

LESSON SEVEN 15-16

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT BROUGHT TO JERUSALEM

DAVID'S SONG OF THANKSGIVING

THE MINISTERS AND WORSHIP

8. BRINGING THE ARK TO JERUSALEM (15-16)

INTRODUCTION

The completion of the movement of the ark to Jerusalem is accomplished at this time. David's concern for worship is underscored in his appointment of Levitical ministers and his composition of a beautiful hymn of thanksgiving.

TEXT

Chapter 15:1. And David made him houses in the city of David; and he prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent. 2. Then David said, "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath Jehovah chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto him for ever". 3. And David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of Jehovah unto its place, which he had prepared for it. 4. And David gathered together the sons of Aaron, and the Levites: 5. of the sons of Kohath, Uriel the chief, and his brethren a hundred and twenty; 6. of the sons of Merari, Asaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty; 7. of the sons of Gershom, Joel the chief, and his brethren a hundred and thirty; 8. of the sons of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred; 9. of the sons of Hebron, Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourscore; 10. of the sons of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief, and his brethren a hundred and twelve. 11. And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and for the Levites, for Uriel, Asaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab, 12. and said unto them, "Ye are the heads of the fathers' houses of the Levites: sanctify yourselves, both ye and your brethren, that ye may bring up the ark of Jehovah, the

God of Israel, unto the place that I have prepared for it. 13. For because ye bare it not at the first, Jehovah our God made a breach upon us, for that we sought him not according to the ordinance." 14. So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of Jehovah, the God of Israel. 15. And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of Jehovah.

16. And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren the singers, with instruments of music, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding aloud and lifting up the voice with joy. 17. So the Levites appointed Heman the son of Joel; and of his brethren, Asaph the son of Berechiah; and of the sons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the son of Kushaiah; 18. and with them their brethren of the second degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaseiah, and Mattithiah, and Eliphehu, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the doorkeepers. 19. So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed, with cymbals of brass to sound aloud; 20. and Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, and Eliab, and Maaseiah, and Benaiah, with psalteries set to Alamoth; 21. and Mattithiah, and Eliphehu, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps set to the Sheminith, to lead. 22. And Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, was over the song: he instructed about the song, because he was skillful. 23. And Berechiah and Elkanah were doorkeepers for the ark. 24. And Shebaniah, and Joshaphat, and Nethanel, and Amasai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer, the priests, did blow the trumpets before the ark of God; and Obed-edom and Jehiah were doorkeepers for the ark.

25. So David, and the elders of Israel, and the captains over thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah out of the house of Obed-edom with joy. 26. And it came to pass, when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, that they sacrificed seven bullocks and seven rams. 27. And David was clothed with a robe of fine

linen, and all the Levites that bare the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the master of the song with the singers: and David had upon him an ephod of linen, 28. Thus all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of Jehovah with shouting, and with sound of the cornet, and with trumpets, and with cymbals, sounding aloud with psalteries and harps.

29. And it came to pass, as the ark of the covenant of Jehovah came to the city of David; that Michal the daughter of Saul looked out at the window, and saw king David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart.

Chapter 16:1. And they brought in the ark of God, and set it in the midst of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before God. 2. And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offering and the peace-offerings, he blessed the people in the name of Jehovah. 3. And he dealt to every one of Israel, both man and woman, to every one a loaf of bread, and a portion of flesh, and a cake of raisins.

4. And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of Jehovah, and to celebrate and to thank and praise Jehovah, the God of Israel: 5. Asaph the chief, and second to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with psalteries and with harps; and Asaph with cymbals, sounding aloud; 6. and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests with trumpets continually, before the ark of the covenant of God.

