

9090

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 2000

DAVID - A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

THE KING OF ALL ISRAEL

Speaker: Bro. John Knowles

Study #1: Arise, O Yahweh into Thy Rest, Thou and the Ark of Thy Strength

Reading: 2 Samuel 6, Psalms 68 and 132

Well, good evening my dear brethren and sisters.

This third series of studies or series of classes, brings us to the time when David was almost totally preoccupied with establishing the city of Jerusalem, as both the centre of administration and worship. As our brother Skip has said, of course, it brings us later on in the life of David from what we've been listening to with our bro. Ron and our bro. David. If you happen to have your programs there, you might just look with interest at a brief overview of the six classes that are set down for this third session, and you'll notice that it takes us from the time when David desired to make Jerusalem his capital, through to the time when Solomon was anointed king, and David penned his last words.

And in this series of studies, we've got some wonderful lessons coming up, for example, in study 1 and study 6, it focuses particularly on Jerusalem, not only Jerusalem as David wanted to establish it then, but more particularly, the vision that David had of Jerusalem in the future. One of the things we want to do in all of these talks is not to look so much at the facts, (although there obviously are going to be facts, and in fact probably this evening's talk is going to be the most factual of all of them, because it's laying a basis) we're more concerned with the feelings that David had about the various situations that arose. For example, our study tonight, deals with David bringing the ark to Zion; and in respect to bro. Skip's little comment about the going back earlier, we might be going back from chapter 6 to chapter 5, we do want to deal briefly with David and Joab taking the city of David (or the city of Jebus which came to be known as the city of David) and then we want to look at David bringing the ark up to Zion. So that's got to be very visionary, what David had in mind in bringing the ark up to Zion. And then our final study #6, 'AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF MORNING HE SHALL ARISE, AS THE SUN OF AN UNCLOUDED DAWN', and once again, the last words of David, as he looks to the future glory of Jerusalem.

But in between this time, we've got three studies which are particularly powerful

character studies. For example, study 3 looks at the incident of David and Bathsheba, study 4 looks at the relationship between David and Absalom and Ahithophel, and again we're going to be looking at the Psalms particularly, as they relate to these incidents, or that we believe relate to these incidents. And study 5, the anointing of Solomon, because as we know Solomon was anointed king before David died; so we've got one study on really the introduction of Solomon into the theme, and once again a very, very interesting, a very intriguing and a very powerful exhortational series of character studies, as we have two groups of people lined up against each other, those who are following Solomon, those who are following Adonijah. And then, perhaps in some ways, the most important of all studies would be study #2, 'IN MERCY SHALL THE THRONE BE ESTABLISHED', and looking at the covenant with David, and particularly, particularly the use of the word 'mercy'; that word 'chesed' often translated as 'lovingkindness'. Perhaps we might say, the greatest of all of Yahweh's attributes as far as we are concerned, because it is that mercy which He has extended to us, which enables us to be here; and I hope, therefore, that in this series of 6 classes, we're going to see, yes, some facts, probably not many new facts, but we do want to see the feelings of David, and we want to be able to identify with him.

So this evening, in our introductory talk, we want to focus particularly on Jerusalem. Why was it that David saw Jerusalem to be so important? And I'm going to anticipate the sort of answer that's going through your head at the moment, and it's probably something like, 'well, everybody knows that Jerusalem is important'. 'Everybody knows that Yahweh chose Jerusalem to be the place which was to be the future capital of the world'. Ah, yes, and how many references are there to that in the bible prior to the time of David? And the answer to that is very, very few indeed! In fact, there is probably only one chapter you can really go to which even gives a hint of the fact that Jerusalem was to be a capital with a king-priest reigning. And that, of course, is Genesis 14 and, in just a moment, we'll go back and have a quick look at that! Ah, yes, you could say Genesis 22 and Abraham offering up Isaac or attempting to offer up Isaac; yes, but that doesn't say much about a king-priest. And apart from that, just a couple of references in Deuteronomy which speaks about the place which Yahweh had chosen to place His name there, and He doesn't even mention what the name of that place is.

So there's the first challenge to us, the ability of David to be able to recognize the importance of Jerusalem. So, as our other speakers were saying (well, I didn't hear bro. Ron this morning, I was with the teens, but I did hear bro. David), we want to try and put ourselves back in that environment to try and see it through David's eyes and, in so doing, will realize that David wasn't just a person living in the present. He wasn't just interested in establishing his capital there, he did it because he knew it was to be the future throne of Yahweh. Hence, even when we get to the Apocalypse, right at the end of the bible, we read about the throne of David being established. We read about the Lord Jesus Christ being both the root and the offspring of David; so, David, of course, is a very, very important man. So, this evening, I want to talk about Jerusalem. We're going to be spending a little bit of time early in the pace, well, just for some of us perhaps, revising a few things we know about Jerusalem, perhaps for some others,

maybe a few things we didn't know about Jerusalem, and its locality and its topography, all of which figure very prominently both in the past, the present and in the future.

