

Ziklag (1 Sam. 29-30)

The Lords Refuse David (1 Sam. 29:1-5)

1 Then the Philistines gathered together all their armies at Aphek, and the Israelites encamped by a fountain which is in Jezreel. 2 And the lords of the Philistines passed in review by hundreds and by thousands, but David and his men passed in review at the rear with Achish. 3 Then the princes of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" And Achish said to the princes of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of Saul king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or these years? And to this day I have found no fault in him since he defected to me."

4 But the princes of the Philistines were angry with him; so the princes of the Philistines said to him, "Make this fellow return, that he may go back to the place which you have appointed for him, and do not let him go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become our adversary. For with what could he reconcile himself to his master, if not with the heads of these men? 5 Is this not David, of whom they sang to one another in dances, saying:

*'Saul has slain his thousands,
And David his ten thousands?'*

- Aphek was a natural jumping off point for the Philistines to head north.

- The Valley of Jezreel was a traditional site for battle, with much room for armies to maneuver. A fertile valley whose name means "God sows" is symbolic of reaping and of judgment.
 - Many consider this the place of the future battle of Armageddon, mentioned in Revelation 16.
- The power of the Philistines was largely concentrated on the coast, in five major cities: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, Gaza, and Ekron. If four of the princes were opposed to David, Achish could not keep him with them.
- The danger to them from David was considerable. Remember that David was traveling in the rear. There was also precedent for Israelite mercenaries to switch sides, as seen in the story of Jonathan in Chapter 14.

David Leaves The Service Of Achish (1 Sam. 29:6-11)

6 Then Achish called David and said to him, "Surely, as the LORD lives, you have been upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army is good in my sight. For to this day I have not found evil in you since the day of your coming to me. Nevertheless the lords do not favor you. 7 Therefore return now, and go in peace, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines."

8 So David said to Achish, "But what have I done? And to this day what have you found in your servant as long as I have been with you, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?"

9 Then Achish answered and said to David, "I know that you are as good in my sight as an angel of God; nevertheless the princes of the Philistines have said, 'He shall not go up with us to the battle.'

10 Now therefore, rise early in the morning with your master's servants who have come with you. And as soon as you are up early in the morning and have light, depart." 11 So David and his men rose early to depart in the morning, to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

- Notice a Philistine king swearing by YHWH.
- David's acting skills are on display once again. Was he being ironic?
- David and his men prepare to go south, while the Philistine army heads north.

Ziklag Burned And Plundered (1 Sam. 30:1-6)

1 Now it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag, on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the South and Ziklag, attacked Ziklag and burned it with fire, 2 and had taken captive the women and those who were there, from small to great; they did not kill anyone, but carried them away and went their way. 3 So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. 4 Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. 5 And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. 6 Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.

- Recall: Saul was earlier judged because he failed to slay the Amalekites. Clearly had spared quite a number of them alive.

- This has a spiritual lesson; Amalek is a type, or symbol of the flesh. Exodus 17:11 says, *“And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.”*
- Failure to fight Amalek has effects even on the next generation!
- They attacked Ziklag with strategic timing: (1) revenge; (2) the movements of the Israelite army left the south land less protected than usual.
- How will David respond? He strengthened himself in the LORD.
 - Note the difference between Saul and David: YHWH is called David's god here, whereas He is never called Saul's god.

The David Pattern

In many Psalms, and in many situations like Ziklag, David starts in despair, but rises up in faith. How does he find a way to encourage himself in the Lord?

1. Remember God's faithfulness to you in the past.

What has He done for me? My testimonies are really His testimonies!

2. Remember Who God is now.

Learn God’s attributes, His characteristics, and then remind Him of those things – that He is kind, just, merciful, faithful, and loving.

3. Remember what God has promised to do for you in the future.

Think about His great and precious promises. Think about what He has said in personal prophecy and within your own heart.

Inquiring Of The Lord Again (1 Sam. 30:7-9)

7 Then David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, "Please bring the ephod here to me." And Abiathar brought the ephod to David. 8 So David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And He answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all."

9 So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the Brook Besor, where those stayed who were left behind. 10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men; for two hundred stayed behind, who were so weary that they could not cross the Brook Besor.

- David returns to seeking the Lord. Abiathar resurfaces with the ephod. Saul probably still has the High Priest's breastplate with him or at his home in Gibeah.

A Way To Find The Enemy (1 Sam. 30:11-15)

11 Then they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David; and they gave him bread and he ate, and they let him drink water. 12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. So when he had eaten, his strength came back to him; for he had eaten no bread nor drunk water for three days and three nights. 13 Then David said to him, "To whom do you belong, and where are you from?" And he said, "I am a young man from Egypt, servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind, because three days ago I fell sick. 14 We made an invasion of the southern area of the Cherethites, in the territory which belongs to Judah, and of the southern area of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire."

15 And David said to him, "Can you take me down to this troop?" So he said, "Swear to me by God that you will neither kill me nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will take you down to this troop."

- We aren't sure of the identity of the Cherethites. They may be a Philistine group, or else related to them. Cherethites ended up serving David after he became king.
- The Egyptian has David swear by Elohim to spare his life.

Total Victory (1 Sam. 30:16-20)

16 And when he had brought him down, there they were, spread out over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing, because of all the great spoil which they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. 17 Then David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled. 18 So David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. 19 And nothing of theirs was lacking, either small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything which they had taken from them; David recovered all. 20 Then David took all the flocks and herds they had driven before those other livestock, and said, "This is David's spoil."

- The Amalekites aren't cautious, and David likely attacks at dawn.
- This is a great picture of David's generalship and how he protected the people. This is reminiscent of Abraham rescuing captives without losing a man.

David's Law (1 Sam. 30:21-25)

21 Now David came to the two hundred men who had been so weary that they could not follow David, whom they also had made to stay at the Brook Besor. So they went

out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him. And when David came near the people, he greeted them. 22 Then all the wicked and worthless men of those who went with David answered and said, “Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except for every man’s wife and children, that they may lead them away and depart.”

23 But David said, “My brethren, you shall not do so with what the LORD has given us, who has preserved us and delivered into our hand the troop that came against us. 24 For who will heed you in this matter? But as his part is who goes down to the battle, so shall his part be who stays by the supplies; they shall share alike.” 25 So it was, from that day forward; he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.

- In the face of “men of Belial,” notice David’s generosity.

Sharing The Spoil More Widely (1 Sam. 30:26-31)

26 Now when David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, “Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD”— 27 to those who were in Bethel, those who were in Ramoth of the South, those who were in Jattir, 28 those who were in Aroer, those who were in Siphmoth, those who were in Eshtemoa, 29 those who were in Rachal, those who were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, those who were in the cities of the Kenites, 30 those who were in Hormah, those who were in Chorashan, those who were in Athach, 31 those who were in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were accustomed to rove.

- David ingratiated himself to these leaders. He is ready for the throne!

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