



## MEN AND WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

### UZZAH

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct your path. Do not be wise in your own eyes Proverbs 3:5-7

After the Ark of God had been stolen by the Philistines and then returned to God's People (Israel), it had been left in the house of Abinadab because people died when they tried to look into it. **1 Samuel 6:19** David decided he wanted to bring the Ark back where it belonged, Jerusalem, a distance of about 16km.

*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. 2 Samuel 6:3*

Do you already see a problem here? Disobedience. They are moving the Ark on a cart. This is not how God instructed for it to be carried. That is how the Philistines moved it when they returned it. But how did God tell Israel to move the ark?

*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. 1 Chronicles 15:15*

This incident is an example of people disregarding God's instructions and doing what was right in their own eyes. God had given clear instructions about how the ark should have been carried.

Now here is where we see God's mercy and reasonable dealing. Earlier when the Philistines returned the ark, they put it on a cart, and let the oxen carry it back to the Israel camp. None of them were struck dead. God knew they did not know any better. God is always merciful when there is a lack of information and people are doing the best they can. However, Uzzah knew better.

*And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God. 2 Samuel 6:6-7*

While God was merciful towards the Philistines who acted out of ignorance, but with good intention, God held Uzzah accountable. Uzzah made a mistake many make today. Instead of worshiping God according to God's law, Uzzah thought he could imitate the world and worship God the way everyone else does. After all, what difference does it make if the ark is on a cart or two poles? What was the big deal?

Initially David became angry at Uzza's death. After David's initial confusion, he realized that he had acted contrary to God's clear instructions about how to transport the ark.

*"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.'" 1 Chronicles 15:2*

At this point David understood that the ark was to be carried with poles on the shoulders of the Levites, just as God had commanded Moses. Next, the priests and Levites sanctified themselves in preparation "to bring up the ark of the LORD God of Israel".

When they carefully followed God's instructions, they were able to bring up the ark "with joy", and they successfully completed the journey without any further mishap. What a difference from their first attempt!