

1 Chronicles

Chapter 13

The Ark Brought from Kiriath-Jearim

David consulted with the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, with every leader. 2 And David said to all the assembly of Israel, “If it seems good to you and from the LORD our God, let us send abroad to our brothers who remain in all the lands of Israel, as well as to the priests and Levites in the cities that have pasturelands, that they may be gathered to us. 3 Then let us bring again the ark of our God to us, for we did not seek it in the days of Saul.” 4 All the assembly agreed to do so, for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.

Ch 13–14 Events of 2Sm 5:17–6:11 are in reverse order here. (TLSB)

13:1–14 The author abandons the chronological order as given in 2Sa 5–6 and puts the transfer of the ark first, delaying his account of the palace building and the Philistine campaign until later (ch. 14). This is in accordance with his portrayal of David; David’s concern with the ark was expressed immediately upon his accession—his consultation with the leaders appears to be set in the context of the coronation banquet (12:38–40). (CSB)

13:1–4 These verses are not found in Samuel and reflect the Chronicler’s own concerns with “all Israel.” The semi-military expedition to retrieve the ark in 2Sa 6:1 is here broadened by consultation with and support from the whole assembly of Israel, “throughout the territories” (v. 2), including the priests and Levites—an important point for the Chronicler since only they are allowed to move the ark (15:2, 13; 23:25–27; Dt 10:8).(CSB)

Written to stress the importance of true worship, the Chronicler disregards the chronological sequence to highlight David’s concern for the ark, the symbolic throne of the transcendent God (v 6; see p 495). Chs 10–12 set the stage, explaining how David was able to undertake moving the ark. Wearing the crown of all Israel (10:1–11:3) in the former Jebusite city of Jerusalem (11:4–9) and commanding a national army (11:10–12:40), David was in a position to promote the spiritual life of his people. Cf 2Sm 6:1–11. David acts as ideal leader, consulting with the commanders. Note David’s concern for all Israel and his desire to have priests and Levites join him. He would correct Saul’s error of not seeking the Lord at the ark of the covenant. (TLSB)

13:4 *All the assembly.* All the people had a voice in the matter through their representatives. Israel acted by consensus rather than by vote. (TLSB)

13:1–4 David strengthens the unity of Israel by consulting the leaders and receiving affirmation. Consensus is often difficult to attain, especially in a large group. Yet the Lord blesses the people’s sincere desire for restoring godly practices. Likewise, He will bless our desire for godly consensus and peace, which He provides in the Gospel. • Grant our congregations unity, dear Lord, as they call upon You and listen to one another. Amen. (TLSB)

Uzzah and the Ark

5 So David assembled all Israel from the Nile of Egypt to Lebo-hamath, to bring the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. **6** And David and all Israel went up to Baalah, that is, to Kiriath-jearim that belongs to Judah, to bring up from there the ark of God, which is called by the name of the LORD who sits enthroned above the cherubim. **7** And they carried the ark of God on a new cart, from the house of Abinadab, and Uzzah and Ahio were driving the cart. **8** And David and all Israel were celebrating before God with all their might, with song and lyres and harps and tambourines and cymbals and trumpets. **9** And when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put out his hand to take hold of the ark, for the oxen stumbled. **10** And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah, and he struck him down because he put out his hand to the ark, and he died there before God. **11** And David was angry because the LORD had broken out against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzza to this day. **12** And David was afraid of God that day, and he said, “How can I bring the ark of God home to me?” **13** So David did not take the ark home into the city of David, but took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. **14** And the ark of God remained with the household of Obed-edom in his house three months. And the LORD blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that he had.

13:5–6 The emphasis remains on the united action of “all Israel.” Israelites came to participate in this venture all the way from Lebo Hamath in the north and from the Shihor River in the south.(CSB)

13:5 *Kirath-jearim.* An Egyptian term meaning “the pool of Horus.” It appears to be a part of the Nile or one of the major canals of the Nile (see Jos 13:3; Isa 23:3). (CSB)

From the southern to the northern border of the land, more commonly expressed as “from Dan to Beersheba” (Jgs 20:1). (TLSB)

13:6 *Baalah.* The Canaanite name for Kiriath Jearim, also known as Kiriath Baal (Jos 18:14). The Chronicler assumes that his readers are familiar with the account of how the ark came to be at Kiriath Jearim (1Sa 6:1–7:1).(CSB)

13:7 **13:7** *a new cart.* Means by which the ark was last moved. Rather than consulting God’s Word, the movers simply followed precedent. (TLSB)

Uzzah and Ahio. Sons or descendants of Abinadab (2Sa 6:3).(CSB)

Sons of Abinadab (2Sm 6:3). Unclear whether this family was Levitical and thus qualified to participate in the movement of the ark.

13:9–12 Cf 2Sm 6:6–9. The issue here was obedience to the Mosaic Law concerning the ark. It was to be carried with poles (Ex 25:12–15). It was also a capital offense to touch the ark (Nu 4:15). Uzzah’s instinctive reaction to steady the ark was contrary to the divinely established statutes regarding the ark. The lesson would bear fruit when David conformed to divine requirements and later successfully brought the ark to Jerusalem (15:25–16:6). (TLSB)

13:9 *Chidon.* Also called “Nacon” (2Sm 6:6). (TLSB)

13:10 *because he had put out his hand to the ark.* The ark was to be moved only by Levites, who carried it with poles inserted through rings in the sides of the ark (Ex 25:12–15). None of the holy things was to be touched, on penalty of death (Nu 4:15). These strictures were observed in the second and successful attempt to move the ark to Jerusalem (15:1–15). It cannot be known whether Uzzah and Ahio were Levites—the Samuel account does not mention the presence of Levites, but the Chronicler’s careful

inclusion of Levites in this expedition suggests that they were (see note on vv. 1–4). In any case, the ark should not have been moved on a cart (as done by the Philistines, 1Sa 6) or touched.(CSB)

13:11 *angry*. The object of David’s anger, whether God or Uzzah and Ahio, is never clarified. (TLSB)

13:13–14 *Obed-edom*. Possibly a Levite from Gath-rimmon, thus a proper caretaker for the ark. (TLSB)

13:13 *Obed-Edom*. Perhaps the same man mentioned in 15:18, 21, 24. In 26:4 God’s blessing on Obed-Edom included numerous sons. This reference also establishes that Obed-Edom was a Levite and that the ark was properly left in his care.(CSB)