

1st Samuel Chapter 29

V: 1-5 As the Philistine Lords along with their respective armies pass in review, David and his men take up the rear with Achish.

- The Philistine lords question why David is there in their midst.
- Achish is seemingly enamored with David and his men – he has found no fault in David during these last 16 months.

James 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses (speaking to the unfaithful), know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

- The princes of the Philistines see the folly of this liaison even is Achish and David don't, and they are suspicious.
- In describing David, isn't this the guy... they remind David from whence he has fallen. David has slain 10,000's, he's been our enemy, he's the servant of the king of Israel. The Philistines remember who David is even if David doesn't.

V: 6-7 Achish reluctantly sends David away from the impending battle. Achish describes David as being “up-right”, not knowing that he's been deceived the whole time.

- Return to Ziklag, go in peace.
- This is God's grace upon David: David is prevented from going against the Israelites, from lifting his hand against his brothers, something that he would have regretted for the rest of his life, and would have changed his kingdom for the worse.

2 Timothy 2:13 “If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself.”

- God is also protecting David from potentially going to battle against Saul or having anything to do with his death.

V: 8-11 David offers his protest, playing it up a bit – but in the end is ordered to stand down and return home.

- David gives Achish an ambiguous answer: Achish understands it to mean that David is referring to Achish as his lord and his countrymen as “enemies”. But David lets him assume that rather than being more specific – because we know that David's true Lord is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that his enemies are the Lord's enemies.

- Like so many of the sinful things we can get involved in, we never meant for it to get this far, David surely didn't – it will get worse, but God will still redeem His servant.
- The Philistines then move onto Jezreel and the battle.

1 Samuel Chapter 30

V: 1-2 It had been a 3 day journey from Aphek back down to Ziklag; when they arrived they saw that their city had been burned to the ground and that all their wives, children, and possessions had been carried away by the Amalekites.

- The Amalekites are always a type of the flesh, if we don't deal with our flesh it will always come back to haunt us.

Romans 13:14 “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.”

- When the children of Israel were coming out of Egypt, having crossed the Red Sea, coming through the area of Sinai – the Amalekites attacked, the struck from behind at the old, the weak, and the feeble. Saul didn't eradicate them according to God's command, now David will have to deal with them.
- The Amalekites were only returning upon David that which he had done to them; actually the Amalekites were more gracious than David in that they didn't kill all the women and children to cover their tracks as David had done.
- They would often kill off the men, taking the woman and children to sell off as slaves, which was very profitable, in this case probably to the Egyptians.
- It is sad when those who are truly the enemies of God behave better than those who claim to be God's children.

1 Corinthians 5:1 Paul rebukes the Corinthian church for being involved in sexual sin that even the non-believing Corinthian would refuse to do.

- David had routinely killed all the inhabitants of the cities he'd raided, and he probably expected the same treatment in return, or at least might have deserved that.

Psalms 103:8-10 “⁸The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. ⁹He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever. ¹⁰He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.”

V: 3-6 Their wives and children captive, their city burned down – the lowest of their low points thus far.

- They wept and grieved until they could weep no more, a depth of despair that seemingly pierced their hearts.
- Then on top of all of that, because of their extreme grief there were those who spoke of stoning David, as he bottoms out – he turns to the Lord. Sometimes that is what it takes:

Psalm 32:9 “Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.”

- Don't be so stubborn and pig headed, having to be jerked around to obedience.
- David's family had been taken, David's house had been burned – he felt their pain, he understood why they'd want to stone him – he identified with them.

Just like our Captain:

Hebrews 4:15 “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”

- David's countrymen through Saul had spent 10 years trying to kill him, now he's been rejected by the Philistines, his wives and kids have been taken captive, his friends now want to stone him – and he knows that he is responsible for it all.
- This is definitely the low point, that final life altering crisis that brings him back into a right relationship with his God. (Whatever it takes God...).

“... *but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*”

- David turned to God:

Hosea 6:1 “Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bid us up.”

Psalm 42:5 “Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance.”

Habakkuk 3:17-18 “¹⁷Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: ¹⁸Yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹The Lord God is my strength...”

V: 7-8 David turns a corner here: he turns to the Lord through Abiathar and the ephod to inquire of the Lord.

- Shall I pursue after them? Yes, you will recover all.

- David had only asked if he should pursue them, and if he would overtake them.
- God's response was "yes" to both, and He added that David would recover all.
- David hadn't asked about recovering all – perhaps he'd thought it to be out of the question – but God comforted David with this response / additional information.

- Had David gone to battle with the Philistines, he would have been much delayed and would not have discovered the attack of the Amalekites until much later; his family would probably have been sold into slavery in Egypt by that time and all would have been lost.

David humbles himself and asks: no longer operating on his own wisdom.

Proverbs 3:5-6 ⁵Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, lean not unto thine own understanding, ⁶In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy path."

V: 9-10 David doesn't ask twice, he takes off in pursuit of the Amalekites.

- He heads towards the south past Beersheba, towards the wilderness of Paran, to the brook Besor.
- There they leave behind 200 men who are too weak and tired to go on.

V: 11-15 After leaving the 200 behind they found an Egyptian, a slave of the Amalekites who had been left for dead.

- They revived him with food and water, and after they promised not to kill him or turn him back over to the Amalekites he leads David and his men to where the Amalekites were camped out.

