

When Mothers are Wise James 3:13-18

13 **Who is wise and understanding among you?** Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. 17 **But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.** 18 **Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.**

This passage in James is our text for our mother's day message but the illustration of this is taken from the book of 1 Samuel.

- I. Who is wise and understanding among you?
 - A. This is not the wisdom of this world that he speaks of in v 14,
 1. 14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.
 2. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above,
 - a. but is earthly,
 - b. sensual,
 - c. demonic.
 3. 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.
 - B. Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.
 - C. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is
 1. first pure,
 2. then peaceable,
 3. gentle,
 4. willing to yield,
 5. full of mercy
 6. and good fruits,
 7. without partiality and
 8. without hypocrisy.

- D. 18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
1. One Man has been shown us by God, in whom His ideal of man was embodied ; and He, ' when He was reviled, reviled not again ; when He suffered, threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously :' He for those who nailed Him to the tree prayed, 'Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.' The world's spirit of wrath, then, must be folly; whilst than a spirit of meekness like His, in the midst of controversy, oppositions, trials of whatever kind, there can be no surer evidence that 'Jesus is made of God to His people wisdom.' *Johnstone, Robert, D.D*

Now we turn to our illustration of these characteristics.

First let us consider Abigail and Nabal. They were both successful and wealthy. Nabal no doubt was a good business man. No one got ahead of him. He had become very wealthy as is seen by the number of animals and servants that he had.

Abigail was also well organized and ran the household in great efficiency. She sounds like the Proverbs 31 woman that we read about.

Most people would have envied this couple, but the two could not have been farther apart in their personalities.

It is one of the many stories about David. After David was anointed King of Israel, Saul tried to kill David. David had to flee for his life and with him was an army of about 600 men.

David stayed on the peripheral of Saul's kingdom and provided protection for the many farmers and herders that lived in that area.

One such man was Nabal from the area south of Hebron.

Nabal was sheering his sheep and was having a great feast and he was a wealthy man.

So David sent some of the young men to request of Nabal a portion of the things they had brought together for the feast.

But Nabal treated them poorly and sent them away in shame. This is where our story picks up in 1 Samuel 25.

1. What David had done for Nabal.
 - a. 1 Samuel 25:14-35 (NKJV) 14 Now one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them. 15 But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields. 16 They were a wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep.
2. The Warning

- a. 17 Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him."
3. Abigail takes action.
 - a. 18 Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys. 19 And she said to her servants, "Go on before me; see, I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. 20 So it was, as she rode on the donkey, that she went down under cover of the hill; and there were David and his men, coming down toward her, and she met them.
4. What David had decided.
 - a. 21 Now David had said, "Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him. And he has repaid me evil for good. 22 May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who belong to him by morning light."
5. Abigail meets David
 - a. 23 Now when Abigail saw David, she hastened to dismount from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. 24 So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be! And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant.
 - i. Notice how she knows that David is a man of justice and peace, so she throws herself on David's mercy.
 - ii. Let this iniquity be on me, she says.
 - b. 25 Please, let not my lord regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his name is, so is he: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him.
 - i. She admits the wrong of her husband and pleads for mercy.
 - ii. Remember how wisdom is willing to yield to right.
 - c. But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent.
6. She pleads in the LORD'S name
 - a. 26 Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD lives and as your soul lives, since the LORD has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal.
7. She has come to rectify the situation with all the goods she has brought.

- a. 27 And now this present which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord.
- 8. She admits fault and pleads for forgiveness.
 - a. 28 Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant.
- 9. She has wisdom to know who God is blessing and who will be king.
 - a. For the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the LORD, and evil is not found in you throughout your days.
- 10. She mentions King Saul but not by name.
 - a. 29 Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, as from the pocket of a sling. 30 And it shall come to pass, when the LORD has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel, 31 that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."
- 11. David recognizes the had of God in all of this.
 - a. 32 Then David said to Abigail: "Blessed is the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me!
- 12. He recognizes the wisdom in her words and her actions.
 - a. 33 And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. 34 For indeed, as the LORD God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hastened and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!"
 - b. 35 So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person."
- 13. When Abigail reveals to Nabal what has happened he dies. V-36-38
- 14. David takes action to have this very wise woman as his wife.
 - a. 1 Samuel 25:39-42 (NKJV) 39 So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the LORD, who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! For the LORD has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head."
 - b. And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. 40 When the

servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife."

- c. 41 Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, "Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord."
 - i. She did not see herself as a Queen in this new kingdom but as a servant.
- d. 42 So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife.

Key Scripture Passages

James 3:13-18

1 Samuel 25:14- 35, 39-42

Julie-Allyson Ieron, Names of Women of the Bible Study Guide: Julie-Allyson Ieron, (Park Ridge, IL: Joy Media, 2010), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Study Session 1. Women Whose Actions Were Wise: Corresponds with Chapters 2, 3, 6, 7".