Lesson 33

**1 Samuel 30:1-31 (NASB)**
1  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;
2  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.
3  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.
4  Then David and the people who were with him lifted their voices and wept until there was no strength in them to weep.
5  Now David's two wives had been taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite.
6  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.
7  Then David said to Abiathar the priest, the son of Ahimelech, "Please bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought the ephod to David.
8  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.*"

[30:1-7](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A1-7). In David's absence from **Ziklag,** Amalekite raiding parties had **burned** the town and **carried... off** his family and everyone else as prisoners. After great lament ([v. 4](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A4)) and his men's threat to stone him, **David inquired of the Lord** through **Abiathar the priest** concerning His will in the matter. The inquiry was made by means of **the ephod,** the high priest's apronlike garment which contained the Urim and Thummim, the sacred stones used to discern the will of God (cf. [Ex. 28:30](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ex+28%3A30)).

9  So David went, he and the six hundred men who were with him, and came to the brook Besor, *where* those left behind remained.
10  But David pursued, he and four hundred men, for two hundred who were too exhausted to cross the brook Besor remained *behind.*
11  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.
12  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.
13  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.
14  "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."
15  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."
16  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.
17  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.
18  So David recovered all that the Amalekites had taken, and rescued his two wives.
19  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.
20  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."
21  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.
22  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."
23  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.
24  "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."
25  So it has been from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel to this day.
26  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:
27  to those who were in Bethel, and to those who were in Ramoth of the Negev, and to those who were in Jattir,
28  and to those who were in Aroer, and to those who were in Siphmoth, and to those who were in Eshtemoa,
29  and to those who were in Racal, and to those who were in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, and to those who were in the cities of the Kenites,
30  and to those who were in Hormah, and to those who were in Bor-ashan, and to those who were in Athach,
31  and to those who were in Hebron, and to all the places where David himself and his men were accustomed to go."

[30:8-31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A8-31). Assured of victory ([v. 8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A8)), **David** and his **men** pursued the Amalekites **to the Besor Ravine** (the Wadi el-Arish, some 20 miles south of Ziklag). When they finally **found** them (with the help of **an Egyptian... slave of an Amalekite** [[vv. 11-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A11-15)]), David's **400 men** who were rugged enough to stand the rigorous march ([vv. 9-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A9-10)) defeated **the Amalekites** (**except** for **400 young** Amalekites who escaped on camelback, [v. 17](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A17)) and retrieved all their families and property intact ([vv. 17-20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A17-20)). **The 200** who had remained behind by **the Besor Ravine** ([vv. 10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A10), [21](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A21)) wanted a share of the Amalekite booty. (On David's 600 men, see [23:13](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+23%3A13); [27:2](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+27%3A2); [2 Sam. 15:18](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Sa+15%3A18).) So reasonable did their request sound to **David** that he established a principle **that day** that would thereafter prevail: **The share of the man who stayed with the supplies is to be the same as that of him who went down to the battle** ([1 Sam. 30:24](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A24)). But David's diplomatic masterstroke was his return of the properties stolen by the Amalekites from the cities and towns **of Judah** ([vv. 26-31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A26-31)). Never would they forget his concern for them, and when the time came for him to declare his kingship at **Hebron** he no doubt enjoyed their enthusiastic support.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

**Open it**

1. What qualities keep a leader in office even through hard times?
 **Honesty and hard work, talking to the people**

2. What rules governing your life or work do you consider unfair?
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**Explore it**

3. What did David and his men find when they returned to Ziklag, the city in Gath where they had been living? ([30:1-3](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A1-3))
 **The city destroyed, and their families gone**

4. What was David’s personal loss in the Amalekite raid? ([30:5](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A5))
 **Both of his wives had been taken**

5. What was the attitude of the troops toward David when they returned to find their families gone? ([30:6](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A6))
 **They were angry and wanted to stone him**

6. As a leader, what first step did David take with regard to his dilemma? ([30:7-8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A7-8))
 **He consulted with God on the problem and how to solve it**

7. What did the Lord reveal to David through Abiathar and the ephod? ([30:8](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A8))
 **They would destroy the enemy and save the families**

8. Why did some of David’s men stay behind at the Besor Ravine? ([30:9-10](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A9-10))
 **The were exhausted from chasing**

9. What method did David use to locate the troops that had captured his family and subjects? ([30:11-15](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A11-15))
 **He found a sick slave and used his knowledge of where they were**

10. What did David and his men find the Amalekites doing? ([30:16](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A16))
 **Celebrating their great victory**

11. To what extent were the Israelites able to recover their families and property? ([30:18-19](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A18-19))
 **They recovered it all, great and small, wives and children**

12. How had the attitude of the fighters changed toward David after the battle? ([30:20](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A20))
 **They gave him a reward of livestock**

13. What did some of David’s men want to do about the two hundred troops who had not gone into battle? ([30:22](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A22))
 **Keep them from sharing in the spoils**

14. What was David’s perspective on the sharing of the spoils of war? ([30:23-25](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A23-25))
 **All share equally**

15. To whom did David send presents from the plunder of the Amalekite raiders? ([30:26-31](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=1Sa+30%3A26-31))
 **He shared with every place he had gone**

**Get it**

16. What is or isn’t fair about holding a leader responsible for the misfortunes that befall the group?
 **Leader is responsible for the actions of his troops, sometime things happen that cannot be helped**

17. What were some positive leadership qualities exhibited by David on the occasion of the recovery of the plunder of Ziklag?
 **His caring for the troops and the sharing of the spoils with places he had been**

18. Why is an extreme concern for fairness sometimes a camouflage for greed?
 **You can give a little to all and still keep too much for yourself**

19. Why did David feel that to punish those who had to stay behind would not be honoring to God?
 **God was the one who was providing, not the army**

20. What might have prompted David to send some of his share of the plunder to friends in Israel?
 **His sense of what he owed them for helping during his time of need**

**Apply it**

21. The next time you find yourself obsessed with an issue of fairness, how can you check your heart for greed and uncharitable thoughts?
 **Pray and ask for guidance from God**

22. What reminders can you use to pray for your church and civil leaders this coming week?
 **notes, text message reminder,**