

1 Samuel 29-30

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 16 March 2025

Preacher: Joe Sutton

[0 : 00] Well, good morning. It was so wonderful to see you, everyone. Welcome, welcome. So we are in 1 Samuel today, getting very close to the end.! And you'll never guess what we're going to do after 1 Samuel. Yes! But today we're going to try and cover two chapters. 29 won't take too long. Chapter 30 we'll spend a little bit longer in this morning.

So you can be turning there while I just give us a quick recap. So you'll recall we've been tracking two men. Saul is one, and he was the first king over all of Israel.

And he was God's anointed king, and yet he wasn't a man who was after God's heart. He didn't have a heart that reflected God's. And we did see him succeed to some extent, but spiritually speaking, he was a total disaster.

And I think we need look no further than our study last time, when we saw him trying to seek God through the occult with that medium in Endor. And you think, wow, how did it come to this all?

And what we'll find in today's text is it will imply, and I'll point out where when we get there, it will imply that effectively Saul has achieved nothing.

[1 : 19] Zero. So that's the first guy, Saul. And then the second man we've been tracking with is David. David is the man that God has chosen to replace Saul. He's not perfect either, but he is doing far, far better.

Now, he was anointed way, way back in chapter 16. Anointed means demarked and set aside to be king, not yet installed, but set aside.

Chapter 16, so that's before his battle with Goliath. It's before he came into Saul's army and was his bodyguard. And what we've seen, though, is even though David had this anointing and he knew that this was coming and it was God's will, he's always respected Saul's office as the current king, anointed king, and he refuses on multiple occasions to take it by force, repeatedly declaring, far be it from me to reach out my hand against the Lord's anointed.

In fact, what he said in chapter 26, verse 10 is this. He said, as the Lord lives, the Lord certainly will strike him, or his day will come that he dies, or he will go down in battle and perish.

And we are now getting rather close to David's words finding their fulfillment. So in the last chapter, 28, again, that remarkable scene where Samuel came up from Sheol to deliver this message to Saul.

[2 : 46] And one of the things he said was this in verse 19. He said, 28, 19, Furthermore, the Lord will also hand Israel, along with you, over to the Philistines, so tomorrow you and your sons will be with me.

Indeed, the Lord will hand the army of Israel over to the Philistines. Hey, Saul, you're going to be with me in the grave, in Sheol. And that decisive battle, the battle of Gilboa, is next time.

And as I read that, I thought, you have to admire Saul. He's been told that tomorrow you and your sons are going to die in battle with the Philistines.

And then the Philistines are there for battle. And he goes. He goes. And what would you do? Would you try and escape? Would you at least try and save your sons?

But I think that was quite remarkable for Saul, in the end, to accept what God had said. The Philistines, then, just by way of introduction of them, we know, we've talked about them before, they are these long-standing enemies of Israel.

[3 : 58] And what's really remarkable is the fact that David has been living with them for the last 16 months, with the king, whose name is King Achish, easy for you to say, of the Philistines.

And King Achish is convinced that David, I think the word it uses is he's made himself a complete stink to Israel. He's just made himself a total stench, obnoxious.

And so Achish thinks David is my guy now, and he's serving as the bodyguard for the Philistines. Amazing. So, I think, let's just get into it.

Because I think this is probably going to run about 50 minutes today. So, let's just move through as fast as we can. So, verse 1, chapter 29, says, Now, the Philistines gathered together, all their armies, to Aphek, or Aphek, where the Israelites were camping by the spring, which is in Jezreel. Now, so in the last chapter, chapter 28, we saw that the battle was starting to draw near. And we read that the Philistines camped at a place called Shunem, and the army of Israel in a place called Gilboa.

[5 : 16] And Tony showed you a map, and you may remember that those places are actually quite far north. So, here's another map just to jog your memory. So, if you look way at the top of that map, that is where you will find Gilboa and Shunem.

