

WIDOWS OF THE BIBLE

ABIGAIL: LESSON TWELVE

by Sandy Harber

"Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on asses." I Sam. 25:18

Abigail recognized that she was in a time crunch. She had to reach David and head him off before he found Nabal. The servant had advised her to consider what she was going to do. But Abigail didn't have to think about it for long. David's men had requested food in consideration for the service they had provided in protecting Nabal's property. Therefore, she would provide them with food.

Nabal and Abigail were preparing a feast to celebrate the successful shearing of the sheep. Thus, there were great quantities of various foods immediately available. Abigail just needed to determine how much of which items to pack up for David's army. She probably supervised multiple servants in packing the food stuff and loading it on donkey's to carry the bounty to David.

Ironically, Nabal had arrogantly indicated that he would not share his bread, water, and meat with strangers (v. 11). Abigail packed up 200 loaves of bread, two wineskins filled with wine (not water), and five sheep who had already been prepared for the festivities. In addition, Abigail provided roasted grain, which was a staple, as well as raisins and figs.

It does not seem as though Abigail was part of a happy marriage. From what the Bible tells us of his character Abigail would have been better off without Nabal. Yet when she was apprised of the danger his foolish tongue had placed him in she "made haste" to appease the injured party and, hopefully, broker peace for her husband.

Perhaps Abigail realized the scope of the crisis: that all her husband's servants and family were in peril. Her actions would save many lives. In addition, it would be through her intervention that David and his men were turned from their angry purpose to draw blood. God was using Abigail to prevent David and his men from sinning.

God uses people to carry out His will. God's will refers to His purpose or His desire for a specified outcome. His will takes two forms: directive and permissive. God's directive will is exercised when He intervenes and causes something to happen (or not happen). When God exercises His permissive will, He allows man to use his free will and make his own choices. But the results of those free-will decisions still advance the purposes of God. He is able to use our mistakes and outright rebellion, as well as our obedience, to accomplish His purposes and plans.

Whatever crisis you have endured or are enduring is in the will of God. God's plans and purposes encompasses the entire world throughout the ages. Our lives are just a small piece of the mosaic He is putting together to accomplish His master design. While God maintains His ultimate Plan for the universe, He still cares about the smallest detail of your life and mine. We can rest safely in His hands.

"Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." Ephesians 5:17