

# Finding Strength in the Lord (1 Samuel 30:1-31 & Philippians 4:10-14)

17-Nov-19

There are **Bibles** in front of you

And we're looking at **1 Samuel chapter 30** - and we'll also be referring to **Philippians 4:10-14**

You've got the usual **outline** for you to **take notes** - if that helps you **concentrate**.

Let me ask **God** for His **help** and **guidance** first - let's **pray**...

## Recap

- Just a **quick recap** where we got up to

### [PowerPoint 1-David and Saul]

- **David** has been **on the run from King Saul** for some time
- King Saul is out to **kill David**
- David has been **flying solo without God** - in chapters 27 and 29
- And he ran off to the **Philistine territory** to escape Saul
- And David **befriended** the Philistine King **Achish**

### [PowerPoint 2-Ziklag]

- Last week - chapter 30 - David and his men were **sent away by the Achish** back to the town of **Ziklag** - because the Philistine **commanders** didn't want David fighting with them

### [Explain Map]

## Intro

- As we pick up the story today in chapter 31

### [PowerPoint 3-Town burnt down]

- When David and his men returned to Ziklag - they found that the Amalekites had **burnt Ziklag to the ground (v1) and taken everyone away** - all the men's families (v2-3)
- Now, the **Amalekites** were **arch enemies** of Israel from way back
  - They were **extremely wicked** people
  - Back in **Exodus chapter 37?** The **Amalekites** had **attacked the Israelites** when they were **coming out of Egypt**
  - And in **1 Sam 15?** **Saul** was told by **God** to **totally wipe out the Amalekites** - but **Saul didn't fully obey God** - and so here they are again attacking
  - All because **Saul didn't fully obey God's instructions** - which is why **God rejected Saul** - and **anointed David** as the next King
- Any way when **David and his men** saw Ziklag burnt to the ground, they were **devastated**
- The Amalekites have even taken **David's two wives** away - Ahinoam and Abigail
- Imagine how **everyone felt?**
- It would be like the **bush fires at the moment** - where people return to their **home** and its **burnt to the ground** - **everything gone**

- For David - as the leader - the matter is worse - in that **his men blame him** - it was **David's idea** to go to the land of the Philistines - and take 600 men with him
- As the **leader** - he **hadn't left enough protection** in his town - to protect all the women and children - and now they're all gone
- The **men** are **so** angry with David - v6 - they're **ready to stone him**
- **Illustration** - when my children were much younger - in the **90s** - there were **bush fires** in the Gosford area - and we live near the bush - as some of you know - One morning I woke up to the sound of voices just over the fence - it turned out to be some **bush care volunteers** - tidying up the bush - but they'd had left all these piles of dead dry branches
- I asked them **if they were going to take the dead branches away** - they said no - that they were just making the bush tidier
- I think I'm right in saying that **dead branches burn quicker and easier than growing green branches**
- I have to say **I was pretty angry** - the first thing I thought of - was someone throwing a **cigarette** into these piles of dry branches and **up goes the fence and then our house** - and that puts our **family in danger**
- Nothing - gets us **upset** quicker than knowing **our family are in danger**
- That's how David's men felt
- Now David's in danger - because the men are **so** angry
- What will he do?

#### [PowerPoint 4-Where do we find strength]

- Where do we find strength - when we're in trouble - especially when we've got no strength left, ourselves?

- Perhaps you've **lost a loved one** - and the **pain and loss** and **loneliness** are so **unbearable**
- Or perhaps **you** or a **loved one** - have been **diagnosed** with a serious **illness** - and the **future** is just so **uncertain**
- Or what about the **people** affected by the **bushfires** at the moment - who've **lost everything** - where do they find their strength?
- Or perhaps you've been in or are currently in a **difficult or toxic relationship** - and you can't see a way forward
- Or perhaps you've had a **number of trials one after another** - and the **last trial is the final straw** - and you're completely spent and **traumatized** - there's **nothing left inside you to keep going**
- I would imagine that's how David felt?
  - He's **tried** to do the **right thing** for the Lord
  - **God** has **chosen** Him as the **next anointed King**
  - But since then - **life hasn't been easy**
  - The current King - Saul - has been out to kill him ever since
  - David's even had **2 occasions** when he could have **taken Saul out** - but he **respected the Lord** - that is was the **Lord's job** - to **remove Saul** and install David as King
  - He's been on the run - for so long
  - He's even tried going to another country - but that didn't work out either
  - And now he comes back to the whole town burnt down and everyone taken captive
  - And of course, now he gets **all the blame**

- But notice **David's reaction** here...
  - He **doesn't complain**
  - He **doesn't feel sorry for himself**
  - He **doesn't blame** anyone
  - He **doesn't blame God**
  - I'm pretty sure **I'd be complaining**, and **feeling sorry for myself** - and **blaming God** - and saying **it's not fair**
  - **Jesus never said** our lives would be **easy** or **fair** - did he - he wasn't a false recruiter?

