**For the Elder Women of the Household**

**1 Samuel 25: 1-44**

**HOW can we as women of God, save our households from Destruction?**

**DO you know we have the power to do such things?**

God has given many examples and the one I want to tell you about is a hero of the Bible not many talk about. But her story---is our story!

When I talk about *households* I am talking about our own homes and the household of the church family!

**Introduction for the gogo’s**

You gogo’s have lived many more years than myself… and a lot of us! Martin used to tell us he loved being with the gogo’s because they stood on the doorstep to heaven! Much closer than us younger ones! We all want to be around someone that close to heaven!!!

**The story I am about to tell you consists of three people.**

#1) Foolish Farmer

#2) Faithful Wife

#3) Furious Soldier

We find the story in 1 Samuel 25

As we enter the story and find **a Foolish Farmer named Nabal.**  He is very wealthy but a very sinful, hateful man full of rage and anger. He is a scoundrel, evil. The Bible tells us he has so much wealth that he lives in one part of the world and all his possessions are in another part of the world. He had over 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats.

Nabal was married to **the Faithful Wife named Abigail.** Abigail knows her husband is wicked and lives without God. Yet, she remains faithful to him. Even though he was evil, she never became evil like him. “Just because we are around evil; doesn’t mean we have to become evil”. There is a popular saying: “we become like the ones we live with” … Abigail proves that wrong.

Instead, Abigail maintains her Spirit of Holiness. Scripture says she carries a spirit of gratitude, graciousness, love, goodness and Godliness. She was a woman of great grace.

Although she recognized that her husband was evil, she never talked behind his back or treated him meanly. The Bible tells us Abigail never put him down, never argued with him, but faithfully supported and took care of him.

The third character in our story is **the Furious Soldier named David**. Before David was King, he was constantly on the run for his life from King Saul. One day David took 600 soldiers and went to Judah, on the border of Israel.

It was the custom of the day that when soldiers dwelt in the land they provided protection for those where they stayed. So these soldiers provided protection to the farmers in the area where they settled. In return for the protection the soldiers offered, the farmers would provide for the soldiers’ needs: giving them food, clothing and shelter.

**So here’s the story…**

One day, David heard Nabal was shearing his 3,000 sheep. The shearing would become Nabal’s income and was a cause for celebration! There would be great parties to celebrate the wealth the sheep’s wool would bring in.

So… David sent 10 of his men to Nabal. His men were instructed to ask for an offering. He said… “Send back whatever you will”. He didn’t specify items or amounts but whatever Nabal would be willing to offer… that, he thought was fair value for the protection of his land and animals. After all, David had contributed to Nabal’s success!

The 10 men went and made their request to Nabal. Nabal acted dumb. He acted like he didn’t know who David was! “Who is this David, the son of Jesse? He refused the request of the 10 soldiers… not one sip of wine, or crumb of bread!

The 10 men came back and told David. David became FURIOUS! He burned with fury.

He was so mad that he gathered over 400 of his soldiers with swords and he planned to take Nabal OUT. He also planned to kill every man and man child of this household! David had unchecked anger… he was going overboard. He left 200 men to guard their camp and the 400 men marched toward the property of Nabal.

**…..here, we meet Abigail.**

Enter Abigail, the faithful wife! A servant of Nabal’s left the shearing party and went and told Abigail that David was coming with 400 men to kill Nabal and all the men of the household!.

Notice that the servant did not warn Nabal—because scripture tells us that no one could ever talk to Nabal. He was so evil and an angry man.

Here is where Abigail shines like as a true HERO of scripture. Her wisdom is in her response. Her response was gracious and full of courage and goodness.

Being faithful and supportive, wise and beautiful--- listen to what she does!

In verse 18, she responds quickly. She gathers 200 loaves of bread, two skins of wine, 5 slaughtered sheep, a bushel of roasted grain, 100 clusters of raisins, and 200 fig cakes!

She packs them on a donkey… and told her servants to go on before her; she would follow. SHE DID NOT TELL HER HUSBAND

As she came riding on her donkey into the mountain ravine, there was David, marching toward her with his 400 men.

Scripture says when Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before him and put her face to the ground.

Here is what she says:

“Pay no attention to that wicked man named Nabal. He is just like his name that means: Fool. Evil goes with him”

She pleads for the lives of her unworthy husband and household.