But what we've read now, in chapter 29, is that the Philistines gather in Aphek. And that, I'm not going to walk around because of these cables, but that is actually, you can see Gath there, and you can see Aphek just a bit further north, or Aphek.

And as this map implies, what we infer, then, is that this event here in chapter 29 is taking place before the Philistines proceed all the way up to Shunem in chapter 28.

That is to say, not strictly in chronological order. So, I think that's the best way to make sense of the text, because the only other alternative is that the Philistines marched all the way up there, and then came back to Aphek to have this conversation about David, which seems absurd to me.

So, the best way to look at it is, this is happening two days prior to the event that we just read in chapter 28. Okay. Now, Aphek, or Aphek.

[6 : 31] Now, this is really, actually, quite a significant place. And you may remember, way back in chapter 4, just after Samuel was established as a young prophet in Israel, that the Philistines camped at a place called Aphek.

And that was the battle where Eli foolishly brought the Ark of the Covenant into battle, and you remember the story. It got stolen. It got captured. And God had to directly intervene.

And there's this remarkable scene where Samuel's like, don't stop praying. And God sends his massive thunderclap, and it's really quite amazing. You should reread it.

But that was here, in Aphek. And then, just exactly after those events, Israel's like, man, we really need a king. We really, really need a king. And here we are, at the end of Saul's reign, and where are the Philistines encamped?

It's the same place. Aphek. And this is the thing, and it prompts you to ask. And I think that the author wants us to ask ourselves this question. What has Saul achieved, then?

[7 : 36] The Philistines have not been pushed back at all. They're in the same place. The fruit of Saul's reign is nothing. And that is with the advantage of David's destruction.

He killed Goliath. David was the one who caused that whole rout of the Philistines. And under Saul's watch, they've been able to regroup and come back to the exact same place as an adversary to Israel.

All of Saul's labor would seem to be heavily implied to be for naught. Or, to put it another way, the best that man can offer adds up to nothing.

And we remember the Psalm 127, verse 1, which says, Unless the Lord builds a house, those who build it labor in vain.

Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. And you could look to the book of Ecclesiastes for all of what it says about the meaninglessness and the emptiness of a life lived apart from God's blessing and apart from God.

[8 : 38] And that seems to be the psalm of Saul's reign. So, verse 2 through 5 says, And the governors of the Philistines were proceeding on, leading hundreds and thousands.

And David and his men were proceeding in the back 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 nothing at all suspicious in him since 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, so that he will 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 how could this man find favor with 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? Wow.

[9 : 45] And when you think about it, it really is remarkable that Achish is content to trust David to come with him. Because in the end, if you look at it objectively, he's just a mercenary.

He's just a hired sword. 600 hired swords, to be precise. And how is it then that Achish has elevated him to this role?

They still remember the folk songs about David. Saul has slain his thousands, but David is tens of thousands, which goes back to the victory over Goliath. And I think, how could this be?

Well, part of it, of course, is David's deception. And we've talked about that in chapter 27. He was deliberately vague about where he had been raiding.

And he led Achish to believe he was fighting against his own countrymen in the south of Judah, when in fact he was continuing the mission of Joshua to clear the Canaanite people.

[10 : 47] Now, another part of it would be, of course, the sovereign will of God. The God who turns the heart of a king, the scriptures say. And he granted David favor in the eyes of the king.

But I did wonder whether there may be also some degree of pride on the part of Achish, thinking, I've managed to get the son-in-law of the king of Israel to defect to my side.

And it's very nice to believe that he was on the right side and he was attracting people over. Maybe, I don't know. Either way, the commanders very wisely are not convinced.

And they declare, get that guy out of here. So, verse 6. Nevertheless, you are not pleasing in the sight of the governors.

Now then, return and go in peace so that you will not do anything wrong in the sight of the governors of the Philistines. However, David said to Achish, but what have I done?

