

There are **Bibles** in front of you

And we're looking at **1 Samuel chapter 25** - and we'll also be referring to **Matthew 5:6-12**, as we go through the Samuel chapter.

Let me pray before we look at this passage together

## Intro

A personal story to begin with

*On a Geography Field Trip in the Lake District - in England*

*Queuing up for Dinner one night*

*When Martin, the bully in the group, came and said to a young Pakistani guy called JAG - "Hey Paki - you have to go to the back of the queue - you're black"*

*On hearing this I have to say my blood boiled*

[PowerPoint 1a-How?]

How do we deal with *injustice*?

Life isn't always *fair*?

Evil and nasty people seem to *get away with it*?

Playing by the *rules* doesn't always work

We live in a world where *evil* often seems to *triumph*

Where the good get *stomped* on

Many *innocent people suffer* the effects of war, terrorism, invasion or bad leadership of their country

Many suffer **poverty** because of their location and/or climate

Many suffer **discrimination** based on religion, colour, race, gender, education, wealth and age

Many children suffer **sexual abuse**

Many innocent women (and some men) suffer **domestic violence**

Life isn't fair

So, how do we deal with injustice?

[PowerPoint 1b-Answer?]

Is the answer to take justice into our own hands?

In our story from 1 Samuel 25 - we see a **right way** and a **wrong way** to handle injustice

[PowerPoint 2-Blank]

Now we only read a **portion** of the chapter

So, let me quickly **summarize** the story

- **David** is still **on the run** from King Saul who is out to kill him
- David sends **10 of his men** to a very rich man called **Nabal** who is married to a beautiful woman called **Abigail**

- David's men ask Nabal for some **food and provisions** - it's a **festival** time - so there's plenty of food available
- David's men's **bargaining power** - is that whilst they've been in the wilderness, they've **protected** Nabal's flocks and shepherds
- But **Nabal** is a **nasty** piece of work and refuses their request
- Even sarcastically saying "**Who is this David, guy anyway?**"
- When David's men return empty handed - **David is furious** and is ready to **wipe out Nabal** and all he has
- Meanwhile Nabal's **servants go to** Nabal's wife, **Abigail**, and tell her how **Nabal insulted** David's men - and how Nabal is making a **grave mistake** - because David and his men really did protect them in the wilderness
- **Abigail acts quickly** and brings a huge amount of provisions to David as a **gift**- and **apologizes** to David - quick smart
- David - comes to his senses and **realizes God has sent Abigail** - and **accepts** Abigail's **apology** on behalf of her husband, Nabal
- Crisis averted
- When Abigail returns home - the feast is in full swing
- Abigail tells her husband, Nabal, what she did the next morning - and Nabal's **heart failed** and he **died** 10 days later
- When David hears about Nabal's death - he sent word to Abigail - to be **his wife** - how romantic!

So, as we take a closer look at the main characters in the story

Let's see what their character is like and who might we be like?

[PowerPoint 3-Heading-Who?]

First, Nabal

[PowerPoint 3a-Nabal]

### Nabal's Character

- Nabal is very *wealthy* - v2 - he has 1000 goats and 3000 sheep
- We should point out Nabal's *name* means *fool!*
- It does make me wonder - *why his parents named him that?* Would you name your child - fool?
- *Nabal is like Saul* - wicked and doesn't have the Lord with him - and I think the author of 1 Samuel wants us to see that
- Nabal *refuses to give David's men anything* - v10 - even though David's men protected Nabal's property and main
- That's pretty *unfair and unjust* - they helped him but he won't help them
- In fact, Nabal is pretty scathing saying - in v10 - who is David? Who is this son of Jesse?
- And Nabal is very *selfish* - see v11 - Why should I take MY bread and water, and the meat I slaughtered for MY shearers and give it to men coming from who knows where. I - ME - MY -
- Nabal's actions *suit his name of a fool*
- He surely can't be that *naive* that he thinks there won't be a *fall out* from his *refusal to help*
- But look at v17 - even his servants know what Nabal their master is like - they say "*He is such a wicked man - no one can talk to him*" - in other words *no one can reason with Nabal*

- **Abigail knows** what **her husband** is like too - see v25 - she says to David - *pay no attention, my Lord, to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name - his name means fool, and folly goes with him.*
- Nevertheless, Nabal goes about **partying** - **oblivious** to what will happen

Application - Is there a **bit of Nabal in us?**

Someone may have helped us - but when **they want help** - we **refuse** - we're **too busy?** Or it's too **inconvenient?**

Or perhaps someone has been **kind to us?** And we **haven't even said thank you** - or even worse - **we've been rude or nasty** to them?

