

2 Samuel 5-6

- In the story of David as king of Israel, we're entering the golden era when everything is new and exciting and full of promise
 - Last week, David was finally accepted by all Israel as the true and rightful king of Israel
 - After seven years of struggle against the north, David's succeeded in winning over all the tribes and consolidating power
 - The writer introduces this period of success and prosperity with an overview summary of David's rule as king over Israel
 - We start in v.6 with David setting his sights on a new home for his reign as king

2Sam. 5:6 Now the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, and they said to David, "You shall not come in here, but the blind and lame will turn you away"; thinking, "David cannot enter here."

2Sam. 5:7 Nevertheless, David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David.

2Sam. 5:8 David said on that day, "Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him reach the lame and the blind, who are hated by David's soul, through the water tunnel." Therefore they say, "The blind or the lame shall not come into the house."

2Sam. 5:9 So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built all around from the Millo and inward.

2Sam. 5:10 David became greater and greater, for the LORD God of hosts was with him.

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- During Saul's reign, the capital of Israel was located in Gilbeah in the region of Benjamin, which was Saul's tribal affiliation

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- But David is from the tribe of Judah, so it makes sense that his new seat of power should be in that tribal area
 - Judah was a large territory, so David had many potential places to select as his capital city
 - But wisely, David decided not to move his seat of power too far away from the previous location in the tribe of Benjamin

- Instead, David decides that a city called Jebus, later known as Jerusalem, should be his capital city and home of his throne
 - Jerusalem means foundation of peace, and it sat on the border of Benjamin and Judah making it the perfect choice politically
 - By sharing the border with Judah and Benjamin, Jerusalem became a compromise and an olive branch for the Benjamites
- More importantly, it gave David the chance to make a statement to his subjects as he defeats Israel's long-time foe, the Jebusites
 - So in v.7 we're told that David invades the stronghold of Zion and defeats the Jebusites and takes the City of David
 - This text gives us none of the details of how that happens, and we get only slightly more in 1 Chronicles

1Chr. 11:4 Then David and all Israel went to Jerusalem (that is, Jebus); and the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, were there.

1Chr. 11:5 The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, "You shall not enter here." Nevertheless David captured the stronghold of Zion (that is, the city of David).

1Chr. 11:6 Now David had said, "Whoever strikes down a Jebusite first shall be chief and commander." Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief.

1Chr. 11:7 Then David dwelt in the stronghold; therefore it was called the city of David.

- Putting 2 Samuel 5 and 1 Chronicles 11 together gives us a little better understanding of how the battle took place
- But a finer understanding depends on some understanding of the city's history and geography
- Jerusalem began as a settlement on the southeastern slope of a mountain the Bible calls Mt. Zion
 - In David's day, the city was in the possession of the Jebusites, who had occupied the city for 515 years going back to before Joshua
 - The Jebusites descend from the third son of Canaan, Jebus, who settled it after the flood and named the city after himself
 - In fact, in David's day the city was called Jebus, and before that, it had been called Salem, meaning peace

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- Archaeologists estimate that about 2,500 people lived inside the city walls
- When Joshua entered the land, he commanded the Benjamites to defeat the Jebusites in Jebus, but they did not obey the command
 - Then years later under the Judges, the tribe of Judah tried again but the Lord did not give Judah favor at that time either
 - So up to David's day, the Jebusites held Jebus, protected by high walls set atop steep valleys making attack nearly impossible
- To the west of the city sat a peak called Mt. Zion, and over time this city took also took on the name of the mountain
 - To the north was Mt. Moriah, the peak known to the Jews as the location that Abraham took his son, Isaac, to be sacrificed
 - And to the east stood the mountain that came to be known as the Mt. of Olives
- Between Mt. Zion and Mt. Moriah was a valley later called the Tyropoeon and between Mt. Moriah and the Mt. of Olives was a valley called Kidron
 - The city was built between these valleys and against these three mountains for two reasons
 - First, the valleys were very steep making an attack against the city very difficult
 - Secondly, the city was built beside the only supply of fresh water in the region: the continuously running spring of Gihon
 - The spring emerges along the side of the Kidron Valley, which made it vulnerable to attack
 - So to secure this important resource, the Jebusites built the city wall around it with a large watch tower to guard it from attack
 - Even though the spring itself was protected by walls, the residents were still vulnerable when they went to retrieve water
 - So the Jebusites tunneled a shaft underground from the city down to the source of the spring
 - That allowed residents to draw water up into the city without being exposed to an attacking enemy

