He also destroyed all the  
firstborn in their land, The first of all their strength. He also brought  
them out with silver and gold, And there was none feeble among His  
tribes. Egypt was glad when they departed, For the fear of them had  
fallen upon them. He spread a cloud for a covering, And fire to give  
light in the night. The people asked, and He brought quail, And satisfied  
them with the bread of heaven. He opened the rock, and water gushed  
out; It ran in the dry places like a river. For He remembered His holy  
promise, And Abraham His servant. He brought out His people with joy,  
His chosen ones with gladness. He gave them the lands of the Gentiles,  
And they inherited the labor of the nations, That they might observe His  
statutes And keep His laws. Praise the LORD!

Psalms 106:1-48 NKJV

Praise the LORD! Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His  
mercy endures forever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD?  
Who can declare all His praise? Blessed are those who keep justice, And  
he who does righteousness at all times! Remember me, O LORD, with  
the favor You have toward Your people. Oh, visit me with Your  
salvation, That I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones, That I may  
rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, That I may glory with Your  
inheritance. We have sinned with our fathers, We have committed  
iniquity, We have done wickedly. Our fathers in Egypt did not  
understand Your wonders; They did not remember the multitude of Your  
mercies, But rebelled by the sea—the Red Sea. Nevertheless He saved  
them for His name's sake, That He might make His mighty power  
known. He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it dried up; So He led them  
through the depths, As through the wilderness. He saved them from the  
hand of him who hated them, And redeemed them from the hand of the  
enemy. The waters covered their enemies; There was not one of them

left. Then they believed His words; They sang His praise. They soon forgot His works; They did not wait for His counsel, But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, And tested God in the desert. And He gave them their request, But sent leanness into their soul. When they envied Moses in the camp, And Aaron the saint of the LORD, The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan, And covered the faction of Abiram. A fire was kindled in their company; The flame burned up the wicked. They made a calf in Horeb, And worshiped the molded image. Thus they changed their glory Into the image of an ox that eats grass. They forgot God their Savior, Who had done great things in Egypt, Wondrous works in the land of Ham, Awesome things by the Red Sea. Therefore He said that He would destroy them, Had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach, To turn away His wrath, lest He destroy them. Then they despised the pleasant land; They did not believe His word, But complained in their tents, And did not heed the voice of the LORD. Therefore He raised His hand in an oath against them, To overthrow them in the wilderness, To overthrow their descendants among the nations, And to scatter them in the lands. They joined themselves also to Baal of Peor, And ate sacrifices made to the dead. Thus they provoked Him to anger with their deeds, And the plague broke out among them. Then Phinehas stood up and intervened, And the plague was stopped. And that was accounted to him for righteousness To all generations forevermore. They angered Him also at the waters of strife, So that it went ill with Moses on account of them; Because they rebelled against His Spirit, So that he spoke rashly with his lips. They did not destroy the peoples, Concerning whom the LORD had commanded them, But they mingled with the Gentiles And learned their works; They served their idols, Which became a snare to them. They even sacrificed their sons And their daughters to demons, And shed innocent blood, The blood of their sons and daughters, Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; And the land was polluted with blood. Thus they were defiled by their own works, And played the harlot by their own deeds. Therefore the wrath of the LORD was kindled against His people, So that He abhorred His own inheritance. And He gave them into the hand of the Gentiles, And those who hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also

oppressed them, And they were brought into subjection under their hand. Many times He delivered them; But they rebelled in their counsel, And were brought low for their iniquity. Nevertheless He regarded their affliction, When He heard their cry; And for their sake He remembered His covenant, And relented according to the multitude of His mercies. He also made them to be pitied By all those who carried them away captive. Save us, O LORD our God, And gather us from among the Gentiles, To give thanks to Your holy name, To triumph in Your praise. Blessed be the LORD God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the LORD!

### **Daily Deep Dive:**

The UCG reading program states: "With Jerusalem now the royal city of Israel, it is finally time to bring "church and state" together in this centralized location. So David calls for the Ark of the Covenant to be moved to Jerusalem from Kirjath Jearim, approximately 10 miles west of Jerusalem. The ark has been situated here since the Philistines relinquished it to the Israelites (1 Samuel 6:21).

Now we come to a very important lesson that David and all Israel had to relearn. Let's review some of the specific instructions that God previously gave for Israel to follow.

The ark of God was an extremely holy object, representing His presence (see Exodus 25:21-22). It had to be handled with the utmost regard to strict regulation in the Law of Moses, which mandated that the care of the most holy things was entrusted to the Levitical sons of Kohath (Numbers 3:29-31). Yet even these caretakers were not to touch the holy articles or so much as look casually upon them "lest they die" (Numbers 4:15, 20). The Kohathites were instructed to carry the ark on their shoulders by poles passing through rings on the ark's corners to keep them from touching it (Numbers 4:1-16; Exodus 25:14-15). It was not to be transported by cart or any other vehicle (Numbers 7:6-9). David,

however, was using the same transport method the Philistines had used (compare 1 Samuel 6:7-8).

Yet God says, "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left" (Deuteronomy 5:32). And: "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (4:2).

Also: "Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it" (12:32).

We are never to reason against, or attempt to change, God's commands.

A king was not to be ignorant of God's instruction: "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that *he shall write for himself a copy of this law* in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and *he shall read it all the days of his life*, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and *be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes*, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel" (17:18-20). Thus, God requires *much* of a leader He chooses.

Though Uzzah's violation is apparently unintentional, God makes a powerful example of him. It is possible, of course, that Uzzah was more involved in what happened than we know. As one given the great honor of walking so closely to the ark, it may be that he was instrumental in the decision to use the cart. Perhaps it was his cart or oxen being employed. And, in any case, he is the one who actually touched the ark. Still, it appears he meant well.

