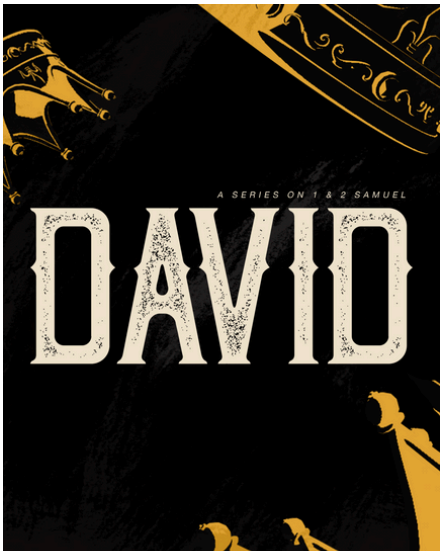
SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Part 6 // “Discouraged Heart, Distorted Perspective”



Newbreak’s Sermon Study Guide is an in-house resource that serves sermon-based Life Groups and/or individuals who want to reflect further on how the message contributes to our spiritual formation.

In this series we’ll journey through the remarkable life of David — shepherd, poet, warrior, king, and wholehearted worshiper of God. From humble beginnings in obscurity to the heights of leading a nation, David’s story is one of both triumphs and trials. We’ll see him dodge javelins hurled by a jealous king, hide in caves as a fugitive, and stand boldly before giants like Goliath — and through it all, God’s faithfulness shaping a man after His own heart and showing us what He can do through a willing life.

ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS

- What’s your “useless superpower,” something totally unhelpful but kind of awesome?

- How do you make major decisions, and which ways tend to work best or worst for you?

GOING DEEPER INTO THE MESSAGE

Read 1 Samuel 27:1–12 (CSB)

David said to himself, “One of these days I’ll be swept away by Saul. There is nothing better for me than to escape immediately to the land of the Philistines. Then Saul will give up searching for me everywhere in Israel, and I’ll escape from him.” 2 So David set out with his six hundred men and went over to Achish son of Maoch, the king of Gath. 3 David and his men stayed with Achish in Gath. Each man had his family with him, and David had his two wives: Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal’s widow. 4 When it was reported to Saul that David had fled to Gath, he no longer searched for him.

5 Now David said to Achish, “If I have found favor with you, let me be given a place in one of the outlying towns, so I can live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?” 6 That day Achish gave Ziklag to him, and it still belongs to the kings of Judah today. 7 The length of time that David stayed in Philistine territory amounted to a year and four months.

8 David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites. From ancient times they had been the inhabitants of the region through Shur as far as the land of Egypt. 9 Whenever David attacked the land, he did not leave a single person alive, either man or woman, but he took flocks, herds, donkeys, camels, and clothing. Then he came back to Achish, 10 who inquired, “Where did you raid today?”

David replied, “The south country of Judah,” “The south country of the Jerahmeelites,” or “The south country of the Kenites.”

11 David did not let a man or woman live to be brought to Gath, for he said, “Or they will inform on us and say, ‘This is what David did.’” This was David’s custom during the whole time he stayed in the Philistine territory. 12 So Achish trusted David, thinking, “Since he has made himself repulsive to his people Israel, he will be my servant forever.”

Point 1 - When my faith wavers, my decision-making becomes vulnerable.

After David's confrontation with Saul in the cave in 1 Samuel 24, he found himself facing a similar challenge of running and confronting Saul in 1 Samuel 26.

Again, David chose not to end Saul's life but to walk away, knowing that he couldn't strike down God's anointed King. After all, it wasn't up to David to decide when he would be king. That was God's decision to make.

However, In 1 Samuel 27, David has had enough with this cat and mouse game of running and hiding from Saul. He's tired, worn down from running for his life, the pressure, the uncertainty so he made the decision to flee to Gath, the hometown of Goliath, to avoid Saul's reign of terror (vs.2-3).

Unfortunately, David allowed his own discouragement, fear, and frustrations to cloud his judgement, take his eyes off of God, and negatively affect his opinion making.

When David says, "There is nothing better for me than to escape immediately to the land of the Philistines," it's not just fear talking, it's fatigue, frustration, and that deep sense of "I'm done waiting."It's the mindset that whispers, "If God hasn't changed this yet, maybe I need to."

We live in a world that treats waiting, pain, heartbreak, and uncertainty as failure.
If we're not moving forward, we assume something's wrong. So we rush to get out of those uncomfortable, in-between places- the wilderness seasons that feel endless and unfair. Those seasons are exhausting, and when we get tired of sitting in them, like David, we start trying to take control and make our own way.

Here's what's crazy though, this decision to flee Israel seemed like it worked at first (vs.4)! Saul stopped chasing him but now David is living in the land of his enemies, the Philistines. This decision, made in a time of spiritual weakness, started one of the most painful and spiritually dry times in David's life. There are no hymns or psalms attributed to David during this season of his life. It was a time of moral compromise that led him to make one immoral decision after another (vs.8-12).

