

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF DAVID

PART I

STUDY NUMBER SIX

1 Samuel 25:1-44

Here are two Psalms for today's study:

Psalm 16:5-8,11

“Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely, I have a delight inheritance. I will praise the Lord, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I have set the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.”

Psalm 18:30

“As for God, his way is blameless. The word of the Lord is tried; he a shield to all who take refuge in him.”

Now we have had the privilege of looking at five studies in the life of David.

We saw David anointed by Samuel at age 16

in study # 1 and then he was on call at the palace to play the harp on regular intervals.

In study # 2 David went to the top of the popularity poles by slaying the giant Goliath from Gath.

In study # 3 we saw some things begin to happen in David's life that were disturbing.

He moved from faith in God in study # 2 to fear of man in study # 3.

It is Saul trying to take David's life because of intense jealousy.

But David has also had deterioration because he is no longer looking for the Lord. He is looking for Saul.

In study # 4 that faith led to fear and that led to failure.

David went down into the land of the Philistines to try to be sustained there.

He lied to Ahimelech then actually feigned insanity before the Philistines in order to escape and he came back to the cave of Adullam.

It was at the cave of Adullam that David confessed, I looked, I lied, and I left.

I looked to the enemy for provision,
I lied to Ahimelech, and
I left your will and your presence.
Out of that cave of Adullam some really
special things happened.

David was not the same last week.
There were two phrases in last week's study
that were just special,
"He inquired of the Lord." Isn't that great!
That is the first time David sought the Lord
before he did something.

And then the other phrase,
"Abiathar bring the ephod so we can determine the Lord's
will."

Now you would think that having such a
rich experience of fellowship with the Lord
and having such good things last week
that it would be like this all the time.
Well, I don't think so!

Today we are going to see something different.
Last week Saul chased David all over the place
and actually the Lord gave Saul into David's hands
because Saul came right into the very cave
that David was in.
David exercised tremendous patience
and self-control by just coming up
and just cutting off the edge of Saul's robe

instead of taking his life.

But he restrained himself from that.

Today David does not exercise self-control too well.

You are going to meet some really neat people. Let's start, Verse 1.

v. 1 Now Samuel died, and all Israel assembled and mourned for him; and they buried him at his home in Ramah. Then David moved down into the Desert of Maon.

What do you think David thought of when he heard of the death of Samuel?

In my mind's eye I think he remembered that three-week retreat at Naioth.

Remember when he fled up to Ramah?

Samuel said "Let's go on up to Naioth.

Let's get away for a little while."

And they spent that time together.

When someone dies and you get word of their death, I think your mind immediately goes back to the time that you last were with them.

And you try to remember some of the last things that were said because they become kind of sacred, and you know that you are not going to see those people anymore.

David thought of Samuel coming and anointing him at his early age and all the encouragement and strengthening he was to him when they had that special time together in Naioth.

Samuel the sensitive servant
with an obedient heart —what a man!

The Bible is really brief concerning Samuel's death. It simply says that he died and Israel gathered to mourn for him.

Samuel had been a great man of God.

He was outstanding.

He was the bridge between the judges and the kings. He was the last of the judges and the first of the office of prophets.

There were other prophets before Samuel but he represented an office that continued on through the Old Testament and went into the New.

“Then David moved down into the Desert of Maon.”

When Samuel died, David went a about 18-20 miles southwest of En Gedi into the wilderness, as far as he could, away from Saul.

v. 2 A certain man in Maon, who had property there at Carmel, was very wealthy. He had a thousand goats and three thousand sheep, which he was shearing in Carmel.

Now you are getting ready to meet a very wealthy guy. You are not going to like him.

Maon and Carmel are only about two miles apart and so David is in the vicinity with his 600 men and that is why this guy comes into the picture. He is very wealthy and statistically some of his holdings are revealed there in verse 2.

v. 3 His name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but her husband, a Calebite, was surly and mean in his dealings.

Isn't it interesting that you can come out of some of the best homes but you can be a creep? Do you remember who Caleb is? Caleb is one of the two guys, along with Joshua, who said that they could go into the land and they were the only two guys who survived that 40-year trek in the wilderness. Caleb at 85 goes in and takes the land that God has given him and drives the giants out of the land.

Caleb was a very wealthy individual. And that wealth was passed on. So actually Nabal did not come to his wealth by the fact that he earned it, he inherited it. And so he is just a spoiled rotten rich kid. Nabal was a man with full pockets and an empty head.

But how in the world does he, such a clod,
end up with such a beautiful woman like Abigail?

Abigail has brains and beauty, both.

What does it mean that Nabal is surly?
That means he is stern, he is sour, he is rude,
he is mean, he is just selfish.

v. 4 While David was in the desert, he heard that Nabal was
shearing sheep.

