

ZIKLAG

THE ZIKLAG VIBE CHECK:

Finding God When Everything Goes Left

First Sunday 2026 | RFBC Teen Church

Key Term 1	Ziklag: a “border town”; the “in-between place”
Key Term 2	Exegesis (ex-uh-JEE-sis): The process of drawing the original meaning out of a Bible passage.
Key Term 3	The Amalekites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Opportunistic nomadic raiders” • They sought revenge from an earlier raid
Key Term 4	Ephod: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A priestly garment used to seek God’s specific “Yes” or “No” for a situation.

THE SCHOLAR’S
CORNER
(CONTEXT AND
TERMS)

THE SCHOLAR'S
CORNER – CONT'D
(CONTEXT)

- David was a refugee
- He was in a “waiting season” before becoming King. He’s not yet where he will ultimately be (on the Throne as King of Israel), but he’s not where he used to be (in the pasture tending the sheep).
- The Lesson: Trouble often hits you when you are in-between blessings.

THE ENEMY'S STRATEGY (V. 1-6A)

The Amalekites
were ancient
enemies of Isreal

“Guerilla
Warfare”—they
did not fight fair!

They attacked
when their enemy
was tired or
distracted

What did the
Amalekites take?

Application question: What is
trying to steal your 2026 joy
before the first full week of the
year even ends?



Primary Quote from verse (NIV): "But David found strength in the Lord his God."



King James Version: "But David encouraged himself in the Lord."



Contemporary English: "But he felt the Lord giving him strength..."



Application: Reach inward to what you know about God. The word of God and the Holy Spirit will comfort and strengthen you—if you allow Them.

THE INTERNAL SHIFT (V. 6B)

HERE'S WHAT WE SEE IN THIS TEXT:

- Grief: It is ok to cry (v 4)
- Pressure: People might turn on you (v 6a). The people were very “bitter.” They were upset because their families were left defenseless.
- The Shift/Pivot: You cannot wait for someone else to encourage you (v 6b). You may never see that “like” or get that “follow” (ok, ok—it’s cheesy, but you know what I mean). Encouragement and strength come from the Lord! (Psalm 121:2)



THE EPHOD STRATEGY

- After David sought God's strength. He then asked God for direction. (He asked for an Ephod.) He didn't respond out of emotion. He asked, "Shall I pursue?" And then waited for an answer.
- The Ephod was a linen vest worn by the High Priest (in this text, Abiathar). Attached to it was the **Breastpiece of Judgment**.
- Inside a pocket on the breastpiece were two objects called the **Urim** and **Thummim**. They were sacred objects (we don't know what they looked like) but they were used to receive a "Yes" or "No" from God.

