

The Philistines Reject David & Davids Wives are Captured

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[0 : 00] on page three is the sing psalms version of the psalm and that's on page three psalm number four the tune is airshire oh hear my cry my righteous god relieve me i'm distressed display your mercy to me now and answer to my request the law the glory of my name o men how long will you despise how long will you delude yourself still searching after lies we're going to sing the whole of this psalm no we're going to sing from the beginning to verse six the first five stanzas from one to six on page three psalm number four the tune is airshire and we'll stand to sing oh here my

His Savior marching to me now and answer my request.

The glory of my name, O Lamb, how long will you despise?

How long will you delude yourselves still searching after light?

O that the Lord hath set apart the glory as his own.

[2 : 12] The Lord will hear me when I fall, how my requests may go.

In anger do not break the storm, consider and be still.

We send a righteous sacrifice and wait upon his will.

O who can show us any good, I hear so many say.

O Lord, shine on us with your light. Show us your face, I pray.

[3 : 40] We're now going to come to God in prayer. We're going to bow our heads in prayer. Father in heaven, we thank you for the way in which what we sing leads us from a place of distress.

And that might be what lies in the heart of many people amongst us this evening. To a place of peace. Because when we come to you in distress, whatever it is that's causing that trouble and that anxiety within us, we pray that as we come together this evening, that something in your word, something will draw us to a closeness to you and a rediscovery of you in such a way that will help us to see things in a different perspective and show us that the glory of God is absolutely marvelous.

And we ask, Lord, that as we see the glory of God working through our everyday lives, and as we revisit your word this evening, we pray that we may see your glory and that we may see your reality and your power and your wisdom.

And we pray that we might be drawn to a greater personal relationship with you and that we might rediscover the fact that if we are in Christ, if God is for us, who can be against us?

We recognize that that is what the psalmist discovered as he wrote these things down. And very often from his own bitter personal experience, when he was drawn to you and when he was made to see afresh, that God is in control and that he had access to God through his high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[5 : 33] And so our prayer is what the psalmist asked, Lord. Shine on us with your light. Show us your face, we pray. That's what we want this evening. We want to see your face.

We know that you are invisible, so we're not going to see that with our visible eyes. But we can see it in our souls, in our hearts. And you can make yourself as certain to us and as sure and as clear to us as if you were standing visibly in front of us.

And we can see your glory this evening in a way that takes our breath away, in a way that brings us to see ourselves afresh, and in a way that strengthens us and that draws us to a renewed confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so we pray that you will speak to us this evening. We pray that every time we come together that you will show us that what we are doing here is something real. We are coming to the living and the true God.

We're presenting ourselves before you and we're asking that you will humble us, that you will show us our own sinfulness and wrongdoing. But that you will come in your forgiving power. And as we confess our sins, that the blood of Jesus Christ will cleanse us from all sins.

[6 : 50] So fill us, we pray, with your spirit this evening. Fill us, Lord, with your word. May your word have a deep and lasting impact on each one of us. And may this Sunday evening be one that, in which God makes this mark on us, for good and forever, we ask, Lord, that you will affect us then, that you will change us.

You'll change our perspective and change our view of you. And Lord God, if we are in dread of you this evening, or if we are here tonight with a negative attitude towards the Lord, we pray that you'll remove that.

We pray that you will so work within each one of us, that we will not be driven away from you, but that we will be drawn towards you. Pray that, especially for anyone who hasn't come to faith in Jesus.

And our prayer is tonight that your word will speak to each one of us. We pray that it will already have spoken to many, many in our congregation.

And we ask, Lord, that you will once again speak. And may we be given hearts that are ready to listen and ready to be changed. For we ask in Jesus' name.

[8 : 02] Amen. We're going to read together from 1 Samuel chapter 29. 1 Samuel chapter 29. It's on page 302.

We're going through the first part of the life of David.

Remember how we had left David two weeks ago in the country of the Philistines, having gone over to the Philistines and having settled in their land because he was so afraid of Saul.

And remember how we saw that that was not the best decision he ever made in his life. In fact, it was a very foolish decision and it could have cost him dearly and almost did.

And we're going to read tonight how he came within a hair's breadth of utter disaster. But the Lord stepped in, in his mercy and in his providence and delivered him from what could have been a calamitous situation.

[9 : 17] Chapter 29. And we're going to read 29. Then we're going to sing again. Then we're going to read 30. Now the Philistines had gathered their forces at Aphek and all the Israelites were camped by the spring that is in Jezreel.

As the lords of the Philistines were passing on by hundreds and thousands and David and his men were passing on in the rear with Achish, the commander of the Philistines. Remember, David is with the Philistines.

He's part of the Philistine army. Unbelievably, he's in the enemy camp. He's just about to fight his own people. The commander of the Philistines said, What are these Hebrews doing here?

And Achish said to the commanders of the Philistines, Is this not David, the servant of Saul, king of Israel, who has been with me now for days and years and since he deserted to me, I have found no fault in him to this day.

But the commanders of the Philistines were angry with him. The commanders of the Philistines said to him, Send this man back that he may return to the place where you have assigned him. He shall not go down with us to battle, lest in the battle he become an adversary to us.

[10 : 18] For how could this fellow reconcile himself to his Lord? Would it not be with the heads of the men here? Is not this David of whom they sing to one another and dances?

Saul has struck down his thousands and David his tens of thousands. Then Achish called David and said to him, As the Lord lives, you have been honest and to me it seems right that you should march out and in with me in the campaign.

