

Message #62

I Samuel 25:36-44

There is a truth found in Scriptures in multiple places and in multiple passages—Vengeance belongs to God and He will repay. In II Timothy 4:14 Paul said, “Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.” **Every now and then God decides to make the vengeance payback sooner rather than later.**

If you are a faithful servant of God, and you are doing the will of God, and people mock you, demean you, ridicule you or harm you, you may know with absolute certainty that God will avenge you. You can know that sooner or later God will repay.

Never is that point as evident as it is right here in this account from the life of David.

When this story began, Nabal was a wealthy, powerful, egotistical, proud, dominant and successful man. He was a man who was hoarding his wealth and had everything he could ever want. He was married to a beautiful woman. **However, when the story ends, Nabal is dead.** David, by an amazing sovereign decree of God, has everything he once had. He has his wife and his wealth.

What we see here is this:

WHEN WE ARE FAITHFULLY SERVING GOD AND FAITHFULLY OBEYING GOD AND DOING HIS WILL, GOD WILL PROTECT US FROM OUR ENEMIES AND WILL EVENTUALLY TAKE REVENGE ON OUR ENEMIES.

You and I can literally trust that vengeance does belong to God and He will repay. Those who have made life miserable for you may seem to be as happy as can be for the moment. They may seem to be on top of their world. But God can and will change that in one instant. If you tamper with God’s property, you are tampering with Almighty God.

That point is clearly brought out here in this story with Nabal. There are five narrative observations we want to make:

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #1 – Abigail comes home to a partying husband. **25:36**

Nabal is the epitome of a worldly fool. He has refused to help David, and he is at home having a party. He is in his own little world living what he considered to be the good life. The sheep shearing work was done and his fortune was made and it was time to party.

He is greedy, lustful and self-centered. The threat of any judgment does not faze him in the least. Notice **verse 36** says he was having a banquet that was “like the feast of a king.” Only powerful people can put on this kind of shindig.

Abigail, his wife, had just saved his life and he doesn't have a clue as to what has been happening. He was living in his nice plush home, eating the food of a king and he was "very drunk." He was happy and merry and totally drunk. I want to point out that the text says his **"heart was merry within him FOR he was very drunk."**

So the reality of this is that the only reason he is happy is because alcohol is controlling his mind. He was not happy when he was sober. He is drunk with a mind that does not think rationally, factually or realistically. He was very drunk.

When people are not right with God, they are not happy with life and one way that people try to escape is alcohol. There are people who drink excessively and spend their lives partying as if it will never end. Well, it will end. Judgment will come.

When Abigail found him in this condition, she decided to wait until morning to tell him what happened. She did not nag him; she just remained quiet about this.

There are some key thoughts to see here:

1) Just because a person has a lot of money does not mean they are right with God or happy.

Just recently, I was looking through the pictures of when I went to Turkey with Jerry. Laodicea was the most impressive place we visited. Even the ruins testify of wealth. But the Laodicea church was so out of fellowship with God, God said I will spit you out of My mouth.

2) Sometimes those who are right with God are temporarily living meager existences and those who aren't right with God are temporarily living a plush existence. That certainly was true with Paul, who didn't even have a coat. It was most seen in Jesus.

3) Those who are about to receive the vengeance of God have no urgent sense of imminent danger. They are buying, selling, partying, drinking and have no clue that it is all about to come crashing down.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #2 – Abigail tells Nabal about her meeting with David. **25:37**

The next morning, after Nabal had sobered up, Abigail informed him of all the events that had transpired between Abigail and David. As he listened to her tell the story, the text says, "his heart died within him." After the heavy night of drinking and after hearing this story, **he had more than a headache; he had a heart-ache.**

Now when it says that "his heart died within him," it may mean he had some form of heart attack or stroke. In fact, the Hebrew words that say, "so that he became as a stone," may indicate he went into some form of a coma. What we do know is ten days later he will be dead.

In one second of time, his happy world ended. His entire existence changed. He was no longer a happy winner, he is an eternal loser.

It is possible to go to bed one night thinking you are happy, secure, rich and successful and the next day have a heart attack or stroke that changes your whole life. It is a very foolish thing to live your life in rebellion to the word of God because God can change your world in a moment.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #3 – God puts an end to Nabal’s life. **25:38**

About ten days after Nabal’s heart died within him, God settled the score and ended his life. It is the “LORD who struck Nabal and he died.” Do you see this? The sovereign God struck down Nabal and he died. God determines the days and months and years of a person’s life (Job 14:5). He sets the boundaries.

