

Title: God is home.
Text: 2 Samuel 6.12-19
Theme: Living in the presence of God
Series: 2 Samuel
Prop Stmt: God loves to among and enjoy his people.

A few months ago, I made chili for our chili cook-off. It was the first time I had ever made chili. I thought it came out pretty good. Apparently, no one else did, because I didn't even place in the rankings. Well, that motivated me to see if I can do better. It's not that I am competitive, I just hate to lose. I have tried at least 3 different recipes and have made chili at least 6 times since then. But something has happened in the process. Instead of inhaling chili as a calorie consumer, I now experience my chili. I take a little more time to enjoy how the ingredients and particularly the spices work together and because of that, I have found that I enjoy the chili a lot more. I pay way more attention to it. Intentional investment of thought and effort is producing a greater joy. I'm not saying that I am going to win this year, but I think some of you should be shaking in your crock pots. Hold on to that.

Read Text:

God is beyond us. The fact that we cannot fully comprehend God does not mean that we shouldn't try to absorb and grasp all that we can. One of the inexhaustible pursuits of life is the study of God. But, the study of God is not frustrating, in the sense that trigonometry might be. When you are studying something that you cannot comprehend, you are tempted to give up in despair – "Oh I will never get this!" That is not the case with God. While we cannot ever exhaust our knowledge of God, the more we know the more we are satisfied and delighted. It's like eating chili, or a well-prepared meal, looking at a painting by one of the masters or listening to good music. There's layering and texture, balance and rhythm that has to be experienced again and again in order to begin to see all that is going on. We should have deep thoughts about God so we can have a deep love for God which drives full-throttled worship of God and our happy enjoyment of God. That truth is beautifully set on display in this account of the Ark of the Covenant finally coming into Jerusalem and being set in place in this city from which it will not leave for about 400 years.

1. **You must pursue deep thoughts about God** (12-13)
(read)

A. Who is God?

God is who He claims to be not what you think. The claims of God are revealed in the Word of God. David had to learn that and he did. We do not presume upon God. We have to deal with God and we have to deal with God on his terms. But this is what you find out. Yes, God is holy. However, God loves to bless. He will not compromise his holiness, but he looks for reasons and ways to bless. God blessed Obed-edom. David heard about it and he believed it! David feared God and he believed that God is good! I think that this is one of David's finest moments. David appeared to be doing a great thing for God by bringing the Ark of the Covenant into the city of

Jerusalem. David had conquered the city. He prepared a new place for the Tabernacle (tent) and he made a plan to get the Ark from the house of Abinadab and bring it to its new home in a very public parade that David is personally involved with. There is a lot to commend to this. But, in spite of all the good that David did, God would not compromise his Word or his holiness. So, when Uzzah grabbed hold of the ark when the oxen stumbled, God struck Uzzah dead and the parade stopped. The day of celebration turned into a disaster. David was angry. Uzzah was dead. The event reflected on David. This was a colossal embarrassment. David could have remained angry, but his anger turned to fear. That could have been him. He could have grabbed the Ark to steady it. Maybe he almost did – who knows? Maybe David realized that he could have been the one who would have died. But David's fear caused David to be humble and he realized that there was a lot about God that he did not know. I say that based on 1 Chronicles 15 and 16. These 8 verses here in 2 Samuel 6 occupy 72 verses in 1 Chronicles where we have a lot more detail. (15.13) Deep thoughts about God involve who he is and what is doing. So...

B. What is he doing?

God is working out his plan to have a redeemed people from every tribe, language and nation, that he will live with and enjoy forever. All of human history is flowing to Revelation 21-22. This has always been the plan of God. Knowing that one day there will be a redeemed people living in beautiful and perfect harmony with God and with one another in the New Jerusalem, we can look back into history and see the significance of God's work in the past. We can realize that right now God is working in this world and will continue to work in this world to carry out this plan. This plan will be accomplished. Nothing will stop or thwart the plan of God.

