

Take It Back

Scripture Reference:

1 Samuel 30:1-8: (NIV): David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it, and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way. When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. David's two wives had been captured—Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God. Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, "Bring me the ephod." Abiathar brought it to him, and David inquired of the Lord, "Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?" "Pursue them," he answered. "You will certainly overtake them and succeed in the rescue."

Main Idea: The word Ziklag means winding or turning course. As David's men arrive, they see Ziklag on fire. Even though the physical distance between David's purpose of being the King seemed to now be at a great distance, the devil incidentally had pushed David closer to becoming the leader God destined him to be. Even when our home has been burned and all we know has been taken, can we rest in Him and find direction for our next step?

Four lessons God teaches us in Ziklag:

- 1. Ziklag is a place where you can only depend on God** - Ziklag is the place where we learn that the things we thought we could count on are not available. No matter how bad life gets, at least we can go home to find rest and peace, right? But not always. This happens because sometimes our plans must die so that God's plan can thrive.

1 Samuel 30:1 (NIV): "David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked Ziklag and burned it."

Question: Have you ever discovered that the place you thought you could count on was in flames? Were you able to encourage yourself in the Lord like David? If not, who did God send to strengthen you?

- 2. Ziklag is a place where God empties you of your pain and fills you with tears** - Brokenness must flow so that God can fill us with His power. What we sow in tears, we reap in joy!

1 Samuel 30:3-4 (NIV): "When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep."

2 Corinthians 12:8-9 (NIV): *“Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹ But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”*

- 3. Ziklag is the place to learn to pray** - This was a place where David could not escape with his sling or fix with his harp. God desires that we always seek Him. There are, however, critical moments of decision in our life where we have to seek God and pray for direction.

1 Samuel 30:7-8 (NIV): *“Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelek, “Bring me the ephod.” Abiathar brought it to him, and David inquired of the Lord, “Shall I pursue this raiding party? Will I overtake them?”*

- 4. Ziklag is a place where we can be grateful for rejection** - If David had not been rejected, they wouldn’t have been back home in time to see the smoke. If they hadn’t been rejected, they could have lost their family and all of their possessions.

1 Samuel 29:6-7 (NIV): *“So Achish called David and said to him, “As surely as the Lord lives, you have been reliable, and I would be pleased to have you serve with me in the army. From the day you came to me until today, I have found no fault in you, but the rulers don’t approve of you. Now turn back and go in peace; do nothing to displease the Philistine rulers.”*

Question: Are there moments of rejection in your life that you can now look back and celebrate the goodness of God for as you realize it was ultimately God’s protection?

Closing: David’s situation was a true recipe for disaster for anyone, especially an aspiring leader. He was frustrated by rejection even though he did nothing to deserve the rejection we see in 1 Samuel 29. His men wanted to take their bitterness from losing their family out on David by killing him. Last, he himself had lost everything and everyone he loved. It was David’s pursuit of the presence of God by requesting the priestly garment that changed his situation. Pursuing God’s presence doesn’t mean we will never have lack, it does however mean we will always have direction to our next place of provision.

Call to action: The bitterness of David’s men could have ruined the opportunity for God to restore to them the desires of their heart. This week pray that God would continually keep you aware of when bitterness is trying to take hold in your life. As a reminder, bitterness is the seed the enemy plants to uproot the fruits of the Spirit that God is bringing forth in our lives. Which fruit of the spirit will you replace bitterness with? (Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness or Self Control)