

# DAVID DEFEATS THE AMALEKITES

[BIBLE TEXT](#): I Samuel 27:1, 2; 29:1-11; 30:1-25

LESSON 217 Senior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psalm 1:6).

## [BIBLE TEXT in King James Version](#)

### **1 Samuel 27:1-2**

<sup>1</sup> And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: *there is* nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.  
<sup>2</sup> And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that *were* with him unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath.

### **1 Samuel 29:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which *is* in Jezreel.  
<sup>2</sup> And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the rereward with Achish.  
<sup>3</sup> Then said the princes of the Philistines, What *do* these Hebrews *here*? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, *Is* not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found no fault in him since he fell *unto me* unto this day?  
<sup>4</sup> And the princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the princes of the Philistines said unto him, Make this fellow return, that he may go again to his place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith

## [BIBLE REFERENCES:](#)

### **I David in Philistia**

<sup>1</sup> Fear of Saul finally drove David into the land of the Philistines, I Samuel 27:1, 2;

#### **1 Samuel 21:10-15**

<sup>10</sup> And David arose, and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath.  
<sup>11</sup> And the servants of Achish said unto him, *Is* not this David the king of the land? did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?  
<sup>12</sup> And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Achish the king of Gath.  
<sup>13</sup> And he changed his behaviour before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.  
<sup>14</sup> Then said Achish unto his servants, Lo, ye see the man is mad: wherefore *then* have ye brought him to me?  
<sup>15</sup> Have I need of mad men, that ye have brought this *fellow* to play the mad man in my presence? shall this *fellow* come into my house?

#### **1 Kings 19:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.  
<sup>2</sup> Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.  
<sup>3</sup> And when he saw *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there.

<sup>2</sup> King Achish made David his bodyguard, but the princes of the Philistines would not countenance the Hebrews, I Samuel 29:1-11

#### **1 Samuel 28:1-2**

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.  
<sup>2</sup> And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.

### **II Destruction at Ziklag**

<sup>1</sup> The Amalekites had invaded the south and had burned Ziklag, I Samuel 30:1

<sup>2</sup> All the people who were in Ziklag had been taken captive, I Samuel 30:2, 3

<sup>3</sup> David's army wept for their loss and spoke of stoning David, but David encouraged himself in the Lord, I Samuel 30:4-6;

#### **Psalms 34:4**

<sup>4</sup> I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

#### **Psalms 56:2-3**

<sup>2</sup> Mine enemies would daily swallow *me* up: for *they be* many that fight against me, O thou most High.

<sup>3</sup> What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

should he reconcile himself unto his master? *should it not be* with the heads of these men?

<sup>5</sup> *Is* not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

<sup>6</sup> Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, *as* the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host *is* good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favour thee not.

<sup>7</sup> Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.

<sup>8</sup> And David said unto Achish, But what have I done? and what hast thou found in thy servant so long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

<sup>9</sup> And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou *art* good in my sight, as an angel of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle.

<sup>10</sup> Wherefore now rise up early in the morning with thy master's servants that are come with thee: and as soon as ye be up early in the morning, and have light, depart.

<sup>11</sup> So David and his men rose up early to depart in the morning, to return into the land of the Philistines. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel.

### 1 Samuel 30:1-25

<sup>1</sup> And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag,

### Psalms 56:11

<sup>11</sup> In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

### Romans 8:31

<sup>31</sup> What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

### Hebrews 13:6

<sup>6</sup> So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

## III Pursuit and Victory

1 At David's inquiry, the Lord instructed him to pursue the enemy, I Samuel 30:7, 8;

### Psalms 91:15

<sup>15</sup> He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I *will be* with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

### Proverbs 3:5-6

<sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

<sup>6</sup> In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

2 Two hundred men were left at the brook Besor, I Samuel 30:9, 10

3 An Egyptian servant was found, who led David's army to the camp of the Amalekites, I Samuel 30:11-15

4 The Amalekites were in a state of revelry, so David and his men were afforded an easy victory, I Samuel 30:16-19;

### Daniel 5:1-4

<sup>1</sup> Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.

<sup>2</sup> Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which *was* in Jerusalem; that the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, might drink therein.

<sup>3</sup> Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which *was* at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.

<sup>4</sup> They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.

### Daniel 5:30

<sup>30</sup> In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.

### Luke 12:19-20

<sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

<sup>20</sup> But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

### Luke 17:27-30

<sup>27</sup> They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

<sup>28</sup> Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

<sup>29</sup> But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all.

<sup>30</sup> Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

## IV Division of the Spoil

1 David reserved for himself the flocks and herds of the Amalekites, I Samuel 30:20

2 The 400 men who went with David did not want to share the

and burned it with fire;  
<sup>2</sup> And had taken the women captives, that *were* therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried *them* away, and went on their way.

