

# Complete Restoration

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[ 0 : 00 ] First book of Samuel, the 30th chapter, and the 19th verse. First Samuel chapter 30 and verse 19. And I want to take the last clause of the verse especially, David recovered all.

I read from the 18th verse again, and David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken away, and David rescued his two wives, and there was nothing left into them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil nor anything that they had taken to them.

David recovered all. The life of David throughout is a wonderful study of the gracious overruling of the divine providence in the lives of his people.

It's an Old Testament illustration of that great truth announced in the New Testament that all things work together for good unto them that love God, who are recalled according to his purpose.

David knew the depth of spiritual despondency. He knew also the height of spiritual exaltation. He knew the bitterness of penitence and the smart of baptism.

[ 1 : 16 ] He knew the pain of self-reproach. But he knew also the joy of pardon and restoration. He knew the wonder of revealing life and seeing the shaping hand of God in all its ups and downs.

It was such a review of life indeed that led him to say in that psalm that is so often a kwanha ulit, goodness and mercy all my life, hath surely followed me. And in God's house forevermore, my dwelling place will be.

For as he puts it in another psalm that will be the singing of evening, he will perfect that which concerns him. The first one comes from a story which is told not indeed to the credit of David, but to the glory of God.

There is a story which tells us how God rectified a grievous wrong that David had done and brought good out of evil.

David recovered all. In other words, we just consider first of all the loss that he sustained and then the confidence that he revealed and finally the recovery that was effective.

[ 2 : 45 ] All these things are pressed upon in these few words which we have chosen for our time. First of all, the loss sustained. How much was covered by this awe that David recovered.

Well, the loss indeed had been total as we saw by this chapter which we read. David and his men had suffered grievous loss. They had acquired for themselves a tract of land in what was at that particular palmetallis the land of the Philistine.

It had been granted to them by Atheid, the king of Gaunt and it was established as a kind of sanctuary for David and his men and the base of operations also while Saul was still upon the throne.

From that center, Sitlach, David used to carry out military expeditions right across the disputed territory of the south of Judah and used to take arms against the enemies of the Philistines it is true but not because they were enemies of the Philistines but because they were the enemies of his own people.

But in all these occasions the Amalekites came upon Ziklag while David and his men were all away on one of these expeditions. They made the fullest use of their opportunity.

[ 4 : 25 ] They burnt Ziklag to the ground which had captured all the people of the town in it and the thieves were spoiled all the possessions that David and his men had in that settlement.

Now why, you might ask, should God let this happen? Why did he not heal David and his men from these calamities and problems?

Well in this case the answer is not far to see. And it was bluntly this that David and his men had no business to be there.

The story is told of how they came to be there in the 27th chapter of this book. He read at the beginning of that chapter 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 be scared of me to seek me anymore in any course of Israel. So shall I escape out of his hand.

[ 5 : 37 ] And David arose and he passed over 600 men that were with him and to wait him the son of Mayer king of God. But no, he came to be there. You see what happened?

David faith had given way. There is nothing better for me for my descent than to go over to the king of God and seek sanctuary there.

This was the man who used to give confidence in God and say better it is to trust in God than trust in man's defense. Better to trust in God than the prince has our confidence.

Now he says there is nothing better for me than put my trust in this Philistine prince. what we are told here is simply that David had transferred his confidence from the strong arm of God to the arm of love.

And what a pretence it all was. He pretended to Aphid that he was loyal to him. He pretended that he had transferred his allegiance from Saul to the king of the Philistine.

[ 6 : 55 ] His whole combat during the period that he was in Ziklag was that of a pretender and that's a sad role for any believer to play.

He asked for Ziklag as a settlement for himself and for his men for one reason only and that was that he might not be all the time under this scrutiny and under this aspicious gaze of Aphid and particularly his Philistine law.

He could go out from Ziklag and return to Ziklag and nobody would know what he had been doing in the interval. And when he did return to Aphid from time to time to give an account of what he had been doing when Aphid put the question to him whether have you made a road today here did he tell him of the attacks that they had carried out along the southern border of Judah as if he were devoting all his energy and he to the cause of the Philistines to take that country out of the hand of the Amalekites.