V: 16-20 As they come upon the Amalekites they are in the midst of a great celebration, they were spread out (not prepared for battle), eating, and drinking, and dancing – because of their victory and great spoil.

- David and his men attacked, killing all the men except for 400 who escaped on camelback.
- This means that they attacked a far superior force – and God gave them the victory
- Just as God had promised they recovered all, there was not a thing lacking of what had been taken that was not returned to them.
- On top of that, they got all the stuff that the Amalekites had from before Ziklag, other cattle and spoils of war.

V: 21-25 David came back to the men who had waited back at the Brook Besor and saluted them, greeted them.

- Some of the men, men of Belial – wicked men tried to say that those who stayed behind would not get any of the spoil or even their own stuff except for their wives and children, and that they should be kicked out of the army.
- David was leading a motley crew; a mixed multitude – part of the reason why they were evil men was because of how they viewed their victory.

“... *the spoil that we have recovered....”*

- David corrects them stating: “... *ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the Lord hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered this company into our hand.”*
- David gives glory to God for the victory and the spoils whereas the evil men did not.
- David then decreed that everyone would get an equal share.
- Those that guard the stuff or play a supporting role get an equal share; no army moves forward without logistical support – the same is true in spiritual battles as well. Some are on the front lines, some are praying, some are sending their financial support, others are serving behind the scenes – all receive part of the reward in heaven.

V: 26-31 David goes even further in the opposite direction of the men of Belial; he sends gifts, portions of the spoil to the elders of Israel:

1. Bethel: “House of God”
2. Ramoth “Height” North of Beit Shean
3. Jattir “Remainder” between Beersheba & Carmel / Maon
4. Aroer: “Naked” S/E of Beersheba
5. Siphmoth: “Fruitful” between Beersheba & Ziklag.
6. Eshtemoa: “Being heard” - A priestly city. Modern Es Samoa, S/O Hebron.
7. Rachal: “Trade” same as Carmel
8. Jerahmeelites “God shows compassion” a family within the Kenites.
Kenites: Jethro, the priest of Midian, father in law to Moses was a Kenite, a nomadic tribe that showed kindness to the children of Israel during the Exodus.
9. Hormah: “Devoted” between Beersheba & Aroer
10. Chorashan: Also Borashan or “smoking pit” between Ziklag and Gaza.
11. Athack: “Attack”
12. Hebron: “Communion”

- All the places where he and his men had hid out at various times.

Hebrews 6:10 “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed towards His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”

- No mention of Ziph or Keilah – those that had betrayed David to Saul.

1 Samuel Chapter 31

V: 1 The Philistines go to battle against Israel, and Israel flees in defeat at Mt. Gilboa.

- This indicates that the Philistines attacked the Israelites in their camp at Gilboa as opposed to the Israelites going out to meet the Philistines in battle.

V: 2 Naturally the Philistines would be gunning for king Saul and his family – in the process Jonathan and his two brothers Abinidab & Melchishua are killed.

- Jonathan was faithful to God and honored his father to the end.

V: 3-4 Saul was struck by arrows from the archers and was severely wounded.

- Saul's fear of torture, abuse, and humiliation were not unfounded, but his armor bearer would not lay his hand against Saul.
- Saul then took a sword, planting the handle on the ground and falling upon it, killing himself before the Philistines could get to him.

V: 5-6 This is how king Saul died, then his armor bearer followed him in suicide and death.

2 Samuel Chapter 1 has the account of an Amalekite who though he'd ingratiate himself to David by claiming to have killed Saul.

- 2 Samuel merely records what the Amalekite said, not what actually happened.
- Saul took his own life while injured on the battlefield.

V: 7-10 When it was apparent that the Israelites had lost the battle and that Saul and his sons were dead – the Israelites in the surrounding cities abandoned their cities and fled the area – and the Philistines occupied them.

- The Philistines discovered the bodies of Saul and his sons, they stripped off their armor and kept them as trophies in the house of their gods, they chopped off their heads and hung their naked bodies on the walls of Beth-shan.
- An inglorious end for Saul and his sons.

V: 11-13 Saul's naked, mutilated body pinned to the walls of Beth-shan.

- When the men of Jabesh Gilead heard of this their hearts were stirred.
 - There was time in their history when they were outcasts, they'd been unwilling to deal with the sin in their midst and were nearly wiped out.
 - Later, early in Saul's reign the town was besieged by the king of Ammon and threatened with destruction.
 - When Saul heard of it, he gathered an army and marched all night to their rescue – now they remembered that kindness and rescued Saul's body, and his sons, taking them back to Jabesh where they cremated and buried them and mourned for them. The bottom line is that they didn't forget.
 - **Cremation** was not a normal practice, normally the Jews would take the dead and wash them, and wrap them in linens and place them in a tomb.
 - In a situation where the body had been mutilated or abused and proper washing wasn't possible, they cremated the body, or the flesh from the body, then take the bones and bury them – in this case under a tree.
 - Saul had often times conducted his court under a tree as we've read a few times and this was a very thoughtful and considerate act.
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- There was a time in each of our lives when we were on the wrong side of things and our King, our Lord Jesus came to our rescue. He was humiliated, stripped naked, his body mutilated, and pinned to a cross. He's asked us to remember Him – don't forget.