As near as we may determine, every human has a choice to make concerning whether he will walk in the path of wisdom or walk in the path of a fool. If a person walks on the path of wisdom and fears the Lord and purposes to obey the Lord, generally speaking, he will live a longer life as opposed to a shorter life. If on the other hand a person chooses to walk on the path of a fool, his life may be cut short. These are the life paths God has established in His word.

Proverbs 9:10-11 says, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding for by Me your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you.”

Proverbs 10:27 says, “The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened.”

So depending on how one governs his life in relationship with God, helps to determine how long God lets one live. Nabal was a fool and God put an end to his life early.

Now one question we would ask of Nabal is what difference did all of Nabal’s money mean now? He would not give God’s man anything, including some food. He hoarded his wealth and held his parties, but in one moment of time he is gone and in eternity. He did not take one dime with him. He did not take any food; he did not take any land or any cattle or sheep. He was dead and gone and was now living life in the presence of God.

If a person lives life for himself and does not support those who love God and serve God, God does not view that lightly. One may proudly make mockery of God and His servants. For a short time. It may appear like he is getting away with it. But it will all instantly change in one moment because there will come a point when “the LORD will strike us and we will die.”

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #4 – David learns of the death of Nabal. **25:39a-d**

This is one time David did not have to kill his enemy; God did it with some type of heart issue. When David learned that Nabal was dead, he responded two ways:

Response #1 - He praised God. **25:39a**

It is a very unusual moving of God when someone wrongs one of his servants and then God ends his life 10-11 days later. But that is what happened. The first thing that David did when he learned of this was to praise God for three reasons:

(Reason #1) - Because God took Nabal's treatment of David Personally and intervened for David. **25:39b**

One of the greatest blessings one will ever experience in life is the blessing of knowing that God is looking out for you personally. It is a thrilling moment and when it happens, praise God.

(Reason #2) - Because God prevented David from doing what was wrong in an evil payback. **25:39c**

Many a man of God has been restrained from avenging a wrong and has lived long enough to see God avenge it.

I know of a minister who was hated by a man in his church. He did not like this minister because he was losing some of his power and credibility. He took a stand against the minister and the minister decided to just leave him to God. The man had a good, high paying corporate job. He lost his job. He could not seem to find another one, so he went through all of his savings. Then he sold his house and he ended up with a job of pumping gas. The minister did not avenge himself, he watched God do it and that is what David did.

(Reason #3) - Because God reciprocated the evil Nabal did by ending his life. **25:39d**

Nabal did not care if David had foot to eat. So God took more than food from him, he took his life. It didn't matter any longer what Nabal had in his life because his life was over.

Response #2 - He asked Abigail to marry him. **25:39e**

We are not sure how long a time transpired between the death of Nabal and David's proposal, but David decided to ask Abigail to marry him.

Now this is a very smart move on David's behalf. This is the kind of woman any man of God would want. She is beautiful, she is intelligent, she is rich and she is spiritual. This is a good move for David. He would have a partner who would look out for his welfare.

She could give David moral and material and spiritual support. What a turn of events. The pompous Nabal has been leveled in one moment of time. He hoarded his wealth from David and now David owned everything, including his wife. God's vengeance is always the sweetest vengeance.

NARRATIVE OBSERVATION #5 – Abigail accepts David's invitation to marry. **25:40-42**

Abigail is an amazing woman. When the servants of David came to ask her to marry him, she was humbled that she bowed before them and washed their feet. What a beautiful woman she was. This was an amazing blessing for Abigail.

She quickly arose and took her maidens and became David's wife. At this point in time she is David's third wife, the other two being Ahinoam and Michal (25:43-44).

Abigail will have one child with David, whose name was "Chileab," also called "Daniel," in the Greek Septuagint (II Sam. 3:3a; I Chron. 3:1).

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS:

- 1) Always keep this in mind, when you are faithfully serving God and people mistreat you or are arrogantly against you, God will settle that score. Leave revenge to Him.**
- 2) The moment God calls us into eternity we will say goodbye to everything tangible on this Earth.**
- 3) God will always bless a faithful mate even if he/she is married to a loser.**