

**1 Samuel 30:1-6(NIV)**

<sup>1</sup> David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, <sup>2</sup> and had taken captive the women and all who were in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way. <sup>3</sup> When David and his men came to Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. <sup>4</sup> So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. <sup>5</sup> David's two wives had been captured--Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. <sup>6</sup> David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But **David found strength in the LORD his God.**

1. Why is it that when you are down or in a storm, hearing that others are worse off is not received as encouragement.
2. What are some of the ways God has used you to encourage others?
3. In Chapter 29, David dwelling in the desert in enemy territory so long he found himself in the enemy's army about to attack his own people the Israelites.
  - A. How can hanging around a group or crowd that God has not ordained cause erratic behavior and undermine our relationship with God?

- B. How have you seen God's providence at work when you were rejected by others in a space where it appeared that you were meant to be there as in the case of David being rejected by the general of the army and told to leave even though he and his men were the most skilled fighters?
4. While David and his men were away God allowed their camp to be raided and everything taken.
- A. When has God allowed something terrible to rescue you from something even worse?
- B. How does knowing God will use whatever means necessary to rescue us, even when it will hurt us aid in our walk with God.
5. What is or isn't fair about holding a leader responsible for the misfortunes that befall the group?
6. Discuss this statement: what you are going through right now is a temporary season in order to bring you to a destination of ultimate good.
7. Memory can either trigger pain or release faith. As we use this as our guiding thought in situations where we encourage ourselves: How can we encourage ourselves with
- A. Songs of Worship
- B. Acknowledging who God is and Who God is to us
- C. What God has done for us
- D. Promises of God
8. Share with the group a time where you like David received the Blessing of Restoration where everything and more was returned.
9. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

## The Dismissal of David to Keep Him from Fighting Against Israel: A Picture of God Working All Things Out for the Believer, 29:1-11

**(29:1-11) Introduction— Hopelessness, Caused by— Circumstances, Bad, Results of— Predicaments, Results of— Problems, Deliverance from— Difficulties, Deliverance from:** we sometimes get ourselves into awkward, unpleasant, or even perilous predicaments, situations that cause all kinds of problems and difficulties. And sometimes the problems and difficulties become critical, boxing us in, appearing to have no answer or solution. There seems to be no way out and serious consequences loom over the horizon. The critical circumstance may be anything ranging from divorce to bankruptcy to a deep trauma suffered as a result of a robbery or assault, or intense grief over a serious accident or even the death of a loved one.

There is no end to the list of circumstances that seem hopeless, impossible to solve. But the wonderful message of God's Holy Word is this: there is no circumstance beyond solution, no problem or difficulty beyond the power of God to control or work out, even working the circumstance out for our good. An amazing promise! Yet it is the teaching of God's Holy Word. God loves us and cares for us, and He particularly begins to work for us when we face crises. No matter what the trial or temptation is, God has the power to hold us in the palm of His hand and to work all things out for the believer.

This is the wonderful message, the practical lesson learned from the predicament that David found himself facing. In the present Scripture, David faced a hopeless, impossible situation. And it was a situation that was caused by his own shameful shortcomings. Nevertheless, the LORD held David in the palm of His hand and worked all events out for good. This is: *The Dismissal of David to Keep Him from Fighting Against Israel: A Picture of God Working All Things Out for the Believer, 29:1-11.*

1. The predicament of David: a lesson on evil associations (v.1-2).

2. The solution to David's predicament: a picture of God's power to deliver His people (v.3-5).

3. The dismissal or discharge of David from this battle: a picture of God's power to keep the believer from terrible evil (v.6-11).

**1. (29:1-2) Evil Associations, Example of, David— Worldliness, Example of, David— Spiritual Separation, Failure to Live, David:** there was the predicament of David, a very serious predicament. David had forsaken the promised land and fled to the unbelieving Philistines, seeking security from them. He had failed to trust the LORD for security and protection from Saul, doubting the promises of God. For about seven years he had been fiercely pursued by Saul, hunted down like a wild animal. The pressure, strain, and stress of having to live as a fugitive and having to provide food and supplies for his six hundred followers and their families—all this became too much for David to bear. For these seven years he had been living like a political criminal on the run, never feeling safe and secure, never knowing when Saul or some other marauding enemy might attack. The pressure simply became too much, and David made the tragic decision to forsake the promised land and to seek the security of the unbelieving, worldly Philistines. (See outline—' 1 Samuel 27:1-12 and notes—' 1 Samuel 27:1-12 for more discussion.)

