

There is much to learn from the pages of the Old Testament. It is true that we no longer live under the Law of Moses. It passed out of existence when Jesus died upon the cross. However, it doesn't mean that God meant for the Christian to discard its teachings. *1 Corinthians 10:11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, ...* . The Old Law provides examples to follow.

Or you can read *Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.* The things written in the Old Law are there for our instruction

For the next few minutes we are going to examine a story about a woman named Abigail (1 Samuel 25:2-42). To begin, let's consider the background. The events recorded here are from the time period when David was fleeing from the wrath of Saul. Rather than fight Saul, David and his 600 men fled into the wilderness. In this same region, a wealthy man, named Nabal, kept his herds. David and his men treated Nabal's herdsmen well and even protected them and their flocks both day and night. Interestingly, from verse 25 of our text describes Nabal as a man of "folly or foolishness" and he certainly lived up to his name.

On a feast day, David sent 10 of his men to request provisions. It was a reasonable payment for the services he had provided without being asked. Not every farmer has 600 men guarding his herds, but Nabal refused to recognize David. It seems he knew something about David's background because he alludes to his being on the run as he calls David a run-away servant who is hiding from his legitimate master.

"Why," he asked, "*should I take food from my workers to give to people that I don't know?*" Nabal did not even bother to check with his servants to see if the men's statements of protecting his flocks were true.

David became very angry at Nabal's rude response. He called his men to war having the intention to kill all the males in Nabal's household. Meanwhile, one of Nabal's servants, realizing what Nabal had done, ran to Nabal's wife (vs14-17). Even Nabal's servants did not respect their master.

Nabal's wife was quite a contrast to the foolish man. *1 Samuel 25:3 Now the name of the man was Nabal; and the name of his wife Abigail: and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance:* If ever a woman illustrated a virtuous wife, it was Abigail. It is her response we wish to study

How Abigail saved her husband. First we notice that she did not delay. *1 Samuel 25:18-19 Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and an hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses. (19) And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.* She loaded up generous provisions for David's men and sent a servant ahead to tell David she was coming. She then rode out to meet David. She did not worry or fret about the problem. She did not wait for David to come to her. She met her problems face on. When you see a brother or sister angry and in danger of committing a grievous sin, immediate action is required. *1 Samuel 25:20 And it was so, as she rode on the ass, that she came down by the covert of the hill, and, behold, David and his men came down against her; and she met them.*

Anger is not to linger. Notice what Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus *Ephesians 4:26-27 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: (27) Neither give place to the devil.* Anger unchecked builds up and corrupts the angry man. Delaying will not make things better. Jesus in Matthew 5:23-25 tells us to settle matters immediately.

Abigail humbled herself before David. *1 Samuel 25:23 And when Abigail saw*

David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground. She could have been indignant or arrogant when confronting David, but instead she fell on her face. Too many want to argue that they are right. Arguing will just break the dam. That's the idea presented in Proverbs 17:14. ***Proverbs 17:14 The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.***

Humility is the best solution Proverbs 6:3 says in part, ***“When thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend.”*** We too should restore the wayward in a similar manner. Paul would say, ***Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*** We see in 1 Samuel 25:24-28 that Abigail took the blame for her husband's foolishness and asked for forgiveness.

We live a society that looks to avoid responsibility. No one wants to be blamed for anything. Instead they strive to fix the blame elsewhere. What a contrast! It wasn't Abigail's fault, but she took the blame; much like our Lord. Speaking of Jesus the prophet said, ***“Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”*** When striving to restore others, we too must be willing to shoulder the burdens of others. We noted Gal 6:1 a few minute ago, verse 2 adds, ***Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.***

She pointed out that her presence was the Lord's hand to keep David from sinning. David was about to slaughter unarmed men because one man foolishly insulted him. Nabal was not nice. He definitely was rude. But rudeness does not deserve a death penalty. Did Nabal's shepherds that David watched over deserve to die because they had a foolish master? At times, brethren must have their sins pointed out to them. As a preacher,

my job description is found in **2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.** Along with exhorting is rebuking and reproof and if I never step on any toes, then I'm not doing my job effectively.

Abigail pointed out how the Lord has blessed David and will continue to bless him – (28-31). The Lord purifies his servants who continue steadfastly in his will. We need to hang in there. **Colossians 1:21-23 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled (22) In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (23) If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;**

Abigail didn't just scold David for what he was about to do. Instead she pointed out that he was formed for nobler purposes. When we must point out the sins of others, don't use it as an excuse to belittle, but a time to rise to greater things. See how Paul wraps criticism with encouragement. There is a list of things given in Titus 3 that the Christian should embrace after which he gives us a concluding statement in verse 8. **Titus 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.**

Abigail pointed out the insignificance of Nabal's offense. David, in his coming glory, would not want a memory of sin caused by a moment of anger to cloud his memories (30-31). We too want to be people with strong confidence in looking back on our lives and say we did what was right.

The party at Nabal's continued with Nabal ignorant of how close he came to death. Abigail waited until Nabal sobered up the next day to tell him

what had happened. *1 Samuel 25:37-38 But it came to pass in the morning, when the wine was gone out of Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. (38) And it came to pass about ten days after, that the LORD smote Nabal, that he died.* The news shocked Nabal so badly that he became like a stone ten days later he died.

Let us learn from the example of Abigail. It wasn't just her foolish, wicked husband whom Abigail saved. She kept a righteous man from making a grave mistake. If today we had brethren with as much wisdom and concern, the church would be stronger.

Maybe you are here and need to respond to the Lord's invitation.

Invitation