

# David | The Once and Future King

## *The Intervention*

First Samuel 30.1-26

10.3.21

*Then it happened when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had made a raid on the Negev and on Ziklag, and had overthrown Ziklag and burned it with fire; <sup>2</sup> and they took captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great, without killing anyone, and carried them off and went their way. <sup>3</sup> When David and his men came to the city, behold, it was burned with fire, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been taken captive. <sup>4</sup> Then David and the people who were with him lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep. <sup>5</sup> Now David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite. <sup>6</sup> Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the LORD his God.*

*<sup>7</sup> Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David. <sup>8</sup> David inquired of the LORD, saying, "Shall I pursue this band? Shall I overtake them?" And He said to him, "Pursue, for you will surely overtake them, and you will surely rescue all." <sup>9</sup> So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those left behind remained. <sup>10</sup> But David pursued, he and four hundred men, for two hundred who were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor remained behind.*

*<sup>11</sup> Now 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. <sup>12</sup> They gave him a piece of fig cake and two clusters of raisins, and he ate; then his spirit revived. For he had not eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights. <sup>13</sup> 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 left me behind when I fell sick three days ago. <sup>14</sup> "We made a raid 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." <sup>15</sup> Then David said to him, "Will you bring me down to this band?" And he said, "Swear to me by God that you will not kill me or deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring you down to this band."*

*<sup>16</sup> When he had brought him down, behold, they were spread over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing because of all the great spoil that they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah. <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> So David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken, and rescued his two wives. <sup>19</sup> But nothing of theirs was missing, whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that they had taken for themselves; David brought it all back. <sup>20</sup> So 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 spoil."*

*<sup>21</sup> When David came to the two hundred men who were too exhausted to follow David, who had also been left at the brook Besor, and they went out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him, then David approached the people and greeted them. <sup>22</sup> Then all the wicked and worthless men*

*among those who went with David said, "Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered, except to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away and depart." <sup>23</sup> Then David said, "You must not do so, my brothers, with what the LORD has given us, who has kept us and delivered into our hand the band that came against us. <sup>24</sup> "And who will listen to you in this matter? For as his share is who goes down to the battle, so shall his share be who stays by the baggage; they shall share alike." <sup>25</sup> So it has been from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day. <sup>26</sup> Now when David came to Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah, to his friends, saying, "Behold, a gift for you from the spoil of the enemies of the LORD..."*

**We've been looking at the life of David.** He was – the least likely – the littlest and last of eight sons, called out of the pastures and sheepfolds unexpectedly and to everyone's amazement, the prophet Samuel said, "Yep! This is the one God wants – he'll be the next king, the man God will conform to God's own heart!"

But David, God's choice, is always seen in contrast to the present king (Saul)... who looks like the MOST likely to succeed... BUT he's only succeeding in becoming what God had warned, i.e. a king like the Gentiles have, kings who TAKE – take money and take property and draft our sons and daughters and who eventually want to be worshiped as demigods.

Saul has succeeded in becoming one of those kings – a king like the nations have – a king who promises to keep the people safe but really just TAKES. And now we want to know – if and when Saul (the taker) dies and David becomes king – will David be a taker too? Will power go to David's head like it did with Saul and will David also get addicted to approval?

At the end of this book we get a few chapters that really focus on a contrast. The kings, at this point look really different AND we've noted that David has been on God's ANVIL and he's getting heated and cooled and hammered and shaped and sharpened – and we're HOPING: "maybe this shepherd will be a king... the kind of king we've never seen... God's kind of king."

Today the contrast becomes crystal clear and God's artistry is unveiled... David IS a different kind or leader ...one that looks like a king of kings – one that looks like THE King of kings... a picture of divine generosity at a brook called Besor (Heb: "Good News").

Let's look at:

- 1) Two Patterns of Leadership**
- 2) A King Who Gives**
- 3) How Grace Transforms Leadership**

If you've been following the story – you may remember that David was badly insulted by a real jerk named Nabal (not a good neighbor!) but the man's wife stepped in (as she'd probably done

100x before) and seeing her tact and wisdom and grace, David was saved from his own rage/vengeance by beauty.

Last week (previous CH) Saul was in a jam and God does NOT lead him (Saul doesn't listen to God anyway!) so Saul goes to visit a woman to get some counsel but she's a medium/witch.

The point is – two kings, both in a dilemma, both turn to women for help – David is saved by beauty/wisdom and Saul is further condemned by lies and superstition.

Then, today's passage and next week's – both kings are engaged in life-and-death military conflicts: David comes off victorious in his but it's not going to go so well in Saul's battle. The writer wants us to see that these two kings really are as different as night and day. Saul has shown his true colors and is now insane, insecure, jealous and dangerous just like all the kings at that time and place. David is different.

David has been living among the Philistines for about a year and a half...he and his men have been mercenaries/bodyguards for King Achish.

Then David is released from his service and it's like a "new Exodus" – he served the Gentiles (as in Moses' day in Egypt); they travel back to the Promised Land but on the journey, there are tremendous trials (the city where they lived is ransacked, burned, and all the families taken captive) AND there's even a threat of stoning (as with Moses!). David's in trouble!

But instead of pleasing the people and instead of consulting a medium (as Saul had done) David (v. 6) "strengthened himself in the LORD his God". Then he calls a priest and together they consult God, looking for God's will and leading, "David inquired of the Lord."

And then they get the word – from God – even though they're all exhausted from a long march – David takes his 600 men to pursue the enemy and rescue their families...and at some point, one third of the 600 simply can not go on and David stows them away at "Good News Creek" – Brook of Besor.