As was seen in the last chapter, the Philistines had invaded Israel with a massive army. And David's forces were enlisted to fight for the Philistines by the side of King Achish. Because of his evil association with the Philistines, David was caught in the middle of a most difficult situation, that of having to fight against his own people, the Israelites. He was being forced to march against the very people over whom God had chosen him to serve as king. Note that he and his men were marching at the rear of the Philistine army, serving as the personal bodyguard of King Achish (1 Samuel 29:2).

**Thought 1.** Evil associations will always create problems for us. For if we become friends with the immoral, lawless, and unjust of this world, they will influence us. And before we know it, we will be participating in their worldly behavior. It is impossible to walk in the footsteps of the wicked and live a righteous life.

⇒ If we follow the worldly, we will become contaminated with worldliness.

⇒ If we follow the immoral, we will commit immorality.

- ⇒ If we follow the lawless, we will commit lawless deeds.
- ⇒ If we follow the unjust, we will commit acts of injustice.
- ⇒ If we follow unbelievers, we will begin to question and doubt God.
- ⇒ If we follow those who distrust God, we will begin to distrust the promises of God.
- ⇒ If we follow carnal, fleshly believers, we will become carnal and fleshly, feeding the appetites and lusts of our bodies.

Evil associations will contaminate, pollute, and corrupt us. And being closely tied to the worldly will lead us down the path of destruction and death. Listen to what the Word of God says about evil associations:

**"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 21:34).**

**"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19).**

**"And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40).**

**2. (29:3-5) Deliverance, of God, Example of— Rescue, Source— David, Delivered and Rescued, by God's Sovereignty:** there was the solution to David's predicament, God Himself. Only the LORD had the power to maneuver events so that David would not have to fight against the Israelites. Note what happened:

1. As the massive army of the Philistines began to march in units of hundreds and divisions of thousands, David and his 600 men were marching at the rear with King Achish. Surprised at seeing David and his men marching with the army, the Philistine commanders protested, questioning what the Hebrews were doing there (1 Samuel 29:3). King Achish assured his commanders that he had confidence in David's loyalty, for David had served him for over a year now, and David had never failed in his service to the king.

But the Philistine commanders became adamant, even angry, with the king and demanded that David be discharged and sent back to Ziklag, the city that the king had assigned to David (27:6). Note that the commanders gave three reasons for this demand:

- ⇒ because David might betray, turn against the Philistines
- ⇒ because David might use the battle as an opportunity to gain Saul's favor by joining in with the Israelites (1 Samuel 29:4)
- ⇒ because David had been a famous enemy of the Philistines whose exploits had even been celebrated in song

After all, in a former war some Hebrew mercenaries had actually turned against the Philistines in the heat of battle and helped Israel defeat their army (14:21). Preventing a repeat of this betrayal, the commanders insisted that David be sent back.

**Thought 1.** God has the power to deliver His people. He had the sovereign power to move events to save David, and He has the power to save us. Just like David, we sometimes get ourselves into predicaments that we cannot handle. The situation becomes desperate and hopeless, and there is no way out. No helping hand is available, not with the power to save and deliver us out of the distressing situation. It may be some critical disease, accident, financial strain, deteriorating relationship, loss of employment, broken marriage, or death of a loved one. Whatever the circumstance, God has the power to deliver us. He even has the power to maneuver events, working all things out for our good in order to rescue and deliver us.

**"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).**

**"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Corinthians 1:10).**

**3. (29:6-11) Power, of God, to Keep the Believer— Keeper, Divine— God, Power to Keep— Keeping Power of God, Example of— Working All Things Out, Example of— God, Sovereignty, Example of— Sustaining Providence— Divine Keeper:** there was the dismissal or discharge of David from this battle, from fighting on the side of the Philistines. Scripture paints a clear picture of God's sovereign power to keep the believer from terrible evil:

1. After hearing the reasonable arguments of his commanders, King Achish agreed to dismiss David and send him back to Ziklag (1 Samuel 29:6-7). But King Achish did not want to lose the permanent service of David, for he had benefited greatly from the plunder David had been bringing him from his conquests (27:9-12). For this reason, the king tactfully approached David and commended him for the loyal service he had given over the past year. Then he informed David of the commanders' opposition and the decision to dismiss him and his men from the Philistine army. Giving three brief orders, the king commanded David to *turn back, go, do nothing* to oppose the decision, lest the commanders become even more suspicious and displeased with David's presence.

