

1Samuel 25:1 ¶ And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah. And David arose, and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

It is noted at this point that Samuel has died. All Israel gathered together to mourn his death and bury him in his hometown of Ramah. David and his men moved to the wilderness of Paran at that time.

Paran = Eerdman's Dictionary - "A desert region S of Judah, W of Edom, and N of the wilderness of Sinai, and probably encompassing Kadesh-barnea."

I liked these comments from Adam Clarke about Samuel: He "...was very zealous for the honor of God.... He was chief magistrate in Israel before the appointment of a king, and afterwards he acted as prime minister to Saul, though without being chosen or formally appointed to that station.... In his office of minister in the state, he gave the brightest example of zeal, diligence, inflexible integrity, and uncorruptedness. He reproved both the people and the king for their transgressions, with a boldness which nothing but his sense of the Divine authority could inspire, and yet he tempered it with a sweetness which showed the interest he felt in their welfare, and the deep and distressing concern he felt for their back-slidings and infidelities."

Oh for such government leaders today!

1Samuel 25:2 ¶ And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

1Samuel 25:3 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: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings; and he was of the house of Caleb.

Easton's Dictionary defines Maon as a town in Judah about seven miles south of Hebron. Carmel was located nearby; this is not the Carmel where Elijah called down fire from heaven.

There was a very wealthy man that lived in Maon and pastured his livestock in Carmel. This man, Nabal, owned 3000 sheep and 1000 goats. It is noted that he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

I liked Guzik's observation: "There are four kinds of riches. There are riches in what you *have*, riches in what you *do*, riches in what you *know*, and riches in what you *are* - riches of *character*. Nabal was a very rich man, but only rich in what he had. He had the lowest kind of riches."

Nabal was married to a beautiful and intelligent woman named Abigail. He, however, was cruel, hard-hearted and evil.

1Samuel 25:4 And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his

sheep.

1Samuel 25:5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name:

1Samuel 25:6 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth *in prosperity*, Peace *be* both to thee, and peace *be* to thine house, and peace *be* unto all that thou hast.

1Samuel 25:7 And now I have heard that thou hast shearers: now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel.

1Samuel 25:8 Ask thy young men, and they will shew thee. Wherefore let the young men find favour in thine eyes: for we come in a good day: give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David.

David got word that Nabal was shearing his sheep. He immediately chose ten of his young men to take a message to Nabal. He told them to greet the man in David's name with a blessing of peace upon him, his house, and all he owned. They were then to say that David had heard that he was shearing the sheep. They were also to explain that David and his men had protected his shepherds and ensured that they did not lose any of Nabal's livestock to predators or thieves. They were also to say that Nabal could ask his shepherds to verify that they spoke the truth. Based on their service to him, they were then to request that he reward them from his profits.

1Samuel 25:9 And when David's young men came, they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased.

1Samuel 25:10 And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who *is* David? and who *is* the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master.

1Samuel 25:11 Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give *it* unto men, whom I know not whence they *be*?

David's messengers went to Nabal and delivered the message from David as instructed. Nabal rudely responded that he knew nothing of David, the son of Jesse. He implied that David was just one of many runaway servants. He basically said that he had no intention of taking what rightfully belonged to his shearers and giving it to a man he knew nothing about.

Notice, he didn't even bother to question his servants as to the truth of what the messengers told him.

Frankly, I think Nabal had to know who David was. David was famous throughout Israel for killing Goliath. He also identified David as the "son of Jesse," information that had not been supplied by the messengers.

1Samuel 25:12 ¶ So David's young men turned their way, and went again, and came and told him all those sayings.

1Samuel 25:13 And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword. And they girded on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred

abode by the stuff.

David's men returned to David to report what had happened. He immediately told his men to get their weapons and prepare to fight. David and 400 of his men strapped on their swords and headed out; they left 200 men behind to guard their supplies.

1Samuel 25:14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.

1Samuel 25:15 But the men *were* very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields:

1Samuel 25:16 They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep.

1Samuel 25:17 Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he *is such* a son of Belial, that *a man* cannot speak to him.

One of Nabal's servants wisely went to Abigail to tell her what had happened. He explained that David had sent messengers to Nabal, and he had refused their request. The servant told Abigail that David's men had indeed been very good to them and protected them and their flocks. They had, in fact, been like a wall of protection around them day and night. He urged her to do something to intervene on their behalf because he was sure that David and his men would come to take vengeance on Nabal and his household. He admitted that he had come to her because Nabal was so wicked that no one could reason with him.

1Samuel 25:18 ¶ Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched *corn*, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid *them* on asses.

1Samuel 25:19 And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.

1Samuel 25:20 And it was *so, as* she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them.

Abigail didn't hesitate. She immediately gathered together a load of supplies to take to David and his men. She gathered 200 loaves of bread, two bottles of wine, five sheep already dressed to cook, five measures of roasted corn, 100 clusters of raisins and 200 cakes of figs. She had the servants load the supplies on donkeys and go ahead of her to meet David.

It is significant to note that she told Nabal nothing of what she was doing. I'm sure she feared for herself if he found out.

She followed the supplies riding on a donkey and met David and his men coming down the hill towards her.

