

## Message #61

## I Samuel 25:14-35

G. Campbell Morgan, the British Bible Teacher of the late 1800's to early 1900's, had four sons who all eventually became preachers. At a family reunion a friend asked Dr. Morgan which one of them was the best preacher. G. Campbell Morgan said, "their mother." She had prayed for them and encouraged them to serve God, while Dr. Morgan was plunged into a worldwide ministry.

C. I. Scofield's mother died when he was born. She was a strong Christian, but before she died she prayed that her new baby would become a great preacher of the Gospel. Dr. Scofield never told this story until years later, after he had become a believer and after he had been called to ministry.

In one chapel service at Dallas Seminary, Dr. Walvoord told the story of a mother who prayed that her son would be saved for 60 years. One week before her death she received a long distance phone call that her son had been saved.

In our years of ministry, I have seen many examples of a godly woman, who ultimately was used by God to bring her husband to faith in Jesus Christ. There is no question that a godly woman can influence people to be right with God.

Never is that point more evident than in this passage right here. It is a good thing that Abigail, Nabal's wife, not only had beauty and brains, but she also had spirituality. If she would not have had those things, everything Nabal had would have been destroyed by David.

Now let's recall the context. David is on his way to wipe out Nabal with 400 of his men because Nabal has demeaned David and refused to help him (25:12, 21-22). There is another episode years later in II Samuel 10:4, where David's men were humiliated and David ended up killing 700 charioteers and 40,000 horsemen (II Sam. 10:18). So David is on his way to destroy Nabal.

There is a limit to the patience of God. Nabal can thank God that Abigail found out about this because if she had not, this story would have ended in a completely different way.

What we see clearly from this text is this:

**A HUMBLE, FAITHFUL, BEAUTIFUL, SUBMISSIVE WOMAN OF GOD WILL BE GREATLY USED BY GOD TO MAKE AN INCREDIBLE DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THOSE AROUND HER.**

One of the most valuable things on this earth is a godly woman. Why? Because she will help produce a godly man and influence her family and others.

Abigail thwarts the judgment of David, which is the judgment of God. She is the reason why God spares her entire family and those who work for her.

There are five key narrative facts brought out in this text that tell this amazing story:

**NARRATIVE FACT #1** – Abigail learns the reality of the situation from an eyewitness.  
**25:14-17**

As the text said, Abigail had beauty and she had brains (25:3). One of the young men who was a servant who worked for Nabal, learned what had happened to David’s men and he immediately went to Abigail to tell her because he knew she was smarter than her husband and would do something about it. He also knew that if she didn’t do something, they all would be dead.

This eyewitness is a credible witness because he knew the truth. He is like that guy from CNN who said President Trump has done some great things for black people. It is accurate reporting. He went to Abigail and gave her six messages:

**Message #1** - David sent messengers to Nabal with a formal greeting and he scorned them.  
**25:14b**

The word “greeting” indicates that this was a very formal and official greeting from David and the word “scorn” means that Nabal had a violent and emotional reaction to just the greeting. When the men greeted him, he emotionally exploded into some rage (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 621-622). He yelled and screamed at David’s men just at the greeting. It is a very serious thing to push God’s man around.

**Message #2** - David and his men were always very good to us. **25:15a**

**Message #3** - David and his men never insulted us or demeaned us. **25:15b**

They always treated us with the utmost respect.

**Message #4** - David and his men never took anything from us. **25:15c**

They did not rob us or take one thing.

**Message #5** - David and his men always protected us. **25:16**

They protected them from predatory animals and tribes of people, who would steal and loot and kill. They protected them day and night. When you are in a wilderness area, night time can be a scary time.

**Message #6** - David and his men will destroy us if you don’t come up with a plan. **25:17**

This servant knew David was not a man you wanted against you. He knew that David was a man of his word. He also knew that no one could talk any sense to her husband, so Abigail needed to act and act fast.