7. Then on that day did David first ordain to give thanks unto Jehovah, by the hand of Asaph and his brethren. 8. O give thanks unto Jehovah, call upon his name; 9. Sing unto him, sing praises unto him; Talk ye of all his marvellous works. 10. Glory ye in his holy name; Let the heart of them rejoice that seek Jehovah. 11. Seek ye Jehovah and his strength; Seek his face evermore. 12. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth, 13. O ye seed of Israel his servant, Ye children of Jacob, his chosen ones. 14. He is Jehovah our God; His judgments are in all the earth. 15. Remember his covenant for ever, The word which he

commanded to a thousand generations, 16. The covenant which he made with Abraham, And his oath unto Isaac, 17. And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a statute, To Israel for an everlasting covenant, 18. Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, The lot of your inheritance; 19. When you were but a few men in number, Yea, very few, and sojourners in it; 20. And they went about from nation to nation, And from one kingdom to another people. 21. He suffered no man to do them wrong; Yea, he reproved kings for their sakes, 22. Saying, Touch not mine anointed ones, And do my prophets no harm. 23. Sing unto Jehovah, all the earth; Show forth his salvation from day to day. 24. Declare his glory among the nations. His marvellous works among all the peoples. 25. For great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised: He also is to be feared above all gods. 26. For all the gods of the peoples are idols: But Jehovah made the heavens. 27. Honor and majesty are before him: Strength and gladness are in his place. 28. Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye kindreds of the peoples, Ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength; 29. Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name: Bring an offering, and come before him; Worship Jehovah in holy array. 30. Tremble before him, all the earth: The world also is established that it cannot be moved. 31. Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations, Jehovah reigneth. 32. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; Let the field exult, and all that is therein; 33. Then shall the trees of the wood sing for joy before Jehovah; For he cometh to judge the earth. 34. O give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good; For his lovingkindness endureth for ever. 35. And say ye, Save us, O God of our salvation, And gather us together and deliver us from the nations. To give thanks unto thy holy name, And to triumph in thy praise, 36. Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. And all the people said, Amen, and praised Jehovah.

37. So he left there, before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required; 38. and Obed-edom with their brethren, threescore and eight; Obed-edom also the

son of Jeduthun and Hosah to be doorkeepers; 39. and Zadok the priest, and his brethren the priests, before the tabernacle of Jehovah in the high place that was at Gibeon, 40. to offer burnt-offerings unto Jehovah upon the altar of burnt-offering continually morning and evening, even according to all that is written in the law of Jehovah, which he commanded unto Israel; 41. and with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the rest that were chosen, who were mentioned by name, to give thanks to Jehovah, because his lovingkindness endureth for ever; 42. and with them Heman and Jeduthun with trumpets and cymbals for those that should sound aloud, and with instruments for the songs of God; and the sons of Jeduthun to be at the gate. 43. And all the people departed every man to his house: and David returned to bless his house.

PARAPHRASE

Chapter 15:1. David now built several palaces for himself in Jerusalem, and he also built a new Tabernacle to house the Ark of God, 2. and issued these instructions: (When we transfer the Ark to its new home), no one except the Levites may carry it, for God has chosen them for this purpose; they are to minister to him forever." 3. Then David summoned all Israel to Jerusalem to celebrate the bringing of the Ark into the new Tabernacle. 4-10. These were the priests and Levites present: 120 from the clan of Kohath; with Uriel as their leader; 220 from the clan of Merari; with Asaiah as their leader; 130 from the clan of Gershon; with Joel as their leader; 200 from the subclan of Elizaphan; with Shemaiah as their leader; 80 from the subclan of Hebron; with Eliel as their leader; 112 from the subclan of Uzziel; with Amminadab as their leader. 11. Then David called for Zadok and Abiathar, the High Priests, and for the Levite leaders: Uriel, Asiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab. 12. "You are the leaders of the clans of the Levites," he told them. "Now sanctify yourselves with all your brothers so that you may bring the Ark of Jehovah, the God of Israel, to the place I have prepared for it. 13. The Lord destroyed us before because we handled the matter im-

properly—you were not carrying it.” 14. So the priests and the Levites underwent the ceremonies of sanctification in preparation for bringing home the Ark of Jehovah, the God of Israel. 15. Then the Levites carried the Ark on their shoulders with its carrying poles, just as the Lord had instructed Moses.

16. King David also ordered the Levite leaders to organize the singers into an orchestra, and they played loudly and joyously upon psaltries, harps, and cymbals. 17. Heman (son of Joel), Asaph (son of Berechiah), and Ethan (son of Kushaiah) from the clan of Merari were the heads of the musicians. 18. The following men were chosen as their assistants: Zechariah, Ja-aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Ma-asseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom and Je-iel, the door keepers. 19. Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were chosen to sound the bronze cymbals; 20. and Zechariah, Azi-el, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Ma-aseiah, and Benaiah comprised an octet accompanied by harps. 21. Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Je-iel, and Azaziah were the harpists. 22. the song leader was Chenaniah, the chief of the Levites, who was selected for his skill. 23. Berechiah and Elkanah were guards for the Ark. 24. Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer—all of whom were priests—formed a bugle corps to march as the head of the procession. And Obed-edom and Jehiah guarded the Ark.