[12 : 00] And what have you found in your servants since the day that I came before you to this day that I cannot 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 into the battle. Now then, rise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who have come with you. And as soon as you have risen early in the morning and have light, leave. So, David got up early, he and his men, to leave in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel, which is where we were at the beginning of last chapter.

And so this is how the Lord's providence saves David from having to go to war with his own countrymen. And when you read this, it sounds like David wants to go into battle.

And obviously we don't know what David wanted to do. We don't know his aims and desires. But what I do know is, thinking about this, there's two bad options here.

[13 : 10] One is, he gets to fight against Israel, which is not good PR for being king later. Or, he has to back out of the battle, at which point his loyalty to Achish is in question, and he is probably at great risk.

Neither of those options are good. And the Lord intervenes to make it so that he can leave and save face, which is awesome.

David must have been delighted. And, you know, and again, I do detect in the passage, again, we don't know David's motivations, right? But we do know what he says there is, he speaks of my lord and king.

Why shouldn't I go to battle with my lord and king? And you read it in context, and you think, well, it probably means Achish, right? But actually, the only person that David is referred to as my lord and king, till this point, is Saul.

He calls Saul my lord and king, I think, three or four times in the previous chapter, saying, I will not raise my hand against my lord and king. So, again, ambiguous, I think.

[14 : 20] Ambiguous. But, anyway, the lord intervenes. And a rather awkward situation is resolved. Another thing that you might have found noteworthy as we went through that is the king there and his references to God.

He says to David, as the lord lives, and, of course, the lord is the covenant name of God, Yahweh, which is the name by which Israel knows the god, knows the god of the universe, the true god.

And Achish is using that name. Then he goes on to refer to David as pleasing in my sight like an angel of God. And you think, hmm, what is the king's disposition towards God?

I don't know. And I found myself thinking that what this said to me is it says more about David than it does about Achish, I think. Because what it says is David was not hiding his faith.

He wasn't hiding his practices when he was down in Ziklag, which is the village, the town that he was in. He was not changing his ways. He was living as a man of God in the context of the world, the unbelievers, the pagans.

[15:32] And for me, it highlighted this concept in Matthew 5, where Jesus says, you are the light of the world. Matthew 5, 14 to 16.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

And I think that's what we've seen here with David and the Philistine king. And for us then, even if, or perhaps I should say, especially if we're called to live or work amongst unbelievers, God wants us to look for opportunities to be light.

And that means being open about our faith, being open about our practice, being open about what we do. And that is not in a, not to say in a self-righteous way, but just in an authentic way.

Just simply seeking to do good, to show love, and to speak truth. And for me, that looks like being open about church life, open about what I do on a Sunday, offering to pray for my team, and I've had some really quite amazing opportunities.

[16:48] You know, nobody has said, yeah, no, no thanks. Everybody has always been really, you know, has either been kind of like, yeah, if you want, or actually, yeah, that would be really good.

And it's amazing, and in my 20-odd years in the workplace, no one has ever said, no, please don't. So, and I think that is part of how we walk in that way.

Anyway, let's proceed into chapter 30. So David's on his way back to Ziklag. Verse 1. Then it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had carried out an attack on the Negev and on Ziklag, and had overthrown Ziklag, and burned it with fire.

And they took captive the women and all who were in it, from the small to the great, without killing anyone, and drove them off and went their way. And when David and his men came to the city, behold, it was burned with fire, and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive.

So the Amalekites have conducted a raid. And you say, who are the Amalekites again? Well, these are the people whom God had commanded Saul to wipe out.

[18:02] And Saul did strike a heavy blow on them in chapter 14. And then in chapter 15, God said, Saul, you need to wipe them all out.

Again, so who are they? They are a pagan, sinful nation, desperately wicked. And God had decreed that they needed to be removed from the land, wiped out, because of their sinful practices.

It was a judgment. And we saw that Saul was partially obedient. We read that he destroyed nearly everyone within a specific area.

