

**Text: 1 Samuel 29:1-11; 30:1-27**

**Theme: How to Find Strength in the Lord**

**Sermon delivered by Dele Agbelusi during Healing and Anointing Service on 30/04/2017 at 10.30am**

David is popularly known as a man after God's own heart and with this nickname, one would think of David whose walk with the Lord is from glory to glory, like an escalator to heaven. A perfect man who deserved and has earned his title. You are wrong. He was a flawed man to whom God has shown his grace and love. He had a time when he was a backslider, but for the grace of God, he would have been a total failure. "Nothing in my hands I bring, safely to thy Cross I cling".

David's walk with God is like a roller coaster ride. Up and down, up and down. And the events we are looking at today, 1 Samuel 29-30 sum up a time in his life when he desired self-comfort and forgot his true identity. It was a time when, after over a decade of running away from Saul, he determined in his heart (not after consultation with God) to leave Israel and live among the idol worshipping Philistines. During this time, he was a law to himself. He lived like a bandit, a terrorist. **(Read 1 Samuel 27; 8-9. This is how bad things can become when we decide to be wiser than God.)**

**But worse days are coming.** In 1 Samuel 29, the Philistines gathered to attack Israel- the nation God had earlier anointed David to lead and David pleaded to join his new allies in battle against his own people!

### **1 Samuel 29 – The Philistines Reject David**

(Verses 2-3) The Philistine rulers object to David's presence among the Philistine army, but David tried to justify his inclusion and his friend, King Achish of Gath, came to David's defence.

Leaders among the Philistines looked at David and his men and said, "They aren't one of us. They are Hebrews. They worship another God. We don't belong together!" David started to think and act like a Philistine, and was ready to fight with them against the people of God. But the Philistine leaders could see that this wasn't right, even when David couldn't see it.

(V.5) David is trying to live in both worlds, so he has no home in either world.

In many ways, David was in the worst place for any child of God. He had too much of the world in him to be at peace in the Lord, and he had too much of the Lord in him to be at peace in the world. God spoke to David through this, but David had to listen.

(V.8-10) David appeals to Achish but the princes of the Philistines were not in agreement with Achish at all. They still remembered the old David and the faith-filled victory over Goliath who was a Philistine. The song of David's victory came back to haunt him again. If say 15 years ago, somebody told David as he was going to fight Goliath, or after his victory over Goliath, that he would be marching behind Philistine army to attack Israel, David would say, "NOT ME." "NOT ME". It could be Saul or another person but not me. So, we find David in a place where he was not communicating with God, he was living among unbelievers and living like them, his appetite and comfort were all the things that mattered to him. God's unseen hands in this situation intervened hence David would have gone to fight Israel with the Philistines and that would have spelt disaster for him.

**Thank God for the times when He keeps us from sinning as bad as we want to.**

(V.11) So David returns to Ziklag and the Philistines army prepares to meet Saul.

All these events were a wake-up call to David. He should have heard God speaking in many ways, but he did not. Instead, he made his return to the land of the Philistines. It will take a dramatic crisis to bring David back to where he should be.

### **That takes us to Samuel 30.**

#### **David's distress – plundered by the Amalekites.**

(Verses 1-2). Ziklag is plundered by the Amalekites.

When David and his men were away, the Amalekites had invaded Ziklag where David and his men were living. It took about three days (about 75 miles) before David and his 600-strong army reached Ziklag. They would have been tired and hungry and looking forward to a welcome home party... As soldiers, they were discouraged that they hadn't been allowed to fight with the Philistines. But they knew they were coming home, and home meant family and familiar surroundings. But that bright thought quickly turned black as night.

But there was none of this. The opportunistic Amalekites took advantage of the defenceless city, attacked it and burned it to the ground. They took captive the women and those who were there, from small to great: Not only was the city burned, but all their women and children were taken away.

(V.4-6) David and his men wept until there was no strength left to weep.

All was lost. At this point, David had nothing more to support him. No one in Israel could help him. The Philistines didn't want him. His family was gone; all he owned was gone. Even his friends turned against him. Every support was gone, except the Lord. That is a good place to be in, not a bad place.

David did not weep only because everything and everyone was lost. He also wept because he knew that he was responsible for it. No wonder David was greatly distressed. He is about as low in his backslidden state as a man can be. David is like the prodigal son who now sits in the pigpen.

(V.6) But David found strength in the Lord. It took a lot to bring David to this place, but now he is here – God is his only strength.

- i. How did David find strength in the Lord? David could remember God's love. At this point of total loss, David now saw the love of the Lord in the rejection of the Philistine leaders. If God had not sent him back home through the rejection of the Philistines, it would have been months and months until he returned and the situation would have been far worse. That which stung him before became sweet to him now, and a most precious expression of the Lord's love.
- ii. David remembers God's promise and calling. He could shake his head, clear the fog and say, "I am a man anointed by God, called by God, and promised by God to be the next king of Israel. I have a high calling and promise from God, and He hasn't taken it away. I need to start living according to that destiny."
- iii. David remembers God's past deliverances. He could say, "This is a terrible spot, no doubt. But I remember all the times when the Lord delivered me out of bad spots before. If He did it then, He will do it now. He didn't deliver me before to let me perish now."  
What David said in his heart in 1 Samuel 27:1 got him into this whole mess; For a moment, he took his eyes away from God and made plans for himself without God.

