

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – August 21, 2022

Theme: Lessons from the life of David Topic: Distress and Strength

Main Texts: 1 Samuel 30: 1-25

Key verse: Psalm 46:1 – *‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble’* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: In one of our studies last month, we learnt the importance of seeking God from the life of David. Today, we come to another part of David’s life that shows that he was perpetually in one form of distress or the other. David had just returned from the adventure of wanting to follow king Achish to war against Israel, only to find that Ziklag had been burned and the women and children carried away captive including his two wives. Being in that situation, *‘David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept until there was no more power to weep’* (1 Samuel 30:4). What distress and tragedy for the entire community! As if having his wives taken captive by unknown persons was not bad enough, his men, felt it was all his fault and spoke of stoning him. All these happening at the same time he was still running from king Saul for his dear life. This was a very distressing time for David, *‘but David strengthened himself in the Lord his God’* (1 Samuel 30:6). And this changed the trajectory of the situation.

1. **(a) How would you describe David’s situation at this time: on the run from Saul, dismissed from king Achish’s army, his two wives taken captive, the families of his 600 men also taken captive, along with all their possessions, their city razed to the ground, and all these blamed on him? (b) From the descriptions in (a) above, what were David’s possible options? (c) What does it mean to strengthen oneself in the Lord and how do you think David strengthened himself in the Lord? What did he do?**

Like his men, David must have wept for the tragedy which befell his family and those of his men. But he didn’t wallow in the situation. Instead, he took control of the overwhelming emotions of fear, and uncertainty of the future. He turned to God for direction. This seemed to have also physically energized him to pursue the enemy as well as fight all night until he overpowered the enemy and to recover all they had stolen from him. He was also able to keep a cool head in all his interactions with his men while this terrible situation lasted; such that there is no record of him reacting negatively throughout this ordeal! Though ‘alone’ at this point, his memory of God’s past faithfulness enabled him to stand strong (Psalm 18:6; 118:5).

2. **Read Psalm 27:4-5; 46:1 (a) *‘but David strengthened himself in the Lord his God’* (1 Samuel 30:6). When and how did David cultivate this mindset of strengthening himself in the Lord (b) How do you think Philippians 4:6-7 help us receive strength in the time of distress? (c) From 1 Samuel 30:7-8, 23, let participants share how David demonstrated faith and works in such distressing situations. What were his key strategies?**

In life, different people respond differently to expected and unexpected situations (pleasant or unpleasant). The wise person prepares for the expected and plans how to respond. As proverbs says, *‘The foolish or not so wise sees danger and walks into it.’* In Psalm 27:4, the Psalmist determined to seek the Lord in good times as a way of preparing for the bad times. But Jesus became for us wisdom from God (1 Corinthians 1:30) and has forewarned us *‘that in the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration ...’* (John 16:33 AMP). Jesus told us these things to help us prepare and have victory because He said *I have overcome the world. (I have deprived it of power to harm you and have overcome it for you’*) (John 16:33 AMP). In Christ, we are privileged to be overcomers in every situation. And in 1 Samuel 30:23-25, David and his men learnt a valuable lesson and principle which still serves us today. But that was after he had trusted God and acted in faith and obedience. We too have the responsibility to choose the path laid out for us in Christ Jesus.

3. **Read John 16:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-4; Romans 5:3-5. (a) How do these Scriptures help us prepare for and respond to distress? (b) What should we be looking towards in time of distress? How did David grow because of the troubles he encountered here, and with how God delivered him from all his troubles? (c) Let participants share how this study has encouraged them to be strengthened in the time of distress**

Prayer: *Our dear heavenly Father, thank You that You have already put the plans in place for us to be strengthened in times of distress. We choose to trust You and constantly remember that You are our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Amen.*