

# THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 18TH, 2024 // 1 SAMUEL

## TRAGEDY (1 SAMUEL 30:1-16) FROM JOYOUS CELEBRATION...

David finally gets to return home rejoicing because he didn't have to fight against his own people. For almost a year and a half, David thought he was hiding and safe from Saul. He had a false sense of security living among the Philistines. He put his faith in the walls and the mighty army. Ziklag had become his haven.

### ...TO IMMENSE GRIEF

David and his men get home only to find their entire city burned to the ground. Everyone and everything is gone, including their families and livestock. What he had put his faith in was now rubble. Grief overcomes them, and they weep to the point of complete exhaustion.

- **Be careful what you put your faith in.**

### THE COST OF DISOBEDIENCE

This is the same tribe Saul was supposed to destroy years ago (1 Samuel 15). If Saul would have done what God asked him to do, none of this would have ever happened.

- There is a reason God wants us to keep ourselves from sin.
- **There are lasting consequences for sin, and its effects can be generational.**

### THE BLAME GAME

It looks like there's no hope for rescue and things are going from bad to worse for David. Instead of planning a way to rescue their families and livestock, David's men are looking for someone to blame. David is in a very difficult position, and his next move would prove to be critical.

### WHAT NOW?

This is obviously a low point in David's life. Instead of seeking others or relying on his own abilities, David found strength in the Lord.

- There are times when we will find ourselves in dark places. Will we give up and walk away?
- **Sometimes, God allows us to get in a place where we finally turn to Him. He is longing to make Himself real to us.**

### THE CONTRAST IN LEADERSHIP

David finally makes a good decision and turns back to the Lord. This is the difference between Saul's leadership and David's. In David's greatest moments of crisis, he looked to God. He had a heart for God.

- Saul wanted what he thought God would supply: riches, prestige, and power.

### "BRING ME THE EPHOD"

What David was really asking for was the presence of God. He finally recognizes he needs God's help and calls for the priest. His response to the tragedy emphasizes his desire to rely on the Lord. David is learning from Saul's mistakes.

- **Don't wait until you're in a crisis to seek God. Be willing to learn from others.**

### THE INQUIRY

David asks the Lord two questions and the Lord answers both. **God is often waiting for us to simply ask Him to intervene.**

- He prepares his men, but some are exhausted from the past trips and the emotional toll of losing everything. David **responds in obedience** and moves forward even with fewer men.

### A TIMELY FIND

The Amalekites left one of their Egyptian slaves to die, and David finds him. David has compassion on him and offers him food and water. As the man gains his strength, David finds out he was in the raiding party that leveled their city and kidnapped their women and children. So, David asks him to lead him down to the raiders.

### DAVID FINDS THEM PARTYING

The Egyptian leads them to the Amalekites and David finds them "eating, drinking, and celebrating" their plunder. This is a huge army! It says they were spread out over the entire area. David wasn't concerned because he had heard from the Lord.

- **We can move forward in confidence when God answers our prayers.**

### TRIUMPH (1 SAMUEL 30:17-31)

#### THE BATTLE

We don't know how far it was until they reached the Amalekites, but after marching nonstop for days, these soldiers found the strength to enter the battle.

- David's small army surprises them and slaughters them for 24 hours. Only 400 of them escape. **Obedience to God brings blessings from God.**

#### GOD'S GREAT GRACE

David recovers everything. Nothing is lost—an incredible display of the grace of God.

- **When you think you've used up all God's grace, He pours out more than you can handle. When you sin and think God can't bless you anymore, God is able to restore and bless. You can't run far enough from God's grace.** (Psalm 139:7-12)

### DAVID'S CHARACTER REVEALED

David's army marches back to the men he left behind. But those who fought don't want to share the spoils with those who stayed back. David gets his perspective back and says the Lord won this battle. God is the One who protected and delivered them.

- **No one is more important than another. We all share in the mission.**

### SHARING THE SPOILS

David and his men make it back to Ziklag and he sends gifts to many of the tribes in which he roamed. David remembered those who had protected him and provided shelter and gives away what wasn't his in the first place.

- **Everything we have has been given to us by a gracious God. We need to be a generous people.**

### SAUL'S LAST BATTLE (1 SAMUEL 31)

#### A SAD ENDING

The Philistines overwhelm Israel. Saul is critically wounded, and his sons are killed.

- Saul faced death the same way he faced life. Characterized by pride in his own abilities and disobedience, he took matters into his own hands and killed himself. Saul tried to please God by religiosity, but **a relationship with God is marked by obedience.**

#### A TALE OF TWO KINGS

God gave Saul ample opportunities, but he never truly repented. His downfall was his reliance on himself. His pride led him to live out his life in rebellion to God. Instead of recognizing the patience and grace of God, Saul wanted to do things his way.

- **We can't live contrary to God's laws and expect His blessings.**
- David had been running a long time. But he humbled himself when things got really bad and sought the Lord. He still had a lot to learn, and there would be major consequences (1 Chronicles 22), but when he turned back, the Lord was quick to forgive.
- **God always offers forgiveness to the prayers of the repentant.**

#### MISTAKES

- We could save ourselves from a lifetime of heartache if we would simply do what God asks of us. **It takes humility to be willing to admit our mistakes.**
- God will use circumstances to get our attention. When God gets our attention, will we humble ourselves and turn to Him?

#### LIFE CHANGE

- There are always consequences for sin. Sin will not go unpunished.
- We need to humble ourselves and deal with our sin. True repentance is represented by a life completely changed by God.
- **God desires obedience over sacrifice.**

#### FAITH

- God is waiting for us to put our faith in Him. We need to seek the Lord instead of trusting in our own abilities. We can trust Him at all times, not just in times of crisis.
- God is a Restorer, Reconciler, and Redeemer.
- Will you put your faith in Jesus?