

God Turns Suffering to Joy

1 Samuel 30:1-30

Read the passage and pray that God would show you wonderful things in his Word.

1. Can you think of a time when you received terrible news only to discover later that God used those circumstances to do incredible good to you?
2. List all the tragic things that happened in vv.3-6? List the similarities and difference between David's troubles and that of Job in the book of Job 1:3-19?
3. In v.6 the text tells us that David "strengthened himself in the Lord." What does that mean in this context? How is this different to Saul's response in chapter 28?
4. How might we be able to strengthen ourselves in the Lord today? Take a look at Psalm 43:5 and Nehemiah 8:10.
5. As a result of "strengthening himself in the Lord" David turned to Abiathar the priest for council. What encouragement could David derive from Abiathar's word from God? How is David's experience here different to that of Saul in chapter 28?
6. Why should the experience of the Christian be far more encouraging as we turn to "our Great High Priest" according to Hebrews 4:14-5:10 and 7:11-28?
7. David and his men would have had little idea where to go to find the raiders. Why is their discovery of the Egyptian in the wilderness so significant?
8. Can you think of how experiences in your life which seemed random would be of great spiritual significance?
9. Is it only those occasions where we notice God's plan where God's providence is active? What does your answer mean for the way we view every detail of our lives?
10. Can you spot the crucial difference between how David (vv.16-17) in contrast to Saul (1 Samuel 15:1-9) fought against the Amalekites?
11. In vv.18-20 it tells us that David recovered all that they lost. Will this always be the experience of Christians in this life? Why or why not? What of the next life? Think about the first part of Revelation 21:4.
12. Why does the narrator mention the men who wanted to stay behind in the valley of Besor (vv.9-10) and then later the complaint of the other men who did not want to share the spoils with them (vv.21-25)? Remind yourself who these men were (1 Samuel 22:1-2). What were David's reasons for sharing the spoils with everyone?
13. What do you think were David's motives for sharing the plunder with the rest of the nation of Israel (vv.26-30)? Is there possibly a lesson in there about how we should use our wealth (Luke 16:9)?

Pray that God would enable you to "strengthen yourself in the Lord".