<sup>3</sup> So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, *it was* burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

<sup>4</sup> Then David and the people that *were* with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

<sup>5</sup> And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.

<sup>6</sup> And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

<sup>7</sup> And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.

<sup>8</sup> And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake *them*, and without fail recover *all*.

<sup>9</sup> So David went, he and the six hundred men that *were* with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed.

<sup>10</sup> But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.

<sup>11</sup> And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water;

spoil with the 200 men who stayed at the brook, I Samuel 30:21, 22;

#### **Numbers 31:27**

<sup>27</sup> And divide the prey into two parts; between them that took the war upon them, who went out to battle, and between all the congregation:

3 David's proclamation became an ordinance for all Israel, I Samuel 30:23-25;

#### **Psalms 68:12**

<sup>12</sup> Kings of armies did flee apace: and she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

### **NOTES:**

#### **Troublesome Times**

"As thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation" (I Samuel 26:24). This was the last statement that David made to Saul, and it would indicate that David was content to let the Lord work out all problems; but then fear entered. "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." This was a rash conclusion. God had intervened in David's behalf so often that David had little foundation for his fear.

When fear comes into a heart, faith weakens; for fear and faith are just as opposite as day and night. When light dawns, darkness flees; but when light is withdrawn, darkness is the inevitable result; so with fear and faith. Fear gains the upper hand only as the result of waning faith and imperfect love. "Perfect love casteth out fear" (I John 4:18).

How soon a man runs into spiritual disaster when left to his own ways and devices! There is no evidence that David called upon God or asked His counsel in regard to this going into the land of the Philistines. Deep trouble soon followed.

David seemed to follow his own course, until he found himself in a very peculiar strait. Achish, the king of Gath and David's protector, appointed David to be his bodyguard. Soon afterward, the Philistines made preparation to invade the land of Israel in warfare. Achish demanded that David and his men go along with the Philistines. If David refused to go against the Israelites, he would be betraying the friendship that had been given to him, and the loyalty that David had shown to Achish. On the other hand, if David went with the Philistines to fight against Israel, he would be betraying his own countrymen; and more, he would be fighting against God. This strait may have been the very thing that startled David from his lethargy and caused him to pray. David must have prayed, for God delivered him from this awkward situation in a marked way.

#### **In the Wrong Place**

"What do these Hebrews here?" the princes of the Philistines demanded of the king of Gath. These men of Israel were absolutely out of place in this Philistian army. The princes were quick to discern the inconsistency of the situation and prevailed upon Achish to dismiss David from their ranks. No doubt God caused the princes to do this.

Is not the same voice heard from the worldly-minded men when the Christian tries to ally himself too closely to the affairs of this life? Most men have a high standard set up in their hearts for Christianity. When the world sees a so-called Christian indulging in all manner of worldly pursuits and amusements, cannot they say with emphasis, "What does this man here?" When a man claims to be the child of God, the world has a perfect right to expect that man to walk in newness of life

<sup>12</sup> And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk *any* water, three days and three nights.

<sup>13</sup> And David said unto him, To whom *belongest* thou? and whence *art* thou? And he said, I *am* a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick.

<sup>14</sup> We made an invasion *upon* the south of the Cherethites, and upon *the coast which belongeth* to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb; and we burned Ziklag with fire.

<sup>15</sup> And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company.

<sup>16</sup> And when he had brought him down, behold, *they were* spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and drinking, and dancing, because of all the great spoil that they had taken out of the land of the Philistines, and out of the land of Judah.

<sup>17</sup> And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.

<sup>18</sup> And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

<sup>19</sup> And there was nothing lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil, nor any *thing* that they had taken to them: David recovered all.

<sup>20</sup> And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which* they drave before

according to the commandments of the Heavenly Father. God changes the heart of a sincere penitent, cleansing him from all sin and giving him power to live in this present world without sinning. The true Christian keeps himself unspotted from the world (James 1:27). "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (II Corinthians 6:17,18).

### David's Encouragement

When David and his men returned to their city, they found that a band of Amalekites had invaded the south country and had burned Ziklag to the ground. All the people who had remained in the city when David went with the Philistines had been carried away captive. The grief that these hardened soldiers felt must have been great, for they wept "until they had no more power to weep." The people spoke of stoning David, possibly because he had allowed all the men to be away from the city with none to remain for its protection. Truly David's griefs and troubles mounted high.

"But David encouraged himself in the LORD his God." This is the first instance that is recorded where David sought the help of his God in the land of the Philistines. God was present to help David out of his difficulties even in this heathen land. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). David wept along with his men about the destruction of Ziklag; but, without doubt, more than sorrow for the loss of his worldly possessions was included in David's tears.

