

David: Shaping a Godly Heart

Beauty and the Beast

1 Samuel 25

One of the most intriguing dramas in the OT



- ❑ Sandwiched between chapters on Saul's pursuit
- ❑ One-chapter "play" about handling hostility

1 Samuel 25:1-3 NIV

- *Now Samuel died, and all Israel assembled and mourned for him; and they buried him at his home in Ramah. Then David moved down into the Desert of Maon. (2) A certain man in Maon, who had property there at Carmel, was very wealthy. He had a thousand goats and three thousand sheep, which he was shearing in Carmel. (3) His name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but her husband, a Calebite, was surly and mean in his dealings.*

Three Leading Characters



- ❑ Two leading men and a leading lady
- ❑ You will identify with one of the main characters
- ❑ They represent the good/bad in human nature

Act I – Payday in the land of Carmel

Scene 1: In the desert

1 Samuel 25:4-8 NIV



- *While David was in the desert, he heard that Nabal was shearing sheep. (5) So he sent ten young men and said to them, "Go up to Nabal at Carmel and greet him in my name. (6) Say to him: 'Long life to you! Good health to you and your household! And good health to all that is yours! (7)'" "Now I hear that it is sheep-shearing time.*

1 Samuel 25:4-8 NIV



- *When your shepherds were with us, we did not mistreat them, and the whole time they were at Carmel nothing of theirs was missing. (8) Ask your own servants and they will tell you. Therefore be favorable toward my young men, since we come at a festive time. Please give your servants and your son David whatever you can find for them.'"*

The desert is tough country

- ❑ But it is suitable for fleeing pursuers
- ❑ David and his men had become the neighborhood patrol
- ❑ They protected the residents and flocks from marauders
 - *1 Samuel 25:16 NIV*
Night and day they were a wall around us all the time we were herding our sheep near them.

