

The LORD Will Establish His King (1 Samuel 25:32-44)

The Recollection of Samuel (v.1)

The Request of David (v.4-9)

The Refusal of Nabal (v.9-11)

1. The Resourcefulness of Abigail (v.14-31)

- One of Nabal's servants informed Abigail of the recent conversation between David's men and Nabal. He informed her that Nabal "railed" (yelled, screamed, shrieked) at David's men.
- The servant affirmed the protection of David and his men (v.15-16) and has educated Abigail as to the impending disaster that is going to befall Nabal's household (v.17). David is coming to enact judgment on Nabal and his men.
- This servant approaches Abigail because of her discernment (v.3) and acknowledges what the reader has known: Nabal is a harsh and worthless man.
- Abigail is in a precarious situation: She cannot exculpate the actions of her husband, nor be disloyal to him. She must honor the LORD, respect her worthless husband, and diffuse this situation. As she is considering what to do, David and four hundred of his men have departed from the wilderness of Paran. They are armed with swords and are approaching Nabal, who is holding a feast in celebration of the successful harvest.

Abigail's Present (v.18): she took five sheep that were already prepared, two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, one bushel of parched grain, one thousand clusters of raisins, and two hundred fig cakes and loaded the food on many donkeys (v.27). She departs and intercepts David and his men before they reach Nabal and gifts them after his heart was changed (v.35).

Abigail's Presentation (v.23): she dismounts her donkey, runs to David, and falls on her face in submission. She refers to herself as a servant fourteen times (v.24-31).

Abigail's Petition (v.24-25): she requests a hearing after humbling herself before David (v.24) and addresses Nabal. She calls Nabal by his name: "fool." She is not dishonoring her husband since his name literally means "fool." Nabal may be a pejorative nickname given to him after he was born. The Hebrew root is the same word used to describe Hophni and Phinehas: worthless men (2:12). The narrator (v.3), Nabal's servant (v.17), David (v.21), and Abigail have all agreed that he is a worthless man. She also assumes the guilt of this offense on herself and her failure to intercept David's men before they reached Nabal.

Abigail's Plead (v.28): after she has humbled herself and acknowledged what everyone in Judah knows (Nabal's Nabalishness), she pleads that David would accept the gift, and forgive her iniquity.

Abigail's Purpose (v.26-31): she believes she has been sent by the LORD to restrain David's anger and future regret if he follows through with his planned bloodshed.

Abigail's Prompting (v.29-30): she reminds David of his conflict with Goliath (17:41-47) and reminds him of the LORD deliverance, absent of sword and spear (17:47).

Abigail's Prophecy (v.29-31): she is the first in Scripture to prophesy David's sure house (eternal kingship). She re-focuses David's mindset to the faithfulness of God in executing salvation (deliverance) Himself, as opposed to David's sinful vindication.

The long-term advantage of a clear conscience always trumps a short-term reward secured through self-indulgence and self-vindication.

2. The Receptivity and Response of David (v.32-35)

- David's heart was redirected to the LORD through the wisdom, tactfulness, discretion, and maturity of Abigail. David blesses the LORD for His providence in sending Abigail to him, along with her discretion and godliness that has kept him from bloodguilt and unrighteous anger (v.33-34). David's own confession acknowledged the hurt and pain that he would have brought upon Abigail (v.34) if his plan was carried out (v.22).
- One mark of godly maturity is thankfulness for deliverance from sin, not just from the result of that sin.

3. The Resistant Heart of Nabal (v.36-38)

- Abigail's encounter with David and subsequent attendance to the feast may have happened on the same day.
- The feast that Nabal held was like that of a king. He is merry (drunk with wine) and not in the right state of mind for any meaningful conversation.
- Abigail waits until the morning, when Nabal is sober, to inform him of the events that had transpired the day before (v.14-35) for two reasons:
 - To be blameless of any malevolent wrongdoing up to this point
 - To give Nabal the opportunity to change
- Instead of a soft and malleable heart like David's, Nabal's heart has turned to stone (v.37). Abigail's prophecy is fulfilled (v.26, 29) as Nabal dies ten days later (v.38).

4. The Revelation of God's Providence, Promises, and Warnings (v.39-44)

- Abigail's prophetic words were imprecatory (v.26). Her only request from David was that he "remember his servant" (v.31).
- Once Nabal dies, Abigail is not redeemed by any kinsman. She has no children, and no next of kin has taken her hand in marriage. David, as a fellow Judahite, marries her. While she never offered herself to him, she did not "drag her feet" (v.40-42).

The narrator concludes this pericope with two major observations:

- David's Lust for Women: Future kings were commanded to abstain from polygamy (Deut. 17:17). Abigail is his third wife (18:27; 25:42, 43). Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:24) will be his eighth wife, not including many concubines he took to himself (1 Chron. 3:9).
- Political Aspirations: Saul had given David's wife, Michal, to Palti the son of Laish, who was of Gallim. Gallim was in Judah. Saul is attempting to strengthen the tribal union between Benjamin and Judah. It is unknown whether Michal desired to marry another man (19:17). The narrator does not speak to David's aspirations.

Nabal is a type of Saul: Both Nabal and Saul had returned evil for good (24:18; 25:21). Both are socially powerful members of wealthy families (9:1; 25:2), both benefited from David's actions (18:30; 25:15-16), both acted with hostility towards David (18:11, 21; 19:1, 11, 18; 21:10; 23:15; 25:10-11), both had clan members who married David (18:27; 25:42) and both wives averted David from a catastrophe (18:11-17; 25:23-35).

From chapters 18-23, the LORD has providentially delivered David twelve times from catastrophe (18:11, 17, 27; 19:6, 11-17, 18-24; 20; 21:12-15; 23:10-13; 23:19-28; 25:23-35). David restrained himself from killing Saul (24:10), but he could not restrain himself with Nabal (25:21-22, 34) without help. David will be the next king, and through his seed, at the fulness of time, the Messiah, the true and lasting King, will offer His perfect life as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28).