For I have found nothing wrong in you from the day of your coming to me this day. Nevertheless, the Lord does not approve of you. So go back now and go peaceably that you may not displease the lords of the Philistines.

And David said to Achish, What have I done? What have you found in your servant from the day I entered your servants until now that I may not go and fight against the enemies of my lord the king? And Achish answered David and said, I know that you are as blameless as my sight as an angel of God.

Nevertheless, the commanders of the Philistines have said, he shall not go up with us to the battle. Now then rise early in the morning with the servants of your lord who came with you. Start early in the morning and depart as soon as you have light.

[11 : 23] So David set out with his men early in the morning to return to the land of the Philistines. But the Philistines went up to Jezreel. We're going to sing now before we return to the next chapter the traditional version of Psalm number 142.

That's the traditional Scottish Psalter version of Psalm number 142. And you'll find that on page 437.

We're going to sing the whole of the Psalm and the tune is Coles Hill. The whole of Psalm 142. I with my voice cried to the Lord with it made my request poured out to him my plain to him my trouble I expressed.

When in me was so overwhelmed my spirit then well thou knewest my way where I did walk a snare for me they privily did lay. Psalm 142. The whole of the Psalm. And we'll stand once again to sing.

I with my voice guide to the Lord with it made my request for thou to him my pain to him my trouble I express.

[13 : 05] When in me was O'er the Lord I was so overwhelmed my spirit and well thou knewest my way where I did walk thou scared for me they trivily did lay.

I looked on my right and I knew but bound to know me where a refuge built with me no man did for my soul take care.

I cried to thee I said thou art my refuge Lord the Lord and in the land of those that live thou art my portion because I am brought very low attended to my cry because I am my persecutor you who does who am stronger are than I from prison bring my soul that

I thine if glorify I the just shall compass me when thou with me tell founteous thee.

We're going to read from the following chapter now. 1st Samuel chapter 30. It's on page 303 and we're going to read the whole chapter. Now when David and his men came to Ziklag, that's of course the town that they were staying, the town that Achish had given to them in the land of the Philistines.

[16 : 02] So for them I suppose it was kind of a coming back home. David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day. The Amalekites had made a raid against the Negev and against Ziklag. They had overcome Ziklag and burned it with fire and taken captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great.

They killed no one, but carried them off and went their way. But when David and his men came to the city and they found it burned with fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive, then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept till they had no more strength to weep. David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel.

And David was greatly distressed for the people spoke of stoning him because all the people were bitter in soul, each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.

And David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, bring me the ephod. So Abiathar brought the ephod to David and David inquired of the Lord, shall I pursue after this band? Shall I overtake them?

He answered him, pursue, for you shall surely overtake and shall surely rescue. So David set out and the 600 men who were with him and they came to the brook Bezor where those who were left stayed behind.

[17 : 23] But David pursued, he and 400 men, 200 stayed behind who were too exhausted to cross the brook Bezor. They found an Egyptian in the open country and brought him to David.

They gave him bread and he ate, they gave him water to drink and they gave him a piece of cake and figs and two clusters of raisins. And when he had eaten, his spirit revived, for he had not yet eaten bread or drunk water for three days and three nights.

And David said to him, to whom do you belong and where are you from? He said, I'm a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite. My master left me behind because I fell sick three days ago.

We had made a raid against the Negev of the Kerethites and against that which belongs to Judah and against the Negev of Caleb and we burned Ziklag with fire. And David said to him, Will you take 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 take you down to this band. And when he had taken him down, behold, they were spread over all the land, eating and drinking and dancing because of all the great spoil they had taken from the land of the Philistines and from the land of Judah.

[18 : 30] And David struck them down from twilight until the evening of the next day. Not a man of them escaped except 400 young men who mounted camels and fled. David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken and David rescued his two wives.

Nothing was missing whether small or great, sons or daughters, spoil or anything that had been taken. David brought back everything. David also captured all the flocks and herds and the people drove the livestock before him and said, This is David's spoil.

Then David came to the 200 men who had been too exhausted to follow him and who had been left to the brook Bezor and they went out to meet David and to meet the people who were with him. And when David came near to the people, he greeted them.

Then all the wicked and worthless fellows among the men who had gone with David said, Because they did not go with us, we will not give them any of the spoil that we have recovered except that each man may lead away his wife and children and depart.

But David said, You shall not do so, my brothers. With what the Lord has given us, he has preserved us and given unto our hand the band that came against us.

[19 : 38] Who would listen to you in this matter? For as his share is who goes down into battle, so shall his share be who stays by the baggage.

They shall all share alike. They shall share alike. And he made it a statute and a rule for Israel from that day forward to this day. When David came to Ziklag, he sent part of the spoil to his friends, the elders of Judah, saying, Here is a present for you from the spoil of the enemies of the Lord.

For it was for those in Bethel and Ramoth of the Negev and Jatar and Aroer and Ziphmoth and Eshtomea and Rachal and the cities of the Jeremilites and the cities of the Kenites and Hormah and Borashan and Athach and Hebron for all the places where David and his men had roamed.

Amen. And we pray that God will bless that word to us. We're going to come back to it in a few moments after we sing together in Psalm number 96. It's the Sing Psalms version, 96a.

You'll find it on page 127. Page number 127 in the Sing Psalms books. It's the Sing Psalms version of Psalm 96.

[20 : 53] We're going to sing from verse 7 to the end of the Psalms. Psalm 96 verse 7 and these are five stanzas. 7 to 13.