And he saved the king, and he saved some of the spoils. And Samuel, the prophet, came along and rebuked Saul. And this was one of the events that was really the catalyst for Saul being rejected by God.

But what this event does here, where we see the Amalekites have made this raid, is it shows us, actually, Saul missed a lot. Yes, it was a big area. Yes, we only read about the king there.

[19:02] But clearly, a lot of the Amalekites were left. Saul did not finish the job. And so we have clear evidence of the futility and the uselessness of Saul's reign.

Could not complete the task. So that's who the Amalekites are. And they are enemies to Israel, and they are enemies to the Philistines. And while this war in the north is beginning to unfold, and all of the forces are going up north, they are going, sweet.

And they are going to go and raid down the south, which is exactly what they have been doing, pillaging and taking whatever they please. Okay, verse 4. So then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep.

Now, David's two wives had been taken captive. Ahinoam, the Jezreelites, and Abigail, the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. Also, David was in great distress because the people spoke of stoning him. For all the people were embittered, each one because of his son and his daughters. But David felt strengthened in the Lord his God. Awesome.

[20 : 16] Now, three short verses, and I have to say I have a ton to say about this. And this is what we're going to count for a little while, because there was just something in my heart that I wanted to share. And that's this.

When there is a cause for sorrow, it is far better to allow it a voice than to try and suppress the tears, suppress the emotion.

Studies bear this out. There was one study that I read that shows that crying, allowing yourself to weep, leads to a reduction in stress. It helps to stabilise the mood.

It's been linked to improved emotional regulation, which means that we're more likely to be able to manage our emotions and make better decisions if we allow ourselves to feel what we feel, what the situation would demand.

Feel the sorrow, the grief, the anger. Acknowledge it. And then we're more equipped and able to make sensible decisions because we're not clouded by unprocessed emotion.

[21 : 17] Now, in this case, unfortunately, we read about some of that emotional-driven decision because they want to stone David. And if they took a moment to reflect and think, it's only really under the leadership of David that we've got a hope to recover from this.

So that would be an example of a poor decision. But the example that we're given here, and for David, is that this is a bad thing. This is an upsetting thing. And they pause to express that through tears.

And then we read, David felt strengthened in the Lord. And just before we ponder on that phrase, I want to just observe and remind you that the order is that they see the disaster, they see the horrible sight of their village burnt and their people gone.

And they don't just get all, you know, what do I do about this? They allow themselves to respond with emotion. And then we read, David strengthened himself in the Lord.

And I do wonder, you know, how often do we, how often do I, try and skip the part where we acknowledge and confess and just say, yeah, this hurts.

[22 : 30] I'm upset by this. My habit, and I wonder if some of you, is to go, what do I do about this? And studies would indicate that is not a healthy way to respond.

And it will lead to worse decisions. So, but I, what I have believed in the past is, well, I should just go straight to the Lord and strengthen myself in the Lord.

I shouldn't feel sorrow. Because how can someone with a perfect future hope have anything to be grieved or upset by? Doesn't the me being upset indicate or say that I don't really believe in that perfect future hope?

And that's kind of where I've been before. You know, like I, because I believe in this hope, I'm not going to acknowledge the hurt that I'm in now. Well, let's get into this because I first want to, I don't know how much convincing you're going to need of this.

So here's a bunch of scriptures. Verses to show you that God has designed us as emotional creatures. And crying is part of God's design to process events in a fallen world.

[23 : 32] So here's the first one. Ecclesiastes chapter 3 verse 4 says very simply this. There is a time to weep and a time to laugh. There is a time to mourn and a time to dance.

It's clear enough, right? There is a time for everything. And that includes tears. There is a time when that is an appropriate thing to do. Next, Psalm 56 verse 8.

David says this, You have taken account of my miseries, put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book? Now this psalm is actually taken from, sorry, this verse is taken from a psalm that David wrote when the Philistine seized him in Gath.

