

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 15, 2018



THE LESSON

2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19

Once again David assembled the select warriors of Israel, thirty thousand strong. ²David and all the troops who were with him set out for Baalah, which is Kiriath-jearim of Judah, to bring God's chest up from there—the chest that is called by the name of the LORD of heavenly forces, who sits enthroned on the winged creatures. ³They loaded God's chest on a new cart and carried it from Abinadab's house, which was on the hill. Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, were driving the new cart. ⁴Uzzah was beside God's chest while Ahio was walking in front of it. ⁵Meanwhile, David and the entire house of Israel celebrated in the LORD's presence with all their strength, with songs, zithers, harps, tambourines, rattles, and cymbals. . . .

^{12b}So David went and brought God's chest up from Obed-edom's house to David's City with celebration. ¹³Whenever those bearing the chest advanced six steps, David sacrificed an ox and a fating calf. ¹⁴David, dressed in a linen priestly

vest, danced with all his strength before the LORD. ¹⁵This is how David and the entire house of Israel brought up the LORD's chest with shouts and trumpet blasts.

¹⁶As the LORD's chest entered David's City, Saul's daughter Michal was watching from a window. She saw King David jumping and dancing before the LORD, and she lost all respect for him.

¹⁷The LORD's chest was brought in and put in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it. Then David offered entirely burned offerings in the LORD's presence in addition to well-being sacrifices. ¹⁸When David finished offering the entirely burned offerings and the well-being sacrifices, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of heavenly forces. ¹⁹He distributed food among all the people of Israel—to the whole crowd, male and female—each receiving a loaf of bread, a date cake, and a raisin cake. Then all the people went back to their homes.

THE RESPONSE Psalm 24

The earth is the LORD's and everything in it,

the world and its inhabitants too.

²Because God is the one who established it on the seas;

God set it firmly on the waters.

⁹Who can ascend the LORD's mountain?

Who can stand in his holy sanctuary?

¹⁰Only the one with clean hands and a pure heart;

the one who hasn't made false promises, the one who hasn't sworn dishonestly.

¹¹That kind of person receives blessings from the LORD

and righteousness from the God who saves.

¹²And that's how things are with the generation that seeks him—

that seeks the face of Jacob's God.

¹³Mighty gates: lift up your heads! Ancient doors: rise up high! So the glorious king can enter!

¹⁴Who is this glorious king?

The LORD—strong and powerful! The LORD—powerful in battle!

¹⁵Mighty gates: lift up your heads! Ancient doors: rise up high! So the glorious king can enter!

¹⁶Who is this glorious king?

The LORD of heavenly forces—he is the glorious king!

THE EPISTLE Ephesians 1:3-14

³Bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven. ⁴God chose us in Christ to be holy and blameless in God's presence before the creation of the world. ⁵God destined us to be his adopted children through Jesus Christ because of his love. This was according to his goodwill and plan ⁶and to honor his glorious grace that he has given to us freely through the Son whom he loves. ⁷We have been ransomed through his Son's blood, and we have forgiveness for

our failures based on his overflowing grace, ⁸which he poured over us with wisdom and understanding. ⁹God revealed his hidden design to us, which is according to his goodwill and the plan that he intended to accomplish through his Son. ¹⁰This is what God planned for the climax of all times: to bring all things together in Christ, the things in heaven along with the things on earth. ¹¹We have also received an inheritance in Christ. We were destined by the plan of God, who accomplishes everything according to his design. ¹²We are called to be an honor to God's glory because we were the first to

hope in Christ. ¹³You too heard the word of truth in Christ, which is the good news of your salvation. You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit because you believed in

Christ. ¹⁴The Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance, which is applied toward our redemption as God's own people, resulting in the honor of God's glory.

THE GOSPEL Mark 6:14-29

¹⁴Herod the king heard about these things, because the name of Jesus had become well-known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and this is why miraculous powers are at work through him." ¹⁵Others were saying, "He is Elijah." Still others were saying, "He is a prophet like one of the ancient prophets." ¹⁶But when Herod heard these rumors, he said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been raised to life."

¹⁷He said this because Herod himself had arranged to have John arrested and put in prison because of Herodias, the wife of Herod's brother Philip. Herod had married her, ¹⁸but John told Herod, "It's against the law for you to marry your brother's wife!" ¹⁹So Herodias had it in for John. She wanted to kill him, but she couldn't. ²⁰This was because Herod respected John. He regarded him as a righteous and holy person, so he protected him. John's words greatly confused Herod, yet he enjoyed listening to him.

²¹Finally, the time was right. It was on one of Herod's birthdays, when he had prepared a feast for his

high-ranking officials and military officers and Galilee's leading residents. ²²Herod's daughter Herodias came in and danced, thrilling Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the young woman, "Ask me whatever you wish, and I will give it to you." ²³Then he swore to her, "Whatever you ask I will give to you, even as much as half of my kingdom."

²⁴She left the banquet hall and said to her mother, "What should I ask for?"

"John the Baptist's head," Herodias replied.

²⁵Hurrying back to the ruler, she made her request: "I want you to give me John the Baptist's head on a plate, right this minute." ²⁶Although the king was upset, because of his solemn pledge and his guests, he didn't want to refuse her. ²⁷So he ordered a guard to bring John's head. The guard went to the prison, cut off John's head, ²⁸brought his head on a plate, and gave it to the young woman, and she gave it to her mother. ²⁹When John's disciples heard what had happened, they came and took his dead body and laid it in a tomb.