

## I Samuel Lesson 30

### I Samuel Chapter 30

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Memory verses for this week: *Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

**Introduction:** We continue our study on Samuel this week. In last week's lesson, we studied about God providentially intervening so that David and his men would not go to war against Israel. King Achish wanted him to go, but the princes of the Philistines did not want him anywhere near the battle. So he was sent back to Philistia as the Philistines prepared to go to battle with Israel.

### I. Ziklag spoiled by the Amalekites

*1 Sam 30:1 And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;*

*1 Sam 30:2 And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.*

*1 Sam 30:3 So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.*

Upon returning to their base camp after being rejected by the Philistine warlords, David and his men made a terrible discovery. While gone, a band of marauding Amalekites had sacked the city of Ziklag and burned it. The Amalekites were longstanding enemies of Israel who lived south thereof toward the Sinai region. Furthermore, they undoubtedly held a grudge against David for his raid against them as recorded in I Samuel 27:8-11.

*1 Sam 27:8 And David and his men went up, and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezrites, and the Amalekites: for those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.*

*1 Sam 27:9 And David smote the land, and left neither man nor woman alive, and took away the sheep, and the oxen, and the asses, and the camels, and the apparel, and returned, and came to Achish.*

*1 Sam 27:10 And Achish said, Whither have ye made a road to day? And David said, Against the south of Judah, and against the south of the Jerahmeelites, and against the south of the Kenites.*

*1 Sam 27:11 And David saved neither man nor woman alive, to bring tidings to Gath, saying, Lest they should tell on us, saying, So did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines.*

Moreover, in raiding Ziklag, they had taken the women captive. Though not killing the women and children of David and his men, the marauding Amalekites had taken them nevertheless. David and his men thought they were not going to a battle, but returning home to their families. What a horrible home coming!

## **II. David and His Men Mourn their Loss**

*1 Sam 30:4 Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.*

*1 Sam 30:5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.*

*1 Sam 30:6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*

Needless to say, David and his men were utterly distraught. They literally cried aloud until they could cry no more. David's two wives were taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. No one was untouched by this disaster including David.

The emotions of David's men quickly turned from grief to anger. They immediately looked for a scapegoat and blamed David for what had happened. Here is remarkable insight into the spiritual character of David. Not only was David greatly troubled by his personal loss, his own men now turned on him.

In that dark hour David turned to his only recourse. He "encouraged himself in the LORD his God." When things looked the bleakest in our lives, we all need to remember there is one that sticks closer than a brother who is our Lord Jesus Christ. Of interest is that the word translated as encouraged (qzx chazaq) most basically means to 'strengthen.' Even though his entire world seem to be crashing down around his head, David sought and found strength in the Lord. Once Moses was in very much the same circumstance when Israel murmured against him for their lack of water (see Exodus 17:4).

*Exo 17:4 And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.*

*Exo 17:5 And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.*

*Exo 17:6 Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.*

A lesson remains herein for God's people to this day. As David would later write in his numerous Psalms, he frequently appealed to the Lord as his strength. See Psalm 18:2, 25:1-2, 34:1,8, 40:1,2.

*Psa 18:2 The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.*

*Psa 25:1 A Psalm of David. Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.*

*Psa 25:2 O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.*

*Psa 40:1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.*

*Psa 40:2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.*

### **III. David Overtakes the Amalekites**

*1 Sam 30:7 And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.*

*1 Sam 30:8 And David inquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.*

David speaks with Abiathar the priest and respectfully requests that he bring the ephod and Abiathar brought the ephod to David. Abiathar, the priest, had fled to David when Doeg murdered his father and brethren, the priests. In fleeing, he had taken the ephod of the high priest with him. In the high priest's ephod were the Urim and Thummim by which God's leading in a given matter might be ascertained. In an hour of great darkness, David sought God's guidance. He went to prayer and asked God if he ought to pursue the Amalekites. David had the benefit of the Urim and Thummim which were the holy stones on the ephod. In ways not explained, God would indicate His will through them. They may have been cast and the way the stones landed indicated either yes or no for a given question.

We today do not have the prerogative of the Urim and Thummim. However, we can come to God's throne of grace thru Christ Jesus seeking his guidance. . In seeking God's face in the matter, God clearly indicated to David to pursue after

the Amalekites. Moreover, in such pursuit, David and his men would recover all that was taken.

*1 Sam 30:9 So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.*

*1 Sam 30:10 But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.*

*1 Sam 30:11 And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;*

*1 Sam 30:12 And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights.*

With that encouragement, “David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed”. The brook of Besor was about ten miles south of Ziklag. It empties into the sea just south of Gaza. All six-hundred of David’s men went this far, but some stopped at the brook. Evidently, they were exhausted from the forced march. Two hundred stayed behind, four hundred continued on with David.

Meanwhile in pursuing, they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him food and water after learning he had no food or water for 3 days. The poor man was nearing dehydration and starvation after having been abandoned for three full days in near desert-like country.