But to set the pattern for the whole series, let's go back to Genesis 14, where we believe is really the only reference that David could have turned to that would have given him any indication of the fact that Jerusalem, or Salem as it is called here in Genesis chapter 14, was to be the site where a king-priest would be established. Now, in some respects, I wouldn't mind spending the rest of the night just talking about Genesis 14 and so I've got to be tempted to limit myself very strictly in the moments we make in regard to this. We are introduced to a man, who is termed Melchizedek (notice, I used the expression 'termed', because 'termed' leaves it open; was it a name or was it a title? Well, of course, names and titles can be interchangeable at times, but there was a person here who was called Melchi zedek and it's Paul in Hebrews that tells us, 'which being by interpretation (4442, 4428+6664) first, king of righteousness', that is Melchi zedek, and because he was king of Salem, as we are told in verse 18 of Genesis 14, he was therefore, king of peace, Salem, Shalom, etc. So Mechi zedek, king of Salem, means 'king of righteousness and king of peace', and it could be like many of the other terms that were applied to kings, that in fact, they were titles. Pharaoh was a title, Artaxerxes was a title, Darius was a title; and, of course, if we follow bro. Thomas's line of reasoning in Elpis Israel,(and personally I do) I believe it was Shem, but we're not going to get onto that now, and we're not going to get on to that now, and we're going to leave that and just say, what did David see in this?

Well, whoever we make the man, we know that he was a king of righteousness and a king of peace, and furthermore, he was one, who embodied in his role, both kingship and priesthood. Now I want to reserve more detailed comments on that to our next study, God willing, because I think the problem that many of us will have as we come to this, is how could David when he brought the ark up to Zion, act the part of a king-priest when he was not of the tribe of Levi, when later on a man like Uzziah was going to be smitten with leprosy because he tried to act in some small way as a priest. How could David get away with it? Well, I used a rather colloquial expression to say, 'how could he get away with it?' because maybe that's how some people are thinking? Well, we want to, God willing, in our second study, spend a little bit of time looking at those two covenants, the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic covenant. Notice my hands, the Abrahamic covenant (the tape didn't do that very well did it?) the Abrahamic covenant looks about that long, that's about a metre, and the Mosaic covenant is about that long, which was in the old days about 9 inches, I can't remember what it is in metres. In other words, there were two covenants, David was obviously seeing his role in bringing the ark up to Zion, as being identified in type with the role that the greater Melchizedek would fulfil, when He established His power, both as a King and a priest in Jerusalem. And we'll point out that while David brought the ark up to the tabernacle of David in Jerusalem, what might be called the tabernacle of Moses under that other covenant was away in Gibeon somewhere else. Now that's tomorrow's study! But I do think though that here's a starting point! that David saw this man (let's take it from say verse 18 of Genesis 14) 'that Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine and he was

priest of the most high El. And he blessed Abram and said, Blessed by Abram of the most high El, possessor of heaven and earth: And blessed be the most high El which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all'. And even our reading this evening from 2 Samuel chapter 6, had this idea of bread and wine being dispensed by David. So we just drop a few hints there that we'll pick up in detail later on.

So, at the moment, the only reason we've gone back to Genesis 14 is to say, 'why did David recognize Jerusalem to be so important? where did he get the information from? Well, of course, you might say he was inspired or God spoke to him through an angel, and that's possibly the case, we don't have any actual evidence of it, but there is the hint back in Genesis 14, which of itself, is a very very important chapter.

Where then is Jerusalem? Well, I suppose if we were to put up a fairly general map, that looks something like this, and if you're able to read the small print that's on there, you'll notice that the time setting of this map gives a spot there called Moriah, and Moriah is one of the mountains of Jerusalem. On that particular map, of course, we haven't got the word 'Jerusalem', but if we want to identify where Jerusalem actually is, it's handy to remember that it's just about level with the top of the Dead Sea in a westerly direction over here. And we do know, don't we, that in Genesis 22, it was on one of the mountains in the land of Moriah, that Abram took Isaac to offer him up as a sacrifice. So in case somebody says it's not only Genesis 14 that makes reference to it, it's also Genesis 22, we can say, 'yes, that's true up to a point, but Genesis 22 didn't really say much about that kingship and priesthood, it was more, of course, the offering of Isaac as the sacrifice. But there's the city of Jerusalem.

