

WIDOWS OF THE BIBLE

ABIGAIL: LESSON EIGHTEEN

by Sandy Harber

" And when Abigail saw David, she hasted and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground. And fell at his feet, and said Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience and hear the words of thine handmaid." I Samuel 25:23-24

As soon as Abigail saw David she jumped off her donkey, ran to where he was, and fell down on the ground in front of him. Her first words were, "lay this sin to my account." Abigail had taken upon herself the task of turning aside David's wrath.

David must have been astonished at the sight which met him when he rode over the hill: donkeys laden with food stuff and a beautiful noblewoman who prostrates herself in front of him. He had to be wondering what was going on. Who were these people? They had obviously come out to meet him. What did it all mean?

Abigail humbled herself falling down into the dirt before him. She addressed him as "my lord," showing the respect he deserved as the Lord's anointed. Her words immediately got his attention. "Blame me," she said in effect. "Hold me responsible for this sin."

Abigail was asking David to impute Nabal's arrogant and ungrateful response to her account. She would take whatever punishment David deemed appropriate. Abigail's sacrifice is a picture of what our Lord Jesus Christ did for us. The sins of mankind were laid on Him. Christ became our substitute and He took our punishment.

Abigail was an intelligent woman. She probably did not believe that David would kill her in Nabal's place. He did not have a reputation for being that kind of person. Besides, she was beautiful, well-spoken, and dressed as befit the wife of a wealthy man. She was obviously not a nobody. And she came bearing presents of much needed supplies for his men. She treated him with respect and deference.

Abigail humbly requested an audience with David. She treated him like the king he really was. She asked him to just stop and listened to what she had to say. Her strategy was brilliant.

David and his army had been brought to an abrupt halt by Abigail and her convoy. The unexpected sight of all the donkeys laden with food brought them up short. Then the sight of a lovely noblewoman bowing down before David made them curious at the very least. Her request to be heard and, subsequently, her entire speech, would drive out all desire to continue their murderous mission.

Abigail injected reason into an emotional situation. She also gave them all something very precious: time. Time to calm down. Time to rethink the game plan. While Abigail spoke, the blood pressure of the warriors returned to normal. Their breathing slowed. Anger dissipated.

Time can be a great healer. It calms. It restores reason. Too often we speak or act hastily when something unexpected or unwanted occurs. The old adage of counting to 10 has merit. Even better, say a prayer. Use the time to connect with God and ask for guidance.

For those of us who have lost loved ones or experienced catastrophic illness or injury time plays a part in the healing process. We learn to cope. We connect to others with similar situations and find support and comfort. We learn that life goes on. So we change our focus. We find a new purpose. We endure.

"Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator." I Peter 4:19