

HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOURSELF IN GOD

¹Then it happened, when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had carried out an attack on the Negev and on Ziklag, and had overthrown Ziklag and burned it with fire; ²and they took captive the women *and all* who were in it, from the small to the great, without killing anyone, and drove *them* off and went their way. ³When David and his men came to the city, behold, it was burned with fire, and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. ⁴Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep. ⁵Now David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. ⁶Also, David was in great distress because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David felt strengthened in the LORD his God. ⁷Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. ⁸And David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this band of raiders? Will I overtake them?" And He said to him, "Pursue, for you will certainly overtake them, and you will certainly rescue *everyone*." ⁹So David left, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and they came to the brook Besor, *where some* who were left behind stayed. ¹⁰But David pursued, he and four hundred men, for two hundred who were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor stayed *behind*. ¹¹Now they found an Egyptian in the field and brought him to David, and gave him bread and he ate, and they provided him water to drink. ¹²They also gave him a slice of fig cake and two cakes of raisins, and he ate; then his spirit ^lrevived. For he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights. ¹³Then David said to him, "To whom do you belong? And where are you from?" And he said, "I am a young man of Egypt, a servant of an Amalekite; and my master abandoned me when I became sick three days ago. ¹⁴We carried out an attack on the Negev of the Cherethites, and on that which belongs to Judah, and on the Negev of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag with fire." ¹⁵Then David said to him, "Will you bring me down to this band of raiders?" And he said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or hand me over to my master, and I will bring you down to this band." ¹⁶Now when he had brought him down, behold, they were dispersed over all the land, eating and drinking and celebrating because of all the great plunder that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. ¹⁷And David slaughtered them from the twilight until the evening of the next day; and not a man of them escaped, except four hundred young men who rode on camels and fled. ¹⁸So David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken and rescued his two wives. ¹⁹And nothing of theirs was missing, whether small or great, sons or daughters, plunder, or anything that they had taken for themselves; David brought *it* all back. ²⁰So David had captured all the sheep and the cattle *which the people* drove ahead of the *other* livestock, and they said, "This is David's plunder." **I SAMUEL 30:1-20 NASB**

- David and his men return home to find their wives and children kidnapped, their homes burned and destroyed, and their town in ruin. **VS1-3**
- Remorse and sorrow and anger poured out of their hearts until they could weep no more. **VS 4**

- David's personal loss. **VS 5**
- David's distress was heightened by the fact that people were blaming him and wanted to stone him to death. **VS 6**
- But...David strengthened and encouraged himself in God.
 - David took courage from God.
 - He was emboldened by God.

How did he do that?

²⁸ and has extended favor to me before the king and his counselors and before all the king's mighty officials. So I was strengthened according to the hand of the LORD my God *that was* upon me, and I gathered leading men from Israel to go up with me. **EZRA 7:28 NASB**

¹⁹ And he said, "You who are treasured, do not be afraid. Peace be to you; take courage and be courageous!" Now as soon as he spoke to me, I felt strengthened and said, "May my lord speak for you have strengthened me." **DANIEL 10:19 NASB**

The LORD is my light and my salvation; *Whom* should I fear? The LORD is the defense of my life; *Whom* should I dread? ² When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh, my adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell. ³ If an army encamps against me, my heart will not fear; if war arises against me, in *spite of* this I am confident. **PSALM 27:1-3 NASB**

I sought the LORD and He answered me and rescued me from all my fears. ⁵ They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces will never be ashamed. ⁶ This wretched man cried out, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles. ⁷ The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear Him and rescues them. ⁸ Taste and see that the LORD is good; **PSALM 34:4-8 NASB**

God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us the work that You did in their days, in the days of old. ² You with Your own hand drove out the nations; then You planted them; You afflicted the peoples, then You let them go free. ³ For by their own sword they did not possess the land, and their own arm did not save them, but Your right hand and Your arm and the light of Your presence, for You favored them.

⁴ You are my King, God; command victories for Jacob. ⁵ Through You we will push back our adversaries; through Your name we will trample down those who rise up against us. ⁶ For I will not trust in my bow, nor will my sword save me. ⁷ But You have saved us from our adversaries, and You have put to shame those who hate us. ⁸ In God we have boasted all day long, and we will give thanks to Your name forever. **PSALM 44:1-8 NASB**

Be gracious to me, God, for a man has trampled upon me; Fighting all day long he oppresses me. ² My enemies have trampled upon me all day long, for they are many who fight proudly

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against me. ³When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. ⁴In God, whose word I praise, In God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. **PSALM 56:1-4 NASB**

Your God has commanded your strength; show Yourself strong, God, You who acted in our behalf. **PSALM 68:28 NASB**

³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. **ROMANS 8:38-39 NASB**

- David 'rehearsed' the truth and God reversed the attack.
- The attack was personal and so was the strength and encouragement David received.
- He got into God's presence...the ephod. **VS 7-8**
 - Revelation from God is more important than revenge or personal validation. **PSALM 42:5**
- He did not focus on his loss.
- He did not focus on his disappointment caused by his friends.
- He focused on his Redeemer and Deliverer. **V8**

The lord's purpose was for David to pursue the enemy and rescue the captives. **V8**

- Always inquire of the Lord...David knew what it was to wait and hide in caves, too.
- God's presence and purpose were so real to David and upon David that it rallied and empowered his embittered men to follow him and fight for him.
- David took 400 men into battle...200 men were too weary to fight. **VS 9-10**
 - Alignment and assignment.
 - Let the Lord pick your battles.
 - The exhausted men had families too, but they also had a God, a leader and comrades that they trusted.
- David leads his men to great victory, rescue, and recovery of all they had lost plus the spoils of war.
- When you don't understand, stand under this banner: His banner over us is **LOVE**...this is your stance in tough circumstances.