She is wise and brings these things to David’s mind:

* She has a good knowledge of David and knows David is a man of God.
* She has heard of Goliath and the battles he has won.
* She knows God is on David’s side.
* She knows the Lord fights David’s battles.
* She knows God is faithful to David.
* She knows God causes David’s enemies to scatter like stones in a sling.

SHE told David … “You will be King one day. Don’t let this petty offense and senseless murder be on your conscious. Don’t let this senseless murder stain your role as King before the eyes of God…

In verse 32, we see David’s response:

* David praises Abigail and God who sent her.
* He blesses her good judgement and from keeping him from needless killing in his anger.
* He blesses her for stopping his foolish actions which would ruin his reputation when he was King.

Abigail stopped David’s anger and David took her offerings and went away with his 400 men in peace.

**Ladies---NEVER underestimate the power of Your Godliness to stop evil around you!** She was a tool in the hands of the Lord to accomplish His will… So are we….

We have the ability and responsibility to intercede with God… what a privilege! Do we use intercessory prayer as much as we should? Even when we do intercede for others AND are successful, should we expect those who benefited from our prayers to appreciate us for it?

**Let’s check back with Abigail…**

When Abigail returned home…WHAT do you think she returned to?

You would hope she would return to a very thankful Nabal. You would think Nabal would bow down before her and thank her for her courage and for saving his life and his substantial household.

NO! …she found Nabal stone drunk at his party! He did not even know what he was spared! Gracious Abigail told him nothing and went to bed.

The next morning… she waited for Nabal to wake up sober. She sat him down and told him what had happened and what she did.

WHEN she told him… Nabal went ‘cold’.. He was embarrassed that a woman fought his battles! He was probably terrified at how close to death he had come. HE became like a stone; paralyzed… perhaps a stroke.

10 days later---the LORD struck Nabal DEAD.

Ladies, God always pays his bills. “Vengence is mine, I will repay” says the Lord! God will reward evil. He will repay.

**But, Abigail’s heroic act did not go unnoticed… This is not the end of the story!**

When Nabal died, David heard about it. He said, “Praise the Lord!!… Praise the Lord , Who upheld my cause against Nabal for treating me with contempt!”

He then sent word to Abigail asking her to become his wife… He sent his servants to Abigail… He KNEW a great woman when he saw her.

Scripture makes no mention that Abigail hesitated or prayed about this for 10 seconds. She took 5 of her female servants and became David’s wife.

**You see, ladies…**

WHEN you fight evil all your life, whether it be at home, in your neighborhood, in your streets, in your churches, wherever we are called to do good in the midst of evil… AND THEN you are asked to marry a KING---you do not tarry. You run!

We are Abigails. We are surrounded by evil everywhere and the days are getting darker and darker around us.

How we respond to the world determines our reward. If we are ‘comfortable’ in the evil world, participating in its evil ways, loving the darkness… we will die there.

BUT if we respond to evil with wisdom, work using the power of God’s Spirit to combat evil and stand apart from all that is wrong, and let the light of Christ shine through us to the dark and hopeless world----we can look forward to be ushered to a wedding… OUR wedding---- our wedding with a Bridegroom who is the King… the King of the Universe! When He invites us to our wedding feast---we will not hesitate, we will run!

It is possible… no, it is ESSENTIAL to maintain our wisdom, graciousness, courage, faithfulness, and ability to remain soft to the things of God when the world gets darker!

We can live in this world and not become like it. Our suffering here is seen by our God Who truly cares for us in every moment of our lives and deeply loves us. He is the God Who Sees, He is ‘El Roi’.

Let us use our suffering as a means to shed off the things that are not like Christ. When Christ suffered the only thing that spilled out of Him was his blood that covers us with His love and salvation.

His humiliation and suffering proved that He WAS the embodiment of love… to the core of his being. When we suffer we can be like Christ and respond in love—because we know one day, GOD will settle all His open accounts… all the unpaid sin debt that both men and fallen angels have racked up. He will judge and repay all manner of evil.

WHILE we, who believe in Jesus, will be wed to King of the Universe and live with Him forever and ever… and of His Kingdom, there will be NO END.

**Be at peace, Ladies!**

GOD is just and will settle ALL open sin accounts

When we suffer… God knows and sees our situations, He is ‘El Roi’

One day… all the evil things we endured will be forgotten, as we behold our GOLD WEDDING RING and the glorious radiance of the face of our Husband and King… Jesus… Yeshua!!!

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