

Abigail – A Study of Courage

Widows of the Old Testament

Student Study Guide

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Review of Ruth

- a. In our last study, we learned about Ruth, the Moabitess. What do you recall about her background and first marriage?
- b. What did Ruth do after her husband died? How did God provide for her?
- c. Share something God has done for you this past week or a need for prayer.

Prayer

Abigail – A Study of Courage

“I will praise the LORD, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me. I have set the LORD always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure” (Psalm 16:7-9).

We will see courage acted out in this study. Caleb, Samuel, David and Abigail were all courageous servants of God. Courage is described as boldness, bravery, fortitude and valor.

As this study opens the times of the judges had reached an end, with Samuel (and his sons) being the last of the judges.

1. Abigail’s father was a descendant of _____ who was of the tribe of _____.
2. According to Joshua 14:6-14 Caleb was _____ years old when he was one of twelve spies whom Moses sent into _____ to spy out the land. All the spies except _____ and _____ were afraid to take the land at that time for fear of the _____. Israel then wandered in the wilderness for forty years until all who were afraid to go in had _____. Then God enabled them to enter Canaan under Joshua’s leadership.

Read Deuteronomy 31:6, 8

Discuss: Do you believe that the same words God gave Joshua and the Israelites are words He has for you today in your difficult situations?

3. When the land was divided between the tribes, Caleb requested his area, of Judah's appointed land, where the _____ (Anakites) lived. He was _____ years old when he said " _____ " and conquered it in battle.

4. Samuel grew up in the _____ in Shiloh. _____, a judge and priest, taught him to love and serve the LORD.

5. What did Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, take into battle with them and what happened? _____

Why did they take the Ark with them? _____

Only faith in God and His power could save them.

Discuss: Will going to church or baptism save you from eternal death – eternal separation from God (See Mark 16:15-16)?

6. When Eli heard that Hophni and Phinehas had died, what happened to him? _____ . Who became judge and priest in his place? _____

7. How did Abigail learn about the history of Caleb, Eli and Samuel? _____

8. Samuel "cried unto the LORD" (prayed) for Israel and " _____ ." The name Samuel means _____ (pg. 68).

Discuss: Through all the difficult times, Samuel rehearsed the words of the people in the ears of the LORD. Read 1 Samuel 8:21 (KJV). Would doing this same thing now, make a difference in your life? Would you like to share an example?

9. Why did the nation of Israel ask for a king? _____ . Samuel anointed _____ as king. When Israel rejected Samuel as their leader, whom did God say they were actually rejecting? _____. What three offices did Samuel hold? _____, _____, and _____.

10. When Abigail was a girl, her father told her about a youth named _____ who slew the Philistine giant _____ with a _____ from a _____ and cut off his head with Goliath's own _____ (pg. 69). Abigail loved to hear the story of this brave young Israelite over and over.

Discuss: David said "The battle is the LORD's." Read 1 Samuel 17:45-51. How does this scripture encourage you today?

11. Abigail's father arranged for her to marry _____, a _____ from Carmel in the desert of Maon. In what way do you think this was or was not a good choice? _____

Discuss: What character qualities do you hope and pray for, in mates for your children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews?

12. In living with this difficult man, Abigail learned to do what Samuel had done; she brought to the LORD's ears the _____ and _____ of _____ and the LORD would _____ her and _____ her _____ what to do. Abigail learned to conquer the giants of _____ and _____ (pg. 70).

13. _____ and _____ provided models of spiritual strength and hope for Abigail. When Samuel died, all Israel mourned for him. David and his men camped in the _____ where he protected Nabal's men and flocks (1 Samuel 23:24-29). Then David's group moved north to En Gedi, where he was pursued by _____ with _____ soldiers (1 Samuel 24:1-22).

Read 1 Samuel 25:1-8

14. Samuel was the link between the time when Israel was a _____ under _____ rule, and the time Israel was a _____ under the rule of a _____. Why was the rule of the kingdom eventually removed from Saul and his family (pg. 71)? _____

15. How many years did the LORD prepare David from the time of his anointing to the time he became king? _____. "So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised" (Hebrews 10:35-36).

Read 1 Samuel 25:9-11

16. David and his men's watchful care promoted Nabal's prosperity. An eastern chieftain would normally have shown gratefulness with rich rewards. How did Nabal respond?

Read 1 Samuel 25:12-13

17. How did David respond to Nabal's actions? _____

Discuss: Why did David spare King Saul's life, yet desire vengeance on Nabal? "I will not lift my hand against my master, because he is the LORD's anointed" (1 Samuel 24:10b).

