

## HONORING GOD TOGETHER

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### 1 Chronicles 16:1-3, 7-36

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.

### David's Song of Thanksgiving

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.

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This narrative is of the time King David and the Israelites brought the ark of God, also referred to as the ark of the covenant, or the ark of the testimony, to Jerusalem and it is a well-rounded example to give us, as a proper perspective to how we should honor and respect God with fear and reverence, and for us to also have an understanding of our role and purpose in His creation. You can also find this psalm from 1 Chronicles 16 in parts, in **Psalm 25**, **Psalm 90**, and **Psalm 106**. I don't know why this Psalm in 1 Chronicles was separated in the Psalms but here we have the Israelites and King David singing this Psalm as it was being led by Asaph and the other Levites in charge of the music, and they were recognizing God as THE God Almighty, the creator of all things and that He was THEIR GOD. They had gathered together to collectively honor God, give thanks to God, to praise God and to continue in seeking God for His favor but also in just giving humble reverence to Him for who He is. They even had the handing out of a piece of meat, a cake of raisins and a loaf of bread. Isn't it incredible that here we are doing the same thing as in the days of King David, which was some 3000 years ago! How can that be? Because He is still God Almighty who is still seated on His throne with His Son Jesus the Christ seated on HIS throne at the right hand of His Father, who is our God and Heavenly Father.

This time we have together each Sunday IS ordained by God and it is His desire for us to gather together, to be One in Christ, to be His people, and not just to be wise sages that just sit in a cave up in the mountains that people come to seek for wisdom and direction or to sit in a spot in the woods to where we are just grinding out our existence in waiting for Christ's return. We have been given all the wisdom and direction we need in God's Word, that is, the Holy Bible as it is called, and we are to be guided into His truth, to have an understanding of His Word as the Holy Spirit gives of that understanding and wisdom to each of His children. We also have been given the fullness of the Revelation from God through Jesus the Christ, that He is the Messiah, the Savior and the Son of God who takes away the sins of the world, to all who will believe on Him. It is therefore not necessary for us to have any new revelation, as Jesus IS the Revelation of God to us which includes then the book of Revelation, which so happens to be the last book in the Bible, and is referred to as the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Therefore, all we need

is Jesus! If Jesus can't get you there, no one else can! "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord (His name is Jesus) shall be saved".  
(Acts 2:21)

What takes place in this passage of Scripture of King David and the Israelites is what is spoken of by the Apostle Paul in **Ephesians 5:19** as well as in **Colossians 3:16** which says this, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Notice Paul says, "teaching one another". We all, at times, could use a word of wisdom, or an encouraging word, or just to be encouraged in the faith. What we see in this passage of Scripture is really a format, a blueprint, or an outline of how the people of God, that is, God's church (that's us), IS to gather together, to give praise and worship to God and to give Him thanks, to go through His testimonies of His marvelous works, that is, by the reading of His Word, the sharing with one another what things God has done for us, and then also taking that good news out into the world in our daily travels. Many times we can bless someone just by being kind and friendly and by not being quick to react to someone else that is not experiencing the peace of God. After all, we all have those times, right? As we have looked at in previous weeks in God's Word, we are to be ministers of reconciliation (**2 Corinthians 5:18**), which means perhaps looking to the Lord for reconciliation between ourselves and someone else, or maybe at times it is just us that needs to be reconciled with God or in love, gentleness, and kindness encouraging someone else to reconcile with God. That can actually start by asking if you can pray with them. We are ambassadors for Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:20**) and we are told by Jesus to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (**Matthew 5:16**) Yes, we must always remember that we are saved by the grace of God by the faith that He has given us but then we are still left here for God's purpose to be His representatives in sharing the love and the gospel of Jesus Christ. The passage of Scripture that says all of that is this, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (**Ephesians 2:8-10**)

