

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on 1 Chronicles by Andrew Stewart and James Smith

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested a godly mother will lead her children

Reading 1 Chronicles 13:1-4 Let's bring back the Ark

Notes
(See back page for authors)

David, God's chosen King, has taken over after the death of Saul, the people's chosen king. (chapters 10-11) As king, David desired to honour God and to have God's close relationship with His people. So, he consulted with the leaders of the people under him about bringing the ark back to Jerusalem, the new capital city.

Stewart points out that *the ark of the covenant was a very important symbol in the religion of the Old Testament. It was a wooden box overlaid with gold, built according to instructions given to Moses in Exodus 25:10–22, stored in the most holy room in the tabernacle and later the temple. Inside the ark were the two tablets of stone on which the Ten Commandments had been engraved, and at various times a gold pot containing a sample of manna from the wilderness and Aaron's rod that blossomed were also kept in it (Heb. 9:4). The ark symbolized the presence of God amongst his people, for his glory dwelt 'between the cherubim', and the character of God, for 'The ark ... is called by the Name' (13:6) and it contained the law that is a transcript of God's holy character.*

David encouraged the people to join in his zeal for God, and they did.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What did David desire to do?
2. What was the Ark of the Covenant?
3. How does David stress the corporate-ness of God's people?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 87a²
1. Ask God for a deepening desire for Him and His presence
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading 1 Chronicles 15:16-29 Joyful, skilful praise

Notes
(See back page for authors)

This time, having determined to obey God fully, David directs the people to accompany the return of the ark with their joyful, skilful praise. Stewart comments, that *there was a spontaneous outpouring of rejoicing as the ark was brought up, but these verses also show that this spontaneous movement was directed by the Word of God so that it was a truly edifying occasion...*

We should notice the importance of the singing of praise in the worship of God... The importance of singing such songs of praise is that as well as ascribing due honour to God they instruct the minds and edify the souls of those present. Praise is not 'sanctified entertainment', nor is it simply a minor preliminary to more important elements of public worship...

The importance of praise means that it should be offered to the very best of our ability... The Levites had dedicated their skills to improving the quality of their praise as much as they could.

This is only as it should be because God's people have a duty to dedicate their gifts to the glory of God and should train themselves so that their praise is as honouring to God as it can be. J. P. Struthers, whose Reformed Presbyterian Congregation in Greenock, Scotland, sang the Psalms without instrumental accompaniment, used to urge his people to make their singing so rich and sweet that passers-by would be compelled to stop and say, 'Listen to the angels singing!'

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How did David direct the people to accompany the ark?
2. What are we told about the Levites' skilfulness in praise?
3. How should we sing praise to God?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 87a
1. Pray that you and your family will offer to God joyful and skilful praise, with His help
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

Reading 1 Chronicles 15:1-15 Get the ark – take 2

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Now, we find David desiring once again to bring the ark to Jerusalem. This time, however, he seeks to do it entirely in God’s way. He acknowledges their sin in not seeking not doing it God’s way the first time (v.13). And, he determined to carefully carry out God’s instructions fully.

The Levites were to carry the ark on poles on their shoulders. The particular branch who were given that responsibility, the sons of Kohath were not even given any ox-carts (Num 7:6-9) because they were to carry God’s holy objects on their shoulders.

Stewart comments that *God did care about the way his instructions were regarded and does not give us liberty to add or discard what we might see fit in our worship and service for him. This is a principle that seems so obvious that it should hardly have to be argued, yet there is a continual urge in the human heart to push at the boundaries of God’s law and ask, ‘Did God really say that?’ The fallen human mind is full of ideas about how we might ‘enrich’ the worship of God, but they are not God’s ideas. David learned this principle and started applying it in the religious life of his people.*

Let us seek to know and do what God requires in all of our service to Him – and especially as we approach Him in worship.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How was the ark to be transported?
2. How did David and the Levites transport the ark this time?
3. How are we to approach God in worship?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 87a
1. Commit yourself and your family to carefully carry out God’s instructions for your service to and worship of Him
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading 1 Chronicles 13:1-6 All God’s people together

Notes
(See back page for authors)

David called on all of God’s people to join him in bringing the ark back from Kiriath-jearim where, Smith notes, *the ark had resided for some seven decades*. Why was it there? You may remember from 1 Samuel 4-7 that God’s people had wrong ideas about the ark. Yes, it was a God-given symbol of His presence with them. But, as they found out the hard way, they could not merely be assured of God’s presence as long as they had God’s box.