When Uzzah is struck down, then, David becomes angry—and not, it should be pointed out, at his own carelessness. Evidently, David still doesn't understand important aspects of what has gone wrong. That he

has either forgotten or is ignorant of God's specific instructions regarding the transport of the ark is apparent from 1 Chronicles 13:12: "David was afraid of God that day; saying, 'How can I bring the ark of God to me?'" (compare 2 Samuel 6:9). He doesn't know.

So his anger, then, is at God—for what He has done to Uzzah. His death seems so unjust and unnecessarily harsh, as it does, no doubt, to many today. After all, Uzzah was trying to protect the ark, and David, who had made the decision about transporting it, was zealous to restore God's prescribed tabernacle worship to the nation. But he should have looked more closely at exactly what God had prescribed.

Moreover, there were other Levites who probably knew of God's instructions and should have made His will known to David. Ignorance and forgetfulness do not negate God's specific commands. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," God will later proclaim (Hosea 4:6). In other words, what you don't know *can* hurt you! Because of such neglect, Uzzah was killed by God. So what began as a joyous time of celebration has turned into a very sad and sobering moment.

God is sending a warning signal here to all people of all times that He is not a God to be trifled with. We must approach Him with the proper awe and respect. And David does receive a dose of healthy fear of God, which undoubtedly sends him to the Scriptures or to the priests to determine what ought to be done—as should have been done in the first place. Let this, then, serve as a lesson for all of us too. From the point of view of leadership, the decisions a leader makes brings consequences—either good or bad—on the lives of those he leads.

As for Uzzah, he will stand in the general resurrection of the dead after Christ's millennial reign (compare Revelation 20:5, Revelation 20:11-12) with all those of mankind who have not yet been given an opportunity for salvation—and he will then be able to choose whether to

truly serve the Lord. God is ultimately fair. Indeed, Uzzah will awake in a world far better than the one he has left behind.

For the next three months, the ark is left at the home of Obed-Edom, a Levite of the line of Korah who will later be one of the doorkeepers for the ark (1 Chronicles 15:18, 1 Chronicles 15:24; 1 Chronicles 26:4-8). He is also called a Gittite (2 Samuel 6:11) because he is from the Levitical city of Gath Rimmon (compare Joshua 21:24).

When David hears that those of the house of Obed-Edom have been blessed due to their possession of the ark, he is once again encouraged to bring it to Jerusalem. The account in 1 Chronicles 15 reveals that David is now aware that the ark had not been transported according to God's instructions: "Then David said, 'No one may carry the ark of God but the Levites, for the LORD has chosen them to carry the ark of God and to minister before Him forever'" (verse 2). And to them he says in verse 13, "For because you did not do it the first time, the LORD our God broke out against us, because we did not consult Him about the proper order" (Hebrew *mishpat*, "judgment, law, decree, charge").

Again, God's law, charge or decree concerning the transport of the ark can be found in Exodus 25:14-15 and Numbers (Numbers 4:5, Numbers 4:15; Numbers 7:9; Numbers 10:21). The ark was to be carried on the shoulders of the Levites, through the use of poles that were inserted through rings. That is now done "as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD" (1 Chronicles 15:15).

The account in 2 Samuel 6 reveals the deep respect and care that David takes in carrying out God's instructions concerning transportation of the ark. Sacrifices are offered to God after those bearing the ark have "gone six paces" (verse 13). It is unclear whether this means just once, after the first approximately 18 feet traveled, or if it implies once every 18 feet that the ark is carried, all the way to Jerusalem.

David once again rejoices with shouting, music and dancing as the ark is carried into Jerusalem. This is not just loud "noise," because those appointed to perform are skilled musicians and singers. David is a skilled musician and composer himself. His manner of celebration, however, earns the contempt of his wife Michal. We will see more about the specifics of her derision in this instance when we read soon of David's return home, but it is apparent that Michal despised him for much more than his actions on this occasion.

Michal's is a terribly tragic story. She was very much in love with the young heroic David in his earlier years (1 Samuel 18:20, 28). And when he bravely killed 200 Philistines to marry her (verse 27), she must have loved him even more. But her love for David estranged this young princess from her father King Saul. Indeed, when Saul sought to kill David, Michal put her own life on the line to help her husband escape (1 Samuel 19:11-18). But his escape only resulted in her separation from him as David spent at least 10 years fleeing from Saul. In fact, Saul annulled her marriage to David and had Michal wed to another man named Palti (1 Samuel 25:44). While in this new marriage, her father and Jonathan, her brother, died in battle.

David, now recently established with the full regal power of Israel, had demanded that Michal be restored to him. So she was forcibly taken from her husband, Palti. As he wept uncontrollably (2 Samuel 3:15-16), it is apparent that he sincerely loved her—and perhaps she had come to love him in return. Yet here she was back with David—no longer the young hero but king in her father's stead (a position no longer disputed since the assassination of her brother Ishbosheth shortly after her return to David). Worse, she could expect no monogamous devotion from her husband. David now had a harem—and she had to compete with at least six other women for whatever attention she might receive from him.

As *The Nelson Study Bible* concludes: "It is not likely that these mere actions of David, as he celebrated before the Lord at the return of the ark, brought about Michal's hatred of him (2 Samuel 6:16). Her hatred had probably grown over the years. Her sarcastic words [which we'll soon read] on David's great day of religious and spiritual joy came from a lifetime of pain (2 Samuel 6:20). Unlike her brother Jonathan, Michal did not accept her God-given lot and trust God for her future happiness (1 Samuel 23:16-18). Instead, she became bitter not only at David, but also toward God [which appears evident in that she was not joyful over the return of the ark and the restoration of tabernacle worship—even staying home instead of participating in the celebration]. Tragically, Scripture gives no indication that there was any healing for Michal. She died childless (2 Samuel 6:23)" ("A Love That Turned to Hate," p. 517). The festivities surrounding the ark being brought to Jerusalem continue. In 1 Chronicles 16, David gives certain of the Levites the responsibility of offering to God thanks and praise on a continual basis before the ark of the Lord. The appointments in the previous chapter concerned the immediate task of moving the ark to Jerusalem, but the ones here are more permanent in nature though involving some of the same people (compare 1 Chronicles 15:1-24; 1 Chronicles 16:5-6). This continual offering of praise is reminiscent of the apostle John's vision in the book of Revelation, wherein angelic choirs are seen offering continual praise before the throne of God in heaven.

