

## Sermon Notes for September 25, 2016

### The Holiness Of God Sermon Series “A Hard Lesson Learned About The Holiness Of God.” II Samuel 6:1-15

#### Introduction

##### A. We Continue Our Sermon Series On The Holiness Of God

1. Until we understand **how holy God is**, we will **not truly know who God is**
2. Until we understand **our sinfulness**, we will not truly appreciate **how holy we are not**
3. **AND**. . .until we understand the holiness of God **AND** the sinfulness of man, we will not understand what God’s grace is all about

##### B. Today, We Will See “Just How Holy God Is.”

1. This is one of the most disturbing stories in all of Scripture; a story that fully illustrates just how holy our God is
2. This is the story of a man named Uzzah who had a personal, physical encounter with the holiness of God.

#### I. The PAST Of Worship.

##### A. The PATTERN Of The Ark.

1. The **centrality** of the Ark.
  - a. during the days of the Old Testament, the Ark of the Covenant was absolutely central to the worship of God’s people
  - b. the Ark was the most important piece of furniture in the Tabernacle
    1. on the Ark rested the “presence, or shekinah glory” of God
    2. the Ark of the Covenant resided in the holiest of all rooms in the Tabernacle; the Holy of Holies
    3. in a sense, the power of God was found in the Ark of the Covenant
2. The **contents** of the Ark of the Covenant
  - a. the **internal** content
    1. the **Old Testament content**
      - a. **the two tablets of the 10 Commandments**
      - b. **the rod of Aaron** that budded, showing God’s favor upon Aaron as the chosen High Priest
      - c. **the jar of manna** – a sample of the food that God provided during the wilderness wanderings
    2. the **New Testament application**
      - a. Jesus Christ as **Prophet** – representing God’s righteousness as seen in the 10 Commandments
      - b. Jesus Christ as **Priest** as seen in Aaron’s rod as High Priest
      - c. Jesus Christ as **King**, providing manna for His people

- b. the **external** content of the Ark of the Covenant
  1. in the middle of the top of the Ark was the mercy seat; upon this mercy seat, the High Priest would place the blood of an animal, representing the need for blood to be shed for the forgiveness of sins
  2. this blood would be applied only once a year on the Day of Atonement
  3. the only person who could go into the Holy of Holies was the High Priest

## **B. The PROBLEM With The Ark.**

1. At one time, the Ark had been captured by the Philistines
  - a. in **I Samuel 4**, we find out that the Ark of the Covenant had been captured by Israel's enemy, the Philistines
  - b. but, the Ark was causing problems for the Philistines
    1. when the Philistines got the Ark back to Philistia, they took the Ark into their place of worship in Ashdod and placed it before their god; Dagon
      - a. as if they could receive some kind of power from the Ark, in addition to their god; Dagon
      - b. the next day, the Philistines went into their Temple, only to find that their god, Dagon, had fallen over on its face – so they placed their god back on its feet
      - c. on the very next day they found their god, Dagon, not only on its face, but his head and hands had been broken as well
      - d. because of the Ark's impact on Dagon, the Philistines decided to move the Ark to Gath
    2. but, in Gath, the next thing that happened to the Philistines was that they were stricken with "tumors"
      - a. "emerods" – or hemorrhoids
      - b. or some kind of tumor
      - c. whatever it was, the Philistines realized that their possession of the Ark of the Covenant was causing them tremendous problems
  - c. so, the Philistines sent the Ark "back" to Israel
    1. they yoked two cows to the Ark and sent it back to Israel, hoping that the cows would take the "dangerous" Ark back to Israel
    2. the Ark arrived at a small farming community called Beth Shemesh in Israel
      - a. **PLEASE NOTE THE EFFECT OF THE ARK upon the Israelites who decided to take a look into the Ark:**  
**I Samuel 6:19a** – "But God struck down some of the men of Beth Shemesh, **putting seventy of them to death because they had looked into the ark of the LORD.**"

- b. don't miss this: God killed the 70 men of Israel "because they **looked** into the Ark of the Covenant."
- c. after this episode, the Ark was then moved to the home of Abinadab
  - 1. the son who was called to guard the Ark was Eleazar
  - 2. Abinadab had two other sons:
    - a. Ahio
    - b. Uzzah
- 2. After 20 years, it was finally time to move the Ark back to Jerusalem.
  - a. King Saul was now dead
  - b. and, King David was now King over all of Israel
  - c. as King, David fully believed that it was time to return the Ark of the Covenant back to Israel, and back to Jerusalem

## II. The PROBLEM Of Worship.

### A. The PLAN For The Ark.

- 1. After becoming King of Israel, David quickly made plans to return the Ark back to Jerusalem.
  - a. he chose 30,000 men to escort the Ark
  - b. he built a new cart and had the Ark placed on a new cart to carry it
  - c. the sons of Abinadab; **Uzzah** and **Ahio**, would escort the cart
  - d. there was a great celebration of music and worship as they traveled.
    - 1. great crowds lined the road
    - 2. music was playing
    - 3. people were dancing
- 2. David was thrilled to bring the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem
  - a. David knew that the Ark belonged in the Temple
  - b. and David knew the power of the Ark.