And in it, he conveys no sense at all that his weeping and his tears are misplaced or inappropriate or that he needs to get over it and fight. He speaks of trusting the Lord, praising and thanking God and shedding tears.

And he acknowledges them and he says that God keeps note of everyone, which I think is figurative for they are remembered and they are not shared in vain. Next, Psalm 34 verse 17 to 19.

[24 : 41] The righteous cry out and the Lord hears and rescues them from all their troubles. The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

The afflictions of the righteous are many, but the Lord rescues him from them all. The righteous cry out and the Lord is near to the brokenhearted.

You see, the Lord is not ashamed of us when we're upset. And he's not thinking, oh my goodness, my promises should be enough for them. Just stop your crying and get over it. No, no, the Lord is, he comes near to honest brokenness.

And I think the only thing I would add is that we should strive to address those cries to God. The righteous cry out and the Lord hears. And so if and when we are brokenhearted or grief stricken or deeply wounded and upset, then the Lord is near and we are encouraged to weep and cry towards him and turn to him.

One more. Revelation 21 verse 4. And he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and there will no longer be any death.

[25 : 54] There will no longer be any mourning or crying or pain. The first things have passed away. A simple point to take from this text. When will we be done with tears and crying?

It's in the future. It's when Jesus comes. It's, it's, they are still, it is still appropriate because we still live in a fallen world where things that are bad happen.

And time would fail us but we could look at Jeremiah and there are many examples of other people who demonstrate the principle. But I hope you can see it. I hope I, I want, I felt I needed to belabor it but maybe I didn't.

The Lord does not call us to stoicism and the removal of emotion. A person is not less holy if they show the vulnerability of expressing emotion and a person is not more holy if they appear to always be stable and fail to express emotion.

And again, we've seen in all those scriptures that God is near. And one other thing to remember is, do you remember way, way back in the beginning of our study we saw Hannah's prayer which is a great example of this exact principle.

[27 : 05] She was hurt. She was hurt because she couldn't have a son and her husband was a loser and he did not know how to support her emotionally and it was really painful to...

Aren't I better to you than ten sons, Hannah? Oh my God. This was... And she took that hurt and she expressed it to the Lord and it was beautiful. And we talked about that at the time.

So anyway. Strengthening in the Lord. Let's get to that now. So there is this distress and it's added to by this turmoil of...

Oh no, I stoned David for taking us away. Look at verse 6. David felt strengthened in the Lord his God. So that's the New American 2020 edition rendering.

If you have a 95 edition it will say that he strengthened himself in the Lord. He strengthened himself in the Lord. Now as far as I can tell that is a better and more accurate translation of the original Hebrew.

[28 : 03] I don't know why the 2020 edition amended that. No other Bible seems to... They all show that it is an active...

It is an act, a willful act of David to draw strength. In fact that's what the New English, the Net Bible says. David drew strength from the Lord his God. It is an active and deliberate drawing of strength from God.

Not passive. God is the source of strength but the action originates from David's own choice and decision. So there is a balance there, isn't there? There is... We do not have the strength.

It is not for us to look inward to try and find the strength to make it through this struggle. No, the strength is in God but we need to go to God and draw it.

Lord, I want your strength. Draw it. Seek it. So how do you do that then? Well, it doesn't say, does it? It just says he did it. Great.

[29 : 01] But, if we survey the life of David and we look at his Psalms and we look at the way that he poured out his heart to God, you know, we looked at Psalm 56 already, you could look at Psalm 142 in the first three verses as another example and we see that David prayed frequently and honestly and with emotion.

He did not, he expressed it to God and then he would remember the faithfulness of God and I think a great example of this is when David was facing Goliath and what he did there to sort of to remind himself was I fought a lion and a bear and God delivered me from their paws.