Appointed chief of this ongoing special music is Asaph, leader of the Gershonite Levites (1 Chronicles 6:39, 43). Asaph and his sons will serve mainly as singers (1 Chronicles 25:1-2; 2 Chronicles 20:14) and composers, as the superscriptions of their psalms attest (see Psalm 50; Psalms 73-83).

Verses 8-36 of 1 Chronicles 16 constitute a song written by David offering thanks and praise to God, which David gives to Asaph to be



performed on this occasion. In it we are all admonished to: a) give thanks to God for all that He has done for Israel and for mankind; b) declare these things to all; c) tell of His glory; d) fear Him; and e) give back to Him of the abundance He has given us. These things should be reflected in the lives of those who trust in Him.

The lyrics of the first part of David's psalm (verses 8-22) are repeated in the first part of Psalm 105 (verses 1-15). Again we are admonished to continually seek God. Christ tells us in Matthew 7:7 that if we do, we will find Him. Perhaps the key idea of the psalm is found in the word "remember" (1 Chronicles 16:12; Psalm 105:5). We are to *remember* God's goodness to His people. Yet even if the people forget, God does not. "He *remembers* His covenant forever" (Psalm 105:8)—that is, the very basis for His special relationship with His people.

The lyrics of the second part of David's psalm of 1 Chronicles 16 are repeated in Psalm 96. Again, we are to praise God, to sing of Him, to proclaim Him to others, and to worship Him in our lives and with our offerings. In verse 11-12 (or 1 Chronicles 16:31-33), trees and other inanimate elements of creation are pictured as rejoicing at the Lord's coming to judge the earth. This personification is a literary device; it does not mean that trees actually have thinking minds and emotions. The point is that creation will only be restored to its intended condition when humanity in general is brought back in line with the laws of God. This will commence with the return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the saints (compare Revelation 11:18; Romans 8:19-22). Psalm 96 adds the additional point that Christ "shall judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with His truth" (verse 13).

The concluding lyrics of David's psalm of thanks in 1 Chronicles 16 (verses 34-36) are repeated in Psalm 106 (verses 1, 47-48). Verse 1 (1 Chronicles 16:34) is another call to give thanks to God for all He has

done. On this occasion of unifying Israel under one king and one worship system, David asks God to truly gather the people together and to deliver them from the power of the gentile nations around them (verse 35; compare Psalm 106:47). The spiritual parallel with those in God's Church today should be obvious. The final verse (1 Chronicles 16:36) will later be used as the concluding verse of book 4 of the Psalms (Psalm 106:48). The later verse tells the people of God to say *Amen*, or "So be it," as they actually do in 1 Chronicles 16:36.

We wrap up our reading of Psalm 105, the first part of which is taken from David's psalm of 1 Chronicles 16. Whereas the first part concentrated on God's covenant with the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the second part continues beyond them with the story of Joseph, the enslavement of Israel in Egypt and God's deliverance of His people from there—all a testament to His faithfulness to the covenant He made. Interestingly, God's stated purpose for delivering His people and giving them a homeland was "that they might observe His statutes and keep His laws" (verse 45). That is also His purpose for us today.

In 1 Chronicles 16:37-43, further details are given of the service required in carrying out the tabernacle worship of that time. But here we learn something surprising. For bringing the ark to Jerusalem, as we saw in 1 Chronicles 15:11, David had summoned the high priest Abiathar, descendant of Eli of the line of Aaron's son Ithamar, as well as another leading priest, Zadok, of the line of Aaron's son Eleazar. It is apparent that David would leave the high priest, Abiathar, in charge at Jerusalem to preside over the rites of the tabernacle raised up here to house the Ark of the Covenant (compare 16:1). His son Ahimelech, or Abimelech, will be of major assistance in this (compare 18:16; 2 Samuel 8:17). Yet in this passage we find David assigning Zadok and his sons to officiate "before the tabernacle of the Lord at the high place that was at Gibeon, to offer burnt offerings to the LORD on the altar of burnt offering

regularly morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the Law of the Lord which He commanded Israel" (1 Chronicles 16:39-40).

This is easier to understand when we compare it with an event years later at the beginning of the reign of David's son Solomon recorded in 2 Chronicles 1: "Then Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for the tabernacle of meeting with God was there, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. But David had brought the ark of God from Kirjath Jearim to the place David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it at Jerusalem. Now the bronze altar that Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made, he put before the tabernacle of the LORD [which is now in Gibeon]; Solomon and the assembly sought Him there. And Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the LORD, which was at the tabernacle of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it" (verses 3-6). And this is completely acceptable to God, as He blesses Solomon at Gibeon on the night that follows this offering (verses 7-12; 1 Kings 3:4-13).

Evidently, after Saul murdered the priests at Nob (1 Samuel 22:19), the tabernacle—that is, the original Mosaic tabernacle from the wilderness with its great bronze altar—had been moved to a hilltop at Gibeon, a few miles northwest of Jerusalem. Thus, David's restoration of tabernacle worship for the ark at Jerusalem does not include bringing the original tabernacle to house it. Instead, we see that he has had a *new* tabernacle built. As for why this is, or why he didn't have the ark returned to the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon instead, we are not told. Knowing that the dwellings of the ark would be blessed and holy (compare 2 Samuel 6:9-12; 2 Chronicles 8:11), perhaps he wanted it next to him simply for that reason—to bless him and his kingdom. Whatever the reason, it is evident that until Solomon's temple is built in Jerusalem, there are *two* legitimate

places for national worship—the new tabernacle at Jerusalem with the ark, where Abiathar and his son Ahimelech officiate, and the original tabernacle at Gibeon, where Zadok and his sons perform the priestly duties.