- And David decides this shaft could be his way into the city, so he goes with his men to Jebus to seize the city
 - In v.6 David brings his fighting men to the walls of Jebus to inform the Jebusites he will conquer them
 - Keep in mind that over the past five centuries, the Jebusites had seen army after army come threatening to invade their city
 - And each time, the city walls held, so of course this time they expect the result to be the same
- They shout down from the walls to David and his men saying they shall not enter the city
 - Moreover, they declare that they can successfully defend the city with only their blind and lame residents
 - This a severe and embarrassing rebuke reflecting the confidence of the city and David's small force
- They think "David cannot enter here" but David is led by the confidence of a man walking in the will of God
 - David's confidence in this situation is an example of what Jesus meant when He told us

Matt. 17:20 And He said to them, "Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.

- When we know we're walking in the Lord's will, we can move with courage and confidence that believes mountains will move
- This isn't wishful thinking or arrogance...it's confidence in what God intends to do
- And that allows us to take bold action others see as impossible
- David is confident that this city will be his, and therefore we must assume that a man after God's heart had heard from God on the matter
 - Perhaps David understood the importance of the city from its time as Salem under Melchizedek, who was the king of Salem
 - The order of Melchizedek ran through David's line on its way to Jesus, the Son of David, so perhaps God told David to take Jebus

- Or perhaps it was the significance of Mt. Moriah nearby which led David to take the city
- Whatever the reason David was confident that the Lord intended to give him that city, and so David knew this city was to be his capital
 - When you know what God is going to do, you can engage in that work confidently
 - And when it comes to pass, your faithful anticipation of the outcome becomes a testimony of God's faithfulness
- So Jebus' record of impenetrability didn't dissuade David from moving ahead, and when the occupants taunt him, it just provided added motivation
 - In v.8 David adopts the term "lame and blind" for his own purposes to refer to all the occupants of the city
 - And he tells his men they will defeat the city by entering through the water tunnel
- According to 1 Chronicles 11, David offers a reward to the first man who makes his way into the city and kills a Jebusite that they will be commander
 - And Joab, the man who David spared for his earlier misdeed, decides this is his chance to win back David's trust
 - So Joab enters the city via the water tunnel and initiated the battle
- Then once the city was taken, it becomes known as the city of David, the stronghold of Zion
 - And David lived there his whole reign, building a palace on the northern end of the city just below Mt. Moriah
 - To protect his palace, David built a terraced wall down the side of the valley, which is called the Millo (mil' - o)
 - This feature is called out in Scripture because it was unique and prominent and marked the location of David's residence
- Recent excavations of the City of David have helped us learn a little more about how David took the city
 - In 1867, Sir Charles Warren was excavating near the Temple Mount in Jerusalem when he discovered a shaft 230 ft long

