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David Inquired of the LORD
First Samuel 30: 1-8

David Inquired of the LORD DIG: What must David and his men have thought as they saw the smoke of their homes on the horizon? How does YHVH once again look after David's interests when his enemies attack him? How do you think David found strength in the LORD? How did the Ephod relate to David's inquiry and ADONAI's will (see **First Samuel 23:9-12)?**

REFLECT: Describe a situation that taxed your faith and patience almost to the breaking point. Are you at a time right now when you think things could not possibly get any worse? Are you at the end of your rope right now? When you are greatly distressed, how do you respond initially: with bitterness and fixing blame, as seen in David's men? Or by finding strength in the LORD, as David did? Where do you need that divine strength right now? Whom else can you encourage to seek that strength?

1011 BC

The Destruction of Ziklag: David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day (**to see link click Bu – The Timeline for David's Return to Ziklag, and Hearing About Sha'ul's Death**). This indicates that **David** and **his men** covered about twenty-five miles a day on **their** march south from **Aphek** to **Ziklag**. During **their** three-day journey **their** hearts must have been lifted at the thought of relaxation after so much stress, as well as joyful reunions with **their wives** and **children**. **But** as they drew new **Ziklag**, however, they may have been alarmed at the sight of smoke on the horizon; we can easily imagine **the men** breaking rank and racing toward **their** families.[201]

The Amalekite leaders knew that **David** was at Gath and that all attention was focused on the confrontation between Isra'el and the Philistines. This was a perfect time to retaliate against **David** for **his** raids **(First Samuel 27:8-11)**, so **the Amalekites raided Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, and**

they had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old, perhaps to sell as slaves in Egypt**. The Amalekites,** whom Sha'ul had failed to exterminate (see **Af – The Problem of Holy War in the TaNaKh**), had taken advantage of the departure of **the fighting men** to wreak havoc, but at least **their wives** and **children** had not been **killed.** There were no bodies on the ground. Everyone was missing. Instead, **the Amalekites** had taken **them captive** to be enjoyed or sold, they also took **their** animals and whatever else **they** could find as booty **(First Samuel 30:1-3).**[202]

The sight of **their burned** homes and missing family members was more than **the men** could bear. Imagine the horror and grief of **David** and his six hundred **men** who had never lost a battle! **So David and his men wept aloud until they had no more strength left to weep. David** had suffered in exactly the same way as everyone else, losing his **two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. Their** city was **burned**, **their** wealth had been seized, and **their wives** and **children** had been kidnapped. It was the mercy of **ADONAI** that **the Amalekites** spared **their** lives, for in **their** raids **David** and **his men** had certainly killed **their** share of **Amalekite women** and **children (First Samuel 27:11)**.

David, at 29 years old, was at the end of **his** rope.[203] Never since **his** flight from Gibeah and Sha'ul **(First Samuel 20:24a)**, had **David** stood so alone.

The blow was not only too much for **David** to bear, but it was also the last straw for **his** weary **men**. Added to **David's** grief was the fact that **he was in great distress** because **his men** blamed **him** for **their** plight. **The men** were so distraught that **they** could not think clearly and were prepared to **stone David** to death because they blamed **him** for the loss of **their** loved ones**; each one was bitter in spirit because of his family being taken.**



But David found strength in ADONAI his God (First Samuel 30:3-6). Here **David** anticipates Rabbi Sha'ul's wonderful two-sided statement in **Philippians 2:12-13: Work out your own salvation . . . for God is at work. David** counted heavily on **YHVH** being **at work**. At the same moment, **David** went to work on **his** rescue mission. By using the expression **ADONAI his God**, **the Ruach ha-Kodesh** emphasizes **David's** intimate relationship with **the One** who, from the beginning, had always been **with him (First Samuel 16:18).**[204] So far from blaming **God** for allowing the destruction of **the city** and the capture of **the women** and **children**, **David** took the retaliation of **the Amalekites** as the work of the Adversary and drew on **his** relationship with **the LORD**.

David's Inquiry of God: Sha'ul was also pictured as being **in great distress (First Samuel 28:15b)**. So both **David** and **Sha'ul** are portrayed as leaders who were in crisis and at great risk. But look at how each **man** responded. **Sha'ul** sought refuge in a witch (see **Bv – Sha'ul and the Medium at Endor**), while **David,** when **he** hit rock bottom, **inquired of the LORD. Then David's** spiritual discernment surfaced, and **he said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, "Bring me the ephod." Abiathar brought it to him** (see the commentary on **Exodus Gb – The Urim and Thummim: The Means of Making Decisions**) and **David** asked: **Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?** Sha'ul had consulted **Ha'Shem** but had received no answer. However, **ADONAI's** response to **David's** inquiry was immediate, clear and full of encouragement. **YHVH** answered with a single word: **Pursue** (Hebrew: *radaph*)**.** Saying, in effect: **You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue (First Samuel 30:7-8).**

To strengthen ourselves in **the LORD** means we remind ourselves of what Scripture

says about **ADONAI** and **His** promises, and we bring those truths to bear on the situation. Every detail causes opposing voices to ring in the ears of the child of **God**. One is the voice of our circumstances, telling us that our situation is hopeless. The other is the voice of faith, telling us that **YHVH** is sufficient for the trial.[205] Therefore, **brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things (Philippians 4:8).**