When David returns home after the festivities, Michal, her bitterness inflamed (see highlights on 1 Chronicles 15:1-16:3 and 2 Samuel 6:12-19), disdainfully mocks her husband (2 Samuel 6:20). "The scornful remark about David's uncovering himself no doubt refers to the priestly attire worn by the king instead of his royal robes (v. 14). Dancing about in this short garment, David had exposed more of himself than Michal [who had been raised a princess] thought appropriate" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verse 20). Indeed, in comparing him to "base fellows," perhaps she even considers him unworthy of kingship for having no royal sensibilities. It may also be that her particular circumstances of now having to compete with the rest of David's harem has made her focus in on this fault of his—and that she has convinced herself that it was actually his goal in the celebration to attract the attention of women. David rebukes her, reminding her that God has chosen him in place of her father—perhaps implying that the royal ideas her father raised her with are incorrect. He goes on to say that he will be even more undignified if the situation calls for it, that he refuses to look upon himself as all high and mighty, and that this approach will be understood and respected by the women of the land—unlike her. According to Scripture, this episode is the reason Michal never has children—but whether this is due to a resultant estrangement from David or a direct punishment of barrenness from God is not made clear. In any case, there will be no possible successor to David's throne from the line of Saul."

[END]

2 SAMUEL 6 additional comments:

Verse 3 – It’s interesting that it twice states in this verse that the cart was “new”. This may show that weren’t cavalier about how to transport the Ark and even went as far as preparing or obtaining a brand-new cart to move it. But as was clearly stated above, they seem not to know the clear instructions God gave on how to move the Ark and therefore, were still sinning.

Verse 7 – This verse states that God killed Uzzah for his “error”. This is the only time in the Bible this word is used. It means “error or fault” but comes from a root word meaning “to be negligent” or “mislead”. This may give us a bit greater insight that Uzzah may have been a part of misleading David and the team into believing that this was an acceptable way to God to move the Ark or it may just indicate he was killed for his negligence in understanding God’s law.

Verse 8 – “Perez Uzzah” means “breach or bursting forth against Uzzah”.

Verse 14 – Regarding David wearing a linen ephod, John Gill’s commentary states: “which others, besides priests, sometimes wore, as Samuel did, and which David might choose to appear in, rather than in his royal robes, as being more agreeable to the service of God, and lighter for him both to walk and dance in on this occasion.”

Verse 19 – Remember that peace offerings were allowed to be eaten by all who were “clean” and included a time of great Feasting and celebration. Representative of God, His ordained Priests and all clean individuals feasting together in peace, togetherness, unity and wholeness.

Verse 22 – The NKJV word translated “undignified” means and could be translated “to be of little account” or “to be slight (thought less of)”. It appears from this word that Michal thought his behavior was not worthy of his position as king.

Read: 1 Chronicles 13, 15, 16, Psalms 96, 105, & 106

PSALM 96 – “The UCG reading plan states “We earlier read Psalm 96 in conjunction with 1 Chronicles 16, which concerns David having the Ark of the Covenant brought to its new tabernacle in Jerusalem. The words of Psalm 96, with some alteration, appear as a significant portion of the latter half of the psalm David composed for that occasion (see 1 Chronicles 16:23-33). Portions of Psalms 105 and 106 may also be found in that psalm in 1 Chronicles 16.

It appears that the 1 Chronicles 16 psalm was the original composition--later divided into separate psalms, probably for temple worship.

Consider that Psalm 96 seems to have been produced through editing the lyrics of 1 Chronicles 16:23-33. Note for instance the following sets of three--sing, sing, sing (verses 1-3), give, give, give (verses 7-9), and let, let, let (verses 11-13). The parallel arrangement in 1 Chronicles 16 has the words sing just once and the word let four times in a row.

It is interesting in this light to consider the first words of Psalm 96, which do not appear in 1 Chronicles 16: "Oh, sing to the LORD a new song!"--the same as Psalm 98:1 (compare also Psalm 33:3; Psalm 40:3; Psalm 144:9; Psalm 149:1). The words of Psalm 96 were probably not new when it was arranged but were being used in a new situation. The music was likely somewhat different, given the word changes. But the main point is probably that all worship songs are to be sung as new--as heartfelt communication rather than rote memorization.

We ought to consider this in singing hymns today. We should always find fresh reasons for praising God. As one commentator suggests: "A new experience of God's blessing, a new truth discovered in the Word, a new beginning after a crisis, a new open door for service--all of these can make an old song new or give us a new song from the Lord" (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Exultant--Psalms 90-150: Praising God for His Mighty Works*, note on verses 1-3). The psalm further implies that the new song will be a daily expression of the good news of salvation and God's glorious works (verses 1-3).

Psalm 96 is paired with Psalm 98 in both theme and arrangement. They begin and end quite similarly--and they both demonstrate an expanding throng of praise: 1) the worshipping congregation of Israel proclaiming God among the nations (Psalm 96:1-5; Psalm 98:1-3); 2) all the nations of the earth joining in worship (Psalm 96:7-10; Psalm 98:4-6); and 3) all creation rejoicing (Psalm 96:11-13; Psalm 98:7-9). As we will see, each of these psalms is followed by a hymn celebrating the Lord's reign (compare Psalm 97:1; Psalm 99:1) and its special benefits for the people of Zion (compare Psalm 97:8-12; Psalm 99:4-9). "This arrangement suggests that Ps 97 has been linked with 96 and Ps 99 with 98 to form a pair of thematic couplets--introduced by Ps 95" (Zondervan NIV Study Bible, note on Psalm 96).

