

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Samuel: God's Shift Of Israel From Apostasy Under The Judges To David's Reign

I. 1 Samuel: From Samuel To The Death Of Saul

Y. Productively Responding To Being Greatly Wronged

(1 Samuel 25:1-44)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

The lure often exists for one who is badly wronged to become so upset over it that he reacts destructively:

(1) Many face this temptation in the political realm: in a letter to the Republican-American, October 28, 2016, p. 8A, Richard Lazarski of Thomaston wrote, "We have to change the mind set of Washington, D. C. politicians. We need to restore law and order . . . We need to be honest and not a prisoner of 'political correctness.'"

(2) Thomas Sowell, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, California, voiced a similar complaint in his piece, "Leftists seldom challenged" (Ibid.). He claimed, "The left's near-monopoly in academia . . . cheats students out of practice in confronting opposing views on innumerable subjects . . ."

(3) We face it at the grassroots level: Brad Davis of "The Talk of Connecticut" last Friday noted that for the first time on record, the number of children ages 10-14 who die by suicide now exceeds the number of children in that age group who die by car accidents due to the pressures of social injustices being done to them in the social media!

(4) We face it locally: I've recently dealt with three heart-wrenching cases of people who were very wronged.

Need: Accordingly, we ask, "If we are greatly wronged, how does God want us to respond to it productively?!"

- I. Having been greatly wronged by Nabal, David was very tempted to take revenge, 1 Sam. 25:1-13, 21-22:**
- A. When Samuel died, David moved south into the desert of Paran to avoid a now-unrestrained Saul, and there he and his men faced livelihood shortages, 1 Samuel 25:1; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to 1 Samuel 25:1.
 - B. However, David then heard that Nabal of Carmel in Southern Judah (Ibid., fn. to 1 Sam. 25:2) was shearing sheep (1 Sam. 25:4), and as David had guarded Nabal's livestock in his "notoriously insecure" area bordering the desert, in line with Bedouin custom even today, David sent men to Nabal politely to ask payment for his services and modestly waited for a reply, 1 Sam. 25:15-16, 5-9 NIV; The Wycliffe Bible Com., 1971, p. 290.
 - C. Instead of responding according to custom, Nabal screamed (Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to 1 Sam. 25:14) at David's men, demeaning David by claiming that he was just an insubordinate servant to his master, Saul, 1 Sam. 25:10-11.
 - D. Angered at Nabal's vile, demeaning wrong to him, David told 400 of his men to don their swords while 200 of them were to stay behind with their baggage in preparation for attacking Nabal's family, 1 Samuel 25:12-13.
 - E. Then, as David's band approached Nabal's property, David mused over Nabal's injustice, working himself into a rage and promising to kill all the males in Nabal's family as in all-out war, 1 Sam. 25:21-22; Deut. 20:10-15.
- II. However, Nabal's wife Abigail was informed by one of Nabal's servants of the threat of David's revenge, so she quickly reacted in a wise, conciliatory, exemplary way for the good of all, 1 Sam. 25:14-20, 23-31:**
- A. Nabal's intelligent and beautiful wife Abigail (1 Sam. 25:3 NIV) did not know of the words between David's men and Nabal until she was told of it by one of Nabal's servants (1 Sam. 25:14-16), and the servant urged her to take action in light of Nabal's insensitivity to reason lest David's men destroy many people, 1 Samuel 25:17.
 - B. Abigail then exemplified how to respond to being badly wronged in a very wise way, 1 Samuel 25:18-20, 23-31:
 - 1. First, she quickly collected quality, prepared foods for David (1 Sam. 25:18a,b), put it on donkeys (1 Sam. 25:18c) and had her servants take these provisions on ahead to David as payment for his services, 1 Sam. 25:19a. She did not tell Nabal about her action lest he hinder her and David then attack, 1 Sam. 25:19b.
 - 2. Second, Abigail sent her servants on ahead not only quickly to placate David, but to allow time for her to make herself presentable, utilizing her beauty to help influence David positively, 1 Sam. 25:19b with 25:3.
 - 3. Third, Abigail then hurried to meet David, respectfully dismounting and bowing to the ground while admitting her foolish husband's error, explaining her ignorance of Nabal's initial refusal to pay David and beseeching him to accept her payment of quality, prepared foods, 1 Samuel 25:20, 23-25.
 - 4. Fourth, Abigail explained how it was in David's best interest not to avenge himself, 1 Sam. 25:26-31a:
 - a. Abigail told David that God was using her to keep him from sinning against the Lord by unbiblically avenging himself of a wrong against him, that God would avenge the wrong, 1 Sam. 25:26; Deut. 32:35.
 - b. She asked David to withhold his vengeance in view of his future reign when God had destroyed all of his enemies like God had led David to slay Goliath with a sling. She said that were David to take his own revenge, he would later regret it since he would have violated God's Word, 1 Samuel 25:27-31a.

