

**Refine Women's Ministry**  
**David Lesson 10: Tragedy Then Triumph at Ziklag- 1 Samuel 29 – 30**  
April 18, 2018 by Kim Peelen

*When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. Pv. 16:7*  
*The wise in heart will be called discerning and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness. Pv. 16:21*  
*The One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name; Because of the greatness of His might and the strength of His power not one of them is missing. Isaiah 40:26*

As chapter 28 opens, David and his mighty men have fought for Achish the Philistine king for sixteen months, using Ziklag as their headquarters for going on raids to surrounding Israelite towns. Although the monarch believes David is loyal to him and is odious to the Israelites, in fact David's army is helping his countrymen by attacking enemies of Israel but also of Philistia. But war between the nations is imminent, and Achish expects David to fight alongside him, putting him in a serious dilemma. *Now it came about in those days that the Philistines gathered their armed camps for war, to fight against Israel. And Achish said to David, "Know assuredly that you will go out with me in the camp, you and your men." David said to Achish, "Very well, you shall know what your servant can do." So Achish said to David, "Very well, I will make you my bodyguard for life" 1 Samuel 28:1, 2.*

**David and His Army March with Achish: 1 Samuel 29:1- 5**

*Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek, while the Israelites were camping by the spring, which is in Jezreel. And the lords of the Philistines were proceeding on by hundreds and by thousands, and David and his men were proceeding on in the rear with Achish. Then the commanders of the Philistines said, "What are these Hebrews doing here?" and Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, "Is this not David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, who has been with me these days, or rather these years, and I have found no fault in him from the day he deserted to me to this day?" But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him, and the commanders of the Philistines said to him, "Make the man go back, that he may return to his place where you have assigned him, and do not let him go down to battle with us, or in the battle he may become an adversary to us. For with what could this man make himself acceptable to his lord? Would it not be with the heads of these men? Is this not David, of whom they sing in the dances, saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands'?"*

As the fighting men of Philistia gather north of Gath in Aphek (NW of Gibeah) while the Hebrews camp near the valley of Jezreel (known as the plain of Megiddo – great battle field), Achish marches with David and his men at the rear. When the superior officers of the Philistine army recognize the bodyguard of Achish, they are dumbstruck! It is the foremost warrior of Israel with his motley group of malcontents marching with the king of a prominent city of Philistia! Achish tries to assure his officers that David is solidly on their side because he has been a model soldier all these months. The commanders rightly interpret the situation and demand David leave immediately.

**Achish Honorably Discharges David: 1 Samuel 29:6-11**

King Achish releases David of his military obligation with a commendation: *"As the LORD lives, you have been upright, and your going out and your coming in with me in the army are pleasing*

*in my sight; for **I have not found evil in you from the day of your coming to me to this day.** Now therefore return and **go in peace**, that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.” David said to Achish, “But what have I done? And what have you found in your servant from the day when I came before you to this day, that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?” But Achish replied to David, “I know that you are pleasing in my sight, like an angel of God; nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, ‘He must not go up with us to the battle.’ Now then arise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who have come with you, and as soon as you have arisen early in the morning and have light, depart.”*

Perhaps Achish is foolish to be deceived by David’s raids, but as the king observes his consistent and wise conduct as his servant and leader of men in difficult circumstances, he knows this is an extraordinary man of remarkable character. Achish rightly desires to retain him; however, he defers to his commanders’ wishes and dismisses his prized bodyguard with words of high praise *to depart in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.* It is a miracle the Philistines did not slaughter David and his men.

### **Living Among Our Enemies: John 17:9- 23**

So what is going on with David and his men desiring to fight against the enemies of the Philistine king, which are the people of Israel (perhaps his brothers and relatives)? Up to this point, David has feigned raids against Israel, but if he went to battle, how could David fight for the Philistine cause yet still remain loyal to God? Though we cannot know precisely what God thinks about the situation, we see God sovereignly working in human affairs as Achish grants David and all his men honorable discharges *immediately* before a massive battle begins – this, when he needs the manpower, he relies on David’s wise leadership, and he trusts this man of integrity with his life! For a season God places David and his mighty men among the Philistine foes in order to neutralize enemies of Israel (Amalekites, etc.). Then, just before the conflict that would compromise David’s obedience to the LORD begins, God uses the king’s Philistine commanders demand for David’s dismissal from their ranks to extract His servant and mighty men from the volatile situation. Also, God spares David from witnessing Israel’s defeat as well as Saul and his sons dying in battle. That is how a perfect, all-knowing God works!

