Lesson 76 – David at Ziklag

Based on 1 Samuel 29-30; 2 Samuel 1

1) Where was David when Achish was getting ready to war with Saul and Israel?
1 Samuel 29:1-2 Now the Philistines gathered together all their armies to Aphek: and the Israelites pitched by a fountain which is in Jezreel. And the lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds, and by thousands: but David and his men passed on in the _____ with Achish.

Rereward is an archaic English word meaning a rear guard or the troops positioned at the back of an army on the march.

As the two armies prepared to join battle the son of Jesse found himself in a situation of great perplexity. It was expected that he would fight for the Philistines. Should he in the engagement quit the post assigned him and retire from the field, he would not only brand himself with cowardice, but with ingratitude and treachery to Achish, who had protected him and confided in him. Such an act would cover his name with infamy and would expose him to the wrath of enemies more to be feared than Saul. Yet he could not for a moment consent to fight against Israel.

David was caused to feel that he had missed his path. Far better would it have been for him to find refuge in God's strong fortresses of the mountains than with the avowed enemies of Jehovah and His people. But the Lord in His great mercy did not punish this error of His servant by leaving him to himself in his distress and perplexity; for though David, losing his grasp on divine power, had faltered and turned aside from the path of strict integrity, it was still the purpose of his heart to be true to God.

2) What did the fellow Generals of Achish think of having David in their army?
1 Samuel 29:3 Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these _____ 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?
3) What did they persist?
1 Samuel 29:4 And the princes of the Philistines were _____ 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 _____ to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself unto his master? should it not be with the heads of these men?
1 Samuel 29:5 Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul _____ his thousands, and David his ten thousands?

The slaughter of their famed champion and the triumph of Israel upon that occasion were still fresh in the memory of the Philistine lords. They did not believe that David would fight against his own people; and should he, in the heat of battle, take sides with them, he could inflict greater harm on the Philistines than would the whole of Saul's army.

4) What did Achish finally tell David?
1 Samuel 29:6-7 Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the LORD liveth, thou hast been _____, 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 _____ thee not. Wherefore now return, and go in peace, that thou displease not the lords of the Philistines.
5) What did David feign?
1 Samuel 29:8 And David said unto Achish, But what have I _____? 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?

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6) What was Achish's reply?
1 Samuel 29:9-10 And Achish answered and said to David, I know that thou art good in my sight, as an _____ of God: notwithstanding the princes of the Philistines have said, He shall not go up with us to the battle. 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, _____.

The reply of Achish must have sent a thrill of shame and remorse through David's heart, as he thought how unworthy of a servant of Jehovah were the deceptions to which he had stooped.

7) What did they encounter when they came back to their Philistine home, Ziklag?
1 Samuel 30:1-3 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 _____ Ziklag, and burned it with fire; And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew _____ _____, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way. 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.

Dumb with horror and amazement, David and his men for a little time gazed in silence upon the blackened and smoldering ruins. Then as a sense of their terrible desolation burst upon them, those battle-scarred warriors ***"lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep."***

8) What did the people who were with David think of him?
1 Samuel 30:6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of _____ 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.

David's followers turned upon him as the cause of their calamities. He had provoked the vengeance of the Amalekites by his attack upon them; yet, too confident of security in the midst of his enemies, he had left the city unguarded. Maddened with grief and rage, his soldiers were now ready for any desperate measures, and they threatened even to stone their leader.

9) What was David's go-to when things were bad?
Psalm 56:3 What time I am afraid, I will _____ in thee.

Though he himself could not discern a way out of the difficulty, God could see it and would teach him what to do.

10) What did he do?
1 Samuel 30:7-8 And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the _____. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David. And David _____ 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.

At these words the tumult of grief and passion ceased. David and his soldiers at once set out in pursuit of their fleeing foe. So rapid was their march, that upon reaching the brook Besor, which empties near Gaza into the Mediterranean Sea, two hundred of the band were compelled by exhaustion to remain behind. But David with the remaining four hundred pressed forward, nothing daunted.

11) In their pursuit, what did they find?
1 Samuel 30:11-12 And they found an _____ in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his _____ came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights.
1 Samuel 30:13-14 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 _____ me, because three days agone I fell sick. 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 _____.

