

Front Page News

Based on 2 Samuel 6 v 11-22

(Looks at watch) At last nearly 10:30. Time to clock off. What a day ... I can't wait to get home.

<Ring Ring>

<Ring Ring>

<Ring Ring>

(Panic) Blimey. I hope they give up soon.

<Ring Ring>

<Ring Ring>

<Ring Ring>

Oh damn. I'll have to answer it. I wish they'd hurry up and invent answer-phones.

(Bored nasal voice) You've reached the offices of the Jerusalem Sunday News. If you want to leave a message for the editor press 1, if you want to speak to accounts press 2, if you want to take out a subscription press 3. Make your choice now.

(Relief) Oh it's you Obed-Edom! Sorry, no. I was just on my way out the door, can you ring back tomorrow? It won't wait? What do you mean it won't wait? Look I've just put the paper to bed and I'd now like to do the same to my body.

(pause)

A late breaking story. (sarcasm) Great. Just what I needed right now ... a change to the front page. Look Obed we're leading with the latest on the peace talks between the Babylonians and the Assyrian Empire. All the papyrus reeds are dried, I've got a hundred slaves working all night crushing beetles for the dye and the scribes have just finished carving the portraits of the two leaders....

(pause)

What's so important that I have to

(pause)

Yes I know you've been mightily blessed by having the Ark of the Covenant in your house...

No. Yes. Yes. Yes. No.

I don't mean to be rude Obed, but you've had a fair crack at the whip. And I really don't think our readers want another 'Shalom' magazine colour supplement featuring many exclusive portraits of you in your private springs or riding your latest racing camel or with your youngest wife!

(pause)

Oh you're calling *about* the Ark. It's not at your place anymore it's gone...

(Excitement) It hasn't been stolen has it?

(pause)

(Disappointment) Oh the King's moving it to Jerusalem. Well yes. It *is* interesting... in a scroll 3 or 4 kind of way but (glances at watch) I do have a pressing appointment with a large bottle of wine ... so if you'll...

(pause)

OK I'll make some notes for your story.

They carry the Ark six paces....dum dee dum ... sacrifice bull ... dum dee dum ... oh a fatted calf ... dum dee dum. Well was it a bull or a fatted calf? Well it doesn't matter to me either but the eligible young bovines of this world might think quite differently. Oh a bull **and** a fatted calf ... I see. Yep. Gotcha. Many there?

(pause)

What, the whole house of Israel? You might be exaggerating a bit there mate. But still that's a lot of blokes. Ok got it.

(pause)

David's been pushing the boat out a bit with this one isn't he?

Trumpets...dum dee dum... Shouting ... dum dee dum... any particular words or just your general rabble-at-large type shouting?

(pause)

Yep. Got that. OK. Anything else?

(pause)

(Jumps up) **HE DID WHAT!**

(pause)

(Cups hand over mouthpiece and shouts off stage) **JEROBOAM!**
..... **JEROBOAM!!!!** ... Where are you, you idle son of camel cleaner ... **JEROBOOOOOOOOOAAAAAAM! TELL THEM TO HOLD THE FRONT PAGE. YES. HOLD IT. WE MAY BE ONTO SOMETHING BIG.**

(Calms down a bit) Obed? You still there? Good. Thought I'd cut you off for a moment then.

THE KING IN A LINEN EPHOD! Stroll on! Are you straight up? I mean if you are this is DYNAMITE sonshine!

(pause)

Nothing else on at all? No robes? No cloak? What not even his socks! (soto-voce) He must have been completely out of it?
Yes - Quite literally. Marvellous!

(pause)

Did you get any pictures?

(pause)

Fan-flippin'-tastic mate! Trust you to keep your best scribe with you at all times eh?

(pause)

What's that? Dancing as well you say? Tap? Ballet? What?

(pause)

I know you're not a dance critic! But I need more than just 'KING DANCES' don't I? I mean he does that at most state banquets.

(pause)

Really wild, energetic...exube... exhuba.. exhoo... oh with all his might ok? I can't spell exuberant.

I mean you've got to hand it to the man. He does go for this God stuff in a big way don't he? No half measures with this King, unlike certain others we won't mention.

(Wistful) Cor. Wish I'd been there to see that lot.

That's not all? Go on then, this is great copy.

(pause)

Umm Hm. Ok. So he dances all the way to the City and then he puts the Ark in his tent. Yep.

Then he sacrifices more burnt offerings.... Yep ... Fellowship offerings. What and then he blessed the people in the name of The Lord? Hang on. Woah. Back up a moment. He's not a priest. He can't do that.

(pause)

So what if he *is* the King. He's **not** a priest. Apart from the King bit he's an ordinary Joe just like you or me. He can't go right up to the Ark and offer sacrifices! I know my Pentateuch as well as the next man ... I have to mate. I end up in court a lot... And he certainly can't go around sacrificing stuff and blessing the people like that.

(pause)

But he just does it anyway. Ok. So no bolt of lightning or dropping dead then? Right so then he feeds all the blokes...

(pause)

And the women! Are you sure? Letting the women get involved is a bad idea ... we all know where that'll end.

(pause)

Too right mate. I'm with you. Women leaders! Not a chance.

Obed. You're a star mate. This story's got everything. Glamour, scandal, royalty, religion. All we need is a punch up and it's the perfect tabloid story.

(pause)

There **was** a punch up? Oh a verbal? Well it's close enough. So who with?

(pause)

The King and ex-Kings daughter who is also his first wife! Blimey. She really laid into him then?

(pause)

I'll just bet she was mate! I don't suppose it is very dignified to strip off and dance about like that in front of the slaves. So did he apologise?

(pause)

You've got a QUOTE! (to heaven) I *love* this man. Obed. You're a marvel mate! What did he say?

(pause)

"I will celebrate before the LORD. I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of I will be held in honour."

(pause)

Doesn't sound a *lot* like an apology, no.

Great Obed. Well thanks for calling. Yep. We'll change the front page.

(pause)

Yes you'll get your by-line. No Obed, no commision. You're at least five times richer than this paper as it is. Ok yes. Love to the wife ... no I don't care which one. Oh neither do you. Fine.

(hangs up)

Wow. This King David's an editor's dream.

Still it must be great to be that excited by God, to get that close to the Ark. Amazing.

I wonder what God's like? David must know. Blimey all those hit songs he writes about him. "Your Loving Kindness", "Though I Walk Through The Valley", "I Will Praise You Oh Lord". Decent enough in their way, but I don't suppose they'll last. Once the novelty value of having a royal pop star wears off. They'll be long forgotten before his son's on the throne.

(shouts off stage) **JEROBOAM! JEROBOAM!!!! ...** Where are you, you idle son of camel cleaner ... **JEROBOOOOOOOOAAAAAAM! Come on we've got a front page to re-write.**