He was doing that actually but as I said a moment ago not enough for the sake of delivering the the Philistine interest from the hands of the Amalekites but for the sake of referring to Judah what had been Judah's procession in happier days.

By the way he gave his report to suggest to Aphid that he was acting in complete loyalty to him that what he had at heart was the interest of the Philistines and Aphid was completely deceived by the account that he gave.

[ 8 : 54 ] So you see the incident of the flood the destruction of David's hideout there and the scattering of his suggestions and the taking captive of his loved ones was a moral necessity that could be no blessing while this life of pretense and hypocrisy was being pursued.

He must learn that the arm of flesh would change him and that he dared not trust his own. He must learn again the better it is to trust in God than trust in man's defense.

Better to trust in God than the quintess of confidence. Nevertheless an effort actually is that whatever gains accrue to God's people from the sinful causes which they choose for themselves under certain pleasures those gains are only temporary and they will eventually be turned into lots. Lots gain the fertile plains of Jordan when he made his choice at the bidding of Abraham that in making that choice for the sake of gain he made a choice that ended in complete loss loss of his own reputation loss of character loss of family loss of riches and almost loss of his very soul. David's experience was similar. By going over to the Philistines he had gained immunity it is quite true from persecution by Saul and he had gained the respect of the Philistine king at least.

[ 10 : 56 ] Then his gains were turned into loss. He lost Ziklat he lost his wine he lost his possessions he lost everything except his God.

and what was worse for him was that all these losses produced a spirit of rebellion amongst his men the men who had been so loyal to him before now spoke of staining him did you see he had led them into this terrible experience that they were alone and possessionless in a hostile country knowing not which way to turn.

But while of course I have no wish to weaken this lesson of correction that the chapter brings before us we must notice because otherwise we shall miss a great deal out of the story we must notice how the restraints of God were laid upon the enemies of his people even in their direst circumstances go back a bit over the centuries prior to this incident at Sikta and remember what happened to Jacob and his sons at Shechem God had said go out to Bethel he had set out to go to

Bethel but to settle at Shechem for a time because Shechem was a fertile country and it suited the temporal interest of Jacob and his son they carried too long there they became too friendly with the people of the place and the result of it all was that a wayward daughter brought this grace from the family and the thankful sons made it impossible for Jacob and his family to dwell in Shechem any longer and then

God gave his renewed command go up to Bethel and dwell there not in Shechem but in Bethel that is the destination I gave you at the outset I renew the order go up to Bethel and dwell there and then Jacob set out set out we will leave with a very fearful heart because a company like his in the course of a journey we are very open to attack and the sons of Shechem were feeling revengeful but he really did that when Jacob set out at the command of God the error of the Lord was upon the sons of Shechem so that they pursued not after Israel you see you are safer in the path of obedience however perilous it may seem to you than in a path of disobedience however safe it may appear well that's what David learned in his own time look safer to dwell yonder in Ziklag than to dwell within the borders of the land where he is yet away in a skid and where

God had promised him the throne and when he got into this terrible trouble in Ziklag God's priests three were manifestly laid upon the Amalekites otherwise the words of our text could never have been written David recovered all they could only go those Amalekites those marauding Amalekites they could only go as far as God permitted them he permitted them to raid Ziklag to burn into fire to destroy that hideout that David had in the land of the Philistines and no doubt the Amalekites had their own intentions with regard to the people whom they had taken away as captives but before their plans matured

[ 15 : 19 ] David recovered all and yet it was a terrible moment when he was faced with revolt amongst his own followers it seemed that he had lost all and yet in his most impoverished conditions he had something left him that no Amalekites could claim for really David encouraged himself in the Lord his God a thing that no Amalekites could do because they didn't know David's God and however dire the situation may be for us at times my friends through our own departures from

God through our own infidelity if the fear of God is indeed in our hearts we shall have this left to us out God David encouraged himself in the Lord is God and as a godly merchant in London in the days of the great fire of London said as he ruefully contemplated his weary houses going up in flames and smoke well after all it's a small thing to lose the gift so long as one retains the giver Walter Petteich encouraged himself in the hour of his greatest love in the Lord his God just as David did now that brings us secondly to the confidence revealed in his word he encouraged himself in the Lord his God which meant that he had confidence in God when his confidence in all of us was shaken his men upon whom he depended and revoked but here was one who would never change he encouraged himself in the

