

## I Samuel 25 Handout

Today's scripture passage will clearly illustrate an important biblical principle that our actions affect our outcomes. In today's chapter we meet three people: the fool, the rash and the wise. They represent three different actions which lead to three different outcomes.

### I. The Fool - Nabal (vs. 1-11)

#### Verse 1

**What piece of sad news do we get in verse 1?** \_\_\_\_\_

We are told that all of Israel assembled and mourned for him and buried him at the house of Ramah.

**Where are we told David goes?** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Verses 2-4

We learn about a man. **What is his name?** \_\_\_\_\_

The name Nabal means "fool". In ancient Israel names were often connected with a person's character. We don't know if Nabal was given this name or he earned it but he certainly lived up to it.

**What do we learn about him?** \_\_\_\_\_

- 3,000 sheep
- 1,000 goats

In verse 3 we learn he has a wife named Abigail.

**How is she described?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In contrast, how is Nabal described in this verse?** \_\_\_\_\_

David hears about Nabal shearing his sheep.

#### Verses 5-8

**What does David do?** \_\_\_\_\_

He gives them very specific instructions on what to say.

- Greet him by name
- Tell him how his shepherds have been with David and his men
- Ask him to find favor with them
- Give whatever you find at hand for them

David and his men had been keeping the area safe. It would have been common courtesy for Nabal to express appreciation to David by providing some food for him and his men. The time of year when sheep-shearing was done was a happy time and usually involved feasting.

**How does David refer to himself at the end of verse 8?** \_\_\_\_\_

This would have been David's way of placing himself in a subordinate position to Nabal.

**Verses 9-11**

David's men speak to Nabal and say everything David told them to and then wait.

**What is Nabal's response?** \_\_\_\_\_

There's no way that Nabal didn't know who David was at this time. Everyone had heard about David and his feats in fighting the Israelite enemies. This would have been a direct insult to David. He goes on to insinuate that David is a rebellious servant.

He basically ends by saying "why should I give my food and water to someone I know nothing about?"

**II. The Rash - David (vs. 12-22)**

**Verses 12-13**

The young men come back and inform David of all that was said.

**What is David's response?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How many men went with David?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verses 14-17**

A young man comes to Abigail to tell her what's happened.

**How does he say that Nabal talked to David's men?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What does he tell her about the men?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What else does he tell her they did in verse 16?** \_\_\_\_\_

Now he gives her a warning. **What does he say?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verses 18-20**

**How does Abigail respond?** \_\_\_\_\_

She does what her husband Nabal should have done but didn't.

- 200 loaves of bread
- Two jugs of wine
- Five sheep already prepared
- Five measures of roasted grain
- 100 cakes of raisins
- 200 cakes of figs

**What does she do with all of this?** \_\_\_\_\_

She tells the men to go ahead of her and she will come after them.

**But what doesn't she do?** \_\_\_\_\_

We are told that as she was going down that David and his men were coming up.

**Verses 21-22**

**What does David plan to do?** \_\_\_\_\_

David is premeditating the vengeful action he is about to take on Nabal and his household because Nabal has repaid him evil for good. His intentions are clear and his mind is set.

**What do you think about how David is planning to respond here?**

**III. The Wise - Abigail (vs. 23-31)**

**Verses 23-24**

**What is the first thing Abigail does when she sees David?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Abigail's approach to David was a model of tact and courage. Think about it. Visualize this lone woman, riding a donkey, approaching 400 armed men bent on slaughtering your household. Think about the courage and boldness it took, not to mention great wisdom for Abigail to do what she did.

**How does she address David?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What do we see her do in verse 24?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How does she refer to herself when talking to David?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What does she ask of David?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Verses 25-27**

**How does Abigail refer to Nabal in verse 25?** \_\_\_\_\_

She says, "for as his name is, so he is". Remember I mentioned earlier that the name Nabal means "fool". This is probably what she is referring to here.

**What does she say is with Nabal?** \_\_\_\_\_

She goes on to say that she did not see the men David had sent.

**What does Abigail say the Lord has done in verse 26?** \_\_\_\_\_

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Abigail proceeds to help David see his situation from God's perspective. She seems more concerned about staying David's hand against unnecessary violence and wrong doing. As God's anointed one, he must continue to live by faith and wait patiently for God's way and timing rather than taking matters into his own hands like Saul did.

