

RELATIONAL STORMS

Model: King David

Focus: Elah Vs Ziklag

“Satan comes to steal, kill and destroy,” (Jn 10:10a). That’s his manifesto. He is a thief. It’s who he is...it’s what he does! And make no mistake ... Satan has stolen something from you.

He walked in your home, evaluated your merchandise and ripped you off! And he did not take the old junk you didn’t want any more. No, no, no...he took your best stuff. You’re precious stuff ... like your peace of mind, your children, your spouse, your capacity to love, your passion and your faith!

While it is true Satan came to steal, it’s also true that Jesus came to give it all back! ***“I am come that you might have life, abundant life.” (John 10:10b).*** He came to equip us with the stuff we need to defend our faith. To repair our broken relationships. To teach us how to forgive. To enable us to win the battles we never thought we could win.

If I’m being honest, sometimes I feel like I can Break Every Chain and other days I doubt I can break a \$3 knockoff necklace. It’s maddening, because I know who I serve, and I know He does the miraculous, but there are times I struggle to connect the dots between what I believe and what I experience.

I’m not alone!

ELAH VS ZIKLAG

10.8. That’s the mileage between Elah and Ziklag. It’s the same distance between this church and Milan. A runner can achieve that distance in 2.5 hours. By horse, you can get there in about an hour. The way some of you drive ... 10 minutes!

As far as king David is concerned, it might as well be a million miles away. Because the difference between Elah and Ziklag is staggering ... but not unfamiliar.

Elah

- The valley where David defeated the giant Goliath.
- He is dripping with confidence. Standing tall. Bold. Defiant. Brave. Faith filled.
- Fellow soldiers carry him off the field of battle on their shoulders.
- David captured the attention of a nation. Kings’ daughter. Wealth. Status.
- Elah is a place of victory. A conquerors playground. Great vibes. Champions.

Ziklag

- The stronghold where David and fellow warriors lost everything.
- He is seized with despair. Bowing low. Confused. Stressed. Faithless.
- Fellow soldiers (friends) start talking about killing him.
- David's family was captured, along with all his wealth. Status is all time low.
- Ziklag is a place of defeat. A victim's prison. Negative vibes. Losers.

I appreciate these alternate realities. This is the same man. Same God. Very different reality. Some people live life from victory to victory, but that is not my story. I'm an Elah to Ziklag to Elah to Ziklag kind of guy. I like Elah. I want to live there ... permanently. But I often find myself hanging out in Ziklag.

And I'm not a defeatist. In fact, I am 'glass always full' guy. But relational storms hit hard. They are the most difficult to clean up post storm. David and his mighty men were a tribe. They were bro friends. Tight. They fought with each other and protected one another. They had an unbreakable bond, yet they turned on him. He is abandoned by the brotherhood.

It was a punch in the gut, and for the first time David was alone. In just 10.8 miles David went from **emboldened to discouraged**.

- **Discouragement** is what brings a mighty man to acting like a weak man.
- **Discouraged** means your courage ran before your fight was over.
- **Discouraged** means I had it, but I lost it.

David, King David, anointed David, gifted David, powerful David was discouraged, and he's balled up in a knot. So, David **"encouraged himself in the Lord"**. Sometimes you're alone in the battle and nobody's encouraging you. Not your neighbor, not your boss, not your spouse, not your daddy / momma. Sometimes you just have to encourage yourself!

So, David's praying, and he says to God, *"I don't know if my life is over, I don't know if I'm going come out of this or not,"* he said, *"I don't even know whether I've got another fight in me, but God, I could use a Word right now!"*

God responded back through the priest and ephod, and in essence He said two words: "FIGHT BACK". Somebody shout: "FIGHT BACK".

So, I've got a message for every man and women who wants to quit / For every person here who's at your wit's end / For everyone who's tired in the middle of the battle, and for every one of you who's wondering, *"Do I have what it takes for this season in my life?"* My message for you is bold yet simple ... FIGHT BACK!

I looked at the first **6 verses of 1 Samuel 30**. Here are the words I extracted from the Ziklag catastrophe...

Raided, attacked, burned, taken captive, carried off, destroyed by fire, wept aloud, no strength left, exhausted, captured, greatly distressed, talked of stoning David, bitter in spirit.

But ... David found strength in the LORD his God. 1 Samuel 30:6b

What do you do when you've been raided, attacked, burned and your closest allies are talking about how to stone you? You ***encourage yourself in the Lord*** and you **FIGHT BACK!**

- When you get overwhelmed with a sense of discouragement, FIGHT BACK.
- When you go through relational hell, & the enemy taunts you, FIGHT BACK.
- When you go home and everything's breaking loose, FIGHT BACK.
- Slap somebody and tell them, *"I'm about to FIGHT BACK and I'm going to get it all back!"*

You see, that's the conclusion of the Ziklag calamity. After David prayed and encouraged himself in the Lord, he took a deep breath, wiped the tears from his eyes, threw back his shoulders, armored up and led his warriors in a chase of their own! They pursued the invaders and caught up to them. David got his fight back and then he fought back!

He looked the enemy square in the eyes and shouted, "I want it back". Somebody here needs to get their fight back! The devil came in and took your stuff. Your precious stuff. Your hope. Your peace. Your joy. Your sanity. Your children. Your relationships. Your prayer. Your spiritual language. Your anointing. Your faith.

Tell your enemy ... *"I want it back. Give me my joy. Give me my peace. Give me my child. Give me my spouse. Give me my family. Give me my friend. I've made up my mind. I want my life back!"*

Now watch this. I can be BOLD and audacious when I say this. I can be confident and speak with authority because the Bible says that David and his men fought back, from dusk until evening the next day ... **and they RECOVERED ALL!** Touch your neighbor and say, *"I'm a recovery agent!"*

None of us are strangers to the pain of a relational storm. Ziklag is traumatic and emotionally draining. But with the help of God you will heal, and you will laugh again, and you will love again, and you will trust again.

Refresh yourself if needed and then get on your feet. I know you're tired. I know you're battle weary. I know Ziklag has been a real downer ... but Elah is just down the street!

I've amended the Action Steps for this one.

ACTION STEPS:

1. Move out of Ziklag! It's not your home.
2. Encourage yourself in the Lord.
3. Initiate the necessary conversations.
4. Forgive and receive Forgiveness.
5. Fight back and against the real enemy.
6. Recover ALL.

ACTION STEPS:

1. *Never give up if you know you're right.*
2. *Don't let the odds discourage you – God's bigger than all of them.*
3. *Never let anyone intimidate you or deter you from your goals.*
4. *Remember, every winner has dealt with defeat and adversity.*
5. **FIGHT BACK!**

RELATIONSHIPS THAT NEED MENDING