

1 Samuel 25

- Today we move to the second chapter of the three-part account of David's spiritual growth
 - In chapter 24, David had opportunity to kill Saul
 - Though he refrained from doing so, David still committed a sin against the Lord's anointed when he cut off the hem of Saul's robe
 - Afterward David felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit, so he repented, confessed to his men and to Saul, and he pledged to protect Saul
 - David even promised to protect Saul's descendants and reputation when he assumed the throne
 - But this was still a failure on David's part, so the Lord wants to teach David about depending upon the Lord rather than taking matters into his own hands
 - Which brings us to chapter 25
 - Because the Lord loves David and has great plans for him, the Lord is going to place David in a set of circumstances to test his heart and develop his trust
 - The Lord will expose David's weakness, his tendency to take matters into his own hand much like Saul
 - And the Lord uses a most unlikely hero to accomplish this work
- So let's move into the second act of our three-act play

1Sam. 25:1 Then Samuel died; and all Israel gathered together and mourned for him, and buried him at his house in Ramah. And David arose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

- Act 2 begins with the death of Samuel
 - Since this book and its sequel are named after Samuel, we naturally ask who was writing the book at this point in the narrative?

- General opinion views Samuel as the author of at least chapters 1-24 of 1Samuel
- But other writer(s) must have completed the rest of the books later
- The Jewish Talmud credits Nathan and Gad with finishing 1 & 2Samuel, in which case Gad would have a book in scripture after all
- The Lord raised up Samuel to bless Israel all the days of his life, as we learned earlier
 - Considering the evil behavior of Eli and Saul, it's fair to say that Samuel was the only bright spot among leadership in Israel
 - Were it not for Samuel the nation would have been without any godly leadership during this time
 - But now this man is gone, so where will godly leadership come from?
- Obviously, David becomes the next man to serve God in this way for the sake of Israel
 - And that's why Samuel's death features prominently in the text at this point
 - It emphasizes that it's time for David to assume the place of godly protector of the people
 - And he still has somethings to learn before he's ready to assume this responsibility
- The timing of Samuel's death raises an interesting possibility
 - Samuel ruled as Israel's only judge after Eli's death
 - So Samuel was Israel's judge for 12 years until Saul became king
 - And then Samuel continued as judge in contrast to Saul's evil rule for the next 18 years
 - This means that Samuel was the righteous judge over Israel for 30 years, a number that indicates God's sovereignty
 - So if God intended Samuel to rule for thirty years and then David would assume the role of righteous leader over Israel, what about Saul?

- Perhaps the Lord is showing us what could have been for Israel?
- Had the nation not demanded a king prematurely, perhaps the lord would have raised up David at the point of Samuel's death
- Instead, the nation brought Saul into power delaying David's arrival and creating great suffering for the people in the meantime
- If so, then this perhaps this serves as another picture of Jesus's first and second coming to Earth
 - Jesus is pictured by David according to scripture
 - And when Jesus came to bring the kingdom to Israel the first time, He was rejected because the people had a different kind of king in mind
 - Just as Israel rejected God's appointed leader, Samuel, in favor of Saul who looked the part
 - This rejection created a delay and suffering for the people
 - Only after a delay will the people of Israel eventually receive their Messiah
- It's unlikely David attended Samuel's burial at Ramah, since Saul would have likely been there too
 - Instead, David retreats into the desert of the Sinai, called Paran
 - While he's there, we must expect he was depressed and worried
 - The one man who could check Saul's power was now gone
 - Yet David is still on the run and living under difficult circumstances
 - But then things begin to look up just a little

1Sam. 25:2 Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel; and the man was very rich, and he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And it came about while he was shearing his sheep in Carmel

1Sam. 25:3 (now the man's name was Nabal, and his wife's name was Abigail. And the woman was intelligent and beautiful in appearance, but the man was harsh and evil in his dealings, and he was a Calebite),

1Sam. 25:4 that David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep.

