**Week Two - January 24/25 - 1 Samuel 25**

**Introduction**

Last week in Chapter 24 David showed restraint, refusing to harm the LORD’s anointed. However, this week we’ll see David as the one who must be restrained from carrying out sin. God often saves His people, restraining evil people from destroying them. But as we’ll see today, He also restrains His own servants from destroying themselves. **Has there ever been a time where an unexpected conversation or event kept you from carrying through on a sinful intention?** We should not take such restraint for granted, and be thankful for how the Lord spares us from ourselves.

**Read 1 Samuel 25:1-13**

God is always at work, for in the same verse that tells us of Samuel’s death, David rises heading toward Paran near where Nabal and Abigail live. **How are Nabal and Abigail introduced to us? What do we know about them?** We see the distinction between these two by understanding their names.Nabal means ‘fool’ and is also a Calebite which means ‘dog.’ Rather than living up to the whole-hearted faithful meaning of the name Caleb, it emphasizes Nabal being a ‘doggish man.’ Abigail means ‘my father’s joy.’ **As David asks Nabal for supplies, what points towards David’s request being reasonable and gracious?** *(Came in peace, David helped him in Carmel, asks for whatever is on hand).* **How does Nabal respond to David’s request and what is revealed about the way he views his possessions? Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-7. In considering your own approach to possessions, where have you been sowing sparingly and where have you been sowing generously?**

**How does David’s response to Nabal show that he too falls short of responding with a heart that reflects God’s heart?** Ephesians 4:26-27 says, “Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.” David shows us how righteous anger can easily be twisted into a desire for revenge. **How are we to imitate Jesus’ righteous anger without letting our anger prompt us to seek payback?**

**Read 1 Samuel 25:14-25**

The servant who spoke to Abigail understood the truth of Proverbs 17:12, “Let a man meet a she-bear robbed of her cubs rather than a fool in his folly” by talking to Abigail rather than confronting Nabal. **What do you observe about Abigail’s faith by the way she responds in this situation?** *(Woman of action, not defined by her marriage, offers an abundance).*Imagine 400 men with swords drawn and bloodthirsty hearts of vengeance rushing toward one defenseless woman. **How is Abigail’s response in this scene layered with overwhelming humility and courage?** *(Consider the way she approaches David and how she speaks to David)* **In what way has Abigail sought to make peace?**

Abigail is a type of Christ, or someone in the Old Testament whose presence and actions point us to the coming Messiah. The word “type” literally means impress or imprint. When we say someone is a type of Christ, they are leaving an imprint of Christ. Old Testament types are not Christ himself and Abigail is not a mini-messiah. However, they serve as prefigured shapes of what would be fully realized in Christ. **How is Abigail seen as a type of Christ?** This is the GOSPEL MOMENT of the story. Abigail assumes the guilt and responsibility for the sin of Nabal even though she is innocent. Keep watching for ways Abigail points us towards Christ and at the end we’ll revisit our understanding of this. Abigail didn’t assume a position of victimhood or act in defiance, which are two extremes the world celebrates. **What may prompt you to respond in these ways? How can your response reflect the way Abigail responded?**

**Read 1 Samuel 25:26-35**

**How can we further understand the motivation of Abigail’s heart as she pleaded before David?** Abigail's plea before David was not one motivated out of fear nor a heart of anger toward her husband, but an understanding of who God is.

**What truths do Abigail remind David of concerning God’s plan for David being king?** 1) v28 - God will establish a “lasting dynasty” from David. **What’s the purpose of this and Abigail’s reasoning for it?** 2) v29 - God would preserve David’s life and care for him.

3) v29 - God would destroy the enemies of David. 4) v30 - God will keep His promise to make David king. **How did David’s perspective change after being reminded of these truths? What are specific realities about who God is that you have to be constantly reminded of?**

**In verse 31, what reasoning does Abigail give to David to deter him from shedding blood?** Abigail understood two things: the significance of maintaining a pure conscience and knowing that vengeance belongs to the Lord. **Read 1 Peter 3:16.** **What is the significance of maintaining a clear conscience in our walk with Christ? How do we prevent our conscience from becoming seared?** Abigail also knew the danger of David taking the situation into his own hands and failing to recognize vengeance is the Lord’s (Romans 12:19). **What is revealed about ourselves when we take retaliation into our own hands and neglect the reality that vengeance belongs to the Lord?**

**Read 1 Samuel 25:36-44**

Nabal is really living up to his name and fits the description when Jesus teaches the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:15-21). He indulges himself without having the faintest idea that David nearly wiped out his entire household and is under God’s judgment. **Re-read v39. How does what is expressed here further develop your understanding of God’s vengeance?**

In the Law, Deutoronomy 17:17 says the king must not take many wives for himself. Thus, David taking multiple wives is descriptive not prescriptive. Throughout this chapter, Abigail points us a lot more towards Christ than David does. **What other things have you noticed throughout this chapter that point toward Abigail being a type of Christ?**

* Abigail took on Nabal’s sin and providing an offering for it (Isaiah 53:11b/Ephesians 5:2)
* Abigail is an intercessor (1 Sam 25:32, 1 Tim 2:5)
* Abigail turned away wrath (1 Thessalonians 5:9)
* Abigail established peace (Colossians 1:20b)
* Abigail washed the servants feet (John 13:5)
* Abigail was elevated to a position of honor (Hebrews 8:1b)

**After reflecting on the ways Abigail points us toward Christ, what aspect of her life causes you to see that quality perfectly demonstrated in Jesus more clearly?**

**Conclusion - Read Matthew 5:9**, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God.” A defining characteristic of being children of God is to make peace. God used Abigail to intercept David on his path of anger and established peace with him by assuming Nabal’s guilt. The peace that Abigail brought about only shadows the peace that Christ brought to us through His sacrifice. **Read Colossians 1:19-20**, “For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, *making peace by the blood of his cross.”* **Spend some time this week reflecting on the peace God has made with you through the cross and how He is calling you to be a peacemaker.**