

## WIDOWS OF THE BIBLE

### ABIGAIL: LESSON NINETEEN

by Sandy Harber

**" Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him." I Samuel 25:25a**

Abigail asks David to consider (regard) her husband, Nabal. That is, to think about what type of person he was. A "man of Belial" means he was a worthless fellow, good for nothing. His servant had used a similar term to describe him (v. 17), adding that it was impossible to reason with him.

Considering the culture and time period, it is interesting that the man's servant and his wife seem to have no fear in speaking about him in such disrespectful terms. The Bible advises servants to be obedient and respectful to their masters (Eph. 6:5). Likewise, wives are to be submissive (Col 3:18), which includes respecting her husband's leadership in the family. But neither Abigail nor the servant are rebuked in Scripture.

Nabal's reputation as a man without worth, that is, without any redeeming value, seemed to be well known. David and his men spent weeks with Nabal's servants. They must have heard all about the master of the estate and how he treated others, especially his employees. He had a reputation for being unreasonable. He was no doubt the type of person who thought he knew everything and refused to listen to another point of view.

Proverbs tells us that a good reputation is better than wealth (Prov. 25:1). The Hebrew word translated "name" in this verse indicates it is a memorial to the individual encompassing his character, authority, and standing. A person's name (reputation) is built over a lifetime. A good reputation should be carefully guarded.

Nabal's reputation, however, clearly reflects the name he was given at birth. Nabal means "folly," as Abigail points out to David. The Hebrew word translated "folly" is "nebalah" and means "foolishness" or "wickedness." It is obviously akin to the Hebrew word "nabal," which means "stupid," "wicked," or "fool." Psalm 14:1 reminds us that a "fool" is someone who does not believe in God and proves it by their wicked deeds.

Abigail advised David to "consider the source" of his anger. The man Nabal was not worth the aggravation he was causing. Nabal was stupid, useless, and wicked. He did not behave rationally and could not be reasoned with. In short, he wasn't worth thinking about.

Abigail had advised David to consider the source of his problem (aka Nabal). She herself had concluded that Nabal wasn't worth the expenditure of David's time and resources. It was best just to ignore him.

The source of my anxiety has been figuring out how to navigate life without my husband beside me. I've concluded, after careful (and prayerful) consideration, that God loves me and always does what is best for me; therefore, I will trust Him to help me through the rest of my life. My plan is to lean on Him and look to Him for guidance. Studying the lives of Biblical widows has given me encouragement and ideas to help me grow spiritually. Connecting with friends and family has kept me from being isolated and depressed.

What is the source of your anxiety? Have you analyzed the problem and worked out an action plan for dealing with it?

*"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold." Proverbs 22:1*