

## DAVID AND HIS ROAD TO RECOVERY

Text: I Samuel 30:1-26

### I. DAVID DELIVERED FROM A GREAT ATROCITY

I Samuel 29:3-5; 10, 11

We cannot say what David would have done had he remained in the rear of Achish's brigade. Can you imagine David's thoughts? Perhaps, "What have I done? How do I get out of this without placing my 600 men in jeopardy?" I can imagine David thinking, "All these years I have refused to fight against Saul and now in a few days I'll be facing him, with of all peoples, the Philistines. And even more heart-wrenching for David would be the thought that he may face in battle the best friend he has ever or shall ever have in Jonathan. God went before David and took care of this for him. Our hero was looking less and less heroic, being in the wrong place, at the wrong time and with the wrong people. David was unequally yoked and God took it upon Himself to take the initiative and break the yoke.

Nahum 1:7, 13: "The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him...For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder." David is led by the Shepherd whom he wrote about in Psalm 23. He was on his way to self-destruction, but he was snatched from doing so by the Lord's intervention. Hosea 13:9: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help." I can easily picture David singing Psalm 124:7 on his long journey back to Ziklag: "Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped."

### II. DAVID'S BEST LAID PLANS HAVE GONE AWRY

I Samuel 30:1-5

I am reminded of some of the lines the poet laureate of Scotland, Robert Burns, who wrote to a mouse after destroying its home while he was plowing his field:

    "...Now you are turned out, for all your trouble,  
        Without house or holding,  
    To endure the winter's sleety dribble,  
        And hoar-frost cold.  
    But little Mouse, you are not alone,  
    In proving foresight may be vain:  
    The best laid schemes of mice and men  
        Go often askew,  
    And leave us nothing but grief and pain,  
        For promised joy!"

The men were tired and ready to go home. No doubt they were anxious to see their wives and children and find the comforts of home, sweet home. There is a portion of a poem written by Frances Ellen Watkins Harper during the Civil War imagining the thoughts of soldiers far, far from home:

“In the silence of the even,  
When the cannon’s lips were dumb,  
Thoughts of home and all its loved ones  
To the soldier’s heart would come.  
From the fields of strife and carnage,  
Gentle thoughts began to roam.  
And a tender strain of music  
Rose with words of “Home, Sweet Home.”

What a sad discovery to find their homesteads burned and their families kidnapped by some of the most ruthless barbarians on the face of the earth. These are a people as a group known as, “...the enemies of the Lord” (I Samuel 30:26c).

I Samuel 30:4 expresses the deepest sorrow one could experience: “Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.” Home sweet home to these mighty men not only seemed elusive, but now permanently gone.

### III. DAVID EXPERIENCES PERSONAL REVIVAL

I Samuel 30:6-8

About the time you think it cannot get any worse, it does! Not only is Saul in pursuit of David’s life, but now his own loyal men are ready to take David’s life for what they believe was a decision on David’s part that cost them their homes. David is far from the one singular human support he had in Jonathan as expressed in I Samuel 23:16: “And Jonathan Saul’s son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.” David was coming to grips that his only hope was also his best refuge. I Samuel 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.” Our English word “encourage” means to take courage, in other words, give support to. The word in the Hebrew language is *chazaq* defined as “play the man.” These are the very words that Hugh Latimer spoke to Nicholas Ridley just before they were burned at the stake for their Christian testimony: “Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, play the man; We shall this day light such a candle, by God’s grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out.”

As evidence of David’s personal revival, we see David calling for Abiathar to consult the ephod to find God’s will and God’s timing. What good news! God gives David the promise that he would overtake the marauding band of the Amalekites and recover all!

### IV. THE PROVIDENCE BEHIND THE SICK EGYPTIAN

I Samuel 30:9-15

Proverbs 16:33: “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.” Even though David’s men will be reduced by one third, God still had a plan for victory. I love the chorus we sing by Don Moen: “God will make a way when there seems to be no way. He works in ways we cannot see,

He will make a way for me. He will be my guide, Hold me closely to His side, with love and strength for each new day, He will make a way, He will make a way.”

God uses the most unlikely means, such as causing a young Egyptian servant to an Amalekite to get sick and be left behind to show David and his men where the enemy would be found.

#### V. DAVID’S EXONERATION OF OBEDIENCE

I Samuel 30:16-20

There was a total victory over the Amalekites and the promise was fulfilled, “...David recovered all...” (I Samuel 30:18a, 19c). And the men who were helping David bring home the reward of the victory said, “...This is David’s spoil” (I Samuel 30:20c). Those who just hours before were ready to kill our hero are now ready to crown him king.

#### VI. DAVID DISPLAYS THE MAGNANIMITY OF HIS FUTURE REIGN

I Samuel 30:21-26

There were 200 of David’s 600 men that had marched approximately 25 to 30 miles per day to Ziklag. And when they reached the brook at Besor, they were in trouble because this brook, which is often dry this time of year, was now running over its banks with rushing water. Two hundred men were so weak they could not make it over the water, so David allowed them to stay behind by the luggage and belongings of the men that could go with David to the battle.

The men who went to battle with David protested sharing the spoil with those left behind. The Bible calls these men wicked and some were idolaters. They were insisting that the men get their families back but that is all. David rebukes them by reminding them that the victory was not because of their ability, but rather the victory and the spoil was a gift from God. I Samuel 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.” From that time onward David made sure this principle became “...a statute and an ordinance...” (I Samuel 30:25b) of sharing with those “...that tarrieth by the stuff...” would “...part alike” (I Samuel 30:24b).

Conclusion:

I Samuel 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.” David shows himself a true leader among men by gifting the older men of Judah. These were men that were not even among the warriors or the stuff.

We observe a parallel of the future Son of David, rejected by His own brethren, then goes on to win an overwhelming victory over evil and finally is accepted as the coming King, who gives gifts unto all who receive Him.

-Pastor Pope-