### [PowerPoint 5-V6]

- Look what David did at the **end of verse 6** - the **key verse** for me
- **But David found strength in the Lord his God**
  - It literally means to bind or tie closely to the Lord - like we're bound together with the Lord - so we're not relying on ourselves - because there is nothing left in us
- Now it's all very well to say **David found strength in the Lord**
- That can sound a bit abstract
- It would be helpful for us to understand - **practically** what **finding strength in the Lord** looks like?
- So, let's see...

### [PowerPoint 6-Heading]

#### Handing the Problem to God (1 Samuel 30:7-8)

Firstly, finding strength in the Lord looks like - **handing the problem to God** - that's in verses 7 and 8.

## [PowerPoint 6a-handing problem to God]

- Notice what **David** does in v7 - He comes back to **God**
- And he **hands** the **problem** straight to **God**
- He asks **Abiathar**, the priest, to bring the **ephod** (Urim and Thummim) - and he **inquires** of the **Lord**
- David asks God (v8) **shall I pursue the raiding party (of Amalekites)?**
- **Will I overtake them?**
- And the **answer** is **Yes**
- How do **we** know if God's answer is yes or no, today?
- **We don't have an Ephod?**
- Well there are number of ways...
  - **Prayer** is **one way**, especially when you're unsure of God's will for your life. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" ([James 1:5](#)). "Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him" ([Psalm 37:7](#)). If you don't know what to pray, you can always personalize and pray verses such as, "Show **me** the way I should go, for to You I lift up **my** soul" ([Psalm 143:8](#)) and, "Guide **me** in Your truth and teach **me**" ([Psalm 25:5](#)).
  - The **main way God speaks to us is through His Word**. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)). If Scripture commands something of us, there's no need to hesitate and wonder if it's really God's will for us. He cares so much about us that He already gave a plain and clear guidebook to life - the Bible. "Your Word is a

lamp to my feet and a light for my path" ([Psalm 119:105](#)). "The Law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple" ([Psalm 19:7](#)).

- Also, **God never contradicts Himself**, so He'll never ask you to do something that contradicts Scripture. He will never ask you to sin. He will never ask you to do something Jesus wouldn't do. We need to immerse ourselves in the Bible, so we will know which actions meet God's standards. "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth: meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything that is written in it" ([Joshua 1:8](#)).
- As Christians, we also have the **Holy Spirit** to discern what is, or is not, God's will for our lives. "The Spirit of truth . . . will guide you into all truth" ([John 16:13](#)). Sometimes the **Holy Spirit** will either agitate our conscience if we're making a wrong decision, or He will pacify and encourage us when we're leaning toward the right decision. [that's generally the way the Lord speaks to me]. Even if He doesn't intervene in such noticeable ways, we can have confidence that He's always in charge. Sometimes **God will alter a situation** without us even realizing He has acted. "The Lord will guide you always" ([Isaiah 58:11](#)).
- If God is calling you to take a [leap of faith](#), be encouraged by His presence. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" ([Joshua 1:9](#)). And remember, "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you" ([1 Peter 5:7](#)). "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on

your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths" ([Proverbs 3:5-6](#)).

- Back to our passage - **Handing the problem to God - brings hope and reenergizes David** and his men - and it's the same for us. **Hope always reenergizes us too!**
- Notice in all of this - **who are we relying on?**
- We are relying on **God's strength** with the problem **not our strength**

**Being content in every situation (1 Samuel 30:6, 21-25, Phil 4:10-12)**

Second, finding strength in the Lord looks like - being content in every situation

[PowerPoint 6b-Being content in every situation]

- In this passage **people** are very **fickle**
- **One minute, David is the villain** - he's got them into so much bother - they're **ready to stone him** (v6)
- **A while later** - after God has helped David win the victory over the Amalekites - **David is the best thing since sliced bread** - and some of the **fighting men - don't want to share the spoils with the men who were too tired to continue**
- Notice how **David** stays **consistent** throughout the whole affair.
  - He handles the situation - by **completely trusting God**
    - He trusts **God** when he has **nothing** and the **men are ready to stone him**
    - And he trusts **God** when he's in the **battle**

- And he **trusts God** when he makes the **decision** with the **spoils** - everyone gets an **equal share**
- Isn't that the way God works? **God does not show favouritism** (Romans 2:11) and we're **all equal in Jesus** - There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)
- **God shows grace equally** to everyone and **Jesus is available to everyone**
- Sometimes we can be like **David's men who stayed behind** - we're too tired to continue
- And sometimes we can be like **David's men who fought the battle** - and **didn't want to share** - and we can be **selfish** and **greedy** - *thinking it's all of us - and none of God*
- We need to take a leaf out of the **Apostle Paul's** book and **learn to be content in all things**
- **Paul** - in his life suffered **shipwrecks, imprisonment** and **persecution** - but in Phil 4:12 he says - <sup>12</sup> **I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.**
- Finding strength in God - is saying **I'm content** in your **capable hands God**
  - - if I end up with **nothing** - I trust you **God** -
  - if I end up with **plenty** - I trust you **God** -