- The writer introduces us to a man living in Maon named Nabal who possessed a large sheep herding business in nearby Carmel (not the same the Carmel of 1 Kings 18)
 - Maon and Carmel only about 15 miles due west of Engedi, which has been David's homebase of late
 - Nabal's name means fool, and it's a prophetic reflection of his character
 - Scripture defines a "fool" as someone who does not give regard to God
 - Despite his foolishness, Nabal is very rich, possessing huge flocks of sheep and goats
 - The reason for his success is explained by his heritage: he is a Calebite
 - Caleb along with Joshua were the faithful members of the scouting party who first entered the Promised Land
 - As a result, Caleb was awarded a large track of land near Hebron
 - And his decedents were blessed with the riches of the land
- The writer reports Nabal has 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats
 - Beside indicating Nabal's wealth, the number of his sheep is important for another reason
 - If you look back to the beginning of this three-chapter story, you find Saul sending three thousand men to capture David
 - At that time David failed the Lord's test of obedience when he took matters into his own hands by cutting Saul's robe
 - So we said God was going to make David take this test again
 - Then in chapter 26, David gets a second opportunity to pass the Lord's test
 - In that third part of this story, Saul is seeking David's life again
 - And once again, Saul will come with three thousand men
 - And between those two chapters we have this story of Nabal, a man who possesses 3,000 sheep

- So in each chapter we have the number three thousand featured prominently
- The author wants us to understand that the events of this chapter are connected with the other two
- Nabal is a proxy for Saul
- In fact, we will see numerous narrative analogies between this story and the story of Saul and David
- These connections help us see recognize how the Lord uses this experience to teach David
- Nabal's wife, Abigail, is a striking contrast to her husband
 - Abigail is a beautiful and intelligent while her husband was apparently not
 - She was also kind and generous and most important, godly
 - While Nabal is harsh, ungodly, foolish and without a concern for the will or presence of God
 - Abigail's name is even a contrast of Nabal, since it means my father rejoicing
 - So Nabal is Saul's counterpart in this story, and his wife is a counterpart to David
 - And the therefore, she serves as an example of how a godly servant of God responds to an ungodly superior
 - David failed this challenge in chapter 24
 - So it's the lesson David needs to pass in chapter 26
- So after Samuel's death, David hears that Nabal is shearing his sheep
 - This event is newsworthy because of Nabal's wealth
 - The person who owns 4,000 grazing animals was the Bill Gates of his day
 - A man with that many animals needed a tremendous range of land for grazing so many animals in such an arid climate

- Since Carmel was only 15 mile west of Engedi, we know that Nabal's shepherds would have crossed paths with David and his men from time to time
 - Therefore David would have been aware of Nabal's wealth
 - So when David hears that it's shearing season, he takes note
 - He believes this is his opportunity to gain some much-needed relief for he and his men
- Shearing time was the point in the year when sheep were brought into pens and the wool was shaved off
 - The shearing took place over a number of days or weeks depending on the size of the flock
 - And sheep shearing was a time of celebration because this was the moment the master cashed in his crop
- So after each day of shearing, the laborers would share in the master's reward with a feast each evening
 - There was plenty of food and drink available for everyone
 - And David believes he and his men have a right to share in this celebration
- So he sends messengers to Nabal to explain why he believes he has earned the right to join the feast celebration

1Sam. 25:5 So David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, visit Nabal and greet him in my name;

1Sam. 25:6 and thus you shall say, 'Have a long life, peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have.

1Sam. 25:7 'Now I have heard that you have shearers; now your shepherds have been with us and we have not insulted them, nor have they missed anything all the days they were in Carmel.

1Sam. 25:8 'Ask your young men and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we have come on a festive day. Please give whatever you find at hand to your servants and to your son David.'"

- First, David tells his men to greet Nabal by name
 - This was a sign of respect and recognition

- David wanted to communicate to Nabal that they were not strangers but rather associated together
- Also notice in v.8 that David refers to himself as Nabal's "son"
- This indicated that David placed himself in a position of service or submission to Nabal
- Here again is another comparison to Saul, who called David "my son"
- Secondly, David tells his men to declare a blessing upon Nabal and his house and all that Nabal possessed
 - This statement made clear David was not Nabal's enemy or a competitor in the land
 - On the contrary, David's desire was to see Nabal strengthened and prosperous
- Then having heard of the shearing David reminds Nabal of what his men did to support Nabal's operation
 - As Nabal's shepherds led their flocks in the wilderness, David's men protected them
 - David's men showed Nabal's shepherds respect and allowed them to graze
 - More than that, David says Nabal's shepherds lost not a single sheep during this time
 - This is a remarkable thing
 - David isn't saying that they never stole any of Nabal's sheep, because that wouldn't be a basis for reward
 - In fact, that would have been a threat of extortion (i.e., "pay me or something might happen to your sheep")
 - Rather, David is saying that his men prevented a loss
 - Not a single sheep was taken by wild animals or thieves
 - Even the occasional sheep that wandered off was returned safe
 - Under normal circumstances a flock of 3,000 sheep would have experienced at least a few losses over the year