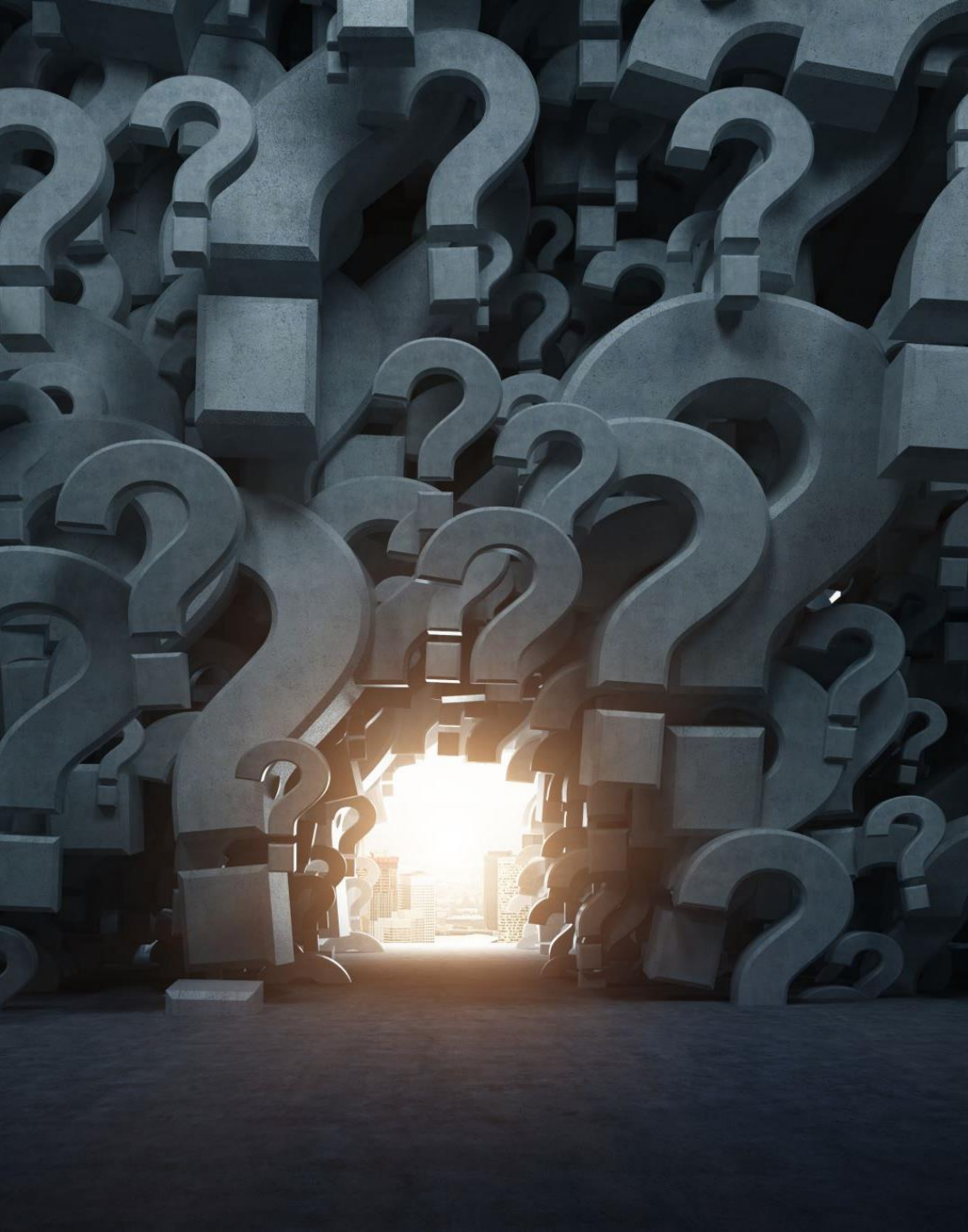
We don't need an Ephod. Because of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the word of God, we have direct access.

APPLICATION (VERSES 7-10)

There is a difference between **reacting** (acting out of hurt) and **responding** (acting out of prayer).

RECOVERY (V 8-10)

- **Text:** "Pursue them... for you will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue."
- What does "rescue" (or recover) mean?
- What does it mean in this context?



CLOSING THOUGHT

Trouble is the middle of
the story, not the end.

THE CONNECTION WITH PASTOR SIMMONS' MESSAGE "WHAT
TO DO IN TIME OF TROUBLE"
HERE'S A BATTLE PLAN:

The World's Response	David's Response (1 Sam 30)	Our 2026 Application
Blame others	Encouraged himself—the Lord strengthened him.	Don't let your "friends" opinions define your God.
Give up	Inquired of the Lord	Pause and pray before you act, post, or pivot.
Stay stuck	Pursued & Recovered	God can give you back what the enemy stole.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER THIS WEEK

Week 1 of 2026

QUESTIONS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLERS (ACTION FOCUS)

- **Observation:** Look at verse 3. How did the city look when they arrived? How would that look if it happened to your school or your house today?
- **Emotion:** The Bible says the men cried until they couldn't cry anymore. Why is it important to know that even "tough" warriors like David's men showed their feelings?
- **Application:** David "encouraged himself." What are three things you can say to yourself when you feel like you have failed?

QUESTIONS FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS (INTERNAL FOCUS)

- **Analysis:** In verse 6, the people David led turned on him and wanted to stone him. How do you stay faithful to your calling when the people "on your team" start to doubt you?
- **Discernment:** David asked God, "Shall I pursue?" Why didn't he just react out of anger? What is the danger of making a big decision when you are "greatly distressed"?
- **Strategy:** How can you apply the "David Shift" (crying → encouraging himself → asking God) to a conflict you're currently facing with a friend or parent?

QUESTIONS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS (LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS FOCUS)

- **Theological Inquiry:** Why do you think God allowed Ziklag to burn in the first place, considering David was the "anointed" future king?
- **Leadership Ethics:** David's men wanted to blame him for their loss. As a leader, how do you handle being the "scapegoat" for problems you didn't create?
- **Biblical Integration:** Compare David's response in Ziklag to how we often see people handle things like "cancel culture" or public failure in 2026. What does David's "Ephod moment" teach us about seeking divine counsel over public opinion?