### B. The POWER Of The Ark.

- 1. What **they** saw.
  - Vs. 6 – “When they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, **Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God, because the oxen stumbled.**”**
  - a. David and the Israelites began the 10 mile journey to Jerusalem
  - b. but, while they were traveling, the oxen stumbled and the Ark was in danger of falling. So, Uzzah, the son of Abinadab, grabbed the Ark to keep it from falling – **whereupon he was struck down and died!**
  - Vs. 7 – “The Lord's anger burned against Uzzah because of his irreverent act; **therefore God struck him down and he died there beside the ark of God.**”**
  - 1. **WHAT IN THE WORLD JUST HAPPENED?**
  - 2. Why would Uzzah be killed just because he “touched” the Ark?
    - a. all that Uzzah was doing was reacting naturally to the situation
    - b. Uzzah revered the Ark and did not want it to fall on the ground
  - 3. Uzzah's death seems “so unfair.”

2. How we react
  - a. why in the world would God kill this man Uzzah for his heroic act?
  - b. how could God have faulted Uzzah for his reverence of the Ark?
3. What we learn.
  - a. **The Israelites were warned**
    1. the Ark was to **be carried by Priests**, not placed on a cart  
**Exodus 25:12-14** – “Cast four gold rings for it and fasten them to its four feet, with two rings on one side and two rings on the other. Then make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. **Insert the poles into the rings on the sides of the chest to carry it.**”
    2. the Ark was to **be carried by Priests called the Kohathites**  
**Numbers 3:28b-31** – “**The Kohathites were responsible for the care of the sanctuary.** The Kohathite clans were to camp on the south side of the Tabernacle. The leader of the families of the Kohathite clans was Elizaphan, son of Uzziel. **They were responsible for the care of the Ark, the Table, the Lampstand, the Altars, the Articles of the sanctuary used in ministering, the curtain, and everything related to their use.**”
    3. the Ark was to **be covered**  
**Numbers 4:4-6** – “This is the work of the Kohathites in the Tent of Meeting: the care of the most holy things. **When the camp is to move, Aaron and his sons are to go in and take down the shielding curtain and cover the ark of the Testimony with it. Then they are to cover this with hides of sea cows, spread a cloth of solid blue over that and put the poles in place.**”
    4. the Ark was **not to be touched**  
**Numbers 4:15a** - "After Aaron and his sons have finished covering the holy furnishings and all the holy articles, and when the camp is ready to move, the Kohathites are to come to do the carrying. **But they must not touch the holy things or they will die.**”
    5. the Ark was **not to be looked at**  
**Numbers 4:20** – “**But the Kohathites must not go in to look at the holy things, even for a moment, or they will die.**”
  - b. **we are warned**
    1. **THIS EPISODE OF THE DEATH OF UZZAH TELLS US ABOUT THE HOLINESS OF GOD**
      - a. when God makes a promise, He **MUST** keep that promise or He will “deny” Himself
      - b. God had **CLEARLY** told the Israelites how to transport the Ark of the Covenant
      - c. so, “Whose fault” was it that Uzzah suffered the consequences of his “lack of knowledge?”

- d. **Pastor Jeff Jones** – “God is far less concerned about getting mud on his throne than He is with an impure and sinful human being defiling His presence. Uzzah did the unthinkable – he violated the holiness of God. The Ark, the symbol of God’s authority, the place where the blood of sacrifice for sins was sprinkled by the Priests was carelessly touched by a sinful man. Uzzah was **a man who forgot God’s holiness.**”
2. this tells us **AS WELL** about the holiness of God **BEFORE** the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- a. **THE REASON** that no one was able to touch the Ark of the Covenant at this time in Israel’s history, was that there had been no payment of sin yet– therefore God was unapproachable and untouchable
  - b. **DID YOU GET THAT?** God was unapproachable because of the huge separation between God’s holiness and man’s sin!
    1. we saw this separation when Moses went up onto Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments  
**Exodus 19:12-13a** – “Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, 'Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch the foot of it. **Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. He shall surely be stoned or shot with arrows; not a hand is to be laid on him. Whether man or animal, he shall not be permitted to live.**”
    2. we saw this separation when Moses asked God if he could see God’s face  
**Exodus 33:18-20** – “Then Moses said, "**Now show me your glory.**" And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. But, **He said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.**"
    3. we **MUST** realize that there was a great separation between God’s holiness and man’s sin because man’s sin had not been atoned for
      - a. at this point in time, no payment had been made for the sins of man
      - b. because Jesus had not yet died on the cross for man’s sins

4. **Bob Deffinbaugh** – “Uzzah is a reminder to us that God’s holiness is such that sinful man cannot draw near to Him, unless He provides the means to do so.”