25. Then David and the elders of Israel and the high officers of the army went with great joy to the home of Obed-edom to take the Ark to Jerusalem. 26. And because God didn't destroy the Levites who were carrying the Ark, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven lambs. 27. David, the Levites carrying the Ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the song leader were all dressed in linen robes. David also wore a linen ephod. 28. So the leaders of Israel took the Ark to Jerusalem with shouts of joy, the blowing of horns and trumpets, the crashing of cymbals, and loud playing on the harps and zithers.

29. (But as the Ark arrived in Jerusalem, David's wife Michal, the daughter of King Saul, felt a deep disgust for David

as she watched from the window and saw him dancing like a madman.)

Chapter 16:1. So the Ark of God was brought into the Tabernacle. David had prepared for it, and the leaders of Israel sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings before God. 2. At the conclusion of these offerings David blessed the people in the name of the Lord; 3. then he gave every person present (men and women alike) a loaf of bread, some wine, and a cake of raisins.

4. He appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the Ark by giving constant praise and thanks to the Lord God of Israel and by asking for his blessings upon his people. These are the names of those given this assignment: 5. Asaph, the leader of this detail, sounded the cymbals. His associates were Zechariah, Je-iel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Je-iel; they played the harps and zithers. 6. The priests Benaiah and Jahaziel played their trumpets regularly before the Ark.

7. At that time David began the custom of using choirs in the Tabernacle to sing thanksgiving to the Lord. Asaph was the director of this choral group of priests. 8. "Oh, give thanks to the Lord and pray to him," they sang. "Tell the peoples of the world About his mighty doings. 9. Sing to him; yes, sing his praises and tell of his marvelous works. 10. Glory in his holy name; Let all rejoice who seek the Lord. 11. Seek the Lord; yes, seek his strength, And seek his face untiringly. 12, 13. Oh descendants of his servant Abraham, O chosen sons of Jacob, Remember his mighty miracles, And his marvelous miracles, And his authority: 14. He is the Lord our God! His authority is seen throughout the earth. 15. Remember his covenant forever—The words he commanded, To a thousand generations: 16. His agreement with Abraham; And his oath to Isaac, 17. And his confirmation to Jacob. He promised Israel, With an everlasting promise: 18. 'I will give you the land of Canaan, As your inheritance.' 19. When Israel was few in number—oh, so few—And merely strangers in the Promised Land; 20. When they wandered from country to country, From one kingdom to

another—21. God didn't let anyone harm them. Even kings were killed who sought to hurt them. 22. 'Don't harm my chosen people,' he declared. 'These are my prophets—touch them not.' 23. Sing to the Lord, O earth, Declare each day that he is the one who saves! 24. Show his glory to the nations! Tell everyone about his miracles. 25. For the Lord is great, and should be highly praised; He is to be held in awe above all gods. 26. The other so-called gods are demons, But the Lord made the heavens. 27. Majesty and honor march before him, Strength and gladness walk beside him. 28. O people of all nations of the earth, Ascribe great strength and glory to his name! 29. Yes, ascribe to the Lord, The glory due his name! Bring an offering and come before him; Worship the Lord when clothed with holiness! 30. Tremble before him, all the earth! The world stands unmoved. 31. Let the heavens be glad, the earth rejoice; Let all the nations say, 'It is the Lord who reigns.' 32. Let the vast seas roar, Let the countryside and everything in it rejoice! 33. Let the trees in the woods sing for joy before the Lord, For he comes to judge the earth. 34. Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; His love and his kindness go on forever. 35. Cry out to him, 'Oh, save us, God of our salvation; Bring us safely back from among the nations. Then we will thank your holy name, And triumph in your praise.' 36. Blessed be Jehovah, God of Israel, Forever and forevermore." And all the people shouted "Amen!" and praised the Lord.

