

‘David Recovers All After Ziklag: Revelation of God’s Delight

I. OVERVIEW OF DAVID’S LIFE BEFORE LIVING IN ZIKLAG

- A. David’s experiences in Ziklag give us insight into what he understood about God’s heart.
- B. The Lord describes David as a man after His own heart. David committed to obey the commands of God’s heart and he studied the emotions of God’s heart more than any other in the OT.
¹⁴ The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart... (1 Sam. 13:14)
- C. As we study God’s emotions, we receive revelation of His heart. This empowers our hearts to love and obey God. It is not enough to be committed to obey, our hearts must be empowered by confidence in love. David had revelation of how God felt about him. This gave David much confidence to run to God in his weakness.
- D. One of the great characteristics of David’s life was his revelation of God’s mercy. Many run from God when they stumble in sin because they are filled with guilt and condemnation and believe that God is angry with them.
- E. In 1 Sam. 16, David was anointed by the Spirit. We see him as a shepherd with a worshiping heart. In 1 Sam. 17, he defeated Goliath and became a national hero. We see him as a warrior with a fearless heart. In 1 Sam. 18, David moved into the king’s palace and the court intrigue began. We see him as man of favor (fame and popularity) with a humble heart. In 1 Sam. 19-21, David is attacked by jealous King Saul. We see him being mistreated. He wavers in his faith.
- F. In 1 Sam. 21, David fled from the king’s palace in fear for his life. We assume that he begins to question some of the great prophecies over his life about being king of Israel. David ran in fear to hide from Saul in the territory of Saul’s enemy, Achish king of Gath, a Philistine king. David crossed Israel’s border to enter the land of the Philistines.
¹⁰ David...fled that day from before Saul, and went to Achish the king of Gath. (1 Sam. 21:10)
- G. David was too afraid of Saul to stay in Israel. David knew that Saul was too afraid of the Philistines to leave Israel to chase him. David lacked faith that God would protect him from Saul. He lost the faith he had when he fought Goliath.
- H. In fear of being killed by Achish, David pretended to be insane.
¹¹ The servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of him...saying: 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands?'" ¹² Now David took these words to heart, and was very much afraid of Achish the king of Gath. ¹³ So he changed his behavior before them, feigned madness in their hands, scratched on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva fall down on his beard. ¹⁴ Then Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see the man is insane. Why have you brought him to me? (1 Sam. 21:11-14)

II. THE PROPHET GAD PROPHESED THAT DAVID RETURN TO ISRAEL

- A. David left Gath and escaped to Adullam, on the edge of Judah's territory. David was 28 years old. About 400 distressed men joined David. Many of them became his mighty men (2 Sam. 23).
¹ David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam. When his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. ² And everyone who was in distress, everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him. So he became captain over them. There were about four hundred men with him. (1 Sam. 22:1-4)
- B. The prophet Gad told David to stop running in fear and to return to Israel. David was to leave the stronghold or fortress in Moab somewhere east of the Dead Sea. David's great-grandmother Ruth was a Moabitess (Ruth 4:13-17). Hereth was an area just west of the Dead Sea.
³ David went from there to...Moab...⁵ The prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go to the land of Judah." David...went to...Hereth. (1 Sam. 22:3-5)
- C. David's fear leads to depression. He determined to hide from Saul in the land of the Philistines.
David said in his heart, "Now I shall perish (die) someday by the hand of Saul. There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape to the land of the Philistines; and Saul will despair of me, to seek me anymore...I shall escape out of his hand." (1 Sam. 27:1)
- D. David reconnected with Achish, the Philistine king. David's plan appeared to work.
² David...went over with the six hundred men...³ David dwelt with Achish at Gath...⁴ It was told Saul that David had fled to Gath; so he sought him no more. (1 Sam. 27:2-4)
- E. Achish gives David the city of Ziklag. David's team of 600 men and their families move there.
⁵ David said to Achish, "If I have now found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there. For why should your servant dwell in the royal city with you?" ⁶ Achish gave him Ziklag...⁷ Now the time that David dwelt in the country of the Philistines was one full year and four months. (1 Sam. 27:5-7)
- F. David deceives Achish (27:8-12).
⁸ David and his men went up and raided the...Amalekites...⁹ Whenever David attacked the land...¹⁰ Achish would say, "Where have you made a raid today?" David would say, "Against the southern area of Judah...." ¹¹ David would save neither man nor woman alive, to bring news to Gath, saying, "Lest they should inform on us..." Thus was his behavior all the time he dwelt in the country of the Philistines. ¹² So Achish believed David, saying, "He has made his people Israel utterly abhor him; therefore he will be my servant forever." (1 Sam. 27:8-12)
- G. Achish asked David to go to war with him against Israel (1 Sam. 28:1-2). The Philistine leaders refused to allow David to participate (1 Sam. 29:1-11) yet Achish trusted him (1 Sam. 29:6-11).
¹ In those days that the Philistines gathered their armies together for war, to fight with Israel. Achish said to David, "You assuredly know that you will go out with me to battle, you and your men." ² David said..., "Surely you know what your servant can do." (1 Sam. 28:1-2)