Now, what makes the city of Jerusalem so significant as far as its topography is concerned? What do we know about the land of Israel? Well, once again, I suppose it's a study in its own right, and if any of you have spoken to your young ones who were in my session this morning, they will tell you that I spent the whole session just talking about the topography of Israel and the importance of Jerusalem in that respect. But the point that we would make, and this is generally the case, that to gather a simplistic description of the land of Israel, we would say that it's divided into 4 strips that go in a north-south direction. If you are able to pick up the colours, you will see that down in the coastal plain here, we've got what we might call, I suppose, a light grey colour, which answers over here to something which is between sea level and 1,000 feet. So down the coast here, we've got the coastal plain, which is at about sea level or just a little bit above it. We've got the Philistine coast down the bottom here, which is known today as the Gaza strip, and so we go up the Carmel coast, the plain of Zebulun and so forth to the north. Bro. David had a beautiful map which he projected up this morning and handed out to all of us, a very very good one indeed, and he made the point that most of the activities in David's life took place around here (and around here for the sake of the tape means somewhere a little bit west of the Dead Sea and not far north of Jerusalem); so, we're looking at the southern part of the land down here, and particularly in this area here, which is coloured in, in green, and if we look up here we can see that green says somewhere between a 1,000 to 2,000 feet. It was what was

called the Lowlands, or in the Hebrew 'the Shephelah', and a lot of the activities in David's life took place there. That's where you've got the valley of Elah, the valley of Sorek and all those sorts of places. Valleys that weren't all that particularly deep (because a 1,000 to 2,000 feet isn't a huge mountain) but they say you could have an army in one and another army in another one, and they didn't know that each other were there.

But in the studies that are part of my series, David is going to take the ark from down here in the Shephelah up into the hill country. So, I'm not very concerned then with the Lowlands as such, I'm going to be more concerned with Jerusalem and the events that took place after David had established himself there. Which, of course, brings us to the third strip. So, we've got the coastal plain down here, we've got the Lowlands particularly in the south here, or in the Shephelah, and then we've got the hill country, which goes up to about 3,000 feet. So, you can see we've got a yellow through here and a sort of purple type of colour, in a couple of spots there, which tells us we're looking at 2,000 to 3,000 feet. There are only two spots that go above that in the land of Israel. Prior to the six day war, there was only one spot, and that's mount Meron (a very, very small spot) but after the 6 day war, of course, we get mount Hermon which is up there around about 9,000 feet high. So the three strips then, the coastal plain down here, the Lowlands or the Shephelah here, the mountain range, the Judaea and the Hebron hills here, going up into the hills of Galilee, and then probably the most significant topographical feature in the land, and maybe on the face of the earth, is the 4th of the four strips that runs down the Jordan valley, and that is the dark grey area, and when we look over here, we can see that it is telling us that it is less than sea level. It is below sea level, so that bro. David pointed out this morning, Galilee, is 600 feet below sea level, and the lowest point on the earth's surface is the Dead Sea down here, 1200 feet below sea level.

The Jordan travels a distance of (I'm guessing so) approximately 100 kilometers from Galilee to the Dead Sea. It only drops 600 feet in that distance which isn't very much, hence, it is one of those rivers that meanders a lot, as slow flowing rivers do. Now with that as a background, here is Jerusalem at around 2,500 feet above sea level, and it's in the mountains. Well, 2,500 feet is a reasonable sized hill, it is not as high as Silver Star mountain, but by the time we get to our last study, if we're able to talk a little about the topographical changes, and we often talk about Jerusalem being elevated, really what Zechariah chapter 14 says is this, 'that all the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba (now Geba is 3 miles north of Jerusalem) to Rimmon (which is about 30 odd miles south)'. 'Shall be turned as a plain', and that word 'plain' is the word 'arabah'(6160) which is the term given to this Jordan depression. In other words, Zechariah is really telling us that the land around Jerusalem will be depressed; so relatively speaking, Jerusalem will be elevated without necessarily itself having to go up. In other words, if you've got something there and everything else around it is lowered then, of course, it becomes a hill or a mountain, and it does appear therefore, that that is what Zechariah 14 is saying. So if all of that came down to about sea level, you've got a 2,500 foot mountain which would be very prominent, especially as it's viewed from the city,

Yahweh Shammah, down here in the south.

