Can’t Touch This  
2 Samuel 6:1-15

Central Expository Proposition: David transported the Ark of the Covenant to the city of Jerusalem after properly preparing for its arrival.

I. David first attempted to bring the Ark to Jerusalem without proper preparation (vv. 1-4).  
   A. David gathered 30,000 men together.  
      1. They travelled from Baale-Judah with the ark.  
         a. Baale-Judah was another name for Kiriath-Judah.  
         b. The city lay extremely close to the Philistine border, about 8 miles from Jerusalem.  
         c. The 30,000 men David brought might have been partly a military move to avoid a battle with the Philistines.  
      2. The Ark was described royally.  
         a. Using the term “Lord of hosts” denoted kingly terminology, as well as military terminology.  
         b. Such terms spoke to God’s power and might, His divine kingship.  
         c. This picture was enhanced with God sitting ‘enthroned’ with Cherubim, which were also a sign of power.  
   B. The Israelites prepared to transport the ark.  
      1. They carried the Ark in an unusual and surprising way.  
         a. The fact that it was on an ox cart directly violated the rules for transporting the Ark (Numbers 4:15).  
         b. The ox cart would have been pulled by two oxen with a heavy yoke instead of carried by priests.  
         c. At the very least, they used a brand new cart instead of an old one.  
            i. A new cart would have been clean and exceptable because it had no ritual impurities.  
            ii. The first people to use a cart instead of priests or Levites were the Philistines. They were unaware of the guidelines for Ark transportation.  
      2. The people involved were not the proper priests.  
         a. Uzzah and Ahio were Abinidab’s sons. They had been with the Ark since it was captured by the Philistines.  
         b. They had experience with the Ark resting at their house.  
         c. Ahio walked in front of the Ark, probably guiding the oxen, while Uzzah followed behind the cart.  

II. Uzzah lost his life because the Israelites did not transport the Ark correctly (vv. 5-11).  
   A. David and the Israelites celebrated the move of the Ark.  
      1. They used instruments and sang to the Lord.  
      2. They used stringed instruments and percussion instruments.  
   B. Uzzah attempted to save the Ark from falling off the cart.  
      1. As they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon, the ark became unsteady.
a. The threshing floor of Nacon seemed to be very close to Obed-Edom’s house, but there is no way of knowing how far they had travelled.

b. Possibly the hilly ground caused the oxen to stumble and the cart to falter, and the Ark was shaken and began to fall off the cart.

2. Uzzah reached out his hands to steady the Ark.
   a. Possibly Uzzah reacted without thought to save the Ark from falling to the ground.
   b. Uzzah had to grab hold of the Ark with both hands to steady it.
   c. God immediately slain Uzzah for touching the sacred and holy Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of His presence.

C. God became angry with Uzzah for what he did.
   1. The Lord’s wrath caused Uzzah’s death.
      a. The Lord was angry that Uzzah had violated the Law and touched the Ark (Numbers 4:15).
      b. God burst forth upon Uzzah in reaction to his touch.
   2. David became angry with the Lord for His actions.
      a. He may have thought God reacted harshly to Uzzah’s well-intentioned attempt to steady the Ark.
      b. He may have felt guilty for not using the proper ways described in the Law for transporting the Ark.
      c. He named the place Perez-Uzzah, meaning the “bursting forth upon Uzzah.”
   3. David feared the Lord because of His great power.
      a. David did not want to cause any more incidents with wrong transporting methods.
      b. He feared what the Lord would do if they continued in this manner.
      c. He may have feared his choice in bringing the Ark to Jerusalem, the new capitol.

D. David left the Ark at Obed-Edom’s house.
   1. Instead of finishing the trip, David turned aside and left the Ark with Obed-Edom,
      a. Scholars remain unclear on this man’s background.
      b. His name means “Servant of Edom.” Edom may have been a god.
      c. He was a Gittite from Gath, a foreigner obviously trusted by David. David often had “mercenaries” in his army from Gath.
   2. The Ark remained here for three months.
      a. Instead of being a dangerous burden, the Ark blessed his entire household.
      b. No one is sure of exactly how Obed-Edom was blessed, whether with crops, children, land, or other ways.
      c. The blessing was evident to everyone.