(V. 7-8) David inquires of the Lord.

Shall I pursue this raiding party? Shall I overtake them? At one time David would not bother to even ask these questions. He would simply do it because when a soldier is attacked he attacks back. But in returning from his backsliding, David brings everything to the Lord. Nothing is done just because it was done before. He asks God about everything. God answered: Pursue them, for you shall surely overtake them and succeed in the rescue.

God gave David something to do (pursue). Then, God gave David a promise in the doing (you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all). When God gives us something to do, He also gives us a promise in the doing.

(9-10) So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the Brook Besor, where those who were left behind stayed.

David's men were almost at a point of mutiny against him but now since he found strength in his God (1 Samuel 30:6) and since he inquired of the Lord (1 Samuel 30:8) and since he did what God told him to do, his men are totally back on his side.

David must have said, "Men, I'm going. I have a promise from God for victory, and I'm going to believe it. It doesn't matter if you come with me or not, because God is on my side, and if I have to beat all the Amalekites all by myself, God's promise will not fail." Such faith stirred the hearts of the six hundred men, and they went with David.

It was a magnificent sight – David and the six hundred men on the march again, this time not hoping to fight for the Philistines or for themselves, but off again on a mission from God. There wasn't an army on earth that could beat David and his six hundred men when they walked in God's will.

(V. 9-10) Two hundred stayed behind, who were so weary that they could not cross the Brook Besor. This might have discouraged David. As he pursued a significantly larger Amalekite army, he found that one-third of his men couldn't continue. But David did not let this trial stop him. He set the one-third to work guarding the supplies, lightening the load of the 400 who continued and he set out again, full of faith.

When God means to bless us, he often takes away a part of the little strength we thought we had. Our God does not fill till he has emptied.

#### **(V.11-15) David and his men befriend a helpless Egyptian.**

As David and the 400 men pursued the Amalekites, they came across a wearied man in the wilderness. It would be easy and logical to ignore this man because they had a "much greater" mission in pursuing the Amalekites. But David and his men showed unexpected kindness and they gave him bread and he ate, and they let him drink water.

(13) Then David asked him, "Who do you belong to and where do you come from? David took a caring interest in this man. He showed simple care and kindness to a nobody. They didn't just give this Egyptian food and water; they gave him care and kindness.

I am an Egyptian, slave of an Amalekite . . . we burned Ziklag with fire: In showing unexpected kindness to this Egyptian, God showed David unexpected blessing. The Egyptian promised to guide David to the camp of the Amalekites.

**(V. 16-20) David overcame the Amalekites winning back all that they carried away and more: Everything that the enemy took David took back.** God gave him a complete victory, because David found strength in the Lord his God (1 Samuel 30:6). But I am not here to preach David but Christ, who is referred to as the Son of David. He said: 'Look, I have come to do **your will, O God--as is written about me in the Scriptures.**' (Hebrews 10:7) The Old

Testament speaks about Jesus. He has not only recovered all that we lost in Adam, all that you lost through your sins, everything you have forfeited through unbelief, he gives you much more. Spoils of war are what comes on top of what you had earlier lost.

We have the blessings of forgiveness in Christ and lots more. We have the Gift of the Holy Spirit and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

(V. 21-25). **The spoil from the battle is divided.**

The spoils are distributed equally among those who fought and those who supported much against the objection of the 400 frontline soldiers.

Many people serve the Lord in invisible, behind-the-scenes ways, often supporting a much more visible aspect of the Lord's work. God will support the hidden servant with the same reward as prominent servant.

There is encouragement for the weary here. **“You Little-Faiths, you Despondencies, you Much-Afraids, you Feeble-Minds, you that sigh more than you sing, you that would but cannot, you that have a great heart for holiness, but feel beaten back in your struggles, the Lord shall give you his love, his grace, his favour, as surely as he gives it to those who can do great things in his name.” (Spurgeon)**

This is the final step in David's getting things right after his time of backsliding among the Philistines.

- David strengthened himself in the Lord his God
- David inquired of the Lord
- David believed God's promise
- David did what God told him to do
- David showed unexpected care and kindness to others
- David saw it as the Lord's victory
- David shared the reward with others
- David did what he could to mend relationships

David is a remarkable picture of Jesus in this chapter. Note these four points of association:

- We are like David's men, David is like Jesus
- We are like the 200 weary soldiers left behind, David is like Jesus
- We are like the Egyptian slave, David is like Jesus
- We are like the spoil David recovered, David is like Jesus.