

WIDOWS OF THE BIBLE

ABIGAIL: LESSON SEVEN

by Sandy Harber

"And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?" I Sam. 25:10-11

Nabal had an opportunity here to ensure his own future prosperity and success by granting the simple request of his future king. He had a chance to be of service to God's chosen man. Nabal could have secured a powerful friend and ally if he had been willing to cooperate with the convoy sent by David.

God sends opportunities our way every day. Every choice we make is an opportunity to glorify Him. I Corinthians 10:31 says that we can glorify God in every little thing we do, including eating and drinking.

When tough times come our way we don't generally think of them as opportunities to glorify God. Our focus is on ourselves: why did God allow this to happen to me? If we changed our focus to Him we might say, "how can I use this situation to glorify God?"

Nabal could have responded to David's friendly greeting in kind. He had the provisions David's men needed. It would not have cost him anything. Nabal's name means "fool" and he was well named.

Nabal's servant overheard the entire exchange and reported to Nabal's wife that he had "railed" on David's soldiers (v. 14). The Hebrew word translated "railed" means "to swoop down" as a bird of prey. In other words, Nabal verbally attacked them.

Nabal was from the tribe of Judah just as David was. He had obviously heard about Samuel's anointing David to be the next king. He knew exactly who David was (the son of Jesse). But he had also obviously chosen sides. And the side he had chosen was King Saul's.

Nabal implied that David was nothing more than a servant who had betrayed his master (i.e. King Saul). He sneered at the fugitive who thought he could be a king. Nabal said haughtily that he wouldn't waste his food on this nobody. Seven times he used "my" or "I" proving what a selfish, arrogant blow-hard he was.

We are faced with a choice every time we vote. Who do we want to represent us? The people of Israel were faced with this dilemma. King Saul was on the throne, but God had rejected him. David was a national hero. God had chosen him to be the next king. Each man had to decide who he would support. Nabal chose poorly.

Even if he supported King Saul Nabal did not have to be so nasty to David's men. They had respected his property and rendered a service to the man. He was ungrateful and churlish. There is never a good excuse to behave in this manner.

David's response to Nabal's words was easy to predict. Sometimes we cause our own problems or make the problem worse by our response. It is our response to the problem that plagues us that God is watching. Do we make choices based on God's Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit? Are we kind and respectful of others even when we don't agree with their point of view? Are we grateful for the support of others? Treat others the way you want to be treated.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." Proverbs 15:3