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- It connected the Spring of Gihon in the Kidron with a settlement on the hill above, which was the location of the city of David
- This is now believed to be the shaft that David's men climbed to reach inside the city
- We don't know how David's men gained access to the shaft itself, but perhaps they dug underground from outside the walls to reach it
 - Once they reached the shaft, they could climb the narrow walls by pressing against both sides as they made their way up
 - It would have been an arduous and risky climb, which is why David had to offer such a generous reward to the first one
- In v.9, we're told David lived in Jerusalem and built it up leading to it being called the city of David
 - Today the ancient city of David is buried under a mostly Arab settlement called Silwan
 - But Israel is busy uncovering as much of it as they can, including the area of the Spring and parts of the original wall
 - In fact, the Millo is now almost completely exposed, proving that David did exist but also that the Biblical record is accurate
- David's conquest of Jerusalem also gave rise to a saying
 - Israel would say that the blind and lame do not enter the house
 - The term "blind and lame" became a euphemism for the ungodly Gentiles of the land, like the Jebusites
 - And "house" was a reference to the temple of the Lord, located in Jerusalem
 - So this phrase was a way of saying that ungodly Gentiles may not enter the temple
 - And from this place, David became greater and greater because the Lord was with him in that place, we're told in v.10
 - This is the writer's key point as he reflects on David's time in the city
 - David's rise to power was nothing if not a testimony of God's grace

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- David was the youngest shepherd boy of an insignificant family, and yet God selected him to be king
- Later, David was tested during a decade of preparation on the run, and David grew more mature and powerful as a leader
 - Men came out to find David and support him in the desert
 - And then as his adversaries died off, David eventually found a clear path to the throne
 - And now, David defeats a city that stood undefeated for over 500 years, which leads to a period of unprecedented growth
- This remarkable rise to power and wealth and security could only be explained, as the writer did, as God being with David
 - And yet when we look at David's life in detail, we can see that his rise to this moment wasn't a fairytale or a bed of roses
 - David was severely tested during his decade in the desert, and he often lamented his situation
 - We can find David often crying out to God in the Psalms like this:

Psa. 6:1 O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger,
Nor chasten me in Your wrath.

Psa. 6:2 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am pining away;
Heal me, O LORD, for my bones are dismayed.

Psa. 6:3 And my soul is greatly dismayed;
But You, O LORD – how long?

Psa. 6:4 Return, O LORD, rescue my soul;
Save me because of Your lovingkindness.

- So David's rise to prominence and power and greatness included many years of low points and sadness and even humiliation
 - And yet God declared from the beginning that David would be king
 - Which means God was always with and for David despite those difficult moments

- At this point as David sits on a throne in a city by his name and presides over a period of prosperity for his people, he can see God is for him
 - But did he see and trust that God was with him in the low points?
 - Listen to how Psalm 6 ends

Psa. 6:6 I am weary with my sighing;
 Every night I make my bed swim,
 I dissolve my couch with my tears.

Psa. 6:7 My eye has wasted away with grief;
 It has become old because of all my adversaries.

Psa. 6:8 Depart from me, all you who do iniquity,
 For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping.

Psa. 6:9 The LORD has heard my supplication,
 The LORD receives my prayer.

Psa. 6:10 All my enemies will be ashamed and greatly dismayed;
 They shall turn back, they will suddenly be ashamed.

- This is what Paul means when he describes the state of every believer

Rom. 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

- Paul isn't talking about a life of fairytales for the Christian, for if your life is going well, you never worry about problems
 - But when you are in the valleys of life, then you are prone to ask where is God and does God care and why won't God fix this?
 - Paul says that when we face those moments, we should ask if God is for us (and He is), then who can be against us?
- In other words, why do we worry over our difficult circumstances knowing God is using them for some good purpose?
 - Instead, we should think like David who argued his case before God but always trusted something good would come from it
 - The issue is one of time and perspective...knowing that time is on our side because God is for us

- In time, the problems go away...in time, the solutions will come
- In time, we will escape our adversaries, we will overcome our sin nature and we will leave this world behind
- And who or what can stand in the way of that plan? If it's God's plan, then there is no one or nothing that can stop it
 - David lived a life that reflected that level of dependence and trust in God's intentions
 - He didn't always know God's plans but he always knew God's intentions
 - You may not always know what God is planning to do in your life or even why some particular event is happening to you
 - But you always know God's intentions, and that's enough by itself to be patient through the trials
- Then in v.11 and on we receive summaries of David's life as king over Israel

[2Sam. 5:11](#) Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees and carpenters and stonemasons; and they built a house for David.