Now, we can see the significance of verses 12-13. David knew that God was holy. He feared that. David also realized that God was good and he believed that. Those realities were pressed upon David in such a way that he knew that he needed to put the Tent of God in the city of Jerusalem. I don't think David had any idea of the eternal significance of this. This was a big deal to David and the nation of Israel, but it was an even bigger deal in the plan of God. For the first time ever, the localized presence of God (known as the Shekinah Glory) was in Jerusalem. God's throne (the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant) came into Jerusalem. In that sense, God is home. God is in his eternal home.

It is common to hear people talk about buying their forever home, which means, the home that I want to live the rest of my life in. Many of us do not get ever get to buy that or if we do, we don't get to stay in it forever, unless your forever home is with God in the New Jerusalem. In that case, it is bought for you, built for you, provided for you, and it is forever. Anyway, this is the story line of the Bible. Who God is and what God is doing causes our mental fuses to blow because we can't handle the overwhelming theological voltage. Here is an example of this. In two weeks, we will be observing Palm Sunday. What happened on Palm Sunday? Jesus came into Jerusalem, right? Do you see it now? Jesus, the glorious Son of God, was carried into Jerusalem by a donkey while the crowds sang and shouted and celebrated. He came into Jerusalem and went directly to the Temple. This event in 2 Samuel previewed that event which together previews the return of Christ on a white horse to take over the whole thing.

But there is something else that we should consider. What is the dwelling place of God now? His people! We are the temple of God. In his letter to the church at Laodicea Jesus said, *“If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him and he with me.”* God doesn’t dwell in a tent or a building anymore, but in believers. When we say that God is home now, he takes up his residence in the lives of those who trust in him. This event in 2 Samuel is a preview of all of this.

Danger: Deep thoughts about God are so that we will make much of God, not of ourselves. If we are impressed with our deep thoughts of God or with the fact that we have deeper thoughts than others, or better thoughts than others, then we are guilty of idolatry. It is easy to do. It is easy to be smug about our better thoughts, our deeper thoughts, our more sophisticated and informed thoughts and fail to be humbled by them. The deeper our thoughts, the greater our humility so our love will be all that purer and more intense.

2. **So you will have great love for God.** (12-14)
(read)

What a great God we serve. What an amazing God we trust. Realizing even what we do know is so that our hearts will be enlarged so that our capacity to love God will just get bigger and bigger. When you read the Psalms, you know that David had deep thoughts about God. 1 Chronicles 15 and 16 (especially 16) make that so clear. Our study of the life of David makes it clear to us that David has a wide emotional range. He is expressive. He is passionate. He can be deeply depressed and intensely exuberant. Not all of you are wired like that, but some of you are. Whatever your God-given range of affection is, it is to be filled up and poured out for God. You are to pursue deep thoughts about God so you will have great love for God. I love this about David. God loves this about David. You need to love this about David. David loved God and danced before the Lord with all his might. It’s like singing in car all by yourself only forgetting that you are actually in the mall. David was so full of God that he was empty of himself. He was so overwhelmed with God that he was completely underwhelmed with himself. He was so mindful of God that he was forgetful of himself. He didn’t act like a king because he was in the presence of THE King. David loved God. The Sovereign God of the universe was making his home in the city that David captured as the capital for the people of God. God was a God who loved to bless. God was a God who wanted to live with and bless his people. This was evident from what happened to Obed-edom. And, here it is happening.

3. **Which drives full-throttled worship.** (13-15)
(read) 1 Chronicles 15

Let’s summarize this. The people of God celebrated the presence of God by means of sacrifice, music, singing, rejoicing and celebration. What required multiple sacrifices has now been completely fulfilled by the once and for all sacrifice of Christ. Today, on the basis of Christ we delight in and enjoy the presence of God among his people through singing, rejoicing, and celebration. The first attempt was problematic because God’s Word did not govern it. This time,

three months later, the event was glorious because God's Word gave God's people the framework for true worship. The holiness of God does not bridle worship it, but intensifies it. Full-throttled worship of God is Word-governed which means it will be Christ-centered.