- But David's men had acted as a personal protection army for Nabal's sheep
- Therefore, David come to claim his reward for that effort
 - He's not asking for charity
 - He's expecting to be paid for his services in protecting Nabal's flock
 - And therefore, Nabal's is obligated by honor to do the right thing in response to David's request
 - David played a part in ensuring the success of Nabal's business and that hard work is worthy of compensation
- David is even making a specific demand beyond the opportunity to participate in the evening feasts that all workers enjoyed
 - This would have been a great source of joy and encouragement to David's men, who probably haven't enjoyed a real meal in some time
 - But when Nabal's receives this reasonable request, he behaves in a most unreasonable way

1Sam. 25:9 When David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in David's name; then they waited.

1Sam. 25:10 But Nabal answered David's servants and said, "Who is David? And who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who are each breaking away from his master.

1Sam. 25:11 "Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men whose origin I do not know?"

- David's men approach Nabal expecting a proper answer
 - But Nabal surprised them with his dishonorable answer
 - First, he rebuffs David's attempt to recognize an existing relationship
 - While David has his men call Nabal by name, Nabal asks who is David?
 - In other words, he is saying on what basis do I have to trust David?

- Furthermore, he asks who is the son of Jesse?
 - Nabal goes a step farther and questions David's right to have even the throne of Israel
 - By this point everyone in Israel knew that Samuel had anointed the son of Jesse as the next king of Israel
 - Yet Nabal has the gall to suggest that David's claim to the throne was not legitimate
 - This too is similar to the way Saul refused to acknowledge that David had a legitimate claim to the throne of Israel
- And then Nabal's proposed his own reason for why Saul was pursuing David
 - Nabal says many servants are breaking away from their masters
 - Nabal suggests David had selfish reasons to challenge Saul's rule and therefore David was to blame for his circumstances
- Finally, Nabal asks why he should take his wealth and hand it out to men he doesn't know?
 - Nabal is denying David's men have earned compensation
 - He's indicating they are seeking charity

1Sam. 25:12 So David's young men retraced their way and went back; and they came and told him according to all these words.

1Sam. 25:13 David said to his men, "Each of you gird on his sword." So each man girded on his sword. And David also girded on his sword, and about four hundred men went up behind David while two hundred stayed with the baggage.

- David responds to Nabal's rebuff by preparing to defend his honor and the honor of his men by killing Nabal and all his household
 - On the one hand, David's response is not surprising given the expectations of the day
 - When a man was dishonored in this way, he would typically be expected to avenge his honor
 - Death was the usual penalty and the culture would have likely let the judgment stand

- On the other hand, God has made it clear to David not to resist evil in his own power
 - Instead, David is supposed to depend on the Lord for vengeance
 - This was the mistake he made in assaulting Saul in the cave
 - Now here again David is challenged by a foolish man, and once again he's preparing to take matters into his own hands
- So David travels the 15 miles or so back to Nabal that very night to kill Nabal and his household
 - We can see David operating in his pride and anger
 - He doesn't pause longer enough to even seek the Lord's counsel
 - If he had, then he would have received different direction
 - David wasn't the only one to be shocked by Nabal's answer
 - Nabal's shepherds learned of Nabal's response, so now they are seriously concerned

[1Sam. 25:14](#) But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "Behold, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master, and he scorned them.

[1Sam. 25:15](#) "Yet the men were very good to us, and we were not insulted, nor did we miss anything as long as we went about with them, while we were in the fields.

[1Sam. 25:16](#) "They were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the time we were with them tending the sheep.

[1Sam. 25:17](#) "Now therefore, know and consider what you should do, for evil is plotted against our master and against all his household; and he is such a worthless man that no one can speak to him."