All nations to the Lord ascribe the glory that is due. Glory and strength ascribe to God and praise His name anew. Enter His courts with joy and bring an offering with you.

Worship the Lord in holy fear. All earth before Him bow. 7 to the end, Psalm 96. It's the June is Huddersfield. Gonna stand to sing. nominations All nations come to the Lord of sight, the glory that is true.

Glory and strength, a scribe to God, and praise His name anew.

And turn His course with joy and ring, and offering with you.

[22 : 18] Worship the Lord in holy fear, all earth before Him bow.

Tell every land the Lord is King, His savage is the air.

And cannot move, the Lord will judge the peoples in His tomb.

Let temps rejoice, and earth be glad, with joy let oceans ring.

The fields and all in them will shine, and forest streets will sing.

[23 : 36] They all will sing before the Lord, who comes to judge the earth.

He'll judge the world in righteousness, the peoples in His tomb.

Let's once again for a few moments bow our heads in prayer. Our Father, what we've been singing tells us to tell every land that the Lord is King.

And we believe these words look forward to a time when your people would be sent out into all the world by the Lord Jesus Christ. To explain to them why He had come into the world.

To confront them with their need to be saved. And to invite them into a saving relationship with you. In which the Lord truly is King.

[24 : 47] And we ask that tonight that for all those who have gone out with the gospel. We believe that in a sense every one of us is a missionary. Every one of us is told to let our light so shine that men may see our good works.

And glorify our Father in heaven. And remind us of our responsibility as individuals and as a congregation. To tell the world that the Lord is King.

And yet Lord we want to pray for those tonight who have gone out to parts of the world. Where there are very few Christians if any. And we pray Lord for them. For those who have gone to various parts of the world.

We remember Lord those who are working for WEC. And we think of the meeting that is going to be happening on Friday. We pray for all those who are going to be taking part. And for the ongoing work.

Which they carry out in your name. In sending people to various parts of the world. To explain the gospel to them. And to bring the gospel.

[25 : 49] And we ask Lord that you will bless all those. Who are involved in that work. Either with WEC or other organizations who we know and support. And we want to remember them oh Lord.

We want to be concerned and interested in what they are doing. We pray that every one of us here who knows Jesus will have a missionary interest. It is not good enough just to think about ourselves.

We if we truly love the Lord. We will want others to have what we have. And we will want people who have never heard the gospel. To hear it for the first time. And so create within us.

We pray a missionary interest. Whether it is an interest in planting churches here in our own country. Or abroad. We ask Lord that you will bless those places.

That are being reached for the very first time. And we ask once again Lord that you will work in the hearts of particularly our young people. That you will create within them that question as to whether they are being called to missionary service.

[26 : 57] We pray that you will give each one of us that prayer in our own hearts. Lord what will you have me to do? And we pray that we will ask it honestly. And with an open heart.

And we pray that we might be made ready for whatever the answer is. And sometimes the answer is different from what we expect. But Lord whatever that answer is make us a willing people in your day of power.

Willing to do. Willing to stay and willing to go. Willing to carry out whatever functions that you give us in your service. So Lord we pray for the rest of the world this evening.

We also want to pray for our own community here. We remember the schools as they go back after the holidays this week. We remember our work in our own congregation Lord.

Particularly amongst young people. We remember the work of campaigners and Sunday school and youth club. We remember the work in the Caber Fee on Tuesday nights. And Road to Recovery.

[27 : 51] And all the work that goes on Lord. Seeking to bring people into fellowship with Jesus. And we pray for that work. And we pray that you will bless it abundantly.

And make us never let us lose sight of the importance of all that we do in your name. We pray Lord all these things asking that you will hear us.

And bless to us now your word in Jesus name. Amen. We're going to return now to that chapter. Second. First Samuel chapter 30.

And verse 6. Page 303. And it's 1st Samuel chapter 30 and verse 6. And David was greatly distressed. Because the people spoke of stoning him.

Because all the people were bitter in soul. Each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.

[28 : 47] We've said all along. That when you read the Bible. The important thing to ask is. Not just what is happening.

On a minute by minute or a day by day basis. What is important if we really want to understand. What the Bible is about is this. What is God showing us.

About himself. It's always a good way. Anytime you open the Bible. You read a chapter. You ask this question. What is God showing me today. About himself.

And when you do that. You come away with a completely different. And a fresh perspective. Of what is in the Bible. A further question of course is.

What is God showing me. How can my life. What is God saying to me. About himself. Because that's what the Bible is. It's where God. Where God shows himself.

[29 : 43] He reveals. That's what we call God's revelation. Of himself. And I guess that. I hope. That that's the reason we are here tonight. To find out more about God.

And perhaps. You spent years. Wondering about God. How God. Interacts. With us. And how we can.

See and learn about God. The reality of God. In a new and a living way. And sometimes. We come away with.

The right answer. To that question. But sometimes. We can come away with. The wrong answer. As well. For example.

When we interpret. Events. That take place. Either in the world. Or in our own personal lives. In terms of. What is God.

[30 : 40] Saying to me. In those events. Take for example. The catastrophic events. That take place. From time to time. In the world. For example.

The 2004 tsunami. That claimed the lives. Of. Two hundred and thirty. Thousand people. Isn't that. Wasn't that an awful event. Wasn't that a frightening.

A fearful event. In which. The whole world. Was shaken. By that. Now we know. You and I both know. As. Worshippers of God. That God is in control.

