

Focus on 2 Samuel 6:1–5, 12b–19

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Carol J. Dempsey

The ark of God was a box made of acacia wood, with dimensions of approximately 4 by 2½ by 2½ feet (Exod. 25:10–22; 37:1–9), that was built by the Israelites during the wilderness period. Closely associated with God’s presence, the ark traditionally contained the tables of the law given to Moses, although the function of the ark may have changed more than once throughout Israel’s history. Eventually, it would reside in the Holy of Holies within the Jerusalem temple. The founding of a new shrine around the ark (v. 17) symbolizes a new regime and a new time in Israel’s history. David is now recognized as the legitimate king.

WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Miguel A. De La Torre

The text tells us that once the rejoicing ended, King David distributed among the people a roll of bread, a portion of dates (or meat), and a raisin cake. Worship—no matter how exuberant it may be—absent praxis (action) is worthless. King David, the richest and most powerful man in the land, understood he had an obligation to those around him. Like Jesus centuries later, he fed the multitudes. While not everyone in the crowd was poor, no doubt many were. The food provided needed nourishment.

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” David G. Forney

Liturgically, this passage invites us to think about the ways in which we praise God with joyful abandon. The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving, which many traditions say at the Lord’s Table, tells of God’s salvation story for humanity and points to the glad feast that is to come. Even though we are not there yet, we do have seasons of rejoicing when we can dance as if no one is watching. We might be surprised by how contagious it might be. So, as Hafiz, the great Sufi poet, counsels, “Cast all your votes for dancing.”

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Theological Perspective,”

Miguel A. De La Torre

Dancing before God may provide space for a deep spiritual connection with the Author of the universe; but true worship is to seek justice, to physically—not solely spiritually—feed the hungry. There is something theologically wrong with those who ignore the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the alien, the incarcerated, and the infirm. Creative worship expressions may provide a sense of being close to God; but only when we touch the oppressed and dispossessed do we actually touch God. That which we do to the very least of these, we do unto God. Dancing is always fun; nevertheless, it is in the doing of justice that we get to enter into God’s presence. Then we have something to dance about.