

Sunday Night Message

January 19, 2020

David and Abigail

Topics – David; Abigail; Nabal; death of Samuel

Series – *1 Samuel*

Text – 1 Samuel 25

Introduction

In chapter 24, both David and Saul were in a place called Engedi where David was hiding out with his men. David has the chance to kill Saul in a cave, but spares him because he believes that Saul is “the anointed of the Lord.” He determines to let God deal with Saul. At the end of the chapter, Saul leaves from pursuing David and returns back home. David makes a promise to Saul that when he becomes the king, he will not take revenge on any of Saul’s family.

I. The Death of Samuel (v. 1)

The death of Samuel was a huge event for both Saul and David, and for all of Israel. The Scripture says that all of Israel lamented him. They rejected his message when he was alive, but they mourned him in his death. They were either being hypocritical or perhaps after reflection, Israel truly regretted the ultimatum they had given Samuel – “We want a king.”

Samuel was the last of the Old Testament judges, but he was more than a judge; he was also a great prophet. McGee calls him “the bridge between the judges and the kings.”¹ Samuel was the one that anointed both Saul and later David to be king. Saul was afraid of Samuel because he knew that the people had a great deal of respect for him. Later, in chapter 28, Saul will try to go through the witch of Endor to speak with Samuel even though he is dead.

I am sure Saul attended the funeral of Samuel for political reason even though they had been “estranged” for a few years, but I wonder if David was there. At first, I didn’t think so, but after the truce that was declared between Saul and David in the last chapter, it is possible that David felt safe enough to attend.

David either during the funeral or after it, went down into the Wilderness of Paran, which is located on the Sinai Peninsula, south of Beersheeba. It could be that David may have fled further south after the death of Samuel in order to distance himself further from Saul.

II. David’s Dealings with Nabal and Abigail (vs. 2 – 38)

Somebody once said the story of Nabal and Abigail was likened to “Beauty and the Beast.”² Nabal was a “churlish” (קָשָׁה – *qasheh*) man, meaning he was hard-headed and stubborn. The name, “Nabal,” means “fool.” Abigail, on the other hand, was very beautiful and wise. How did a fool like Nabal end up with a wife like Abigail. It was probably an arranged marriage.

¹ J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 2 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 171.

² Ibid.

David's men were hiding out in the same area where Nabal was shearing his huge flock, containing 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. David's men had been a source of protection to Nabal's herdsmen. He sends some men to ask Nabal to give David some food, but Nabal flatly refuses to help David and even insults him. David is furious and in his rage determines to wipe out Nabal and take everything he has.

Nabal's wife, Abigail, however, was a very wise woman, and when she hears about the way Nabal treated David, she rushes out to him and offers a gift of food and wine. She convinces David to let God take care of Nabal, and not to take vengeance himself. This was a lesson that David seems to be constantly learning:

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." (Romans 12:19)

David heeds the advice of Abigail, and just as she predicted, God did eventually take out Nabal.

Practical Point – Men – it is wise to listen to the advice of women, especially your wife.

Women – it is wise to carefully approach your husband with your advice. David was full of wrath. Abigail approached David very humbly, and reasons with him. She tells him that someday when he is king that he will regret taking vengeance on Nabal.

She is absolutely right.

Notice v. 31 – Abigail reminds us of the thief on the cross. She asks David to remember her when he receives his kingdom (Luke 23:42 – 43).

III. David's Decision to Marry Abigail (vs. 39 – 44)

David was so impressed with Abigail that after her husband is dead, he decides to make her his wife. Abigail was beautiful, but she was also very wise, and her advice kept David from operating in the flesh and it saved David from a lot of future heartache.

By the way – by marrying Abigail, David also received all of Nabal's possessions.

Notice in v. 41, Abigail offers to wash the feet of David's men. She is a servant.

Notice in v. 44, we find out that David's first wife, Michal, was given by Saul to somebody else.

Conclusion

The main lesson that we see in this story is that we need to let God deal with our enemies. In the case of Nabal, God took him out. David had nothing to do with it. Though David did want to kill Nabal, he didn't do it. God did.

A secondary lesson we can glean from this passage is that it is wise to cool off before you take action. David's anger almost turned to wrath, and almost caused him to sin against God.

"He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." (Proverbs 14:29)

*"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:
For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." (James 1:19-20)*

Along with this, we can also say that it is unwise to make major decisions in the valley. We often need to just wait and see what God is going to do.

David is waiting. He knows that he was anointed to be king, and he is being patient, but he is trusting that God is going to do what he promised.

A third lesson that we need to learn is that it is wise to listen to godly counsel, and in this case that counsel came from a woman. Husbands, don't be too full of yourself not to listen and also, when appropriate, heed the advice of your wife.

"A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent. ... Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die. ... The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding. The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility." (Proverbs 15:5, 10, 31-33)

Along with this – ladies, there are rare times when you should not submit to your husband. Abigail was not in submission to her husband when she went to David. She was, however, acting in Nabal's best interest, even though he would not see it that way. She saved Nabal's life. By the way, the guy that reported Nabal's stupidity to Abigail was technically being disloyal to his boss.

DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM SAUL

- City
- ① Numbered movements of David
- ← Route of David from Saul (as far as Mizpah of Moab #5)
- ← Route of David from Saul (as far as Keilah #8)
- ← Route of David from Saul (as far as Wilderness of Maon #13)
- ← Route of David from Saul (as far as Ziklag #15)
- ← David's offensive actions (#16-19)
- ← David becomes king at Hebron (#20)
- ★ Battle scene