2. But note what David did: he objected to his dismissal (1 Samuel 29:8). He asked why the commanders were suspicious and complaining. He wanted to fight against Israel, or at least pretended he did. He wanted to fight for his "lord the king." What did David mean by his "lord the king?" Did he mean King Achish, or King Saul, or his supreme King, the LORD Himself?

Note how ambiguous David's objection was, not naming just whom he considered his enemy to be, and not identifying just whom he considered his "lord the king" to be. The author of *First Samuel* leaves it up to the reader to determine what David meant and against whom he would have fought had he been forced to enter battle against the Israelites. That David had definitely been called by God to serve as the future king of Israel and that he had a heart "after God's own heart" is unquestionable. But so is the fact that David had been gripped by a spirit of doubt in the promises of God and had left the promised land to live among the unbelieving, worldly Philistines. Moreover, David had not only forsaken the promised land to live in the world of unbelievers, he was continually lying to and deceiving King Achish (27:10-12).

How far had David backslid, slipped away from the LORD? Far enough to have fought with the Philistines against his own people, the Israelites? It is as though the author has left it up to each reader to draw his own conclusion—perhaps for the purpose of allowing different lessons to be drawn from this experience of David (1 Corinthians 10:6).

3. Sensing tension in David, King Achish began to vindicate David's service to the Philistines (1 Samuel 29:9). In the eyes of King Achish, David had been as an "angel of God"; that is, David had been a blessing to the king, enriching him significantly through the plunder he had paid as a vessel or mercenary commander under his service. Nevertheless, David had to be dismissed because of the commanders' insistence. But he must know that it was only because of their demand, not due to King Achish himself.

4. The decision was made: David had to arise early in the morning and leave with his men lest he further anger the commanders (1 Samuel 29:10).

5. Thus David was delivered from his predicament by the sovereign working of God in moving events (1 Samuel 29:11). Early in the morning David left with his men. He avoided having to fight against his own people, the people of Israel whom God had appointed him to serve. And he avoided having to help an enemy in their conquest of the promised land.

David had been in a predicament from which he could not escape. If he had refused to stand with the Philistines in their fight against the Israelites, he and his men would have been executed on the spot. As a result of his having forsaken the promised land and having gone out to join the unbelieving, worldly Philistines, he had placed himself in an impossible, hopeless situation. There was no escape, except through the power of God. And God stepped forth to rescue, deliver His chosen servant: moving events through His sovereign power, God worked all things out for David's good. It was as though the LORD were holding David in the palm of His hand, keeping him from destroying himself. The *keeping power* of God was holding David up, keeping him from

going too far, from reaching the point of no return, beyond the point of repentance. God's *keeping power* kept David from slaughtering the people of God and from destroying the promised land and placing it into the hands of the enemy.

**Thought 1.** God's keeping power protects us and prevents us from falling, from going too far, from reaching the point of never returning, of never repenting. If we are genuine believers, sincerely seeking the LORD with our whole hearts, God holds us in the palm of His hand and does not let us go. He keeps us, securing us and assuring us of living with Him eternally. God is able to present us faultless before His presence with eternal joy.

**"But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:7).**

**"And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (John 17:11).**

**The Defeat of the Amalekites by David: A Picture of Christ Setting the Captives (His Loved Ones) Free, 30:1-31**

**(30:1-31) Introduction— Slavery, Evil of— Bondage, Spiritual, Deliverance from— Prostitution, Deliverance from— Sex, Bondage of, Deliverance from:** enslavement, being held in bondage, is one of the most terrible evils on the face of the earth. And yet multitudes of people are in bondage, some being enslaved by men and others being enslaved by substances. Tragically, people are held in bondage to secure cheap labor or to work in the sex trade or to serve the will of some master or wealthy person. But in addition to the human slave market, there are many who are enslaved to drugs, alcohol, tobacco, food, sex, and a host of other worldly vices.

But there is wonderful news: we can be set free from the slavery and bondages of this world. Jesus Christ can set us free. This is the practical lesson of this present passage of Scripture, the glorious truth that Jesus Christ sets the captives free. This is: *The Defeat of the Amalekites by David: A Picture of Christ Setting the Captives (His Loved Ones) Free, 30:1-31*.

