

God's Restraining Mercy v2

God sends Abigail to David to persuade him not to commit a grievous sin

Introduction

- As Christians, we should continually be grateful to God for His grace and mercy
- First, when we became a Christian by putting faith in God to repent of our sins, confess Jesus as the Son of God and be baptized for forgiveness of our sins, we received mercy
- Then, as erring Christian, by putting faith in God to repent, confess and pray for forgiveness of our sins, we receive mercy ²

Introduction

- But, as Christians, we should desire to do more of what is right and less of what is wrong
- To help us, God in some cases, by His providence, sends people across our way to encourage us to do right and not to commit a sin that we may be tempted to commit
- Some have called this "God's restraining mercy" ³

Introduction

- David and Abigail are such a case where each one uses their free choices with the result that David decides not to commit a sin because of Abigail's counsel
- David attributes her coming to him as the Lord helping him so that he might be persuaded not to sin ⁴

General Background To Abigail and David

- Israel cried out for a king so they could be like all the other nations
- God commanded Samuel to appoint Saul as king
- Saul was humble at first but later grew proud and rebellious against God
- God choose young David to replace Saul
- Saul jealously sought to kill David and he flees into the wilderness with his men ⁵

David Restrains Himself From Killing Saul

1Sa 24:3 He came to the sheepfolds on the way, where there was a cave; and Saul went in to relieve himself. Now David and his men were sitting in the inner recesses of the cave.

David Restrains Himself From Killing Saul

1Sa 24:4 The men of David said to him, "Behold, this is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold; I am about to give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it seems good to you.'" Then David arose and cut off the edge of Saul's robe secretly.

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David Restrains Himself From Killing Saul

1Sa 24:5 It came about afterward that David's conscience bothered him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's robe.

1Sa 24:6 So he said to his men, "Far be it from me because of the LORD that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD'S anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, since he is the LORD'S anointed."

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Death of Samuel and David In The Wilderness of Paran

1Sa 25:1 Then Samuel died; and all Israel gathered together and mourned for him, and buried him at his house in Ramah. And David arose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

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Character of Nabal and Abigail

1Sa 25:2 Now *there was* a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel; and the man was very rich, and he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And it came about while he was shearing his sheep in Carmel

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Character of Nabal and Abigail

1Sa 25:3 (now the man's name was Nabal, and his wife's name was Abigail. And the woman was intelligent and beautiful in appearance, but the man was harsh and evil in *his* dealings, and he was a Calebite),

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Nabal's Evil Toward David and His Men

1Sa 25:4 that David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep.

1Sa 25:5 So David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, visit Nabal and greet him in my name;

1Sa 25:7 'Now I have heard that you have shearers; now your shepherds have been with us and we have not insulted them, nor have they missed anything all the days they were in Carmel.

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Nabal's Evil Toward David and His Men

1Sa 25:8 'Ask your young men and they will tell you. Therefore let *my* young men find favor in your eyes, for we have come on a festive day. Please give whatever you find at hand to your servants and to your son David."

1Sa 25:9 When David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in David's name; then they waited.

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Nabal's Evil Toward David and His Men

1Sa 25:10 But Nabal answered David's servants and said, "Who is David? And who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants today who are each breaking away from his master.

1Sa 25:11 "Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men whose origin I do not know?"

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David's Sinful Response To Nabal's Evil

1Sa 25:12 So David's young men retraced their way and went back; and they came and told him according to all these words.

1Sa 25:13 David said to his men, "Each of you gird on his sword." So each man girded on his sword. And David also girded on his sword, and about four hundred men went up behind David while two hundred stayed with the baggage.

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David's Sinful Response To Nabal's Evil

1Sa 25:21 Now David had said, "Surely in vain I have guarded all that this *man* has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him; and he has returned me evil for good.

1Sa 25:22 "May God do so to the enemies of David, and more also, if by morning I leave *as much as* one male of any who belong to him."

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Abigail's Righteous Response To Nabal's Evil

1Sa 25:17 "Now therefore, know and consider what you should do, for evil is plotted against our master and against all his household; and he is such a worthless man that no one can speak to him."

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Abigail's Righteous Response To Nabal's Evil

1Sa 25:18 Then Abigail hurried and took two hundred *loaves* of bread and two jugs of wine and five sheep already prepared and five measures of roasted grain and a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded *them* on donkeys.

1Sa 25:19 She said to her young men, "Go on before me; behold, I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

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Abigail's Righteous Response To Nabal's Evil

1Sa 25:24 She fell at his feet and said, "On me alone, my lord, be the blame. And please let your maidservant speak to you, and listen to the words of your maidservant.

1Sa 25:25 "Please do not let my lord pay attention to this worthless man, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name and folly is with him; but I your maidservant did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent.

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God Uses Abigail To Prevent David From Sinning

1Sa 25:26 "Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, since the LORD has restrained you from shedding blood, and from avenging yourself by your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek evil against my lord, be as Nabal.

1Sa 25:27 "Now let this gift which your maidservant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who accompany my lord.

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God Uses Abigail To Prevent David From Sinning

1Sa 25:28 "Please forgive the transgression of your maidservant; for the LORD will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD, and evil will not be found in you all your days.

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God Uses Abigail To Prevent David From Sinning

1Sa 25:29 "Should anyone rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, then the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the LORD your God; but the lives of your enemies He will sling out as from the hollow of a sling.

1Sa 25:30 "And when the LORD does for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and appoints you ruler over Israel,

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God Uses Abigail To Prevent David From Sinning

1Sa 25:31 this will not cause grief or a troubled heart to my lord, both by having shed blood without cause and by my lord having avenged himself. When the LORD deals well with my lord, then remember your maidservant."

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David Listens To Abigail and Praises God For His Restraining Mercy

1Sa 25:32 Then David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me,

1Sa 25:33 and blessed be your discernment, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodshed and from avenging myself by my own hand.

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David Listens To Abigail and Praises God For His Restraining Mercy

1Sa 25:34 "Nevertheless, as the LORD God of Israel lives, who has restrained me from harming you, unless you had come quickly to meet me, surely there would not have been left to Nabal until the morning light as *much as one male.*"

1Sa 25:35 So David received from her hand what she had brought him and said to her, "Go up to your house in peace. See, I have listened to you and granted your request." 25

The Lord Strikes Nabal

1Sa 25:36 Then Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; so she did not tell him anything at all until the morning light.

1Sa 25:37 But in the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him so that he became as a stone. 26

The Lord Strikes Nabal

1Sa 25:38 About ten days later, the LORD struck Nabal and he died.

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David Marries Abigail

1Sa 25:39 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 back His servant from evil. The LORD has also returned the evildoing of Nabal on his own head." Then David sent a proposal to Abigail, to take her as his wife.

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Applications

- Let us be people God can use to encourage others not to sin
- Let us be grateful to God for sending others to us who encourage us not to sin

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Encourage One Another To Do What Is Right

Heb 3:12 Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

Heb 3:13 But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Heb 3:14 For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end, 30

Encourage One Another To Do What Is Right

Heb 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

Heb 10:25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.