

# THRU BIBLE

## 1 Samuel 30—31 | “The Death of Saul”

### I. THE AMALEKITES RAID. (30)

#### A. (v. 1)

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;”**

a. *“the third day”*

1) It took 3 days to travel from Aphek to Ziklag.

#### B. (v. 2)

1. **“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.”**

a. *“they slew not any”*

1) There were no men killed because the men were already with David.

2) The Amalekites were probably going to sell the *captives* as slaves to Egypt.

#### C. (v. 3)

1. **“So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire;...”**

a. As they were approaching the city of Ziklag, they saw the smoke of a fire that cannot be just from a little fire to cook or something. No doubt, they saw the billowing smoke of the city.

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### D. (v. 4)

1. ***“Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.”***
  - a. We can read right over this verse, but stop for a moment and imagine the depth of emotion here and what they were actually going through.
    - 1) I’m sure they assumed that everyone was dead.
    - 2) **Illust.** - Imagine that you left your family for the weekend with your friends, and when you drove home, you saw your town destroyed and on fire, and your family is gone!

### E. (v. 6)

1. ***“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:...”***
  - a. Imagine the pressure that David is under:
    - 1) He’s been on the run for his life from King Saul.
    - 2) His first wife was given to another man.
    - 3) He’s been leading a militia of 600 misfits.
    - 4) He’s afraid that Saul will eventually kill him, so in a lapse of faith, he runs to the Philistines in Gath.

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- 5) He’s had to live undercover for the last year and four months.
- 6) He comes back to where he’s staying, and his 2 wives are gone, along with all the women and children of his 600 men.
  - a) **NOTE:** David’s distress came from a lot of unknowns:
    - i. He did not know who his enemy was at this point.
    - ii. He did not know if his wives were dead or alive.
    - iii. All he knew is that the families were gone, and the city was in ashes.
  - b) **NOTE:** It is always tragic when our lapse of faith negatively effects others.
    - i. David’s wives, along with all the other women and children, would not be in this situation if he had sought the LORD and trusted the LORD to fulfill His promises.
    - ii. David should have sought the LORD instead of just being directed by his emotions and leaving in fear (27:1).
  - c) **KEY:** Just know that if you are led by your emotions, often times it will just lead to more headaches and effect those who you love.
    - i. Cf. **Jeremiah 17:9** - “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and*

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*desperately wicked: who can know it?”*

- ii. Cf. **Proverbs 16:25** - “*There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*”

b. “*distressed*” - Heb. “*vexed; tied up; cramped up*”

1) **Q** = Have you ever been in a situation where you were all *tied up* in knots over it? Especially if it was a difficult situation that was your fault?...

a) It’s that *anxious FEELING* you get when:

- i. Your boss calls you into the office.
- ii. You get called into HR for a complaint by another employee.
- iii. You have to go to the principal’s office.
- iv. Your spouse sits you down to talk about what you did wrong that hurt your child’s feelings.
- v. You are the center of attention, everybody is looking at you, and they are all upset with you.

**2. “...but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.”**

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- a. David had gone into the Philistine territory because of a lapse of faith, and now tragedy has struck. He does not know what to do. So, he does the only thing he can do, and that is repent and come back to the LORD.
- b. **NOTE:** When we are faced with tragedy, we turn to the Lord for *encouragement* and *strength*.
  - 1) We can receive so much encouragement and comfort from the Scriptures in times of disaster.
- c. There is often THE NEED OF ENCOURAGEMENT!
  - 1) In times of DISCOURAGEMENT.
    - a) Trying to do the right thing can often be discouraging.
      - i. People will turn on you.
      - ii. The Apostle Paul said, “*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*” (**Galatians 6:9**)
    - b) Getting blamed for something you are not responsible for.
  - 2) In times of UNCERTAINTY.
    - a) You don’t know where to turn.
    - b) You don’t know how things are going to work out.
  - 3) In times of PRESSURE.

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- a) The load gets heavier than you can carry.
- b) The task is more than you can handle.
- 4) In times of FEAR.
  - a) Your security is being threatened.
- 5) In times of DEPRESSION.
  