Psalm 96:4 tells us that God is to be praised for His greatness and that He is to be feared--held in reverent respect and awe--"above all gods." The other "gods" people worship are mere idols, but the true God is the Creator of the universe (verse 5)--which includes anything people might decide to worship. This same reasoning was employed in the previous psalm (Psalm 95:3-5). God is surrounded by majestic honor, strength and splendor in His sanctuary--in context seeming to refer to not merely His physical house on earth but to His heavenly abode (96:6).

The three-fold call give, give, give in verses 7-8 ("ascribe" in the NIV), which does occur in 1 Chronicles 16, has a parallel in David's words of Psalm 29:1-2. The idea is that of rendering God His due. Examples of what to render are also given here in triplet form: offering, worship and proper fear (Psalm 96:8-9). Worshipping "in the beauty of holiness" is also found in the parallel verses above.

Where 1 Chronicles 16 has the directive to "say among the nations, 'The LORD reigns'" (verse 31) as the second of its four "let" verses, it is placed before the "let" verses in Psalm 96. The pairing of this phrase with the comment on the firm establishment of the world in Psalm 96:10, demonstrating God's present sovereignty, is also found in the introduction to the royal psalms of this section (see Psalm 93:1). This also introduces the future reign of God through Jesus Christ, when "He shall judge the peoples righteously" (Psalm 96:10).

In verses 11-12, as noted above, the whole creation is personified as rejoicing at the establishment of that future reign (compare Romans 8:18-23). Where 1 Chronicles 16:33 mentions God as coming to judge the earth (administering His righteous rule and justice throughout it), Psalm 96:13 builds more intensity regarding this theme with the repetition of "He is coming" and the addition of the final sentence describing Christ's coming rule. As already mentioned, a close parallel to the encouraging conclusion in verses 11-13 is found in Psalm 98:7-9."

[END]

PSALM 105 – The UCG reading plan states "Psalm 105 continues from the past two psalms on the theme of praising and thanking God for His benefits—in this case, for His special care and provision for Israel in fulfillment of His promises. We earlier read Psalm 105 in conjunction with David's bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem—for the



first 15 verses of the psalm are taken from the first part of David's song composed for that occasion (1 Chronicles 16:4-36).

Just as the same doxology or praise expression "Bless the LORD, O my soul!" appears at the beginning and end of both Psalms 103 and 104, it seems likely that another doxology, "Praise the LORD!"

(Hebrew Hallelujah) is found at the beginning and end of Psalms 105 and 106—the last two psalms of Book IV in the Psalter. It appears that the doxology "Praise the LORD!" at the end of Psalm 104 should actually begin Psalm 105—as it does in the Septuagint—prefixed to the statement from 2 Chronicles 16:1: "Oh, give thanks to the LORD!" (Psalm 105:1). Again, observe that the same doxology ends Psalm 105 and that it has been prefixed to the excerpt from 1 Chronicles 16:34 in Psalm 106:1 (and also affixed to the adaptation of 2 Chronicles 16:35-36 in Psalm 106:47-48).

Psalm 105:1-15 follows the source material from David in 1 Chronicles by instructing others to thank God, to seek Him and call on Him and to proclaim His wondrous deeds to others—one important way being through psalms such as this one. Minor changes may be noted from the source material. For instance, Psalm 105:6 refers to the Israelites ("children of Jacob") as the "seed of Abraham His servant" rather than "seed of Israel His servant" (see 1 Chronicles 16:13)—perhaps to emphasize the covenant with Abraham mentioned a few verses later.

Both descriptions are of course true. The progression of patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel) appears in 1 Chronicles 16:16-17 and Psalm 105:9-10. In the entire book of Psalms the name Jacob occurs 34 times while Abraham is mentioned by name in only Psalm 105 (verses 6, 9, 42) and 47:9—and Isaac is recalled by name in Psalm 105:9 only.

In 1 Chronicles 16, David had emphasized the theme of remembering—for the Israelites to remember God's marvelous works and judgments (verse 12) and to remember the covenant He made with the patriarchs to

give their descendants the land of Canaan (verses 15-19). The first reference (verse 12) is repeated in Psalm 105 verbatim (verse 5). Yet in the second reference, rather than calling for the audience to "remember His covenant forever" (1 Chronicles 16:15), Psalm 105 says that "He remembers His covenant forever" (verse 8). The change here would seem to stress that even if the people don't remember, God does. This further demonstrates, in line with other psalms of this section, God's benefits—here being His eternal faithfulness. The same theme of remembering is built on later in verse 42, where God's faithfulness is again demonstrated.

David's words in 1 Chronicles 16:20-22, repeated in Psalm 105:13-15, are a further reference to the patriarchs. God had promised them the land of Canaan as an inheritance when their households were few in number and they were actually strangers in the land, which was for the most part out of their control (verses 11-12). Though not immediately giving them this homeland, God preserved them from harm in the meantime as they traveled as nomads from nation to nation and kingdom to kingdom (verses 13-14). Regarding his rebuking of kings for their sakes, telling these rulers not to hurt His anointed ones (verse 15)—here synonymous with His prophets (same verse)—note two examples in the life of Abraham (see Genesis 12:10-20; Genesis 20:1-17). In the latter instance, God told Abimelech (the Philistine king of Gerar) that Abraham was a prophet (verse 7). Other stories in Genesis show that God continued to oversee the lives of Isaac and Jacob, protecting them from those who would have harmed them.

We then move into the latter part of Psalm 105, which was not taken from David's earlier composition in 1 Chronicles 16. The author of this latter section is unknown. It could have been David or, just as easily, anyone else from his time up to that of Ezra more than five centuries later. This section follows on from God's promise to give the land of

Canaan to Israel by telling the story of what led up to their eventual inheritance (verses 16-45).

