

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

May 15

### MONDAY

Dismissed by Achish, David and his men returned to Ziklag only to discover that the Amalekites had attack and plundered the village three days earlier. They had burned the town and carried the citizens away as slaves. (note: For the most part, the men were with David.) Seeing this, David and his men cried unto the Lord until they had no tears left.

#### **READ: I Samuel 30:1-4**

Notice that it was the Amalekites who did this. The Amalekites were the people whom Saul was commanded by God to utterly destroy, but when he had the chance to do so, he did not. Now they are back! Notice God's goodness in having the citizens carried away rather than slain, as would have normally been the practice. Think of the scene which met the eyes of David and his men: the smoke of the burned and smoldering city would have been the first thing they saw, even from a distance. And the closer they came, the worse it would have been. Have you ever cried until there were no more tears? I'm sure you have. Yet, even in the tears, there remains hope and there remains peace. For God is still on the throne! Think of that: God is on His throne today! He rules! In my life. In the events of my day! And He would rule in my thoughts and words and actions if I would only allow Him to do so. *Lord of my life, I crown Thee now.*

### TUESDAY

David's two wives were among those citizens of Ziklag who were carried away as captives of the Amalekites. He was distressed, not only because of the city being destroyed and his wives being taken, but also because his own men were so distraught that they were talking of stoning him! (Talk about being caught between a rock and a hard place!)

#### **READ: I Samuel 30:5-6**

The 600 men with David had left their families in Ziklag undefended in order to follow him. Now they blamed him for what happened. (This is why we ought not to depend too much upon man's approval.) But David *encouraged himself in the Lord*. He reflected on what he knew of God: that God is good; that He honors those who honor Him; that He cares for His people; and that He delights in being our strength. We need to learn from David's example: we need to reflect on God and His nature and His work. And if we do so, we will most certainly be encouraged. *For He has done great things for us, wherefore we are glad!*

### WEDNESDAY

David called upon the High Priest, Abiathar, to bring him the *ephod*. (the apron-like clothing worn by the High Priest) Then he asked the Lord for direction: "Shall I go after the Amalekites and try to rescue the people who were taken captive?" God said YES, so David and his 600 fighting men started to chase after them. But when they came to the Brook Besor, 200 of David's men were too exhausted and camped there while David and the 400 pressed on.

#### **READ: I Samuel 30:7-10**

Think about it: David had every good reason to go chasing after the Amalekites right off. They had wronged him grievously. His revenge upon them was 100% justified. Yet, he stopped and took the extra time to call the priest, get the *ephod*, and consult the Lord. Get the picture? He is growing in the faith! He is becoming more and more the "man after God's own heart." *In all thy ways, acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.* We must do that. It's not an option if we are serious about having God direct our paths. "Lord, help me to your face and hear your voice today!"

### THURSDAY

David and his 400 men come across an Egyptian who had been a slave to the Amalekites. He

lay near death in the desert after three days without food or water. They fed him and cared for him and he recovered. When questioned by David, the young slave explained that the Amalekites had invaded the south region and had burned Ziklag. On their return to their home base, because he had become sick, they left him by the roadside to die.

#### **READ: I Samuel 30:11-14**

What an unusual find - an almost-dead slave lying by the side of the road! And he becomes a source of much information and valuable help to David in the task before him. Is it not amazing how God finds such great pleasure in using people to accomplish His ends? Ordinary people! Less-than-ordinary people! On being reminded of this, our first thought might be a prayer: that God would use me. That's a great prayer and the way it should be. But we ought to see also that this means that God will use other people in my life and yours. That's what the body of Christ is: believers being used in the lives of others. We can ask "Lord, how are you using the words and actions of this one or that one to speak to me?" Such thinking might help us to treasure more those whom God brings into our lives.

### FRIDAY

To David's request that he lead them to the Amalekites, the slave replied that he would if David first swore that he would not kill him. David did so and the slave led them to a place where they gazed down on the camp of the Amalekites spread before them. The Amalekites were partying big-time because of their successful raids. And for the next 24 hours, David and his men fought and defeated them. In the end all except 400 who escaped on camelback were killed.

#### **READ: I Samuel 30:15-17**

Picture a celebration so wild that the partygoers couldn't fight back. Picture partygo-ers whose philosophy of life is eat, drink, and be merry. Picture David and his 400 crashing the party and then some of their skulls. And picture 400 elite enemy troops whose only thought was to jump on a camel and make a wild dash. Got the picture? Now see the bigger picture - God saying to each Amalekite, "Thou fool, tonight thy soul shall be demanded of thee." Let us determine to make the most of this day.

### SATURDAY

In defeating the Amalekites, David rescued his two wives (and everyone else who had been taken) and recovered all the goods. In fact, he recovered 100% of what had been taken from Ziklag, and captured lots of other spoil which the Amalekites had taken from other places. David took the livestock as his personal prize.

#### **READ: I Samuel 30:18-20**

God's blessings are obvious in all this. Not only was everyone and everything recovered, but lots more was captured as well. David and his men got back much more than they had started with! And God's plan in all of this is obvious. He wanted the Amalekites destroyed. He had commanded first Joshua and then later Saul to do so, but the Amalekites remained. So God intervened in such a way that David ends up destroying most of them in order to rescue his two wives. Maybe there was no other way to get David to do what Joshua and Saul had not. In any case, God's purposed are accomplished. And He is still accomplishing His purposes in our lives today! Hopefully we are yielding ourselves to His working.

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