

Abigail, Wife Of King David

'David lived with Achish, king of Gath. David, his servants and every man with his household. David with his two wives; Ahinoam the Jezreelitess and Abigail the Carmelitess, widow of Nabal' (1 Samuel 27:3).

Abigail seemed to have been a very wise woman. She had lived for years with a violent, alcoholic, foolish husband named Nabal. After Nabal's death, David proposed to Abigail. She was David's second wife. His first wife was Michal, daughter of King Saul. 'The sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi and Malchishua. His two daughters were Merab, and the name of the younger, Michal (1 Samuel 14:49). 'Saul gave David, Michal his daughter for his wife' (1 Samuel 18:27). Michal never had any children. 'Michal the daughter of Saul had no child to the day of her death' (2 Samuel 6:23). Abigail had two sons to David, Chileab and Daniel. 'To David were sons born in Hebron ... Chileab, born of Abigail the Carmelite, widow of Nabal' (2 Samuel 3:2 & 3) ... Daniel born of Abigail the Carmelitess' (1 Chronicles 3:1).

The wisdom of Abigail is almost breathtaking. She saved the whole of Israel by her quick thinking. 'There was a very wealthy man named Nabal in Maon whose possessions were in Carmel. He had three thousand sheep, a thousand goats and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. The name of the man was Nabal and his wife Abigail. Abigail was a woman of wisdom and was very beautiful, but Nabal of the house of Caleb, was churlish and evil in all his works. King David heard Nabal was shearing his sheep. David sent ten young men, instructing them, "Go up to Carmel and go to Nabal. Greet him in my name. Tell him, 'Peace be to you, peace be to your house and peace be to all you have. I have heard you have shearers. Your shepherds have been with us and we did them no harm, neither was there anything taken from them all the while they were in Carmel. Ask your young men and they will tell you. Therefore let the young men find favour in your eyes for we come in a good day. Please give whatever comes to your hand, to your servants and to your son David."

When David's young servants came, they spoke to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David. Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is David and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants who break away from their masters these days. Should I then take my bread, my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers and give it to men who I do not know where they come from?"

David's young servants went back and told David all these words. David said to his men, "Gird on every man his sword."

Every man girded on his sword. David also girded on his sword and about four hundred men went up after David, plus two hundred stayed by the baggage. One of Nabal's young servants told Abigail, "Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master and he railed at them. The men were very good to us and we were not hurt, neither did we miss anything as long as we went with them when we were in the fields. They were a wall to us both by night and by day all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore, know and consider what you will do for evil is determined against our master and against all his house. He is such a worthless fellow one cannot speak to him."

Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves of bread, two bottles of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five measures of parched grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, two hundred cakes of figs and laid them on donkeys. Abigail said to her young servants, "Go on before me. Behold, I will come after you." She did not tell her husband Nabal. As Abigail rode her donkey and came down by the covert of the mountain, behold, David and his servants came down toward her and she met them. When Abigail saw David she hurried and alighted from her donkey, fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground. She fell at his feet and said, "On me, my lord, on me be the iniquity and please let your handmaid speak in your ears. Hear the words of your handmaid. Please do not let my lord regard this worthless fellow Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is within him, but I your handmaid did not see the young men of my lord, whom you did send. Now therefore my lord, as the Lord God lives and as your soul lives, seeing the Lord God has withheld you from blood guiltiness and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now therefore let your enemies and those who seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal. Now this gift which your servant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord. Please forgive the trespass of your handmaid for the Lord God will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord fights the battles of God and evil will not be found in you all your days. Though men be risen up to pursue you, and to seek your soul, yet the soul of my lord will be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord your God and the souls of your enemies, them shall He sling out as from the hollow of a sling. It will come to pass, when the Lord God will have done to my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and will have appointed you prince over Israel, that this will be no grief to you, nor offence of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. When the Lord will have dealt well with my lord, then remember your handmaid."

David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me. Blessed be your discretion and blessed be you, for you have kept me this day from blood guiltiness and from avenging myself with my own hand. For indeed, as the Lord God of Israel lives, who has withheld me from hurting you, except you had hurried and come to meet me, surely there would not have been left to Nabal by the morning light so much as one man."

David received of Abigail's hand all she had brought him, and he said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. Behold, I have listened to your voice and have accepted your person."

Abigail came to Nabal and behold, he held a feast in his house like the feast of a king, and Nabal's heart was merry within him for he was very drunk, therefore she told him nothing until the morning light. It happened in the morning when the wine was gone out of Nabal, Abigail told him these things. His heart died within him and he became as a stone. About ten days later the Lord struck Nabal so he died. When David heard Nabal was dead he said, "Blessed be the Lord who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal and has kept me back from evil, and the evildoing of Nabal the Lord has returned on his own head."

David sent and spoke concerning Abigail to take her to him as his wife. When the servants of David came to Abigail, they spoke to her saying, "David has sent us to you, to take you to him as his wife."

Abigail arose and bowed herself with her face to the earth and said, "Behold, your handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." Abigail hurried and arose, rode on donkeys with five ladies of hers who followed her and she went after the messengers of David and became his wife' (1 Samuel 25:1 to 42).

Abigail was happy with David but was abducted by the Amalekites, along with every other woman and all the children in the city, while David and the men away. When David and the men returned, they were extremely distressed and sobbed until they were so exhausted they could not cry any more tears. The men were so distressed and angry they wanted to stone David, but he strengthened himself in the Lord. David and his men recovered all the Amalekites had taken and David rescued his two wives' (1 Samuel 30:1 to 18). Some time later the Lord told David to move to Hebron. 'David went up there with his two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail' (2 Samuel 2:2). It was in Hebron where Abigail gave birth to her boys.

We cannot confuse Abigail the Carmelitess, King David's wife, and David's sister Abigail the daughter of Jesse and Nahash. David's sister Abigail married an Ishmaelite named Ithra. 'Absalom set Amasa (his cousin) over the army instead of Joab (another cousin). Amasa was the son of a man whose name was Ithra the Israelite who went in to Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister to Zeruijah, Joab's mother' (2 Samuel 17:25). 'Jesse became the father of his firstborn Eliab, Abinadab the second son, Shimea the third son, Nethanel the fourth son, Raddai the fifth son, Ozem the sixth son, David the seventh son, and their sisters Zeruijah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruijah were Abishai, Joab and Asahel. Abigail bore Amasa. The father of Amasa was Ithra the Ishmaelite' (1 Chronicles 2:13 to 17).

Most of us could emulate Abigail, wife of David, by being wise in the face of difficulties. David was also a wise man. 'David behaved himself wisely in all his ways and the Lord was with him' (1 Samuel 18:14).

Amen and God bless you.

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