They still don't know who destroyed their village and kidnapped their families (you can imagine the panic!) Then they run into this...kid wandering half-dead. Sad, they don't have time to stop... BUT...they stop!

They feed him and refresh him and give him some dried fruit and fresh water – they find out he's a young man from Egypt (an ancient enemy!) but they treat him very well and it turns out: he knows where the bad guys are. So David protects him and he leads the 400 men to the Amalekites. And these pirates of the desert are livin' it up, dancing and feasting. The families of the Israelites must be utterly terrified.

But David and his 400 men, with a much smaller army, launch a surprise attack and kill all the terrorists and recover their families and possessions.

And it sent a loud message to all would-be pirates and terrorists – “No tolerance!” David’s men are really happy to be fighting with him as leader and sing, “The spoils are David’s!” What a big affirmation!

On the way home they pick up their exhausted soldiers recovering at Good News Creek – and it’s hard to imagine how relieved the 200 men were... It must’ve been quite a reunion – Good News at Good News Creek... What a day of rejoicing that would be!

And then, from the 400 men who fought, a few want to talk about ... you know...what’s fair.

It’s important to be fair, don’t you think so?

I mean, “We were the ones who risked our lives...we kept marching even though we were ALL tired...and they got their families back so...let’s be fair... they don’t deserve any additional spoils – just trying to be fair.”

And David...turns to these champions of fairness (whom BTW are called “wicked and worthless”) David says, “Fair? This isn’t about fair...and this isn’t ‘David’s spoils’ – this is a gift from God...that we found this Egyptian kid and were compassionate to help/feed him and then he showed us the way...Accident? NO!”

“This was God’s grace...these families came back to us from the dead...this is a miracle of God’s favor – we have received freely and freely we will give... Do you men really want from God, what YOU deserve? Do you want FAIR...or do you want GRACE?”

And David says, “This is how God has dealt with me...and this is why I’m making this intervention; this is how we do it...in my way of leadership. Any questions?”

And then they sent spoils to some of the other cities in Judah...it sort of signaled... “there’s a new king in town – less concerned with fair more concerned with God and His grace.”

And this was no small thing. All the kings of all the Near Eastern peoples were terrible. They were mean and capricious and autocratic/all-powerful gods AND were totally paranoid and with good reason.

And even though these few “wicked and worthless” fellows who wanted fairness (kinda like Judas John 12.4-6) were probably bummed... everyone else was saying, “we’ve NEVER seen anything like this! Not a king who takes but a king who gives!”

David was a grace-man! He knew that he was what he was BY THE GRACE OF GOD (1 Cor 15.10) not because he was somehow better than others or had the approval of the people – David knew God and he lived by faith – in total dependence on God alone. He knew what it was to be a shepherd AND he knew what it was to BE shepherded by the Good Shepherd!

And that changed David's way of doing leadership. From the Brook of Besor rang the Good News to all Israel that grace has begun to reign in our land.

And in this passage, we get a major foreshadowing of THĒ reign of grace and THĒ King who gives, Jesus Christ. As our friend Warren Gage has pointed out, when Jesus Christ said "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day..." (Luk 24.46) and then the apostles used that phrase "third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor 15.4) and the Church confesses it in the Nicene Creed "and third day He rose again according to the scriptures..." -- Well, what ARE those Scriptures?

Well, it's not one specific verse... but it's a pattern that began in creation when ON THE THIRD DAY, life began to emerge from the dirt: "On the third day, God said, 'Let the earth sprout vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees'" and that pattern comes up again and again in the Hebrew Bible.

The third day is when death dies, when deadly situations are reversed – when Jonah comes alive out of the big fish (3<sup>rd</sup> day) when starving Egyptian servants, good as dead are revived and brought back to life and when help arrives to rescue children and families taken captive by the enemy... a King of Grace shows up (on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day) and "LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN." (Eph 4.8)

This is included to show us...to prepare the Jewish Church for the coming of the King of Grace. It all happens on the third day ...and at a brook called "Good News Creek" – a neon sign pointing to THE King who gives – who will rule like no king we've ever seen – David foreshadows the Once and Future King, Jesus Christ. David's intervention points to THĒ intervention, when God intervened.

He is the King who takes fairness in His own hands – He takes the justice that I deserve and gives me what He deserves – the Rights of a Son... given to all who believe for free... because He paid the bill.

And when you see this, when you're believing in this uniquely generous and almighty King of kings, Jesus Christ – it changes the way you lead.

It changes the way you treat pitiful, weak, left-for-dead Egyptian enemies...and it gives you a new orientation to your victories – the spoils are (not David's and NOT mine!) but His – Jesus Christ's who plunders the strong man's house (Mat 12.29), takes back what the evil one has

stolen and gives extravagant gifts to His people at Good News Creek, people who didn't even do the work! People like you and me!

And even when we fail and sit ashamed and sidelined with our feet in the water (Ps 23.2) and our heads in our hands – exhausted, embarrassed and weak, the King of grace, the King who gives says, “Come unto Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart...” (Mat 11.28-29)

See, we learn from Him. Grace teaches us (Titus 2.11-12). We receive freely from this King and we “pay it forward” (as they say). It changes how we lead our kids...how we treat service people. His grace, which we receive by faith – it brings vegetation from the soil of our hearts – the fruit of love (Gal 5.22ff) humility, generosity to the people around us. We go beyond fairness to compassion. When we believe, we can't help it.