

# The Lord Restrains David

I Samuel 25

Introduction:

- The chapter begins with the death of Samuel. He was a great judge, and prophet and he was a true example of a servant of God. This did not mean he was immune from death. Thankfully, God's work in Israel did not end when Samuel died. God's work never is dependent on only one man.
  - Authorship- continues with his trained prophets- Nathan/Gad
  - Samuel died...David arose- God continues sustaining His work
- I. David's anger at Nabal
    - a. A man named Nabal
      - i. His name means: folly/fool. We don't know if Nabal was given this name or if he earned it but he certainly lived up to it.
      - ii. The first thing we learn about this man is where he lived (Maon, with his business in Carmel), and that he was a very rich man (three thousand sheep and a thousand goats).
    - b. "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."
    - c. He was enjoying the good seasonal economy of sheep-shearing- Sheep-shearing time was traditionally celebrated by feasting, with enough and to spare."  
(Baldwin)
    - d. Nabal's wife was both beautiful and wise, in contrast to Nabal himself
    - e. Arranged marriage? It is amazing how many Abigails are married to Nabals!
    - f. (1Sa 25:4-9) David asks for compensation for his valuable service to Nabal.
      - i. In modern times this might seem like a mafia shakedown

- ii. This was actually a custom, since Philistines would often raid, and sheep shearers were usually hospitable and generous
  - iii. David does this politely- sending ten messengers in peace, after the harvest time and he has probably earned his portion (feast day custom)
- g. V. 10-12- Nabal's reply
  - i. He mocks David in refusing to recognize him- who does he think he is?
  - ii. He even implied that he was a rebellious servant!
  - iii. V. 11- emphasis on "my"
  - iv. Guzik: True and Biblical generosity doesn't think, "This is mine and I will share it with you." It thinks, "All that I have belongs to the Lord so you can have some of it also."
- h. V. 13- David's reaction- gird your swords men!
  - i. This was not a spiritual reaction from David
  - ii. David was able to be kind and longsuffering to Saul, but it seems to have been harder to do it towards someone he perceived as his equal or lower than himself. Often, this is true measure of our character – not how we treat our superiors, but how we treat our equals or those "beneath" us in some way or another.

## II. Abigail intervenes

- a. One of the servants who witnessed Nabal's response to David's men tells Nabal's wife Abigail that Nabal railed David's men. To rail means, "to treat with contemptuous language."
- b. The men were very good to us: Nabal's servants told Abigail of the valuable service David's men performed. Abigail then knew that David and his men deserved compensation.
- c. V. 17- Know and consider what you will do, for evil is determined: Nabal's servants read the handwriting on the wall. They knew that David would not take such an insult lying down
- d. Nabal is called a harsh (churlish), scoundrel (son of Belial)

- e. V. 18- Abigail assembles quite the feast pretty quickly- showing that Nabal was indeed being selfish
  - f. David in the meantime vows to wipe out all the males in Nabal's household
  - g. (1Sa 25:23-31) Abigail's wise appeal to David.
  - h. Abigail reminded David of the Lord's promise for his life (the Lord will certainly make for my lord an sure house/enduring dynasty). She guided David to look beyond the immediate aggravation and to the bigger promise of God.
  - i. God will take care of your enemies- v. 29
  - j. She said, "David, you are like a bundle that the Lord holds closely and securely to Himself. Your enemies are like rocks that the Lord will sling away."
  - k. V. 31- Abigail asked David not to do something he would later regret, when God's promise was ultimately fulfilled (that this will be no grief to you... that you have shed blood without cause). This is perhaps the single best thing that Abigail said; she wisely asked David to consider the outcome of his present course and how bad it would be. She asked him to let the Lord settle the matter instead of taking vengeance into his own hands.
  - l. She also did some things wrong
    - i. She spoke ill of her husband openly
    - ii. Did not seek his counsel/approval (sneakily)
    - iii. Hinted at making herself available?
    - iv. But perhaps she felt this was a life or death situation
  - m. Abigail is a marvelous model of "sweetly speaking submission.
  - n. (1Sa 25:32-35) David thanks God for Abigail's appeal, and receives her advice.
- III. Nabal dies and David marries Abigail
- a. (1Sa 25:36-38) God strikes Nabal dead 10 days after his drunken feast
  - b. Nabal is a picture of the sinner who goes on rejecting God without regard to God's coming judgment.

- c. Jesus may have had Nabal in mind when He taught the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:15-21). That parable describes a man who dies with everything – and nothing.
- d. (1Sa 25:39-44) David marries Abigail.
- e. Was this inappropriate? Wasn't David already married to Saul's daughter Michal? (1 Samuel 18:27) The writer of 1 Samuel explains that at this time, David was not married to Michal, because Saul had taken her away and given her to another man to spite David (David will get Michal back in 2 Samuel 3:13-16).
- f. However, David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and so both of them were his wives: Though Abigail was David's "second marriage," with Ahinoam David took a second wife and will add many more wives.
- g. Was this inappropriate? It did go against God's ideal, His plan for oneness in a marriage relationship. David was a man of great passions and as a part of that he had many wives. But because David never really followed God's plan and purpose for marriage, his family life was never blessed and peaceful. Family trouble brought David some of the greatest trials of his life.

#### Conclusion:

- This is a story of humility triumphing over pride- Abigail goes from a handmaid to the wife of the future King
- Sometimes God in his providence has to prevent us from going forward with something
- Are we as sensitive to the Lord's restraints as we are to His promptings?
- Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers- we should seek to follow peace with all men- as much as possible!