Lord his God now you and I when we need encouragement very nicely to those nearest and dearest to ourselves to those who are most likely to be able to help us and one doesn't disparage for a moment the encouragement and the help that does come from two friends and yet my dear friends the encouragement that we can obtain from those who love us best and from those who really care for us and are able to help doesn't suffice in the gravest circumstances of all the best and most enduring encouragement comes from the Lord our God and that we have no right to expect that we should have this encouragement from him unless we are related to this God as David wants the Lord is God God had chosen David to be his servant and his king in Israel and David has assuredly by the grace of

God chosen God to be his king oh Lord thou art my God and king thee will I magnify and praise and it is only when we are related in that way to the Lord when we can speak of him as our God and king that we can encourage ourselves in him God had a peculiar interest in David he had set him apart for himself he had promised him the throne of Israel and he is thought no doubt comforting David in this hour of crisis he had conducted himself in an unworthy way it was quite true he had transferred his allegiance temporarily from God to man by going over to the Philistines but God was still his God and he knew that he could appeal to him not all that passed between David and God at this time but there are certain things that we can safely assume we can believe that David humbled himself and repented repented the kind of life he had been living since he had gone to live amongst the Philistines he may believe that he confessed his sins and that he was forgiven but he himself declared if in my heart I sin with God the Lord me will not be he knew

that there was no use going to God with prayer for help unless he returned to his former loyalty to God but other things were as bad as the were the

[ 20 : 43 ] God of Israel was still his God he was a God who had bound himself to David by many precious promises the anointing oil had been poured upon David's head as a token that he was to be king in the place of Saul might try to prevent his accession the Philistines and others might conspire against him the Amalekites might play ambush against him but even in such circumstances the psalmist could still say the Lord my light and saving health who shall make me afraid that was no empty boast that he made as the incident in this chapter revealed he encouraged himself when the

Lord is God what a confidence in the power of God is revealed in those words saw was against him the Amalekites were against him his own men were rising in revolt against him he had lost his loved ones he had lost his confidence he had lost his possessions he finds encouragement in these circumstances in the Lord his God he believes that God will bring about the seemingly impossible things and will yet give him the victory so he noticed what he does in token of God belief he tells Abiyah to the priest to bring the effort what was the significance of that action just this that David was again going to pray now I don't mean that he had given up praying quite certainly he hadn't but you know if you are living a life of pretence prayer life cannot be very vigorous and now David purposed to pray in sincerity as he had done before he went over to the Philistine bring him with the ear forth he was going to pray with his high priest and that to implore the favor of God and you notice that he laid all his planning now before God it wasn't a case of going out morning by morning and deciding where he was going for the day or for the next few days what skirmishes he was going to fight and what territory he was going to free it wasn't that he humbly comes to God and says shall I pursue after the Amalekites and coming in that spirit he received an answer pursue for I shall overtake them and shall recover all and that is our text reminds us what actually happened

David recovered all there was nothing lacking to them neither small nor great neither sons nor daughters neither spoil nor anything that they had taken to them David recovered all that's what happens when we put our trust in God and not in the arm of flesh and what confidence this reveals on the part of David in the unchangeableness of God he had indeed changed towards God but God has not changed towards him you may believe that his thoughts went back to that unforgettable occasion when David when Saul when Samuel indicated to Jesse his father that the next king of Israel was to come from his family and that this was the one who is to be king it is upon his head the anointing all of poor and yet the prospect of kingship seems more improbable now than ever it had been in the past

Saul was still on the throne the succession of the house of Saul seemed assured and David had lost the confidence of his own men and with an army like that he was not likely to be raised but he encouraged himself and the Lord his God and was not disappointed you see here too how God can use small instruments and small incidents to fulfill his own purposes shall I pursue after them God David asked God and God said pursue after them for thou shalt recover all and in the pursuit they came across an Egyptian lying sick and down on the face of the wilderness passed and weep because he hadn't partaken of food or drink for three days he'd been abandoned and no further use to his

