

1 Samuel 25:2–5

2 Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance; but the man was harsh and evil in his doings. He was of the house of Caleb.

4 When David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep,

5 David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, “Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.

God’s Preventative Providence **1 Samuel 25**

INTRO:

Four years ago we were studying in **1 Samuel**. We paused because one of the ABF’s was beginning a study of this book. Believing we need to explore again a part of the Bible that many ignore, I decided to revisit David, the man after God’s own heart, in the end of **1 Samuel**. These are historical/narrative sections, so we must take large portions of the material to analyze and understand. Today we look at how God providentially took care of David in **chapter 25**.

I. The Canvas Displaying Yahweh’s Providence (v.2-11)

II. David’s Action and Yahweh’s Action (v. 12-35)

III. Yahweh’s Vengeance and Provision (v.36-44)

I. The Canvas Displaying Yahweh’s Providence (v.2-11)

1 Samuel 25:2-3 *“Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance; but the man was harsh and evil in his doings. He was of the house of Caleb.”*

A. First we need to meet some people who are a vital part of the events chronicled here. **(1)** There was a very rich man, who was exceedingly hard headed and selfish.

“But the man was harsh and evil in his doings. He was of the house of Caleb.”

[2] Second, there was Nabal’s wife, Abigail. All that Nabal was, Abigail was the opposite.

B. A Highlight of the year was the shearing season. This is exactly where we come upon the scene.

1 Samuel 25:4-8 ***“When David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep, David sent ten young men.” “Greet him in my name. And thus you shall say to him who lives in prosperity: ‘Peace be to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have! Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel. Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on a feast day. Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David.’”***

This all sounds odd to us because we no longer live in this kind of culture. David’s request was normal. Anybody that heard it would expect Nabal to do what David asked.

C. However, Nabal was greedy and self-centered so instead of doing the reasonable thing, instead he railed on David and his men.

vs.10-11 ***“Then Nabal answered David’s servants, and said, ‘Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master. Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?’”***

II. David’s Action and Yahweh’s Action (v.12-35)

A. No sooner do David’s young men return than David decides he needs to teach Nabal a lesson (**vs.12-13**). Everyone get your sword.

B. **Verses 14-17** are a kind of *“meanwhile back at the ranch”* scene. The unnamed servant and Abigail do not know what was happening, but they can guess. The servant comes to Abigail and tells her David was right. Nabal is wrong and is in trouble.

v.17 ***“Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him.”***

C. The next two verse are a flurry of activity as Abigail provides for her husband by making up a gift for David and his men. Then she gets on her donkey and sends her servants ahead of her to meet David. There is an interlude where David’s intent to

destroy Nabal and his household. Now we come on the dramatic meeting between Abigail and David. Abigail's speech and actions are crucial.

vs.27-31 *“And now this present which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord. Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil is not found in you throughout your days. Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, as from the pocket of a sling. And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant.”*

David relents of his decision to kill Nabal and thus is prevented from doing something he will someday regret.

D. What really is happening here? David and Abigail are amazing people, but that is not the point. Listen to what the text says in Abigail's words.

v.26 *“Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, since the LORD has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand.”*

In David's words

vs.33-34 *“And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. For indeed, as the LORD God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you.”*

Finally, in verse 39 we read,

“So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, ‘Blessed be the LORD, who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! For the LORD has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head.’”

The lesson is that God works in the background to deliver us from sin at times.

III. Yahweh's Vengeance and Provision (v.36-44)

A. This last section deals with how the LORD took vengeance upon Nabal and ultimately how He provided for Abigail.

B. What do we do with this truth?

1. When we serve the Lord Jesus we will find some who will take advantage of us and walk on us.

Romans 12:19–21 *“Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”*

The only way we can do this is by believing in God’s providence.

2. When God puts an obstacle in our way, perhaps we should think and consult with Him before we continue.

3. How big is your God?

Hymn #178 O Sacred Head Now Wounded