Or maybe we're like Nabal - in that we **can't accept correction** when it's due - we won't listen when someone says we've made a bad choice or mistake - we **refuse to listen** - and put our **fingers in our ears** - la la la.

(pause)

[PowerPoint 3b-David]

Next we'll look at David

### David's Character

- Remember last week - David spared Saul's life - and I said - what a great guy David was - but **don't leave church wanting to be like David** - because you **won't want to be like David this week**
- In **this** chapter, David **sends his men to get some provisions from Nabal** - he needs to feed his hungry men - and there's a feast on - and Nabal is rich - and after all David has been **protecting Nabal's flocks and men**

- When *Nabal refuses to help* - look how *David reacts* - in v13 - straight for the *sword* - and off he goes with 400 men *to wipe out Nabal* and his household
- You see David is out for revenge - whereas last week - he correctly said - *vengeance was up to God* - not this week
- David even makes a foolish oath in v22 - *May God deal with David be it ever so severely if by morning I leave alive one male of all who belong to Nabal*
- *Unlike Nabal* though - when *Abigail points out to David* that if he had gone ahead and slaughtered Nabal and his household - this terrible act would have been *on his conscience* and it would have *damaged David's reputation* when he became king - *David actually listens* to the sense that Abigail makes
- David is capable of listening and taking the gentle rebuke from Abigail
- David also *attributes this intervention by Abigail as being the Lord's work* - see v32 - *Praise to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me*
- David *accepts Abigail's apology and gifts*

Application - Are we a bit *like David*? *One week* - making *Godly choices* and the *next week* making *ungodly and foolish choices*?

Are we like David - in that we have a *knee jerk reaction* to something being unfair or unjust - and we want to *payback* with our own justice (which is really unjust)?

If that's the case - remember the children's song from earlier...

*Don't bop'em on the head  
Don't kick'em and yank their hair  
Don't punch and bite and scratch and call them names  
Cause if you go the dummy-spit  
The Lord will not be pleased with it  
It's not so weak to turn the other cheek*

Now - remember my story at the beginning

*The Pakistani guy Jag*

*How I said my blood was boiling when Martin, the bully, told Jag to get to the end of the queue because of his colour*

*Well - Jag was about to go to the end of the queue as he was told*

*But I told Jag - don't you dare do that*

*And I put him in the queue in front of me*

*This made Martin, the bully, really angry*

*So, I told Martin - if I saw him treating Jag like that again - I'd flatten him.*

*See it's easy to have a knee jerk reaction*

*I didn't need to say anymore really - my point had been made by protecting Jag*

*The matter got worse later in the evening - when Martin the bully went missing for several hours - no one could find him*

*I have to say - I was feeling really guilty - all sorts of things were going through my mind - maybe he's so upset - he's killed himself?*

*Praise God - he turned up a few hours later...*

The point is - don't' react like David - or like me

By all means stand up for injustice - but do it peacefully and with no payback and revenge in mind.

(pause)

[PowerPoint 3c-Abigail]

Then there's Abigail

### Abigail's character

- Abigail is like the woman in proverbs 31 - verses 10 to 12

*A wife of noble character who can find?*

*She is worth far more than rubies.*

*<sup>11</sup> Her husband has full confidence in her  
and lacks nothing of value.*

*<sup>12</sup> She brings him good, not harm,  
all the days of her life.*

- Abigail is **beauty** and **brains** - see v3
- When she hears what her husband has done
- She **acts quickly and wisely** to avoid a disaster
- She **doesn't tell her husband** v19- not because she is being deceitful or not submitting to her husband
- Rather - she knows **her husband won't listen**
- And **she also knows he will be killed if she doesn't do something quick**
- And oh - how she acts - she brings **a load of gifts** for David
- And acts with such **charm and gentleness and diplomacy**
- She **apologizes** and yet at the same time **gently points out that the Lord has prevented David from causing unnecessary bloodshed**

*You may have heard of a young Pakistani girl – Malala Yousafzai – she's a advocate for female education – who was shot as she travelled home on a bus after an exam - and she's the youngest winner of the Nobel Prize –*

*She said this: The best way to solve problems and to fight against war is through **dialogue***

I think some of our world leaders need to take on board this advice.