### C. The PAIN Of The Ark.

1. David was **confused**.  
**Vs. 9** - David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, "**How can the Ark of the LORD ever come to me?**"
  - a. David thought, “If Uzzah simply “touched” the Ark and died, then what hope could there be for me? Even as the King of Israel?”
  - b. What should David do with the Ark now?
    1. because of his fear, David decided to move the Ark to the home of Obed-Edom
    2. after waiting three months and seeing how God had blessed Obed Edom by keeping the Ark, David decided that it was time to take the Ark back to Jerusalem
2. David was **committed**
  - a. Bu,t as David planned a “second” trip to Jerusalem with the Ark, David, this time David sought the Lord and His Word to see how to properly transport the Ark
  - b. David would **make sure** that God was pleased with how they would transport the Ark this second time
    1. “This time,” the Ark **would be carried on poles by the Kohathiles**
    2. In fact, “this time, David instructed those carrying the Ark to take only a few steps, then stop and make a sacrifice to God
    3. “This time,” David would follow God’s rules “to the letter.”

### III. The PROPRIETY Of Worship.

#### A. God Is Holy

1. If we are going to understand the death of Uzzah, we **MUST** understand the requirement that God made of Adam and Eve in the Garden  
**Genesis 2:15-17** - “The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the LORD God commanded the man, "**You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.**"
2. **WHY DID THE CREATOR GOD REQUIRE OBEDIENCE OF CREATED MAN?**
  - a. was God simply “being difficult”; was God simply asking something of man that he could not do?
  - b. no, God required obedience of man:
    1. **BECAUSE GOD IS HOLY!**
      - a. and, God wanted the man that **He** created to be holy as well

- b. please note that, before man fell into sin, **MAN WAS HOLY!**
    - 1. before man's fall into sin, man wanted **only** to be with his creator God and to fellowship with Him
    - 2. it was not as if God had not equipped man when He created him to "be able" to live a holy life
    - 3. **THE REASON** that God warned man about disobeying Him was that man "could" fall into sin and lose his ability to be holy!
  - c. **WHAT OTHER KIND OF CREATURE COULD GOD CREATE THAN A HOLY CREATION?**
    - 1. God did not "create" a flawed, sinful creation
    - 2. **HOW COULD A HOLY GOD CREATE AN UNHOLY MAN?**
2. **IN FACT, EVERYTHING THAT GOD CREATED WAS HOLY!**
- a. the creation was holy:
    - 1. there was perfect food; ample water
    - 2. there were perfect animals and perfect weather
  - b. **AND GOD WANTED TO CONTINUE IN THIS PERFECT, HOLY STATE BECAUSE THAT IS WHO HE IS!**
3. please note that God would not only require obedience, but would also punish disobedience
- a. God's requirement of obedience **HAD** to require punishment for his disobedience
    - 1. for, if man decided to disobey God, **IT WAS "HOLY" OF GOD TO PUNISH DISOBEDIENCE**
      - a. is it right or wrong to punish for disobedience?
        - 1. should the people who flew the airplanes into the twin towers be punished?
      - b. **WHAT HAPPENS TO A CULTURE THAT DOES NOT PUNISH WRONG DOERS?**
    - 2. so, why did God "**have**" to punish Adam and Eve?
      - a. **first**, God had to punish Adam and Eve because **HE SAID THAT HE WOULD DO SO!**  
**Vs. 17 – "but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."**
      - b. **second**, God's holiness "required" that He punish Adam and Eve's disobedience
        - 1. Adam and Eve had sinned against the holiness of God
        - 2. and, some "kind of payment" **HAD** to be made to "make things right" with a holy God

- b. we must understand the truthful character of God
  - 1. if God said that He would do something
  - 2. **HE MUST DO IT!**