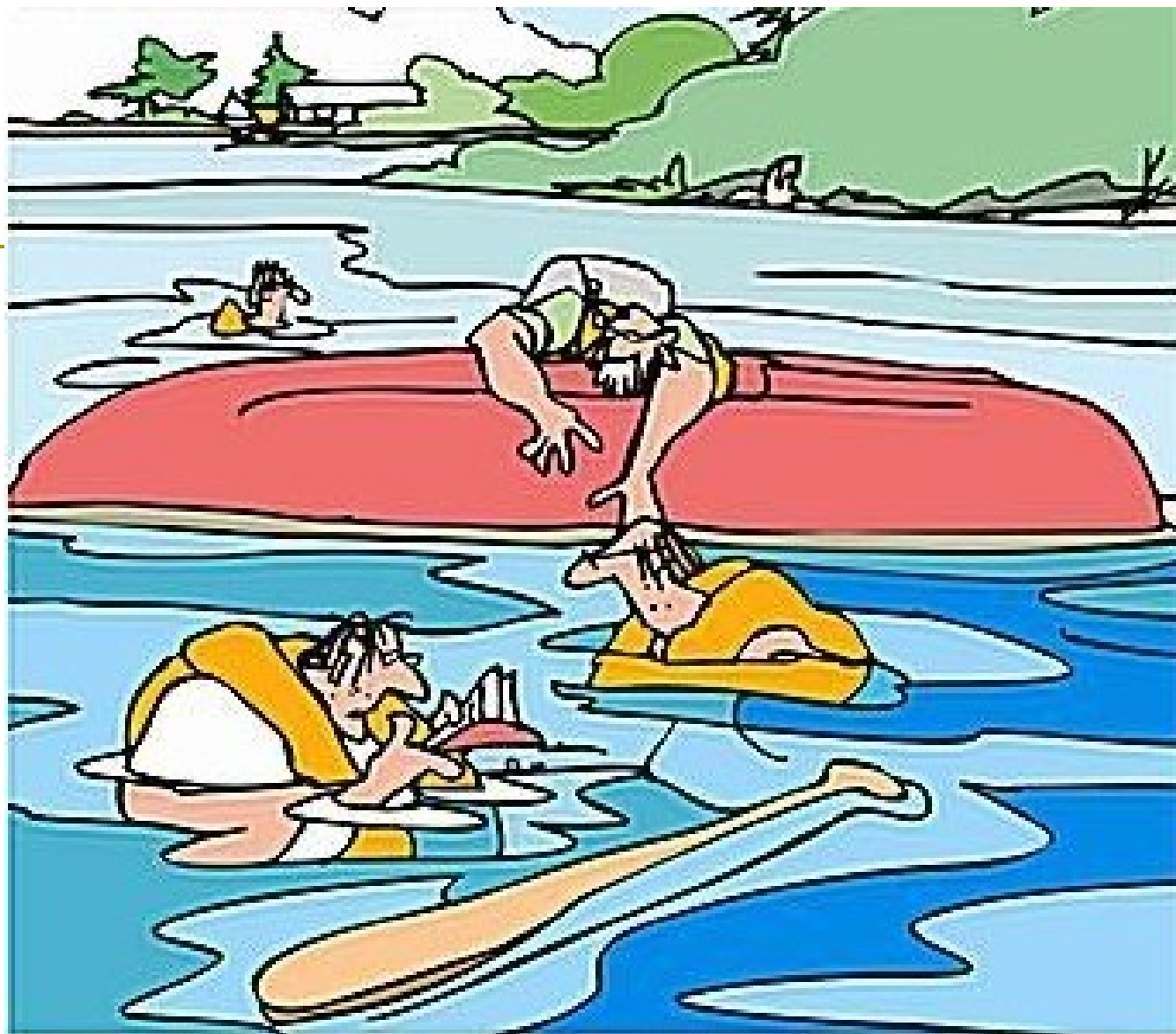


Customary kindness



"It's a good idea to tip first. That way I know what level of service you expect."

- ❑ Customary to give gifts to those who have served you
- ❑ No rule requires it
- ❑ You can get out of a restaurant without it
- ❑ But we all know it is the thing to do



“It’s right here in the brochure:
‘Be sure to tip your fishing guide.’”



BROWN.

David's men: "How about a bonus?"

- They protected Nabal's flocks from others
- They didn't even take food for themselves
 - Doing so would have been expected
- David is not engaged in a "protection" racket
- He is not seeking a specific amount
 - He is not invoicing Nabal for his time (e.g. 1,000 hours @ \$1 per hour)



Scene 2 – At the Ranch

- *1 Samuel 25:9-11 NIV* When David's men arrived, they gave Nabal this message in David's name. Then they waited. (10) Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days. (11) Why should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men coming from who knows where?"

Nabal's response & heritage



- Response: Casts aspersions on David
- "I'm not going to give one penny to a runaway slave. I hear there are a lot of slaves running away these days."

Nabal's response & heritage



- Heritage
- Remember the Ziphites who planned to turn David over to Saul?
 - They were of the same tribe as David - *1 Samuel 23:19-20*
- Nabal is also a descendant of Caleb – of the tribe of Judah
 - Early in David's life, his own people gave him the least respect.

Scene 3 – Back in camp

- ❑ Principle: You never know what a hungry man will do. An otherwise rational man may become irrational.



- ❑ Imagine your waitress coming after you with a sword because you didn't leave her a tip!

David may be overreacting



- He takes 400 armed men to go after one fool
 - Like killing a cockroach with a shotgun.
 - It'll get the job done, but it's over-the-top.

- David: a man of extremes
 - One day he can kill the man who has taken everything from him, and he refuses to do so.
 - Later, he flies into a rage over an insult.

Nabal has stung David's ego

- David's response:
"I've taken a lot off of Saul, but I'm not going to take anything off of Nabal."



- *1 Samuel 25:21 NIV* David had just said, "It's been useless--all my watching over this fellow's property in the desert so that nothing of his was missing. He has paid me back evil for good."



STRIFE

AS LONG AS WE HAVE EACH OTHER, WE'LL NEVER RUN OUT OF PROBLEMS.

The extremes we will go to in response to an insult



- *Proverbs 26:4 NIV*
Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you will be like him yourself.
- David's sin: anger
- Act 1 closes with David's men riding to a massacre.

Act II – Enter our Heroine



Scene 1 – Back at the Ranch

1 Samuel 25:14-17 NIV

- *One of the servants told Nabal's wife Abigail: "David sent messengers from the desert to give our master his greetings, but he hurled insults at them. (15) Yet these men were very good to us. They did not mistreat us, and the whole time we were out in the fields near them nothing was missing.*

1 Samuel 25:14-17 NIV

- *(16) Night and day they were a wall around us all the time we were herding our sheep near them. (17) Now think it over and see what you can do, because disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him."*

The servants tell Abigail what has happened

- ❑ The servants had tried to talk sense into Nabal, but they failed.
- ❑ Sidelight: Employers, don't let your employees talk like this about you. "We can't talk to him."





BEAUTY

IF YOU'RE ATTRACTIVE ENOUGH ON THE OUTSIDE,
PEOPLE WILL FORGIVE YOU FOR BEING IRRITATING TO THE CORE.

Reflections on Abigail



- Her parents pledged her to the richest man
 - From the best family
 - Owned a big spread
 - “Our daughter couldn’t have done better!”
- Others were jealous
 - She rode in the nicest chariots and wore the newest clothes
 - She was trapped in a marriage she didn’t make and didn’t want



ROMANCE

WITH A DOSE OF REALITY.....