III. David tried again to bring the Ark to Jerusalem with success (vv. 12-15).
   A. When David saw that the Ark was a blessing to Obed-Edom, he decided it was safe to continue the Ark’s journey to Jerusalem.
1. His servants informed him of Obed-Edom’s blessing from the Ark.
2. David went to get the Ark after he saw that it was blessing Obed-Edom.

B. The people finally brought the Ark to Jerusalem in a proper manner.
   1. They rejoiced as they brought the Ark.
   2. They transported the Ark properly, according to the guidelines in the Law.
      a. It was carried by men instead of pulled by animals.
      b. The men were probably priests.
   3. David sacrificed after just six steps.
      a. Perhaps it had been less than six steps from Baale-Judah to Obed-Edom’s house, so David was using this as a measuring stick to see if anything negative would happen again.
      b. He was cautious in his movement of the Ark the second time.
      c. He sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal, sacrificing to God for His blessing in the Ark of the Covenant.

C. Much rejoicing was done, starting with David.
   1. David danced before the Lord
      a. This dancing may have been an ecstatic type of dancing, uncontrollable in some ways.
      b. Most scholars suggested that David used his fingers in the dance
      c. The text mentioned that David was wearing a linen ephod, which is the same garment the child Samuel wore before the Ark.
         i. Some scholars suggest that this was a garment too small for David and he became exposed as he danced, which would flow into Michal’s anger with him in verses 16-19.
         ii. Others suggest that the linen ephod was similar to that of the priests. Although David was not a priest, he was acting as a worshipper in the presence of God, performing sacrifices.
   2. The people shouted to the Lord and used the horn or shophar to announce the Ark’s arrival.
Central Theological Proposition: Humanity must follow God’s guidelines to avoid alternative and ineffective methods for handling His presence.

I. God provides guidelines for His presence.
II. When those guidelines are not followed, harm comes out of wrong practice.
III. In the absence of God’s guidelines, humans choose their own guidelines, which lead to practices that disagree with God’s ways.
Subject: Operating in God’s Presence.

Need of Audience: To be encouraged to flourish in God’s presence instead of operating out of fear.

Development Technique: Ability

Theme: God’s Presence.

Sermonic Objective: To encourage people to operate in obedience instead of fear in God’s presence.

Central Homiletical Proposition: You can minister without fear in the presence of God!

Introduction
The room was almost completely dark as the door squeaked to a stop. I searched the room from top to bottom for the first time. It was silent and stale. Time stood still as I drank in the view of my grandfather’s bedroom for the first time. I had never been here before. I was so afraid of doing something wrong or touching anything. The whole image might shatter if I did. I think that many people feel that way in the presence of God as well. They don’t enjoy His presence as a child of God should. But you can minister without fear in the presence of God!


As David continued to centralize Israel in the new capitol of Jerusalem, he suffered a major setback when he chose to act without consulting God’s Law on how to transport the Ark of the Covenant.

From David’s mistake, we can learn three principles that will help us to minister without fear in God’s presence.

I. Know What God Wants (vv. 1-5).

A. The image of God sitting on the thrown of the Ark as king prominently highlights the beginning of this passage. God had certain guidelines in the Law about how to transport the Ark and how to act around the Ark.

1. The Ark was supposed to be carried by the priests of Israel or by Levites.
   a. It is unknown whether or not Uzzah and Ahio were Levites.
   b. Since David neglected the other guidelines for moving the Ark, we might imagine that they were not Levites.

2. Poles that passed through rings on the sides of the Ark were used to carry the Ark.
   a. In this text, we see Ahio walking in front of the Ark and the oxen pulling along the Ark on a new ox cart.
   b. Uzzah follows close behind. These two were sons of Abinadab, the man at whose house in Baale-Judah the Ark was kept until now.

B. Despite the innovation of the new ox cart, instead of an old one, and moving the Ark without touching it by having it on a cart, the Israelites terribly violated God’s guidelines for transporting the Ark.

   1. A new cart would have been clean and acceptable because it had no ritual impurities.
2. The first people to use a cart instead of priests or Levites were the Philistines. They were unaware of the guidelines for Ark transportation.

