

NOTES: Nabal and David:

Maon: district of Carmel:

hill country south of Hebron in Judah (not Carmel in the north)

Four kinds of riches:

1. In what you have
2. In what you do
3. In what you know
4. In what you are: in your character
5. Nabal had the lowest kind of riches: only what he had

Name: Nabal: means fool

- Churlish or harsh and evil in his doings
- House of Caleb: means dog; a canine disposition; a doggish man;

Abigail: beautiful and wise

- Only other women who were described as beautiful appearance were Rachel and Esther
- One scholar notes that Abigail bridges the gulf between the death of Samuel and the arrival of Nathan—the two prophets upon whom David relied.
- How did a woman like Abigail get matched with a man like Nabal?
 - Arranged marriage
 - Her father matched her to Nabal's wealth
 - Many a child is cast away on riches

David: had performed a valuable service for Nabal

- Protecting his flocks when Philistine raids were common
- Expected to be compensated
- Bent over backwards to do all this right and make the request right.

David waited: until Nabal was shearing his sheep

- He protected them for a long time but didn't expect compensation until Nabal had made his money
- He was very polite to Nabal: sent 10 men and asked through messengers

- Greeted him with warmth and kindness, no intimidation
- Gave him an itemized receipt for services
- Didn't set an amount: left it up to Nabal's generosity

David is very insulted: Get ready to fight: he's a soldier and warrior: gets 400 men together

David was able to be kind and longsuffering to Saul, but it seems to have been harder for him 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.

Servant went to Abigail: she interceded

- Harm is coming to all the household

Abigail does what Nabal should have done: gathers food as quickly as possible

David plans to massacre Nabal and all the males in the household

Commentators agree that brutal retaliation, especially against a fellow Hebrew, would have stained David's reputation and threatened his future claim to the kingship.

Abigail could remain hidden from David right up until they met face to face. It also seems that **Abigail saw David** first, and when David first saw her, she was humbled before him, at the head of a great train of gifts and provisions.

- i. David and his men were charging forth to kill a man who had terribly insulted and stolen from David.
- ii. David also had focused his wrath against every *male* of Nabal's household, but here is a *woman* of Nabal's household. Because

of David's anger and agitation, what Abigail did here probably could not have been done by any man in Nabal's household (except for Nabal himself), no matter how humble and wise that man was.

Abigail immediately, and with her first words to David, takes the blame on herself (**On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be!**).

Abigail plainly, straightforwardly, asked for forgiveness (**Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant**).

vii. Despite David's present anger and agitation - which is clearly sin - Abigail speaks of David's character in high terms, regarding his present unmentioned state as an aberration (**my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil is not found in you throughout your days**).

Abigail's appeal to David was so glorious, because it ***lifted him up instead of beating him down***. David was clearly in the wrong, and Abigail wanted to guide him into the right. But she didn't do it by being negative, by emphasizing to David how wrong and angry and stupid he was acting - though he was in fact acting that way! Instead, Abigail emphasized David's glorious calling and destiny, and the general integrity of his life, and simply asked him to consider if what his present course of action was consistent with that destiny and integrity.

g. Look how *positive* Abigail is in her appeal: **the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house** .

"It was a major lesson in David's training for kingship, and one that he was going to need to keep before him at future crises. The implication is that violence breeds violence, whereas restraint makes way for a peaceful solution. This he knows with his head, but he may fail to remember it when his blood is roused." (Baldwin)

So David received from her hand: It is important to remember that Abigail did not come to David empty-handed. One reason her appeal was effective was because *she paid David what was owed to him*. When David received it from Abigail, he acknowledged that Nabal had paid the bill and there was nothing outstanding.

There he was, holding a feast in his house: Nabal lives up to his name; he is a fool. His life is in imminent danger - his wife knows it, all his servants know it, but he doesn't know it. He eats and gets drunk as if all is fine, and he hasn't a care in the world.

. His heart died within him, and he became like stone . . . the LORD struck Nabal, and he died: Abigail's wise action saved Nabal from David, and saved David from himself. But it could not save Nabal from God's judgment. Nabal was never out of God's reach, and when it was the right time, God took care of him.

David marries Abigail.

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). So, Abigail is not really David's second wife; she is his "second first wife."

ii. "By his marriage with Abigail, it is probable he became possessed of all Nabal's property in Carmel and Maon."
(Clarke)