Now this used to be a big deal, this is reaping
of the harvest. And it is a festive time.

v. 5 So he sent ten young men and said to them, “Go up to
Nabal at Carmel and greet him in my name.

v. 6 Say to him: ‘Long life to you! Good health to you and your
household! And good health to all that is yours!’

David has a three-fold greeting here:

A long life to you

Good health to you and your household

Good health to all that is yours

v. 7 Now I hear that it is sheep-shearing time. When your
shepherds were with us, we did not mistreat them, and
the whole time they were at Carmel nothing of theirs
was missing.

David is saying, man, we took care of you.
Not one thing that belonged to you was ever lost because
we took care of everything for you.

v. 8 Ask your own servants and they will tell you. Therefore
be favorable toward my young men, since we come at a
festive time. Please give your servants and your son
David whatever you can find for them.”

Now what David is saying is I protected you.
I took care of your investments.
My men were involved in protecting what you had.

Do you remember, Keilah from last week?
So David and his men not only liberated them
from the Philistines in Keilah but also did
a favor for them to the north by providing this wall
around them and protected them
from the Philistines.

David has a right to say, look in the realm
of eastern etiquette, you have a responsibility
to take care of us right now, we need some help
and so the least you can do is send something
our way.

Notice how courteous, respectful and modest
David is in this request.

v. 9 When David's men arrived, they gave Nabal this
message in David's name. Then they waited.

Are you ready?

Nabal is getting ready to reveal what an empty head he has.

v. 10 Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days.

Wow what a put down.

"Who is this David?"

He knows full well who he is.

How do we know that?

He spills the beans in the next statement.

"Who is this son of Jesse?"

Saul always used that kind of terminology.

He knows whose family he is from and he knows who he is.

v. 11 Why should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men coming from who knows where?"

In this 11th verse Nabal asks his third question, and it has to do with WHY.

In verse 10 it was WHO, and now in verse 11 it is "WHY, should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to your men?"

v. 12 David's men turned around and went back. When they arrived, they reported every word.

What do you do when you have been wrongly treated?

Boy you come home and you just quote it verbatim. Every word. Get it out.

When David's men arrived empty-handed, they reported every word that Nabal had said.

Now verse 13 is exactly the opposite of the way David conducted himself last week!

Last Week;

David inquired of the Lord. And David turned to Abiathar and said, bring me the ephod.

v. 13 David said to his men, "Put on your swords!" So they put on their swords, and David put on his. About four hundred men went up with David, while two hundred stayed with the supplies.

David and his men, are not really in an actual famine or desperate situation. Notice "two hundred stayed with the supplies." David loses his cool completely and orders his men to pick up their swords.

Nabal was a stinker —overbearing, contemptuous, hard hearted, insulting, and surly, and he was wrong.

It just all comes out and David doesn't look very good today.

He is seeking revenge.

Revenge is sweet isn't it?
Somebody cuts in front of you on the freeway
and you have to let them have it
and you tell them so.

And there are some of the strangest things
that happen in revenge.
We are so eager to get back at the person
for what happened.

We keep those things in our little ledger
and then when we get our chance we go for it.

A little boy was saying his evening prayers
after getting spanked by his mother.
He was heard to say, "Bless Daddy, brother, sister, Rover,
& Fluffy."

And then he jumps into bed.

And he looks at his mother,

"I supposed you noticed—you weren't in it."

v. 14 One of the servants told Nabal's wife Abigail: "David
sent messengers from the desert to give our master his
greetings, but he hurled insults at them.

Listen to the testimony of the servants:

v. 15 Yet these men were very good to us. They did not mistreat us, and the whole time we were out in the fields near them nothing was missing.

v. 16 Night and day they were a wall around us all the time we were herding our sheep near them.

v. 17 Now think it over and see what you can do, because disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him.”

Abigail, there is a tornado on the ground and it is heading our way.

It is absolutely necessary for you to do something and act immediately or we are all going to die. Nobody can talk to that wicked man.

v. 18 Abigail lost no time. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys.

Abigail realizes the very preciousness of every minute, so she lost no time in putting together this large gift for the 600 men.

There are six parts to the gift that is prepared:

1. 200 loaves of bread
2. 2 skins of wine
3. 5 dressed sheep
4. 5 seahs of roasted grain
5. 100 cakes of raisins
6. 200 cakes of pressed figs

v. 19 Then she told her servants, “Go on ahead; I’ll follow you.” But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

Abigail is smart; she puts the gift out there in the front. And she is going to follow that gift and so she sends them on and says, “I’ll follow you.”

v. 20 As she came riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, there were David and his men descending toward her, and she met them.

v. 21 David had just said, “It’s been useless—all my watching over this fellow’s property in the desert so that nothing of his was missing. He has paid me back evil for good.”

v. 22 May God deal with David, be it ever so severely if by morning I leave alive one male of all who belong to him.”