The psalmist picks up the Genesis account with the story of Joseph, who was sold by his brothers into slavery and ended up the ruler of all Egypt under its pharaoh. While in prison, Joseph, with God's inspiration, accurately interpreted the divinely induced dreams of the pharaoh's baker and butler—eventually securing his release. This is evidently what is referred to in Psalm 105:18-19, which the NIV translates as saying that Joseph was imprisoned "till what he foretold came to pass, till the word of the LORD proved him true." Joseph then interpreted dreams of the pharaoh to mean that a period of plenty would be followed by a period of famine—and the pharaoh appointed Joseph as his vizier or prime minister to oversee the storing up of provisions for the famine. This eventually served to provide during the time of famine for Joseph's father Israel or Jacob and the rest of his family—who came down to settle in Egypt. Verse 16 declares the destruction of provision and resultant famine to be the work of God. And verse 17 further declares Joseph being sent as a slave to Egypt to be by God's design—so as to provide for His people. This is just what Joseph himself acknowledged in assuring His brothers that He would not take vengeance on them: "You meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones" (Genesis 50:20-21).

Note, incidentally, that Egypt is referred to here as the "land of Ham" (Psalms 105:23, Psalms 105:27; Psalms 106:22; compare Psalms 78:51). Ham was one of the three sons of Noah, and from him sprang Mizraim or the Egyptians (Genesis 10:1, Genesis 10:6). The H in "Ham" was pronounced as a heavily aspirated or "coughed" K—so that the name could be written as Khem (as the Moffatt Translation renders the word

in Psalms 105 and 106). Khem (sometimes spelled Chem) was in fact the ancient name for Egypt, written in hieroglyphic script as KM, the name denoting "black" or "hot" (in the sense of "burnt."). The "black" meaning here is often understood to refer to the darkened fertile soil along the length of the Nile. But the name Khem could just as well derive from the name Ham, which has the same meaning, or be a reference to Ham's dark-skinned descendants.

Jacob's family grew and prospered in Egypt until God turned the hearts of the Egyptians "to hate His people...and deal craftily with His servants" (Psalm 105:25). At no time does the psalmist question why this long history of intrigue and reversal was necessary for giving the Promised Land to Abraham's descendants. He trusts God. The Lord's performance of spectacular miracles during the Exodus period that comes next in the story flow was critical for Israel's remembering(see Deuteronomy 15:15).

In introducing the Exodus, the psalmist mentions God sending Moses and Aaron to perform signs and wonders (Psalm 105:26-27; compare Exodus 4; Exodus 7:8-13). He then follows with a description of the plagues with which God struck Egypt (Psalm 105:26-36; compare Exodus 7:14-12:30). The psalmist begins with the plague of darkness (Psalm 105:28a), which was actually the ninth of the 10 plagues. It may be that he was using this to metaphorically represent all the plagues as a dark time of affliction for Egypt. And this could have been intended as a play on words—the sending of darkness or blackness on the "Black Land" (as "land of Ham" in the previous verse could mean).

The second part of verse 28 has caused much difficulty in interpretation. The NKJV has: "And they did not rebel against His word." Some take the "they" as "these"—referring to the plagues that follow in the next few verses, meaning that these (in a personified sense) did not veer from accomplishing what God sent them to do. Others take the "they" of verse

28 to be the same "they" of verse 27, that is, Moses and Aaron (verse 26), which would mean they did not go astray from fulfilling the signs God gave them to perform. Others take "they" in verse 28 to refer to the "them" of verse 25, among whom signs were performed—though it is not clear whether this refers to the Israelites or the Egyptians (see verses 24-25). If the Israelites, verse 28 would mean that they did not go against doing what God commanded them at this time—i.e., keeping the Passover, etc.

However, the "they" in verse 28 is usually understood to refer to the Egyptians, as "their" in the next verse clearly refers to them. Yet how did the Egyptians "not rebel against [God's] word" when they were punished for defying God's command to release His people? Some Bible versions try to fix this problem by dropping the word "not" before "rebel"—meaning that the Egyptians did rebel. However, the Hebrew word for "not"—lo—is clearly present here. The NIV and Jewish Publication Society Tanakh more reasonably solve the problem by interpreting the words as a rhetorical question: "...for had they not rebelled against his words?" Another possibility is that the statement here speaks of the end result of all the plagues—that the darkness of the plagues in the previous clause broke the Egyptians so that they no longer rebelled against His order to release His people. Finally, it may be that the statement simply means that at all points the Egyptians did not withstand His word (to any effect)—as they could not.

The psalm then reiterates the various plagues in generally the same order as the book of Exodus except for switching flies and lice and skipping over the fifth plague of livestock deaths and the sixth plague of boils (and, as already mentioned, for having darkness first as a summary rather than in its actual next-to-last position). The psalm, we must remember, is written as poetry and makes no claim to giving the

historical order. The present wording may simply have better fit the musical composition.

Following the description of Egypt's punishment, we then again see God's provision and benefits for His people. Psalm 105:37 mentions the Israelites departing enriched with silver and gold. Where the same verse says that there was "none feeble" among them, J.P. Green's Literal Translation says that "not one was stumbling." The NIV says "no one faltered" (compare JPS Tanakh). Thus, God took such excellent care of His people that everyone made it. Verse 39 describes His pillar of cloud and fire, which shaded the people from the desert sun during the day and gave them light to see at night. And during their travel through the desert He miraculously fed them with quail, manna and water (verses 40-41)—the word "satisfied" here recalling the listing of God's benefits in Psalm 103:5.

God performed all of this because ("for") "He remembered His holy promise" to Abraham (Psalm 105:42). Joyfully and gladly, God gave the land to "His chosen ones," Abraham's descendants. They inherited a land already developed by the labor of the Canaanites, so they could immediately enjoy its produce and benefits. Yet all this required a proper heartfelt response of gratitude (as the psalm begins) and the honoring of God through obedience. "He gave them the lands...that they might observe His statutes and keep his laws" (verse 45).