- Nabal's shepherds rush to Abigail and inform her that Nabal has scorned David
 - They confirm for us they had good reason to expect an attack from David's men
 - The servants also seemed to understand that Abigail was a person they could reason with under these circumstances
 - They explain to her that David's men had done the right thing by Nabal

- Notice in v.16 they report that David's men even took turns guarding the flock at night when it was most vulnerable
- Essentially, David's men were working as shepherds for Nabal for free, so they deserved pay
- But notice also in v.17 they say "evil" is preparing an attack
 - They expect David's anticipated revenge
 - They called David's actions good in one case but evil in another
 - David was good to help the shepherds but he is about to commit evil if he prosecutes this attack
 - Seven times in this chapter the words good and evil are paired, indicating that this contrast is a focus of the chapter
- So after hearing the report, Abigail springs into action to save her husband

1Sam. 25:18 Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred loaves of bread and two jugs of wine and five sheep already prepared and five measures of roasted grain and a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys.

1Sam. 25:19 She said to her young men, "Go on before me; behold, I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

1Sam. 25:20 It came about as she was riding on her donkey and coming down by the hidden part of the mountain, that behold, David and his men were coming down toward her; so she met them.

1Sam. 25:21 Now David had said, "Surely in vain I have guarded all that this man has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him; and he has returned me evil for good.

1Sam. 25:22 "May God do so to the enemies of David, and more also, if by morning I leave as much as one male of any who belong to him."

- She grabs two hundred loaves of bread and jugs of wine and large quantities of grain, raisons, and cakes of figs
 - These materials were available because they had likely been prepared for the nightly shearing feasts
 - So Abigail is simply bringing David's men exactly what they requested
 - Though she isn't bringing enough for all of David's men

- Instead she's bringing the most she could carry on her donkey
- To get a sense of this woman's bravery, imagine a solitary woman riding a donkey laden with valuable goods headed into a desert alone to face an approaching army of bloodthirsty men
 - She was placing herself entirely at David's mercy
 - There was at least an equal chance she might have been killed or worse
- Why doesn't she send a servant in her place?
 - Because in doing so she would likely have condemned that servant to death one way or another
 - If David didn't kill the servant, Nabal would certainly have disciplined any servant who gave away his possessions without permission
 - But the wife had authority in the house to act in this way
 - Therefore, she was the only one who could survive the consequences
- Before she meets David, the writer shows us what was in David's heart according to David's own words
 - He is fuming at Nabal
 - David declares that he has been wronged by Nabal, which is true
 - David took good care of Nabal, and Nabal returned the favor by dishonoring David
 - Then David declares that should he fail to kill every male in Nabal's household, then may the Lord complete the task for him
 - In other words, David suggests he will be doing the Lord's work as he vanquishes Nabal's household
 - David's words aren't prophetic, obviously
 - David is acting in the flesh but assuming God was on his side
 - In fact, he sounds a little like Saul, thinking that what he wanted was automatically what God wanted

- This entire situation is very similar to one David has been facing for some time
 - David worked hard in support of Saul
 - He defended Saul's army and respected Saul's authority
 - He simply expected Saul to show David the proper respect in return
 - Instead, Saul was evil and unjust against David
 - Nevertheless, the Lord didn't permit David to raise his hand against the anointed king of Israel
- Clearly, David didn't learn the lesson God was trying to teach him in chapter 24
 - David was supposed to rely on the Lord to protect and defend him
 - Only the Spirit's conviction led David away from making an even worse mistake
 - Now he's about to repeat that mistake
- So this conflict with Nabal becomes an opportunity for the Lord to teach David the correct way he should respond to those who oppose him
 - And the Lord chose an unlikely and humbling hero to make His point

[1Sam. 25:23](#) When Abigail saw David, she hurried and dismounted from her donkey, and fell on her face before David and bowed herself to the ground.

[1Sam. 25:24](#) She fell at his feet and said, "On me alone, my lord, be the blame. And please let your maidservant speak to you, and listen to the words of your maidservant.

[1Sam. 25:25](#) "Please do not let my lord pay attention to this worthless man, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name and folly is with him; but I your maidservant did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent.

[1Sam. 25:26](#) "Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, since the Lord has restrained you from shedding blood, and from avenging yourself by your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek evil against my lord, be as Nabal.

[1Sam. 25:27](#) "Now let this gift which your maidservant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who accompany my lord.

[1Sam. 25:28](#) "Please forgive the transgression of your maidservant; for the Lord will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the Lord, and evil will not be found in you all your days.