III. DAVID AT ZIKLAG (1 SAM. 30)

- A. The Amalekites burn and plunder Ziklag (1 Sam. 30:1-5). This was one of the worst days in David's life, yet it ended up as the beginning of one of the most powerful weeks in his life.
*¹ David and his men came to Ziklag...the Amalekites had...attacked Ziklag and burned it...
³ So David and his men came to the city, and there it was, burned with fire; and their wives, their sons, and their daughters had been taken captive. ⁴ David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep. (1 Sam. 30:1-4)*
- B. Ziklag was the place of David's compromise. God loved him so much that He allowed the place of his compromise to be burned. Sometimes we live in compromise because we are afraid that God will not deliver us. So we figure out a way to deliver ourselves. We hide in a Ziklag of our own making. Eventually, God will burn our Ziklag to remove all the props we falsely trust in.
- C. David strengthened himself in God and inquired of the Lord (1 Sam. 30:6-8)
⁶ David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him...But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God....⁸ So David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this troop? Shall I overtake them?" And He answered him, "Pursue, for you shall surely overtake them and without fail recover all." (1 Sam. 30:6-8)
- D. This is one of the lowest times in David's life. Everything seems lost. King Saul was seeking to kill him. For sixteen months, he had lived in compromise by disobeying God's prophetic word to live in Judah (1 Sam. 22:5) and lying to Achish. He lost his family. His team wants to kill him.
- E. David pursued and defeated the Amalekites (1 Sam. 30:9-31).
¹⁷ David attacked them from twilight until the evening of the next day...¹⁸ David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away...¹⁹ Nothing of theirs was lacking... (1 Sam. 30:17-19)
- F. Saul and his three sons died in a battle against the Philistines (1 Sam. 31:1-6).
³ The battle became fierce against Saul. The archers hit him...⁶ Saul, his three sons...and all his men died together that same day. (1 Sam. 31:3-6)

IV. WHAT DAVID UNDERSTOOD ABOUT GOD'S HEART (PS. 18 & PS. 56)

- A. Ps. 18 reveals what David was thinking in his despair. This Psalm is for all who desire to be a person after God's heart. The title of Ps. 18 tells us that David wrote it on the day God delivered him from Saul. *Title: A Psalm of David...who spoke to the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.*
- B. David was a student of God's emotions. This was key to his recovery. If we do not know what David knew about God's heart, then we run from God instead of to Him. A life of shame leads to a life of sin. If we feel dirty before God, then we will live dirty.

- C. David declared his love for God. Some of his men may have whispered, "I do not think that he really loves God. I have seen his compromise these last 16 months." God saw David's love for Him as genuine because weak love for God is not false love. Shame was broken off of David as he declared out loud to God, "I love You, O LORD."
¹ ***I will love You, O LORD, my strength. (Ps. 18:1)***
- D. David knew that God delighted in him and would treat him with great gentleness.
¹⁹ ***He delivered me because He delighted in me... (Ps. 18:19)***
³⁵ ***Your right hand has held me up, Your gentleness has made me great. (Ps. 18:35)***
- E. David had a revelation of Jesus' gentleness. Because God treated him with such gentleness, David went on to be a great man in the fear of God and with love for God. God wants to make us great in our heart before Him, not necessarily famous before men.
- F. This gave him confidence to declare that he loved God even after his compromise. Our most sincere efforts to love God are flawed and fragile. Our heart was created with a longing for the assurance that we are enjoyed by God. We are revolutionized by seeing how Jesus feels about us.
- G. God is gentle to us in the Ziklag years in order to restore our confidence in Him so that we may mature in love in the years ahead. David said, "If You would measure all my sins, then how can I stand before You in confidence?" When He forgives us today, we mature in God in the future.
³ ***If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? 4 But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared. (Ps. 130:3-4)***
- H. It takes confidence before God to be a wholehearted lover of God. The Lord wants us to have a 2-fold confidence. First, we are to be confident that He loves us in our weakness. Second, we are to be confident that He esteems our weak love for Him as genuine rather than being false love.
- I. The introduction to Ps. 56 tells us it was written when he was with Achish in the Ziklag years.
⁸ ***You number my wanderings; put my tears into Your bottle; are they not in Your book? 9 When I cry out to You, then my enemies will turn back; this I know, because God is for me. (Ps. 56:8-9)***
- J. David deserved to be punished but he knew that God would forgive and restore him. This is one of the greatest influences on heart is gratitude to God. One of the great tragedies of any is to become a prisoner of ingratitude that shuts our heart down in darkness and powerlessness.
¹⁰ ***He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 13 As a father pities (has compassion, NIV) his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him. 14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. (Ps. 103:10-14)***