- d. HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF IN THE LORD.
  - 1) David called upon the Lord.
    - a) He sought God’s wisdom and counsel.
      - i. Q = Why is it that we leave prayer as a last resort?...
      - ii. When everything else fails, pray!
  - 2) By singing spiritual songs.
    - a) It can lift your depressed mood.
    - b) Force yourself to sing.
      - i. You won’t want to.
      - ii. It will take real effort.
    - c) Turn on worship music.
  - 3) Congregate together with God’s people.
    - a) When the wolf finds a sheep isolated from the flock, poor sheep.

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- b) We receive strength when we worship together.
  - c) How often have we come in battered and bruised by the world, and God’s Spirit begins to minister to us and we are revived.
- 4) Getting your mind on God and His Word.
- e. **NOTE:** There might be times were you find yourself in a place where you have negatively effected those who you love because of a decision you made and it’s just too much! What are you going to do?... I would say, like David, just go to the Lord and encourage yourself in Him!
- 1) There have been times that I have made decisions that have negatively impacted those that I care about, and it’s never been easy! But, what it did was make me get on my knees and be *strengthened* and *encouraged in the Lord*.
    - a) I don’t say this for pity or to seek encouragement from others, but it is difficult to be a leader. Sometimes you make decisions that are not popular, and sometimes those decisions end in failure and bring disappointment to others. It can be very lonely. However, a good leader will always come back to seek the Lord and try to realign with God’s will. He will *“encourage himself in the LORD his God.”*
    - b) The Apostle Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia, *“For do I now persuade men, or*

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*God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.” (Galatians 1:10)*

- f. David is in a pickle, but how does he respond?... By going to the Lord!

### F. (v. 7)

**1. “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.”**

- a. This is what David should have done before going to Philistia, but he didn't because of his lapse of faith (27:1).

### G. (v. 8)

**1. “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.”**

- a. “David enquired of the LORD”

- 1) One of the ways that David encouraged himself in the LORD was through prayer. He prayed for direction from the LORD.
- 2) **NOTE:** Through prayer, David received 2 things from the LORD:
  - a) He received directions from the Lord.
  - b) He received promises from the Lord.



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### H. (v. 9)

**1. “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.”**

a. “the brook Besor”

- 1) The *brook Besor* is known in Hebrew as *Nahal HaBesor* or *HaBesor Stream*.
- 2) It is a wadi in southern Israel and the largest stream in northern Negev.<sup>1</sup>

### I. (v. 14)

**1. “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.”**

a. “Cherethites”

- 1) The name *Kerethites* shows that the Philistines originated from Crete ([Amos 9:7](#)).
- 2) The name *Kerethites* is used to identify the Philistines ([Ezek. 25:16](#); [Zeph. 2:5](#)), and because many of the Philistines came from Crete, they were referred to as the *Kerethites* for that reason.

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- 3) Later on, they will become a part of David’s army (2 Sam. 8:18; 15:18; 20:7, 23; 1 Kings 1:38, 44)

### J. (v. 23)

1. **“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.”**

a. *“that which the LORD hath given us”*

- 1) David realized that it was THE GRACE OF GOD that allowed them to recover their families, their stuff, and the spoils from the Amalekites.

b. *“who hath preserved us”*

- 1) David recognizes that it was God’s hand that kept and *preserved* them and their families alive.

c. *“and delivered the company that came against us into our hand”*

- 1) David is giving credit of the victory to God.

### K. (v. 24)

1. **“For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his**

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***part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.”***

- a. **NOTE:** David establishes a national principle (v. 25) that those who stay behind to support the troops that go out into battle will receive the same reward, though they were not on the front lines.
- b. **KEY:** I believe that this principle applies to the Church as we support missionaries.
  - 1) Missionaries are like those that go into battle in the frontlines of evangelism, whether it’s domestic missions or international missions.
  - 2) **Q** = How can those of us who stay with the stuff support our missionaries?...
    - a) Pray for missionary workers.
    - b) Financially support them to carry out their work.
  - 3) **KEY:** At the Judgment Seat of Christ, I believe that those who supported missionaries through prayer and financial support will share equally in the rewards.
    - a) Cf. **Philippians 4:10-18** - *“But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry,*

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*both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. **Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.** But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.”*

### L. (v. 26)

1. **“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;”**
  - a. “he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah”
    - 1) David is showing his loyalty to his own Tribe of Judah, and not to the Philistines in Gath.
  - b. “even to his friends”
    - 1) These were those that helped him in his flights from Saul.