There are three things to observe here:

- 1) If you learn that someone is doing something wrong that can destroy things, you need to notify someone who is in a position to do something about it.
- 2) It is not right to protect the one doing the wrong and not protect the one who is right.
- 3) As servants of God, we all have a responsibility to warn of God's coming judgment.

**NARRATIVE FACT #2** – Abigail immediately responds to the reality and threat. **25:18-20**

Abigail was a very quick thinking woman who was married to a nitwit. In fact, as all of this is going on, Nabal is at home getting drunk (25:36). His wife is saving his life and he is at home drinking himself into a stupor.

When Abigail learned of this she did not say, let's pray about this and meditate, she immediately sprang into action. She specifically took three actions:

**Action #1** - She loaded up a large amount of food and wine to take to David. **25:18**

David needed food for 600 men, so she loaded 200 loaves of bread, two jugs of wine, five sheep, five measures of roasted grain, 100 clusters of raisins and 200 fig cakes.

This is a remarkable and sizeable provision, which will never be equaled again, even though others will give David the same kinds of things, which was probably based on this very story - II Samuel 16:1; I Chron. 12:40.

David had a real need for him and his men and Abigail was smart enough to know we can meet this need.

**Action #2** - She sent her young men on ahead of her. **25:19**

What we learn here is that she senses the urgency of the moment. She does not waste any time. She sent the young men on ahead of her because they could travel much faster than she could. She wanted them to meet David and inform him that she was on the way.

**Action #3** - She selected a wise travel route to meet David. **25:20**

What we learn here is that Abigail selected a hidden travel route that was not visible to any who looked at the mountain. It was probably a ravine or canyon that kept her out of sight. She did this for two reasons:

**(Reason #1)** - Her husband and those with him would not see her;

**(Reason #2)** - This was the kind of route David would use.

David would never silhouette himself so people could see him or his men on the side of a mountain. He would stay in the shadows and travel tough out of sight routes.

**NARRATIVE FACT #3** – David has threatened judgment and is on his way to carry it out. **25:21-22**

What David had threatened to do was perfectly consistent with the O.T. law - Deuteronomy 20:10-14. David had protected Nabal and his men and property. He had not taken one thing and when he asked Nabal for a little provision, Nabal returned David's good with an evil response. David intended to destroy all of the young men before morning. Abigail knew the grave danger of this pending judgment and she knew David would do it.

**NARRATIVE FACT #4** – Abigail meets an angry David and asks for grace. **25:23-31**

Abigail saw David coming to pour out judgment on her and her family. David is focused on killing Nabal and all connected to him. When Abigail saw David, she responded with two actions that are a masterpiece of feminine wisdom, charm and grace:

**Action #1** - She bowed down before David. **25:23**

As far as we know, this is the first time in David's life that he has met a woman who truly respects him and wants the best for him. His own wife, Michal, was a spiritual dud and emotional nut. She would never think of doing this.

- 1) She did save David's life but ruined his reputation. 19:11-17
- 2) She married another man while David was gone. 25:44
- 3) She had to be brought back to David by Abner. II Sam. 3:13-16
- 4) She despised David and David did not touch her again until she died. II Sam. 6:16-27

We live in a world in which women think they can push men around and no one sees or knows. Some think I am really something if I am a loud-mouthed pushy woman. Truth is, when this kind of woman gets before God, she will prove to be what she really was, a spiritual loser.

The Apostle Peter described a valuable woman of God in God's estimation in I Peter 3:1-6, and when you compare that text with Abigail, she is a great woman of God.

Had Abigail been some arrogant, hot-tempered woman, loud-mouthed woman, David would have destroyed her. But this response touched his heart.

**Action #2** - She spoke to David. **25:24-31**

This is a high-pressure negotiation and speech. Lives are literally on the line here. This is an amazing discussion she has with David. There are nine statements she makes:

**(Statement #1)** - She asks David to blame her. **25:24**

This is an amazing woman. Most people pass the buck and blame anyone else other than themselves. Abigail blames herself for the fact that her husband is a failure. When you blow it, go to God and admit it and don't make excuses for yourself.

