



ABIGAIL: WISDOM THAT CAPTIVATED A KING

INTRODUCTION

Abigail was a beautiful and intelligent wife who was married to Nabal, a wealthy, foolish, scoundrel who was harsh and overbearing. She was a woman, like many, who found herself in a grievous and abusive situation. Her knowledge of God and His ways brought about godly wisdom which was evident in the way she ran her home and in her continued faithfulness to a wicked husband. Her obedience and reverence to God and His servant David was greatly rewarded by the Lord.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

And David said to Abigail, blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me (I Samuel 25:32).

Names Given to Abigail

Abigail *Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance . . . (I Samuel 25:3).*
Nabal's wife *The name Abigail in Hebrew means - father of joy or cause of joy.*

David's wife *And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife (I Samuel 25:39b)*

SECTION 1 - A Woman in the Midst of a Difficult Situation

In the opening chapter of Abigail's story, Saul, king of Israel, in a state of disobedience, had lost his anointing from God as king. Samuel the prophet, being directed by the Lord, had anointed David as the king to replace Saul. David found favor before the Lord and later would be referred to as a *man after God's own heart*. With jealousy and anger in his heart, Saul sought an opportunity to kill David; however, David and the men who followed him stayed in the strongholds of En Gedi.¹

READ I Samuel 25:1-13.

1. Why were the Israelites gathered together (v. 1)? _____

Where did David go from the stronghold of En Gedi? _____²

LOOK DEEPER

LOOK at your Bible map or atlas, in what modern country would we find the Wilderness of Paran?
LOCATE the town Maon and find the town of Carmel.

2. Who lived in Maon (vv. 2, 3)? _____

What characteristics do we find that describe Abigail? _____

How is Nabal described? _____³

3. What did David hear (v. 4)? _____

¹ En Gedi: an oasis on the barren western shore of the Dead Sea, thirty-five miles southeast of Jerusalem.

² Wilderness of Paran: desert or wilderness in the central part of the Sinai Peninsula; Maon.

³ churlish: cruel, harsh, stubborn, ill behaved, surly, an evil doer.

The shearing season was a festive time. The sheep owner would provide a feast when the job was done. During this time, anyone who had helped the owner in tending the sheep would be eligible to receive a gift. David and his men while in Carmel had made sure that Nabal's men and flocks were both safe and protected. David had provided a service, and in accordance with the customs of this day, he had a right to ask for provisions.

4. In whose name were the ten messengers sent to Nabal (v. 5)? _____

5. SUMMARIZE the greeting they were to give Nabal (vv. 6-9). _____

6. How did David humbly refer to his men and himself (v. 8b)? _____

7. What was Nabal's foolish reply concerning David, the future King of Israel (vv. 10, 11)? _

According to Eastern tradition, Nabal's response was unacceptable. He posed a question, which deliberately insulted David. Proverbs 14:16 says . . . *but the fool rageth, and is confident*, these qualities proved to be a part of Nabal's character. He should have shown David respect, even if he had proven to be a deadly enemy.

8. What did David's men do (I Samuel 25:12)? _____

9. What action did David take against Nabal and his household (v. 13)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

READ Proverbs 2:10-12. What attributes do you find that will keep you from responding as Nabal did?

SECTION 2 - A Woman of Understanding

READ I Samuel 25:14-22.

1. Who was informed of the situation (v. 14)? _____

What did the young man say about Nabal? _____

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2. How did the young man describe the protection David and his men had given (vv. 15, 16)? _____

3. What did the servant encourage Abigail to do (v. 17)? _____

Why? _____

What did the servant know about Nabal? _____

5

Abigail had immediate decisions to make; she needed to take wise action quickly. If she did not intervene, they would most certainly be killed.

4. How did Abigail take immediate action (v. 18)? _____

LOOK DEEPER

We know that Abigail was a woman of good understanding. As she heard the servant, she moved with haste. Consider the amount of food that Abigail put together without notice. What does this tell you about the type of household she ran? READ Proverbs 31, and LIST the characteristics of a virtuous⁶ woman.