37. David arranged for Asaph and his fellow Levites to minister regularly at the Tabernacle, doing each day whatever needed to be done. 38. This group included Obed-edom (the son of Jeduthun), Hosah and sixty-eight of their colleagues as guards. 39. Meanwhile the old Tabernacle of the Lord on the hill of Gibeon continued to be active. David left Zadok the priest and his fellow-priests to minister to the Lord there. 40. They sacrificed burnt offerings to the Lord each morning and evening upon the altar set aside for that purpose, just as the Lord had commanded Israel. 41. David also appointed Heman, Jeduthun, and several others who were chosen by name to give thanks to the Lord for his constant love and mercy. 42. They

used their trumpets and cymbals to accompany the singers with loud praises to God. And Jeduthun's sons were appointed as guards. 43. At last the celebrations ended and the people returned to their homes, and David returned to bless his own household.

COMMENTARY

In spite of the reverses suffered in his previous attempt to locate the ark in the capital city, David was determined to complete this project. He fortified Jerusalem and continued to build "houses" in the city. These houses would be directly related to his government. As the king directed all of this activity Jerusalem came to be known as "the city of David", peculiarly identified with him. As he was caught up in the business of establishing his government in Jerusalem David could not forget the ark of the covenant. A special tent was constructed in the city to serve temporarily as a shelter for the sacred vessel. The tabernacle constructed at Sinai in Moses' day had been located at Shiloh in the tribe of Ephraim for many years. It was at Shiloh that Eli and Samuel ministered in the tabernacle (I Samuel 3:3). Later the tabernacle was moved to Nob (I Samuel 21:6) near Jerusalem. At this place David had been provided with shewbread and Goliath's sword as he fled Saul's wrath. There are indications that the tabernacle was moved to Gibeon where it most likely remained until the Temple was built. The ark had been captured by the Philistines, was returned to Beth-shemesh, moved to Kiriath-jearim and brought to the house of Obed-edom. During the three months after the death of Uzza, David laid careful plans for the moving of the ark. The sad experience with the oxen and the cart brought David to the decision announced in verse 2. Since the Levites had been appointed by Jehovah to carry the ark, this holy vessel must be carried on their shoulders (Numbers 1:15-53). Boards, bars, pillars, sockets and curtain materials could be transported on carts; but the sacred vessels were to be carried in the arms of the Kohathite Levites. Once more, runners were sent throughout the kingdom to announce the

happy occasion and a great assembly convened at Jerusalem. A careful distinction was made between "the sons of Aaron" and "the Levites". Every priest in order to serve, had to be a Levite; however, all Levites were not qualified to serve as priests. The Kohathite Levites who were physically perfect and ceremonially clean qualified to serve as priests. The Merarites and Gershonites (Gershom) could serve as hewers of wood and drawers of water, but they could not do the work of the regular priests. Zadok and Abiathar (verse 11) were the chief priests in David's administration. Zadok (II Samuel 8:17) and Ahimelech (I Samuel 22:20) were sons of Ahitub. Abiathar was Ahimelech's son. Only one High Priest functioned in Israel at a given time. Zadok would have the primary responsibility in David's day and Abiathar, his nephew, would serve as chief assistant. These two priests were called before David and he gave them special charge concerning the ark. "Sanctify yourselves" (verse 12). David had read the Law. He had concluded that because they had failed to observe this regulation concerning the priests and the ark they had incurred the wrath of Jehovah. The priests were very willing to do exactly as David commanded. They would give their personal attention to this matter. The ark with staves in place would be carried upon their shoulders, "in their arms". One hundred and twenty Kohathites, two hundred and twenty Merarites, and one hundred and thirty Gershonites were numbered and appointed to see that this mission would be accomplished. Others among the Levites were given specific appointments within the limits of Jehovah's Law. David made every effort to avoid any problem like that which had resulted in Uzza's death.

