



*Abigail's Wisdom, Tact
And Marriage to
David*

Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

Overview

Abigail the wife of Nabal's who had denied David's request for provisions puts herself in the place of a penitent, and of a petitioner.

She could not excuse her husband's conduct. She depends not upon her own reasonings, but on God's grace, to soften David, and expects that grace would work powerfully.

She says that it was below him to take vengeance on so weak and despicable an enemy as Nabal, who, as he would do him no kindness, so he could do him no hurt.

She foretells the glorious end of David's present troubles. God will preserve thy life; therefore it becomes not thee unjustly and unnecessarily to take away the lives of any, especially of the people of thy God and Saviour.

David is moved by her actions. When Nabal dies, she become a wife of David.

Abigail, the wife of Nabal

David's Request; Nabal's Churlish Refusal (1 Samuel 25:2-11)

We should not have heard of Nabal, if nothing had passed between him and David. Observe his name, Nabal, "A fool;" so it signifies. Riches make men look great in the eye of the world; but to one that takes right views, Nabal looked very mean.

He had no honour or honesty; he was churlish, cross, and ill-humoured; evil in his doings, hard and oppressive; a man that cared not what fraud and violence he used in getting and saving.

What little reason have we to value the wealth of this world, when so great a churl as Nabal abounds, and so good a man as David suffers want!

David pleaded the kindness Nabal's shepherds had received. Considering that David's men were in distress and debt, and discontented, and the scarcity of provisions, it was by good management that they were kept from plundering.

Nabal went into a passion, as covetous men are apt to do, when asked for anything, thinking thus to cover one sin with another; and, by abusing the poor, to excuse themselves from relieving them.

But God will not be mocked. Let this help us to bear reproaches and misrepresentations with patience and cheerfulness, and make us easy under them; it has often been the lot of the excellent ones of the earth.

Nabal insists much on the property he had in the provisions of his table. May he not do what he will with his own? We mistake, if we think we are absolute lords of what we have, and may do what we please with it.

No; we are but stewards, and must use it as we are directed, remembering it is not our own, but His who entrusted us with it.

David's Intention to Destroy Nabal (1 Samuel 25:12-17)

God is kind to the evil and unthankful, and why may not we be so? David determined to destroy Nabal, and all that belonged to him. Is this thy voice, O David?

Has he been so long in the school of affliction, where he should have learned patience, and yet is so passionate?

He at other times was calm and considerate, but is put into such a heat by a few hard words, that he seeks to destroy a whole family.

What are the best of men, when God leaves them to themselves, that they may know what is in their hearts? What need to pray, Lord, lead us not into temptation!

Abigail Takes a Present to David (1 Samuel 25:18-31)

By a present Abigail atoned for Nabal's denial of David's request. Her behaviour was very submissive. Yielding pacifies great offences. She puts herself in the place of a penitent, and of a petitioner.

She could not excuse her husband's conduct. She depends not upon her own reasonings, but on God's grace, to soften David, and expects that grace would work powerfully.

She says that it was below him to take vengeance on so weak and despicable an enemy as Nabal, who, as he would do him no kindness, so he could do him no hurt.

She foretells the glorious end of David's present troubles. God will preserve thy life; therefore it becomes not thee unjustly and unnecessarily to take away the lives of any, especially of the people of thy God and Saviour.

Abigail keeps this argument for the last, as very powerful with so good a man; that the less he indulged his passion, the more he consulted his peace and the repose of his own conscience.

Many have done that in a heat, which they have a thousand times wished undone again. The sweetness of revenge is soon turned into bitterness. When tempted to sin, we should consider how it will appear when we think upon it afterwards.

He Is Pacified, Nabal Dies (1 Samuel 25:32-39)

David gives God thanks for sending him this happy check in a sinful way.

Whoever meet us with counsel, direction, comfort, caution, or seasonable reproof, we must see God sending them. We ought to be very thankful for those happy providences which are the means of keeping us from sinning.

Most people think it enough, if they take reproof patiently; but few will take it thankfully, and commend those who give it, and accept it as a favour. The nearer we are to committing sin, the greater is the mercy of a seasonable restraint.

Sinners are often most secure when most in danger. He was very drunk. A sign he was Nabal, a fool, that could not use plenty without abusing it; who could not be pleasant with his friends without making a beast of himself.

