

# To **GOD** be the **GLORY**

by Robert Hatfield

One of David's first acts as king over all Israel was to transport the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem from the house of Abinidab in Gibeah (where the men of Kirjathjearim had placed it following its return from the Philistines [1 Sam. 6-7]). David, in an effort to honor God, gathered 30,000 men of Israel and created a celebration. The people gathered numerous musical instruments to play and a new cart was built especially for the use of transporting the ark. Abinidab's sons, Uzzah and Ahio, were responsible for the ark's travel; Ahio drove the cart from the front and Uzzah stayed behind or to the side of the cart. As the oxen pulled the cart along the path, something caused the beasts to stumble, so "Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it" (2 Sam. 6:6). 2 Samuel 6:7 explains that God's anger rose against Uzzah, for God had clearly forbidden the touching of the ark (cf. Num. 4:5, 15, 20). Uzzah had violated God's command, thus "God smote him there for his error" (2 Sam. 6:7).

Why did God cause Uzzah to die? The people of Israel, including David, Ahio, and even Uzzah, were doing something they thought would glorify God, but God was displeased. The people were *not* glorifying God, they were sinning against Him! God had given specific instructions concerning the transportation of the ark of the covenant (Exo. 25:14-15), which certainly did not include the construction of a new cart. God had made known His commands and no man was to change them. If the people would not have placed the ark on a cart, Uzzah probably would not have committed this sin.

How is God glorified today? Some people in the world create breathtaking celebrations, claiming their actions in the name of God. However, the Bible plainly teaches that God is glorified *only* when people follow His will. Jesus explained that Christians should do good works to "glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 5:16). In John 17:4 Jesus prayed, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." God is glorified when His children are united by His Word: "That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15:6). Peter wrote, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ... that God in all things may be glorified..." (1 Pet. 4:11).

However sincere a person may be, he or she must not add to or take away from God's Word. The Israelites' decision to add to the commands of God caused Uzzah to lose his life. Christians who sing "to God be the glory" realize that God is glorified when His children obey His word — nothing more, and nothing less.

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