David must have remembered now the many times that God had been his help in times of danger. He possibly thought of the day when the lion and the bear came out of the wilderness to rob his father's flock, that God gave power in that day to overcome these fierce animals. The memory of the giant Goliath may have passed through David's mind. He remembered how the Lord had delivered the defier of Israel's God into David's hand, thus taking away the reproach from God's people. David's tears probably included the tears of repentance for the recent fear that was found in his heart.

The God of the past is just as truly the God of the future, so David encouraged himself in God. The Christian will find that the quickest way out of the valley of doubt or fear is to stop and count the blessings that God has previously showered upon him.

### The Successful Way

Gone were David's own ways. From this time onward, David was ready and willing to seek God's counsel. No sooner did David begin to seek God's counsel than David's reverses were turned into successes. Abiathar, the priest (who apparently had been with David all this while), was called; and David inquired of the Lord. The Lord instructed David and his men to pursue the Amalekites, for without fail all their possessions would be recovered.

Men pursue their own ways in the world until they have lost everything. When the last item is taken from their grasp, then they are willing to call upon God for help. It is the mercy of God that He answers prayer at a time like this, but He does. Could not a much greater end be attained if men would pray at the outset of their lives and allow God to direct their every step? "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). Do not try to follow God in some ways, and trust to your own understanding in all the rest, for this will not avail.

those *other* cattle, and said, This *is* David's spoil.

<sup>21</sup> And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that *were* with him: and when David came near to the people, he saluted them.

<sup>22</sup> Then answered all the wicked men and *men* of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them *ought* of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead *them* away, and depart.

<sup>23</sup> Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand.

<sup>24</sup> For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part *is* that goeth down to the battle, so *shall* his part *be* that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.

<sup>25</sup> And it was *so* from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

God must be acknowledged in all the phases of a Christian's life.

### Victory for David

The victory over the Amalekites was complete. Two hundred men had been left behind at the brook Besor, because they were too faint to make the crossing; however, the 400 men who continued with David were enough to complete the victory, with God's help. The Amalekites were found in their camp, reveling in the spoils they had taken. They felt secure, but woe to any worldling when he feels secure in his ways! "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (I Thessalonians 5:3).

David and his men not only recovered their wives, children, and their own possessions, but won a great amount of spoil that the Amalekites had taken from the other countries of their invasion. Sadness was suddenly turned into gladness, weeping and mourning were turned into laughter and song, because one man encouraged himself in the Lord his God. That all these soldiers were not praying men is proved by the event that followed.

When the victorious band returned to the brook where the 200 men had been left with the "stuff," the 400 soldiers proposed to pay off the 200 men by restoring each man's wife and children, and then to send them away. David would not accept this proposition, however. He made a decree that stayed with the Children of Israel during the rest of their history as a nation. "As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike." This principle has been carried on by the Christians.

Not all Christians are called to go into evangelistic work, missionary fields, or other lines of active duty in the Kingdom of God; but every Christian is called to pray. Jesus needs prayer-warriors as much as He needs any other type of soldier. The Christian who remains in his place and prays earnestly for the one who is laboring in the field of Christian endeavor will receive a reward. "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42).

### Darkest Before Dawn

This period of time that David spent in the land of the Philistines was probably one of the darkest intervals of all his life. David went through a great deal of suffering, but he brought it largely upon himself. Had David remained within God's boundaries, none of these troubles would have come upon him. However, God was merciful and faithful to the man whom He had called to be king of Israel. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Psalm 103:14).

The Lord desired that David be back in the land of Israel, that the Children of Israel might soon crown him king. Ziklag was burned, David's wives and children were taken captives, and all his earthly possessions were gone; but this darkest hour preceded the crowning day of David's life. Through these events David was again brought to the place where he could trust God in every circumstance before the day of success came. The means that God sometimes has to use may seem severe, but God knows the heart and does the thing that is necessary to bring a man to the place where he can be used in God's service.

The coronation day of the full overcomers is not far distant. It seems that God is burning the last bit of dross out of the hearts of His saints, to get them ready for that event. It may be that the

"Ziklags" necessarily will go up in smoke, or that worldly possessions will suddenly vanish. Whatever the Lord sees in the lives of His children that makes them unfit for Heaven, He will remove, if they will allow Him to do so. The testing times may be dark, but the light is just beyond for those who put their full confidence in God and come through the test. The crown of righteousness is laid up for all who love Christ's appearing (**2 Timothy 4:8** <sup>8</sup> Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing).

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1 Why did David and his men escape into the land of the Philistines?
- 2 Did David ask counsel from God about this move?
- 3 In what strait did David and his men find themselves?
- 4 How did David get out of this predicament?
- 5 What did David find when he returned to his city?
- 6 What did the army speak of doing? What did David do?
- 7 How successful was the battle with the Amalekites?
- 8 How did David decide that the spoil should be divided?