- **all that matters** are that I have a **relationship with you God** - and you're with me all the way through my life
- The verse I became a Christian on - when I was in a desperate situation in my life - was Rom 8:31 - **if God is for me, who can be against me** - I've got the BEST on my side - everyone else against me - can't match God - He's the BEST - that's David's attitude here and it should be ours
- The way I try to explain it to people is like this
  - We have **2 types of relationships**
  - **A vertical relationship** with God - that's the **most important** relationship - and **must be maintained always** - and God will always be there at His end
  - And **horizontal relationships** - which are **human relationships** - and they unfortunately depend on **sinful human beings** like each of us - so from time to time - either we mess up the relationship or the other person does - or both of us do
  - But the **important thing is to keep the vertical relationship with God** going all the time - and He will help with everything - in His own way and in His own time

**Acknowledging that God is in control of everything (1 Sam 30:23-25, Phil 4:13)**

**Thirdly, finding strength in the Lord looks like - acknowledging that God is in control of everything**

**[PowerPoint 6c-God in control]**

- As we look at David's situation - we can see that **God is so in control of everything** here
- First off back in chapter 29 - **God arranged for David to be removed from this compromising position** where he was marching in the Philistine army and ready to **attack his own people**, Israel
- **God knows** that there **will be a battle** between the Philistines and the Israelites (in the next chapter, 1 Sam 31) and it will **end up with Saul being killed** - and so **God arranges** for David to be **out of the picture**
- So **even though David** arrives back in **Ziklag** to a **terrible situation** - God has prevented David from being involved in the battle that the Israelites will lose
- Notice - **God is in control** - of the **battle against the Amalekites** in this chapter too
- **God provided help** in the form of an **Egyptian slave** - a slave of an Amalekite - who was left behind because he was sick - this **slave led David** and his men to the **Amalekites' camp** - where the **Amalekites are complacent** - thinking they're job was done - and are in the middle of **partying**
- A **warning for us** - **not** to be **complacent** - see 1 Cor 10:12 - **so, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!**
- **David** and his **600 men** are well **outnumbered** - but **God gives** them the **victory** - and more **plunder**
- God blesses David and his men - and **everything is restored** to David and his men - and more besides

- **David finds strength** in this chapter because he **knows God is in control** of everything - David has **stopped flying solo** and **come back to trusting God** in everything
- That's **where we can find our strength** - by saying to ourselves - **God is in control** - why am I anxious? Why am I giving up? Why am I doubting? Why am I afraid?
- If **God created everything** just by **speaking**?
- If **God sent His son** to **fix our sin** and give us **eternal life**?
- Isn't it logical that **He cares about every detail** - isn't that how **God is consistent** - **the same yesterday, today and forever?** (Hebrews 13:8)
- Isn't that why the Apostle Paul can say in Phil 4:13 - **I can do all this through him who gives me strength**
- Will that be **our mantra** - as we face the next thing - when we have no more strength left - can we join Paul and say - it's ok - **I can do this - because the Lord will give me the strength?**

### **Conclusion (Pointing to Jesus)**

**[PowerPoint 7-Conclusion]**

To **finish up** then:

**We all have a problem we can't fix** - which is our **sin**

No matter what strength and wisdom we have humanly speaking - it's not enough to fix our sin

**Only Jesus can fix our sin**

### [PowerPoint 7a-Victory]

Just like **God won the victory for David and his men** over the wicked Amalekites - **Jesus won the victory over sin** by His death on a **cruel cross** - and **He won the victory over the punishment of our sin** - which is **death** and separation from God forever - through His **glorious resurrection**

So, **Jesus has defeated sin and death, once and for all.** If we care to believe in Him.

### [PowerPoint 7b-Rescue]

**David rescued his people from captivity**  
**Jesus rescued His people from captivity of sin.**

### [PowerPoint 7c-Share the Spoils]

And just like **David cared for everyone** - not just himself - and **shared the spoils** of his victory

**Jesus - sacrificed His life** for all - and **shares the spoils of His victory**

- We have **forgiveness**
- We have **eternal life** promised - and to look forward to

**And** He has given us the **Holy Spirit** and it's the Holy Spirit that supplies our **spiritual gifts** (the **spoils of Jesus' victory**) for each member of the body of Christ - which is His church - and so **each one of us** can **use those spiritual gifts** to **encourage** and **help** and **strengthen one another**

Let's pray...