

LESSON 11

ABIGAIL MAKES PEACE

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Abigail

At the time when he was an outlaw and pursued by Saul, David showed kindness to a man named Nabal and protected Nabal's flocks and herds. At harvest time, however, Nabal did not return the favor but insulted David's messengers and refused to share from his abundance. Angry at Nabal's ungrateful and selfish actions, David determined to wipe out Nabal's household.

This was when Nabal's wife Abigail acted quickly. When she heard of what her husband had done, she immediately sent provisions to David and went to meet him personally to urge him to excuse her husband and not to take bloody revenge. David accepted her peace offering and thanked her.

When the Lord struck Nabal ten days later and he died, David sent word to Abigail and asked her to be his wife. She traveled with David during the difficult years when he was fleeing from Saul, and she bore him one son named Kileab (or Daniel).

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

In this week's lesson, you will help your students understand what it means to be peacemakers for God. Jesus has told us that peacemakers "shall be called sons of God" (Mt 5:9). How can we be peacemakers today? We can help keep peace at home by obeying our parents and not fighting with our brothers and sisters. We can also be a peacemaker by being truthful with our friends and by staying calm when someone wants to start a fight.

Besides living in peace, we can help to make peace between others. We can help make peace between God and people who don't know Him. We can invite them to come to church to get to know God and experience His wonderful love and forgiveness.

Help your students understand that they can help make peace between people. Maybe one of their friends is really angry at another friend for saying something hurtful. They can help their friends make up and reconcile.

When we help to bring peace, others will see that we shine the light of God. Jesus Himself said that we would be called "the sons of God."

BIBLE TEXT

1 Samuel 25:2-42

BIBLE TRUTH

The Lord wants us to live in harmony with one another.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To strive to be peacemakers.
2. To understand the four characteristics of a virtuous person: courageous, full of wisdom, faithful, and peace-loving.

MEMORY VERSE

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

(Matthew 5:9)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. We thank You, Lord, for guiding us here on Your holy Sabbath so that we can enjoy peace and rest. You have promised peace to those who love You. Please guide us as we learn about Abigail, a smart and beautiful woman who brought peace. Please also help us to be peacemakers in our home, school, and church. Hallelujah! Amen.

VOCABULARY

messenger: someone with a message to deliver
shear: to cut hair with a tool similar to large scissors
insult: to say something to hurt another person's feelings
foolish: not smart

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about how David had the chance to get back at Saul for trying to hurt him. When he had the chance to kill Saul, did he choose to do so? (No.) Why? (Saul was the Lord's anointed; the Lord rewards those who are honest and faithful.)

What did we learn from David in last week's lesson? (We should have mercy and compassion for those who hurt us, because God has mercy on us.)

This week, we will learn about a woman named Abigail who stopped David from doing something rash. David had lost his temper, but Abigail acted quickly to make peace. Let's see what happens in today's story.

BIBLE STORY

David Sends Messengers to Nabal

While fleeing from King Saul's pursuit, David moved to the desert of Maon, where a rich man named Nabal lived.

Most of the people at that time lived the lifestyle of a herdsman, and the status of a man was determined by how many sheep and goats he owned. If a person possessed a large amount of livestock, such as sheep and goats, he was considered rich.

Nabal had a thousand goats and three thousand sheep. He also had a wife named Abigail, who was very smart and beautiful. Unfortunately, Nabal was mean and stingy.

While David was in the desert, he heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep at Carmel. David needed some food and drink for himself and his men, so he politely asked Nabal for some help. David sent ten young men and said to them, "Go to Nabal who is at Carmel and tell him that I said 'hello.' Say to him: 'May you live a long life! May you and your household enjoy good health! May all that is yours enjoy good health!'

"'Now I hear that it is sheep-shearing time. When your shepherds were with us, we watched over your property so that nothing of yours went missing. Ask your servants, and they will tell you that this is true. So please be kind to my young men, since we have come at such a happy time. Please give us whatever food and drink you can find for us.'"

Nabal Insults David

David's men followed his instructions and went to Nabal. When David's men arrived, they gave Nabal the message. Then they waited to see what Nabal had to say.

However, Nabal, being a stingy and inconsiderate man, said to them, "Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse?

Many servants are running away from their masters these days. Why should I take my bread, water, and meat and give it to men coming from who knows where?" [Ask the students: If you were David, how would you feel if you heard this?]

This was an ungrateful attitude. After all that David's men had done for Nabal, this was the disappointing response they got!

David's men went back and reported every word that Nabal had said. David was very angry when he heard Nabal's message and said to his men, "Put on your swords!" So they put on their swords, and David put on his. Since Nabal refused to return the favor he had received, David and his men had to resort to using a more forceful method to get their supply of food and drinks.

About four hundred men went with David, and two hundred stayed with their belongings. Nabal was really in trouble now.

Abigail Prepares a Present

One of the servants told Nabal's wife Abigail what had happened: "David sent messengers from the desert to say 'hello' to our master, but he insulted them. Yet these men were very good to us. They did not harm us, and the whole time we were out in the fields, nothing was missing.

"Day and night, they protected us like a wall around us while we herded our sheep near them. Now think about what we should do, because something terrible is about to happen to Nabal and to his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him."