Now, we're getting too far ahead too fast, but what I'm trying to do, is just indicate that in talking about the topography at the moment, it's not just to talk about topography, but we want to see tonight how it was important in the time of David, it's even important today, but it's going to be very important in the future, and I think for all of us, it's a good idea to have just some understanding of how Jerusalem sits in relation to the rest of the country round about it. Let's imagine ourselves then, in a position somewhere around about here (and I'm pointing at a spot over in what we'd call Trans-Jordan today, the Hashamite kingdom of Jordan) and my little red dot is probably about over where the city of Amman is today, and we're looking in a sort of a south-westerly direction over here, and the picture would look like this. And what I can tell you is that if the people listening to the tape recorder can't see this picture, if you can get the June 1995 National Geographic, you'll find that this particular aerial view - come computer simulated satellite picture all put together, is a view looking in just that particular direction. For example, down here is Mount Nebo, here's the Jordan coming down here, here's the Dead Sea over here, Mount Nebo is about there, and just over there we can pick up the seacoast. Now the city of Jerusalem is just there, so what we're saying is, much of the time of David's fleeing from Saul and that, was down in this area of the Lowlands, and in fact, we're going to see in just a minute, that when David brings the ark up to Zion, he has to bring it up from this area down here, at Beth-shemesh, Kirjath-jearim and up here to Jerusalem, because he knew that Jerusalem was going to be very important for him then, as it will also be in the future.

So before he could bring the ark up to Zion, and this is the little bit that Skip was talking about earlier, we've got to go back just a fraction (it's only a few verses in the bible, and we don't even need to read it, we'll save time by just talking about it), to the time when David decided that he would have to capture the city which in those days was called Jebus. But when we put up on the screen a picture of what Jerusalem is like today, and when we look at it we say, 'well, where is the city that David actually took in order to establish his capital'? We say, well, it's this section down here, and what we're pointing at is a spot just south of what is known as the 'temple mount' today, and that is known as the 'hill of Ophel'. Now it wasn't very big, it was I dare say, a kilometer long and quite narrow, but that's the location of where the city of David was, the city of Jebus, and in later times it moved more to the north, as Solomon built his temple here, and as the city progressively moved further to the west. We, of course, are looking in an easterly direction, the Mount of Olives just over here, the cleavage line that Zechariah implies would be there, is about here, and you can pick up the Dead Sea over in the distance.

So, if that's what it's like today, what was it like when David approached the city from the east and decided he had to capture a city called Jebus here, and make it his capital and bring the ark up and install it there? What would it look like? Well, we bought this picture, and it's quite a legal one, and we bought it at the very spot a couple of years ago when we were in Jerusalem. I badly wanted to visit the spot where Joab, as the scriptures say, 'jumped up the gutter' (or as it's sometimes called 'the water spout'). This

is a pictorial representation of what the city of David would have been like. Now, can you picture what we were looking at a moment ago? A moment ago, we were looking from that direction over here; this is a drawing of what it would have been like after David had captured it. So, this is David's palace here, and already we can see on the right hand side here, the temple which Solomon built, just on the so called Temple mount. So, if you just forget that for the moment as far as Joab taking the city is concerned, Joab had to get into the city. Now somewhere just outside the city round about here is what was known as the 'virgin fountain' or known today as 'the spring of Gihon'. Perhaps we'll come back to that one in just a moment, but we'll put up a map so we can see the sort of thing that we're talking about.

Now this is one of those maps that you've got to exercise your minds and try to work out what you don't want to see on there, so it becomes simple, because there's too much on that particular map. So don't pay attention to all these little lines coming along here which are only elevation lines, and what we can see is this, that this part up here is the so-called Temple mount today, and the city of David, called Ophel or Zion or the city of David, is simply this section around here. That was the city of David, and if we've got a scale on there (it's a bit hard to read it, I won't try to read it now, but it's given in cubits), and it says down the bottom there 3,000 feet. Well, if that's 3,000 feet from there to there, then it is about a kilometer, isn't it? because there's 5,280 feet in a mile and a kilometer is about 5/8 of a mile. Yes, it's about a kilometer long I suppose (someone can check it out later). So here is the city of David, and in order to get into that city, David and Joab, as we know from 2 Samuel 5, devised a very daring scheme. And the scheme was this, that here at the spring of Gihon there was a permanent supply of water. To get the water into the city, they had dug a tunnel (now don't confuse that tunnel with the one that Hezekiah later constructed which is here in blue, which he built down to the pool of Siloam). This was a very simple one that just went straight in here to the city, and people inside the walls could lower buckets down on ropes and bring up water into the city. So if we were to take a sectional view through there, in other words we're going to cut through there and then turn it up (in what they would call an elevation view) this is the sort of picture that you'd see.

So here is the inner city walls, so we're taking a cut through the city wall; here's the virgin's fountain or the spring of Gihon out here; and Joab went along this tunnel, he climbed up this conduit, or if you like, waterspout, and he gained access to the city, going effectively under the wall and into the city, opened up the gates and allowed the Israelites in. You know, the hand of God had to be in that because that would have been very easy to defend. As the Jebusites said, 'what we need to do is put the blind and the lame up there, and they could protect this city'. And effectively speaking, it was true; that's what the scriptures say that they said that. Well, Joab very daringly then, came in here, climbed up that conduit and into the city. I mentioned about being here a year or so ago, and I was very keen to see this, and you can actually go down here, down some steps, walk along there to this point and look down there. And it was indeed, at this spot here, that we got that other simulated picture.

