

WIDOWS OF THE BIBLE

ABIGAIL: LESSON THREE

by Sandy Harber

"And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep." I Sam. 25:4

David was on the run from King Saul. He survived by moving from place to place, making it hard for Saul to find him. He had friends in many places, people who believed that he was the one chosen of God to be king over Israel.

Hiding in the wilderness in Judah, David was on home turf. He and many of his men were from the tribe of Judah. Surely he had many relatives and friends who were willing to provide David with information. Thus it came to him that Nabal was shearing his sheep at Carmel.

David was intimately familiar with the life and duties of shepherds. He, himself, had cared for the sheep of his own father's flocks as a young boy and teenager. He knew that sheep shearing was a time of celebration. It was a time when neighbors came together and hospitality was the norm.

Shepherds who owned large flocks like Nabal with 3,000 sheep employed many men to assist with the shearing. Smaller flock owners would gather together in one place where they would shear the sheep and, then, celebrate together with their families.

David knew that his men had provided a service to Nabal by protecting his sheep and his employees. David's men could have killed as many sheep as they wanted if they were hungry but they did not do so. Nabal owed David a debt for the protection he provided. Inviting David's men to share in the celebration was the least Nabal could do to repay the warriors for their kindness.

David was a morally upright man. As the leader of 600 warriors David could have taken whatever he wanted. But he did not. He did not force others to provide his men with food or goods. He only took that which was willingly offered.

Power had not corrupted David. Life on the run had not turned him into a barbarian. Difficult circumstances had not caused him to doubt or forsake God. David weathered the trials of his life because he kept his eyes on God. He praised God for his victories and trusted in Him when things were at their lowest. He sought God's will for himself and those in his charge. And when he sinned he was quick to admit it and repent.

God never allows more adversity into our lives than we can handle. He give us the strength and wisdom to overcome. We just need to keep our eyes on Him.

"My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him." Psalm 62:5