

## 1 Samuel 25 Chapter Introduction

**25:1;** Chapter 25 begins with the death of Samuel; and with his death the period of the Judges was ended (see 8:19-22). Samuel was God's chosen instrument to anoint Israel's first king, and thus the nation became a monarchy. "The deep respect in which Samuel was held is indicated by the grief that swept across the nation when he died" (Wm. MacDonald, p.316). After Samuel's death, David briefly relocated further south to the "Wilderness of Paran," Perhaps David sought to gain relief from Saul's relentless pursuit.

**25:2;** In verse 2, the narrative shifts to the region of Maon and the city of Carmel (about 10 miles S. of Hebron). There Nabal, a man of great wealth, was shearing his sheep: 3,000 in number. His name, Nabal was indicative of his character (*nabal*, Heb. for "fool" (v.25); ex. Psa. 14:1, Prov. 17:7 (meaning: arrogant, self-sufficient, obstinate, one without any need of God). The time of sheep shearing was customarily a time of celebration and feasting; indeed, it was "an occasion of festivity and goodwill" (NBC, p.300). So, David sent 10 men to ask for a gift in gratitude for the protection they had provided Nabal's flocks (vv.15,16). Those sent were instructed concerning what to say to Nabal and importantly they were to greet him "in David's name" (vv. 5,9).

**25:10;** Nabal's disregard for God was clearly evident in his response to David's request: "*Who is David?*" This was NOT Nabal's honest ignorance of who this person might be: 'David who?' Not at all. For Nabal knew he was Jesse's son. An indication that Nabal was also aware of David's anointed position. Yet, as his name implied, Nabal's rejection of David was more deeply his rejection of the LORD, for he was in no need of God, or His anointed, in his life (cf. Luke 12:20-21).

**25:12;** On hearing Nabal's ungrateful and even hostile response, "David was enraged and started toward Carmel with 400 men to punish Nabal and his *household*" (Wm. MacDonald, p.316). But God mercifully intervened (cf. Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19). The LORD sent Abigail, Nabal's exemplary wife, to again test and refine the heart of David, preparing him for the work God had chosen him to do (here 'lady wisdom' is set in stark contrast with 'folly'). David, in this narrative, pictures the important Biblical quality of "blamelessness:" a quality distinct from "sinlessness" (vv.30,31; see also Psalm 119:1; Gen. 6:9; 17:1; *Eph. 1:4*). Then, in verse 35, notice David's concluding "gracious" words that *praised* Abigail for her humble and discerning counsel: counsel that David humbly and wisely received (cf. Eph. 4:1; 5:21).

**25:36;** God acted shortly thereafter. The next morning when Nabal heard of Abigail's emergency intervention it brought upon him a paralyzing physical reaction that 10 days later took his life. Following the death of Nabal, God rewarded Abigail. Indeed, David remembered Abigail in a way she likely never imagined (v.31); David took her as his wife.