[2Sam. 5:12](#) And David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel.

[2Sam. 5:13](#) Meanwhile David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron; and more sons and daughters were born to David.

[2Sam. 5:14](#) Now these are the names of those who were born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,

[2Sam. 5:15](#) Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,

[2Sam. 5:16](#) Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet.

- What follows here and in the next few chapters are the writer's proof to support his statement in v.10 that the Lord was with David as king
 - In effect, v.10 is the topic sentence of an essay of David's success as king
 - And then what follows is a summary of David's personal, military, religious accomplishments
 - All of these accomplishments are a testimony that the Lord was with David and that David was king because God made him so

- Starting here with David's family blessings starting with the riches of his home, built from the finest materials available in that day
 - Tyre was an extremely wealthy trading port where the finest goods flowed from east to west and vice versa
 - The king of Tyre offered to build David's house for him, probably as a gesture of peace and goodwill
 - He hoped to coexist with David and trade with Israel more than likely
- Later this relationship between Israel and Tyre becomes a corrupting influence for future kings
 - Which is a vivid example of two biblical principles...first, bad company corrupts good morals as Paul says
 - And secondly, no godly person should choose to be unequally yoked with the ungodly, since it brings potential for compromise
- Beyond his home, David continues to grow his household, and this too he does through unwise compromise
 - David takes additional wives and slave wives for himself, ultimately leading to a harem and a large family of children
 - As we addressed in an earlier lesson, the Bible records that David takes additional wives to be *descriptive*, not *prescriptive*
 - We are reading a description of what David did, however we are not reading a prescription for what we should do
 - And it's safe to assume that David's habit of taking additional wives when it pleased him was largely responsible for his most serious sin
 - Because of this sin in David's life, he became a man accustomed to having women when it pleased him
 - As someone once said, "a man who has broken down the fence will wander endlessly"
 - I should add that if someone today believes David's example allows us to take multiple wives, he should remember polygamy is against the law
 - And the Bible also commands believers to obey the governing authorities over us

- And so for that reason alone a Christian is prohibited from practicing polygamy
- But here's the hardest part we must also accept...even though David was wrong to have multiple wives, God blesses the result
 - David is blessed to have a large family with many children, even though he produces those children from multiple wives
 - In that sense, David's situation is no different than that of Jacob
 - Jacob had four wives and God used those four women to produce 12 sons in a much quicker period of time
 - As a result, all 12 sons were able to grow up together and live side-by-side long enough to establish twelve tribes
 - Without multiple wives, it's hard to see how Jacob could have raised twelve sons fast enough for all of them to work together as they did
 - Here again, the fact that God used multiple marriages to His advantage doesn't become a prescription for us
 - God has the power to cause bad things to work to good, but that doesn't give us license to do as many bad things as we wish
 - Conversely, God's blessings to His children do not turn on whether we are perfectly obedient or not
 - And in this case, the prosperity that God granted David was for God's own purpose in blessing Israel
 - And God blesses us even though we sin, for if He made perfect behavior a prerequisite for blessing us, we could never have it
 - So a blessing from God is His grace to His sinful children, but that does not make it an endorsement of our sin
- Looking at the list of sons born to David, we find eleven more sons born to him in Jerusalem to add to the six David had in Hebron
 - The tenth son is Solomon, who will ultimately succeed David as king
 - Solomon's mother is not named in this list, but she is Bathsheba
 - David's ninth son is Nathan, and interestingly both Nathan and Solomon are listed in the genealogy leading to Jesus

- Jesus' earthly father, Joseph, was descended from Solomon while Jesus' mother, Mary, was a descendant of Nathan
- And even later other sons are mentioned in 1 Chronicles, so David had a large family and many descendants in Israel
 - This helped cement his rule and his dynasty, at least in Judah
 - And we will learn more about his dynasty in coming chapters
- Meanwhile, the writer now moves from David's family prosperity to his military success

2Sam. 5:17 When the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek out David; and when David heard of it, he went down to the stronghold.

