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All You Need Is Faith (2 Sam 6:1-14)

The spider silk is only 0.003 mm thick but it is 2 times stronger than the Kevlar, the material used in the bullet stopping vest used by the police and armed forces. It is 5 times stronger than steel. 21st century science and technology haven't yet to produce anything that thin and that strong.

But, of course, spider silk is easy to break with a finger. Israel was weak by herself, too. They were few in number; they didn't have many weapons; they weren't strong. But, whenever God was with them they were always strong and victorious.

In Exodus 25 God told Moses to make the Ark of Covenant. In it were the two stone tablets of the Ten Commandments, a golden jar containing manna and the budded staff. The ark was God's covenantal declaration of His love towards the mankind. The ark of God is God's promise that He will love us to make us perfect in Christ!

It wasn't people of Israel that caused the Jericho's wall to fall, but it was their obedience to the Word of God (Jos 6). They won the battles when they *faithfully carried* the ark of covenant. The ark of covenant was the national treasure number one!

God is to be worshiped by faith. But, Israel began to deal with God in their own way. As a result, they lost every battle. In their battle against the Philistines not only they lost the war totally but they lost the unthinkable - the Ark of Covenant (1 Sam 4)!

The Philistines took the ark of covenant by force but it wasn't of any value to them. In fact, it was their worst nightmare! The Lord's hand was against them; He afflicted the Philistines, both young and old, with an outbreak of tumors.

People were dying. The Philistines were extremely afraid of the ark of covenant. So they came to the right decision - return the ark back to the Israelites! They made a new cart for the ark of the Lord and had two cows to carry it (1 Sam 5-6).

The ark of the Lord was taken to the house of a Levite named Abinadab. It stayed there for 20 years (1 Sam 7:2). It was now David's reign in Israel. He wanted to bring the ark of God to Jerusalem. So he took 30,000 chosen men and set out to the Abinadab's house.

Why did David take 30,000 people with him when it would only take 4 persons to carry the ark of God? Because the ark of God was the national treasure. It was nation's defense against enemies. It was national protection for all God's people. Besides, Jerusalem was the center of believer's faith in those days and transporting the source of national defense to Jerusalem was a matter of national security.

Now, the cows that were carrying the ark of God on the new cart stumbled when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon. Uzzah, one of the two sons of Abinadab, reached out and took hold of the ark of God. 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 (2 Sam 6:6-7).

So, here's the question. What went wrong here? Uzzah was trying to save the ark of God from falling off the cart by holding it tightly. So what did Uzzah do that deserved his death? And, here's the answer. Only Levites were *allowed* to *carry* the ark of God on their shoulders.

Uzzah was a Levite alright. But, he didn't know God. Can a person, I mean, is it possible for a person who doesn't know God to serve Him? In Num 4:15 touching the ark of God was punishable by death. It was a capital offense toward God. Whether Uzzah ever read the verse or knew of it but didn't believe it - we don't know. What we do know is that he died because of his *irreverent act*.

But, here's even bigger problem. It is David's method of bringing the ark of God. It is, in fact, *problematic*. He used the pagan's culture to do the work of God. He knew that long ago the Philistines used a cart and cows to do the carrying so he may have thought why not! Why not us! Why don't we use the most efficient way to do the work of God?

Using a cart would be *faster* than walking on the foot. Plus, using the cows to pull the cart would be *easier* than carrying the heavy ark of God on the shoulders. Remember the ark of God was about 50 x 30 x 30 inches. The lower box was made of acacia wood, inlaid with pure gold.

The Seat of Mercy, the atonement cover for the ark, was made of pure gold. And, let's not forget the two stone tablets, the jar of manna and the budded staff. As you can imagine it was fairly heavy. And, let's not forget it's the *new* cart. Maybe we could use some new ideas to go about honoring God.

*But, wait a minute. What was David thinking?* He was thinking about how do things faster and easier in a new world way. But, that's not how we do God's work. *We need faith to do God's work. There's no other way. It's the only way!* The reason for Levites to carry the ark of God on their shoulders is because the shoulder symbolize faith.

The source of body strength is from the waist. Shoulder is where that strength is most effectively used for carrying a weight. And, Levites are God worshipers. To sum it up, the Levites carrying the ark of God on their shoulder was both spiritual and practical lesson that we need faith to carry the Word of salvation for the ark of God symbolized the Word!

The name Uzzah means 'Strength.' Uzzah died because of his irreverent act. So the lesson applies to us even after 3,000 years. Our strength will give out and die if we don't believe God according to His way! Faith is not like DIY, you know, Do-It-Yourself

kind of thing. There is sure & certain way to believe; we must believe according to the Bible! There is sure & certain truth to be understood. He is Jesus Christ! And, there is sure & certain life to be lived; it is the eternal life (Jn 14:6)!

Faith is not knowing a lot than others. Faith is not doing something faster than others. Faith is not doing things easier than others. But, faith is obeying the Word of God. That's what faith is and faith does. Faith lives to please and honor God. Faith is putting God first. That's why we give tithe. That's why we give thanks first to God.

Strength that does not know God or His Word will die out eventually. Spiritual strength, physical strength, brain power and economical stability will be no more if they aren't used for the work of God. Uzzah's lesson is that we must honor God according to the Scriptures - both the Old and New Testaments.

Meanwhile, David learned that the "new cart and cow" stunt he pulled didn't do the job. He learned his lesson. After 3 months he took another opportunity to bring the ark of God to Jerusalem. This time he did it by faith. This time not only he followed God's Word but he did it with overflowing joy, thanksgiving and praise (2 Sam 6:12-19).

And, he purified the Levites who were to carry the ark of God (1 Ch 15:12). Remember, Levites are God worshipers. So are we. To carry the Word of God to others we must be purified in every way. We must cut off and throw out unholy habits and behaviors. There's just no room for these in the mind of God's children.

Do you have your own 'new cart' or some 'cows' to pull the cart? You don't need any of those things to do the work of God. All you need is faith. All you need is God-fearing shoulders to carry the ark of God! All you need is faith to do the work of God. *Faith is Jesus Christ!*