

The Jewish Kingdom - Lesson 25

David and Nabal

David almost makes a very grave mistake in anger and is only saved through the wise action of an evil man's wife.

65. The Death of Samuel - I Samuel 25:1

- The passing of Samuel was a great loss for Israel. He had been a steady force bridging the time of the judges and the reign of the kings.
- Samuel would have been the only person who could have checked Saul's authority and actions. With his death, David flees south out of the Promised Land to the wilderness of Paran. This is the desert area that the children of Israel wandered for forty years in.

66. David and Nabal - I Samuel 25:2-42

- Nabal - his name means "fool". We see that he was a wealthy man in the area of Maon and Carmel in southern Judah. Wealth being measured at the time by the size of your herds, we find him with 3,000 sheep (Job had 7,000 in Job 1:3). We also see that he was a descendant of Caleb (Numbers 13:6, etc.)
- Abigail - "my father's joy"
- churlish - "rude in a mean-spirited and surly way"
- vs. 4-8 - David hears that Nabal is shearing his vast herds, which traditionally would be a time of celebration. David sends ten men to ask for aid and provisions. The manner and message are abundantly respectful. We will see that David's men had been a help to Nabal's shepherd.
- vs. 10-11 - Nabal shows disrespect and distrust of David and his men. He is accusing David of rebelling against Saul and harboring fugitives (which is partly true, see I Samuel 22:2)
- vs. 13 - David responds in force to Nabal's rebuff and avenge this insult to his character. This is a mistake on David's part.
- vs. 14-17 - one of Nabal's servants appeals to Abigail to do what is right.
- vs. 18 - This is a lot of supplies, perhaps more than Nabal would have had on hand to supply. Note also that the "bottles" of wine would probably be large leather bags.
- vs. 21-22 - David is ready to destroy all that was Nabal's.
- vs. 23-31 - Abigail appeals to David on behalf of her husband. She doesn't defend her husband as much as appeal to the future king.
- vs. 32-35 - David responds to her appeal, accepts her gift, and halts his attack.
- vs. 37-38 - Nabal appears to have either a heart attack or stroke that left him in a coma for ten days before passing away.
- vs. 39 - David is not celebrating the death of Nabal, but praising God's actions as the Divine Judge and for His Providence in stopping David's attack.
-

67. David's Wives - I Samuel 25:43-44

- David would go on to have at least eight wives.
 - Michal, daughter of Saul, was his first wife. We see here that Saul had given her to another while David was in exile.
 - Ahinoam
 - Abigail,
 - Maacah
 - Haggith
 - Abital
 - Eglah
 - Bathsheba
 - ... and more - 2 Samuel 5:13
- Other references - 2 Samuel 3:2-5, I Chronicles 3:1-3
- We must note that it was never in God's plan for a man to have multiple wives. Genesis 2:24 speaks of a wife and not wives. God expressly commands kings to not have multiple wives (Deuteronomy 7:14-20). God seems to have tolerated it, but we must also not that it never makes a happy home.