God remembered His covenant and promises and stuck to them—and the people needed to do the same. Moreover, these wonderful laws, as God's greatest benefits to Israel, gave the people far more freedom than their physical deliverance from Egypt. Far more than land and populace in the land of Canaan, obedience to God's laws would make them a truly great nation, as God had also promised Abraham (compare Genesis 12:1-3; Deuteronomy 4:6-8). This promise is yet to be completely

fulfilled when Israel at last comes to properly understand all this and fully submits to God's ways in the Kingdom of God.

Psalms 105 makes it clear that God is in charge of history—and guides its outcome for the benefit of His people. As we will see, the next psalm continues the theme of God remembering His people for their great benefit (compare Psalm 106:4-5). As we reflect on these psalms, may we all join in our thoughts in the expression that opens and closes them: Hallelujah or "Praise the LORD!" [END]

PSALM 106 – The UCG reading plan states “In the arrangement of the Psalter as it has come down to us, Psalm 106 is the concluding psalm of Book IV. Yet as explained in the Beyond Today Bible Commentary introductory comments on the Psalms, it appears that Books IV and V originally formed a single collection before a book division was placed here. Furthermore, as was mentioned in the opening comments on Psalm 101, Psalms 101-110 appear to form a collection of hymns. Indeed, Psalms 105, 106 and 107 (now the first psalm of Book V) seem to be very closely related (more on this later). Of course, the location of the book division here, though seemingly artificial, must surely have been very carefully selected. Perhaps this place was chosen so that Book V would flow right on from Book IV in theme and tone, serving to establish the continuity of the psalms.

Recall that Psalms 103 and 104 both begin and end with the same inner exhortation "Bless the LORD, O my soul." Likewise, as noted in prior comments, it appears that Psalms 105 and 106 both begin and end with a shared doxology or praise expression: *Hallelujah* or, as translated, "Praise the LORD!" (as this expression on the last line of Psalm 104 seems more likely to open 105). Coming immediately after these opening words in Psalm 105 is the call to gratitude: "Oh, give thanks to the LORD!" (verse 1), taken along with a large section that follows

(verses 1-15) from David's psalm composed for the occasion of bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem in 1 Chronicles 16 (see verses 7-22). In Psalm 106 we find a parallel to this. Occurring right after *its* opening doxology is another call to thanksgiving taken from a later related line in the very same Davidic composition: "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy [or steadfast love] endures forever" (compare Psalm 106:1; 1 Chronicles 16:34). The *end* of Psalm 106 was essentially taken from the same song as well, as we will later consider further (compare Psalm 106:47-48; 1 Chronicles 16:35-36). For this reason we earlier read these parts of Psalm 106 (verses 1, 47-48) in conjunction with our reading of 1 Chronicles 16. Observe moreover that Psalm 107 *also* opens with David's words "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy [or, again, steadfast love] endures forever." (This is also powerfully expressed throughout Psalm 136.) Many consider Psalm 106 to be a companion to 105 in various respects--including both language and theme. Psalm 106 rehearses much of the same national history covered in 105 but with an expanded perspective. Psalm 105 is a song of thanks to God for His faithfulness in remembering His promises and covenant as a benefit for His people. Psalm 106 thanks God for continuing in His faithfulness despite the rebellion of His people--repeatedly leading them to repentance and restoration. On this basis, the psalm is also a prayer to be included among the recipients of this wonderful benefit of God's mercy and deliverance, which is here asked for yet again. Note especially verses 4-5: "Remember me, O LORD, with the favor You have toward Your people. Oh, visit me with Your salvation, that I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of your nation, that I may glory with your inheritance." Thus, Psalm 106 constitutes a continuation of the presentation of God's benefits to His people begun in Psalm 103--the benefit here being God's wonderful patience.



A strong contrast is drawn throughout the psalm: the sinful rebellion of the people versus the constant faithfulness of God; the people who "*soon forgot His works*" (verse 13), who "*forgot God their Savior*" (verse 21), versus the God who "*for their sake...remembered His covenant, and relented according to the multitude of His mercies*" (verse 45). In all the confession of Israel's rebellion throughout the psalm, we must not make the mistake of seeing this as the point of the psalm. As one commentator expresses it: "The purpose of the psalm is not to condemn Israel but to extol the Lord for His longsuffering and mercy toward His people. In order to glorify God, the writer had to place God's mercies against the dark background of Israel's repeated disobedience" (Wiersbe, *Be Exultant*, introductory note on Psalm 106).

The particular circumstance behind the composition of the psalm is not known except that the psalmist appears to have been scattered with others of God's nation among foreigners (see especially verse 47). For this reason and a statement we will later note in verse 46, many have surmised that the psalm was written during the Babylonian captivity. Furthermore, we can see that the psalmist was familiar with Psalm 105, using it and its source material by David in 1 Chronicles 16 to write Psalm 106. (Some advocate the same author for Psalms 105, 106 and 107.)

The psalmist may have been reflecting on the amazing events described in the previous psalm, "God's wonders in the land of Ham" (Psalm 105:27), for He notes that the Israelites forgot that God did "wondrous works in the land of Ham" (Psalm 106:22). Remarkably, God had done these wondrous works for His people despite the fact that they had basically lost faith in Him and persisted in their failure to acknowledge Him even as He rescued them (verse 7).

