

TREASURE IN JARS OF CLAY



Uzzah

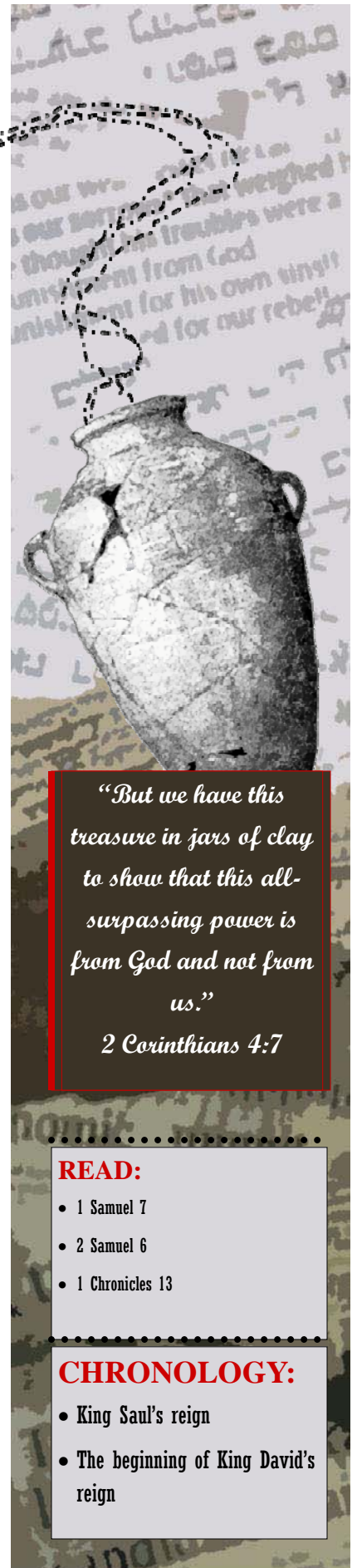
The story of Uzzah presents most of us with a difficulty in our assumptions about how God works. We just aren't sure about a God who would strike dead a guy who is just trying to be helpful.

We understand, at least intellectually, that our ways are not His ways. But sometimes He doesn't even seem to behave in God's ways...at least not with the behaviors we have imagined Him to have. He forgives when we expect vengeance, and His wrath bursts forth at the time that we least expect it. When we think we are behaving in a way that will earn His pleasure, and are rewarded with His wrath, we are doubly blindsided.

So, what is the lesson learned from Uzzah? Like Samson, he apparently accomplished more in his death than he had in his life. By his death he taught a king and a nation that ignorance is no excuse when it comes to God's instructions, and that following the example of the pagan nations around them would bring dire consequences.

Uzzah's lessons continue for us.

- He teaches us to not look for the shortcuts in acquiring God. Taking care of our spiritual life the easy or convenient way spells disaster.
- Looking to the surrounding culture, even "church culture" to influence or even define our relationship with God carries a price too high to pay.
- When we don't understand God, we must turn toward Him to wrestle honestly with Him rather than turn away from Him.
- Just as God counted the spiritual welfare of a nation worth the sacrifice of one man, so we must remember that we live and die for the kingdom of God above our personal welfare.



"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."

2 Corinthians 4:7

READ:

- 1 Samuel 7
- 2 Samuel 6
- 1 Chronicles 13

CHRONOLOGY:

- King Saul's reign
- The beginning of King David's reign

Losing the ark to the Philistines

The Israelites had brought the ark of the covenant into the battle with the Philistines, apparently believing that doing so would ensure God's presence and their victory. Their misunderstanding of God led them to follow the pagan idea that by controlling the location of the ark, they controlled God Himself. What then was their reaction when the Philistines had captured the ark? (1 Sam. 4) _____

What do you think the Philistines assumed when they initially gained control of the ark? _____

What are some ways that we try to "control" God's presence and favor? _____

In chapter 5, what are some of the difficulties the Philistines encountered while they possessed the ark? _____

How long was the ark in the possession of the Philistines according to 1 Sam. 6:1? _____

What did the Philistines consult their religious experts about in 1 Sam. 6:2? _____

