

1 Samuel 30:1–6

- 1 Then it happened when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negev and on Ziklag, and had overthrown Ziklag and burned it with fire;
- 2 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.
- 3 When David and his men came to the city, behold, it was burned with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive.
- 4 Then David and the people who were with him lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep.
- 5 Now David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite.
- 6 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.

How David strengthened Himself in God **1 Samuel 30:1-7**

INTRO:

We looked at **Psalm 3** last Sunday because it bears on what we will look at this Lord's Day. In our study of **1 Samuel**, we had arrived at the point where Saul will be taken away and the way paved for David to become king. Before this happens there is one more major trial for David to face. In this account we learn how David was able to stay strong though all the storms in his life. David's secret was that he had learned to "***strengthen himself in Yahweh his Elohim.***" This passage introduces us to the lifelong discipline David employed at the low points in his life.

I. The Flow of the Account (1-6)

II. Strengthening Himself in God (verse 6)

I. The Flow of the Account (1-5)

1 Samuel 30:1–6 *“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, 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. 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. Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. And David’s two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive. 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.”*

A. In the last chapter, we come upon David and his six hundred men mustered with the Philistine armies preparing to attack King Saul and Israel. David’s deceit got him in trouble. We find David in the midst of the horde who was seeking to kill the same LORD’s anointed, David refused to kill.

1. Now what was David to do? It seems there were two alternatives, the one the other Philistines anticipated, David attacking the Philistines from the rear or David refusing to march. Clearly, David found himself in a tough place.
2. God providentially delivered David and his men by planting suspicion in the hearts of the Philistines. So, David and his men began the sixty mile hike from Aphek to Ziklag.

B. We come upon the scene in **1 Samuel 30** when David and his troops find Ziklag burned with fire.

“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, 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.”

We the readers are aware of much more of the story than David undoubtedly knew in the beginning. They found the city plundered and burned. At this point they most likely did not know the fate of their loved ones. David also did not necessarily know it was the Amalekites who did the deed. Raiders did not leave their calling card when they attacked.

C. Their reaction was normal and understandable.

“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. Then David

and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. And David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had been taken captive."

Fearing everything they counted dear was gone, they wept until they were exhausted.

D. Their second reaction was radical but could be expected.

"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."

When you hurt so bad that you cannot stand it, the normal desire is to strike out and hurt someone. They indulged in the blame game and blamed David. We can understand the enormous pain of the men, but look at David. David lost his wives too. David now has 600 men on the point of mutiny. What do you do?

II. Strengthening Himself in God (verse 6)

A. *"But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God."* How did he do this? The text does not expressly say. Yet there are things about this we learn from other things David wrote.

B. First, we recognize that this discipline of drawing strength from our God is not just an Old Testament discipline. In **Ephesians 6:10**, it says, *"Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might"* Our relationship with Christ must be real enough for us to take hold of Him and draw strength from Him.

C. Second, David's walk with God allowed him to lay claim on God. Two key passages from the Psalms describe David's confidence in his God. The first is **Psalm 18:1-3** *"I love You, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies."*

Is our relationship so strong that we will call on our LORD to deliver us? The second text is **Psalm 3**.

"You, O LORD, are a shield about me, My glory, and the One who lifts my head. I was crying to the LORD with my voice, And He answered me from His holy mountain. Selah."

Yahweh's being and character made it so David could trust. We cannot have confidence in our God if we ignore Him in our everyday life and only cry on Him in the valleys of life.

D. Third, David could strengthen himself in the LORD his God because he forearmed Himself. He decided in advance how he would respond to fear. **Psalm 56**, was the second Psalm he wrote after his escape from Abimelech the first time

he fled to Gath. David poured out his heart because of those who attack him and threaten him. Then in **verse 3-4**, David states his choice.

“When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. In God, Whose WORD I praise, In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?”

When fear comes upon me, I choose to trust in Him.

E. Finally, he could strengthen himself in God because he recognized God had a plan even in this disaster and he did not blame God for the situation. The blame game does not help us find a solution to the problem. Blaming God is a short term strategy. It does not help us climb out of the hole. If anything, it makes it worse. David did not fall into the trap we often fall into. We are so centered on ourselves that we cannot see what God is doing. We need to be alert to the work of God in our lives at all times. Do we really truly believe **Romans 8:28**?

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose?”

What Do We Learn from David?

A. One, we cannot strengthen ourselves in God if we have not built a relationship with Him before the problems come. We can only draw strength from Him if we know Him as our always faithful covenant keeping God Who loves us as a Father. In **Psalm 23**, David wrote four verses about God’s provision, protection, and fellowship before he spoke of his confidence in the Shepherd as they traversed the dark places of life. He knew God as he was laying down in the green pastures, drinking in the still waters, and following in the paths of righteousness before he could find comfort in His presence in the valleys of the shadow of death.

B. Second, we must decide ahead of time how we will respond to adversity when they shove their way into our lives. Trouble will come. **James 1** says we need to count it all joy when they appear. The only way we can do this is if we choose ahead of time that when we are afraid we will trust in God and in His Word. We cannot count it all joy if we are not sure that God is right there in the trial with us and only allows it to happen in His love.

C. Finally, we must recognize God is always in control and He has a plan which is working itself out in each situation we face. He knows the goal and He knows our strength. Spiritual trials are like therapy. It is painful at the time, but it helps us to do more and use muscles that otherwise we could not use.

If we commit ourselves to strengthening ourselves in God, we will find ourselves, like David, not defeated by the circumstances. Rather, we will be victorious in them and our God will be glorified in us and not despite us.

Hymn# 201 *Grace Greater than Our Sin*