That he is. In control of all things. That's what we call. His sovereignty. But sometimes. We ask. Is God. Saying to us. Something. Through these events.

And if so. What. What is God. Saying to us. In these events. Recently. A counselor.

[31 : 37] A Christian counselor. In England. He. Said. That. The floods. The recent floods. That have been down south. Were.

Connected. With. The government's decision. To allow. Same-sex marriage. This was God's judgment. He said. On England. Because of that. Now.

What I want to say. This evening. Is that. It is. Always. Foolish. To try. And interpret. Events. Just by themselves.

In terms of. What God. Is doing. I want to say this. We can never know. What God is doing. In events. God doesn't.

If God was saying. Something. To us. He wouldn't be. Leaving us. In the dark. Back. When God. Wants to say. Something. To us. He will say it.

[32 : 34] That's of course. Why we're here tonight. Because we believe. The Bible. Is God's word. The clear. Revelation. Of God. So if you want. To know. What God is saying. You don't try. And interpret.

Events. That take place. In the world. Whether a tsunami. Or floods. Or anything. In terms of. What we think. God might be saying. To us. Very foolish. But what we do.

Is we go to the Bible. And we interpret. We don't need to interpret. Because God. Clearly tells us. Things. How. As they are. In the Bible. He tells us.

Where we are. In relation to him. And he tells us. What he has done. To reconcile us. To himself. And so. It is not right. To look at some event.

That place. And the same is true. Without personal lives. Say for example. Something went wrong. Say you became seriously ill. As a Christian.

[33 : 29] Would you say. Well God is judging me. For something. I must have done something wrong. In my life. God is saying something. To me. He is showing me. This is payback time. For something I did.

When you think that way. You end up. With a very negative view. Of God. The fact is. That we all deserve. God's judgment. And his anger.

His righteous anger. Every one of us. All have sinned. And come short. Of the glory of God. And yet. If you want to find out. What God is saying.

To you tonight. Then you don't look at. Your own personal circumstances. Or your sicknesses. Or your illnesses. Or the calamities. That happen in your homes. You come to the Bible.

And that's where you find. And if you've gone wrong. As we all have done. Then there is a way. Of reconciliation. Through the Lord Jesus Christ.

[34 : 25] And if anything. Shows us. That there is a way. Back to God. It's this chapter here. This is an absolutely. Marvelous chapter. In which a person. Who is a Christian.

A man after God's own heart. And he's. Made a very foolish decision. To go over to the Philistine camp. And spend. I don't know how long he spent there. But. But when he came back.

He discovered. That the town. In which he and his men. Had lived. Was destroyed. And I guess. He didn't quite know. Whether his wives.

Or whether his families. And the children that he had. Or the wives and families. Of his men. They didn't. They don't. They hadn't a clue. What had happened to them. There was no communication. In those days. There was no way.

Of finding out. So. I guess. That. They all assumed. The worst. Who knows. What happened to them. Who knows. What terrible things. Had happened to them. This must have been. An absolute disaster.

[35 : 22] But for. David. As a person. Who knew the Lord. And who all of a sudden. Was confronted. With the foolishness. Of what he had done. Perhaps. He too.

May have been. Tempted. To conclude. That this was. God judging him. And bringing. Bringing back. On him. The foolishness.

Of what he had done. In going over. To the Philistines. He may even. Have concluded. That God was now. Finished with him. No more mercy. No more grace. This was.

What he deserved. For having gone over. To the Philistine camp. You would forgive him. Wouldn't you. For concluding that. For coming to.

After all. He knows. That God is sovereign. God is holy. And God is. Of purer eyes. Than to behold iniquity. He knows. That David. Acted. Faithlessly. Prayerlessly.

[36 : 16] Foolishly. And he didn't. Only do so. On his own behalf. But he did so. On behalf. Of his men. As well. He represented them. And now. Look at. What he's getting.

The Amalekites. Have come. And they've. Destroyed his village. And his life. Is now. Finished. Everything. That he held dear. Has been taken away from him. Everything. Has.

Been. Stripped. Of him. Well. Although. We might forgive him. For. Such a conclusion.

It turns out. That that would have been. An absolutely. Wrong conclusion. For him. To come to. Because.

The truth of the matter. Is this. When you read it again. You discover. That this is not. About God. Judging him. Or punishing him. Or condemning him.

[37 : 12] Or paying him back. For his own. This is actually. This chapter. Is not about. God. Against David. It is actually. The opposite. It's a chapter.

That reminds us. That God. Is for David. Let me. Put it this way. If God. Hadn't. Intervened. The moment.

That he did. And arranged. For. The. Commanders. Of the Philistines. To persuade. Achish. To send him back. The moment.

That he did. Then who knows. How much longer. He would have spent. In the. Philistine camp. He would have gone to war. Against his own people. Disaster. And then. He would have come back.

To Ziklag. And he would have had. No chance. Whatsoever. Of recovering. His wives. And his families. And the wives. And the families. Of his men. If he hadn't come back.

[38 : 08] At that precise moment. When he had the opportunity. Then. To go after. The Amalekites. And to win back. And to recover. His wives. And his families. And all his goods.

That's what God did. At that precise moment. That was God's. Merciful. Gracious. Marvellous. Providence. Towards him. God.

Is. For him. And if God is for him. Then who can be. Against him. Now. You might want to go.

One step further than that. We all think this way. Don't we. When we think of. What God allows. And what God does. And what God doesn't do. And the providence.