C. Application: Why don’t we want to do things God’s way? What is it in us that rebels against all of His wishes? He tells you to witness to a specific person, but you tell him it’s not a good time. He tells you He knows the best path but you pick your own. In America, we are obsessed with individualism and rights. But we need to know what God wants and do it.

II. Avoid Disobeying God (vv. 6-11).

A. This next section fleshes out what we already know will happen since David neglected God’s guidelines for the Ark. We see the Israelites singing songs with instruments of different kinds as the oxen pull the cart with the Ark on it. All seems well until they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon.

1. Suddenly, the oxen stumbled and almost tipped the cart.
   a. Uzzah, from his position at the rear of the cart saw that the Ark was falling and instinctively reached out to steady the Ark.
   b. This touching of the Ark violated God’s guidelines in Numbers 4:15. Uzzah was toast before the Lord.

2. God and David get angry.
   a. God becomes angry with Uzzah for touching the Ark and kills him on the spot. God was the agent of Uzzah’s death. God was defending His glory and acting in line with His character here.
   b. David becomes angry with the Lord for reacting in such a strong manner! But God had warned them of the guidelines. This whole incident could have been avoided if David heeded the words in the Law.
   c. Illustration: Many children become so angry with their parents as they are growing up because parents don’t always give the reasons for what they tell their children to do. But as children grow up, they begin to realize that what their parents told them to do is the better way in many cases. But the children are always so angry with their parents as they grow up, just as David was first angry with the Lord for His reaction to Uzzah. David was realizing the hard way that God’s presence is a very awesome and powerful presence, not to be taken lightly. When God gives commands, it is for the benefit of those whom He commands.

B. David decided against going any farther with the Ark and brought it to rest at Obed-Edom’s house.

1. When David realized that God’s holiness was not something to be trifled with, he turned to the nearby house of Obed-Edom.
   a. “Obed-Edom” means “Servant of Edom.” Edom may have been a god, but scholars remain unsure of this. Many times people were named “Servant of.” Take Obadiah for example, meaning “Servant of Yahweh.”
   b. This man was from Gath, possibly a mercenary or just a foreigner. Either way, David trusted him explicitly to leave the Ark with him.

2. The Ark stayed with Obed-Edom for three months.
a. God poured out blessings upon everything that Obed-Edom owned.

b. We are unsure of what form these blessings had, whether they be a fruitful harvest, blessing of children, or other blessings. But these were definitely noticeable blessings!

C. Application: When we obey God and do what is pleasing to Him in His presence, we don’t have to live in fear of Him at all. We can treat God with respect and honor, showing Him how much we love and adore Him when we follow His guidelines. That obedience shows that we love Him. We can not only know what God wants, but we can do everything He desires. There is no fear in God’s love.

III. Enjoy His Presence (vv. 12-15).

A. When David saw that the Ark was blessing Obed-Edom’s house, he took it as a sign that the Ark was safe to move again.

1. David was informed of the Ark’s blessing to Obed-Edom.
2. He then returned for the Ark.
   a. This time was very different for the transportation of the Ark, following God’s requirements for moving it.
   b. Notice in verse 13 that people “bore the Ark.” This tells us explicitly that there were people carrying the Ark the proper way, probably priests or Levites as well.
3. David respected God’s presence with awe and worship.
   a. After just six steps, David made a sacrifice to God of an ox and a fattened animal. He understood that God must be respected and revered.
   b. He may have done this in thanks for no further setbacks to bringing the Ark to the city of David, Jerusalem.

B. David and the people worshipped God while they transported the Ark.

1. David danced before the Lord.
   a. The kind of dancing David did may have been ecstatic uncontrollable dancing or some type of dancing involving fingers.
   b. He wore a linen ephod as he worshipped God.
      i. This is similar to the linen ephod worn by Samuel in front of the Ark as a child. Some suggest that the ephod was too small for David and he exposed himself during his dancing.
      ii. This ephod is similar also to the ephods the priests would wear. David was not a priest, but he was offering sacrifices to God in thanks as a worshipper, in a sort of coronation setting for his kingship.

2. They brought the Ark to Jerusalem and completed their task with rejoicing.
   a. They shouted unto God, which is a victorious image.
   b. The horn or shophar was usually used in battle to call the soldiers to arms, but here is another victorious picture.

