

DO WE RESPOND OR REACT?

I SAMUEL 25:1-44 FEBRUARY 3, 2019

DEVELOPING A GOD LISTENING LIFE

- 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. 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?"
- ¹² David's men turned around and went back. When they arrived, they reported every word. ¹³ David said to his men, "Each of you strap on your sword!" So they did, and David strapped his on as well. About four hundred men went up with David, while two hundred stayed with the supplies.
- ¹⁴ One of the servants told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "David sent messengers from the wilderness to give our master his greetings, but he hurled insults at them. 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. ¹⁶ Night and day they were a wall around us the whole time we were herding our sheep near them. 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."
- ¹⁸ Abigail acted quickly. 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. ¹⁹ Then she told her servants, "Go on ahead; I'll follow you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.
- ²⁰ As she came riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, there were David and his men descending toward her, and she met them. ²¹ David had just said, "It's been useless—all my watching over this fellow's property in the wilderness so that nothing of his was missing. He has paid me back evil for good. 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!"
- ²³ When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. ²⁴ She fell at his feet and said: "Pardon your servant, my lord, and let me speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. ²⁵ Please pay no attention, my lord, to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name—his name means Fool, and folly goes with him. And as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my lord sent. ²⁶ And now, my lord, as surely as the LORD your God lives and as you live, since the LORD has kept you from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, may your enemies and all who are intent on harming my lord be like Nabal. ²⁷ And let this gift, which your servant has brought to my lord, be given to the men who follow you.
- ²⁸ "Please forgive your servant's presumption. The LORD your God will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my lord, because you fight the LORD's battles, and no wrongdoing will be found in you as long as you live. ²⁹ Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my lord 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. ³⁰ When the LORD has fulfilled for my lord every good thing he promised concerning him and has appointed him ruler over Israel, ³¹ my lord will not have on his conscience the staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having avenged himself. And when the LORD your God has brought my lord success, remember your servant." ¹

¹ The New International Version. (2011): Zondervan.

1. Protection Received

1 Samuel 25:1-9

Therefore be favorable toward my men, since we come at a festive time.

Please give your servants and your son David whatever you can find for them. 1 Samuel 25:8

A. David's changing reality

1 Samuel 25:1-3

A new era without the godly influence of Samuel

Abigail = 'my Father is Joy' and she is Intelligent (literally **Good** – טוב (tób)) Insight) and Beautiful

Nabal = 'Fool' and he is Surly and Mean (literally **Evil** – רע (rã)) (Recall Genesis 1-3)

Nabal may be out to prove that his name is wrong

The Irony of being **Calebite**: Nabal is from David's tribe of Judah. David's success would spill over to the tribe. Caleb was one of the 12 spies, only 1 of 2 who brought back a favorable report to conquer the land. (Numbers 13–14). Caleb was given the land around Hebron (later to become David's first seat as king). Caleb is a person's name and also the generic name for 'dog' perhaps suggesting the ideas of loyalty and faithfulness.

B. David's request for generous treatment

1 Samuel 25:4-9

David was looking for some good will

Vs. 8 **Be Favorable** - ין (hēn) A Hebrew noun used less commonly in the OT (69 times and 6 in 1 Samuel) It has a range of meaning from **favor**, to **grace** both of which are motivated by compassion. Translated: NIV, ESV, NASB, NKJV, KJV, Favor(able); NLT, Kind.

2. Protection Rejected

1 Samuel 25:10-19

David sent messengers from the wilderness to give our master his greetings, but he hurled insults at them. 1 Samuel 25:14

A. What got David so worked up?

1 Samuel 25:10, 11

Nabal had the right to refuse the request

Who is David? Identity challenge

Who is Jesse's son? Family challenge

Many Slaves breaking away from their masters

Nabal was wrong to refuse to see what everyone else saw

B. Lock and Load

1 Samuel 25:12, 13

David reacted poorly with outrage

C. Danger looms

1 Samuel 25:14-17

The servants have seen truthfully

D. Abigail acts

1 Samuel 25:18, 19

She sends a gift and begs for forgiveness

Abigail needs to repair her husband's foolishness

3. Protection Recognized

1 Samuel 25:20-31

Please forgive your servant's presumption. The LORD your God will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my lord, because you fight the LORD's battles, and no wrongdoing will be found in you as long as you live. 1 Samuel 25:28

