

15:15. They treated the ark like a common box, v. 6. The religious consciousness of the time ascribed the sudden death of the chief offender to divine displeasure, v. 7. David, quarreling with this manifestation of the divine will, was at once angry (v. 8), afraid (v. 9), and paralyzed, abandoning further attempts to bring the ark and leaving it in the house of Obed-edom, v. 11. This king has to learn that inward obedience to the divine will is the condition of blessing, rather than outward ceremonious observance, Heb. 10:35, 36.

3. *David's rejoicing over the divine will*, vs. 11, 12. The prosperity enjoyed by Obed-edom whilst the ark was in his house (v. 11), convinced David that the "breach" was closed, and he carried out his interrupted purpose with gladness, v. 12.

His strong emotion found vent in religious rites (vs. 13, 17, 18), physical animation (v. 14), and social good cheer, v. 19. All these have their place (if kept in their place) in modern Christian life and work. The gospel is far from narrow in its permissions, Phil. 4:8. The divine will, as revealed in Christ, does not bid us "repress" ourselves, but encourages us rather to "express" ourselves in fitting degrees and appropriate methods of rejoicing, Acts 5:41; 8:8; Heb. 3:6.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. E. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

A hopeful beginning, a happy ending, a tragedy between.

Begin with—

1. *The hopeful start.* The first step, the marshaling of the 30,000 men. The scholars will have something to say of the pageant at Quebec in July, with its gathering of soldiers and of battleships, and the immense concourses of people: the interest, patriotic. By questions, bring out the occasion of the Lesson: where the ark was, how it had come to be there, why David desired to remove it, whither it was to be brought, who were summoned to the joyous task, how king and people went with them (v. 2), how deeply their hearts were stirred by the fact that it was the ark, the meeting place between their God and themselves, which they were to bring in. It was a great occasion, a great

turning point in a nation's history: make this felt, and thus key the scholars to eager expectation of what is to follow.

Go over the items of the start—the vehicle, the drivers, Ahio leading the way, David and the people playing and dancing (see Exposition, v. 5) in their joy (take a little time for the various instruments of music: it will make the whole joyous scene the more vivid). Question as to one error into which they fell, carrying the ark in a cart, not on the shoulders of the Levites—see Exposition. But God is patient.

2. *A terrible happening.* The facts will be easily brought out; they are few and startling: Uzzah's touching of the ark with his hand, and his instant death at the hand of God. Wherefore was it wrong for him to touch the ark? Make this quite clear: it was in direct disobedience to the command of God; the penalty being death (see Exposition). As to the punishment, it was a direct judgment of the Almighty. Lev. 10:1, 2; Acts 5:1-12 are parallel cases. The woes of the great Judgment Day, Matt. 25:41, etc., will help in the understanding of it. Show that God's anger is not impulse or passion, but justice.

3. *A happy home-coming.* This is told of in v. 12. Have the scholars mark the steps that led to it: (a) David's hot displeasure, v. 8: God interfering with his plans, forsooth! God will be worshiped and honored in His own way, or not at all. (b) David's fear, when he had time to think. It is to David's credit, to have taken back his words, when they were wrong words. Repentance is not cowardice, but true courage. (c) The blessing the ark brought, vs. 10, 11, 12a. Try a little exercise of calling for passages to show that God's presence brings blessing—gladness, peace, strength, prosperity.

Now the climax of the Lesson, v. 12b, the ark brought up. Vs. 13-15 give the joyous details. Choirs and musicians accompanied the ark. Psalm 24 was sung as a marching chorus. Have the scholars so read it. The whole congregation, vs. 1, 2; a single voice or choir, v. 3; another voice or choir, v. 4; two voices or chorus, vs. 5, 6 ("Selah" is an interlude, when only the orchestra was heard, and the head of the procession enters the