C. Illustration: When team members do what the coach asked, and perform with excellence, applying what he has taught them, they can win any game. And the coach isn’t too busy standing by the sidelines yelling at the players for all the
mistakes they make that he coached them out of. Instead, he stands on the
sidelines, almost with a smile on his face, a smirk toward his opponent, and
playing in that type of situation is so much more fun than playing with a coach
whose always yelling at you. When we obey God’s guidelines, we can enjoy
God’s presence instead of fear Him.

D. **Application:** When the time comes for God’s presence to flow and God moves in
this place, we can be ready to minister to others, but to enjoy that presence instead
of fear what God’s going to reveal about us or displeasing Him in any way. We
don’t have to worry God’s going to use a prophet to air our dirty laundry. We
don’t have to fear God will strike us dead if we don’t pray enough or shout loud
enough. Everyone reacts differently to the presence of God. When we are pleasing
to Him, we enjoy Him.

**Conclusion**
When we pay close attention to God’s guidelines for ministering in the midst of His
awesome presence, we avoid the danger of violating His holiness. God has shown us how to live
in His presence, and we can enjoy His presence. We can minister in God’s presence without fear!

As we know that God is going to be blessing us in the near future with a powerful
presence that’s going to change people’s lives, are you ready to live and minister in the presence
of the Lord? If that’s you this morning, excited about being in God’s holy presence, prepare your
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2 Samuel 6:1 David again gathered all the chosen men of Israel, thirty thousand. 2 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, which is called by the name of the Lord of hosts who sits enthroned on the cherubim. 3 And they carried 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, were driving the new cart. 4 with the ark of God, and Ahio went before the ark. 5 And David and all the house of Israel were making merry before the Lord, with songs and lyres and harps and tambourines and castanets and cymbals.
6 And when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. 7 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God struck him down there because of his error, and he died there beside the ark of God. 8 And David was angry because the Lord had burst forth against Uzzah. And that place is called Perez-uzzah, to this day. 9 And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and he said, “How can the ark of the Lord come to me?” 10 So David was not willing to take the ark of the Lord into the city of David. But David took it aside to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. 11 And 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.

12 And it was told King David, “The Lord has blessed the household 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 rejoicing. 13 And when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal. 14 And David danced before the Lord with all his might. And David was wearing a linen ephod. 15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn.

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consulting God’s Law on how to transport the Ark of the Covenant. From David’s mistake, we can learn three principles that will help us to minister without fear in God’s presence.

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Finally, we can **Enjoy His Presence** (vv. 12-15). When David saw that the Ark was blessing Obed-Edom’s house, he took it as a sign that the Ark was safe to move again. David was informed of the Ark’s blessing to Obed-Edom. He then returned for the Ark.

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Application: When the time comes for God’s presence to flow and God moves in this place, we can be ready to minister to others, but to enjoy that presence instead of fear what God’s going to reveal about us or displeasing Him in any way. We don’t have to worry God’s going to use a prophet to air our dirty laundry. We don’t have to fear God will strike us dead if we don’t pray enough or shout loud enough. Everyone reacts differently to the presence of God. When we are pleasing to Him, we enjoy Him.

Conclusion

When we pay close attention to God’s guidelines for ministering in the midst of His awesome presence, we avoid the danger of violating His holiness. God has shown us how to live in His presence, and we can enjoy His presence. We can minister in God’s presence without fear!

As we know that God is going to be blessing us in the near future with a powerful presence that’s going to change people’s lives, are you ready to live and minister in the presence of the Lord? If that’s you this morning, excited about being in God’s holy presence, prepare your hearts today to do whatever He tells you to do when He tells you to do it. If you would like to be part of this team of people who minister in God’s presence with joy, stand with me today.
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Sermonic Objective: To encourage people to operate in obedience instead of fear in God’s presence.

Main Sermon Idea: You can minister without fear in the presence of God!

I. Know What God Wants (vv. 1-5).
   A. The image of God sitting on the throne of the Ark as king prominently highlights the beginning of this passage. God had certain guidelines in the Law about how to transport the Ark and how to act around the Ark.
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