Now the first message is this, there were two men that wanted to get that city. One was Joab and one was David. Why did Joab want to get that city? The answer given is because David said, 'whosoever gets this city, I'll make him commander-in-chief'. Joab wanted that city so he could be commander-in-chief. Why did David want that city? David wanted that city because as our reading said tonight, it was going to be the resting place for the ark of the cherubim of Yahweh Sabaoth; it was to be the city that Yahweh had chosen, and David wanted that city for Yahweh's sake.

Lesson #1 already, why do we want to be in the kingdom? for Joab's reasons or for David's reasons? Do I want to be in the kingdom so I can be a king-priest? I can be a king-priest with the emphasis on the 'I', or do I want to be in the kingdom because I want to be there with the Lord Jesus Christ, with David and with others, and see God's glory filling the earth? You know, it's the old story, isn't it? personal salvation or God manifestation. We all know that personal salvation is a bible doctrine, certainly a bible doctrine, but if salvation is all that we want and is all of our motivation, then of course, we could well find ourselves being someone like Joab, being very brave and doing a lot of work in the truth, but what's the motivation? Well, this isn't really study #1 yet, that's only the background to it, so we won't extend that particular point; but as bro. Skip said, the story of Joab taking the city isn't covered by either of the other speakers so we just put that little point in, and so then, the city was captured and the next thing that David wanted to do, was to make it his capital, and more importantly, he wanted to bring the ark up to Zion.

So just to give us then the picture, once again, of the city; and I think one of the things it does is, that it brings things back to a right size. In our reading of the bible if we don't look up maps and things, we might get the idea that this was some huge city. It was rather a very unimpressive little city, wasn't it? it wasn't really any bigger than that, when Nebuchadnezzar came against it, or in fact, in the days of Isaiah and Hezekiah, when Sennacherib sent Rabshakeh down, and Rabshakeh had taken all the cities of Judah right down to there, and he said, 'you think that this little city here is going to stand up against Sennacherib?' Of course, he put it the other way, didn't he, he said, 'do you think that your God, Yahweh, is able to save your city against all of the gods of the Assyrians?' And I mean, I don't think there would be anybody, in fact there was probably hardly anybody apart from Hezekiah himself, who thought there was any hope of saving that little city against this huge mighty power of Assyria, which had built Nineveh by the hand of Nimrod, and of course, later on Babylon, built by the same person, Nimrod also.

So, it's not very significant in those days as far as it looks, but David knew it was significant because of what was to happen there in the future. So David wanted that city for Yahweh's sake; and brethren and sisters, we want Christ to return and we want the kingdom for Yahweh's sake. And what is the throne that's going to be established? It's going to be the throne of David! not because there's anything special about David, except it was that man, like Abraham was the father of the faithful, (and we are the seed of Abraham when we're faithful); well, David was the man that wanted the throne there, because it was Yahweh's throne as he says to Solomon later on, that was being set up

there, even in a fairly shadowy typical sort of way. Nothing like the extent to which it will be in the kingdom.

So, with that little bit of a background, I hope it's given us some sort of picture then, of what is going to happen in our stories, as David now desires to bring the ark up to Zion. Well, what about the ark? I've got a map here which shows to us some of the movements of the ark and this, of course, is also quite important in the studies on the time of David. Going very quickly through this, and we won't look up these references, but I will actually just mention them, so if someone wants to listen later on, or even copy them down, or something, we can at least get the record. You might like to follow this through on the map.

When Israel entered the Land, they crossed over the Jordan from a place called Shittim, over here to Gilgal. And the ark, of course, lead them across the Jordan, and in Joshua chapter 4 verses 18 and 19, we've got the mention of the ark arriving there at Gilgal. It accompanied the children of Israel as they encompassed Jericho, (Jericho's not mentioned on the map but somewhere round about here) and that's in Joshua chapter 6. It was then taken up to Shechem after the conquest of Ai, and the tabernacle was set up at Shiloh. It moved backwards and forwards between Shiloh and Shechem a few times, until it eventually settled here in Shiloh, and the next significant incident as far as the ark was concerned, was in the days of Eli.