And the overruling. Of God. It's a mystery. The whole thing. Is completely beyond. Our understanding. Isn't it? You might go. One step ahead of that.

[39 : 04] And you might say. Well. If that's the case. Why did he not. Why did God not. Arrange for David. To be sent back. A day before. And then he would have been. Ready for the Amalekites. And so he could have.

Prevented the whole thing. In the first place. See what I'm saying. And that's where. We take things. Into our own hands.

When we've got no right to. That's where we have to. Contend with the mystery. Of God's providence. And it is a mystery. I don't know.

Why God didn't send. David back. A day earlier. Or two days earlier. So that he could be ready. For the Amalekites. We don't know. David doesn't know. His men don't. Know. That's the mystery.

Element in it. But what we do know. Is that. If he hadn't. Sent him back. When he did. He would have had no chance. Because his wives. And his. They would have been defiled. And they would have. Who knows. What would have happened to them.

[39 : 59] They would have. Probably been killed. Or sold. Or whatever. So. What we've got. Is. You lay hold.

On what you know. About God. But you leave the rest to him. He had a purpose. In sending him back. Exactly when he did. Send him back. And we have to trust ourselves.

You can never understand. What God is doing. In your life. Or in the life of anyone else. But what you can know. Is this. That if you know Jesus.

If you're trusting. And following Jesus. You know. That you are in safe hands. You know. That he is your shepherd. And that he leads you. By still waters. And by the green pastures.

Even though I walk through the valley. Of the shadow of death. There. Your rod and your staff. They comfort me. That's the one thing. That we know.

[40 : 58] This evening. Is that if God is for us. Then who. Can be. Against us. So this chapter. Is not about God. Paying back David.

By all means. It's a chapter about God. Disciplining David. But look at what the Bible says. When it talks about God discipline. Hebrews chapter 12. Tells us. That he disciplines.

He whom. He loves. The writer to the Hebrews. Tells us. That to endure discipline. As to endure hardship. As God's discipline.

So we're not to read. Into difficult circumstances. God's anger. And his judgment. And his condemnation. We're not to do that.

We're to endure hardship. As God's listen. And know. That God's discipline. Is towards those. He loves. It's a mark. Of God's fatherly love.

[41 : 55] In which he takes us through. All of these circumstances. And he brings us. Closer to himself. That's exactly what happened here. David is stripped of everything. That he has. What does he do?

He comes close to the Lord. He runs to the Lord. And hides in the Lord. And that's what we do. As well. Isn't it? I hope so. Our first instinct. Our instinctive reaction.

When things. Go. Against us. Is that the Lord knows. The Lord is in control. I am in his hands. I am the pot. I am the clay. He is the potter.

And I know that he loves me. More than I. More than I can appreciate. So. That's the first thing.

In that chapter. So much more. I would love to say. About. About this whole area. I am quite sure. That. Everyone here. Has. Has thought. Of course. It brings in. The whole.

[42 : 54] Idea. Of the whole. The whole concept. Of. Why does God. Allow. Things to happen. Why does he allow. Evil to happen. Why does he allow. Sickness to happen.

Why did this happen. Or that happen. That I hear about. Or that's been in my life. All of these things. Are. Are such. A mystery. To us. But the thing is. Not to. Not to allow these things.

To drive us away. From God. But to draw. Us to him. On the basis. Of what we know. In the Bible. And what he tells us. Is this. He says. That he. Who did not.

Withhold. His only son. But delivered us. Up for us all. How shall he not. Also. Freely with him. Give us. All things. We have. A great God.

This evening. We have. A personal God. A God. Who knows us. Intimately. As we are. And has accepted us. As we are. He knows.

[43 : 47] Our failings. He knew. David's failings. And he knew. He knew. How to. Work. All of these things. Together. For good. To them. Of course. That doesn't give us. An excuse.

To live any way. We want. But it does. Give us. The encouragement. When we know. We failed. To come to the Lord. To run to the Lord. And to know. That. We.

Are. Forgiven. And there are many times. That David would have. Would discover that. Time. And time. Again. I suppose. If anyone.

Could have given up hope. It would have been David. He sat down. His face. Was just. Running. Streaming. We was filthy. After a long journey. After who knows. How many days.

On the road. With. Not knowing. Where he was. Having discovered. In the fire. And the. The smoldering. Embers. Of. Ziklag. And. Trying to find. Something. Living.

[44 : 39] In all. Of the carnage. That was there. Only to sit down. And to just. Inconsolably. Weep. With the rest of his men. The rest of his men. They were. They were. Understandably.

Bitter. And their bitterness. Was. Turned. To David. He was the leader. He was the one. Who they saw. Was. Was responsible. For all this mess. Look at this. Look at what you've got.

Is into David. Is this. Is this the end result. Of all the devotion. That we've given to you. Only to lose. Everything. Then what was he going to do. As far as the Lord.

Was concerned. Who was he going to turn to. If anyone. Could have given up. Then David. I suppose. Could have easily. Given up. But that's.

This is what's so marvelous. About this chapter. He did the opposite. Instead of giving up hope. He. Ran to the Lord. He took refuge.

[45 : 34] He strengthened himself. In the Lord. His God. How can you explain this? How can you explain that he. He refused. To accept that God had given up.

On him. Well I believe that there is. There are two clues. In that sentence. That help us to understand. What action that David took.

David strengthened himself. In the Lord. His God. There are. And then of course. He said to Abiathar. The priest. The son of Amalek. Bring me the ephod. And Abiathar brought the ephod to David.