**1. (30:1-8) Prayer, When to Pray— Trials, Answer to— Distress, Answer to— David, Prayer Life of— David, Source of Strength— Amalekites, Invasion of Israel— David, Opposition to:** when David and his men returned home from the battlefield, they discovered their city burned and their families taken captive by the Amalekites. Remember, David had forsaken the promised land and sought refuge among the unbelieving, worldly Philistines. For over a year now he had been living among the Philistines and had even joined their armed forces who were poised and ready to strike against Israel. He had been ready to commit two terrible evils: the evil of fighting against his own people over whom God had appointed him to serve as king, and the evil of helping the enemy attack the promised land. But in His sovereign power, God had stepped in to prevent David from engaging in the battle. He had aroused the Philistine commanders to oppose David's presence lest he turn against them to fight for the Israelites. As a result of the commanders' opposition, King Achish had discharged David. He and his men were sent back home to Ziklag, the city the king had given to David in the land of the Philistines. Ziklag was about fifty miles from the battlefield, so it took David and his men about three days to reach their home. But shockingly, when they arrived they found their city burned to the ground and their families missing. Warren W. Wiersbe says this:

*Perhaps the LORD permitted this raid on Ziklag to encourage David to get out of enemy territory and go back to Judah where he belonged....[The Amalekites] burned the city, an act of vengeance on their part but perhaps a message from the Lord that it was time for David to think about returning to Judah.*

1. The Amalekites' raid on David's city, Ziklag, was unopposed because David and his men had been off preparing to join the Philistine army in their attack against Israel. It had been an ideal time for the Amalekites to attack, for all the men were away. As a result, the Amalekites were able to capture everyone alive and enslave

them either for their own use or else to be sold at the slave markets (Amos 1:6, 9). All the women, children, and elderly were carried off as captives.

2. The discovery was an utter shock to David and his men. Seeing their city burned and realizing that their families had been taken captive shook them. They were stunned, in a state of shock.

3. Overwhelming emotions struck the men, and they wept to the point of utter exhaustion until they could weep no more.

4. Even the two wives of David had been taken captive, both Abigail and Jezreel (1 Samuel 30:5).

5. Standing there grieving, David's men were flooded with thoughts of their families' being abused. They became hostile and began to direct their hostility toward David, threatening to stone him (1 Samuel 30:6).

6. Once again David was under terrible strain. He had to bear not only the distress of losing his wives, but he also had to bear the pressure of the present crisis, the threat of his own men against his life (1 Samuel 30:6-8). In this situation David had only one choice: he had to seek the face of the LORD for strength and for guidance about what to do. Taking immediate action, David called for Abiathar the priest to bring the ephod so they could seek the LORD. As soon as the priest arrived, David prayed and asked the LORD if he should pursue the raiding party and if he would catch them. Immediately the LORD responded, answering both questions, "Yes."

**Thought 1.** This is a strong lesson for us on prayer, on seeking the LORD during bitter, painful trials. With the loss of his family and then having his closest friends turn against him, David faced the most bitter trial a person can face. Imagine losing your entire family and then later, for whatever reason, having all your friends turn against you.

Bitter trials confront us all, and most of us will suffer trials just as David did. A loved one will die, and a deep, intense grief will strike our hearts. We will feel the pain, emptiness, and loneliness of no longer having the loved one with us. And many of us have already suffered the grief of losing a parent, child, brother, sister, or close friend.

Moreover, as we walk throughout life, most of us will experience a time when a friend or neighbor or co-worker or even a relative will become upset with us and turn against us, opposing us. Then the breach or divisiveness will cause great anxiety or distress. Sometimes even physical and emotional problems result, such as headaches, depression, or any number of other problems.

The answer to bitter, painful trials is the LORD, praying and seeking His face for strength to bear the trials, to overcome and conquer them. If we ask, God gives us strength. If we seek, we will find. If we knock, it will be opened unto us. This is the promise of the LORD.