So, even though they took the ark into battle against the Philistines, they were soundly defeated, the ark of God was captured, Eli’s two sons were killed in the battle, and, on hearing the news, Eli fell off his stool, broke his neck, and died. Eli’s grandson, born on that dreadful day bore the dreadful name, Ichabod, meaning “the glory has departed.”

The Philistines then found they couldn’t control God, or His presence for judgement, so they sent the ark on a cart to Kiriath-jearim. David now acknowledges that God’s people had not been concerned enough about God’s presence with them. They had not enquired of God in the days of Saul’s kingship.

But, now, as Stewart comments, David wanted *to remind the people of the goodness and greatness of the God of Israel. They were under His authority and were answerable to Him. They were to seek God’s guidance to direct their lives and needed to be in a right relationship with Him.*

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. Why was the ark in Kiriath-jearim?
2. Why did David want the ark back in Jerusalem?
3. Who did David call to join him in bringing the ark back? Why?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 87a
1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to drawing near to God, with His help.
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading 1 Chronicles 13:7-10 The Ark on a Cart

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Sadly, although David and the people had very commendable intentions, they were not concerned enough with the holiness of God. Putting the ark on a cart was good enough for the Philistines (1 Sam 6:11ff). Surely it was good enough for God’s people too, right? Wrong!

Good intentions in approaching God are not good enough. As Stewart notes, *is possible to act with good intentions and still fall into serious sin. David’s intention in bringing the ark from Kiriath Jearim was to honour God by bringing the symbol of his presence to the heart of the kingdom. He wanted to show that the years of neglect under Saul had come to an end. But David forgot that when sinful men draw near to God they must come in the way that God has laid down in his Word.*

God has revealed how He is to be approached. Not however the world might. Not even however we think is best – even when we are full of enthusiasm for God. Instead of accepting David and the people’s zeal, God judged David and His people severely. When the oxen pulling the cart stumbled and the ark tottered, Uzzah reached out, touched the ark, and God took his life. Uzzah died because David and he presumed their way was good enough.

Now, we know God doesn’t always kill His people when they disobey. But, do we love God enough to find out His way and obey?

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How did David and Israel transport the ark?
2. How had God commanded it be transported?
3. Why aren’t good intentions enough?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalm 87a

1. Commit yourself and your family in prayer to seek to better know, and do, God’s ways, with His help.
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading 1 Chronicles 13:8-14 God’s anger, David’s anger

Notes
(See back page for authors)

What do you do when you find in God’s word you have been going in ways He does not want? When God’s righteous anger burst out against Uzzah and He killed him, we might have expected, and hoped, that David’s immediate response would have been humble repentance. Instead, as Stewart notes, *In David’s case two unsavoury traits of character were exposed that day at Perez Uzzah.*

David responded to God’s righteous anger, with his own unrighteous anger. But, as Stewart notes, *repentance, not resentment, is our only appropriate response when God chastises us.* Then, David retreats from God. Stewart points out how *this was, of course, an attempt to hide from the lessons that God was teaching David. Rather than turn to God, asking how he had gone astray and what God would have him to do, David set the ark aside and returned home.*

How do we respond when it seems God is disciplining us? Although we can’t always know if hardship is God’s discipline, it is always a good thing to seek God, repent of known sin, and draw near to God. Don’t we, like David, instead at times get angry with God when things are hard? Don’t we, like David, at times say, “It’s too hard, I’ll just stay home”?

Notice too, briefly, God’s mercy in this time. As the ark remained with Obed-edom’s family, God brought unexpected blessing to them. Where sin abounds, grace abounds much more.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How did David respond when God killed Uzzah?
2. How should we respond when we think God is disciplining us?
3. How did God show His mercy after His anger?

4.     

Praise Pray

Psalm 87a

1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that God is full of mercy
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member