DESTINY

YOU WERE MEANT FOR ME. PERHAPS AS A PUNISHMENT.

Abigail's choices:

- ❑ The servants told her:
“If you don't do something, you're going to be a widow!”
- ❑ Her choices:
 - “Alright!” – Do nothing
 - “Let's pray” – Sound spiritual
- ❑ For better or worse, he was her husband and she protected him – even from himself



Prepared a buffet for 400

- *1 Samuel 25:18-19 NIV* Abigail lost no time. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys. (19) Then she told her servants, "Go on ahead; I'll follow you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

She didn't tell Nabal



- ❑ He would've told her not to go.
- ❑ Submission does not mean you have to turn off discernment.
- ❑ She was doing what was right for the family – saving Nabal and innocent others.
- ❑ You don't have to be a doormat in order to be a godly wife.

Scene 2 – In the Valley

- *1 Samuel 25:20-24 NIV* As she came riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, there were David and his men descending toward her, and she met them. (21) David had just said, "It's been useless--all my watching over this fellow's property in the desert so that nothing of his was missing. He has paid me back evil for good. (22) May God deal with David, be it ever so severely, if by morning I leave alive one male of all who belong to him!"

Scene 2 – In the Valley

- *(23) When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. (24) She fell at his feet and said: "My lord, let the blame be on me alone. Please let your servant speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. 1 Samuel 25:20-24 NIV*

Abigail gives one of the great speeches in the Bible

- *1 Samuel 25:25-31 NIV* May my lord pay no attention to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name--his name is Fool, and folly goes with him. But as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my master sent. (26) "Now since the LORD has kept you, my master, from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, as surely as the LORD lives and as you live, may your enemies and all who intend to harm my master be like Nabal.

Abigail gives one of the great speeches in the Bible

- *(27) And let this gift, which your servant has brought to my master, be given to the men who follow you. (28) Please forgive your servant's offense, for the LORD will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my master, because he fights the Lord's battles. Let no wrongdoing be found in you as long as you live. (29) Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my master will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the LORD your God.*

Abigail gives one of the great speeches in the Bible

- ▣ *But the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling. (30) When the LORD has done for my master every good thing he promised concerning him and has appointed him leader over Israel, (31) my master will not have on his conscience the staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having avenged himself. And when the LORD has brought my master success, remember your servant." 1 Samuel 25:25-31 NIV*

Subtitle: “A cool hand on a hot head”



- “Consider the source”
 - Nabal means “fool”. No mother ever named her son “fool”. That is a name he had to earn.
- “Consider the consequences”
 - The next king of Israel ought to have more on his mind that an insult. “With one rock you killed a giant, and now you’ve got 400 men to go after a fool?”

David's response

- *1 Samuel 25:32-34 NIV David said to Abigail, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. (33) May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. (34) Otherwise, as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak."*

He saw God's hand in Abigail's mission



- ❑ He could back down from a rash promise. In front of his men, he admitted his mistake.
- ❑ Can you back down?
 - Have you ever made a rash vow and later wished you hadn't?
 - Did you back down? Or did you try to save face by following through?

Men who didn't back down:



- ❑ Darius put Daniel in the lion's den, when he should've said, "That's a dumb law!"
- ❑ Herod made a promise to the daughter of the wife he shouldn't have had. He promised her the head of John the Baptist and couldn't back down.
- ❑ If good judgment dictates change, we must, even if it is embarrassing to do so.

Act III – A romantic ending



Scene 1 – Back at the ranch

Nabal has made a bunch of money



- ❑ Throws a party for himself.
- ❑ Abigail comes home to inebriation, instead of appreciation.
- ❑ He wouldn't celebrate, if he knew what was about to happen.
- ❑ Abigail told him. He fell into a coma and died.