**"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7:7).**

**"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).**

**2. (30:9-15) Compassion, Example of— Service, Example of— Ministering, Example of— David, Heart of, Filled with Compassion:** assured by the LORD, David and his men immediately began pursuing the Amalekites. Just imagine the emotions of David and his men as they were vigorously pursuing their savage foe: stricken with grief over the loss of their families, picturing their wives and children being raped and in chains and driven along like a herd of animals. Such images were bound to cause intense grief, but also arouse a spirit of bitter hostility toward the Amalekites. Note how Scripture describes their pursuit of this brutal enemy:

1. David and his men were utterly exhausted, for they had already spent the last three days traveling from the battlefield to their home at Ziklag, a journey of over fifty miles (1 Samuel 30:9-10). In addition, experiencing the destruction of their homes and the loss of their families drained the strength out of their bodies. A state of total exhaustion, of being bone-weary and completely worn out had overtaken some of the men. When they had traveled about another sixteen miles in their pursuit of the Amalekites, they came to a deep and wide ravine known as the Besor Ravine. Being thoroughly exhausted, 200 of the men could not cross the ravine.

They simply could go no further. So leaving these 200 men behind, David and the remaining 400 men continued their fierce pursuit.

2. While racing as rapidly as they could to catch the Amalekites, suddenly some of the men spotted a half-dead Egyptian lying in a field. They brought him to David and gave him drink and food, for he had not eaten or drunk for three days and nights.

3. Once revived, David began an interrogation of the Egyptian and discovered that he was one of the enemy (1 Samuel 30:13-14). He was an Egyptian slave of an Amalekite who had become ill on the march and been abandoned by his master. He informed David that the Amalekites had raided three different areas:

- ⇒ The Negev of the Kerethites, which was a coastal area inhabited by a clan of people closely connected to the Philistines.
- ⇒ The territory belonging to Judah, which was David's own home tribe.
- ⇒ The Negev of Caleb, which was the territory surrounding Hebron, which was also in the tribe of Judah and had been formerly given to Caleb by Joshua (Joshua 14:13-14; 15:13-15).

4. Learning that the Egyptian knew so much about the plans of the Amalekites, David immediately asked if he would lead them to the camp of the raiding party (1 Samuel 30:15). By making this request, David was running a dangerous risk, for the Egyptian could betray them. But having been assured by the LORD that he was to pursue the Amalekites, David trusted the LORD to protect him and his men. Sensing an opportunity to save his life, the Egyptian agreed on one condition: that David spare his life and swear that he would not kill him or hand him back over to his master.

**Thought 1:** This is a striking lesson on compassion. Rushing to save their families, David and his men did not have to stop to help this Egyptian. Spotting the man, it was visibly evident that he was half-dead, and it would take some time to revive and refresh him. Stopping to help him meant a delay in their pursuit to save their families. Nevertheless, compassion reached out to help the man. And because David was filled with compassion, he was rewarded with additional information about the Amalekites.

Our hearts are always to be filled with compassion, reaching out to help any person who is in need. And there are needs all around us. Within every community, some people are in pain and suffering from...

- disease
- old age
- rejection
- depression
- discouragement
- abuse
- lack of finances
- inadequate housing
- loneliness
- purposelessness
- emptiness
- grief and sorrow
- unemployment

There are a host of hardships and misfortunes all around us and people who are suffering and need our help. For this reason we must reach out in compassion. When we know of a person who needs help, we must arouse our hearts and we must act in compassion. Listen to what the Word of God says about compassion:

**"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7).**

**"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful" (Luke 6:36).**

**"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him" (Luke 10:33-34).**



**3. (30:16-20) Captives, Set Free— Type, of Christ— Christ, Types of— David, Type of Christ— Rescue, Types of, Christ— Salvation, Types of, Christ:** David and his men defeated the Amalekites, setting free their families and recovering their possessions. In setting their loved ones free, David became a clear picture of Christ, who sets the captives free. A clear picture of the wonderful deliverance is described by the Scripture:

1. Being led by the Egyptian, David and his men soon spotted the Amalekites. To their amazement, the enemy was scattered out across the countryside partying. They were dancing and drinking, celebrating over the great amount of spoils they had been able to plunder. Despite their exhaustion, David and his men immediately attacked the Amalekites and fought them from dusk until evening of the next day. All the enemy were killed except 400, who escaped fleeing on camels (1 Samuel 30:17). David recovered everything, freeing his own two wives and every other person who had been taken captive. In addition, he recovered all the plunder, all the possessions that had been stolen including all the flocks and herds. As a reward for having led his men in the recovery of their families and possessions, his men gave David all the livestock the Amalekites had stolen in their raids on the other territories.

