

WIDOWS OF THE BIBLE

ABIGAIL: LESSON TEN

by Sandy Harber

"But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep." I Sam. 25:15-16

The servant reporting to Abigail had personally experienced the companionship and protection of David's men. He had been out in the fields keeping the sheep day and night. During that time, David's soldiers had encamped in the same fields. The soldiers were friendly and acted as a wall of protection to Nabal's servants, keeping them safe day and night.

Many of David's men grew up in Judah just as David had. Some of them were probably from this same area of Mt. Carmel. They may have had friends and family in the region. Certainly they felt a kinship for Nabal's servants.

The servant explained all of this to Abigail so that she could understand that David's request for food was reasonable. His men had earned the right to be treated fairly. There is something in human nature that rebels at injustice. How many times have we said as children, "That's not fair!" We are taught young to share with everyone when we have a bag of candy in our possession. If someone breaks in line instead of going to the end, we all insist "that's not fair." We object when one person is singled out for an honor he did not earn.

Perhaps it's because God is just. He is a God of justice and we are made in His image. Micah tells us that God requires three things if we want to be in a right relationship with God and man: 1) to do justly; 2) to love mercy; and, 3) to walk humbly with God. Justice, mercy, and humility will keep us in good stead with the Lord.

Nabal lacked all three. He refused hospitality to the soldiers who had earned his favor by protecting his property. Nabal was unjust. The soldiers were on the move, running from King Saul because the king was jealous of David. They needed provisions for themselves and their families. Nabal had no mercy. And, finally, there was no humility in Nabal who arrogantly degraded David as a rebellious servant of King Saul.

When my husband died from Covid while other people recovered, I had to wonder "how is that fair?" During times of illness or loss it's human to question the justice of our situation. We have all noticed that sinful men (and women) seem to prosper while the righteous suffer. Psalm 37 addresses this problem. God tells us not to fret or envy the evildoers (v. 1) because his day of reckoning will come (v. 13).

Life is not fair. As long as we dwell on the earth we will encounter injustice. It's inevitable. Our response can only be to trust in the Lord. "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17) we are told. Faith is the key.

*"They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever."
Psalm 125:1*