

Bible Studies for Life: August 27

Abigail: A Woman of Wisdom • 1 Samuel 25:14-17, 23-28, 32-35

By Don Hicks



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The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 12:16, *Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation (CSB)*” Paul summarizes this teaching with this verse: *If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone (Romans 12:18 CSB).*

Our Bible lesson this week is about a woman who showed the courage, wisdom, and determination to follow the Spirit’s leadership and avoid great bloodshed in a very dangerous situation.

The title of the lesson gives her name, Abigail, and her character, A Woman of Wisdom. Abigail is the wife of Nabal, a very wealthy man. *The woman was intelligent and beautiful, but the man, a Calebite, was harsh and evil in his dealings (1 Samuel 25:3 CSB).*

After the prophet Samuel died, King David withdrew to the wilderness near where Nabal’s shepherds were shearing sheep. This was usually a very happy time for a wealthy sheep owner like Nabal.

David's army had provided protection for these shepherds since they were fellow Israelites. David sent greetings to Nabal because it was a festive time, but Nabal lived up to his harsh and evil reputation.

Nabal very roughly and condescendingly answered David's emissaries that he didn't know who David was, perhaps a runaway slave.

When the young men reported these insults to David, he turned to his troops and ordered them to arm themselves with swords and prepare for battle. At this time, one of Nabal's men rushed to Abigail and told her how Nabal had treated David's ambassadors.

Abigail went immediately and bravely into action. The young man who alerted Abigail of the problem also gave this warning: *Now consider carefully what you should do, because there is certain to be trouble for our master and his entire family. He is such a worthless fool nobody can talk to him! (1 Samuel 25:17 CSB).*

Note that Abigail is reacting responsibly to reliable firsthand information and not gossip, hearsay, or unsubstantiated rumor.

Abigail is knowingly accepting grave personal danger to protect her family and kinsmen from eminent danger. The author of the Senior Adult Study material, Nikki Wilbanks, points out that:

- Abigail avoided gossip.
- Abigail was available to other believers.
- Abigail prayerfully sought God's leadership.

Here are the immediate preparations that she made: *Abigail hurried, taking two hundred loaves of bread, two clay jars of wine, five butchered sheep, a bushel of roasted grain, one*

hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys (1 Samuel 25:18 CSB).

Then she left without telling her husband and rode off on her donkey to meet David and his men. As soon as Abigail saw David, she got off her donkey and fell on her face to the ground in homage, saying, *My master, let me take the blame! Let me speak to you. Listen to what I have to say. Don't dwell on what that brute Nabal did. He acts out the meaning of his name: Nabal, Fool. Foolishness oozes from him (1 Samuel 25:23-25a MSG).*

Remember the cultural setting in which Abigail, Nabal, and David lived during the time of this incident. If Nabal had caught his wife riding off to talk to another man, he would have killed her and all of his own men accompanying her, and David along with as many of David's men as he could.

Abigail had shown great bravery to act this decisively without her husband's permission. It took every bit as much courage for Abigail to approach David, God's anointed King who had been gravely offended.

Remember a few weeks back when we studied Mordecai and Esther, and the danger Esther was in when she approached her husband, King Ahasuerus, uninvited. If the king did not hold his golden scepter out to her, she would have been executed immediately.

David had the same total power over Abigail as she rode up on her donkey. As she jumped off her donkey and bowed face to the ground, David allowed her to live and listened to her.

Not only did David listen to her but he also said:*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today! May your discernment be blessed, and may you be blessed (1 Samuel 25:32b-33a CSB).*

Soon after this incident Abigail's husband died of natural causes, and she agreed to marry King David when he sent

messengers to ask her to marry him.

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