2Sam. 5:18 Now the Philistines came and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim.

2Sam. 5:19 Then David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You give them into my hand?" And the LORD said to David, "Go up, for I will certainly give the Philistines into your hand."

2Sam. 5:20 So David came to Baal-perazim and defeated them there; and he said, "The LORD has broken through my enemies before me like the breakthrough of waters." Therefore he named that place Baal-perazim.

2Sam. 5:21 They abandoned their idols there, so David and his men carried them away.

2Sam. 5:22 Now the Philistines came up once again and spread themselves out in the valley of Rephaim.

2Sam. 5:23 When David inquired of the LORD, He said, "You shall not go directly up; circle around behind them and come at them in front of the balsam trees.

2Sam. 5:24 "It shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the balsam trees, then you shall act promptly, for then the LORD will have gone out before you to strike the army of the Philistines."

2Sam. 5:25 Then David did so, just as the LORD had commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer.

- Here we're told of two battles that took place early in David's reign
 - They are not the only battles David fought, so we should see them as examples of why and how David fought

- First, David fought the Philistines as a matter of economic necessity and for national pride
 - Every world superpower has been born on the battlefield and David's military success was key to Israel as a superpower
 - In fact, Israel is among the first great superpowers of history, second only to Egypt
- Victory in battle is the basis for establishing peace in the land, and peace is the foundation for economic prosperity
 - When a land is at war, it must divert people and materials into war fighting efforts, which lowers wealth for all
 - When the land is at peace, people and resources are invested in development of the land, which returns a harvest
 - And developed, producing land leads to prosperity for all
 - So David's military successes set the stage for tremendous economic growth which led to population growth and the expansion of the tribes
 - As the tribes expanded, they took over more land, which led to more production, which led to more prosperity
 - When drought and other disasters hit one part of the land, other parts could compensate with greater production
 - The nation was able to stabilize its economy, drive out competition and enemies, and so on
 - Moreover, David's relentless pursuit of his enemies was cathartic for a nation that struggled against the Philistines under Saul
 - Many Jewish lives had been lost over the decades of Saul's rule, but now David is defeating larger forces everywhere he tries
 - This is a huge boost to national pride and to the nation's identity as a power in the land, something not seen since Joshua
 - Secondly, notice how the writer explains David's success...each time David asks the Lord how to proceed into battle
 - We don't know exactly how these exchanges took place, whether by prayer or through the high priest's divining stones

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- But I believe it was most likely through prayer, something David learned while he spent years in the desert depending on God
- David was a man who knew that God hears and answers prayers, so David took full advantage of that opportunity
 - This also was a stark departure from Saul, who rarely if ever consulted with God before battle
 - And at the end of his life Saul was seeking wisdom from witches
- In both battles, God not only approves of the engagement but even gives tactical plans to David
 - The first battle is retold in Chapter 23 and was probably a battle early in David's reign as king
 - The location Raphaim means valley of the giants and is unknown except it's probably south of Jerusalem
 - We assume the Philistines were hoping to defeat a new king before he had consolidated power
 - But the Philistines didn't account for David's God Who went before Israel into battle and so they were defeated
 - In the second battle, the Lord told David to attack and even how to prosecute the battle, coming from the rear
 - They were to lie in wait until the Lord gave the troops a signal which was a sound of marching from the tree tops
 - When the Lord created this supernatural sign, the troops would move out and catch their enemy by surprise
 - This second battle took place near Geba, which was also near Gibeon northwest of Jerusalem
 - These two battles were highlighted here because they were important to establishing the city of Jerusalem as a Jewish stronghold
 - And were probably the most remarkable since they were defeats won when David's forces were smallest
 - It showed the Lord's favor upon David that he could defeat such powerful foes even at the beginning of his reign

- So based on David's military success having trusted in the Lord and having taken His counsel, the people and the land are safe and prosperous
 - Now the writer turns his attention to David's impact on the religious life of Israel

2Sam. 6:1 Now David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand.