Interestingly, the great act of God left out of the Exodus account in Psalm 105 is the Red Sea crossing--but this pivotal event is incorporated

as a major focus in the expansion of the story in Psalm 106 (verses 7-12, 22). Verse 12 says that this episode finally led the people to then believe God's words and sing His praise--yet only, as the next verse clarifies, for a very brief period. They did not wait on God, lacking trust and patience (verse 13), and grumbled for water (see verse 14; compare Exodus 15:22-27), for food (see Exodus 16) and more specifically for meat (see Numbers 11:4-15, Numbers 11:31-35). Although God gave the people what they asked for, He allowed them to suffer consequences (Psalm 106:15; compare Numbers 11:33).

Psalm 106:16-18 recalls the rebellion in Numbers 16 of Korah, Dathan, Abiram and other dissenters who envied and opposed the leadership of Moses and Aaron--though Korah is not named here, perhaps for the simple reason of poetic construction. The earlier horrific episode of the golden calf at Horeb or Mount Sinai, the very site of Israel's covenant with God, is also recalled (Psalm 106:19-20; see Exodus 32). On more than one occasion God would have destroyed the people for their idolatry "had not Moses His chosen one stood before Him in the breach, to turn away His wrath" (verse 23). "The metaphor 'stood in the breach' derives from military language, signifying the bravery of a soldier who stands in the breach of the wall, willing to give his life in warding off the enemy" (*Expositor's Bible Commentary*, note on verse 23). Similar imagery occurs in Ezekiel 22:30, where God finds no one to "stand in the gap" before Him on behalf of His people's land so that he should not destroy it.

The psalm next addresses the Israelites' fearful refusal to honor God in embracing and entering the Promised Land, which brought on them the penalty of their decades of wandering and death in the wilderness (Psalm 106:24-27; see Numbers 14).

The next two incidents in Psalm 106 happened near the end of Israel's wilderness years. The episode of worshipping Baal of Peor (verse 28) is

found in Numbers 25, which mentions the people's involvement in Moabite and Midianite sexual rites. Psalm 106 adds the detail that the people "ate sacrifices of the dead" (verse 28b, KJV)--which horribly might mean that they ate the dead as sacrifices, for Baal worshippers practiced cannibalism (the word cannibal deriving from *Kahna-Baal*, meaning "priest of Baal"). The idolatrous debauchery so provoked God that He sent a plague that killed 24,000 people, withdrawing it only when Aaron's son Phinehas executed an Israelite man and Midianite woman who brazenly attempted to perform their lewd rites at God's tabernacle. Because of Phinehas' bold stand for the holiness of God and His people, God promised him an enduring priesthood for his descendants.

The incident at the "waters of strife" (verse 32) or "waters of Meribah" (NIV) occurred earlier (Numbers 20). Moses lost patience with the people and reacted to their rebellious grumbling "so that he spoke rashly with his lips" (verse 33). As a result of his angry outburst, Moses lost the privilege of leading the people into Canaan. This drastically contrasts with Moses' intercessory role in verse 23. The point seems to be that they wore down even their wonderful intercessor so much that he lost patience with them and stumbled.

When the people finally entered the Promised Land, they "did not destroy the peoples, concerning whom the LORD had commanded them" (verse 34). They instead embraced the lifestyle and customs of the native Canaanites (verse 35). They worshipped their idols, even sacrificing their children to the pagan deities behind them, which were actually demons (verses 36-37; compare Leviticus 17:7; Deuteronomy 32:17; 1 Corinthians 10:20). By these works they defiled themselves and polluted the land (verses 38-39). Therefore God's wrath was so great that He "abhorred His own inheritance" (verse 40). Pathetically, in blending with the gentiles (that is, the other nations), the Israelites were actually

submitting to the ways of peoples who hated them. God therefore gave them over wholly to these enemies (verses 41-42).

Yet God's purpose, even in the midst of His wrath, was not to destroy His people but to bring them to repentance and rescue them. "Many times He delivered them" during the period of the Judges (verse 43), but the people always drifted away from Him (verse 44). Nevertheless, He heard their cry (verse 44), remembered His covenant (verse 45) and relented (same verse). Verse 46 further says that God made His people's captors to take pity on them. *The Zondervan NIV Study Bible* says this "makes clear that the author's recital includes the Babylonian captivity (see 1 Kings 8:50; 2 Chronicles 30:9; Ezra 9:9; Jeremiah 42:12).

Although there were earlier captivities of Israelite communities, no other captive group was said to have been shown pity" (note on Psalm 106:46). This, of course, assumes past Scripture as the only source of the psalmist's information.

Finally, as previously noted, verses 47-48 are, as with the opening of the psalm, taken from David's psalm in 1 Chronicles 16 but with some interesting differences. Observe that David in 1 Chronicles 16 tells those who hear his psalm to "*say*, 'Save us, O God...'" (verse 35). Psalm 106:47 does not say to "*say*," but rather simply *says*, evidently in response to David's words, "Save us, O LORD our God..." David further said to say, "Gather us together, and deliver us from the Gentiles..." In David's context of Israel as an independent nation, this would simply have been a prayer for the unity of God's people and help against foreign enemies bent on destroying them. When applying this statement in Psalm 106:47, notice that it has been changed to fit new circumstances: "...And *gather us from among* the Gentiles..." (emphasis added). This implies a time of captivity--again commonly assumed to mean that the psalmist and his people are captives in Babylon.

The last two lines of verse 47 and the first two lines of verse 48 are the same as in 1 Chronicles 16:35-36. Yet observe in 1 Chronicles 16:36 that the second line ends David's psalm. It is followed by this description of what happened following its performance: "And all the people said, 'Amen!' and praised the LORD" (same verse). This is transformed in Psalm 106:48 into a directive as part of the song: "And let all the people say, 'Amen!' Praise the LORD!" Thus verse 47 says what David told the people to say. And verse 48 tells people to say what the people did say in response to David's song. This ending to Psalm 106 very much seems to be an intrinsic part of the psalm rather than an editorial attachment of a doxology and amen as in other book endings within the Psalter--further strengthening the idea that there was initially no book ending here.”

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