

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

Apr 17

MONDAY

David heard that Nabal was dead, and he gave thanks to the Lord for being a just God who returned Nabal's own wickedness upon him.

READ: I Samuel 25:39

When David hears that Nabal is dead, he thanks God (1) that God took matters into His own hands and vindicated David; (2) that God had prevented him from killing the man himself; and (3) that God demonstrated again His perfect justice. While we also rejoice in God's work, it's difficult for us to rejoice in the death of those who are eternally lost. We are wrong to rejoice when trouble comes to others, and dying without a relationship with God though Jesus Christ is trouble. But, like David, we can thank and bless the Lord that He is working out His purposes even when we do not see those purposes clearly. He's doing that today. In the death of some. And in the lives of others. Working out His purposes for our eternal good and His eternal glory!

TUESDAY

David immediately sought the widow to be his own wife. He sent servants to bring her back to the palace for the wedding. Abigail greeted the servants kindly, and with five of her own personal servants, returned to the palace, and married David.

READ: I Samuel 25:40-42

We see an amazing contrast here, do we not! Abigail takes five damsels with her to the palace, a gesture which speaks of her position, status, and wealth. Yet, she washes the feet of David's servants who came to arrange the trip. By doing so, she was indicating that she would gladly be even a servant in the palace of the king; even a servant to the servants of the palace. In short, she esteemed not herself. In the end, Abigail is a good example of great courage, wisdom, and humility.

WEDNESDAY

David also married Ahinoam about this time, perhaps before Abigail, since she is listed first. And he had already been married to Michal, Saul's daughter who had been "awarded" to him, but the king had given her to another man.

READ: I Samuel 25:43-44

Here's another example that David is a man "like unto us." David followed the heathen custom of his day, taking multiple wives (2 here with more to follow). Perhaps he would blame Saul for this: he's the one who kept David and the bride of his youth, Michal, apart. How different his married life might have been is they had lived together as one flesh. But we deceive ourselves if we think that the actions of others can cloak our own sin. How crucial is it that we stay far away from what God tells us to avoid!

THURSDAY

The Ziphites tried again to deliver David to Saul, sending word to the King that David was near Hachilah. Saul took three thousand troops to catch David there. David, hiding in the wilderness, sent out spies who reported that the king and his troops had camp near by. David himself sneaked to the outskirts of the camp and saw the king and his

general, Abner, sleeping with the three thousand men circled around him.

READ: I Samuel 26:1-5

The last time we read about Saul, he was calling David his son, and slinking home in shame for having wanted to hurt him. How much time has gone by, we do not know, but enough so that Saul is his old self. The Ziphites, unaware of what had happened, notify Saul of David's location. Maybe they had fed Saul other information about David which would have alarmed the king. In any case, with evil intent, Saul pursues David. When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," this is the sort of thing we are asking the Lord to deliver us from. From being swayed by the evil around us. From listening to voices within and without which would plant doubt and fear in our hearts.

FRIDAY

David asked for a volunteer to accompany him on a dangerous mission, right into the heart of Saul's camp. Abishai volunteered. So he and David stealthily made their way through the surrounding soldiers right to the trench where Saul was sleeping. Abishai realizes that this is a golden opportunity and he offers to kill Saul with his own spear.

READ: I Samuel 26:6-9

This sounds very much like a previous episode, doesn't it: when Saul, wanting to take a nap, wandered into the very cave in which David and his men were hiding. But this time, David has taken the initiative and instigated the action. Still, he is consistent with his former resolution: that he will not touch the Lord's anointed. Do we not see David as one who is growing in spiritual things? Just previously, he had taken things into his own hands and was at the point of killing Nabal and his men. And God spared him from that, and David had proclaimed that justice belongs to God. Now David sees that the same truth fits this case, too. Applying past lessons to the experiences of today brings growth. The kind of growth we so urgently need in our lives today.

SATURDAY

Continuing to explain why he will not kill the king himself, David told Abishai that the Lord will somehow cause Saul to die. He instructed Abishai to take the spear and bottle of water which were by Saul's side. Abishai did so, and then they went back to their own camp, creeping past thousands of men who were enjoying an unusually deep sleep which the Lord had placed upon them.

READ: I Samuel 26:10-12

Previously, pride had played a role in David cutting off a piece of Saul's robe while he slept. This time, it's not pride at all; it's integrity. David determines to demonstrate once and for all, his loyalty to Saul. After grabbing the spear and the water jug, they "got them away", the King James quaintly puts it, past a sleeping army. To accomplish His purposes, the Lord put an entire army to sleep! What will the Lord do in our lives, I wonder, to work out His purposes in us and through us? Maybe put an entire congregation to sleep? I don't think so. More likely, He will wake us up! #26