2Sam. 6:2 And David arose and went with all the people who were with him to Baale-judah, to bring up from there the ark of God which is called by the Name, the very name of the LORD of hosts who is enthroned above the cherubim.

- With peace assured, David is ready to install the ark of the Lord in its proper place
 - David goes up to retrieve the ark from Kiriath-jearim, also called Baal-judah
 - Interestingly, Baal-judah means master of Judah, which means it a center of Baal worship
 - So the ark of the Lord has been sitting in a town known as the center of pagan worship of the Canaanite god Baal in Judah
 - But now it will move to the city where it will become the center of worship of Yahweh, the true living God
- And to understand why the ark is moving here, we need to understand a little of its history
 - About twenty years earlier, Saul had gone against the Lord's wishes by taking the ark from the tabernacle in Shiloh into battle
 - Saul wanted to assure his success by having his troops enter battle with the ark going before them
 - Since Saul tried to force God's hand, the Lord allowed the ark to fall into the hands of the Philistines who took it away in victory
- For a time, it circulated among various Philistine cities causing mayhem and severe discomfort until finally they decided to return it to Israel
 - When the ark was returned in 1 Samuel 6, it first came to a place called Bet Shemesh
 - There the men of Bet Shemesh violated the word of God by opening the ark and looking inside, which no man may do

- And the Lord responded by killing more than 50,000 men in Israel on that day
- After that slaughter, Israel was so afraid of the ark that they sent it to a small mountain village in Judah called Kiriath-jearim
 - There it stayed in the home of a man named Abinadad, where it was cared for by that man and his son for the next 20 years
 - But that's not where the ark should be, and David is determined to return it to the tabernacle
- The fact that the ark has been away for so long also means the people of Israel have not been following the Law's requirements very closely
 - Without the ark in the tabernacle, the priests couldn't perform the sacrificial responsibilities properly
 - And the presence of the Lord was not in the tabernacle as well
 - And given that Saul was in power during those days, it's logical to assume that the entire Mosaic system was out of fashion
 - So this move on David's part isn't just about bringing an artifact home, it's also about re-establishing the importance of worship
 - The return of the ark to the tabernacle is the return of the Mosaic system in a sense
 - And that system would now be centered on the city of Jerusalem as well, where before it had moved around the land
 - David is consolidating the seat of political power with the place of religious authority in the land of Israel
 - Unlike Saul, David isn't working to return the ark on the basis of superstition but rather to defend the honor and name of the Lord
 - Notice in v.2 we're told that the ark is called by God's name in that day, the very name of the God of Heaven
 - And that means something to David, and he dearly wants to ensure that something representing God's name is honored
 - While David clearly wants to do the right thing here, as this chapter plays out, we shall see that David does it in the wrong way
 - And doing the right thing in the wrong way isn't God's way

- And so the events of this chapter serve as counter argument of sorts to the previous chapter

[2Sam. 6:3](#) They placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart.

[2Sam. 6:4](#) So they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Ahio was walking ahead of the ark.

[2Sam. 6:5](#) Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of instruments made of fir wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals.

- David instructs the men to load the ark on a cart likely pulled by oxen
 - David appears to be trying to honor God, because he chooses a new cart, which means one consecrated to the Lord
 - A new cart is reserved for royal or holy purposes to ensure it was never used for lesser purposes
 - So clearly, David is trying to honor the Lord run his heart
 - And while David was trying to honor God, he was ignoring God's word
 - Specifically he was ignoring the Law of God, which stipulated in Numbers how the ark was to be moved
 - The Law required that only priests move the ark on foot by using poles inserted into rings along its side
 - Nevertheless, either out of ignorance or disobedience, David chose to move the ark on a oxen-drawn cart
- I wonder where David got the idea to bring the ark to Jerusalem in that way?
 - There were likely two reasons, beginning with the simple reason that it was easier to move it on a cart
 - It would have been very difficult for a small group of men to carry the heavy ark the 9 miles through difficult terrain
 - By comparison, it was much easier to place it on a cart drawn by oxen