She goes on to say - may your enemies and those who seek evil against David be like Nabal.

She then offers the gift she brought to the men who accompanied him.

**Verses 28-31**

**What is Abigail trying to do for David here?** \_\_\_\_\_

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She doesn't want him to do something that will be an obstacle to him and trouble him down the road. That's what will happen if he sheds blood without cause and avenges himself.

Notice her wording in verse 29. **What do you think Abigail might have been trying to accomplish when she used the terminology, "but the lives of your enemies He will sling out as from the hollow of a sling?"**

**Verses 32-35**

**How does David react to all that Abigail has said?** \_\_\_\_\_

David obviously heard the voice of God behind Abigail's words. He in turn praises God for sending her to him.

**What else does David praise?** \_\_\_\_\_

David accepts what she brought for him and his men.

**What does David say to Abigail in verse 35?** \_\_\_\_\_

He has listened and granted her request.

**Verse 36-38**

**What has Nabal been doing during this time?** \_\_\_\_\_

We are told he is very drunk which is making him cheerful.

Abigail decides not to tell him anything until the morning.

**What happens the next morning when Abigail tells him what she has done?**

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The Hebrews used the heart metaphorically to describe the seat of courage. No courage remained in Nabal. When he realized what happened, the shock seemed to have immobilized him. It is thought that he had a heart attack.

**What happens ten days later?** \_\_\_\_\_

The author of the book gives God the credit for terminating Nabal's life prematurely.

**Verses 39-42**

**What is David's response to Nabal's death?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What are we told David does at the end of verse 39?** \_\_\_\_\_

A servant delivers the message to Abigail who again wastes no time in reacting to this news and goes and becomes David's wife.

**Verses 43-44**

**What are told in verse 43?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What are we told that Saul did with David's wife Michal?** \_\_\_\_\_

We talked before about how God's will from creation has been monogamy (Genesis 2:24). The bottom line was that it was wrong for David to marry Abigail since he already had a wife (Michal) and apparently another one (Ahinoam of Jezreel). Maybe he justified this marriage with the fact that Saul had taken Michal from him. Or perhaps he got into polygamy because it was customary in this part of the world at this time for great warriors and monarchs to have many wives and concubines. He could have done it for political reasons. This would allow him to gain support from the Calebites. Marriage to Abigail would mean David could establish influential links within the region. Marriage to Ahinoam would achieve the same thing with another important town. Whatever the reason, polygamy was not the will of God. Genesis 2:24 says that "Man will leave his father and mother (not father and mothers) and be united to his wife (not wives), and they will become one flesh."

**Deuteronomy 17:14-20**

*"When you enter the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and you take possession of it and live in it, and you say, 'I will appoint a king over me like all the nations who are around me,'*  
**15** *you shall in fact appoint a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses. One from among your countrymen you shall appoint as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves, anyone who is not your countryman. 16 In any case, he is not to acquire many horses for himself, nor shall he make the people return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.'*  
**17** *And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, so that his heart does not turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself.*

**18** *“Now it shall come about, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this Law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, so that he will learn to fear the Lord his God, by carefully following all the words of this Law and these statutes, 20 so that his heart will not be haughty toward his countrymen, and that he will not turn away from the commandment to the right or the left, so that he and his sons may live long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.”*

**Why were kings told not to multiply wives (vs. 17)?**

**According to verses 18 and 19, how did God insure that each king would consider His specific commands?**

As I said at the beginning of this study, we were going to see a very simple message in our chapter today: our actions affect our outcomes.

**The Bible says in Galatians 6:7-8:**

*“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.”*

Our actions and attitudes have a huge effect on our lives and the lives of those around us. So, after reading this story, the question becomes are you a Nabal, a David or an Abigail?

Nabal sowed foolishness and reaped destruction

David sowed rashness and almost reaped disaster

Abigail sowed wisdom and reaped God’s blessing

As Christians, we are called to glorify God with both our actions and our attitudes. We do this by following Jesus and living according to God’s word. We see in this passage that David isn’t perfect. If it wasn’t for Abigail, David would have made a grave mistake. But he heard God’s voice through the words of Abigail and listened.