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### M. (v. 27)

**1. “To them which were in Bethel, and to them which were in south Ramoth, and to them which were in Jattir,”**

a. “Bethel”

- 1) This NOT the famous Bethel of Benjamin because he specifies that these cities were limited in Judah.
- 2) This is Bethuel/Bethul of Judah ([Josh. 19:4](#); [1 Chron. 4:30](#)).

b. “south Ramoth” - Heb. *Ramot Negev* ([Josh. 19:8](#))

c. “Jattir”

- 1) A Levitical city for Judah.

### N. (v. 28)

**1. “And to them which were in Aroer, and to them which were in Siphmoth, and to them which were in Eshtemoa,”**

a. “Eshtemoa” - Levitical city ([Josh. 15:15](#); [21:14](#))

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### O. (v. 29)

**1. “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,”**

a. “Rachal”

1) According to the LXX, this refers to Carmel of Judah, the area of Abigail and Nabal.

b. “Jerahmeelites”

1) *Jerahmeel* was a Judean clan (1 Chron. 2:9).

c. “Kenites”

1) A branch of the Midianites that sided with Israel.

### P. (v. 30)

**1. “And to them which were in Hormah, and to them which were in Chorashan, and to them which were in Athach,”**

a. “Hormah”

1) This was a Negev town.

b. “Chorashan”

1) Another town in the Negev.

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### Q. (v. 31)

#### 1. **“And to them which were in Hebron,...”**

##### a. “Hebron”

- 1) This would become David’s first capitol.

#### 2. **“...and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.”**

- a. All these places mentioned were all the places that David and his men would hide. They were the ones that gave David shelter for those 10 years while David was on the run from Saul, so David chooses to reward them for their actions.

- b. “wont to haunt” - Heb. “accustomed to rove; known to prowl”

## II. THE DEATH OF SAUL. (31)

### A. (v. 9)

#### 1. **“And they cut off his head, and stripped off his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to publish it in the house of their idols, and among the people.”**

- a. “in the house of their idols”

- 1) Probably included Dagon.

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### B. (v. 10)

1. **“And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan.”**

a. “Bethshan”

- 1) Beit She’an is located<sup>2</sup> at the junction of the Jordan River Valley and the Jezreel Valley.
- 2) It became known as the Greek city Scythopolis, and became the leading city of the Decapolis, the only one west of the Jordan River, under the Roman Empire.

### C. (v. 12)

1. **“All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.”**

a. “Jabesh”

- 1) **Q** = Why would those of Jabesh-Gilead risk their lives to save the bodies of Saul and his sons?...
  - a) This was the town that Saul had rescued from the Ammonites (1 Sam. 11:1-11), and although 32 years have now passed, they remembered what Saul did for them. That rescue is now repaid by this rescue 32 years later.

<sup>2</sup> DMS 32° 30' 0" N, 35° 30' 0" E    Decimal 32.5, 35.5  
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- b. *“went all night”*
  - 1) This was a distance of 15 miles from Jabesh to Bethshan.
  
- c. *“the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons”*
  - 1) It didn’t say earlier in the Text, but we now know here that the Philistines did the same thing to Saul’s *sons* that they did to him.
  
- d. *“and burnt them there”*
  - 1) Cremation was not a Jewish practice, but they probably did it here to prohibit further desecration.
  - 2) **NOTE:** This Text has often brought up the question of cremation.
    - a) I personally have no problem with cremation.
      - i. Cremation does in 37 minutes what takes place in 37 years.
      - ii. God told Adam, *“For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”* (Gen. 3:19)
  
- e. **NOTE:** This is the end of Saul’s life, and you can summarize Saul’s career in 3 ways:

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- 1) It began with promise, but ended in sadness.
- 2) It began with victory, but ended in defeat.
- 3) It began with hope, but ended in despair.