To make certain that everything was properly arranged for the occasion, David gave special instruction to those who would lead in the services. Singers, those who played on musical instruments, doorkeepers for the ark were all briefed regarding their respective duties. Psalteries, harps, cymbals, and trumpets were to be used. It was to be a happy day. The musical instruments were to be played skillfully with volume suited to the occasion. The singing was to be joyful. Heman, Asaph, and

Ethan, Levitical master musicians and their assistants were charged to lead in worship through song. The musical instruments were of varying kinds and were designed to produce excellent balance in tone. "Psalteries set to Alamoth" produced a high pitch harmonizing with the singing voices of men. "Harps set to the Sheminith" which means "the eighth or octave", produced a tone similar to that of the singing voices of men. This music was to be of the highest quality. Chenaniah, chief of the Levites, had special duties on this occasion. There is some question as to the exact nature of these duties. Verse 22 mentions "the song". The term used here may be translated "in the carrying", possibly of the ark. So Chenaniah had specific assignment given him either with regard to the music or with regard to the actual carrying of the ark itself.¹ Berechiah, Elkanah, Obed-edom, and Jehiah were appointed to serve as doorkeepers for the ark. They probably served as a special guard to avoid any possibility of anyone touching the sacred vessel. Special assignments were made to seven of the priests who preceded the ark. These priests were also musicians who sounded trumpets as they led the procession. The trumpets were most likely made of silver like those designated for priestly use in Moses' day (Numbers 10:1-10). They were long, straight, narrow instruments with an expanded mouth. Such horns had been used to call people for a religious assembly, to announce the beginning of a new month or a new year, and to warn of an enemy attack. Originally there were only two silver trumpets. By the time of David and Solomon (II Chronicles 5:12) their number had been increased to one hundred and twenty.

The actual bringing in of the ark of the covenant is described in verses 25-28. The chronicler reflects the deep satisfaction experienced by all who shared in this joyous occasion. II Samuel 6:12-16 provides the parallel record of these events. It was with utmost reverence that the priests approached the ark to move it. There were sad memories of another day. What will the God of Israel do today? Will He unleash His wrath or will He smile upon His people? In great

¹Clarke, Adam, *A Commentary and Critical Notes*, Vol. II, p. 608.

fear the priests dared to lay hold upon the staves and carefully lift the sacred ark to their shoulders. The historian recorded the words, "God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of Jehovah". In effect, Jehovah said, "What you do here today meets my approval". In return, the priests offered animal sacrifices and rejoiced in God's help. At regular intervals (six paces or measurements) along the route to Jerusalem the whole company stopped and offered sacrifices. The Levites were careful to wear the clothing appointed for them as they carried out the sacred service. The regular priests could be easily distinguished from the High Priest by their garments. David, as the king, was dressed in a beautiful linen robe. In addition, David also wore a linen ephod. Historically, the ephod was worn only by the High Priest (Exodus 28:4-12). Samuel, as a child in the tabernacle, also wore a linen ephod (I Samuel 2:18). The ephod was worn much like a vest or jacket. When the High Priest wore it, the breastplate was attached to it. Jehovah evidently approved David's actions. In David the offices of king and priest were combined. This anticipated the time when the offices of king, priest, and prophet would all be united in Jesus Christ. All Israel joined in singing as the Levites played upon the musical instruments. The people also expressed their joy by shouting.

David was completely caught up in the joy of the occasion as he "danced and played". He leaped about in half-circles. He led in the celebration. His wife, Michal, took exception to his actions. She most likely had not been a part of the great assembly as the ark was brought into Jerusalem. From the window of her room she observed the king and was not sympathetic with his attitudes or the manner of his self-expression. She judged him to be guilty of conduct unbecoming to his position as king. II Samuel 6:23 says that Michal died childless. This curse was directly related to her severe judgment of David. Whereas Uzzah had died when the ark was moved on the earlier occasion, Michal is now cursed and through her there will be no son for David and no glory for her father, Saul.

Verses 1-3 of chapter sixteen are inseparably connected

with the concluding verses of the previous chapter. The ark was brought to the special tent David had constructed in Jerusalem for this purpose. Chapter 15:1 made direct reference to this appointment. There are no indications that David had intended to return the ark to the original tabernacle. Many sacrifices had been lifted up to Jehovah that day; however, burnt and peace offerings are now presented as the ark is set inside the tent. In the whole round of offerings designated in Leviticus, chapters 1-7, the burnt offering was the basic form of worship and the peace offering was the concluding presentation. In the burnt offering the worshipper pledged total consecration to Jehovah. This was symbolized in the complete reduction of the animal to ashes. The peace offering involved the presentation of the blood and fat of the animal to Jehovah. The wave breast and the heave thigh were food for the priests. The offerer and his family feasted on the sacrifice. So Jehovah, priests, and the worshipper all shared in this happy occasion. The peace offering symbolized the wonderful covenant relationship between Jehovah and His people. So burnt and peace offerings were presented when the ark was set in its place. In his official capacity as king, ruling by divine appointment and governing God's people by His sacred Law, David blessed Israel that day. With all of the rejoicing and the deep satisfaction that Jehovah had moved into Jerusalem, it was a time to give and receive gifts. David's generosity was equal to the joy of this occasion. The record indicates that he gave bread, flesh, and raisin cakes to all who were gathered there that day. The bread may be described as circular perforated cakes. The portion of flesh is translated by some to mean a measure of wine. The dried pressed cakes of raisins or grapes completed this festive gift.