What is wrong with that?

“May God deal with David” but also

May God deal with Nabal is what David

should have said.

He should have left these matters in the Lord's hands to take care of it.

But he is so hot and volatile and angry he is just spewing it out.

Remember what Abigail is getting ready to do is so courageous!

She is facing an army of men who are bent on revenge and war.

v. 23 When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed before David with her face to the ground.

She comes in the right attitude and submission. In these next verses in her speech she is going to use terms of submission 24 times.

Abigail is showing her respect for authority and she comes with a very humble and broken and contrite attitude.

v. 24 She fell at his feet and said: "My lord, let the blame be on me alone. Please let your servant speak to you; hear what your servant has to say."

Abigail's opening remarks are a plea for time and an ear to hear.

v. 25 May my lord pay no attention to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name—his name is Fool, and folly goes with him. But as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my master sent.

What she is saying is please forgive me.
You know, Nabal is crazy, he is a fool.
But I just did not see your servants.
If I had seen them I could have taken care of it.

v 26 Now since the Lord has kept you, my master, from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, as surely as the Lord lives and as you live, may your enemies and all who intend to harm my master be like Nabal.

Here Abigail speaks of the Lord.
She is obviously a GOOD, GRACIOUS and GODLY woman.

“Since the Lord has kept you from bloodshed” and
“avenging yourself with your own hands,”
she then makes a wish,

“May your enemies and all who intend to harm
my master be like Nabal.”
In other words, may they be fools too.

v. 27 And let this gift, which your servant has brought to my master, be given to the men who follow you.

In verse 27 she makes a plea for accepting the gift which she has brought, and in verse 28 she makes a plea for forgiveness.

v. 28 Please forgive your servant's offense, for the Lord will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my master, because he fights the Lord's battles. Let no wrongdoing be found in you as long as you live.

She not only asks for forgiveness, but she acknowledges the fact that the Lord will certainly make a lasting dynasty for David. The reason given is "because he fights the Lord's battles."

Abigail agrees and admits that David was right, and that Nabal was wrong. But she advises David not to waste his attention on a man who is not worth it.

v. 29 Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my master will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the Lord your God. But the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling.

Verse 29 is rich.

"Even though someone is pursuing you to take you life." Who is that? She sees Saul as he really is. She knows what Saul is up to.

“Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life,”
what is going to happen to you David?

She predicts it, “the life of my master will be bound
securely in the bundle of the living by the Lord your
God.

v. 30 When the Lord has done for my master every good thing
he promised concerning him and has appointed him
leader over Israel,

Here Abigail turns in faith, believing what the Lord is
going to do to fulfill the promises
that had been made to David.

v. 31 My Master will not have on his conscience the
staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having
avenged himself. And when the Lord has brought my
master success, remember your servant.”

You can just see David melting under this.
You cannot give a speech like that to a guy
who is bent on revenge and has any
spiritual orientation without really
giving some serious thought.

Abigail in this little address that we have just looked at,
uses the term ‘my lord’ twice,
the term ‘the Lord’ seven times,
the term ‘your servant’ six times,
and the term ‘my master’ nine times.
This is a total of 24 occurrences of respect
to authority that is over her.

v. 32 David said to Abigail, “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me.

Nobody could talk to Nabal but Abigail could talk to David and he listens.

The reason David is a man after God’s own heart is because he listens to the Lord.

As long as we are stubborn and rebellious and think we know what we need to do and how to do it and we do not have to check in with the Lord for signals, you know he cannot communicate with us.

But when the Lord gets a listening ear, he chooses to bless the one with the listening ear.

Here David’s response is one of praise to the Lord, the God of Israel, and he is so grateful for the fact that Abigail has been sent to meet him today.

v. 33 May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands.

Abigail Van Buren decided that she would make her column “Dear Abby” as a result of reading this verse.

She wanted to be one who would likewise exercise good judgment and give wisdom in difficult situations.

His wish now is that Abigail might be blessed because she has done three things for him:

1. She has exercised good judgment in a difficult situation.

2. She has restrained David from bloodshed.

3. She restrained him from avenging himself with his own hands.

v. 34 Otherwise, as surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak.”

Here David makes reference to the seriousness of the situation and what he was fully intending to do when he arrived in Carmel at Nabal's household.

v. 35 Then David accepted from her hand what she had brought him and said, “Go home in peace. I have heard your words and granted your request.”

Having accepted Abigail's gift, he says, “Go home in peace because:

1. I have heard your words.

2. I have granted your request.

v. 36 When Abigail went to Nabal, he was in the house holding a banquet like that of a king. He was in high spirits and very drunk. So she told him nothing until daybreak.

He was partying up with all of the boys.
There are three things that are true of Nabal when she arrives home:

1.He was in the house holding a banquet like that of a king.