This is the story which is mentioned in 1 Samuel chapter 4 and I think of all of the records, this is the one, perhaps, that we will just briefly look up. 1 Samuel chapter 4 and especially verses 1 to 4, speak about the way in which the children of Israel, in a very superstitious sort of way, thought that the ark was going to help them, in a time of trouble. So 1 Samuel chapter 4 and reading at verse 1, it says 'And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Ebenezer; and the Philistines pitched in Aphek'. So you can see on our map here, over towards the coast we've got Ebenezer and we've got Aphek, so that's where the battle was to take place. The record goes on to say, 'And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel, and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines. And they slew of the army in the field about 4,000 men. And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, wherefore, hath Yahweh smitten us today before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of Yahweh out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies. So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of Yahweh of hosts, which dwelleth between the cherubim: and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God'. AND WE ALL KNOW WHAT HAPPENED! The Philistines captured the ark, and the Philistines killed Hophni and Phinehas; and to give Eli his due, when the news was brought to him, as sad as he was about his sons, he does appear to be even more distressed about the fact, that it was the ark of Yahweh that was taken. Notice how the record doesn't just say 'the ark' it's the ark of Yahweh of Armies which dwelleth between the cherubim, in other words, they had no right to take that ark out of that tabernacle!

But so they did, and to cut a long story short, the Philistines took it down to Ashdod, things didn't go too well for them down in Ashdod, they put it in the temple of Dagon, and when they got up next morning, Dagon had fallen over flat on his face; they tried it again, and he fell over again and got broken, so they said, 'let's get rid of it out of here', so they took it over to Gath. Things didn't go so well in Gath either, so they sent it up to Ekron, and up in Ekron things didn't go too well either, (you can read what didn't go well in the record) so they said, 'let's send it back'. So it came over here to Beth-shemesh and from Beth-shemesh it eventually went up to Kirjath-jearim and it was from there that David was to bring it up to Zion.

But it spent a long time down in this area here (I don't want to go into the details at this stage, it's not particularly relevant). But it's just this short journey from here to here, that we're involved in, in the time of David. So virtually we should say, from Beth-shemesh, Kirjath-jearim up to Jerusalem; but there's the original history and that's how the ark came to be there. I think once again, it would be good if we could get some sort of picture of how David would have been involved in taking it up and what sort of terrain he might have had to cross. This is a map which I dare say, anyone past the front row won't be able to read the words, but nevertheless, you probably can see the lines on there. This is a map in which north is in that direction (over to the left) so we're looking east, the coast is somewhere down the bottom here, and there's Jerusalem (we can see Jerusalem on this map); so this is Jerusalem, this is what it looks like today. The roads are still basically in the same place as they ever were; down here we've got Beth-shemesh, and up here we've got Kirjath-jearim, so the ark is coming from Beth-shemesh to Kirjath-jearim, up here to Jerusalem. Let's have a look at a view, we're going to put ourselves somewhere down about here, just to one side of the hill of Azekah. Now the hill of Azekah comes into Ron's studies or David's studies, the battle of Elah, the battle of David and Goliath (they're Ron's) Well, you might be interested that the valley of Elah, of course, is actually here and the hill of Azekah is mentioned in the story, they camped between Shochoh and Azekah and that sort of thing.

So just imagine ourselves here, looking in that direction, we're looking just across the hill of Azekah, we'll see Beth-shemesh in the distance and with a little bit of imagination, Jerusalem up in the hill country. And there's the picture! There's the Tel of Azekah, a 'tel' of course, means that there was once a city there and now there isn't, but there's a hill where it was, and that's a 'tel', I suppose. But this is called Azekah today, remember seeing the road on the map, there's the road and it winds its way around here, gets a bit lost in those hills and there's Beth-shemesh today. So there's Beth-shemesh; now, the imagination is that you've got to go up in the hills here, past Kirjath-jearim up to Jerusalem. I do have another picture but I won't put it up which is looking across this way and looks across to the valley of Elah, which is the David and Goliath story.

So here then, is David desirous of bringing the ark up to Zion from where it is in the house of Obed-edom. So we turn then to 2 Samuel chapter 6 which is our reading. Having spent that much time on the topography, (and my assessment is that I've spent about 10 minutes too long, we might try and take some of this and put some of it over

into the next session because I know that time is fairly critical). So in 2 Samuel chapter 6, we found in the first 9 verses that David commenced to bring the ark up to Zion, but he failed. And we know the reason he failed, it was because of the story of Uzzah. So I don't think we'll bother to develop too much out of that for the moment, except to say, we do know that story. In verses 10 and 11, we read there, 'So David would not remove the ark of Yahweh unto him into the city of David, but David carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom the Gittite. And the ark of Yahweh continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months; and Yahweh blessed Obed-edom and all his house'. So eventually, as verses 12 to 19 describe for us, David did eventually bring the ark up to Zion. I've described here in fairly lengthy terms, or fairly lengthy notes for me anyway, this moment; and I think in order to be concise and that, I might just read what I've got here, rather than 'ad lib'. So, if you'll excuse me, I don't normally like reading notes, but I think it might work out a little better.