### **Jesus’s perspective on living among enemies as He prays before His crucifixion:**

*“I [Jesus] ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine; and all things that are Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I have been glorified in them. And I am no more in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father keep them in Thy name, the name which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, even as We are. While I was with them, I was keeping them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me; and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition [Judas Iscariot], that the Scripture might be fulfilled. . . I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. . . I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, that the world may know that Thou didst send Me, and didst love them, even as Thou didst love Me.”*

Having His servant David live alongside Achish was God's divine plan, inserting righteousness among the wicked to declare His message of love and redemption to a dying world.

### **David's Mighty Men: 1 Chronicles 12:19 - 22**

*From Manasseh also some defected to David, when he was about to go to battle with the Philistines against Saul. But they did not help them, for the lords of the Philistines after consultation sent him away saying, "At the cost of our heads he may defect to his master Saul." As he went to Ziklag, there defected to him from Manasseh. . . captains of thousands who belonged to Manasseh. And they helped David against the band of raiders, for they were all mighty men of valor and were captains in the army. For day by day men came to David to help him, until there was a great army like the army of God.*

As David and his men leave the battlefield and return "home" to Ziklag, more men from Israel defect from Saul's army and join David. Jezreel/Megiddo are located in the land of Manasseh, and evidently many men from this tribe decide to fight with David rather than King Saul.

### **Tragedy at Ziklag: 1 Samuel 30: 1- 10**

David returns from the war with more men, but to their horror find that the dreaded Amalekites had made a raid on the Negev and had overthrown Ziklag and burned it with fire; and they took captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great, without killing anyone, and carried them off and went their way. Then David and **the people who were with him** lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep. Now David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. Moreover David was greatly distressed because **the people spoke of stoning him**, for **all the people** were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. **But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.**

Will the trials and suffering EVER end for David? "The people" who are with David are his mighty men, and at least some of them, now want to kill him. Apparently, they believe it is David's fault that their families are kidnapped and the town burned, and therefore he needs to be executed for his crime. Once again, extreme emotions cause extreme reactions, but David entrusts his emotions and fears to the All-Knowing God. *Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. **David inquired of the LORD**, saying, "Shall I pursue this band? Shall I overtake them?" And He said to him, "Pursue, for you will surely overtake them, and you will surely rescue all." So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those left behind remained. But David pursued, he and four hundred men, for two hundred who were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor remained behind.*

Wisely, David calls for the priest Abiathar (all his family was slaughtered by Saul in Nob), who brings the official lots Urim and Thummin that are stored in the ephod. David casts the lots, which is asking a yes or no question to which the LORD answers through the lot, and unlike Saul, the LORD answers David's petition. He wastes no time, and although they have just finished a three-day journey from King Achish, they pursue the Amalekites. However one-third of the men cannot continue due to exhaustion, so they remain behind with the baggage.

### David's Kindness to the Egyptian: 1 Samuel 30: 11-17

As the army of David pursues the Amalekites, they discover an exhausted man lying in the field. Rather than ignoring him or killing him, David's men give him food and water. *David said to him, "To whom do you belong? And where are you from?" and he said, "I am a young man of Egypt, a servant of an Amalekite; and my master left me behind when I fell sick three days ago. We made a raid on the Negev of the Cherethites, and on that which belongs to Judah, and on the Negev of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag with fire."* Then David said to him, "Will you bring me down to this band?" And he said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring you down to this band." When he had brought him down, behold, they were spread over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing because of all the great spoil that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. David slaughtered them from the twilight until the evening of the next day; and not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled.

It is evident that David not only embodies the worthy walk of a God-follower himself, but encourages it among his men for they serve this abandoned man with *all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace Ephesians 4:1-3*. What a contrast to the heartless master who left his ill servant to die alone by the road. Their kindness is rewarded by the Egyptian's cooperation to lead David and his men to the marauding band of Amalekites, whom all but 400 they exterminate. These rascally Amalekites will continue to harass Israel (see Esther).

### David Recovers Everything: 1 Samuel 30: 18 -20

*So David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken, and rescued his two wives. But nothing of theirs was missing, whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that they had taken for themselves; David brought it all back. So David had captured all the sheep and the cattle which the people drove ahead of the other livestock, and they said, "This is David's spoil."*

God completely fulfills His prophecy, for David surely overtook them and surely rescued all that the enemy had pilfered from Ziklag. However, another problem arises from the victory.

