



## BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A2280 ~ Abigail Befriends David.**

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*Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.*

The death of Israel's prophet, Samuel, is announced in the Bible book of 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel, Chapter 25. The Israelites gathered together and mourned for him, and buried him at his home in Ramah. Samuel was Israel's only truly godly leader during this time period. At that time, David and his faithful men decided to move to the wilderness of Paran for protection, in case King Saul of Israel, David's father-in-law, decided another attempt to catch David and take his life.

When the tribes of Israel settled into God's promised land of Canaan, from time-to-time, neighbouring countries made raids on Israelite farms and flocks and carried off their grain and animals which they didn't own. Each shepherd had to keep a close watch on his sheep or they might be stolen from him. With large flocks, the livestock owner often paid others to protect his animals.

In today's *Bible Adventure*, we hear about a wealthy man named Nabal, who was a descendant of Caleb; Caleb was one of the 12 spies Moses had sent to spy out the land of Canaan. Nabal was harsh and mean in his business dealings with others, but his wife, Abigail, was beautiful and intelligent.

Nabal grazed his livestock in a semi-desert area where David and his men were staying, and David's men protected Nabal's shepherds and animals from being stolen by raiding parties. After a while, David's men were in need of provisions for a Jewish feast day and so David sent 10 of his young men to Nabal to ask for food.

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Abigail urged David not to let any wrongdoing be found in him lest he lose the Lord's favour. David blessed Abigail before sending her home again. When Abigail returned home, she found Nabal giving a great feast and getting drunk. So Abigail never said anything to him about what had happened until the next morning.

When she did tell Nabal while he was still in bed, he became very fearful that David might change his mind and still return to harm his household. Nabal had brought upon himself the hostility of the future king of Israel. As a result, he became paralysed, maybe through a stroke. Although he escaped death once, thanks to Abigail, God brought judgment on Nabal 10 days later and he died.

When David learnt of Nabal's death, he praised God for upholding his cause and keeping him away from any wrongdoing. David then sent some of his young men to Abigail with a marriage proposal, which she accepted. David had already married another woman from Jezreel but no further details of her background are given. David had also been married to King Saul's daughter Michal. However, when David became a fugitive, Saul gave Michal away in marriage to another man. Saul wanted David to have no part in his family, and Saul especially wanted to remove from David any claim to the throne that he might have had as the king's son-in-law.

The story of Abigail and David illustrates some important principles of conduct that remain valid for us today. As we go through life, we all experience times when we are the cause of hurt to others. If we, either directly or indirectly, have hurt others, we need to follow Abigail's example. First, she acknowledged that wrong had been done to David and that she was ready to take the blame for it, even though she herself was innocent. Second, she made right the wrong by presenting David with the provisions her husband should have provided him in the first place. Third, she asked for forgiveness.

If we'll do these three things that Abigail did when we've wronged another person, we will have obeyed God. In addition, we will likely turn that person into a friend – or in Abigail's case, a husband! How often are we ourselves hurt? When we are, we need to put those who hurt us into God's hands and never take revenge; rather, we must forgive and let God deal with the person concerned. In Matthew, Chapter 6, the Lord Jesus taught: "If you forgive others the wrongs they have done to you, your Father in heaven will also forgive you. But, if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive the wrongs you have done."

In the text of the Scriptures, we're often not told how long it is from one chapter to another. We can only assume that a while after Nabal's death, a delegation of people from Ziph came to King Saul's court in Gibeah to gain favour with Saul; they did this by telling Saul where David and his men were hiding. It seemed that after David hacked off a piece of Saul's robe in a cave but never harmed the king, there was a peace between the two men. However, the men of Ziph stirred up trouble against David and Saul fell for their schemes.

Saul took 3,000 of his best soldiers and camped beside the road close to where the men of Ziph said David's men were hiding. When David heard of Saul's trap, he sent out spies to see if it was true that Saul was looking for him again. And the spies came back saying it was true. David went immediately and located the exact spot where Saul and Abner, the commander of his army had laid down to sleep in the middle of their soldiers in their camp.

One of David's relatives, Abishai, agreed to go with David into Saul's camp when it was dark and while all Saul's men were asleep. The two men very quietly made their way through the lines of soldiers to where Saul was sleeping, with his spear stuck in the ground near his head. Abishai wanted to kill Saul there and then, but David restrained him, using the same argument that he'd given his men while in the cave with Saul. David told Abishai that God Himself would strike Saul, either by natural means or through military conflict, but not David or his men. There was no need for either man to strike Saul.

To prove to Saul once again that David didn't intend to kill Saul, even when he had the opportunity to do so, David had Abishai collect Saul's spear and his water jug as they left the king's camp. No one saw them leaving because the Lord had put all of Saul's men into a deep sleep. When they were a safe distance away, David called out to Abner and reproached him for not looking after his king better. Saul woke and recognised David's voice; he called out asking if it was truly David, and David replied that it was.

David then shouted across the valley, asking Saul why he was still pursuing him. "What have I done? What crime have I committed?" David again told Saul that he was innocent of any wrongdoing against Saul. Then David gave two possible reasons for Saul's hatred of him: The Lord may have incited Saul to kill David or men may have incited Saul to do so. If it was the Lord, then David was willing to bring a peace offering. But if it was men, David called for the Lord's judgment to fall on them.

The reason that David spoke so strongly against the men who had incited Saul against him is that, in effect, they had driven David out of his inheritance in the Promised Land of Canaan and into the lands where the Lord was not worshipped. David was really pleading with Saul not to cut him off from the community of Israel. David concluded his points by reminding Saul of the absurdity of what Saul was doing. Saul was leading an army of 3,000 men to catch himself, who was only as important as a flea or a wild bird. David made himself seem very insignificant and certainly not worth the effort Saul had gone to, to catch him.

Saul replied that he'd done wrong against David, again. "Come back," he said, "I will never harm you again, because you have spared my life tonight. I have been a fool! I have done a terrible thing!" David replied, "Here is your spear. Let one of your men come over and get it. The Lord rewards those who are faithful and righteous ... Just as I have spared your life today, may the Lord do the same to me and free me from all troubles!"

Saul responded to David's words, "God bless you, my son! You will succeed in everything you do!" Saul was in effect, assuring David that he would inherit Saul's throne. After that, both men went their own ways, never to meet again.

What can we draw from these chapters of the Bible? These events remind us that we can live on several levels: 1. We can return evil for good. Nabal did that when he refused to share his food with David's men. 2. We can return evil for evil. David was going to do that before he was stopped. David showed mercy to Saul who treated him far worse than Nabal. How easy it is to lose perspective in the heat of our anger! 3. We can overcome evil with good. God used Abigail to prevent David from becoming a murderer. She reminded David that, if he'd gone ahead with his revenge, he would suffer every time he remembered the incident in the future. This is good counsel to follow the next time you think about seeking revenge.

In God's mercy, He had given Saul many opportunities to repent of his treatment of David, but Saul's heart remained hard. Even while he slept, Saul kept his spear next to him to remind everybody that he was king. David taking Saul's spear from him was a significant action.

In this last encounter with Saul, David won a great victory over Saul, but it only led David to despair. Would Saul ever give up his murderous pursuit of David? David should have talked to the Lord and found out what God wanted him to do. As a result, David didn't know where to go next. The Bible reveals how completely lacking David was in the area of trusting God at that time. In uncertainty, David wrote Psalm 39, which shows his suffering and anxiety while in despair. But David also saw the futility and shortness of life. So it is in Verse 7 that he said: "What, then can I hope for, Lord? I put my hope in you. Save me from all my sins."

*The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.*

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