David made certain that all Levitical appointments were in order (verses 4-6). The work of officiating priests is here carefully outlined. They are to celebrate the name of Jehovah. This may be translated "to cause others to remember". Priests had a two-fold duty of officiating in the sacrifices at the altar and in serving as teachers for Israel. "The name of Jehovah" was a phrase used in reference to the total character of the God of

Israel. It involved His complete self-revelation. When one sincerely called upon "the name of Jehovah", he fully accepted God's presentation of Himself and he agreed, without reservation, to do God's will. The priests must "celebrate" Jehovah's name. They must lead the people in thanksgiving. This expression would proceed naturally out of the remembrance of Jehovah's provisions for Israel. The priests would also be leaders in formal praises and worship of the one true God. David, Israel's king, clarified these matters. He used the cymbals of worship. Asaph had special responsibility in these matters. He used the cymbals in the musical service. Benaiah and Jahaziel were responsible for the trumpets. Zechariah was assistant to Asaph. The other men named in verse 6 played the psalteries and harps. This service was done with utmost solemnity "before the ark of covenant of God."

The reader is impressed with the indication that these preparations were made for this special day in Israel's history; but not for this day only. It was the chief work of the priests to lead in the whole round of worship day after day. A liturgy and order of worship had already been begun. God's Word must be reduced to written form. The Law (or Torah) had already been prepared. It formed the basis for all sacred writings pertaining to Jehovah's people. Some of the prophets had written their records of Jehovah's Word. Other prophets were yet to come and leave with men their burning messages prefaced with the call, "Hear the Word of the Lord". A few hymns, like the Song of Moses in Exodus 15, had been composed. The bringing of the ark into Jerusalem signalled the era for the flowering of Hebrew poetry and sacred song. David, himself, was called "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Samuel 23:1).¹ When Jesus made reference to the sacred writings in Luke 24:44, He spoke of the law, the prophets, and the psalms. These three divisions include the entire Old Testament as we know it. David and the good men associated with him shared the major responsibility for the third division, the Psalms. The Book of Psalms was the

¹Oehler, Gustave F., *Theology of the Old Testament*, Zondervan Publishing Co., 1883, p. 373.

hymnbook for the Hebrew church. In the section now under study, I Chronicles 16:7-36, it is of considerable interest that the hymn of praise used on this occasion contained portions from at least four hymns recorded in the Book of Psalms. Verses 8-22 echo Psalm 105:1-15. Verses 23-33 repeat Psalm 96:1-13. Verse 34 repeats Psalms 107:1; 118:1; 136:1. Verses 35 and 36 employ words and ideas used in Psalm 106:47, 48.

In the true spirit of priestly ministry verses 8-22 "celebrate" or cause Israel to remember what Jehovah had done for her. "Call upon His name". "Glory in His holy name". Fifteen times in twenty-nine verses the name "Jehovah" is used. Who is this God? He is "Yahweh", the only existent God who has entered into covenant relationship with His people. What should Israel do in response to this great God? They are to give thanks, make Him known, sing praises, talk about Him, glory in His name, seek Him, remember His works, His miracles, His covenant, bring an offering, worship, tremble in His presence. When psalmists sang of Jehovah's wonders, they often recalled what he had done in the plagues sent on Egypt (Psalm 78:43). The covenant concept distinguished Israel's God. The gods of the heathen, though made in the form of man, could not think, feel, will, speak, or move. Israel's God was alive, real, a genuine person, intelligent, sympathetic, disposed to enter into reciprocal agreements with men, especially with Israel. The covenant first enunciated to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3) and ratified with blood (Genesis 15), renewed to Isaac and Jacob, was still in force. When Jacob and his sons were forced by famine to find refuge in Egypt, Jehovah did not abandon His people. As Abimelech, king of Gerar (Genesis 20:7), was forbidden to harm Abraham, so Jehovah's mercies followed His people. "O give thanks unto Jehovah", "Glory ye in his holy name", priests and people sang.