*1 Sam 30:13 And David said unto him, To whom belongest thou? and whence art thou? And he said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick.*

*1 Sam 30:14 We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, and upon the coast which belongeth to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire.*

*1 Sam 30:15 And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.*

*1 Sam 30:16 And when he had brought him down, behold, they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.*

The man was thus interrogated. Out marauding, his Amalekite master had no second thoughts about abandoning his ill servant to fend for himself. The servant told David about the invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, and upon the

coast which belonged to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb and also about burning Ziklag with fire. The region called the "south of the Cherethites" was a part of greater Philistia. The Amalekites therefore were out marauding both southern Philistia and the south of Caleb in Judah. They also happened upon Ziklag and burned it. The Amalekites likely were aware this was the base camp of David and in retaliation against him burned and looted the place. Moreover, the Amalekites may have been aware that David had joined forces with the Philistines who were all off preparing for war against Saul at Jezreel. They therefore may have been emboldened to pounce upon Ziklag.

David therefore further interrogated this Egyptian. And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? Before further cooperating with David, the Egyptian asked David to swear before God that he would be spared. Though not noted, quite evidently, David agreed. The man clearly knew where his former master had retreated. The implication of the text is that the Amalekite encampment was farther still to the south and apparently in a broad valley. They there were celebrating their success in raiding southern Philistia and Judah. David, aided by the Egyptian, viewed his enemies partying below. His reconnaissance mission went undetected.

#### **IV. David Recovers What Was Lost**

*1 Sam 30:17 And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.*

*1 Sam 30:18 And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.*

*1 Sam 30:19 And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any thing that they had taken to them: David recovered all.*

*1 Sam 30:20 And David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drave before those other cattle, and said, This is David's spoil.*

David therefore ordered his force and attacked unannounced down into the valley. David's surprise attack caught the Amalekites completely off guard. David therefore struck at sundown of that day and continued his attack throughout that night until sundown the next day. All that escaped of the Amalekites were four hundred of the youngest of them who mounted swift camels and fled. David only had four hundred men. Implied by the fact that four hundred young Amalekites escaped is that their main force was much larger.

Notwithstanding, God gave David a great victory. As God had foretold him, everything and everyone taken by the Amalekites were recovered. Furthermore,

the livestock evidently were that which had been taken as the Amalekites had raided Philistia. David thus took these along with their own recovered livestock. It became his spoil of war.

## V. David's Distribution of the Spoil

*1 Sam 30:21 And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that were with him: and when David came near to the people, he saluted them.*

*1 Sam 30:22 Then answered all the wicked men and men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away, and depart.*

*1 Sam 30:23 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.*

*1 Sam 30:24 For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.*

*1 Sam 30:25 And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.*

After their great victory, David and his men who fought the Amalekites returned to the remainder of his men left exhausted at the brook Besor and they greeted each other. Immature hotheads in David's band demanded that their exhausted comrades not share in the spoils of their victory save only that their families be returned to them. As far as they were concerned, those slackers could just pack up and go elsewhere.

David would have nothing to do with such a petty, vindictive spirit. David had the maturity and good judgment to realize that God had given them the victory and he would not allow undue division in his ranks over such a petty matter. As far as David was concerned, those who had served as a rearguard and stayed by the stuff would share in the spoils of the victory. They would divide the spoils with them as well. (v25) David's wise judgment in this matter became a clear example for future generations.

*1 Sam 30:26 And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, even to his friends, saying, Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD;*

*1 Sam 30:27 To them which were in Bethel, and to them which were in south Ramoth, and to them which were in Jattir,*

*1 Sam 30:28 And to them which were in Aroer, and to them which were in Siphmoth, and to them which were in Eshtemoa,*

*1 Sam 30:29 And to them which were in Rachal, and to them which were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to them which were in the cities of the Kenites,*

*1 Sam 30:30 And to them which were in Hormah, and to them which were in Chorashan, and to them which were in Athach,*

*1 Sam 30:31 And to them which were in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.*

The Amalekites had also raided portions of southern Judah during their marauding. Therefore, when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* to his friends, saying, “**Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD.**” It may be that in returning to Ziklag that David intended to rebuild and reside there. He had no other place to go. However, he graciously returned to his brethren in southern Judah what evidently had been taken by the Amalekites.

Furthermore, David sent some of the spoil to *them* which were in Bethel, south Ramoth, Jattir, Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, Rachal, the cities of the Jerahmeelites, the cities of the Kenites, Hormah, Chorashan, Athach, Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men desired to dwell in or pass thru. Each of the above places were communities in Judah (Bethel likely referred to Kirjathjearim which also was known as Bethel). Every place where David had previously frequented was made to share in his great victory over the Amalekites. Evident is not only the generosity of David, but also his wisdom. Though Saul remained his mortal enemy, David was quietly building bridges to his brethren in Judah.

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*Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

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