

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 28TH, 2024 // 1 SAMUEL

NABAL (1 SAMUEL 25:1-13) GOD'S WORK DOES NOT HINGE ON ONE MAN

Samuel's death was the end of an era moving Israel fully from the time of judges into the time of kings.

- Though the last great judge of Israel had died and all Israel mourned him, the work of God continued. **David arose and would carry out the work of God, looking out for the people of God.**

A MAN NAMED NABAL

We are introduced to a man in Maon, and before we even learn his name, we find out **he was a very rich man** (3000 sheep and 1000 goats), and **he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.**

- **Nabal, though a rich man, was only rich in what he had but was very poor in character.**

NABAL'S WIFE, ABIGAIL

Then, we are introduced to Nabal's wife, Abigail.

- In contrast to her husband, who was "**harsh and evil in his dealings,**" we see that **Abigail was intelligent (wise). She is also called beautiful,** a description only given to two other women in the Bible, Rachel (Genesis 29:17) and Esther (Esther 2:7).

A TIME OF THANKFULNESS AND GENEROSITY

Sheep-shearing would take place **twice a year as a time of harvest for a sheep rancher.**

- Out of **thankfulness** for the harvest given, this would have been a festive occasion where **food and supplies were plentiful.** Traditionally, this time would be celebrated with **meals and generosity toward others** because of how much was reaped during harvest.

RESPECTFUL AND REASONABLE REQUEST

As a Calebite, Nabal would have been a kinsman of David from the tribe of Judah, so **David and his men kept watch over Nabal's shepherds.**

- David sends a group of young men to tell Nabal of the service they provided and **request kindness in return for the kindness David had shown them.**

NABAL'S REPLY

David was known throughout Israel (18:5-7), but **Nabal refused to acknowledge him.** Then, to further insult him, Nabal **essentially said that David was nothing more than a rebellious servant.**

- **We see the depth of his ungratefulness and lack of generosity in his response (*my bread, my water, my meat, my shearers*).**

BIBLICAL GENEROSITY

True generosity doesn't say, "**This is mine,** and I will share it with others," but instead, "**Everything I have belongs to the Lord,** and I can give to others because of how I have received.

- **If God owns everything, freely gives me all things, and takes care of my needs, what will keep me from sharing what God gives me with others?**

DAVID RESPONDED TO EVIL WITH EVIL

David had been patient and longsuffering with Saul, displaying the heart of God toward him, but that is not how he reacted toward Nabal's insults.

- **David allowed his anger to get the best of him.** So, he marched 400 of his men out to **take vengeance on Nabal,** planning not to allow any of his family to live.

ABIGAIL (1 SAMUEL 25:14-35)

NABAL'S MEN APPEAL TO ABIGAIL

One of Nabal's young shepherds informed Abigail that her husband had treated David's men with contempt when they deserved compensation.

- Knowing **David would not take kindly to such an insult,** and since **no one could talk reasonably to Nabal, they asked Abigail to intercede on their behalf as well as her husband's.**

ABIGAIL SPRINGS INTO ACTION

Time was of the essence, and something had to be done. So, Abigail wasted no time gathering what was owed to David's men and set out to right the wrong committed.

- The fact that Abigail was able to gather this much in a short amount of time **shows the extent of Nabal's wealth and the depth of his greed.**

ABIGAIL PLACES HERSELF AT THE MERCY OF DAVID

David and his men were halted on their journey by a beautiful woman humbled before him, leading a train of donkeys carrying gifts.

- Abigail dismounted her donkey and "**knelt down with her face to the ground and paid homage**" to David in **a very similar way to how he had just placed himself at the mercy of Saul** (24:8).

ABIGAIL HUMBLY AND WISELY SPEAKS

Abigail humbly assumed responsibility saying that if she had known his men were there then this offense would not have taken place.

- She wisely appealed to David, asking him **not to do something he would later regret.** She asked him to **let the Lord settle the matter instead of taking vengeance into his own hands.**

DRAWING FROM HIS PAST

It is very likely that Abigail knew of David's victory over Goliath and wisely compared his enemies to **stones in a sling** being flung away from him by God.

- David remembered the trust he had in the living God as he fought the Philistine champion, and once again, **his focus was back on God and not his enemy.**

DAVID RECEIVES ABIGAIL'S CORRECTION

Abigail's wise words got through to David. He recognized **it was the Lord who had sent her,** and he **thanked her for stopping him from sinning.**

- What a blessing it is that God would send His Son for the **forgiveness of sins,** and it is no less of a blessing that he sends his children to **keep us from sinning.**

FUNERAL AND A WEDDING (1 SAMUEL 25:36-44)

GOD PROTECTS AND AVENGES HIS SERVANT

Abigail returns home to find her "**foolish**" husband drunk and **throwing a party fit for a king.** She waited to tell him about her intercession until morning. When he heard the news, he had a heart attack and died 10 days later.

- **God had spared David from taking vengeance into his own hands and then avenged Nabal for coming against him.**

DAVID'S ACHILLES' HEEL

David received word about Nabal's death, and he understood **this was God's judgment on him.**

- David, **honoring the oath he made with Abigail, sent word asking her to become his wife.** We also find out that earlier **David married Ahinoam,** and while he was a fugitive, **his first wife, Michal,** was given to another man.

"REMEMBER ME YOUR SERVANT" (25:31)

Abigail asked David to remember her when the Lord does good to him, so **at the death of Nabal, he took her as his wife.**

- In ancient times, it would have been nearly impossible for an unmarried woman to provide for herself. **Without a father, brother, or husband to take care of them, women were subjected to prostitution or slavery.**

ALLOWANCE VS APPROVAL

We cannot take God's silence in the OT on the topic of polygamy as His approving of it.

- Though God did not approve of this practice, it was **allowed for the protection and the provision of women,** who would have been left destitute. Polygamy, though not ideal, could have been **allowed for the expansion of humanity** (Genesis 9:7).

BIBLICAL VIEW OF MARRIAGE

Though it was *allowed* for a time, the Bible makes it clear that **polygamy was not part of God's design.**

- Creation began with one man and one woman forming one flesh (Genesis 2). In the NT, Ephesians 5:22-33, describes the biblical relationship between **a husband and a wife in the singular form.**

WE FREELY RECEIVED; WE FREELY GIVE

- **God demonstrated the most sacrificial offering by sending his own Son** (John 3:16).
- **God desires our generosity and is honored by it** (2 Corinthians 9:6-15).
- **Our generosity reveals the true state of our hearts. Do you trust God? What is your motive for generosity?**