He remembered God's faithfulness in the past which allowed him to move forward with hope for the future and confidence and I think that is one of the ways that David drew strength and draws

strength and then in this very chapter and we'll see this in a moment immediately after drawing strength what he does is he seeks the counsel of God and then he took action based on what God says so that is seeking the Lord with ready to make a faith-based response so prayed frequently honestly showed his emotion to God was honest how he felt remembered the faithfulness of God and then sought the Lord to counsel took action okay cool what else well let's I wanted to talk about a couple of other examples of how one draws strength from the Lord as well and the first one you may read would be Matthew 26 which is Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane and if you read verses 36 to 46 you'll note a few things Jesus there in the garden was under extreme emotional distress as he anticipated bearing the sins of humanity and what do we see well he took his closest friends Peter, James and John and only them he took them into confidence he revealed to them how he felt and he asked for their prayers and support he went and prayed honestly to God he said let this cup pass from me honest expression of how he felt and then he submitted to the will of God yet not what I will but as you will and he did that three times repeatedly praying to the Lord is not wrong it's not a lack of faith Jesus did that and if he needed to do that you can bet we do and then he received strength remember the angel came to minister to him another example we could look at would be Paul and his thorn in the flesh which is in 2nd Corinthians chapter 12 verses 7 through 10 and we read about this somewhat enigmatic thorn in the flesh all we know about it is it's a messenger from Satan that sounds like it sucked but that's what he had and what did he do he prayed three times that it would leave him and he didn't get what he asked instead he got the response my grace is sufficient for you my power is perfected in weakness now was was Paul oh good that's alright then I won't worry about it anymore you know I think this was do you remember it was given to him because of the visions that he'd had and there was a purpose in the suffering that it caused and the way that it would cause him to not get proud and to remember his God and Paul learned in time to reframe his perspective and reframe his suffering saying I delight in my weaknesses and my distresses because when I am weak then I am strong that is drawing strength reframing one's perspective drawing strength from God is actually acknowledged linked to acknowledging one's own weakness we better sum this up and move on the sum up for all of that would be scripture and science agree that it is healthy and right for us to express our emotions to weep when it's appropriate to share with others secondly drawing strength from God is not helped by refusing to acknowledge how we feel as Paul said actually we confess or even boast in our weaknesses because then his strength is perfected in us

[33 : 26] Jesus David Paul they all model actively seeking God's strength for themselves and we see that it is done through recalling the past works of God his faithfulness it is repeating heartfelt prayer as often as is required and it is submission to the will of God and then Jesus also models for us that community aspect taking his closest friends but not everybody into his confidence to share the burden and to pray alright that's enough of that verse 7 then David said to Abiathar the priest the son of Ahimelech please bring me the ephod so Abiathar brought the ephod to David and David inquired of the Lord saying shall I pursue this band of raiders will I overtake them and he said to him pursue for you will certainly overtake them and you will certainly rescue everyone so in the turmoil and the upset David is seeking

God's counsel very wise and we've talked about Abiathar and the ephod back in chapter 23 and I went into some details so we can move on for now you can listen to that teaching online if you would like to catch up so with David's prayer what we're reminded of is that faith based action is prayer based action because David was a warrior and he could have said right I'm going to find those Amalekites and I'm going to beat them up but he didn't he sought the Lord he sought the Lord and waited for his word you know how often do we think how often do I think you know something's happened I've got to do something about it and maybe you do but the first thing to do would be to pray and maybe to seek some wisdom maybe talk with my wife would be good and then take action so verse nine so David left he and his six hundred men who were with him and they came to the brook

Besor or Besor where some who were left behind stayed but David pursued he and four hundred men for two hundred were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor and stayed behind so David's army is six hundred strong and if you remember that map I showed you they've marched three straight days up to Afek three straight days back again to Ziklag carrying all of their armour and their weapons of war and their provisions and I don't know I couldn't find much about the brook vessel but it would seem the implication of this is it was particularly challenging to cross and so a

third of his army and I think I said before his army were tough dudes they were strong guys like the weakest of them was a match for a hundred one passage in first chronicles reveals they were tough guys strong guys and they couldn't do it they could not they were done and that must have been a hard thing to admit to yourself if it's your children or wife that has been taken