Scene 2 – Happy ending

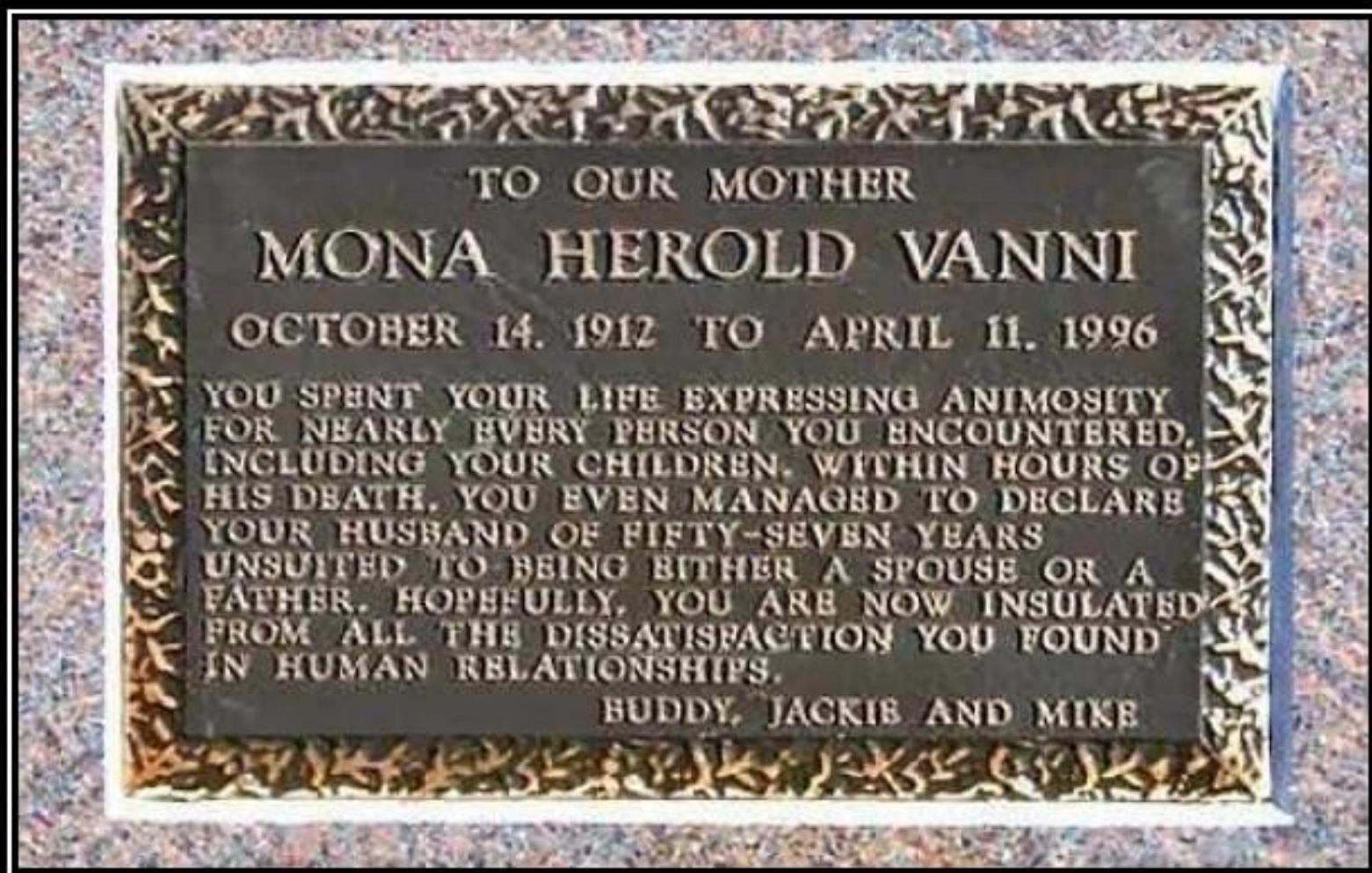


- ❑ Praise God – No pious pretense.
- ❑ “Abigail made the best fig cakes I ever had. I think I’ll marry her!”
- ❑ Abigail was ready to serve. David was not going to let her get away.
- ❑ Applications:

Remember the importance of your character

- ❑ Nabal had everything: health & wealth.
- ❑ God doesn't look at the outside, but the inside.
- ❑ Nabal may be the fool Jesus thought about in *Luke 12:15-21*
- ❑ God is not looking for what you have, but what you are.





MEMORIES

TRY TO BE NICE.....

Remember the importance of your commitment



- ❑ Abigail's philosophy about a difficult marriage is foreign
- ❑ She viewed marriage as a covenant
- ❑ She was committed to stay in the marriage, even if it was bad
- ❑ She had made a commitment to Nabal – and to the Lord



MARRIAGE

TAKES ALOT OF WORK.....

Remember the importance of your calling

- ❑ David could not afford to get sidetracked from God's purposes
- ❑ We tend to forget our calling not in the big challenges, but in the small ones
- ❑ God has called us to more important things than the petty gripes that eat at us





PERSPECTIVE

....IT'S HARD TO SEE THE THINGS CLOSEST TO YOU.

Ephesians 4:1-2 NIV

- *As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. (2) Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.*
- God doesn't give patience on credit, but day-by-day.
- Look at yourself in the mirror. Are you more like:
 - Nabal?
 - Abigail?
 - David?