Getting to our story, this was the second attempt at bringing the ark of God back to Jerusalem after the Philistines had taken it, after they defeated Israel. The first attempt was also with King David and that is when they put the ark on a cart, that was pulled by oxen, and it started to topple and Uzzah reached out to stabilize the ark and he was killed instantly. God had warned His people that no one was to touch the ark that it was holy. After Uzzah died, they said, "ok we're done here." Actually the story tells that King David was

"afraid of the Lord that day." (**2 Samuel 6:9**) They didn't mess with it anymore after that other than to get it into the house of Obed-Edom to where it says for the three months that the ark was in his home God had blessed him. It did not bode well for the Philistines though in having the ark as they did not honor God and they certainly did not consider repenting for NOT honoring God and so, as they had the ark of God in their territories God gave them a plague of rats and the contracting of deadly tumors upon them. After the Philistines tried moving the ark from one Philistine town to the next, all of which came under the wrath of God to where they began dying of the tumors, the Philistines finally hitched up a wagon to some cows and put the ark on the cart and sent it into Israel's territory. The ark then stayed in the house of Abinadab for 20 years. (**1 Samuel 7:2**) The ark stayed in the house of Abinadab except for one time King Saul had the ark brought to the Israelites as they were in a battle with the Philistines. This is really the one time, before the downfall of King Saul to where the Holy Spirit actually left him, that God was working for the good of Israel during King Saul's reign, as the Israelites were victorious in battle. Nevertheless, it wasn't until King David that the ark was finally moved to the city of David, that is, to Jerusalem. It could be said from all of that, with the different locations that the ark of God was moved from one place to another, in places of God's enemies to places of God's people, that God KNOWS who are His. God did not just bless the Philistines because they had the ark. God did bless His people though when they had the ark.

What can then be mentioned about the ark is that it was just an image of, or a representation of the throne of God. When it was in the tabernacle, God would come down upon His throne, called the mercy seat that was placed on top of the ark, and God would then minister to Aaron, the High Priest. Now that Christ has conquered death AND overcome the world, He is our High Priest and therefore in Him we can also go before the mercy seat, figuratively speaking. We can with confidence, go before the throne of God, as the writer of Hebrews says, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." (**Hebrews 4:16**)

Later, after they had finally gotten the ark to Jerusalem, and later when King David's son, King Solomon had built the temple of God, **2 Chronicles 5:13-14** says, "indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever," that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God." Then in **2 Chronicles 7:2**, it says, "And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord,

because the glory of the Lord had filled the Lord's house." That should give us all a very rough idea at how great and mighty and glorious God really is. Even though God would come down upon the temple and sit, so to speak on the mercy seat that was on top of the ark, there is obviously no containing God and God is much greater and grander than anything that could be created for Him to abide in or sit on. Yet as we go before His throne, by ourselves, or collectively, as we are here today, we cannot take it lightly. We must act with reverence and honor when we are seeking Him and praising Him.

The glory of God filling the temple can speak to all of us as to the fact that as great and marvelous as God is, that God transcends all of creation, that HE IS greater than all of creation for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein". (Psalm 24:1) Also, as it says in **John 1:1-3**, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." Then it says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (**John 1:14**) Jesus who is of God, also transcends all of creation for He was the manifestation of God in the flesh. God chooses from time to time to come down and be with His people, first was in the garden of Eden when He would come down and fellowship with Adam and Eve, He came down upon Mt. Sinai to meet with Moses and then later, of what we just read, by filling the temple of God with His glory and then resting upon the mercy seat above the ark of God. But then around a thousand years later God gave mankind the fullness of His revelation to mankind, which is in Christ Jesus. He sent His Son Jesus to come to this earth to die on a cross for our sins, to take away our sins and to bear the wrath of God that due to us for our sins against Him. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (**John 3:16-17**) How is that possible that Jesus, the Son of God, coming into the world could save us from our sins against God and taking away the wrath of God that was to be on us? Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, [here it is] **I have overcome the world**" (**John 16:33**) and **in Christ we too will overcome the world!** The fulfilling of, or completion of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, to us, is this, "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been **revealed** what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (**1 John 3:2**) Now that is something to be eagerly waiting for, is it not?