[1Sam. 25:29](#) "Should anyone rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, then the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God; but the lives of your enemies He will sling out as from the hollow of a sling.

[1Sam. 25:30](#) "And when the Lord does for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and appoints you ruler over Israel,

[1Sam. 25:31](#) this will not cause grief or a troubled heart to my lord, both by having shed blood without cause and by my lord having avenged himself. When the Lord deals well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."

- As Abigail approaches David, she bows and immediately places all the blame on herself
 - She isn't suggesting that she is responsible for what happened
 - David knows she had nothing to do with the situation
 - Rather, she's asking that David transfer her husband's blame upon her
 - She says had she known David's men had come, she would have stepped in earlier to ensure they received what they deserved
 - So now she working to make things right after her husband ruined the situation
 - Abigail forms a distant picture of Christ by her behavior
 - She is riding a donkey as Jesus did when he entered Jerusalem
 - She is giving herself up freely to her enemies as Jesus did with the Romans
 - She was innocent but nevertheless she assumes the blame for a guilty party
 - She offers pay for the sins of the foolish, those who do not acknowledge God
- Abigail asks David to pay no attention to her husband, whom she calls worthless and worthy of his name
 - Obviously, Abigail knows her husband well

- She testifies to David that his behavior in this matter is characteristic of his nature overall
- As his name indicates, he is a fool, so therefore he acts like one
- She's saying he couldn't help himself
- Therefore, she asks David to overlook her husband's mistake
- Perhaps at this point, we begin to wonder if Abigail has crossed the line in her behavior as Nabal's wife?
 - Can a godly wife say such things about her husband and still honor him?
 - Shouldn't she be more supportive of her husband?
 - Or at the very least, shouldn't she remain silent and refrain from insulting him publicly?
 - And what about her decision to bring the food to David...isn't that disobeying her husband's wishes?
- If we focus only on these details, we will draw the wrong conclusion about Abigail's actions and judge her unfairly
 - Consider the entire set of circumstances and take note of Abigail's desires concerning her husband
 - In Genesis 2 the Bible says a wife is to be a helper to her husband because she is one flesh with him
 - Under these circumstances preserving her husband's honor isn't the highest priority
 - Ladies, imagine a situation where a robber breaks into your home at night, ties up your husband and points a gun at his head
 - The robber demands your husband give up the keys to his new sports car but your husband stubbornly refuses
 - Now you know where he keeps his keys
 - And you know your foolish husband is about to die if you don't act quickly to save him.
 - So what do you do? How do you honor him?

- Some wives might reply, “I would keep quiet, collect his life insurance and buy another sports car...”
- Obviously, the most honoring thing to do under those circumstances is to act in your husband’s best interests by giving up the keys to save his life
- You haven’t directly disobeyed his instructions
- You’re just acting to compensate for his foolishness, which is in keeping with your role as helper
- This is what Abigail is doing
 - Abigail’s first concern must be saving Nabal’s life from David and his men
 - And if Abigail hadn’t taken this extreme course of action, Nabal’s own foolishness would have resulted in his destruction
 - And she might have died as well
- Furthermore, Abigail isn’t violating any specific order from her husband
 - Her husband never forbid Abigail from acting
 - In fact, she didn’t even talk to Nabal before going on this mission
 - Obviously, she probably suspected he would stop her if he knew
 - But here again, she was acting shrewdly to compensate for his foolishness
- As she appeals to David’s mercy, Abigail wisely invokes David’s relationship to the Lord
 - In fact, throughout this important speech Abigail frequently refers to David’s relationship with the Lord
 - She acknowledges the Lord’s anointing of David as the future king
 - She affirms that the Lord will always defend David
 - Then she wisely asks David to consider how he will feel once he becomes king should he go through with his plan?
 - How will he feel when he remembers that he wrongly took the lives of an entire household because of one man’s foolishness?