2.He was in high spirits.

3.Very drunk.

In light of these circumstances, she told him nothing until daybreak.

v. 37 Then in the morning, when Nabal was sober, his wife told him all these things, and his heart failed him and became like a stone.

“When Nabal was sober,” in other words after he had about six cups of coffee.

He got so frightened and so fearful by what might have happened he had a heart attack.

v. 38 About ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died.

The big party, last night as a swinger,

and ten days later he dies.

v. 39 When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said,
“Praise be to the Lord, who has upheld my cause against
Nabal for treating me with contempt. He has kept me
from doing wrong and has brought Nabal’s wrongdoing
down on his own head.” Then David sent word to Abigail,
asking her to become his wife.

May I share a contrast with you for a moment?
Go back to verse 1 and see what happened
when Samuel died and then stay at verse 39
and see what happens when Nabal died.

What do you want people to do when you die?
Do you want them to mourn a great loss
because you are a great person or do you
want them to rejoice that they don’t have to
mess around with you anymore, you are gone?

Here David is very open and honest.
He is praising the Lord for three things:

1. That the Lord has upheld his cause
against Nabal for treating him with contempt.
2. He has kept David from doing anything wrong.
3. He has brought Nabal’s wrongdoing
down on his own head.

Now David didn't waste any time.
He sent word to Abigail asking her
to become his wife.

v. 40 His servants went to Carmel and said to Abigail, "David
has sent us to you to take you to become his wife."

v. 41 She bowed down with her face to the ground and said,
"Here is your maid-servant, ready to serve and wash the
feet of my master's servants."

Once again notice how many times
she uses the words that make reference
to submission:

She calls herself 'a maid-servant.'

She is ready to serve,

and to wash the feet of the servants of her master.

v. 42 Abigail quickly got on a donkey and, attended by her
five maids, went with David's messengers and became
his wife.

On this occasion, she "quickly"

1. Got on a donkey attended by her five maids
2. She went with David's messengers
3. Became his wife.

v. 43 David had also married Ahinoam of Jezreel, and they
both were his wives.

Ahinoam is now the wife of David but she is also
the daughter of the king and queen of Jezreel

so that is a very prominent and wealthy wedding.

David's holdings have increased tremendously with the inheritances that Abigail has received at the death of Nabal.

And so once again David is expanding his holdings through the process of his marriage.

God does not bless polygamy.

Just ask Jacob when he married Rachel and Leah. You can ask Abraham with his situation with Sarah and Hagar the handmaid.

v. 44 But Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife to Paltiel son of Laish, who was from Gallim.

Saul is still very angry at David and he does one last thing to cut off the whole family from him.

He takes Michal who is back there in Gibeah and marries her to Paltiel son of Laish at Gallim.

The fact that Saul is giving David's wife to someone else is just another insult to David, and another attempt to fight against God.

This is a double reproach.

However isn't the Lord's timing is so perfect to bring Abigail into David's life now that Michal is gone.

What are the lessons that we got out of this study?

LESSON #1: Note the contrast between the death of Samuel in verse 1 and the death of Nabal in verse 39.

LESSON #2: Wealth had made Nabal **STERN, SOUR and STUBBORN**.

LESSON #3: Abigail has **BRAINS, BEAUTY and BELIEF IN GOD**.

What a lady.

LESSON #4: It is possible to pass the big tests in our lives and fail the little ones.

LESSON #5: Never make a decision to act when you are angry.

LESSON #6: Being quick-tempered is a mark of immaturity in the Christian life.

LESSON #7: Bless the Lord for bringing people into our lives to keep us from making mistakes.

Lessons Learned In The Life of David

PART I

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QUESTIONS:

1. Read 1 Samuel 25:1-44 several times and in your own words outline what is happening in the life of David.
2. What sad event took place in verse 1?
3. Describe Nabal and Abigail, according to verses 2 & 3.
4. What is Nabal's response to David's men in verses 9-11?

5. How does David handle the situation, according to verses 12 & 13?
6. How does Abigail set out to appease David's anger?
7. What is Abigail's plea, according to verse 28?
8. How does David respond to Abigail in verses 32-35?
9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?
10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

Lessons Learned In The Life Of David:

STUDY NUMBER SIX - 1 Samuel 25:1-44

LESSON #1: Note the contrast between the death of Samuel in verse 1 and the death of Nabal in verse 39.

LESSON #2: Wealth had made Nabal stern, sour, stubborn, and selfish.

LESSON #3: Abigail has brains, beauty, and belief in God.

LESSON #4: It is possible to pass the big tests in our lives and fail the little ones.

LESSON #5: Never make a decision to act when you are angry.

LESSON #6: Being quick-tempered is a mark of immaturity in the Christian life.

LESSON #7: Bless the Lord for bringing people into our lives to keep us from making mistakes.