In this 2 Samuel chapter 6 then, we've got these preparations; and we read that the most careful preparations were made. The priests and the Levites were assembled in family groups (and we saw that in our reading tonight), with the leading men at their head. At the head of the two great divisions of the descendants of Aaron were the two priests, Zadok and Abiathar. They were all told to make special preparations for the very great work that they were called upon to do. 'Sanctify yourselves, that you might bring up the ark', David commanded them. And the record, incidently, is probably easier to follow in 1 Chronicles which is the parallel record and particularly chapter 15 and verses 12, 14, and 15 in this case. To get some idea of what the situation would be like, it was like this: some were appointed as musicians, others were as doorkeepers, others as singers. There were choirs of singers both male and female and these were selected. Special psalms were written, Psalm 68, Psalm 24, Psalm 132, all appear to have reference to this, and we want to look at as many of those as we're able to, whenever we can fit it in somewhere sometime, because that's where David expresses his feelings about what he's doing. You remember, I said we want to deal with feelings more than facts; well, we've had a few facts tonight and we want to get a few feelings in!

At last, all was ready! From all parts of the Land people gathered to witness the ceremony and the procession; those taking part were put in their order. First came the chief Levites in charge of the musical arrangements, then came the players on cymbals to mark the time, they were followed by those playing stringed instruments, the psalteries, leading a female choir, we're told it was on Alamoth. Then came the harpers followed by the male choir, the Sheminith, and finally at the rear there came the priests, blowing upon the festal trumpets, used on such occasions. All was ready! but a feeling of uneasiness filled the great assembly. Was everything really alright? Would tragedy spoil the event as it had previously? And so specially selected Levites were chosen; they lifted the ark upon their shoulders by means of the staves as commanded under the Law. And they took six steps, they didn't take seven, seven had that idea of completeness, let's take 6 steps and see what Yahweh has in mind. And of course, we know that all was well, it was plain that Yahweh took pleasure in this attempt. And so at that point, the procession stopped! it stopped and before all the people, the king offered

his sacrifice in 2 Samuel 6 and verse 13. And then he offered one for the nation, in 1 Chronicles 15 verse 26, and then amid acclamation of the people, with cymbals loudly marking the time, and with the psalteries and harps providing the melody, with the voices of the male and female choirs singing the psalms selected for the occasion, the ark was borne aloft along the long winding valley road, which we can picture from our transparency there leading to Zion. And its removal was separated by David himself, dressed as one of the priests. On that day, perhaps the greatest day in David's glorious history, he stood before the people triumphant and successful, the great king-priest of his people (and we'll explain how he could do that).

Now, I think I have about 5 minutes or so left. I'd just like to look up one or two of the Psalms which I think pick up for us now the spirit of this; so, as I said, this opening talk is the one that's probably got most of the facts in it, and I hope you found those facts interesting, but let's see now, how David felt about it. And I'd like to go first of all to Psalm 68, this is a psalm that takes us both backward and forward. I recall an occasion, where a visiting brother to Adelaide and he did a week's special effort at the Enfield ecclesia just on Psalm 68. So it's not just a one night talk and he did a whole week's special effort on Psalm 68, and I'm sure he could have said a lot more than he did, and he said a lot. So Psalm 68 is one of those beautiful Psalms which looks backward and it looks forward. It starts off with words in verse 1 that echo the words back in the days of the wilderness, when the ark was to lead the children of Israel through the wilderness, and it said, 'Let Yahweh arise and let His enemies be scattered', etc., etc. Psalm 68 starts off with, 'Let Elohim arise' and whilst it is a play upon the events back in the wilderness, it's now anticipating the future when the Elohim, the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the mighty ones of the future age, will move forward like that ark did, in order to accomplish these events spoken of here in Psalm 68.

So, 'Let Elohim arise: let His enemies be scattered. Let them also that hate Him, flee before Him'. And so this would seem to be a psalm which would be appropriate to the beginning of the movement. Let's sing this psalm as the ark now moves forward! Yes, there's a little bit of conjecture, a little bit of supposition there, but I don't think it hurts at times in the era of the psalms to say that this psalm could have applied. We don't have a definite statement, some psalms do definitely tell us, but this one does seem to be most appropriate to the occasion. We gloss over verses like 18 and 19 which are so very powerful and are picked up in the New Testament, and we come down say to verses 24 to 29. You think that these words might have been appropriate to that great procession? Verse 24, 'They have seen thy goings, O Elohim, even the goings of my El, my King, in the sanctuary. The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after, among them was the damsels playing with timbrels. Bless ye Elohim, in the congregations, even Yahweh, from the fountain of Israel. There is little Benjamin with their ruler, the princes of Judah and their council, the princes of Zebulun, and the princes of Naphtali. Thy Elohim hath commanded thy strength: strength, O Elohim, that which Thou hast wrought for us. Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents unto thee'. And so whilst we couldn't have said that all of that was fulfilled in David bringing the ark to Zion, I don't think there's any doubt that David saw that as but

a very small typical shadowy foreshadowing of this greater time to come.