There's two clues. In those verses. That help us to understand. The secret. To David's character. And his relationship. To the Lord. And the first clue.

Is found in the title. That it gives us. In verse six. The Lord. His God. Now you've seen this before. We've gone over this before. And it's. But it's such an important issue.

[46 : 33] In the Old Testament. Anytime you come across. The word Lord. In capital letters. It is the name. That God gives to himself. In relation to.

His covenant. With his people. Israel. Always remember that. When you're reading the Old Testament. You come across the word Lord. L-O-R-D. In capital letters. It's Yahweh.

Yahweh. Yahweh. It's the word from which. Jehovah comes from. But a more accurate term. Is Yahweh. Okay. Now that's the name. It's a very.

Particular name. It's a name that. Only. Those. Who were loved by God. And who loved God. Could use for him. And they were entitled. To use that name.

Because. He was not only. God. In general. Way up there. He was their God. God. And that's why. David goes on. To call him the Lord. His God.

[47 : 29] His personal God. Not. That's not to say. That there were loads of gods. And he had chosen one of them. No. No. That's not the way it works. That's the way people. Would have you think. Here. In this generation. But that's not the way it is.

There is only one. Living and true God. And yet. That Lord. That God. Has called us. Into. A personal relationship. With himself. And that's what David knew.

That's what marked him out. As a man of God. A man after God's own heart. He knew the Lord. He knew he could go to the Lord. He knew he didn't have to go through. Any process. Or procedure.

To be accepted by God. He knew that God loved him. Regardless. Of his failure. He knew that he was in covenant. And God. Whatever else God would do.

He would never. Ever. Break his covenant. With his people. And it was on the strength of that. That he knew. He could turn to him. And it's exactly the same. With God's people.

[48 : 26] In every generation. Whether it's Old Testament. Or New Testament. In fact. We have a greater understanding. Of this relationship. And so there's absolutely. No excuse for us.

You and I. If we. If we're Christians. If we belong to Jesus. Tonight. We have access to God. And we can say. He is my God. God. He belongs to me.

And I belong to him. I am in the palm of his hands. He tells us that. He has engraved my name. In the palm of his hands. And I am loved. And when we can say.

That God loves us. And that's a love. You're never going to find. Anywhere else. In this world. Whatever love you find. In the world. Amongst human beings. Men and women. Even in families.

A love that comes and goes. It's strengthened one day. It's diminished the next. But God's love. Is absolutely certain. It's rock solid. And it does not depend. On our performance.

[49 : 25] And it doesn't depend. On how we feel. And it depends. It doesn't depend. On what we've done. And what we haven't done. Every single day. If we are justified. Then we can stand. Before God. And know.

That he. Accepts us. And loves us. Because of what we are. In Jesus Christ. But then the second clue. Is in verse 7.

Where David said. To Abiathar the priest. That's the second clue. Not only the word Lord. But the word priest. Because the priest. Was absolutely essential. In the person.

In the Old Testament. In their relationship to God. Abiathar belonged to the family. Of high priests. And I want. I want to simplify this. Again. We've been through this before. But it's so important.

If you want to understand. The Bible. Then we have to understand. The place. Of the priesthood. And it's very simply this. It's something very simple. The priest was the person.

[50 : 24] The man. Who God chose. To mediate. Between him. And the people. So he was a. Intermediate. He was a man. Who stood.

And represented. The people. Before God. And represented. God. Before the people. It was necessary. For that. Such a person. To exist. The priest. Was also the person.

Who made sacrifice. But in this case. He was the person. Who. Was to. Speak. On behalf of the Lord. To David. And to show David. That there was a. A future.

And to point him. In the right direction. But. We have a priest. As well. Right. We have. The priest. Christ. Because every. Priest.

Priest. In the Old Testament. Looked forwards. A reminder. To the people. Of the Old Testament. That someone. Was going to come. In the fullness. Of time. Who would truly. Once and for all. Stand between.

[51 : 17] Us and God. You need a priest. Tonight. And there is only one. There's no point. Looking around. You're trying to find. Someone who can stand.

Because you won't find. Anybody. On this earth. But the priest. That we have. Was once. On this earth. He was born.

In Bethlehem. He lived. And taught. And healed. Walked on the water. Created. Enough food. For five thousand. People. He raised the dead.

And eventually. He was. Killed on the cross. He. He died. On the cross. As our priest. Our great. High priest. When he died. He was our representative.

Taking our sin. And the guilt of our sin. On himself. So that. Our sin. Was forever. Paid for. And so that we. Are cleansed. Once and for all.

[52 : 11] Our sin is put away. And no one. Can ever take our sin. Back again. And make us guilty. Of what Jesus. Has cleansed us from.

And what that means is. There is a way to God. There is only one way to God. That same priest said. I am the way. The truth. And the life. And that same priest. Was raised by God.

On the third day. As our priest. As the man. Who stands between. You and God. You can't get to God. Except through him. There is no other way.

You can try as you want. You can search. Far and wide. You won't find. Anyone. In the world. Who rose again. From the dead. And that's the final proof.

That he truly is. Who he says he was. And that he truly is. The way to God. That you are the one. Who stands. Between you. And God. So if you want to be right. With God tonight. You need.

[53 : 08] The priest. You need. Jesus Christ. The living. Risen. Glorious. High priest. And you know. You can be absolutely sure.