- Especially since David already knows the Lord will defend David from all enemies without requiring David sin in this way
- Won't David be ashamed?
- Won't he view his actions were unnecessary?
- It's easy to see the Lord speaking through Abigail directly to David's heart
 - She skillfully speaks to David's conscience by pointing him back to his relationship with the Lord
 - This was the lesson the Lord wanted David to understand
 - In chapter 24, David took a step of revenge in defense of himself against a foolish man, Saul
 - Here he was ready to do the same again
 - So the Lord sends a woman to teach David what he already knew
 - And to stop David from sinning against the Lord
- Finally, Abigail knew her audience well, because in v.29 she used a metaphor especially appealing to shepherds
 - Shepherds carried two bundles while tending the sheep
 - One bundle held the food that would sustain the shepherd's life while out with the sheep
 - The second bundle were stones used with a sling to fend off thieves and wild animals
 - She reminds David that his life assured because he is bound with the Lord
 - While David's enemies are like stones to be flung away by a sling
- David hears Abigail and his heart is touched by her appeal

[1Sam. 25:32](#) Then David said to Abigail, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me,

[1Sam. 25:33](#) and blessed be your discernment, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodshed and from avenging myself by my own hand.

[1Sam. 25:34](#) “Nevertheless, as the Lord God of Israel lives, who has restrained me from harming you, unless you had come quickly to meet me, surely there would not have been left to Nabal until the morning light as much as one male.”

[1Sam. 25:35](#) So David received from her hand what she had brought him and said to her, “Go up to your house in peace. See, I have listened to you and granted your request.”

- First, David recognizes that Abigail was sent by the Lord for his sake
 - This is the first step in recognizing the discipline of the Lord in our own lives
 - When the Lord disciplines his children, the Bible says He does so for our good
 - And that discipline usually comes through other people
 - Most often through our spouse
 - But other times through our children or friends or even a stranger like Abigail
 - Obviously, not every critique we receive is from the Lord or even appropriate
 - But when someone offers criticism or makes a suggestion or maybe they merely model righteousness before us and we experience conviction, we’ll know it’s the Lord
 - What happens next will determine whether we’ll learn the lesson
 - Do we react defensively, do we make excuses, do we run away?
 - Then we missed the chance to recognize the Lord sent us a messenger to correct our heart
 - For his part, David immediately knew this woman was speaking with the heart of God
 - So David received her as from the Lord
- Next David blessed Abigail for her discernment and her bravery for stepping into a dangerous situation to stop David from sinning

- This is the second step in receiving the discipline of the Lord
 - Bless the person who acted obediently to deliver the Lord's message
 - Abigail took a tremendous step of faith to server the Lord's purpose in David's life
 - She was in this position because of David's prospective sin
 - So when David recognized the Lord working through her to his own benefit, he blessed her in return
- This is the opposite of shooting the messenger
 - Next time someone tries to rescue you from yourself, recognize they are working on your behalf, so return the blessing
 - They might not even know the Lord was working through them
 - So encourage their heart by acknowledging how they served God's purpose in your life
 - David tells Abigail that had she not obeyed the Lord, surely terrible things would have happened
 - And David would have been far worse off
- So David agreed to her request and determined not to attack Nabal
 - But what of David's honor?
 - Well, because David was willing to step aside and let the Lord fight his battles, the Lord showed Himself faithful

1Sam. 25:36 Then Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; so she did not tell him anything at all until the morning light.

1Sam. 25:37 But in the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him so that he became as a stone.

1Sam. 25:38 About ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died.

- Abigail returns and fittingly, she finds her husband, the fool, drunk that night
 - He was completely unaware of what was coming his way

- He and his men were sitting ducks that evening, but the faithful wife saved his life
- Nabal reminds us again of Saul who lived by the flesh and operated as if he was invincible over his empire
- In the morning, at the first opportunity, Abigail reports what happened
 - The writer makes a pun in v.37 using Nabal's name
 - The Hebrew word nebel means wine sack
 - So the writer says Nabal (the wine sack) ran out of wine...
 - An empty wine sack is worthless, and so was Nabal when he was sober
- Notice Abigail didn't deceive Nabal at any point
 - She told him the whole story at the first opportunity, once the emergency was over
 - And at that point the heart of Nabal went dead
 - It means he lost all courage when he realized how close he came to death
 - But it also pictures Saul becoming hardhearted as sin took hold in his life
- Finally, the Lord brings the vengeance David deserves because David refrained from acting on his own behalf
 - Notice Nabal's death came about ten days later
 - About means not exactly ten, as in something between nine and ten
 - The number nine means judgment in scripture
 - While the number ten means testimony
 - So Nabal's death was a judgment of God in defense of David's honor
 - And the entire episode was a testimony
 - It was a testimony of the wickedness of Nabal, the faithfulness of Abigail and the repentance of David