

## Encouragement Learned From David

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by Wayne Goff

We can learn about encouragement from a difficult story in the life of David in 1 Samuel 30. While David and his men were away from camp, the Amalekites had invaded Ziklag, burned it with fire, and had taken the women and children captive (vv. 1-2). When David and his men returned to the city and found these results, the text says *“Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep”* (v. 4). No doubt the first impression upon David and his men was that this was a *hopeless* situation!

David rightly inquired of Jehovah, asking what he should do, and God comforted him with the knowledge that they should overtake the invading troop, defeat them, and all would be recovered safely (vv. 7-8).

Verse 6 tells us that *“David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.”* How did he do that? We are not told in the text, but we can reference several Scriptures which might help us understand.

In Psalm 18:6, David wrote, *“In my distress I called upon the Lord, and cried out to my God; He heard my voice from His temple, and my cry came before Him, even to His ears.”* Thus, David strengthened himself in the Lord by prayer and confident trust in God.

Prayer should be important to us, not only in times of trouble, but all the time, Luke 18:1; Phil. 4:6-7.

*“Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart”* (Lk. 18:1).

*“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”* (Phil. 4:6-7).

Psalms 27:1, 4-5 and 40:1-3 tell us also that David trusted in the Lord, and leaned upon Him for strength.

*“The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? . . . One thing I have desired of the LORD, that will I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.”*

*“I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my steps. He has put a new song in my mouth — praise to our God; many will see it and fear, and will trust in the LORD.”*

As you study these passages carefully, you see that David **trusted** in God with his very life. He **desired** the spiritual abode with God above all else, and ordered his life accordingly. He then trusted that God would **“hide”** him from his enemies.

Psalm 40 uses the word *“patiently”* — David waited **patiently** for the Lord. This may be difficult to do in times of stress, sorrow, grief and pain — but David did this and was **delivered** and **established** by God! This led David to sing praises to Jehovah God and to encourage others to seek the same.

Today, nothing has changed for God’s people. We are despised, rejected, hunted, and hated by people of the world. Yet we can learn to be encouraged by the example of David. How **horrible** to see his home destroyed and his family missing! How does one keep his wits about him in such a situation. But David did gather his thoughts, his mind, and returned to the **foundational basics** — trust in God, inquire of His will, patiently wait for God’s reply, and then obey His every command. Try it! It works!

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