**(Statement #2)** - She admits her husband is a fool. **25:25a**

Nabal's name fit him well and his wife admits it. She does not try to cover up the truth; her husband is a worthless fool. Sometimes a mate or a parent is too afraid to tell the truth about their family member. There are worthless fools who are spiritual duds and Abigail admits it. To tap into God's grace, truth must be admitted.

**(Statement #3)** - She acknowledges that she did not initially know anything about this. **25:25b**

Abigail had no clue as to what had happened between David's men and her husband. She is factually setting forth reality. She did not know about David asking for some food.

**(Statement #4)** - She has an aspiration that all of David's enemies would be as easily defeated as Nabal. **25:26**

Abigail has great aspirations for David and his men. She hoped that David will get everything he desires from any enemy without having to destroy them.

**(Statement #5)** - She asks David to accept her gift. **25:27**

Abigail is not just giving David a political speech to try to smooth this over; she brought real tangible things to help David.

**(Statement #6)** - She asks David to forgive her. **25:28a**

She wisely asks David to forgive her by bringing up the LORD. God forgives us when we ask for forgiveness and she tactfully is asking David for forgiveness in the context of God.

**(Statement #7)** - She predicts that David will always be protected from evil by God. **25:28b**

She knew that David was God's man and she knew that David was fighting powerful battles for God. She also knew that God would protect David and that he would keep evil from him.

**(Statement #8)** - She predicts that God will destroy every enemy of David. **24:29**

She uses a metaphor "bound in the bundle" to refer to the fact that David was extremely valuable and God would protect him and destroy all of his enemies.

In the museum in Cheyenne, Wyoming, are some Indian artifacts. On display are bundles mothers used to protect their babies. They were insulated with blankets and covered with leather. An Indian mother could carry that baby bundle on her back or on a horse and none of the elements could harm it.

That is the imagery Abigail is using here for David. God would protect him and destroy every enemy.

**(Statement #9)** - She predicts that if David spares her, this episode will not bring any painful or troubled memories in the future years. **25:30-31**

It is a wonderful thing to be able to look back and have your conscience say, “I did the right thing.” Abigail appeals to that. Abigail says David, when you are King you will be able to look back on this moment and not be troubled by the fact you destroyed us all.

One of the best things one can do is stop another person from doing something that they will regret in the future.

**NARRATIVE FACT #5** – David demonstrates forgiving grace to Abigail. **25:32-35**

When Abigail got done speaking, David responded in four ways:

**Response #1** - David praised God for sending her to him. **25:32**

David believed that God in His sovereignty had sent Abigail to him at just this moment in time.

**Response #2** - David realized that Abigail is a very wise woman of God. **25:33**

There are no higher accolades that could be given to a woman than this. David acknowledges that Abigail is a very discerning woman of God, who was used by God to prevent him from doing something regrettable. We not only need to praise God for what we have, but we need to praise God for what we didn't do. When we are kept from sinning, that is a sovereign work of God.

**Response #3** - David realized that God has sovereignly controlled the timing of this. **25:34**

God sent Abigail to David at just the right moment of time. Had this not happened, Nabal and all connected to him would have been dead before the next morning.

**Response #4** - David sent Abigail home in peace. **25:35**

David listened to Abigail and granted her request. He forgave her and her foolish husband. Abigail is an amazing woman. She has beauty. She has brains. She has spirituality.

#### **PARTING THOUGHTS:**

- 1. When a godly mate is married to a worthless and foolish mate, the godly mate needs to intercede and talk to God.**
- 2. There are times for praying and waiting on God and there are times for action. Wise people discern this.**
- 3. One who mocks God and faithful people of God will experience the definite judgment of God.**