## **B. Man Is Sinful**

- 1. after man fell into sin in the Garden, there was a real spiritual dilemma
  - a. a holy God required obedience of man and promised to punish man if he disobeyed
  - b. so, after man fell into sin, **GOD “HAD” TO PUNISH MAN!**
    - 1. God is not like parents who continue to make deals with their kids after the kids disobey
    - 2. God is not like our court system that allows “plea bargains;” probation and a night in jail
    - 3. **GOD’S HOLY CHARACTER WOULD NOT “ALLOW HIM” TO OVERLOOK ADAM AND EVE’S SIN!**
- 2. so, there was a real problem that existed between a holy God and sinful man
  - a. a holy God had been offended and so man had to “make things right”
  - b. but, man had lost his ability to be holy himself and he had “NO WAY” to “make things right” with God
- 3. this separation between God and man **“explains”** why Uzzah died when he touched the Ark of the Covenant
  - a. FOR, GOD IS “SO HOLY” THAT:
    - 1. God required that no person could touch the Ark  
**(Numbers 4:15)**
    - 2. God required that no person could look at the Ark  
**(Numbers 4:20)**
  - b. now, why would Uzzah be punished with death because he merely “touched” the Ark to keep it from falling off of the cart?
    - 1. this “little incident” indicated:
      - a. because man was sinful and no sacrifice had yet been made to pay for the disobedience of man’s sin and, because God was “so holy” and no payment had been made, **ANY CONTACT OF A SINFUL MAN WITH A HOLY GOD WOULD RESULT IN DEATH!** An unholy man could not be in contact with a holy God!
      - b. **R. C. Sproul – “God did not want His holy throne touched by that which was contaminated by evil, that which was in rebellion to Him, that which by its ungodly revolt had brought the whole creation to ruin.”**
  - 2. the “same thing” was seen by Moses when he met God at the burning bush  
**Exodus 3:4-5 - “When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.” “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”**

#### IV. The PROVISION Of Worship

##### A. The PROVISION Was Prophesied

1. the answer, the provision, the solution to sinful man's dilemma with a holy God, was prophesied:
  - a. **Genesis 3:15** – “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; **he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.**”
  - b. **Isaiah 53:5** - “But He was **pierced for our transgressions**, He was **crushed for our iniquities**; the **punishment that brought us peace** was upon Him, **and by His wounds we are healed.**”
2. God was CLEARLY saying that one day, He would send an answer, a solution, to the dilemma between God's holiness and man's sin; the death of His own Son.

##### B. The PICTURE Was Presented

1. to “**illustrate**” the solution for man's sins, God would require sinful man to build a Tabernacle, revealing the separation, as well as the solution of God's holiness and man's sins
  - a. the bloody altar
  - b. the veil preventing sinners from coming into God's holy presence
  - c. the Holy of Holies, the picture of Jesus and His bloody payment for man's sins
2. this “picture,” as seen in the Tabernacle, would be fulfilled in the death and resurrection of Jesus

##### C. The PAYMENT Was Revealed

1. **John the Baptist** would introduce God's solution to sinful man  
**John 1:29** –“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “**Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**”
2. finally, **HERE** was the physical manifestation of God's payment for man's sin
  - a. no more prophecies
  - b. no more waiting
  - c. **THE SOLUTION TO THIS SEPARATION WAS FINALLY HERE!**

##### D. The PAYMENT Was Made

**John 19:30** –“When He had received the drink, Jesus said, “**It is finished.**” With that, He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”

1. **telelestai**
  - a. accomplished
  - b. paid
2. Greek tense
  - a. **perfect** – an action that has been completed in the past – “He broke his leg.”
  - b. **passive** – the subject is the receipt of the action – “The boy was hit by the ball.”
  - c. **indicative** – a statement of fact – “Two and two is four.”

### E. The PROBLEM Was Solved

1. what we **ALL** need to realize is just how “spiritually” far from God man was before the death of Jesus on the cross
  - a. God was “so holy” and man was “so sinful” that to even “look” at the Ark of the Covenant would cause a man’s death
    1. **“THAT” IS HOW HOLY GOD IS!**
    2. **“THAT” IS HOW SINFUL MAN IS!**
  - b. **DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?**
2. so, look at how our holy God “fixed the problem” with sinful man  
**Hebrews 12:18-21** – “You have **not** come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, because they could not bear what was commanded: **“If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.”** The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.”

**Hebrews 12:22-24** – “**But** you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, **to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.**”

### Conclusion

1. Ultimately, Uzzah died because God was holy and he was not!
  - a. because no payment had been made for the sins of man
  - b. any physical contact of a sinful man to God would cause that man’s death!
2. Now, if you “really” want to see God’s wrath poured out on man, look at God’s wrath poured out on His own Son; Jesus  
**R. C. Sproul** – “The false conflict between the two Testaments may be seen in the most **brutal act of divine vengeance ever recorded in Scripture. It is not found in the Old Testament but in the New Testament. The most violent expression of God’s wrath and justice is seen in the Cross.** If ever a person had room to complain of injustice, it was Jesus. He was the only innocent man ever to be punished by God. If we stagger at the wrath of God, let us stagger at the Cross. Here is where our astonishment should be focused. **If we have cause for moral outrage, let it be directed at Golgotha.**”
3. So, listen beloved at how our holy God “**now**” invites us into His very presence **because of the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross:**  
**Hebrews 4:14-16** – “Therefore, **since we have a great High Priest who has gone through the heavens,** Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin. **Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**”
  - a. and now, **BECAUSE** of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross, not only can

- we “touch” our Holy God,  
b. we can crawl up in His lap and say; **“Daddy, I’m yours.”**