

## DAVID AT ZIKLAG – THE END OF FEAR

*1Samuel 27:1 And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul: there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel: so shall I escape out of his hand.*

We first need to understand the background to David's despair and despondency. David did not consult God when he decided to flee to the Philistines and take refuge with Achish, the Philistine king of Gath. Imagine that the man who killed Goliath and was a terror to the chief enemies of Israel was now a refugee in their midst. While David was a giant of the faith, he was also, thankfully, human. I say thankfully because like any ordinary believer, he experienced fear and a crisis of faith. His faith was so shaken that he decided to escape into the land of the Philistines. Like David, we too may experience a crisis of faith and seek refuge in the camp of the enemy, although we know this is not what we should do. Nothing good comes ultimately out of placing our trust in the hands of the enemies of the Lord. God in his mercy did not condemn or judge David, although his decision to turn to the Philistines was a reproach on the name of the God of Israel. David lied to Achish in stating that he fought against the cities of Judah and destroyed them. Achish wrongly rejoiced in the knowledge that David would now never be welcomed in Israel again after what he had done. Fear led to all these lies – lies are never satisfied. It is best to tell the truth and expel lies. May lies never have power over the Christian! It must have been very painful for David to tell Achish that he was prepared to go to battle against his own people, the children of Israel.

*1Samuel 28:1 And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men.*

*1Samuel 28:2 And David said to Achish, Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do. And Achish said to David, Therefore will I make thee keeper of mine head for ever.*

Now, the Bible records that the Philistine chiefs and generals questioned the presence and loyalty of David and demanded that he be sent away. "Then Achish called David, and said unto him, Surely, as the LORD liveth, thou hast been upright, and thy going out and thy coming in with me in the host is good in my sight: for I have not found evil in thee since the day of thy coming unto me unto this day: nevertheless the lords favour thee not" (1 Samuel 29:6). David found himself now afraid of Saul and the Philistines. See what comes of being afraid of fear! In his inaugural address in 1933, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "We have nothing to fear, except fear itself!" The Bible declares 331 times "fear not!" Because our

faith is precious, the Lord will permit the enemy to test it. The Devil was furious at the repertoire of gifts and talents David possessed, and he was determined to at least eliminate some of them, if not all. “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:7).

*1Samuel 27:5* And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

*1Samuel 27:6* Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day: wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day.

*1Samuel 30:1* And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

*1Samuel 30:6* And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

When David first came to the Philistine king, he was given the city of Ziklag. He and the 600 souls with him settled in this city. However, that which we receive from the enemy will never bring peace – it ends in disaster. The enemies came and destroyed the city and burned it. Nothing was left. This is the result of fear and lack of faith – Ziklag. “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love” (I John 4:18). The people with David were fed up with this fear that resulted in Ziklag. They now wanted to stone David to death. Ziklag threatened to become David’s undoing, but at that lowest point in his life, David found his old faith once again. He basically zoned out from the space of fear created through Saul, Achish, Ziklag and now his own people who wished to destroy him. “...but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God” (I Samuel 30:6). Samson, too, had to experience his own Ziklag. His eyes were gorged out, a boy had to guide him, and he was ridiculed cruelly by the Philistines. Ziklag is not the end for the Christian, but the end of fear. At Ziklag, we stop fearing fear because we turn to the God who commanded us not to fear. Ziklag becomes a synonym for the watershed moment, the turning point in the Christian’s life.

David encouraged himself in the Lord. When your life’s work appears to go up in smoke at Ziklag, encourage yourself in the Lord. Become your own preacher, pastor, evangelist and mentor. Christ is still in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27). You will find he has not abandoned you, just called on his name and he will banish the fear that brought you to Ziklag.

*1Samuel 30:7 And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.*  
*1Samuel 30:8 And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.*

Now David did it the right way! Honor God and his order, wait on the Lord and he will direct you. “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5,6). What crisis of faith are you going through? Don’t go to the Philistines! Don’t accept a Ziklag from them – it will be destroyed. However, if and when you find yourself at Ziklag, encourage yourself in the Lord Jesus Christ. Be a Job at Ziklag who refused to curse God and die! God did not ordain David David to be assistant to the Philistines and he did not fill us with his Holy Ghost to compromise with the world out of fear. Encourage yourself in the Lord Jesus Christ today and he will avenge of the shame of Ziklag.