That's how Abigail solved the problem - through dialogue.

Applying our NT passage from Matthew 5 - verses 6 to 12 - to Abigail [If you'd like to turn there in your Bibles]

- Abigail *hungers and thirsts for righteousness* - v6 - and she is filled
- Abigail is *merciful* she prevents David from ruining his reputation and she *receives mercy herself* v7
- Abigail's actions are the opposite to David - she offers grace and mercy
- She is *pure in heart* v8 and *sees God in action* - as *God keeps David from making a terrible decision* - and she's sees God in action as she is *delivered from an evil husband, Nabal*
- She is a *peacemaker* v9 and she is *a child of God* held up in the bible as an *example for us* all to follow

Application - Abigail doesn't just accept the injustice she *makes a stand against injustice* and so must we - speaking out against all injustice

*She makes good the injustice her husband carried out* in a peaceful and wise way - so must we.

She stood against David's injustice in a *gracious and wise way* - so must we.

She handled injustice perfectly by *hungering for righteous, being merciful, showing grace, being pure in heart and being a peacemaker*. So must we.

## Jesus?

Who are we like?

Perhaps - if we're honest with ourselves - we have a bit of Nabal and David and Abigail - in us?

Who should we be like?

Hopefully Abigail

[PowerPoint 4d-Jesus]

Yet we must always *look to our Lord Jesus*

How did he deal with injustice?

He *stood against the injustice* of the Pharisees - *peacefully* - yet with *boldness* and *authority*

He taught the Jewish people - to *turn the other cheek* and to *love* their *enemies* and *pray* for those who *persecute* them

He went to the *cross willingly* doing the fathers will

He *didn't respond to the false* accusations

He *died for his enemies* giving them *grace* and a *second chance*

He said we were to *expect injustice* and that we will be *persecuted for following Him* and there is a *cost* for following Him

He said those who are *persecuted for doing the right thing* will be *blessed* with the kingdom of Heaven - v10

He said we will be *blessed* for *copping evil and copping false accusations* for following Jesus - v11

Yes, by all means, be *like Abigail*

But remember, our ultimate model - is *Jesus*

## Conclusion

### [PowerPoint 4-Conclusion]

To finish up then...

### [PowerPoint 4a-Sovereignty]

Overriding all of this story in Samuel - is *God's sovereignty - His rule over all things*

Out of His *grace* and *mercy*

- God sent Abigail to *prevent David doing wrong - saving David from sin* - which points to *Jesus who saves us from our sin* - if we care to believe in Him
- *God provided* David with a wonderful *wife, Abigail*
- God *prophesied through Abigail* - that David would be ruler of the land - David's dynasty will be a *lasting dynasty* - pointing of course to *Jesus' everlasting dynasty* - David's kingdom foreshadows Jesus' kingdom

### [PowerPoint 4b-Justice]

Ultimately God deals with the wicked and He is the one who dispenses justice.

The *only way to truly escape injustice* is to first accept that *God* is perfectly *just* and *humans* are inherently *unjust*.

Only when we are no longer concerned with making ourselves righteous can we trust the One who purifies us from sin (1 John 1:7) and makes the ungodly right with God (Romans 4:5) - that of course - is Jesus.

Then, as God's children, we can see clearly to combat the injustice around us - we need to *act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God* (as Micah 6:8 and James 1:27 says)

[PowerPoint 3c-Reward]

Yes, we must *stand up to injustice peacefully without retaliation* but we can also as in Matthew 5 - v12 - *rejoice* when we receive injustice as a Christian because we're *standing up for the name of Jesus* - and because our reward is literally out of this world - see v12 - and our *reward is in heaven*

Let's pray...