5. [Fifth, though Abigail did not state it, her advice that David not to avenge himself was invaluable for David's future: were he to avenge himself of a man of Southern Judah, other Southern Judah folk who had sided with Saul against him might react to David's slaying of Nabal's kin by still opposing him when he became king. It was thus in David's best interest not to slay Nabal's kin that he might build trust in Judah!]
6. Sixth, with her own future welfare needs in mind, Abigail asked David to remember to help her as a widow when God cut off David's foes, including her evil husband who had wronged him, 1 Sam. 25:31b.

III. Abigail's action not only helped all involved, but David praised her wisdom, 1 Samuel 25:32-35:

- A. Impressed by Abigail's presentation, her payment for David's services and appeal to God's will for his life, David blessed the God of Israel for sending her to keep him from wrongly avenging himself, 1 Sam. 25:32-34.
- B. David thus accepted Abigail's payment and told her to return to her home in peace, 1 Samuel 25:35.

IV. When Abigail discreetly informed her foolish husband Nabal about his near escape from death, he was so shocked that he suffered a heart attack and died in judgment for wronging David, 1 Sam. 25:36-39a.

V. Seeing the value of having a newly widowed, beautiful, wise Abigail as a wife, David honored her request for help when she was widowed by proposing marriage to her, and she eagerly accepted, 25:39b-42.

***Lesson:** Abigail responded to the great wrong of her foolish husband that riled David's fury by (1) making proper payment to correct Nabal's wrong, by (2) approaching David in as positive a way as was possible to influence him to diffuse his anger, by (3) showing respect to the wronged David further to diffuse his anger, by (4) explaining God's will in urging David not to avenge himself and by (5) serving in David's best future interests. For their mutual commitments to righteousness, God rewarded Abigail and David, arranging for them to marry one another.*

***Application:** If badly wronged by a party and sorely tempted to take revenge, may we (1) trust in Christ to be saved and be indwelt by the Holy Spirit, John 3:16; Romans 8:9b. (2) Then, relying on the Holy Spirit, may we (a) do what we can to correct the wrong (b) in as positive a way as is possible, (c) may we focus on our respectable value before God to diffuse our anger, (d) may we recall God's interests in having us not avenge ourselves and (e) may we focus on our best long-term interests found by avoiding the sin of taking revenge.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

In our introduction, we referred to voter anger at injustice, and a lot of it is a deep-seated reaction to the oppression of unjust ideologies that are fueled by Satan. We thus apply 1 Samuel 25 to address this problem:

One ideology that is maddening to many voters is Marxism: Thomas Sowell's piece cited earlier (Ibid.) complained of its impact on "leftists" today, and he observed that "(n)o secular doctrine has so swept across the world so swiftly, and with such widespread political impact, as Marxism in the 20th century."

Another ideology inflaming many voters is Islam since it is being brutally promoted by Islamist terrorists who are in turn being tolerated by Marxist progressives. Conservative radio talk show hosts often claim that the lax illegal immigration promoted by Marxists opens the door for Islamist terrorists to enter America and commit acts of terror!

Incredibly, both Marxism and Islam are bedfellows fueled by Satan: (a) Brannon Howse's book, Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 15-16, tells of Alice Bailey (1880-1949) and her insight from a spirit being who predicted the future would be "predominantly the age of group interplay, group idealism and group consciousness . . . for the will of the individual will voluntarily be blended into group will." (Ibid., citing Bailey, The Rays and the Initiations, (1934-1947), p. 109) This is a key part of Marxism: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engel's work, "The Communist Manifesto," held that in their proposed society, "the living person is dependent and has no individuality." (learn-usa.com, "Goals, 'Communist Manifesto'" citing Marx and Engels, "The Communist Manifesto," p. 82)

(b) Also, "Islam" means submission to Allah's will and a "Muslim" is one who submits to Allah (SIM NOW, July-August, 1989, p. 5) with "slave submission" according to an unnamed Arab Christian leader. Islam thus counters individualism, helping to replace individualism with group consciousness as predicted by Alice Bailey's spirit guide.

Thus, if a voter faces either Marxism or Islam, he faces what was touted by a demonic spirit to Alice Bailey, so to confront these ideologies is to war in the angelic conflict where only God can win, Ephesians 6:12-18. It is thus a self-destructive trap for a voter to get so upset over Marxism's and/or Islam's rise, spread and/or toleration that he reacts by his own human ways and means since doing so can only wear himself out. Rather, he must rely by faith on the Holy Spirit and apply Scripture as Abigail urged David to do as opposed to taking revenge in his own might: he must thus let God work to counter the false, Satanically-fueled ideologies that he faces!

May we respond to bad wrongs by trusting in Christ for salvation. Then, may we heed Abigail's Biblically upright appeal to David and David's proper response to it in order to enjoy God's rich blessing.