

Message #72

I Samuel 30:21-31

The story of what happens to David is an amazing story of God's sovereignty. God takes a shepherd boy from the side of a field and says you will be the next king of Israel. The actual road God sovereignly orchestrated for him to become that King was not the way any of us would have scripted it.

We may remember that David and his men had been basically terminated from their job to fight for the Philistines. The Philistines sent David and his men home to Ziklag. When they got home they discovered that their city had been burned down and their wives and children had been taken captive by the Amalekites. From a human perspective, things had gone from bad to worse. There was nothing in this story that would appear to be a blessing of God.

But behind all of this was the sovereignty of God that was leading David to the great blessings of God and to him becoming the next King. **God would use this very event to enable David to not only recover the women and children, but He would use David to recover tremendous amounts of spoils that he could share with the people of Israel, which would ultimately prompt those people to rally around him as the next King. No one but a Sovereign God could come up with a scenario like this and script a story like this.**

Not only did this happen, but all of this happened at the same time Saul was going to be killed. So this entire episode is orchestrated by God to work out His perfect will.

There is a point that God's people really need to see here:

WHEN THINGS LOOK BLEAK, GOD'S PEOPLE NEED TO REMAIN FAITHFUL AND REMEMBER GOD IS SOVEREIGNLY AND COMPLETELY WORKING OUT HIS WILL.

Sometimes the situation for God's people looks grim. Don't ever forget God is still sovereign and still at work and is still in perfect control working out His will according to His plan.

When these things happened to David, there is no way he could have seen any silver lining in any of it. From David's perspective this is a total nightmare. His own men talked about killing David because their families had been taken.

But God was in this nightmare because in His Sovereign program, He would use these very horrible things to bring David to the appointment of being Israel's next king. David would not only recapture all the families, but he would end up with so much spoil that he would be able to share it with the people of Israel. That would prompt them to rally around him as the next King of Israel.

As we said, this is an amazing story of God's sovereignty. So if you find yourself surrounded by negatives, stay faithful because you have no idea what God is actually doing in your world.

This is a fascinating text. There are four narrative parts to it:

NARRATIVE PART #1 – The 200 soldiers who had been left behind come to meet David.
30:21

We may remember that after David and his men came to Ziklag and found their families gone, some of the men were totally exhausted (I Sam. 30:9-10). But they immediately took off chasing the Amalekites. They had traveled 60 miles just to get back to Ziklag and then traveled about another 16 miles and some of David's men were just too worn down to go any further, so David left 200 of these men behind to take care of the baggage (30:24) and he took 400 men with him.

When David and his men came back with the women and children and spoils, it must have been an amazing sight. The 200 men who had been guarding things saw them coming and went out to meet them.

They were elated that God had given them success. Even though they had been too exhausted to travel with David on this mission, they were thrilled with what God had done.

The exhaustion of the men had been real. This was not some girly man excuse for not going, they had been totally exhausted. When the righteous succeed, other righteous people are happy and rejoice.

Back in October of 1972, a rugby team was traveling on a jet that crashed in the Andes Mountains. Many survived the crash but after many days the search to find them was called off and all were presumed dead. Three men who survived decided the only chance of survival was for them to walk west to get help. So they started west. One of the three reached a point where he could no longer go on, so the other two told him to go back and they went on. Those two men traveled 12 days and finally got help and when the helicopters went back to get the rest, those who had been left behind broke out in an emotional celebration.

That is exactly what happened here.

NARRATIVE PART #2 – The wicked and worthless men with David do not want to share any of the spoil with these 200 men. **20:22**

Some of the 400 men who had gone with David did not want to share anything with those who didn't go. These men wanted to hoard all the spoil and not give the 200 anything except their wives and children. In fact, they wanted to give them the wives and children and then make them leave. They did not want to give them a cut of the spoils.

Now these 200 men were good men. They had been with David and the others a long time. They had fought battles together and just because they had been totally exhausted, some of the 400 did not want them to have anything. The text says they were "wicked" and "worthless" men.

That is the way God saw it. This was the same way God saw Nabal (I Sam. 25:17, 21), who was very greedy and hoarded his wealth. Their thinking is because they did not go with us to track down the Amalekites, why should they get anything.

But these 200 men had carefully guarded everything while they were gone. They guarded their gear and food. Had David and his men been defeated, they would have been too.

In the work of God, some people are more front line than others, but all the people are needed. Some people are front line soldiers and others are behind scene servants. All are on the same team in the family of God.

