

**1Samuel 30:1 ¶ 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, and burned it with fire;**

**1Samuel 30:2 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.**

Continuing the narrative from the previous chapter...

David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day only to find that the Amalekites had attacked in their absence. Eager to get revenge, they had burned the city with fire and taken all of the women and children captive. That they were taken captive was to be assumed since there were no dead bodies left behind.

Guzik's commentary makes note that David and his men would have had to travel about 25 miles a day from Aphek to reach Ziklag on the third day.

**1Samuel 30:3 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.**

**1Samuel 30:4 Then David and the people that *were* with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.**

**1Samuel 30:5 And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite.**

When David and his men saw the burnt out city and found their families gone, they wept until their tears were spent. Both of David's wives were taken captive as well.

JFB adds this insight: "The language implies that the smoke of the conflagration was still visible, and the sacking very recent."

**1Samuel 30:6 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.**

Not only did David face the stress of worry about his wives and the families of his men, he was also faced with the anger of his men. They began to talk of stoning him, evidently holding him accountable for the loss of their families.

BUT—David encouraged himself in the LORD his God. This statement helps to affirm my beliefs concerning David's heart when he protested at not being allowed to join the Philistine army as they attacked Israel. His allegiance was to the LORD his God and, therefore, to God's people—his people. The LORD would not have encouraged David if he were not in right relationship with Him.

**1Samuel 30:7 ¶ 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.**

**1Samuel 30:8** 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*.

David called for Abiathar the priest to bring the ephod to him. He asked the LORD if he should pursue the enemy. The answer was positive; go and pursue the enemy because you will overtake them and recover all that they had taken.

**1Samuel 30:9** 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.

**1Samuel 30:10** 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.

**1Samuel 30:11** 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;

**1Samuel 30:12** 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.

David and his 600 men took out after the enemy. When they got to the brook Besor, 200 of the men had to be left behind because they just did not have the strength to continue. Later in the chapter (v24) we are told that they were left to guard the equipment. This would imply that the 400 were allowed to continue on prepared to fight without the hindrance of unnecessary equipment.

As David and the remaining 400 men continued their pursuit, they encountered an Egyptian along the way that was obviously in need of nourishment. When they brought the man to David, they gave him bread, water, a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. The food strengthened the man who had gone without food and water for three days and three nights.

**1Samuel 30:13** 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.

**1Samuel 30:14** 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.

Seeing that the man was now able to converse, David asked him to whom he belonged and where he was from. He answered that he was a young Egyptian servant of an Amalekite master. Three days ago he had fallen sick, and his master had left him behind. They had just invaded the Cherethites in the Negev (from the Hebrew), the land of Judah and the land of Caleb and had burned down the city of Ziklag.

**1Samuel 30:15** 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.

**1Samuel 30:16** 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.*

**1Samuel 30:17** 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.

David then asked the young man if he could lead them to the Amalekite army. He agreed to do so if David would swear to him by God that he would not kill him or turn him over to his master. David evidently complied because he led them to the enemy camp. In the camp the Amalekites were eating, drinking and dancing to celebrate all the spoil they had taken from the lands of the Philistines and Judah.

David and his men made a surprise attack at twilight, as day was about to dawn (from the Hebrew), and fought until the evening of the next day. (Reminder: The biblical day was from evening to morning. We would say that they fought all that day.) Only 400 young men from the army of the enemy were able to escape on camels. The rest were killed.

**1Samuel 30:18** And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two wives.

**1Samuel 30:19** 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.

**1Samuel 30:20** And David took all the flocks and the herds, *which they drave before those other cattle*, and said, *This is David's spoil.*

When the fighting ended, David and his men recovered everything the Amalekites had taken away, including his two wives and the families of his men, as well as all of their belongings. They also took spoil of all the flocks and herds that had not originally belonged to them. They called it "David's spoil."

**1Samuel 30:21** ¶ 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.

**1Samuel 30:22** 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.

As they headed toward home, they were greeted by the men that were left behind at the brook Besor. David greeted them in return. Some of the men that had fought with David did not respond with the enthusiasm with which they were greeted. They were already thinking about the division of the spoil and did not believe that the men that had not fought with them deserved a portion. They thought that all they should receive were their wives and children.

This is one of the few times that we are told of the lack of unity among the men that formed David's entourage.

**1Samuel 30:23** 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.

**1Samuel 30:24** 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.

**1Samuel 30:25** And it was *so* from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.

David rebuked the selfish men. He reminded them that it was the LORD that gave them the victory and protected them in the process. It was because of the LORD that they had recovered their families and belongings. It was the LORD that had given them the spoil.

David confidently declared to the selfish men that they wouldn't find many of the men that would agree with them. All 600 men, warriors and guardians of equipment, would benefit alike from the spoil. This principle became the law in Israel and was still in effect at the time this narrative was written.

There is an important application to be made to the Christian. The LORD will reward every person that serves him in faith and obedience. Pastors won't automatically get a bigger reward than the unknown servant who is faithful behind the scenes.

I also liked the application that Guzik made: "We should come to Jesus, and by our free will give Him everything we have, everything we are. We give our lives to Him and say, 'This is Jesus' spoil.' We give our gifts and abilities to Him and say, 'This is Jesus' spoil.' We give our possessions to Him and say, 'This is Jesus' spoil.' We give our praise to Him and say, 'This is Jesus' spoil.' We give our time to Him and say, 'This is Jesus' spoil.'"

**1Samuel 30:26** And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, *even* to his friends, saying, Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD;

**1Samuel 30:27** To *them* which *were* in Bethel, and to *them* which *were* in south Ramoth, and to *them* which *were* in Jattir,

**1Samuel 30:28** And to *them* which *were* in Aroer, and to *them* which *were* in Siphmoth, and to *them* which *were* in Eshtemoa,

**1Samuel 30:29** And to *them* which *were* in Rachal, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to *them* which *were* in the cities of the Kenites,

**1Samuel 30:30** And to *them* which *were* in Hormah, and to *them* which *were* in Chorashan, and to *them* which *were* in Athach,

**1Samuel 30:31** And to *them* which *were* in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.

David was a smart man. Not only did his men receive a portion of the spoil, but he also sent of the spoil to the elders of Judah that were his friends. He expected to be their king one day and wanted to inspire their confidence in his leadership.

David presented the gifts he sent as a present of the spoil of “the enemies of the LORD.” Gifts went to those in Bethel, south Ramoth, Jattir, Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, Rachal, Jerahmeelites, the cities of the Kenites, Hormah, Chorashan, Athach and Hebron. These were all places that his men had sought provision and/or from time to time. The IVP Commentary notes that most of these towns were in the hill country of Judah, but a few were in the Negev.