There is not a surer sign that a man has but little wisdom, nor a surer way to destroy the little he has, than drinking to excess.

Next morning, how he is changed! His heart overnight merry with wine, next morning heavy as a stone; so deceitful are carnal pleasures, so soon passes the laughter of the fool; the end of that mirth is heaviness.

Drunkards are sad, when they reflect upon their own folly. About ten days after, the Lord smote Nabal that he died.

David blessed God that he had been kept from killing Nabal.

Worldly sorrow, mortified pride, and an affrighted conscience, sometimes end the joys of the sensualist, and separate the covetous man from his wealth; but, whatever the weapon, the Lord smites men with death when it pleases him.

David Takes Abigail to Wife (1 Samuel 25:39-44)

Abigail believed that David would be king over Israel, and greatly esteemed his pious and excellent character. She deemed his proposal of marriage honourable, and advantageous to her, notwithstanding his present difficulties.

With great humility, and doubtless agreeably to the customs of those times, she consented, being willing to share his trials. Thus those who join themselves to Christ, must be willing now to suffer with him, believing that hereafter they shall reign with him.

1 Samuel 27:3

And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his men, every man with his household, even David with his two wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the Carmelitess, Nabal's wife.

2 Samuel 2:2

So David went up thither, and his two wives also, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail Nabal's wife the Carmelite.

Mother of Chileab by David

2 Samuel 3:1-6

Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.

And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelite;

And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite;

And the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur;

And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith;

And the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital;

And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife.

These were born to David in Hebron.

And it came to pass, while there was war between the house of Saul and the house of David that Abner made himself strong for the house of Saul.

1 Chronicles. 3:1

Now these were the sons of David, which were born unto him in Hebron; the firstborn Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second Daniel, of Abigail the Carmelitess:

Abigail taken captive and rescued by David

Ziklag Spoiled by the Amalekites

1 Samuel 30:1-6

And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

And had taken the women captives that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way.

So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.

Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.

And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite. And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

When we go abroad in the way of our duty, we may comfortably hope that God will take care of our families in our absence, but not otherwise.

If, when we come off a journey, we find our abode in peace, and not laid waste, as David here found his, let the Lord be praised for it.

David's men murmured against him. Great faith must expect such severe trials. But, observe, that David was brought thus low, only just before he was raised to the throne.

When things are at the worst with the church and people of God, then they begin to mend. David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.

His men fretted at their loss, the soul of the people was bitter; their own discontent and impatience added to the affliction and misery. But David bore it better, though he had more reason than any of them to lament it.

They gave liberty to their passions, but he set his graces to work; and while they dispirited each other, he, by encouraging himself in God, kept his spirit calm.

Those who have taken the Lord for their God, may take encouragement from him in the worst times.

David Overtakes the Amalekites (1 Samuel 30:7-15)

If in all our ways, even when, as in this case, there can be no doubt they are just, we acknowledge God, we may expect that he will direct our steps, as he did those of David.

David, in tenderness to his men, would by no means urge them beyond their strength.

The Son of David thus considers the frames of his followers, who are not all alike strong and vigorous in their spiritual pursuits and conflicts; but, where we are weak, there he is kind; any more, there he is strong, 2 Co 12:9, 10.

A poor Egyptian lad, scarcely alive, is made the means of a great deal of good to David.

Justly did Providence make this poor servant, who was basely used by his master, an instrument in the destruction of the Amalekites; for God hears the cry of the oppressed.

Those are unworthy the name of true Israelites, who shut up their compassion from persons in distress. We should neither do an injury nor deny a kindness to any man; some time or other it may be in the power of the lowest to return a kindness or an injury.

He Recovers What Had Been Lost (1 Samuel 30:16-20)

Sinners are nearest to ruin, when they cry, Peace and safety, and put the evil day far from them. Nor does anything give our spiritual enemies more advantage than sensuality and indulgence.

Eating and drinking, and dancing, have been the soft and pleasant way in which many have gone down to the congregation of the dead. The spoil was recovered, and brought off; nothing was lost, but a great deal gained.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

Reference:

Verse Concept: Matthew Henry's Concept Bible Commentary.

