

## **Which Battle Does God Want David to Fight? 1 Samuel 29: 1 – 30:31**

### **Introduction:**

David was in a bind. King of Achish, who welcomed David and his men into the territory of the Philistines, even giving them a city, Ziklag, to live in, now wants David to join the armies of Philistia as they make war against the Israelites. David has been deceiving the king, saying he was raiding the Israelite towns when he was actually raiding towns of the Amalekites, etc. Achish was convinced David was a loyal subject, and even gave him the honour of being the king's bodyguard.

Now, as the Philistine army mobilized to attack Israel, David is told he will fight with the Philistines against his own people. How could David, the one chosen and anointed to be the next king of Israel, do this? How would the people ever trust a king who once sided with the enemy and attacked them? How was David going to get out of this conundrum?

In these chapters we see once again that God always has a plan and a way. David was his servant, and God had plans for David's life that included being king of Israel. Watch how God puts David where he needed to be, and not only rescues David from an impossible situation but turns it into something good.

### **Rejected by the Philistine Generals – 1 Samuel 29:1-5**

1. We have seen the Philistines attack Israel time and time again. In this chapter we get some information that suggests that this is the biggest assault against Israel to date. What indicates how big and important this attack is in verses 1 and 2?
2. Who is among the armies of the Philistines (v. 2)? What is the response of the Philistine commanders when they saw them (v3)?
3. What defense does King Achish give for having David and his men with him (3)?
4. Do the commanders accept King Achish' defense of David (v. 4)? According to this verse, what is their concern about having David march with their armies?

5. What reputation does David still have despite his years of flight and hiding in Ziklag (v. 5)?

### **King Achish Dismisses David – 1 Samuel 29:6-11**

6. What opinion does King Achish have of David (v. 6)?

7. What does King Achish ask David to do in verse 7? Why?

8. In verse 8 David sounds offended. Is this sincere or is it part of the ruse?

9. King Achish continues his flattery of David in verse 9. What does he say about David there?

10. What instructions are given to David and his men (v. 10)? Does David comply?

### **Trouble in Ziklag – 1 Samuel 30:1-6**

11. How long does it take David and his men to return to Ziklag (v. 1)? What has happened in Ziklag since David and his men left for war (vss. 1-2)?

12. What good news do we learn in verse 2 despite the destruction?

13. When David and his men return to Ziklag they find their city burned and their families taken away (v. 3). How did the soldiers respond to this tragedy (v. 4)?

14. Why do you think the writer mentions the taking of David's wives in verse 5? Wouldn't it be assumed according to the earlier information given?

15. On top of grieving the loss of his wives, David must face another battle. How are the soldiers responding in their grief? What are they planning to do (v. 6)?

16. Grieving the loss of his family, and feeling the pressure of the soldiers due to their losses, where does David go for strength (v. 6)?

### **Lord, What Next? – 1 Samuel 30:7-15**

17. Who does David bring into his council at this point (v. 7)? Why?
18. What does David ask of the Lord (v. 8)? What is God's response?
19. Hearing God's verdict, what does David do (v. 9)? Though David has a following of 600 men, why do only 400 join him in pursuit of the raiders? (v. 10)
20. What do we learn about the man found in the desert (vss. 11-12)? Is it surprising how he is treated by David? Explain.
21. As David interviews this man found in the desert, what does he discover about him? About his connections (vss. 13-14)?
22. Suddenly God has put an open door before David, a way to find those who raided his city and took the families of his men. What agreement does David strike with this young Egyptian slave (v. 15)?

### **God's Intervention – 1 Samuel 30:16-31**

23. Verse 16 opens with a description of what was happening in the camp of the raiding party. What is described as happening there? Why?
24. Verse 17 describes the actions of David and his men, and their success. What do we learn about this battle?
25. Verses 18-19 describe a little miracle. What is it? Whose hand do we see at work here?
26. Verse 20 goes on to describe how David is rewarded for his leadership. What does he receive after the raid?
27. On the way home who do the men of David encounter (v. 21)? What is their response to the 200 who stayed behind (v. 22)? Why? How does scripture describe the actions of the soldiers unwilling to share the spoils of war?

28. In verses 23-25 David lays down a law for his band. What is it? What effect will such a law have on the community/army?

29. In verses 26-30 David does one more deed following the rescue mission. What does he do? Why might he do this, and how is it important to his future?

### **Conclusion:**

David is backed into a corner and there seems no way he can get out and still retain the trust and loyalty of Israel. He has been recruited to fight for the Philistines, the enemies of God's people. God intervenes and David is rejected as a soldier in the Philistine army. The Philistine generals do not trust him. He is sent home.

When David arrives home he finds his city raided and burned. The families are gone, along with all the valuables of the people. David's men threaten to stone him, they are so angry at their loss. But David goes to the Lord, and not only finds strength but direction as well. The families are rescued – not one person missing – along with all the goods that were stolen plus a cash of valuables taken from other towns that had been raided.

Why would David have to go through all of this? To learn humility? To learn trust in God? To grow in his leadership skills? To gain wisdom on how to build community even in difficult circumstances? All of this is true. Yet there is one more important piece to this story.

What was happening during the time that David is pursuing the raiding band, and rescuing his people from them? War. The armies of the Philistines and the armies of the Israelites are engaged in bloody conflict. And David is not there. As strange as this may sound, it was important that he was not there. This will be explored more next week, but for now we see that God not only took David off of the battle field, but actually heading the opposite direction to rescue the families of his men. It could never be said that David was complicit in the death of King Saul.