

What is the significance of Ziklag in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Ziklag-in-the-Bible.html>

Ziklag, a town on the southernmost boundary of Judea, is first mentioned in the Bible as part of the inheritance of the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:31). Ziklag was assigned to the tribe of Simeon within Judah (Joshua 19:5) but appears not to have been conquered by the Israelites before the time of David. Ziklag was still under Philistine control when Saul reigned as king.

For many years King Saul sought to harm David. After the death of Samuel, David fled for his life with six hundred men and their households to Philistine territory. While there, Achish, the Philistine king of Gath, gave Ziklag to David at his request: “Then David said to Achish, ‘If I have found favor in your eyes, let a place be assigned to me in one of the country towns, that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?’ So on that day Achish gave him Ziklag, and it has belonged to the kings of Judah ever since” (1 Samuel 27:5-6). Achish awarded Ziklag to David most likely to ensure David’s continued neutrality.

David ruled over Ziklag for 16 months, during which he made the town his base of operations for military exploits against the Amalekites. Many of Israel’s disillusioned warriors flocked to join forces with David’s private army there (1 Chronicles 12:1-22).

While David and his men were away attempting to join the Philistine army to fight against Saul, Amalekite raiders attacked Ziklag. When the Philistines refused to let David and his men fight with them, David returned to Ziklag and found his city had been burned down and all its inhabitants taken hostage: “David and his men reached Ziklag on the third day. Now the Amalekites had raided the Negev and Ziklag. They had attacked

Ziklag and burned it, and had taken captive the women and everyone else in it, both young and old. They killed none of them, but carried them off as they went on their way. When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive” (1 Samuel 30:1-3). In a daring rescue, David and his men pursued and defeated the raiders, recovering all that had been taken, including David’s two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail (verses 16-31).

David was living in Ziklag when he received the news of Saul’s death (2 Samuel 4:10). After that, David moved to Hebron to become the king of Judah.

The exact location of Ziklag is debated. Some scholars associate it with Tell esh-Sharia, about 15 miles southeast of Gaza. Others pinpoint it at Tell el-Khuweilfeh, about 10 miles northeast of Beersheba.

Ziklag remained in Israelite possession until the end of the monarchy and is last mentioned in the Bible as one of the cities inhabited by Jews after returning from exile in Babylon (Nehemiah 11:28).