[ 26 : 23 ] Amalekite master but this man abandoned by the Amalekites was the very man that David needed he was able to give him the information about the Amalekites that he needed in his pursuit and he came upon those Amalekites feeling perfectly secure and there they were feasting and drinking dancing perfectly confident yet nothing could deprive them of all this spoil that they had won for themselves not only at the flood but in certain territories of the Philistines as well and then David came upon them and David recovered all when the wicked feel most secure it is then sometimes that they are most insecure you remember how we are told in the book of

Daniel of Belshazzar's great victory in Jerusalem he seemed to have triumph not only over the Jews but of the God of the Jews by the sacred vessels of the temple were upon his table there taking away his common spoil they were drinking out of them using them as common vessels but just then when the merriment was at tight and when it was most secure the fingers of a man's hand wrote their sentence of doom on the wall opposite the king's eye and that night was Babu Chabza the king of the Chaldeans slayed so it happened to these raiders of Chitlat behold there was spread abroad upon all the earth eating and drinking and dancing because of all the great spoil that they

had taken out of the land of the

Philistines and out of the land of Judah and David smote them from the twilight even until the evening of the next day and there escaped not a man of them save four hundred young men which rode upon camels and fled and David recovered all of the Americans had carried away he encouraged himself when the Lord his God and his confidence was not put to shame it was a confidence that could be compared with the confidence of Jonathan when Jonathan cancelled immediate attack upon the Philistines although there were very few to go and attack the mighty foe maybe he said the Lord will work with our father father has no restraint with the Lord to win by many or by few in that confidence he won he went and tried my dear friends let us give to

God what little we have and what little we are let us do everything with unswerving confidence in him and the results will surprise us as they surprised David recovered or that brings us to the last thing that I mention that is the recovery effect this foliation had been total the restoration was of the same dimension and David recognized that it was all God's doing it was not of man you notice how he spoke to the men who had gone with him to the battle and who had taken the spoil and wanted to exclude some participation in the spoil that he had taken those men who for no fault of their own were left behind to guard the stuff to keep their possessions until they return they didn't bear the brunt of the battle said these men let's give back to them just their own possessions and don't let them have any portion of the spoil but this matter was decided for

David by the Lord and said David you shall not do so my brethren with that which the Lord has given us who has preserved us and delivered the company that came against us into our hands gives all the glory of it to God for he says who will have come unto you in this matter for as his part is that goes down to the battle so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff they shall pass alight now what bearing has all this upon ourselves surely my dear friends there is a sentence which we are in a similar plight and any sin has stripped us of all care of

[ 31 : 51 ] God who is in possession of the outside this spoliation was complete this same king speaking as a penitent sinner cried out I am poor and greedy needy that's what sin had done to him oh he had plenty of material wealth at that particular time and yet poor and needy sin had stripped him of all and that is the plight in which we are a sinner poor and needy with nothing to commend us to God nothing to call our own but sin but there is encouragement for us in the Lord our God he directed the battle on behalf of these people Christ restored that which he took not away if the spoliation was complete so it is the restoration he recovered all all things are yours says Paul to those believing

Corinthians for ye are Christ and Christ is God and if tonight any of us who profess the name of the Lord Jesus Christ have been living unfaithfully in recent times putting our trust in the arm of flesh living a life of pretense so far as religion is concerned if our religion has lost its vitality if our faith has weakened if our hope has grown dim don't let us go on as if nothing had happened don't let us go on living a dick lug so to speak let us be faithful to God unfaithful to ourselves let us return to him in penitence as David did and he will restore all that sin took away and we shall be able to say with this man so greatly blessed by the God from whom he had gone astray he will perfect that which concerns me you and I can say that too if we put our trust in God and as we go from God's house tonight if we indeed return to God in true penitence we can sing with David better it is to trust in God than trust in man's defense better to trust in God than make princes our confidence may he add his blessing let us pray

Lord we come to thee in the name that is above every name giving thee thanks that thou hast not dealt with us according to our sins and our unrighteousness but that even when we strayed from thee thou didst keep covenant with us and it's maintained thy faithfulness even although we turned away from thee Lord we thank thee for the victories of my love and pray that we may be wholly one by that love and may give ourselves anew to thee tonight to be for thee and not for another we thank thee for the mercies of the day and pray that you follow them with the mercies of the night forgive all things and let thy blessing be upon us in the coming days of the week for thy name is saved Amen