### David Wisely Mediates a Dispute: 1 Samuel 30: 21 – 26

*When David came to the two hundred men who were too exhausted to follow David, who had also been left at the brook Besor, and they went out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him, then David approached the people and greeted them. Then **all the wicked and worthless men among those who went with David** said, "Because they did not go with **us**, **we** will not give them any of the spoil that **we** have recovered, except to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away and depart."*

Yet another trial confronts David because of sinful men. Yes, Ziklag is burned, but EVERY SINGLE person and animal is recovered from the grip of the Amalekites, who are known for their cruelty and destructiveness; yet, a few of his mighty men spoil the celebration by their evil idea for justice. Some men who were strong enough to fight the Amalekites believe THEY deserve to divide the spoils while excluding the weaklings who stayed behind. Then, they

'generously' permit the stragglers to lead away their wives and children before departing the group. Scripture rightly concludes these men are wicked and worthless – ungrateful, arrogant, and ignorant of how the entire band of 600 men participated in the fight whether they were wielding a sword or guarding the baggage. How does David handle their demand?

*Then David said, "You must not do so, my brothers, **with what the LORD has given us**, who **has kept us and delivered into our hand** the band that came against us. And who will listen to you in this matter? For as his share is who goes down to the battle, so shall his share be who stays by the baggage; they shall share alike." So it has been from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day. Now when David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Behold, a gift for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD. In addition, David generously shares with the surrounding Israelites.*

Group Discussion: **Psalm 62:** For the choir director; according to Jeduthun. Psalm of David

1 *My soul waits in silence for God only; From Him is my salvation.*

2 *He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken.*

**1. Underline descriptions of God. What does David vow to do?**

3. *How long will you assail a man, That you may murder him, all of you,*

*Like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence?*

4 *They have counseled only to thrust him down from his high position; They delight in falsehood; They bless with their mouth, But inwardly they curse. [Selah.*

**2. What troubles David? How does he describe the tactics of those who oppose him?**

5 *My soul, wait in silence for God only, For my hope is from Him.*

6 *He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be shaken.*

7 *On God my salvation and my glory rest; The rock of my strength, my refuge is in God.*

8 *Trust in Him at all times, O People; Pour out your heart before Him;  
God is a refuge for us. [Selah*

**3. Upon what truths does David dwell? What does he urge others to do?**

9 *Men of low degree are only vanity, and men of rank are a lie; In the balances they go up;  
They are together lighter than breath.*

10 *Do not trust in oppression, And do not vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase,  
Do not set your heart upon them.*

11 *Once God has spoken; Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God;*

12 *And lovingkindness is Thine, O LORD,  
For Thou dost recompense a man according to his work.*

**4. What two things does David compare? In which one does David place his trust?**

**5. Discuss one truth from this psalm to dwell on when you are struggling.**

**Summary:** In just two chapters David experiences extremes in testing: a pagan king praises him for his impeccable service and honesty, comparing him to an angel of God; his own men blame him for their town and families being ransacked by the Amalekites and prepare to stone him; and after God miraculously returns their loved ones and all their possessions, unruly malcontents declare that one third of the men are not worthy to share in the recovered spoil because they stayed behind. And David is not even king yet! Rather than being overwhelmed, angry, or arrogant, David continually strengthens himself in the LORD his God. How does he gain strength? By inquiring of the LORD for HIS direction, His purpose, His plan and then obeying as completely as possible. It is evident by his life that his regular prayer to the LORD is, "Not my will, but Yours, be done." David's life illustrates the Messiah to come, the perfect Son of Man, Jesus the Christ, *who although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE SHOULD BOW, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD to the glory of God the Father Philippians 2:6-11.*

### **Homework for our Last Lesson**

1. Read Psalm 16 and think of David living among the Philistines with their false worship. Even though he lives among his enemies, what is God teaching David? What is God teaching you about living a holy, godly life in the midst of sinful people?
2. Read Psalm 27 and contemplate the events of 1 Samuel 29 and 30 – describe specific events that David could be recalling as he chooses to trust in the LORD. Reread the psalm, pondering events in your life – record specific thanks to God for His walking beside you during it.
3. Read all of 1 Samuel, specifically focusing on the last chapter 31.
4. Read 5 Psalms per day to finish reading all 150 by the end of our study. Write out your favorite Psalm. Write your own psalm.