

Introduction: All around the world people are confining themselves in silos of individualism, addicted to the dangerous virtual reality they carry in their hands at arm's length. Oblivious to the physical reality around them, they soak up random bits of information that reinforce the lesser parts of their humanity without any guidance other than from profit seeking algorithms. Humans created in the image of God are being de-humanized by other humans! *** The God of amazing, awesome love created a man, and a woman from the man, for a love relationship with them, and for them to have a love relationship with each other (Genesis 2:4-24; Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Leviticus 19:18). But, in a world where the vast majority of people are ignorant of God, life-sucking virtual reality is leaving desperate people 'looking for love in all the wrong places', credit to a song in the 1980 sleeper movie *Urban Cowboy*. *** The truth is God created people to know, love and serve Him. Each person has been given by God unique gifts, talents, life experiences and vocations that result in a unique understanding of life in this world. Even people who do not yet know the true God can be directed by the Holy Spirit to give helpful advice to others about how to live a good life. I can testify that whatever is good in me is the result of good advice I have taken from dozens of mentors. *** The people who do know God through Jesus have received the Holy Spirit who makes them able to give godly advice. All people need all the godly advice they can get. This is why Jesus promised the apostles in the Upper Room to send another Counselor to be with them forever (John 14:15-21). Everyone needs the advice of the Holy Spirit to make sense of the human advice he or she receives. *** The story of Abigail and David is an excellent illustration of the truth that everyone needs godly advice. In the priestly tribute to God's Word, we learn that God Himself is the best teacher of His people. The question for each of us is: What will I do with godly advice?

True believers are open to godly advice

Let's now seek God to give us advice from His Word.

I. Abigail's advice to David to leave blood revenge to Yahweh resulted in him praising Yahweh God, but Nabal's reaction to it was death to his heart and body. (1 Samuel 25:32-38)

A. David praises God for Abigail's advice to him that kept him from saving himself by taking revenge into his own hand. (Verses 32-35)

1. David said to Abigail: Blessed be Yahweh, God of Israel, who sent thee today to meet me; blessed be thy advice and ... thee, who have kept me back from bloodguilt and saving myself. (Verses 32-33)

Praise Yahweh God: David says Yahweh is to be blessed, praised, for sending Abigail to him.

Advice: He also blesses her advice, and her, for not taking the things of God into his own hand.

2. But indeed! (As) Yahweh, God of Israel, lives, who withheld me from doing evil to thee unless thou quickly came to meet me, surely not one remained to Nabal by morning light 'urinating against wall'. (Verse 34)

God through Abigail: David states the advice Abigail gave to him that he not have any blood guilt on him when he took the throne of Israel made all the difference in his behavior. Because David is a man after Yahweh's heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22) trusting Yahweh, he took Abigail's advice.

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3. Then David took from her hand what she brought to him, and said: Thou must go in peace to thy house, and thou must see I heard thy voice and lifted up thy face. (Verse 35)

Shalom: David sends her away in peace. The final blessing of Yahweh's three-fold blessing: Yahweh will lift His face on thee and give thee peace (Numbers 6:26). People who receive this blessing will have their faces lifted to Him.

B. When Nabal hears Abigail gave advice to his enemy, his heart became hard and dead, then Yahweh slew his body. (Verses 36-38)

1. Then Abigail came to Nabal and he (was) feasting in his house as the feast of a king, and Nabal's heart was good to him, and he was very much intoxicated; so, she told him nothing small or great until morning light. (Verse 36)

Nabal 'wasted': In modern parlance we would say Nabal was quite 'wasted'. So, Abigail was silent.

2. In the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things and his heart died in him and he was a stone; about ten days later, Yahweh slew him. (Verses 37-38)

Yahweh slays Nabal: Surely, Abigail often gave Nabal godly advice before. Now, Nabal hears her advice to David, which saved his life, and his heart turns to stone. So Yahweh slew him.

Contrast: When David said yes to her graciously given godly advice, he demonstrated his obedient faith to Yahweh as Abraham had (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6).

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Application: We must all be convinced by the Holy Spirit to be open to all the advice we receive to apply it in our lives according to God's Word and the guiding of the Holy Spirit.