Why were they worried about how the task would be accomplished? _____

What method of transportation did they decide upon in 1 Sam. 6:8? _____

Curiosity killed the Cat 1 Sam. 6

How did the ark arrive at Beth-shemesh? _____

What was the initial reaction to its arrival? _____

What mistake did the men of Beth-shemesh make? _____

Why do you think they did this? _____

What were the tragic consequences? _____

What warning is given in Num. 4:17-20 in regard to the Kohathites who were to be entrusted with the care of the ark? _____

What question did the mourning people of Beth-Shemesh ask in 1 Sam. 6:20? _____

How does asking that question lead us to salvation? _____

Why was the punishment at Beth-shemesh much more severe than what the Philistines had experienced? _____

What did they decide to do with the ark at that point? _____

Whose house did it end up at? _____

How long did it remain there according to 1 Sam. 7:2? _____



"We can't stare at the Law without the cover of blood."
Glenn Packiam

The lesson for a nation 2 Sam. 6:1-8 and 1 Chron. 13

All through the reign of Saul, the ark hung out at Abinadab's house, in Kiriath Jearim, apparently largely forgotten by the nation of Israel. Who was appointed to watch over the ark? (1 Sam. 7:1) _____

Who else had lived with the ark? (2 Sam. 6:3) _____

We have no evidence of good or bad events connected to the ark during the time it remained at Kiriath Jearim. Why do you think that was? _____

What attitude might that foster among those who were in close proximity to the ark? _____

What was to happen at the ark of the Testimony according to Exodus 25:22? _____

This had not happened for all the years of Saul's reign, and the ark had been left neglected and ignored at the house of Abinadab. For David to desire to reinstate the ark, the actual glory and presence of God Almighty, onto center stage for the nation of Israel by moving it to Jerusalem was no small matter. David, in front of the entire nation, was putting God back on the throne. According to 1 Chron. 13:1-4, who was involved in this endeavor? _____

Moving the ark of the Testimony from the obscurity of Abinadab's house to prominence at the future site of the temple in Jerusalem was to be a grand and public event. What were David and the rest of Israel doing while the ark was being moved under the guidance of Ahio and Uzzah? (1 Chron. 13:7-8) _____

The glory of God would finally be returned to Israel! But then, right in the middle of the party, the oxen stumbled, Uzzah reached out to steady the ark, and was struck down in anger for the seemingly well intentioned act. It had to have been shocking and sobering, and surely confusing for the joyful crowd.

In 2 Sam. 6:8,9, what was David's initial response to the death of Uzzah? _____

When faced with such a perplexing event, David had the opportunity to throw up his hands and turn away from God, or to turn to Him and wrestle with his understanding of God. One of the things that made David a "man after God's own heart" was his consistent choice of the latter.

What conclusion had David come to in 1 Chron. 15:13? _____

What instructions were given about transporting the ark in Num. 4:15? _____

Why didn't David, or Uzzah follow those instructions? _____

Whose method of transporting the ark had they imitated instead? _____

Why had one incurred such a harsh penalty and the other had not? _____

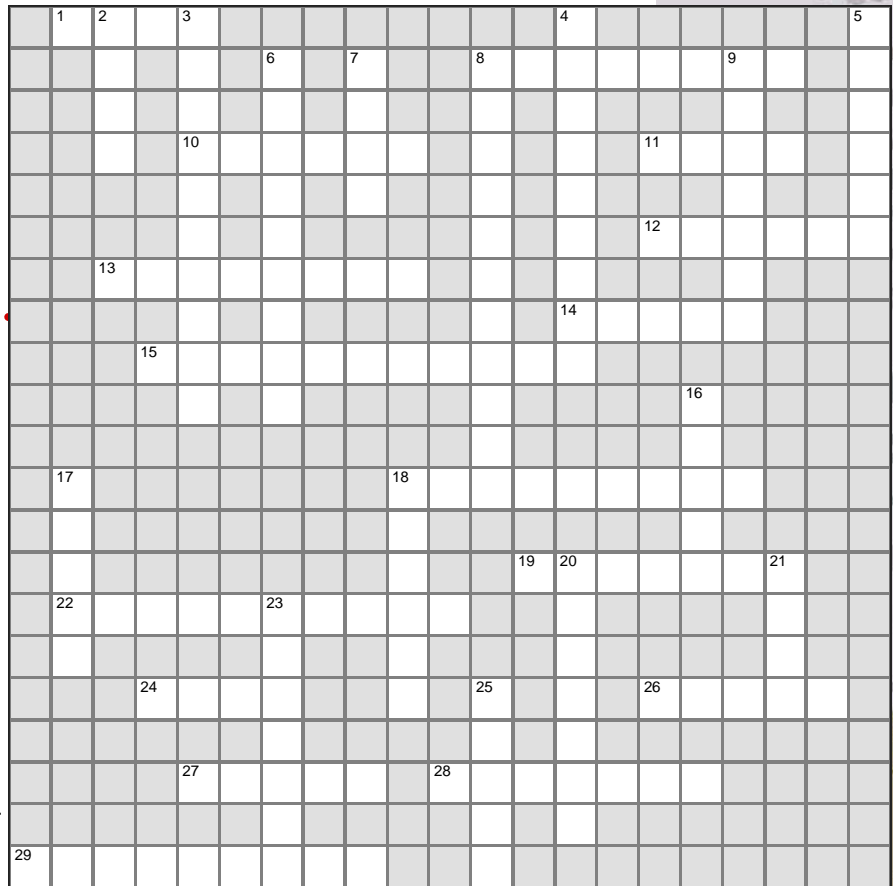
To what extent do you think we are held accountable for what we have neglected to learn? _____

