

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 27TH-28TH, 2024 // 1 SAMUEL

AN INSULT (1 SAMUEL 25:1-13)

"SAMUEL DIED..." (VS. 1)

Samuel, the spiritual leader, prophet, and the last judge of Israel who anointed Israel's first two kings, has died.

- All of Israel assembled to mourn for him, and they buried him in his home in Ramah.
- Saul probably didn't attend the funeral, but David might have ("...David then went down to the Wilderness of Paran...").

David and his men had spent time hiding out in the wilderness of Maon, which is in the vicinity of Carmel.

There in Maon was a certain businessman who was very successful, wealthy, and affluent (vs. 2-3).

- His name was Nabal, which meant "fool," and he certainly lived up to his name—he was harsh, evil, foolish, greedy, gluttonous, and reckless.
- However, his wife was beautiful and intelligent.

"IS SHE REALLY GOING OUT WITH HIM???"

What in the world was Abigail, a beautiful, wise, godly, and intelligent woman, doing with a fool like Nabal?

- Perhaps her marriage to him had been arranged by her parents (after all, he was quite wealthy).
- Maybe Abigail married him thinking his redeeming qualities (wealth, charm, business sense) would eventually outweigh his character deficiencies.
- Physical beauty, charm, money, or success are what most people find attractive in a potential spouse; however, if there isn't deeper character or shared spiritual values underneath that, none of those things will end up being attractive in the long run.
- "Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting..." (Proverbs 31:30)

David was essentially a business partner with Nabal—David and his men had been in Nabal's vicinity for some time. They had protected Nabal's shepherds several times over the course of the year (vs. 7, 16).

- Shepherding was often a dangerous job, so David's men had protected Nabal's shepherds from bandits or robbers.
- In return, David sought a small compensation.

These types of transactions were customary in those times—it was an expected, simple, and courteous gratuity (like tipping in a restaurant).

- Not only does Nabal deny David's request when David sends a messenger to collect (vs. 8), Nabal sends back an insult to David in return (vs. 10-12), essentially saying, "David? David who? Never heard of him. Sounds like a runaway slave trying to scam me out of my money."

When David hears of Nabal's response, he becomes absolutely furious.

- David tells his men to put on their swords, takes 400 of his warriors, and begins a violent march toward Nabal, determined to wipe out every single man he can find (vs. 13, 22).
- This is very disappointing behavior from David—in chapter 24, he showed mercy to Saul and wouldn't lift a finger to harm him.

Now David is locked and loaded, ready to kill because of a rude insult levied his way!

- We're all capable of forgetting who we are, whose we are, what we value as most important, and letting our flesh get the better of us.
- We can't rest on the laurels of yesterday's spiritual victories—every day we must be watchful, stand strong, and be careful not to fall into sin and the desires of our flesh (1 Cor. 10:12).

THE WISDOM OF ABIGAIL (1 SAMUEL 25:14-22)

When word gets to Abigail, who is intelligent and beautiful, about what her idiot husband did, she very wisely springs into action (vs. 14-18).

- Abigail puts together an enormous gift basket for David and his men to compensate them for their protection and to hopefully make up for Nabal's rude and foolish insult.
- She loads up the peace offering and rides out with her servants to meet David and his men.

Abigail doesn't tell Nabal what she's doing, but culturally, as the mistress of the house, she has every right to show hospitality and manage her house's resources as she sees fit.

- As a wise woman, Abigail grasped the seriousness of this situation and knew that unless she intervened, this would spell disaster for her husband and their house.

Abigail and her servants met David just as he and his men were descending down a mountain ravine (vs. 20).

- We see just how angry and vengeful David is in verses 21-22—David is set on completely destroying Nabal and his entire house!
- David's assessment of the situation was accurate ("...he paid me back evil for good!"), but David's heart and response were sinful.

Foolish, stubborn, ungodly, and childish men often create messes for their godly, intelligent wives to have to clean up.

- This is a shameful dynamic in any marriage or household—wives aren't supposed to bear the burden of being Mom 2.0 for their husbands.
- Men, before you make a major financial purchase/career decision or before you send that text or e-mail—consult your wife!

AN APPEAL (1 SAMUEL 25:23-31)

When David saw Abigail, she was kneeling with her face to the ground at the head of a great train of gifts and provisions for him and his men (vs. 23).

- We can imagine David's anger calming as he sees Abigail's beauty, wisdom, and humble demeanor.
- Abigail accepts full responsibility for the crisis and asks for permission to speak bluntly (vs. 24).