II. After Nabal dies, David praises Yahweh again, then sends to Abigail to be his wife and she humbly accepts; the psalm writer tells of his love for God's Word and God who instructs him. (1 Samuel 25:39-44; Psalm 119:97-104)

A. When David heard what happened to Nabal, he again praised Yahweh; then, he sent word to Abigail to take her as his wife and she humbly accepted. (1 Samuel 25:39-44)

1. When David heard Nabal was dead, he said: Blessed be Yahweh who contended my scorning from Nabal; He has kept his servant from evil; and, Nabal's wickedness Yahweh returned on his head;

then David sent and spoke to Abigail to take her (as his) wife. (Verse 39)

Praise Yahweh: Again David blesses, praises, Yahweh because Abigail's advice had turned him away from cutting off in death Nabal and all his men.

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Fitting wife: He asked her to be his wife because her godliness would make him a better king.

2. When David's servants came to Abigail at Carmel they said: David sent us to thee to take thee (as his) wife; then, she rose and bowed her face to the ground and said: Behold! Thy handmaid is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord. (Verses 40-41)

Abigail's humility: Abigail's humility to David's servants is evidence of the greatness of her character.

3. Then Abigail quickly rose and mounted her donkey, and five of her female servants walking at her feet; then, she went behind David's messengers, and she was his wife. (Verse 42)

Some means: Abigail humbly agrees to be David's wife. She will not burden him because she brings five servants to tend her needs. According to Lemuel, she is a virtuous wife (Proverbs 31:10-31).

4. David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they became, both of them, his wives; Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Phalti, son of Laish from Gallim. (Verses 43-44)

David wrong: David is going against God's creation mandate (Genesis 2:23-25) because he took two wives after he was already married to Michal.

Saul wrong: And Saul defiles David's first wife, his daughter, by taking her and giving her to another man to be his wife (Hebrews 13:4).

Application: All of us, whether we are married or un-married, must support and speak the truth of God's plan for the sanctity of the covenant marriage of one man and one woman for life.

- B. The psalmist priest tells of his great love for God's Word and declares God Himself instructs him. (Psalm 119:97-104)

1. How I love Thy Torah / all day it (is) my meditation. (Verse 97)

Torah: Torah means instruction (given by God to Moses), in particular Deuteronomy.

The word meditation is used three times to describe a pious and devotional treatment of God's Word.

2. Thy commandments will make me wiser than my enemies / because until eternity, they are with me. (Verse 98)

Eternally to me: Sometimes God's Holy Spirit will take a commandment for all God's people and specially apply it beyond the plain sense meaning to one person who will say out loud to God: Thank You, I really needed that word today!

3. I have more insight than all my teachers / for Thy testimonies are my (pious) meditation //

I understand more than the elders / for Thy precepts I have preserved. (Verses 99-100)

Double witness: First, because he devotionally meditates on God's testimonies, he has been given more insight than all teachers. Second, by obediently preserving God's precepts, he understands more than the elders.

4. From every evil path, I have kept back my feet / in order that I will keep Thy Word. (Verse 101)

Kept from evil: David was kept from doing evil because of Abigail's intervention. David's son Solomon would be given some Proverbs about the necessity of turning from evil with God's help (3:7; 4:27; 12:26; 14:16).

5. From Thy ordinances I did not turn aside / because Thou, even Thou, have taught me. (Verse 102)

Best teacher: The word for taught is *yah-rah*. Its noun is *to-rah*. God teaches according to His Torah in Deuteronomy, the culmination of God's instruction to His people who love Him.

Those who love God's Word want Him to instruct them

Application: We must always be open to God teaching us as we read God's Word to store it in our hearts and minds to meditate on it to get wisdom to do what is right in the true love of God (Ephesians 4:15-16).

6. How sweet to my taste are Thy Words / more than honey in my mouth. (Verse 103)

Sweet as honey: Honey comes directly from God's creation order through flowers and bees.

It is far sweeter and better than humanly refined and processed sugar from vegetables.

7. From Thy precepts I gain understanding / therefore I hate every false way. (Verse 104)

Understanding: Understanding goes beyond mere knowledge of facts about God.

Hate false way: All who love God must be taught by Him to strive against and hate what is false.

Application: Let us join in God's spiritual warfare against evil and be moved to stand in the gap to deliver and protect our neighbors from the punishment of God on our evil nation (Ezekiel 22:23-30).

Conclusion: From God's Word we have seen the importance of God-given advice. David praised Yahweh God because Abigail's advice to him kept him from taking revenge into his own hands. In contrast, Nabal who had no use for God had his heart turn to stone as a result of Abigail's godly advice to his enemy. The end of all this was that David gained a humble and godly wife. The priest author of the psalm sums it all up by declaring his great love for all of God's Word and gives thanks for the instruction he receives from God Himself.

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