1Samuel 25:21 Now David had said, Surely in vain have I kept all that this *fellow* hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that *pertained* unto him: and he hath requited me evil for good.

1Samuel 25:22 So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that *pertain* to him by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.

David had determined that Nabal would pay for his wicked treatment of him and his men. He basically swore to kill all the male's of Nabal's household.

Note: Only males can "piss against the wall." (How gross!)

1Samuel 25:23 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

1Samuel 25:24 And fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, *upon me let this iniquity be*: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience, and hear the words of thine handmaid.

1Samuel 25:25 Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, *even* Nabal: for as his name *is*, so *is* he; Nabal *is* his name, and folly *is* with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

1Samuel 25:26 Now therefore, my lord, *as* the LORD liveth, and *as* thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to *shed* blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

1Samuel 25:27 And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord.

1Samuel 25:28 I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid: for the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the LORD, and evil hath not been found in thee *all* thy days.

When Abigail saw David she quickly got off the donkey and fell on her face on the ground before him. She basically accepted the blame for Nabal's actions. She begged him not to pay any attention to Nabal because he was a very foolish man. She said that she had not been aware that David had sent messengers until they were gone. Abigail observed that it was the LORD that had kept David from avenging himself by shedding innocent blood. She obviously knew the scripture.

Deuteronomy 32:35 "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence...."

She then showed her disgust of her husband's actions by wishing David's enemies to be like Nabal, whose name identified him as foolish and stupid. She then urged him to accept the gift she offered to his men.

Abigail then begged David's forgiveness as she called for God to bless him. She acknowledged David as a servant of the LORD that fought in the name of the LORD. She knew that he was a good man.

1Samuel 25:29 Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD thy God;

and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, *as out* of the middle of a sling.

1Samuel 25:30 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he hath spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel;

1Samuel 25:31 That this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offence of heart unto my lord, either that thou hast shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself: but when the LORD shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid.

Abigail also revealed that she knew that though Saul sought to kill him, the LORD “thy God” would protect his life and destroy his enemies.

I thought it was interesting that she used the analogy of slinging his enemies away, and I am sure it was intended to honor David, knowing that he had killed Goliath with one shot from a sling.

Abigail also revealed that she knew that the LORD had chosen David to be the next king of Israel. She sincerely hoped that David wouldn’t have to regret the killing of innocent blood and not having waited on the LORD to avenge him when that time came. She also expressed the hope that he would remember her with kindness.

1Samuel 25:32 ¶ And David said to Abigail, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:

1Samuel 25:33 And blessed *be* thy advice, and blessed *be* thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to *shed* blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand.

1Samuel 25:34 For in very deed, *as* the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.

1Samuel 25:35 So David received of her hand *that* which she had brought him, and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person.

David was touched by Abigail’s entreaty. He thanked the LORD God of Israel for sending her to meet him and counseling him not to shed innocent blood but to trust the LORD to avenge him. He admitted that if she had not come to meet him, Nabal and all the males in his household would have been dead by morning.

David then accepted his gifts and told her to return home in peace because he had accepted her wise counsel.

1Samuel 25:36 ¶ And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal’s heart *was* merry within him, for he *was* very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light.

1Samuel 25:37 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became *as* a stone.

1Samuel 25:38 And it came to pass about ten days *after*, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.

When Abigail returned home to Nabal, he was holding a feast fit for a king. He was “riding high” as we say and very drunk. She decided that it wasn’t the right time to tell him what she had done.

It’s interesting that she determined to protect her household by not telling Nabal what she planned on doing because she knew he would not allow it. It is clear from verse 36 that she never intended not to tell him. She was willing to face the consequences once she had secured the safety of her household.

The next morning when Nabal was sober, Abigail told her husband what she had done. It sounds like he had a heart attack that incapacitated him when she told him. Ten days later, the LORD killed Nabal.

1Samuel 25:39 And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed *be* the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

1Samuel 25:40 And when the servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they spake unto her, saying, David sent us unto thee, to take thee to him to wife.

1Samuel 25:41 And she arose, and bowed herself on *her* face to the earth, and said, Behold, *let* thine handmaid *be* a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.

1Samuel 25:42 And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

When David heard that Nabal was dead, he thanked the LORD for keeping him from personally taking vengeance upon him. David knew from all that Abigail said to him that she had no real love or respect for her husband. So, he sent a message asking Abigail to be his wife.

The woman in me wants to yell at David; you’d think he could at least have gone to ask her in person. Evidently, Abigail didn’t see it that way. She humbled herself before David’s servants and went with them, taking five servant girls with her. And she became David’s wife.

JFB noted that by marrying Abigail, David inherited all that had belonged to Nabal.

1Samuel 25:43 David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they were also both of them his wives.

1Samuel 25:44 But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David's wife, to Phalti the son of Laish, which *was* of Gallim.

Sadly, we read that David took another wife as well—Ahinoam of Jezreel. Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Phalti, the son of Laish from Gallim.

Clark adds this information regarding Ahinoam: "Many think that this was his wife before he took Abigail; she is always mentioned first in the list of his wives, and she was the mother of his eldest son Ammon."