Abigail pleads with David to pay no attention to Nabal's insult—Nabal is a worthless fool, and stupidity is all he knows (vs. 25-26).

- She asks David to forgive the offense, accept the gift, and not participate in any bloodshed or vengeance against Nabal and her household (vs. 27-28).
- Abigail then takes the conversation in a different direction.

Abigail basically says, "David, you can trust God to fight your battles for you. Taking matters into your own hands will only leave you with regret" (vs. 29-31).

- It's interesting to note the mention of "stones from a sling" in vs. 29—Abigail probably knew of David's victory over Goliath and used it as a reminder to David of God's faithfulness in delivering David from his enemies in the past.

Abigail reminded David that the Lord had given him a "lasting dynasty" because David was committed to fighting the Lord's battles.

- Since God has promised David the throne, if David trusted God and followed the Lord's plan, he wouldn't have to live with remorse or a troubled conscience because of needless bloodshed or revenge.
- God was going to do good things for David (vs. 31).

Abigail only asked that David would remember her when that time came.

- Was this a hint at marriage or a request for provision should Nabal die sometime in the future?
- Perhaps this was simply Abigail telling David to always remember the truth she spoke to him that day—God has a perfect will, plan, timing, and purpose, and David can trust Him!

INTERVENTION (1 SAMUEL 25:32-44)

Abigail's appeal to David works—he viewed her coming to him as a message from the Lord to keep him from bloodshed and from making a foolish, rash decision that he would later regret (vs. 32-34).

- David received her gifts, called off the attack, and sent her home in peace (vs. 35).
- We should marvel at Abigail's wisdom and tact in her appeal to David.

We should also take notice of David's willingness to listen to Abigail's appeal.

- We all have momentary lapses of faithfulness and can find ourselves in some odd places mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.
- In those places, there is a great temptation to act on our feelings and do what seems right to us at the moment.
- This is why we need godly community!

When we're in those places, God often sends us an Abigail—a godly brother or sister in Christ to talk us down, speak truth to us, and give us counsel about a wiser course of action than the one we're on.

- We need to be humble and wise enough to listen!
- Our listening to the Abigails that God sends means we also must be self-aware and know our emotions might not be all that trustworthy.

Even though Nabal's life was in imminent danger because of his own foolishness, he let his wife clean up his mess while he sat at home feasting and getting drunk (vs. 36).

- The next day, when Abigail told Nabal all that had happened, the news so stunned him that he had a heart attack/stroke(?) and then lay helpless for ten days before God took his life (vs. 37-38).
- God had avenged David!

David soon heard that Nabal had died, and he understood that the Lord had stepped in and avenged him (vs. 39).

- David sent word asking for Abigail's hand in marriage, and she accepted and became his wife (vs. 40-42).
- David's first wife, Michal, had been given away by Saul, and he had also married Ahinoam of Jezreel (vs. 43-44).

Polygamy was just a fact of life in the ancient world: in David's life, God never commanded him to take more than one wife.

- Polygamy was never God's design (Gen. 2:22, Mark 10:6-10), and strife and conflict always show up in polygamous arrangements.
- David never followed God's ideal plan and purpose for marriage, so his family life was never blessed and peaceful and brought him some of the greatest pain and trials of his entire life!

GOLIATH, SAUL, AND NABAL

- David witnesses God's supernatural intervention and deliverance in his life in his battle against his enemy, Goliath (1 Sam. 17).
- David witnesses God's supernatural deliverance and intervention in his life as he runs and hides from his enemy Saul (1 Sam. 18-24).
- Yet, when David encounters Nabal, he gets it in his head that he has to take care of it on his own.
- On the cross, Jesus conquered your enemy of sin and death, which you were completely powerless against.
- Because of His victory, if you are His, someday, all the things in your life that are difficult, painful, confusing, and sad will end.
- If Christ has defeated our ultimate enemy, why wouldn't we trust Him with all our battles now?

MOMENTARY LAPSES OF FAITHFULNESS

- We're all capable of forgetting who we are, whose we are, what we value as most important, and letting our flesh get the better of us to take things into our own hands.
- God, in His mercy and love for us, sends us messages of truth to remind us of who we are, His salvation, faithfulness, provision, protection, and plan in our lives.

LISTENING TO ABIGAIL

- If God's been faithful in your past, if He's given you a promise concerning your future, won't He be faithful in the situation right in front of you now?
- Don't give into temptation, let your anger/fear/anxiety or emotions drive you, or be led by the lusts of your flesh—calm down, believe the truth of the gospel, and trust God to give you what you need.