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Advancing, they came upon an Egyptian slave apparently about to perish from weariness and hunger. Upon receiving food and drink, however, he revived, and they learned that he had been left to die by his cruel master, an Amalekite belonging to the invading force. He told the story of the raid and pillage; and then, having exacted a promise that he should not be slain or delivered to his master, he consented to lead David's company to the camp of their enemies.

12) What happened?
1 Samuel 30:16-17 And when he had brought him down, behold, they were spread abroad upon all the earth, eating and _____, 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. And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there _____ not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.
1 Samuel 30:18-20 And David _____ all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives. 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. And David took _____ the flocks and the herds, which they drave before those other cattle, and said, This is David's spoil.

When David had invaded the territory of the Amalekites, he had put to the sword all the inhabitants that fell into his hands. But for the restraining power of God the Amalekites would have retaliated by destroying the people of Ziklag. They decided to spare the captives, desiring to heighten the honor of the triumph by leading home a large number of prisoners, and intending afterward to sell them as slaves. Thus, unwittingly, they fulfilled God's purpose, keeping the prisoners unharmed, to be restored to their husbands and fathers.

13) What happened as they returned from the spoil?
1 Samuel 30:21-22 And David came to the two hundred men, which were so _____ 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. 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 _____ _____ 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.
14) Was David having any part of that?
1 Samuel 30:23-25 Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath _____ us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. 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 _____ _____. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

Besides recovering all the spoil that had been taken from Ziklag, David and his band had captured extensive flocks and herds belonging to the Amalekites. These were called ***"David's spoil;"*** and upon returning to Ziklag, he sent from this spoil presents to the elders of his own tribe of Judah. In this distribution all those were remembered who had befriended him and his followers in the mountain fastnesses, when he had been forced to flee from place to place for his life. Their kindness and sympathy, so precious to the hunted fugitive, were thus gratefully acknowledged.

15) David was busy with his own troubles when the Philistines killed Saul. How did he get the news?
2 Samuel 1:1-2 Now it came to pass after the death of Saul, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and David had abode two days in _____; It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes _____, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

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2 Samuel 1:3-4 And David said unto him, From whence comest thou? And he said unto him, Out of the camp of Israel am I _____. And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are _____ also.

16) What did the messenger tell David?
2 Samuel 1:6-8 And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his _____; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an _____.
2 Samuel 1:9-10 He said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and _____ me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have _____ them hither unto my lord.

The fugitive reported Saul's defeat and death, and the death of Jonathan. But he went beyond a simple statement of facts. Evidently supposing that David must cherish enmity toward his relentless persecutor, the stranger hoped to secure honor to himself as the slayer of the king. With an air of boasting the man went on to relate that during the battle he found the monarch of Israel wounded, and sore pressed by his foes, and that at his own request the messenger had slain him. The crown from his head and the golden bracelets from his arm he had brought to David. He confidently expected that these tidings would be hailed with joy, and that a rich reward would be his for the part that he had acted.

17) Was David happy that Saul was dead?
2 Samuel 1:11-12 Then David took hold on his clothes, and _____ them; and likewise all the men that were with him: And they _____, and wept, and fasted until even, for Saul, and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the LORD, and for the house of Israel; because they were fallen by the sword.

18) What became of the messenger who tried to embellish the news?
2 Samuel 1:14-16 And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thine hand to destroy the LORD'S _____? And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have _____ the LORD'S anointed.

David's grief at the death of Saul was sincere and deep, evincing the generosity of a noble nature. He did not exult in the fall of his enemy. The obstacle that had barred his access to the throne of Israel was removed, but at this he did not rejoice. Death had obliterated the remembrance of Saul's distrust and cruelty, and now nothing in his history was thought of but that which was noble and kingly. The name of Saul was linked with that of Jonathan, whose friendship had been so true and so unselfish.

19) What did David write concerning Saul and Jonathan?
2 Samuel 1:19 The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the _____ fallen!
2 Samuel 1:23 Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than _____.
2 Samuel 1:25-27 How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am _____ for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty _____, and the weapons of war perished!

Israel needed leadership, but David was still in Philistia, what would happen next?

Can you see that God oversees the nations?

Would you like to walk by faith?

When is it time to humbly seek the LORD for guidance?

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