So, what happened when they reached the city? Well, we said Psalm 24 would probably have an application there, and in mentioning Psalm 24 perhaps just one particular verse we might take, say verse 7, and I think we may have heard these words many times before. Verse 7, so as the ark nears the city this would have been the psalm, 'Lift up your head, O ye gates: and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in', but you see, it wasn't really the King of glory but it was the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, wasn't it? Do you remember that expression, and I need to go back to 2 Samuel 6 to get the exact words, but do you remember in our reading this evening in the opening of 2 Samuel 6 what it actually said about the ark there? It was quite specific in its terminology, it said verse 2, 'And David arose and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah to bring up from thence the ark of Elohim, whose name is called by the name of Yahweh Sabaoth that dwelleth between the cherubim; and they set the ark of Elohim upon a new cart'. So you see, it wasn't just the ark but it's identified with the name of the God of Israel who dwelleth between the cherubim, and so even in the actual factual record of Samuel, it sees something far greater than a wooden box with gold over the top of it being carried by some men up into a rather innocuous looking city. It definitely saw something greater!

Now at this point before we look at (and I'll just take one more psalm to conclude with tonight and we'll pick it up, God willing, tomorrow, at this point), b&s, I'd like us to ask ourselves the question, how do we feel about this in relation to Jerusalem even today? You know, the scripture talks about Jerusalem being 'my chiefest joy', Zion is my chiefest joy; I know if you go there today and you look at Jerusalem, the first thing you see is all these television masts, I wished they'd at least get rid of those; and then, of course, we'd have to knock down the Catholic church, but I'm not sure what order we'd do it in, perhaps the other one first. But you look at it and you try to picture Jerusalem in its glory, and it would be about the most difficult city on earth, to try and see as the 'city of the great King'. And yet, b&s, we've got to be able to have that feeling for that Land, because of the future, but if one was to go there, to be able to look past those sorts of things, so when you look at a picture like that on the screen, I'd have to say personally, I find that really exciting to be able to mention the fact, that here was the ark being brought up here, and winding around here, and that here was the spot where Beth-shemesh was, and for that matter that's where the Philistines camped a little earlier. If we've really got the spirit of the truth, when we read these stories, it's not just saying, well, how was David feeling about what he was doing then? What he was feeling about was the future! so even today, when we see things going on in Jerusalem, and even when we put up our pictures with the dome of the rock stuck in the middle there, the Moslem thing there, with the Lutheran church down here, the church of the Holy Sepulchre somewhere round about there, Latin patriarchal street just here, Greek patriarchal street just there, and all those sorts of things, and all the television masts right over there; somehow we've got to see a beauty in it. And we've got to be able to see that, because we've got to be able to look past it; and, if we can appreciate the fact that the Mount of Olives is going to be split in two, this is going to be elevated, all that's

going to be knocked down, and this is going to be a huge temple. Then, of course, even today, we should be able to be excited about seeing those sorts of things.

Well, I'd like to just finish with a quick summary which I can do by means of an overhead transparency, of what I think might be one of the psalms that David found one of the most appropriate to that occasion. And what I'll do, because I should be finishing virtually right now, is just to show you that on this transparency (and we'll start with this transparency in tomorrow's study); but just to show you the spirit of it. Psalm 132 is definitely divided into two parts. Verse 1 says, 'Yahweh remembered David and all his afflictions' (it's an introduction). Verses 2 to 10 speak about what David swore unto Yahweh, and verses 11 to 17, is what Yahweh has done for David, and all of these verses are paralleled across there, there's a very, very interesting structure, as we see the parallel there. And then verse 18 finishes it off, 'His enemies will I clothe with shame, but upon himself shall his crown flourish'. And so I'd just like to finish up, b&s, with the words of Psalm 122 (we'll come back to that, God willing, as our starting point tomorrow, because there's a lot more we've got to say about the significance of David bringing the ark up to Zion, and not, say, taking it to Gibeah) but let's just read the words of Psalm 122.

'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of Yahweh. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together. Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of Yahweh, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of Yahweh. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sake, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of Yahweh our Elohim I will seek thy good'.

And may we, b&s, identify with those words even today, and look forward to that time when Jerusalem shall surely be the city of peace.