

## Message #60

## I Samuel 25:1-13

There is a very interesting statement given by Paul in the book of Galatians. Paul writes: “let us do good to all people, and especially those who are of the household of the faith” (Gal. 6:10). The actual context of that statement is sharing and giving to one who teaches us the word of God (Gal. 6:6-9). In that context, Paul makes the statement “God is not mocked.” So what I would understand this to mean is this—**when people have the means to care for a chosen servant of God and they refuse to do so, they will eventually suffer severe consequences down the road.**

If ever you want to see this principle or proposition brought out in living color, in a real life and death situation, just look at the story of Nabal in I Samuel 25. The Hebrew word “Nabal” means fool. This guy named Nabal proves to be just what his name means, a fool.

Now one question we would certainly ask here is “Why does God put this story in His word?” It seems to me that He wants to communicate a very critical point:

**WHEN A TRUE SERVANT OF GOD HAS A NEED AND PEOPLE HAVE THE MEANS TO MEET THAT NEED AND REFUSE TO DO SO, THERE WILL BE VERY SERIOUS, NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES SENT BY GOD TO THOSE PEOPLE.**

Now notice the thesis. This is a true servant of God who does have a real need. We are not talking here about some delusional man who pretends to have a need. David was a true man of God called by God to be King of Israel. He had a real need here and Nabal had the means to actually meet the need. He decided not to do it and there were serious and deadly consequences sent by God. That is the point here.

Now as we work our way through this text there are three main observations we may make:

**OBSERVATION #1** – Samuel dies in Ramah and David moves to the deep south. **25:1**

Samuel had been a great man of God. His mother, Hannah, had prayed about having Samuel and she gave Samuel back to the Lord when he was old enough to be left with Eli. Samuel was a man who did receive direct messages from God. **Samuel was the bridge between the era of the Judges and the era of the Kings.**

Samuel was used by God to select Kings; he was a prophet who revealed God’s truth and prophecy; he was a judge who made decisions concerning the will of God and he was a counselor who advised people concerning God’s word and will.

There is an old adage that says, “no one is irreplaceable.” I have never fully embraced that idea. Frankly, there would never be another Samuel. When he died the world lost a great man of God. His death hit all of Israel.

In fact, **verse 1** says, “all Israel gathered together and mourned for him and buried him at his house in Ramah.” This man was impacting for God in these people’s lives and when he died, it was an irreplaceable loss.

We must not ever take for granted those who have been called and gifted by God to communicate God’s word to us. When a man of God dies, it is a major loss.

There has never been another Apostle Paul. There has never been another Dwight Moody or Charles Spurgeon. There has never been another C. I. Scofield or Lewis Sperry Chafer. There has never been another John Miles or John Walvoord. There will never be another Billy Graham. When these men of God died, it was a major loss to the world. When Samuel died, it was a major loss, because there would never be another Samuel.

At the end of **verse 1** we learn that when this happened, David moved to the deep south in the wilderness of Paran. This wilderness was a desert wilderness located south of the Promised Land.

Now some conclude that this move had no connection with Samuel’s death, however, the conjunction “and,” which in Hebrew is a waw consecutive, clearly shows sequence of action.

**Samuel’s death prompted David to move.** Samuel had been David’s counselor, advisor and protector. He has been a spiritual lifeline to David. Samuel had anointed David to be the next King and when he died, David sensed a key man of God was gone and so he moved to the deep south. It was a major loss to Israel and to David, personally.

David apparently thought there is no one here who can replace Samuel. Samuel had been a major force for God and for good and now that he was dead, David sensed this was a major loss.

Before we move on, we want to make three applications:

- 1) When God brings special people into your world, who can point you to the pure and true ways of God, do not ever take them for granted nor treat them lightly. They will not be around forever. If the Lord tarries, there will come a moment when they will be gone. So esteem them, appreciate them and support them.
- 2) No matter whom the person is or how important the person is, if the Lord tarries, he/she will die. At some point it will happen to even the best of servants.
- 3) You will leave the best legacy of yourself if you were known as a faithful man or woman of God. If you were a faithful man or woman of God, people will truly mourn for you and miss you when you are gone.

**OBSERVATION #2** – David is hungry and sends men to a rich man named Nabal for help.  
**25:2-9**

According to **verses 2-3**, there was a very rich businessman in a town near David, whose name was Nabal. As we said, his name means “fool.” Robert Bergen says his name actually means “intellectually and/or ethically foolish” (*1, 2 Samuel*, p. 245). He was a Calebite, which means he came from a very prominent family. Caleb was a hero. He was one of the 12 spies sent by Moses to spy out the Promised Land and only he and Joshua came back and said let’s take it for God will give it to us (Numbers 13). Caleb’s younger brother, “Othniel,” was a great, godly Judge for 40 years in Israel (Judges 3:9-11).

So Nabal came from a godly, heroic family line. But just because one comes from a great, godly family doesn’t mean he will be godly. In fact, he may be an absolute fool. **Verse 3** says he was “harsh” (qaseh) and “evil” (ra).