- I can hear David's men saying, "Oh the pole method went out of fashion long ago. Everyone is using oxen and carts these days."
- The second reason is probably because of precedent
 - The Philistines used a cart to return the cart years earlier
 - But of course, the Philistines were not Jews and did not possess the Law of God
- And had David consulted the word of God, he would have known that God expected him to do something entirely different
 - In fact, if ANYONE in Israel knew the Law, they could have informed David of his mistake, and David would have listened
 - Which tells you that there was a general ignorance of the Law in that day, and this was a problem going back generations
- After the time of Joshua, a generation rose up that did not know or care to follow the law of God
 - And that led to each man in Israel doing what was right in this own eyes
 - After generations of wandering away from the Law of God, Samuel tried to bring obedience back to the people
 - For a time he succeeded, but under Saul's leadership, the people reverted to disobedience and disinterest in the word of God
 - Since their leader was not a man to follow the Law of God, neither did the people
 - So by David's time, the nation was in a bankrupt state, morally speaking, and even David himself was not a man schooled in the word of God
 - Nevertheless, David did have a heart after God and a desire to honor God and a pattern of seeking God
 - Therefore, we might assume God will give David a pass on knowing and following His word
 - After all, David acted with good intentions
 - This is a classic problem in the life of any follower of God who is not well acquainted or attentive to the word of God

- Out of ignorance, we mix good intentions with bad methods which leads to sin and consequences
- And when the consequences come, we blame God for not honoring our good intentions
- Meanwhile, God is rightly blaming us for not honoring His word
- We know David relied heavily on prayer and godly intuition to make his decisions, and certainly that's a good and necessary thing for every believer
 - But there is more to pleasing God than having good intentions or even a robust prayer life

[Luke 11:27](#) While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed.”

[Luke 11:28](#) But He said, “On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it.”

- The call of Scripture is to obey the word of God, and answering that call depends on consulting what God has told us when we have questions
 - But that requires studying and remembering what we learn, and many believers resist doing that work
 - We find it easier to substitute our own ideas or our intuition for study
 - Or we expect God to tell us personally what to do in prayer or otherwise rather than consulting what He already gave us
- This is lazy discipleship: expecting the Lord to deliver every instruction we need for life just in time, when we need it, automagically
 - “Lazy discipleship” assumes you don’t need to study because you can make direct appeals to God for answers whenever
 - It’s like a student who sets his or her textbook aside expecting the teacher to explain everything already given in the book
 - Or a man going to God in prayer asking for marital help after the marriage is on the rocks rather than studying the Bible before
- But that is not how a relationship with God works

- Yes, we are supposed to pray and we can certainly ask God to help our marriage or anything else, and He will hear and answer
 - But the answer you're likely to receive is, "Read My book"
 - As Jesus said, the blessed are those who hear the word of God and do it
- We aren't supposed to replace study of God's word with the expectation of personal revelation for matters already addressed in the Bible
 - For example, there is never a need for someone to pray on whether to have sex before marriage or cheat on their taxes
 - Those questions are clearly answered in the word of God, and because they are in the word of God, we are accountable to God
- Asking God for a "personal" answer in prayer to such questions is simply someone looking for a different answer
 - And if you reject the answer given in God's word, you will not receive a different answer in your prayer time or in your heart
 - Playing games with God or ignoring His word won't be an acceptable excuse when we fall into sin
 - We will be forgiven for our sins by Christ's blood, but that doesn't mean our sin won't bring consequences
 - David was ultimately forgiven for his sins too, but his mistakes often cost him dearly
- The Lord had already instructed the people of Israel on how to move the ark of the Lord, but David seems to be ignorant of that fact