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Verse 1 shows us how David reasoned his way to survival. What's missing from that reasoning, and what might that reveal about the state of his heart?
- What are some ways fatigue, fear, or frustration can cloud our judgment, even when we know God's truth?
- David fled to a foreign land to escape Saul's pursuit. Why do you think he chose to take matters into his own hands rather than wait on God? What are some reasons we sometimes try to take control of our situations instead of trusting God's timing and plan?
- What might God want to teach or develop in us during "wilderness" seasons when it feels like nothing is changing?

Read 1 Samuel 30:1–19 (CSB)

David and his men arrived in Ziklag on the third day. The Amalekites had raided the Negev and attacked and burned Ziklag. 2 They also had kidnapped the women and everyone in it from youngest to oldest. They had killed no one but had carried them off as they went on their way.

3 When David and his men arrived at the town, they found it burned. Their wives, sons, and daughters had been kidnapped. 4 David and the troops with him wept loudly until they had no strength left to weep. 5 David's two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite and Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite, had also been kidnapped. 6 David was in an extremely difficult position because the troops talked about stoning him, for they were all very bitter over the loss of their sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.

7 David said to the priest Abiathar son of Ahimelech, "Bring me the ephod." So Abiathar brought it to him, 8 and David asked the Lord, "Should I pursue these raiders? Will I overtake them?"

The Lord replied to him, “Pursue them, for you will certainly overtake them and rescue the people.”

9 So David and the six hundred men with him went. They came to the Wadi Besor, where some stayed behind. 10 David and four hundred of the men continued the pursuit, while two hundred stopped because they were too exhausted to cross the Wadi Besor.

11 David’s men found an Egyptian in the open country and brought him to David. They gave him some bread to eat and water to drink. 12 Then they gave him some pressed figs and two clusters of raisins. After he ate he revived, for he hadn’t eaten food or drunk water for three days and three nights.

13 Then David said to him, “Who do you belong to? Where are you from?”
“I’m an Egyptian, the slave of an Amalekite man,” he said. “My master abandoned me when I got sick three days ago. 14 We raided the south country of the Cherethites, the territory of Judah, and the south country of Caleb, and we burned Ziklag.”

15 David then asked him, “Will you lead me to these raiders?”
He said, “Swear to me by God that you won’t kill me or turn me over to my master, and I will lead you to them.”

16 So he led him, and there were the Amalekites, spread out over the entire area, eating, drinking, and celebrating because of the great amount of plunder they had taken from the land of the Philistines and the land of Judah. 17 David slaughtered them from twilight until the evening of the next day. None of them escaped, except four hundred young men who got on camels and fled.

18 David recovered everything the Amalekites had taken; he also rescued his two wives. 19 Nothing of theirs was missing from the youngest to the oldest, including the sons and daughters, and all the plunder the Amalekites had taken. David got everything back.

Point 2 - God's guidance restores our strength and directs our steps.

In 1 Samuel 30, David's choices finally catch up with him. Everything he built in his own strength begins to collapse. The Amalekites raid his camp, his home is burned, his family is taken, and the people who once followed him now want to stone him.

With his family gone, the men who once supported him now ready to kill him, and the ashes of his self-dependence falling all around him, David finally says, "Bring me the ephod."

After months of self-reliance, David turns back to the only One who can give him real strength and direction. He seeks the Lord, not his men, not his emotions, not his own reasoning, but God.
And when he does, God speaks. God leads. God restores.

1 Samuel 30:8b (CSB)
The Lord replied to him, "Pursue them, for you will certainly overtake them and rescue the people."
This is truly one of the most beautiful pictures in Scripture of God's grace. After 16 months of running from God, layering mistake upon mistake, God meets David right there- not with anger, but with mercy. That is grace.

And the same is true for us. Some of us have been running for days, weeks, or even years- and today might be the day to turn back to God. When we stop relying on self-effort and start seeking God's guidance again, He restores what's been lost: our peace, our strength, and our clarity for the next step forward.
This doesn't necessarily mean everything will automatically be fixed or that pain will disappear. But it does bring us back to a place of trusting God to guide us. It recenters our hearts on the One who provides and cares for us.

David's story reminds us that failure isn't final when faith returns. God didn't meet David with punishment; He met him with presence. The same grace is available to us- even when we've drifted, tried to handle life on our own, or found ourselves standing in the ashes of our own making. God's desire isn't to shame us but to restore us. When we stop striving in our own strength and return to seeking Him, He meets us right where we are and leads us forward one step at a time.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When have you recognized that your own self-reliance was leading to burnout, frustration, or loss? What helped you turn back to God in that moment?

- David "found strength in the Lord his God" (1 Samuel 30:6). What does it look like for you to find your strength in God instead of in your own effort or plans?

- When David turned to God, God didn't shame him. Instead, God guided and restored him in grace. How does this shape the way you see God's heart toward you (or others) when we fall short?