Now Nabal lived in Maon and his business was in Carmel. We may remember that Saul had set up a monument to himself in Carmel (1 Sam. 15:12). The words “very rich” indicate he was the rich of the rich. **He did have a lot of money, but he had no honor, no honesty and no brains. He was a worthless nitwit in the sight of God. Just because a person has billions of dollars does not mean he is an honorable man. Money is not the same as integrity. Often very rich people are Nabal fool types.**

According to **verse 3**, Nabal married a woman named Abigail, who was a very rare woman. Her name means “who is the cause of joy.” She was very intelligent and she was very beautiful. Often times beautiful women are not intelligent women and intelligent women are not beautiful women, but Abigail was both.

Now one question that would immediately come to our minds and that is if she is so intelligent why did she marry Nabal? Nabal is rich but he is a fool. Ever seen that? Some good-looking woman marries some idiot and you scratch your head. In one of our ministries, I saw a good-looking gal marry a dud of a man who didn’t even brush his teeth regularly. The girl is foolish.

Abigail was not foolish; she was smart so why did she marry this jerk? Well marriages were often arranged and, as one commentator said, this is one time when you could say this was a true marriage between “Beauty and the Beast.”

According to **verses 4-5**, David learned that Nabal was shearing his sheep in the wilderness area where he was and he sent ten of his younger men to go visit him and ask for some food. If you send ten men to get the food, naturally you would expect a liberal gift.

In **verses 6-8**, David told his men exactly what they were to say. They were to pass on five verbal messages:

**Message #1** - David told his men to give Nabal his greeting. **25:5b**

David would be the next king of Israel and he told his men to give him a formal greeting that was given in David's name.

**Message #2** - David told his men to tell Nabal that he wanted him to live a long life. **25:6a**

David had already protected Nabal's property and by giving him this greeting, he is saying that he wants this relationship to be a long and lasting one and David will do everything he can to see that it happens.

**Message #3** - David told his men to tell Nabal that this is a peace greeting. **25:6b**

The implication is that David will do everything he can to make certain that Nabal will live in peace. Not just peace for Nabal, but also for him and his family and everything he has and owns. This is a very meaningful greeting when it is coming from the next king of Israel.

What is so ironic about this is because Nabal refused to accept this greeting from David, he will not have peace and he will not live a long life. He is about to die. If a person does not accept the grace greeting from Jesus Christ, life will not end well.

**Message #4** - David told his men to inform Nabal how he and his men have protected Nabal's men and sheep. **25:7-8a**

David could have taken anything he wanted, but instead he protected Nabal's men and sheep. In fact, in **verses 15-16**, one of the men says David was good to them and treated them respectfully and never took one thing and actually protected them.

David and his men had actually watched over Nabal's flocks and employees, protecting them from enemies.

**Message #5** - David told his men to ask Nabal for any food or supplies they could spare. **25:8b**

When you think about this for a moment, it is humbling. David needs to ask somebody for food. He is the godliest man on this earth and the next king of Israel, and he is the one who needs to ask for help. Truth is he could have taken whatever he wanted, but he didn't do it.

Often times God's servants reach a point where they must ask someone for help. They must ask someone for a proper portion just so they may live. Sometimes people think it is okay for a fool like Nabal to be wealthy, but not a servant of God.

David was not asking for much. He and his men needed something to eat and in view of the fact that he had protected Nabal and everything he owned, this is a legitimate request.

According to **verse 9**, the young men did exactly what David told them to do. They went to Nabal and relayed the messages.

**OBSERVATION #3** – Nabal responds to David's request. **25:10-12**

When David's men asked Nabal for help, Nabal not only refused to give David's men any food, but he insulted David by implying he is a nobody. "Who is David" and "who is this son of Jesse" is a demeaning attack on the most important man of God in history at the time.

Nabal is mocking a man of God. In **verse 10**, Nabal says there are many slaves fleeing from their masters as if to say, David is just fleeing from Saul.

In **verse 11**, Nabal says I am not going to give to David. I am not going to take my bread, water and meat and give it to him or his men.

Nabal is falsely implying that David is a disloyal servant of Saul who has betrayed him.

We know by Abigail's response that he knew of David's reputation as the one who killed Goliath and beat the Philistines. David's reputation was known all over the world.

Nabal is a fool and when he starts mocking David, he is doing something very foolish and very dangerous. It is a dangerous thing to mock a true man of God and make false allegations about him.

**OBSERVATION #4** – David prepares to destroy Nabal. **25:13**

David had spared Saul, but he had no intention of sparing Nabal. He was going to kill him.

David said to his men, each of you put on a sword. David got 400 of his men, leaving 200 to stay behind and guard their baggage, and they started off on a mission of destruction.

There are many people who mock Jesus Christ. They don't think He will come back to settle the score. Think again. Jesus Christ will come back as a ferocious judge and when He does come back, all those who rejected Him and mocked Him will be destroyed.

**PRACTICAL THOUGHTS:**

- 1) When a true servant of God has a real need and one has an abundance and an ability to meet the need, it is a very serious matter in the mind of God to not meet it.**
- 2) God can and will send many negative and destructive things into the lives of those who mock Him or His servants.**
- 3) When it comes to the work of God, scores are always settled at some future moment.**