A. David's outrage – Identity and Actions 1 Samuel 25:20-22

David's identity as king is no secret
Acting as a 'wall' is acting like a king
Threatening to kill a family is more like Saul

There is an interesting Hebrew idiom occurring 6 times in the OT. Only the King James translates into English for us. The idiom certainly means male persons. The idea in 1 Samuel is that David equates this idiom to his actions in verse 16 where his protection has been a 'wall' that Nabal has since seriously disrespected. 1 Samuel 25:22 (34)

KJV : *So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.*

NIV: *May God deal with David, be it ever so severely, if by morning I leave alive one male of all who belong to him!"*

NLT: *May God deal with me severely if even one man of his household is still alive tomorrow morning!"*

B. Please forgive your servant's presumption 1 Samuel 25:23-31

Verse 24 Identity of David clarified: My Lord, Your servant.
Verse 25 She throws Nabal 'under the chariot' - unusual
Verse 26 Clever appeal to the LORD on David's behalf
Verse 28 Please Forgive, a kindly sort of action
She affirms God's destiny for David's dynasty

4. Protection Restored

1 Samuel 25:32-44

Praise be to the LORD, who has upheld my cause against Nabal for treating me with contempt. He has kept his servant from doing wrong and has brought Nabal's wrongdoing down on his own head. 1 Samuel 25:39

A. David now extends protection again 1 Samuel 25:32-35

David sees God's hand in restraining him

B. The LORD responds 1 Samuel 25:36-39a

David restrained himself, The LORD stuck Nabal dead, later

C. David's questionable Kingly Actions 1 Samuel 25:39b-44

David **solidifies political alliances**
Sadly acts like other kings Deuteronomy 17:14-20

There is a difference between reacting and responding

David's initial reaction is wrong. Abigail responded quickly, wisely, with insight and maturity, tuned to God's view of things. David hears God through Abigail and showed he is listening by a changed direction.

God will speak to us through the godly counsel of others. Identify the people you hear God speaking through. Be sure to listen to God

Study Questions

for your personal study or study with family, a friend, mentor or Life Group

Beginning:

1. What insight, idea, question or principle from Sunday's message did you find most helpful, eye opening or troubling?
2. What is your most typical reaction when someone is mean or angry with you?

Studying:

3. In verses 1-8, how has David been behaving in a time and place that seems so hostile?
4. Do you think David's request for 'whatever' (verse 8) is extortion, fee for service or a chance to receive some generosity? Why?
5. What got David so angry from Nabal's reply in verses 10 and 11? Who is in David's camp that he is taking advice from?
6. In verse 13 what lesson should we be drawing from David's behaviour?
7. How do we repair our foolish mistakes? Check Abigail's actions. Look over the text and list her character traits. Who is the heroic figure in this chapter?
8. In verses 23-31 list the requests made by Abigail. List the actions/promises of the LORD she implies. Compare her identification of David with that of Nabal in verses 10, 11. How does she know this and how does Nabal not?
9. In verses 38, 39, who kills Nabal? How is this important? Who is credited for restraining David's murderous rage?

Applying:

10. Review David's initial reaction to Nabal and then his reaction to Abigail. What does this tell us about how we could process anger (even in the absence of a smart and pretty girl with food)?
11. Think of some better ways to respond the next time you are mistreated, defamed or slandered. Write out some of the responses and have someone else check them to ensure they are not cheeky, proud, insincere or spiteful.

Praying:

12. Who or what can you remember to pray for from today's service?
13. Pray for a situation or person causing you the most anger right now. Where can you find strength and counsel from a godly friend?

Growing and Mentoring: Moving our discussions with a friend to a deeper level regarding anger: What has made you very angry recently? How did you respond or react? Where could you find better emotional balance? How could you change your initial thinking? Where have you taken time to seek or listen to God? Where did God speak through someone else? What did your anger reveal about your character? Sometimes we are more 'honest' than we realize when we are angry, what truth about yourself did you discover? Where does this discovery challenge you regarding critical areas of growth?