I can't go on I couldn't go on so it shows you how exhausted they were verse 11 now they found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David and gave him bread and he ate and they provided him water to drink and they also gave him a slice of fig cake and two cakes of raisins and he ate and his spirit revived for he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights and then 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 Amalachite and my master abandoned me when I became sick three days ago we carried out an attack on the Negev of the Herathites and on that which belongs to Judah and on the Negev of Caleb and we burned Ziklag with fire and then David said to him will you bring me down to this band of raiders and he said and he said swear to me by God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master and I will bring you down to this band so David and his 400 men hot pursuit trying to track down these Amalekites and they encounter a poor Egyptian man abandoned because he was sick having not eaten or drunk for three days straight now a person can only survive a few days without water if they're in good health they'll only survive a few days without water now this guy is sick and he's in the desert

I think the fact that he is still alive is a miracle and he is not in a good shape and also notice the question to whom do you belong this implies David doesn't look at him and go ah here's an opportunity for some military intelligence he sees a man in need and he stops he is the good Samaritan David was on a mission a mission that God had commanded him to do and that God had promised success and he took the time to do good to a stranger in desperate need I think we should reflect on that he took time now I read that figs and raisins are a great choice high in sugars for immediate energy restoration high in fiber and nutrients for that sustained recovery and easy to digest so suitable for anyone in a weakened state there we go this commercial was brought to you by so raisins and fig cakes but also this they are delicacies in that culture they were used for celebration and for worship so David isn't sharing the minimum that he can offer he is sharing probably the best that he has bearing in mind it's just army provisions right and he does give bread as the basic he does give water but he gives these wonderful provisions that are costly they're in the desert and they are exactly what he needs in order for him to be raised up now observe this if you would the sickly man was abandoned by his

[39 : 50] Lord by his Adonai if you like he's no longer useful and he was abandoned by his Lord but David stops and raises him up and his spirit returns and I thought there's definitely a figure here because the world abandons those who are no longer useful those who are no longer useful not needed but Christ takes those who aren't useful and places his spirit inside of us and he makes us useful for the kingdom and I saw that modeled here in that little story but it is charity it is I believe that this is David just a simple act of charity and in it he is blessed with this military intelligence so let's read on verse 16 now when he had brought him down behold they were dispersed over all the land eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the great plunder that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah and David slaughtered them from the twilight until the evening of the next day so that's 24 hours and not a man of them escaped except for 400 young men who rode on camels and fled so David so David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken and rescued his two wives and nothing of theirs was missing whether small or great sons and daughters plunder 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 plunder success just as God had promised and the Amalekites guard is completely down as I said they were expecting an e-pillaging season because they knew that the Philistines and Israel were all up north getting ready for this battle and rattling their spears at each other and the Amalekites were like great we'll go and plunder so completely at ease armors off swords are over there and they are just getting drunk nobody is on watch nobody is armed or ready for battle and David approaches with 400 men not many and they defeat everybody except for 400 who managed to get away so how many were there in the first place I don't know but clearly a significantly larger number than 400 was their group so amazing success that the Lord enabled now if you've ever done an inductive study then those are those studies where you highlight the words as you go through and if you've done this passage you will