That if you come to God. Through him. And you ask the Lord. Lord have mercy upon me. A sinner. And I ask it. Not because I deserve it. But because of. What Jesus.

My priest. Has done. And I want to accept him. Once and for all. As the person. Who stands. Between me. And you. And I want to come. On the basis. Of what he has done.

Alone. I want to accept his death. And I want to accept him. As my savior. And as.

My. Lord. God. So the priest. In the old testament. Was such. A key. Individual. In our relationship. To God. Because he pointed the way.

[54 : 05] And he was key to David. And that's the reason why. That was the secret. David's a man. Who's called. A man after God's own heart. What does that mean? It means that he knew. He had access to God.

That God was the most precious being. In his life. He was the very center. Of his being. He sought the kingdom. Of God. And everything that he did. Well.

Barring a few foolish decisions. That he made. Same as us. Isn't it? We make foolish decisions as well. We saw that a few weeks ago. When we looked at what he had done. And we saw how like ourselves it was.

How like Peter. It was. How like John the Baptist. It was. When we lose sight. Very often. Of. What we ought to be. In our relationship with the Lord.

Where it becomes obscured. But here was his way. Of coming back. Of returning. No. Rather. This was God's way. Of restoring David. Back to where he should have been.

[55 : 03] In the first place. And that's the way God works. He restores my soul. And makes me to walk. In the paths. Of righteousness. But not only. Was David restored.

To a right relationship. To God. But God had a future. For him. He took him back. To where he should have been. In the first place. Isn't that. The grace of God. Took him back. To where he should have been.

And then pointed him. In the right direction. Here's the first thing. You're going to have to do. You're going to have to go after. These Amalekites. You're going to have to win back. Your wives. And your families. Because I am going to give them. Back to you.

That was God. He wasn't. God was not saying. All right. I'm going to forgive you. But then. After that. You're on your own. You can. Make of your life.

What you want. No. No. That's not the way. That God works. God. Everything that the Lord does. Is done. Wholeheartedly. And without pulling any of.

[55 : 58] There's no. Holes barred with the Lord. Everything that God does. Is done in full. And in completeness. So for David. When he was brought back.

When he was restored to the Lord. When he found strength in the Lord. That was only the beginning again. It was a new beginning for him. Off he went. In the strength that God gave to him. Guided by the Holy Spirit.

After the Amalekites. Because now. He was on the track again. He was on the right track again. And he was moving on it. Now. That's what God wants to do.

I'm not saying it's an easy process. And I'm not saying it doesn't. Involve pain. It was very painful for David. It wasn't easy at all. And yet. It was one of those times.

[56 : 52] Where he was forced. And there are times. When we are forced to. Into a closeness with God. That. Hardship brings. And when they went after him.

When they went after the. The Amalekites. Once again. God shows us providence. And that they found. And they found an Egyptian.

Verse 11. In the open country. And brought him to David. And they gave him bread. And ate. And they gave him water to drink. Why is this written for it? Is this not. Unnecessary detail. No it's not.

Because for David. Finding this. Egyptian. Who had been rejected. By the Amalekites. Who had been. Evicted. From the army. He was surplus.

To requirements. Because he was. An Egyptian. Because he had fallen sick. They couldn't care less. About him. But that was all part. Of the providence of God. Even the sickness. By which.

[57 : 55] He wasn't able to. Stay with the Amalekites. It was all in God's hands. So he was able to. Show. David and his men. Point the way to them. Small.

Providences. Are big. Encouragements. You know that. Don't you? As a Christian. You know that. Small providences. Are big. Encouragements. Just the little ways. In which.

Even. In calamities. And darknesses. Somehow or other. God just. Shines his light. He gives us. That little.

Encouragement. To point us. In the right direction. That's what he always does. The rest is history. Some of the men. Weren't able.

They were so exhausted. They had to stay with the bags. That was okay. As far as David was concerned. The rest of the men. Went with David. Under the guidance. Of the Egyptians. The Egyptians.

[58 : 49] They found the Amalekites. They overtamed them. They. They warred against them. They were the enemies. Of God. Remember. They took back. The spoils.

Not only the wives. And the families. But they took back. The spoils. Of war. And they came back. With it. But amongst David's men. There were some. Worthless fellows. People who were.

Troublemakers. And. The. Their heart. Wasn't in what they were doing. At all. Who knows why. They were with David. I suppose. It was some kind of. Patriotism. Or family connection.

Or whatever. But they were. Their heart. Wasn't in the right place. The wicked and worthless fellows. They wanted to say. Well. We. We're the ones. That did all the work. These guys. Just sat where they were. Because they were too tired.

They're all a bunch of wimps. Why should they get any of the spoils? David says. Stop now. You might ask. Well. What's this in the chapter for? Is this not a. A.

[59 : 43] A. Nothing is in the Bible. Except what is there for our good. What do we. What do we find here? Well. For one thing. David is asserting his leadership. We're coming on. By the way.

This is us. At episode 17. Of series one. Series two will be. Later on in the year. And it's an entirely different David.

Entirely different circumstances. But God is preparing him. In series one. To be king. And part of that preparation. Is that he has to assert.

And he has to know. And he has to experience. How to lead people. How to be. A balanced leader. And there's quite a skill. As those of you who are leaders.

In any capacity know. It's a real skill. That has to be learned. He was a natural leader. But it had to be. His talents had to be developed. And they can only be developed. When he's challenged. And he's challenged.

[60 : 38] By these wicked. These worthless guys. Who are saying. Look. They don't deserve anything. They sat with the bags. We are the ones. Who went to war. Against the Amalekites. We deserve everything.

