

• *David's foolishness leads to a dilemma*

We have seen^{□1} that David did a foolish thing when he joined the Philistines. It was a lapse into unbelief. It was leaning on his own understanding. Soon he was disgracefully identified with an attack upon Israel^{□2}. Now what would David do?

□1 in 27:1-28:2

□2 28:1-2

God's intervention

• *The Philistine generals have doubts about David's loyalty*

David was moving steadily towards total entanglement in sin. If he backed out of attacking Israel he was risking his life at the hands of Achish. Yet there was no way he could proceed in the direction of attacking Israel and yet expect to be Israel's king.

Suddenly God intervenes and a surprising turn of events takes place that rescues David. The Philistines get ready to fight Israel^{□1}. David and his men assemble with the others^{□2}. But this raises questions in the minds of the other generals^{□3}. Achish believes in David's loyalty^{□4} but the other generals will not hear of fighting alongside David^{□5}. Achish apologizes but insists David must not be in the battle against the Israelites^{□6}. It would not be safe for David to seem to be pleased to be released! So he keeps up the pretence and strongly protests^{□7}. But Achish is insistent. David must leave immediately^{□8}.

□1 29:1

□2 29:2

□3 29:3a

□4 29:3b

□5 29:4-5

□6 29:6-7

□7 29:8

□8 29:9-10

• *David is forced to leave*

• *A wonderful demonstration of the faithfulness and mercy of God*

So David was released from his predicament^{□1}. It is a wonderful demonstration of the faithfulness of God. It is not that David had repented of his folly and started calling on God. But even before his repentance God put a limit to the extent that he would allow David to go on in his foolishness. God is able to keep us from falling^{□2}. This does not mean that he always will. But he is able to. God allowed David to fall into this folly but to have allowed him to fall even further would have totally ruined David's future as king and this God would not allow. Even without David's repentance God would not allow his servant to ruin his life any further. David had showed much love and trust in God. It was not that he had a totally rebellious spirit, as did Saul. Yet David too could have gone the way of Saul if it were not for the mercy of God.

□1 29:11

□2 Jude 24

David is brought back to God

• *The Amalekite destruction of Ziklag*

• *Turned to God in prayer and cast his burden upon the Lord*

Then something else happens which brings David to his senses. David has still not come to regret his folly in turning to the Philistines. He goes back to the town that was given him by the Philistines, Ziklag, only to find that the Amalekites had invaded the town, destroying it and kidnapping the women^{□1}. The entire army was shattered and grief-stricken^{□2}. David himself had lost Ahinoam and Abigail^{□3}. His army were blaming David and were ready to take violent action^{□4}.

□1 30:1-3

□2 30:4

□3 30:5

□4 30:6

• *Turned to seek God's will*

It was this that brought David back to God. We have had no reference to David's turning to the Lord since the day he panicked in fear that he would be killed by Saul^{□1}. His fear had been a lapse of faith and his relationship with God had not been a good one since that time. But now 'David strengthened himself in the LORD his God'^{□2}. It means that he turned to God in prayer and cast his burden upon the Lord. He reminded himself of God's mercy and God's faithfulness, and stayed seeking God's face until (like Hannah^{□3}) he found peace and assurance that God had forgiven him and would be with him.

□1 27:1

□2 30:6

□3 1:18

He then turned to seek God's will, by consulting Abiathar and the ephod^{□1}. It had been some time since he had sought God's will. He did not do this when he was falling into panic because of fear of Saul. Now he wants to trust God's guidance and has ceased to lean on his own understanding.

□1 30:7-8

• God uses our experiences to teach us what we need to know

God is well able to mix our experiences in a way that teaches us what we need to know and puts pressure on us when we need to be brought forcefully back to him. David's experience at this point was needed to drive him back to God. It was also needed as part of his training for the kingship. There would be times after he had become king when he would face disaffection and disillusionment among his people. He would need to know how to regain his authority when facing dispute and disloyalty.

David regains authority among his supporters

• God gave him an assurance that he would recover everything

God's working all things together for good is apparent here. David's fainting fit and flight to the Philistines was obviously a low point in David's life of faith. Yet out of it all came experiences that were to be useful to David in later years when he was the king. There are several ingredients in his regaining authority among his supporters.

• David learned wisdom in allocating tasks according to abilities

Firstly, God gave him an assurance that he would be able to regain his lost people and lost goods^{□1}. The oracle gave him the assurance that he would recover everything. He goes forward with a sure knowledge of God's will. To move with a knowledge of God's will is a vital part of leadership. Jesus would spend much time in prayer before every major decision so that his actions always were in accordance with a knowledge of his Father's will. David had learned to acknowledge the LORD in all his plans and ventures. God's people are to understand what the will of the LORD is^{□2}.

□1 30:8

□2 Ephesians 5:17

• Recovery and usefulness

Secondly, David learned wisdom in allocating tasks according to abilities. Some of his men were stronger than others. David made use of those who were capable of sustained conflict, and gave weaker soldiers a task appropriate to their weakness^{□1}. Some were physically exhausted; David left them at the brook. It was a good use of the varied abilities of his people. He was wisely giving tasks to his men in such a way that he was not overstraining the weak, and was making maximum use of the strong. God's people have gifts that differ^{□2} and some are weak at points where others are strong^{□3}. We have to 'accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us'^{□4}.



□1 30:9-10

□2 Romans 12:6

□3 Romans 15:1

□4 Romans 15:7

God's wise ways with David had brought him to recovery and usefulness once again.

 <p>slices.org.uk</p>	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible (PTTB)</i> books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
<p><i>These specially reformatted chapters "Slices of Bread" produced by Sovereign World Trust are available in three categories as set out below</i></p>		
<p>Slices for the Nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For pastors, libraries and colleges in those parts of the world where resources are scarce and unaffordable In the fullness of time the whole series will be made available free of charge Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or available to download from the <i>Slices</i> web site 	<p>Slices for Sponsors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those in more prosperous circumstances who can afford to contribute to the development of this material and its distribution with a small monthly donation The same material as Slices for the Nations Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or by download from the <i>Slices</i> web site 	<p>Slices for Everyone / Slice of the Week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those who wish to sample the material or dip into it from time to time, a proportion of the PTTB series is available free of charge Slices for Everyone (as a download) or Slice of the Week (attached to a weekly email) The remainder of the PTTB material is available to Sponsors and those eligible to receive Slices for the Nations
<p>To subscribe please contact: slicesofbread@sovereignworldtrust.org.uk stating which category fits your situation. Further details are at www.slices.org.uk Details of the availability of <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> books and how they may be purchased can be found on www.ibtr.org.uk</p>		