have highlighted the name David many many many times in the Hebrew it's 20 times I think it is up to this point 20 times that's once for every verse the name of David appears and it would seem to me to be more than was necessary I'm sure he or him would have been appropriate at some point but it's David it's David it's David because the author wants us to see David's success this future king who is going to be leader he has this great success perfect success everybody is recovered everybody is brought home in fact more because he also takes other plunder that the Amalekites have stolen it's David in contrast to Saul the useless guy who couldn't push the Philistines back a yard out of Atech David is shown to be perfect in his success and again not meaning to imply that he was perfect I'm showing you what the scriptures or the author appears to be implying David was awesome king and a type of the perfect son of David finishing the text verse 21 when David came to the 200 men who were too exhausted to follow David and had been left behind 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 and then all the wicked and worthless men among those who went with David said since they did not go with us we will not give them any of the spoils that we have recovered! But David said you must not do so my brothers with what the Lord has given us for he has protected us and handed over to us this band of raiders that came against us and who will listen to you in this matter for as is the share of the one who goes down into the battle so shall the share of the one 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 spoils to the elders of Judah to his friends saying behold a gift for you from the spoils of the enemies of the Lord to those who were in Bethel to those who were in Ramoth of the Negev to those who were in Yatir to those who were in Aroah to those who were in Sifmoth to those who were in Eshtimoah to those who were in Rakhal to those who were in the cities of the Jeremialites to those who were in the cities of the [45 : 19] Canaanites to those who were in Hormah to those who were in Boashan to those who were in Athach to those who were in Hebron to all the places where David himself and his men walked so this principle is established and this example of generosity is given you've got these wicked and worthless men who are demonstrating selfishness the kind of selfishness that one encounters all the time in the world I should be rewarded for my efforts I have done I have done I did more than that person I should be rewarded more and my job was more difficult I had to go and fight those guys just had to wait by the bags it's not that way for us it's not that way for David and it's not that way in the church David said you must not do so with what the Lord has given us he has protected us and handed over to and you see the author is repeatedly saying it's David's victory and then

David says no it's God's victory it wasn't our might or bravery it wasn't our giftings or abilities it was all of God this is God's spoil and even if you had gifts and abilities that enabled you to do this thing who gave you those gifts and abilities it's God it is God nobody can take credit and so this principle is established and I think as I thought about how that applies to us I was reminded of this text here in Acts 4 which I'll just read Acts 4 32 to 35 which is an illustration of the communal aspect that the church is to have it says this and the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own but all things were common property to them and with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and abundant grace was upon them all for there was not a needy person among them for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales and lay them at the apostles feet and they would distribute to each to the extent that any had need and what that passage does is it gives us a glimpse into the very early life of the church now some would argue that their example goes beyond what we're called to do and I think to some extent that is true because after all many of us will own our homes still and we haven't all sold them and given the money to me to distribute we haven't followed this example to the letter but the principle is what we if I have two and that person has none we'll have one that kind of thing share and share alike the phrase that comes out of our very text in 1st Samuel now one last thing before we close you thought that was the last thing didn't you one last thing before we close from the spoil David gives gifts he gave gifts to men very generous 13 named places and then the author just says oh and all the places that David walks so an uncountable number of places to which David gave spoil and it must have been significant amount for it to be worth giving and

I did wonder if he gave away all of his profits from the raid now Ephesians chapter 4 verse 8 speaking of Christ says that when he ascended on high he led captive the captives and he gave gifts to people and we read here David leading to freedom the captives the wives the children and he is giving gifts to people you know in so many ways David is a picture of Jesus Christ so many ways we see him giving gifts David is perfectly victorious over the enemy and he loses nobody and no thing nobody and nothing is lost and Jesus said this in John 10 verse 27 he said my sheep listen to my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand my father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of my father's hand perfect is Jesus able to keep those who are his and then in his victory he gives these gifts just like the victorious Jesus Christ who blesses his church with gifts of grace and then this David blesses abundantly Jesus Christ give life and spiritual riches John 10 says John 10 verse 10 says that the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy I came so that they would have life and have it abundantly abundant life that may be characterized or touched with suffering and weeping and weakness but Paul said when I'm weak then I am strong and may our weaknesses trigger us to seek the God of all comfort to be conscious of the gifts and the blessings that he offers us today and look forward to that day when weeping will be no more!

[50 : 40] Amen Amen Amen Amen