These 200 were faithful and loyal soldiers who were on the team.

NARRATIVE PART #3 – David decides that all would receive part of the spoils. **30:23-25**

Notice that David calls these wicked and worthless men of his “my brothers.” There will always be very troubled people in the family. There will always be those who are greedy, wicked and worthless.

Now notice carefully from **verse 20** that this is **David’s spoil**. Without David, this rich supply would be nonexistent. This is not their spoil, it is David’s. David was the key man of God here. God gave them victory through him. Without David, they would have never even had any of this.

David could have said this is all mine. He could have said I am not sharing this with anybody, but that was not David’s heart or mind. It has often been said the man who can conquer prosperity is far greater than the man who can conquer adversity.

David rejected the request of the worthless and wicked men and he decided to share his wealth with all equally.

There are three major actions David took:

Action #1 - David reminded all that God had given them victory. **30:23**

The reason why they had this spoil was not due to their military prowess; it was a gift from God. David said God is the one who gave us victory and gave us all of these spoils. This was a much bigger victory than some private enterprise. This victory was from the hand of God. David saw it as a gift from God.

Action #2 - David decided that all of his men should share the spoil equally. **30:24**

There is a higher law than self-interest and that law is being a team player. Those men who stayed behind were part of the team. They guarded everything while the others were gone.

Everyone who is faithful on the team needs to share in the spoils of the victory. Stingy people don't go far and don't last long. Just ask Nabal.

Action #3 - David decreed that all Israel should share in this victory. **30:25**

It did not matter to David whether one was a member of the band of soldiers or just part of the citizenship of Israel. David wanted all to share in the spoils of this victory.

NARRATIVE PART #4 – David distributes the spoils all over the land. **30:26-31**

When President Trump took office in 2016, one of the first things he did was to go after tax cuts for all Americans so they could share with wealth that the government had taken from them. It was a very Davidic move.

When David got back to Ziklag, he immediately started to distribute some of the goods. All of the cities named here are cities located in the southern part of the Promised Land.

This land was specifically located in the tribes of Judah and Simeon.

This is a major distribution of the spoils. These were major places where God's people lived. The majority of places mentioned here are not specifically identifiable today, but we may assume they were significant places when David made these distributions. There are sixteen distributions that David makes of the spoils:

Distribution #1 - He sent some of the spoils to Judah's elders. **30:26a**

This speaks volumes. David thinks of God first. He wants the elders to have their share and he starts with them.

Distribution #2 - He sent some of the spoils to his friends. **30:26b**

These were special people who were near and dear to David. David appreciated loyalty. Loyalty will be rewarded.

Distribution #3 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Bethel. **30:27a**

Bethel was a city of Simeon.

Distribution #4 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Ramoth. **30:27b**

Ramoth was a city of the tribe of Simeon.

Distribution #5 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Jattir. **30:27c**

Jattir was a city of the tribe of Judah (Josh. 15:48)

Distribution #6 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Aroer. **30:28a**

Distribution #7 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Siphmoth. **30:28b**

Distribution #8 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Eshtemoa. **30:29a**

Eshtemoa was a city set aside for the Aaronic priesthood.

Distribution #9 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Racal. **30:29a**

Distribution #10 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites. **30:29b**

Distribution #11 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in the cities of the Kenites. **30:29c**

Distribution #12 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Hormah. **30:30a**

Hormah was a priestly city of the Simeonites (Joshua 19:4).

Distribution #13 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Bor-ashan. **30:30b**

Distribution #14 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Athach. **30:30c**

Distribution #15 - He sent some of the spoils to those who were in Hebron. **30:31a**

Hebron was located about 14 miles south of Jerusalem. This would become David's capital city for a while (II Sam. 2:1). This by far was the most significant city in southern Judah. It was an Aaronic priestly city (Joshua 21:11, 13).

By virtue of the fact that three priestly cities were given spoils—Eshtemoa, Hormah and Hebron—we may assume that David is clearly showing his intention to well provide for the priests.

Distribution #16 - He sent some of the spoils to all places where David's men went. **30:31b**

Any person who had been nice to David and his men received a portion of the spoils. David never forgot his friends and allies.

This action would certainly endear them to David.

LESSONS:

- 1. All people of God are valuable in the program of God.**
- 2. People of God have different assignments and responsibilities in the work of God.
Some are front line, some are behind scene servants.**
- 3. Loyalty to a leader of God will be honored and recognized, remembered and rewarded.**