I. INTRO:
   A. David, living 16 months in Philistine land, & almost sent to war against Israel, was now relieved that he & his men had been discharged from the war.
      1. David returned to Ziklag only to find tragedy.
      2. There are times when 1 problem follows right on the heals of another.
   B. Outline: Strength In Defeat & Generosity In Victory!
   C. As we review what the Lord did for David in that dark hour in his life, we can better understand how He helps His people when problems & crises come into our lives.

II. STRENGTH IN DEFEAT! (1-8)
   A. WHEN LIFE GOES UP IN SMOKE! (1-3)
   B. Imagine coming home to find your neighborhood ash-gray, charred embers smoking & smoldering; & an eerie stillness, a bone chilling silence.
      1. Lets put ourselves in David’s worn-out sandals.
   C. PRESSED INTO A TIGHT CORNER! (4-6a)
   D. The families of David & all his men were missing.
   E. David was greatly distressed - “pressed into a tight corner, the way a potter would press clay into a mold”. (Wiersbe)
      1. Different people react in different ways to the same circumstances.
         a) What life does to us depends on what life find in us!
   F. And the grief of David’s men soon turned to rage against David.
      1. They were so angry at him. We trusted you, we lost everything.
      2. They spoke of rising up in mutiny against their leader & killing him.
         a) Sometimes we let our hearts run ahead of our heads.
      3. I wonder if some of you haven’t experienced these very feelings though?
         a) A wife to her husband over their finances...I trusted you, we lost everything!
         b) A business partner to his/her colleague...I trusted you, we lost everything!
   G. The Significance of proper values!
      1. Talk about having your proper sense of values restored immediately!
      2. Look how many times they mention there wives & kids...but not once their things!
a) No thought was given to the **material loss** they had sustained.
b) Instead every men was overcome w/grief over the loss of **loving relationships**.

3. Life’s true values lie in our **relationships w/1 another**, not in our **possessions**.
a) Lk.12:15 Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the **things** he possesses.

H. A **crisis** does not **make** a person; it **shows** what a person is made of! (Warren Weisrbe)
   1. Like his men, David **wept & sorrowed**; but unlike some of his men he did not look for a **scapegoat**.
   2. In times of crisis, **express** your feelings honestly, but do not look for **somebody to blame**.
   3. Rather, **get your strength from the Lord**(6b) & **seek his will**(7,8).

I. **GET YOUR STRENGTH FROM THE LORD!** (6b)

J. David had sunk to his lowest low. Finally, he was ready to reach out/up to heaven.
   1. His heart suddenly sprang back into its old resting-place in the bosom of God.¹

K. The principle we learn:
   1. **Cloudy days & dark nights** call for **right thinking & a vertical focus**.
   2. Ps.30:1-5 O Lord my God, I cried out to You, And You healed me.
      Lord, You brought my soul up from the grave; You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit. Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His, And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name.
      For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning.

L. **SEEK HIS WILL!** (7,8)

M. Please bring the ephod here to me - He was determined to **look to the Lord** for guidance on his very next decision.
   1. He learned his lesson, no more stepping/running ahead of the Lord.

N. It is important to have a clear understanding of **biblical principles**...but little will be accomplished if we do not also become personally involved in the **circumstances** of our lives.
   1. Far too many people today take a **passive approach** to the Christian life.
   2. David & his men **would not have** recovered their wives & children if they had just **sat dejected** among the ashes & charred timbers.

3. As **tired** as they were, & **emotionally spent**, they needed a firm resolve & the determination to pursue their enemy.

4. Where **ch.29** showed the importance of **divine** involvement; **Ch.30** shows the importance of **human** effort.
   
a) **Q**: Are you prepared to become involved in a **task** so that God can accomplish His purposes through **you**?
   
b) **What do you sense God wants you to do presently?**
   
c) **Ever notice, Buddha is always seated, Jesus is always moving!**
      
      (1) Christianity has become very **Buddhistic**!

5. **Positive action** is needed if we are to accomplish great things for God.

O. God promised David & his men success if they would **pursue** the Amalekites.

P. **Wait a minute!** - after 16 months of standing on his self-will; living on deception & duplicity...and God just answers him? **Pursue!**

1. **Not**, “David, I **can’t trust** you anymore!”
   
   **Not**, “David, you’re on **probation** for **at least** 6 months!”
   
   **Not**, “David, go directly to jail, do not pass go, do not collect $200.
   
   **Not**, “David, you’re going back into **training** for a long time, before I could ever trust you in My army!” Just, **“Pursue!!!”**

2. **That’s my God!** - when David touched **rock bottom**, he turned back to God. And at that 1st upturn of his **tear stained face**; the very 1st moment God looked down & saw his **brokenhearted child weeping**, until he could weep no more, **then** heaven answered with an immediate word of **power & victory**, & sent him to **conquer**.
   
   a) That moment became for David the **gateway** into victory.