**Thought 1.** Just as David rescued the captives, those whom he loved, so Christ has rescued the captives, those whom He loves. We are held captive by three forces. First, we are held captive by sin. We sin and we cannot help but sin. No matter how much we may try, we disobey and come short of God's glory. Sin has captivated us, and we cannot break free from its grasp.

Second, death has captured us, holding us in its grasp and refusing to let us go. We die, every one of us, and there is nothing we can do to keep from dying. From dust we came and to dust we will return. We are captivated by death.

Third, we are held captive by hell. As unpleasant as it may be, we are doomed to hell and cannot escape its grasp. Being doomed to hell is the result of our unbelief, disobedience, and rejection of Jesus Christ, God's very own Son.

But here is the wonderful news: we can be set free, delivered from our enslavement to these three forces. We no longer have to be captive to sin, death, or hell. Why? Because the Lord Jesus Christ came to earth for the very purpose of setting the captives free. And we are the captives. We can be set free by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ died to set us free, died upon the cross bearing our sins. And if we believe this wonderful truth, that Christ bore our sins to make us acceptable to God, the most wonderful thing happens: God truly accepts us. He sets us free from sin, death, and hell. This is exactly what Scripture declares:

**"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Romans 5:9).**

**"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Galatians 1:4).**

**4. (30:21-31) Justice, Example of— Generosity, Example of— Covetousness, Example of— David, Justice of— David, Generosity of:** David demonstrated a strong spirit of justice and generosity. What happened next gives a glimpse into the heart of David, who was soon to become the future ruler of Israel:

1. Joying and rejoicing over the recovery of their families and possessions, David and his men made their way back to the 200 men who had been too exhausted to pursue the Amalekites (1 Samuel 30:21). As soon as the 200 men spotted David and the others returning, they rushed out to meet the conquerors. Note David's attitude toward them: he did not rebuke nor scorn, but rather greeted them with a joyful heart, for the LORD had given them a wonderful victory that day.

2. But David's spirit of acceptance did not exist in the hearts of all the men. There was opposition and covetousness within the hearts of some wicked troublemakers among David's men (1 Samuel 30:22). They opposed the exhausted men's receiving a share of the plunder, suggesting that they were laggards. However, the troublemakers yielded to the laggards' having their families returned.

3. Nevertheless, David intervened and demonstrated a strong spirit of wisdom and justice in dealing with people (1 Samuel 30:23-25). He declared two facts: first, the victory was the LORD's; therefore the plunder was a gift from Him. It was the LORD and the LORD alone who had protected them and helped them defeat the enemy. Second, the task of the supply soldier was just as vital and important as that of the combat warrior.

Having established these two facts, David made his decision: justice demanded that all share and share alike. Note that this principle of equal distribution was made a permanent law from that day to the day that the author was writing the book of *First Samuel*.

4. When David arrived back in Ziklag, his spirit of generosity continued to shine brightly (1 Samuel 30:25-31). He sent some plunder as gifts to a large number of city leaders scattered throughout Judah, leaders who had provided supplies for him during his distressing years as a fugitive from Saul. For years David had been building relationships with leaders of various territories, relationships that were going to help him in unifying and consolidating the nation once he became king. And soon—in just three days—David was going to receive word about the death of King Saul and the defeat of the Israelite army by the Philistines. As a result, events would move rapidly and David would be crowned king, just as the LORD had promised (2 Samuel 1-2).

**Thought 1.** We must not be greedy or treat others unfairly. If we are greedy, we seek more and more, banking and hoarding what we have. A greedy heart is consumed by lust, the lust for more pleasure, comfort, possessions, wealth, recognition, fame, position, and power. A greedy heart also mistreats others by blinding a person to the desperate needs of the world. A greedy person seldom reaches out with a helping hand, to give to and meet the needs of people. And sometimes a greedy person is aroused to cheat and steal in order to get more and more, treating others unfairly and unjustly. But God's Word is clear: we must always be just in all dealings, never cheating or stealing from anyone.

1) Covetousness is condemned by God. God's Holy Word says this:

**"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).**

2) God demands that we treat people justly, fairly. He even demands that we be generous in dealing with people. This is exactly what Holy Scripture says:

**"And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil" (Luke 6:31-35).**