This is a worship event for the people of God. The time and location are set. The people are selected and organized. There are almost 1,000 men involved in leadership of the worship! The songs are planned and the music is rehearsed. This is not out of control ecstasy. Full-throttled worship is not chaotic. This was organized. That is clear from 1 Chronicles 15 and 16. The bringing of the ark of God into the city of Jerusalem was planned out. And it was planned out in a manner that was governed by God's Word. God, on the basis of sacrifice was coming to live with and among his people. This is well thought out because God is being worshiped and God has very specific parameters that define true worship. But the fact that worship is serious does not mean that it is subdued.

True worship of God is full-throttled. I mean that our confession of our sin is deep and deeply personal. We will never be overwhelmed at God's grace unless we face the depth of our need for forgiveness. Full-throttled worship means that our repentance is overwhelming. It takes time to repent. It takes time to confess our sins and listen to the Spirit of God draw our hearts into a clearer understanding of our own hearts. Genuine confession and heart-level repentance are part of our full-throttled worship of God. Our trust is real and our confidence in God's provision for our salvation in Christ is certain. Our delight is rich, our joy is true, and our hope is certain.

Once again, there is so much here that simply blows my mind. How many hundreds of years before did Melchizedek reign in Jerusalem as the King/priest who loved and worshiped Yahweh? Now David, the king, is wearing an ephod. That is something that priests would wear. This king/priest is leading his people in the worship of God like Melchizedek did before him and like Christ will do 1,000 years after him. But not everybody is comfortable with people who are consumed by a passion for the glory of God. I will address this more specifically next week because it deserves careful attention. Michal despised David. She didn't think that a king should behave like that. Do you?

David is overwhelmed by God. Are you inclined to be dismissive, perhaps critical of people who are consumed with a passion for the glory of God? Do you find yourself identifying more with Michal or David? Have you ever been overwhelmed by God? Has your heart ever been so captured by a passion for his glory that you did not care what others thought? Full-throttled worship of God is not manipulated and hyped. It is an expression of deep love for God that is fueled by deep thoughts about God. When we grasp who God is and what he is doing, we start forgetting ourselves and what we consider to be our own importance. When you are overwhelmed with God, you will be underwhelmed with yourself.

4. **And a happy enjoyment of God.** (17-19)
(read)

It worked. It really worked. God came home to his city. This will be the city that he will one day return to, never to leave. This is the first time, that the glory of God in the Shekinah cloud is present in the city. For now, there is a sense in which all is right. This is a taste of how it is supposed to be. God is in his house, and his people are around him, singing, celebrating, worshiping, being blessed, being provided for and eating.

1 Chronicles 16.8-36

This day went so differently than the one 3 months earlier. The Ark of the Covenant was in its new and rightful home. God had blessed his people with his presence and with a king who blessed them and led them in humble, yet fervent worship. Their king gave them gifts and all the people went home with joy. It was a good day. It was a satisfying day. It was a happy and rejoicing day. But, before he could even get into his house, Michal hissed and spit her venom all over him. More on that next week.

Beloved, we live in the shadowlands. Yet, in our journey in these lands, there are days that point to greater days, joys that point to greater joys, and songs that point to greater songs. This day for David would end and even this day wouldn't end the way he wanted. But there is coming a day when God is in his home in the New Jerusalem and we are with him. He will not be hidden in a temple because the entire city is the temple. He will live with and among us, enjoying us perfectly and us enjoying him and one another perfectly. And get this: It will never end. It will never disappoint. And we will never stop being amazed. There is no end to deep thoughts about God, which means that there is limit to our love for God which means there is no restraint on our full-throttled worship of God which means there will be no end on our enjoyment of God.

Behold, our God