3. **When I was a child** I would swim directly above the drain in the deep end. Then I’d stop swimming, & descend, blowing out all my air. It was a very slow descent, then my feet would touch the drain. Then with just the flex of my toes, it would propel me back to the surface. - **David just pushed off the drain!**
   
   a) David is about to begin the accomplishment of God’s purpose for his life.

4. **This morning...Turn** your eyes to Jesus; **lift** your tear stained face; **repent** of your self-life; **acknowledge** the futility of fighting against God.
   
   a) At that moment he will **lift you up**; **bring you** victory; & **send you** to pursue your enemy.

III. **GENEROSITY IN VICTORY!** (9-31)

   A. **DIVINE DIRECTIONS!** (9-16)

   B. Many seem to think the bible has to be **explained**; no, it needs to be **believed & obeyed!**
1. We often fail to see the tremendous difference between knowing the Word of God, & knowing the God of the Word!

2. Conferences, rallies, missionary conventions, church service’s, & home bible studies come & go, & often we remain unchanged.

3. We are often just a group of what Alan Redpath called, unbelieving believers, “perhaps never so well equipped, but never so poorly endued.”

C. David & his 600 men set out after them, but ⅓ drop out as they were too exhausted to keep the pace & were allowed to drop out of the pursuit.

D. God uses the weak things in the world, even a sick boy who was left to die.
   1. When we do the possible (i.e. David pursuing after the Amalekites);
      God does the impossible (God provides an informant)!

E. **DAVID’S SPOIL!** (17-20)

F. They furiously fought them for 2 days & destroyed all but 400 of them.
   1. Remember Moses prophesied, that he Lord would one day wipe out the Amalekites (Ex.17:14-16)
   2. So complete was David’s destruction of the Amalekites that they are never again mentioned in either the books of Samuel or Kings.

G. They recovered all - in addition, they seized the Amalekites flocks & herds.
   1. They recovered wives, children, & possessions...but above & beyond that, David recovered his relationship back with the Lord; David recovered purpose; David recovered direction; David recovered vision; David recovered passion; David recovered gladness of heart; David recovered all forgiveness!
      a) David recovered in one day what he had lost over a period of 16 months.
      b) David recovered all!

H. This is David’s spoil - he wasn’t claiming it for himself in a selfish way, but only stating that he would see to its distribution.
   1. His generosity bothered some of the bad men. (but it always will)
   2. Just like it did w/Judas a she said to the woman w/costly perfume, why this waste? For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much & given to the poor.

I. **SHARE & SHARE ALIKE!** (21-25)

J. David’s rule regarding the equal distribution of booty/spoil finds its parallel in Paul’s teaching about Christian Service!
1. 1 Cor.3:6-9 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God’s fellow workers.

K. It was the Lord that gave them the victory, so nobody had the right to claim the spoils for himself, as if the Lord owed it to him.

1. God was gracious & generous to deliver the enemy into their hands, & they should be gracious & generous to share the wealth w/others.

L. **ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE!** (26-31)

M. The tragedy became victory, with profit for everybody!

N. The elders of Judah - They were in part compensation to those people in the villages & hamlets of the Negev who had helped him during his outlaw years.

O. These gifts would also make it easier for David & his men to return to Israel, following their now imminent departure from Philistine Territory.

1. Prov.18:2 A gift opens the way for the giver and ushers him into the presence of the great.

P. Remember, this was David’s spoil! (20)

1. David gladly acknowledged the help he had received from his friends.

2. Gratitude shouldn’t only be the dominant note in Christian piety but equally the dominant motive in Christian action in the world.

3. Such gratitude is for the grace that has been shown us by God.

4. A true Christian is a man who never for a moment forgets what God has done for him in Christ.

Q. So, we saw how God helps His people when problems & crises come into their lives.

1. 1st the Lord encouraged David so that he didn’t despair.
   a) When crises come our way we need courage to face it.
   b) We must not blame others, & we must not pretend that nothing is wrong.

2. 2nd the Lord gave David wisdom to know what to do.

3. 3rd the Lord provided David with the facts he needed so he could find his enemy. [when we step out in faith & trust Him, He will guide us when we need it]

4. 4th the Lord gave David & his men the strength they needed to defeat their enemy.

5. Ps.37:5 Commit your way to the Lord, Trust also in Him, & He shall bring it to pass.

R. Maybe this morning is your turn around day like David’s...Push off the drain!