But David knew. That wasn't right. And I'll tell you why. The reason was. A theological one. And he tells them.

That this is not like. An ordinary war. In which. You go in. By yourself. And might is right. That's not what we're doing here. We. Are God's people. And we have to act.

And behave. As God's people. And we have to understand. That if we won this battle. It's not because of us. It's because God. Gave. Them.

Into our hands. Whatever we have. Is what we've had. What we've got from God. And I can't think. Of a more basic.

[61 : 32] And fundamental principle. By which you and I. Must live. Tonight. And the principle. That says. Whatever we have. Is what we've got from God.

You think about it. Yourself tonight. Think about who you are. Think about where you are. Think about yourself. In comparison. To people you read about. In the newspapers.

People who lived. A different life. To you. People who were victims. People who are caught up. In war. People who have. Who have had. A totally. Depraved life.

And here we are tonight. And I hope most of us. If not all of us. Are following the Lord. You think we did that. By ourselves. You think that. That was something to do with us.

Of course it's not. What do you have. Says the apostle. That you did not receive. Eve. Everyone. Here.

[62 : 35] Is a. Is a. A. A. A. A. A. A. Receptor. Of God's grace. And his generosity. That's why tonight. That's why. That's why there's so much responsibility.

On you to listen to what God is saying. You're not in any position. To be able to say. Okay. Take it or leave it. I'll leave it. No. No. No. God has given you.

Something. He has given you an opportunity. That he hasn't given. To many people. There are millions of people in the world. That don't have the opportunity. That you have. To hear the gospel. And if you are a Christian.

You can never. Take credit for yourself. Paul tells us this. He says it was by grace. That you have been saved. Not by works. Less. Any of us should boast. We've done nothing.

For our own salvation. But that's not just some kind of arbitrary truth. That we can just. That we can just put. On a plaque. On our walls.

[63 : 32] By grace you have been saved. It is a truth. That we need to live by. It's a truth. That should affect. Every part of our being.

It should affect our humility. We should be the most humble. People in the world. As Christians. Why? Because we know. That what we have. We've been given.

By God. We should also be the most worshipful. Christians. We should also. We should. We should live in such a way. That God comes into everything.

Every aspect. Of our lives. We should never. Lose sight of. Everything that we do. We do. We do in God's name. By the help.

And by the strength. And by the leading. That God gives us. Knowing that he takes our hand. Every step of the way. It also. Should affect our generosity. What we have tonight.

[64 : 28] Even in terms of material things. It's what God has given us. And that's what David's point was. And that's the lesson that they all share and share alike. We are God's people.

And he says that if some of us. Some of us have been given gifts to go to battle. Other people haven't been able to. That doesn't matter. Because God has given us. This generously. This.

This product of. The battle. Therefore we share it. And I'll tell you this. Says David. It's not only them that's going to get it. I'm going to give it. I'm going to. I'm going to spread it. Abroad.

There are other people who aren't with us. And by this time. Of course. The battle against the Philistines. Would have been raging. And all these losses. That we spoke about last Lord's Day. Remember. Saul.

And his sons. And they were all lying. Defeated. Dead. So many of the Israelites were now. By now dead. If ever they needed. Strength. And some kind of hope.

[65 : 26] And some kind of encouragement. It was now. And David was in a position. To give them that. Remember last week. I'm going to close. Remember last week.

We said that this whole book. First Samuel. Ends in disaster. If you read chapter 31. That's the way it appears. But actually. There was another sign.

There's something happening. Behind the curtain. And behind the curtain. Is God. Preparing David. For a new day. For a new dawn. For a new era.

Where he. Would become king. So what appeared. To be. A calamity. And a disaster. Was actually. God. Preparing. A new moment.

Where David. A man after God's own heart. Was going to be raised up. And when he was going to be. Enthroned. And when he was going to be. Recognized. By Israel. And when once again.

[66 : 21] They would be restored. To a right relationship. With God. That's. What God's purpose. And his plan is. A right. Relationship. With him. If you have that tonight.

Then rejoice. In the Lord. Go out of here. Bearing witness. To him. In your life. And in everything. That you do. If you don't.

Then now's the time. To come to him. Let's bow our heads. In prayer. Father in heaven. We thank you. Lord. For the grace of God. In the gospel. We ask Lord.

That you will. So work within us. To convince us. Of this great truth. That Jesus. Is our only. And our great high priest. And we pray. That we may know him.

And what he has done. On the cross. As the sacrifice. For our sin. In Jesus name. Amen. Page number 334. In the. Sing Psalms books.

[67 : 16] It's the. The traditional. Version. Of Psalm number 80. Psalm number 80.

Last three verses. The tune is Morvan. I'm going to sing. From verse 17. So on page 334. Psalm number 80. It's the traditional version. Oh let thy hand. Be still upon. The man of thy right hand.

The son of man. Whom for thyself. Thou made us strong. To stand. So henceforth. We will not go back. Or turn from thee at all. Do thou quicken us. And we upon thy name. Will call. Last three verses.

Verse 17. We're going to stand to sing. Amen. I may less strong to stand.

For henceforth we will not go back, nor turn from thee at all.

[68 : 43] Or do thou quicken us and we, upon thy name we'll call.

Arm us again, Lord God of hosts, and upon us thou shalt, to make thy countenance to shine, and so we shall be saved.

Now may the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, rest on and abide with each one of us, both now and always. Amen.