Yet listen to this, though He was sent by God to be born of a virgin, and He lived a sinless life, and did many miracles, including the raising of the dead, Jesus, "who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him." (**Hebrews 5:7-9**) Yes, we can "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" but we also have the example set before us in Christ Jesus to honor God with a godly fear and live in obedience to His will. Just as Jesus said, "nevertheless, not my will but Your will be done." (**Matthew 26:39**)

The process of becoming a Christian, a disciple of Christ, which is being a follower of Christ is that it is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit that Jesus is the Christ, that He did indeed die on a cross for our sins, and that He rose from the dead on the third day, to which He conquered death and "overcame the world" and that in Him we too will overcome the world and raise from the dead unto eternal life. The Holy Spirit also leads us into repentance from our sinning against God. Just as that passage in Hebrews says that He gives "eternal salvation to all who obey Him", Peter explained in **Acts 5:32** that God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. We are to consider ourselves dead to sin and alive in Christ. Having trouble with that one? "Have mercy on me Lord and save me!" **John 1:12-13** says, " But as many as **received Him**, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who **believe in His name**: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Just think about it, when we receive Christ we are receiving into our hearts the Spirit of Christ in His Wisdom and His Righteousness. We are receiving Christ for who He is. That is where the battle begins with the Spirit and the flesh. We are to obey God and let His Spirit reign in us, not giving way to the flesh.

The Israelites at the time of our passage of Scripture for today, during the reign of King David, did not really fully understand how God was going to save them, they just knew that God was their salvation. They did though acknowledge that there is but one God and that He alone is worthy of praise, glory, and honor. Just as Isaiah the prophet recorded as God saying, "That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting that there is none besides Me. I am the Lord, and there is no other." (**Isaiah 45:6**) Jesus spoke though of there being other gods, and also the Apostle Paul elaborated and explained, "For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many **gods** and many **lords**), yet for us there is one **God**, the **Father**, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live." (**1 Corinthians 8:5-6**) There is but one Creator of all

things and but one Sovereign God who ultimately reigns over all of creation. It is interesting that God chose to speak of the sun in His proclaiming that He alone is God. The sun has, for most of the time of mankind, been a representation of a false god that has been the symbolic representation of either the "illumination of man" to be their own gods, or of the one who "transforms himself into an angel of light" (**2 Corinthians 11:14**). It wasn't always necessarily that they were worshipping the sun but in what it represented. Satan who "transforms himself into an angel of light" is the one that Jesus said is a thief that comes only to "steal, kill, and destroy." There are two primary tactics that Satan will do in trying to get us away from the will and blessings and hope and promises of God. 1. To question God's Word and 2. to rebel against God. The perfect example of that is in **Genesis 3:1-5**. Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "**Has God indeed said**, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

We are reminded in this Psalm of David that was sung at the inauguration of the placing of the ark of God in the tabernacle in Jerusalem, that there is but one God Almighty who is worthy of praise, glory, and honor and that we are still living in that promise of God to Abraham, as God told Abraham, "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have **obeyed My voice**." That seed that is spoken of by God has been revealed to us as Jesus the Christ, the Savior of the world, to all who will believe on Him. Likewise, as God spoke it to Abraham, it is also being spoken to us, that we are not to be afraid, for Jesus is to us as God spoke to Abraham, "I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward." Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (**John 14:6**) If we put our trust in Jesus, we will not be put to shame. (**Romans 10:11**) Jesus is calling, "Follow Me." (**John 10:27**)

"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!" Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever."

"**Save us, O God of our salvation**; Gather us together, and deliver us from [not the Gentiles in our case, but from evil] 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."