Do you ever make decisions without considering the long-range consequences to you and those you love?

Read 1 Samuel 25:14-17

18. Why did the servant rush to Abigail with news of the problem? _____

Discuss: Abigail may have remembered Caleb's and David's success against giants and believed God could give her victory in facing this challenge. Can you think of any giants we are up against in our present day society? Have you faced any giants in your life?

1 Samuel 25:18-19 (5 seahs is about 1 bushel).

19. Abigail oversaw, with haste, the preparations and loading of the food on donkeys. Why do you think she did not tell her husband? _____

Discuss: Whom do you speak to first for wisdom? Pastor? Friend? A relative? Husband? "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you" (Psalm 32:8).

Read 1 Samuel 25:20-22

20. What was David's last statement in this passage? _____

How did God intervene? _____

Discuss: Has God ever asked you to do something courageous, difficult or dangerous? “This is the word of the LORD . . . ‘Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit’, says the LORD Almighty” (Zechariah 4:6).

Read 1 Samuel 25:23-25

21. Abigail showed _____ by bowing low. Humility is an attitude of _____ as we recognize that all we have is _____. How did Abigail appease David’s anger? _____

Read 1 Samuel 25:26-29

22. Who kept David from bloodshed and seeking vengeance? _____. He used _____ overcomes foolishness (pg. 77). Abigail gave a _____ and sought _____.

Discuss: The Bible, in Romans 6:23, says we are sinful creatures deserving death. Who is our peace offering?

23. Abigail, by God’s Spirit, foretold that David would have a _____ because he fought _____. “[Jesus] will be great and will be called the _____ of the _____. The LORD God will give him the throne of _____ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; _____ will never end.” (Luke 1:32-33).

24. David was strongly urged _____ through all his life (1 Samuel 25:28).

Consider: How do you keep from yielding to wrongdoing? How do you respond to hardships? Is God training you to seek Him? Are you pleasing God?

25. God gave Abigail insight which she shared with David. Concerning his struggle to flee from Saul, she prophesied that though his life was threatened, he would be kept safe and secure by God. She used _____ to speak to David. She probably grew up around _____ and could speak his language clearly to relate on a _____ and _____ level. God used Abigail to be an _____ to David’s heart and a _____ to his soul (pg. 79).

Consider: Has God sent anyone to you who could speak to your heart and soul; a person who understood you? Has God used you to speak to someone who needed encouragement, a challenge or a rebuke? Is He speaking to you now about someone you should go to?

Read 1 Samuel 25:30-31

26. Such an understanding greeting and prophetic utterance could only be given by a person filled with God's _____; the Spirit of Truth and Knowledge.

Consider: In Ephesians 5:18b God commands us, as His children, to "be filled with the Holy Spirit." As we yield to Him in obedience to His Word, His Spirit fills us.

Read 1 Samuel 25:32-35

27. David _____ Abigail's _____ in acting quickly. He _____ her offering and assured her Nabal's household was _____ and no longer in danger of _____. Nabal still had to face _____, _____, and _____ wrath _____.

"Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

Consider: Have you ever felt that someone who brought pain and suffering to your life, seemed to be without understanding or justice? Take courage, God is aware of it and He is a just God. Pray that God will change the heart of the person who hurt you.

Read 1 Samuel 25:36-38

28. What happened to Nabal when Abigail confronted him with the truth concerning David? _____

Discuss: Have you been placed in a caregiver role? What are your greatest challenges? See Hebrews 4:15-16; Philippians 4:6-7.

Consider: Are you in a situation of struggle and pain caused by someone who needs to be confronted? Ask God to show you what to do. He may lead you to talk to a trusted person who understands your situation and can pray with or for you and help you work through it. See Matthew 18:15-17.

Read 1 Samuel 25:39-41

29. When David's servants came to Abigail with his proposal, how were these men received? _____

Read 1 Samuel 25:42

30. How did Abigail respond to David's marriage proposal?

Personal Application

Review the application opportunities, presented in the "Discuss" and "Consider" sections, in your personal prayer time and ask God to help you act on those that speak to your needs.

31. Have any of you come to a deeper understanding of salvation because of what you are learning in these studies? Are you willing to share with others about your relationship with the Lord? If anyone has questions about her/his salvation experience or needs assurance please speak with your teacher/facilitator. It is the most important issue in your life.

Exercise Get together with a Christian you respect sometime in the next week or so, to share your spiritual story with her or him. Talk about when you fully committed your life to God and what that means to you. Talk about what Jesus Christ has done for you.

Prayer