In what ways did the death of Uzzah benefit the nation of Israel? _____

Why was that so important to God's plan, and therefore to us today? _____



PUZZLE PAGE



Clues

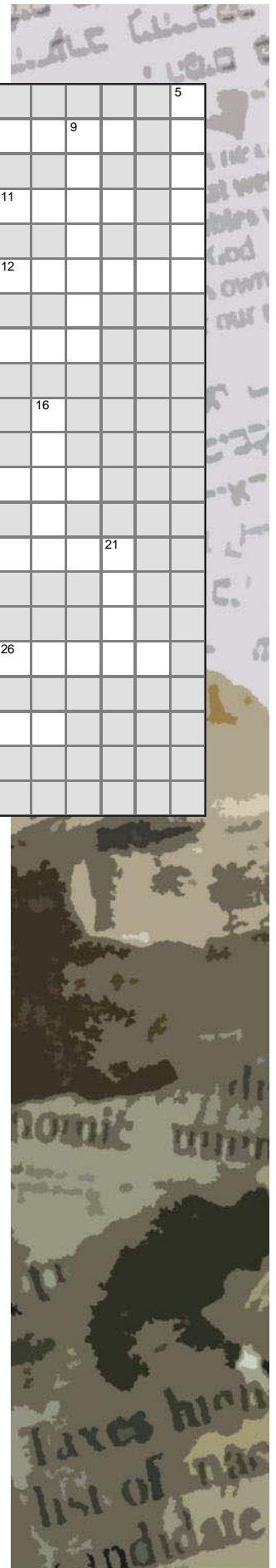
Across

- 1 even those carrying the ark were not to do this to it (4)
- 8 after the curious men were killed, the people asked "Who can stand in the _____ of the Lord?" (8)
- 10 Uzzah's death made David _____
- 11 wrong way to transport the ark (4)
- 12 the Philistines made a test to see if their suffering was from God or by _____
- 13 father of Uzzah (8)
- 14 Uzzah died at the threshing floor of _____ (5)
- 15 what David and all the Israelites were doing while Uzzah and Ahio guided the ark (11)
- 18 the ark of the _____ (9)
- 19 the pagan Philistines consulted theirs before moving the ark (7)
- 22 Uzzah's action was _____ (10)
- 24 color of cloth that was to cover the ark (Num. 4:6) (4)
- 26 the Philistines sent a _____ offering along with the ark (5)
- 27 Israelite who died from touching the ark
- 28 men of Beth Shemesh killed for looking in the ark (7)
- 29 David _____ with his officers about getting the ark (9)

Down

- 2 stumbled while pulling the cart (4)
- 3 the clan who was to carry the ark (Num. 4:15) (10)
- 4 reaction of the people of Beth Shemesh when the ark was returned

- 5 Israelites thought the ark's presence would help them win this (6)
- 6 where David wanted to bring the ark (9)
- 7 Uzzah's brother (4)
- 8 captured the ark from the Israelites (11)
- 9 ark was to be covered with this when being transported (Num.4:5) (7)
- 16 the ark was to be carried by poles through these (5)
- 17 was angry because of the Lord's wrath (5)
- 18 number of years the ark remained at Kiriath Jearim (6)
- 20 the poles were not to be _____ (Ex. 25:16) (7)
- 21 the ark was not inquired of during his reign
- 23 in charge of guarding the ark at Abinadab's house (7)
- 25 what the men of Beth Shemesh were harvesting when the ark came to them (5)