⁴ railed: to hurl insults at, to scold or scorn with an intolerable rage; flew upon them.

⁵ son of Belial: one who is reckless, lawless, a fool, a good for nothing; a scoundrel, worthless, ungodly.

⁶ virtuous - Hebrew *chayil* valor: army, valiant, might, power, substance; a woman who fears the LORD.

5. What did she tell her servants to do (I Samuel 25:19)? _____

SECTION 3 - A Woman of Wisdom and Knowledge

READ I Samuel 25:20-31.

1. DESCRIBE Abigail and David as they came upon each other (vv. 20-22). _____

2. What did Abigail courageously do when she saw David (v. 23)? _____

3. What requests did Abigail ask of David (v. 24)? _____

4. What did Abigail say about her husband (v. 25)? _____

⁷

5. In the following verses we will see the heart of Abigail as she encounters the future king. WRITE how she encourages and petitions him, and her words of wisdom and knowledge to him.

v. 26 _____

v. 27 _____

⁷ Nabal: foolish, wicked.

v. 28 _____

v. 29 _____ 8

v. 30 _____

v. 31 _____

Abigail understood clearly the sovereignty⁹ of God. In her address to David, Abigail used the word LORD¹⁰ which showed her wisdom in that she was in full submission to Him regardless of her husband's standing. Abigail also recognized David's anointing and God-given authority as the future King of Israel and called him her lord¹¹ (I Samuel 25:24-31).

PERSONAL

Do you need wisdom to deal with a difficult situation or person? Abigail's knowledge, wisdom, and understanding came from the LORD. How will you obtain wisdom (James 1:5-8)?

LOOK DEEPER

DESCRIBE the way of Wisdom (Proverbs 9:1-12). _____

⁸ bound in the bundle: a Hebrew saying to picture the Lord's care of David; comes from the custom of bundling valuable possessions as precious jewels to keep them secure and safe; David was securely protected by God; words often found on the Jewish tombstones referring to the life beyond the grave.

⁹ sovereignty: God's absolute right to govern all things as He chooses, without limitations; His complete authority and final rule over all of His creation.

¹⁰ LORD: referring to Jehovah.

¹¹ lord: referring to mortal man; a title of respect.

SECTION 4 - A Woman Blessed

READ I Samuel 25:32-42.

1. What was David's immediate response (v. 32)? _____

2. How did David bless Abigail (vv. 33, 34)? _____

3. How did David receive Abigail, her gifts, and her godly words of wisdom (v. 35)? _____

4. As Abigail returned, in what foolish behavior did she find Nabal (v. 36)? _____

How did Abigail demonstrate wisdom in her response? _____

5. What happened to Nabal when Abigail finally told him about her meeting with David (vv. 37, 38)?

6. David recognized God's sovereignty over the situation. How did he express this truth (vv. 39, 40)?

Abigail requested David to remember her when the Lord had dealt well with him. In what way did David choose to honor her request?

7. DESCRIBE Abigail's actions and attitudes in response to David's proposal of marriage (v. 41). ____

David took another wife. What had King Saul done with his daughter Michal, David's first wife (vv. 43, 44)?

Abigail continued to serve David as he became king. Perhaps he might have even consulted her in matters concerning the kingdom. Her wisdom, understanding, and knowledge would continue to fill the palace with all precious and pleasant riches. She became the mother of Chileab, the son of David (II Samuel 3:2).

MEMORY VERSE

_____ (I Samuel 25:32).

Abigail, like many women today, found herself in a marriage to a man whose ways were evil. Her life becomes a great encouragement to them, as she shows how to rely upon God's wisdom for each difficult situation that is bound to arise in such circumstances. She feared the Lord over her husband, although still seeking his welfare as well as those in her household. She trusted and rested in God's sovereignty. Although she was beautiful and influential, it was her active faith in God that enabled her to bring peace in the midst of impending danger.

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His holy name, and His Word have been capitalized.

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