

# **Knucklehead Nabal**

1 Samuel 25

David Feddes

# Knucklehead Nabal

**knuck·le·head** [nuhk-uhl-hed]–noun

*Informal.* a stupid, bumbling, inept person.

Synonyms: blockhead, bonehead, dolt, dullard, dummkopf, dunce, dunderhead, fool, halfwit, idiot, ignoramus, knothed, moron, nitwit, numskull, oaf, simpleton

# Three Angles on a Knucklehead

- **Nabal:** What if you're a knucklehead?
- **Abigail:** What if your spouse or boss is a knucklehead?
- **David:** What if you're wronged by a knucklehead?

# What if you're a knucklehead?

*Having everything going for you does not prove that you're smart or good.*

- **Great wealth:** “The man was very rich.”
- **Great wife:** “The name of his wife Abigail. The woman was discerning and beautiful.”
- **Great heritage:** “He was a Calebite.”

## What others see

- **His servant** says: “He is such a worthless man that one cannot speak to him.” (25:17)
- **A friendly stranger** (and future king) says: “He has returned me evil for good.” (25:21)
- **His wife** says: “Let not my lord regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is with him.” (25:25)
- **His God** says: “The man was harsh and badly behaved.” (25:3))

# Knucklehead dangers

- A knucklehead can turn a huge opportunity into a huge disaster.
- A knucklehead endangers people under him and around him. (Nabal and Saul)
- A knucklehead endangers himself:  
*A man who remains stiff-necked after many rebukes will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy. (Prov 29:1)*

# Ultimate danger

- Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him. (Psalm 2:12)
- How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has spurned the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace? (Heb 10:29)

## **What if your spouse or boss is a knucklehead?**

- Nabal's servant faced facts about his boss and acted to stop disaster.
- Abigail saw her husband's folly and took action contrary to his wishes.
- If you work for a knucklehead or are married to a knucklehead, do what you can to prevent damage to others, even if you must go against his wishes.



## **Faith's foresight**

“Please forgive the trespass of your servant. For the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the Lord... And when the Lord has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you prince over Israel ... when the Lord has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant.” (25:28-31)

# What if you're wronged by a knucklehead?

- Reject rage and revenge.
- Revenge flames out of control and causes more hurt than the original offense.
  - Nabal insulted and wronged David, and David wanted to repay insult with death.
  - David's furious revenge was going to destroy not only Nabal but all of Nabal's male family members and workers.

# What's your sword?

*David also strapped on his sword. (25:13)*

- ... **tongues** are sharp swords (Psalm 57:4)
- ... with swords in their **lips** (Psalm 59:7)
- ... evildoers, who whet their **tongues** like swords, who aim **bitter words** like arrows (Psalm 64:2-3)
- There is one whose **rash words** are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. (Proverbs 12:18)

# Handling hurts

- When you're provoked, slow down and cool down before taking any action.
- Listen when a wise person speaks.
- Realize who else you might hurt in getting revenge on your enemy.
- Be sure of your God-given identity and destiny, rather than reacting to insults.
- Let the Lord settle the score.



# **Overcome evil with good**

Repay no one evil for evil... Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:17-21)

## **Recognizing God's hand**

“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! Blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodguilt and from avenging myself with my own hand!” (25:31-32)

“Blessed be the Lord who has avenged the insult I received at the hand of Nabal, and has kept back his servant from wrongdoing. The Lord has returned the evil of Nabal on his own head.” (25:39)