Draw a line from the number on the map to its correct location, tracing the journey of the ark from Shiloh

1. - where the ark had been kept in the tabernacle
2. - location of battlefield where the ark was lost to the Philistines.
3. - border town between Judah and Philistia. The ark was returned to Israel here, and 70 Israelites died.
4. -home of Abinadab, also called Eleazar. The ark remained here until David took the throne.
5. - David brought the ark to this holy city

Kiriath-jearim

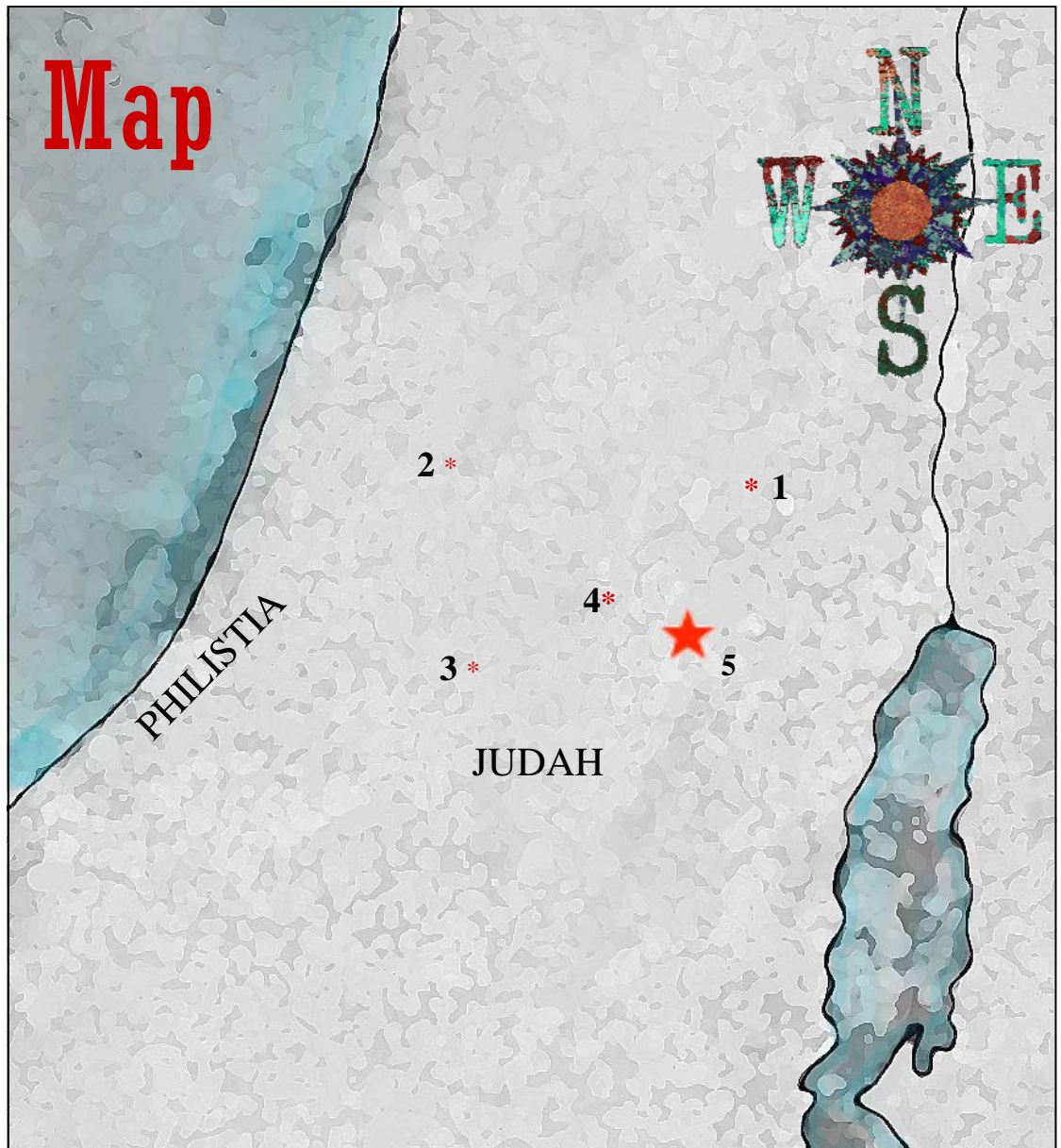
Shiloh

Jerusalem

Beth-shemish

Ebenezer

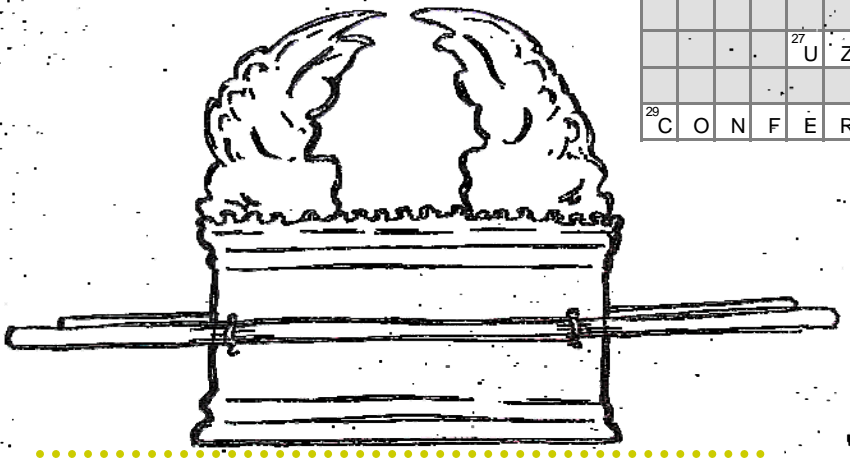
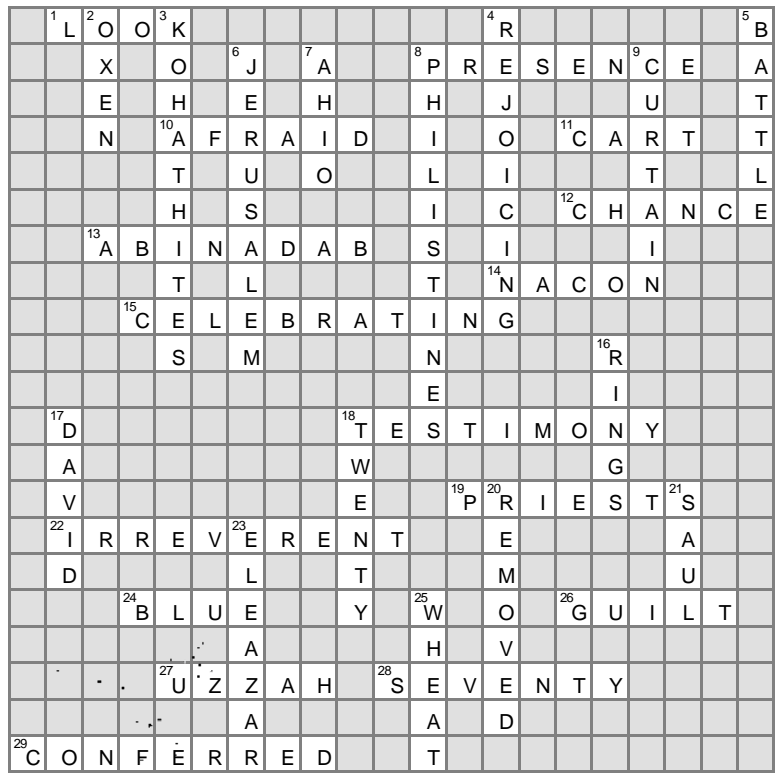
Map



Puzzle answers:

“A cart is anything we use to ‘carry God’ for us; it is the shortcuts we attempt and the God experts we prefer...that we rely on to bring God to us in a quick, easy, but devastatingly impersonal way.”

(Peckiam 161-162)



Sources:

Peckiam, Glenn. *Secondhand Jesus*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2009. 137-170. Print.

Web resources:

<http://globalchristiancenter.com/lesser-known-bible-people-series/the-house-of-abinadab-and-the-ark-of-god.html>

<http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/commentaries/Matthew-Hery/2Sam/Uzzah-Smitte-Touching-Ark>

<http://www.ecclesia.org/truth/uzzah.html>

Down Victory Road
www.downvictoryrd.com