Verses 23-26 carry the worshipper beyond the limits of the Hebrews. What He had been to Israel He will be to all mankind. Let all the peoples of the earth join in the song of praise. Before this wonderful vision could become reality, Israel would have to do her work. She must make Jehovah known to the peoples of

the world. In large measure she failed in this task. The nations are to be brought into the presence of Jehovah in the same attitude of worship as demonstrated in Israel's example. The nations are to sing to Jehovah, declare His glory, reverence Him as Creator, ascribe glory unto Him, bring an offering, worship in holy order, tremble in His presence, joyfully accept Jehovah as king. Verse 26 contrasts Jehovah with heathen gods. The gods are idols (elilim), nothings. Paul said in I Corinthians 8:4 that an idol is not anything. Verse 26 does not recognize the reality of heathen gods. On the contrary, it is a strong denial of the existence of such. Once more, the basic revelation of Jehovah as the Creator is underscored. In a crescendo of praise, the Psalmist (verses 28, 29) calls for the proper recognition of Jehovah's deity. Even inanimate things such as the sea, the field, and the tree are called upon to join in hallelujah chorus. The role of Jehovah as judge of the earth, of all mankind, is mentioned in verse 34. Even when He comes in judgment, all men must know that Jehovah is good. He will judge according to His standard of righteousness. Loving-kindness is the term used to describe Jehovah's religious duty. In every instance He will do what ought to be done according to the circumstances. Finally, the song turns once more to Israel's praise of Jehovah. This composition provided a very fitting hymn for this special occasion. The people willingly followed the leaders of worship.

The regular ministry for the service in the presence of the ark was carefully designated in verses 37-43. Special assignments on a continuing schedule were set up for the work in Jerusalem and for the tabernacle which at this time was in Gibeon.¹ The priests were to be very careful in observing "all that is written in the law of Jehovah". When the ceremonies of this very special day were completed, everybody went home. David returned to his own quarters deeply grateful for the blessings he enjoyed, yet somewhat concerned about an unsympathetic wife.

¹Clarke, Adam, *A Commentary and Critical Notes*, Vol. 11, p. 610.

SUMMARY QUESTIONS

LESSON SEVEN 15-16

209. What did David do for the ark?
210. What specific assignment was determined for the Levites?
211. Where is the tabernacle at this time?
212. Which of Aaron's sons now receive special assignment?
213. How is the trouble involving Uzza's death explained?
214. How many Levites are numbered here in the special assignment?
215. Identify Zadok and Abiathar.
216. How could the priests sanctify themselves? What was the procedure?
217. How is the ark to be moved? What is the significance of this?
218. Name the principal Levites who share responsibilities with regard to the program of music.
219. What kind of musical instrument was used just ahead of the movement of the ark?
220. Where was the ark of the covenant at this time? How long had it been there?
221. Describe the exercises the people shared as the ark was brought to Jerusalem.
222. Why would David wear a robe and an ephod of linen?
223. Describe the cornet and the cymbal.
224. Who was Michal? Why did she react as she did?
225. Relate the special meaning of the burnt offering and the peace offering to worship.
226. Why did David present gifts to the people and what were the gifts?
227. What was the work of the Levites according to 16:4?
228. Which of the Psalms repeats the message of this song in chapter 16?
229. What was the specific occasion for this song?

230. What are the "judgments of Jehovah"?
231. Describe Jehovah's covenant with Abraham.
232. Chapter 16:19 refers to a time when Israel was few in number. How many Hebrews went into Egypt in Jacob's day?
233. Which of the Psalms echoes the song beginning with 16:23?
234. Does verse 25 admit that other gods exist? Explain.
235. How does Jehovah differ from the gods according to verse 26?
236. When will the trees of the wood sing?
237. What was the nature of Asaph's work?
238. Explain the specific work assigned to Heman and Jeduthun.
239. What were the morning and the evening sacrifices?