[Ask the students: If you were the servant, how would you feel about Nabal's actions? Nabal was so foolish that he did not even know how much trouble he had caused

himself and his family.]

But Abigail was smart and she didn't waste any time. She quickly went to prepare some provisions for David and his men. She loaded donkeys with two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five cooked sheep, five bushels of roasted grain, one hundred cakes of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs.

She sent all these along with her servants and told them, "Go ahead; I'll follow you." She did not tell her husband Nabal what she was doing. [Ask the students: Why didn't Abigail want her husband to know what she was doing?]

Abigail Makes Peace

As she was riding her donkey down a mountain, David and his men came towards her. David had just finished saying, "It was useless for us to watch over this man's property so that nothing went missing. He has returned my good with evil. By morning, not one man of his household will be left alive!"

When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed low before him. Abigail humbly fell at David's feet and said, "My lord, this is all my fault. Please allow me to speak to you; please don't pay any attention to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name, which means 'fool.' Foolishness follows him wherever he goes, but I did not see the messengers that you had sent.

"Now the Lord has kept you, my master, from taking revenge on your enemies and from killing. Please take this gift that I have brought for you and your men. Please forgive Nabal for his wrongdoing. When the Lord has done what He has promised and made you the king over Israel, then you won't have a guilty conscience for taking revenge and killing a man. When the Lord has done all of this, please remember me."

After hearing this, David began to calm down and no longer wished to attack Nabal's household. Well done, Abigail! She was indeed a very good peacemaker.

David said to Abigail, "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. May you be blessed for your wise decision and for keeping me from taking revenge and killing. Otherwise, I would have killed every man in your household by the morning."

Then, David took the gift that Abigail had brought to him and said, "Go home in peace. I have your words and will do as you say."

Abigail Becomes David's Wife

When Abigail went home to Nabal, he was holding a feast at the house like a king. He was drunk and very happy. So Abigail waited until morning to talk to him. By the morning, when Nabal was no longer drunk, Abigail told him everything. Then Nabal's heart stopped and he became like a stone. About ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died.

When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said,

"Praise be to the Lord, who has shown that Nabal treated me wrongly. The Lord has kept me from doing wrong and has punished Nabal for what he has done."

David sent word to Abigail and asked her to become his wife. His servants went to Carmel and said to Abigail, "David has sent us to you to take you to become his wife."

This is a very kind gesture of David towards Abigail. Most of the women in those days would rely heavily on their husbands to look after them and provide for them. Now that Nabal had died, Abigail became a widow and had no one to look after her. Due to her good character, God blessed her by giving her the blessing of becoming David's wife.

Abigail bowed down to the ground and said, "I am your maidservant, ready to serve David and his servants." Abigail quickly got on a donkey and, with her five maids, went with David's messengers. Abigail then became David's wife.

The Characteristics of a Virtuous Woman

Today, we learned the story of a woman who was truly beautiful on the inside and on the outside. When we are beautiful on the outside, some people might call us "pretty" or "good-looking." When we are beautiful on the inside, this is called being a virtuous person.

So what does a virtuous person look like? From Abigail's example, we can identify four characteristics of a virtuous person:

- 1. Courage:** Abigail was willing to put her life at risk to save her household from danger. During those times, a woman was her husband's property, and she would risk being punished by her husband if she went ahead and took things into her own hands. Abigail decided not to tell her husband about her plan and went to meet David and his 400 men who all had swords. She didn't go with a large group of warriors but simply traveled into the mountain ravine on a donkey (1 Sam 25:20). This is indeed a very admirable virtue. When we are faced with a situation where we need take action, we need to have courage and do the right thing.
- 2. Wisdom:** Abigail was very wise in handling a difficult situation. When faced with a group of angry warriors, she immediately humbled herself and asked David to have mercy and turn away his anger from Nabal's household. The Bible teaches us this same principle, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov 15:1).
- 3. Faithfulness:** She believed in God and she reminded David of all the good things and grace that the Lord had shown him (1 Sam 25:26). She knew that David had God's abidance, and she knew that God's promise would surely come true. In the end, Abigail was rewarded for her faithfulness and married David, the future king of the Israelites (1 Sam 25:42).

4. Peace-loving: Abigail was a woman of great integrity, and God used her to do an extraordinary thing in saving the lives of everyone in Nabal's household. Her peace-loving nature was pleasing in the sight of God. "Blessed

are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Mt 5:9). All of us need to strive to lead a life where the Lord can make good use of us to do remarkable things.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. **What kind of man was Nabal? What kind of woman was Abigail?** Nabal was rich, but mean and stingy. Abigail was smart and beautiful.
2. **What favor did David ask of Nabal?** He asked for food for him and his men.
3. **What did David want to do because he was so angry?** He wanted to kill all the men in Nabal's household.
4. **What did Abigail do when she found out?** She quickly prepared provisions and went to David to make peace.
5. **What was the main reason why David stopped himself from attacking Nabal's household?** Abigail asked for forgiveness to excuse her husband, and David did not want to sin against God by taking revenge in anger.
6. **What are some virtues you can learn from Abigail?** Courage, wisdom, faithfulness, and peace-loving.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9)

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9)
2. B
3. A
4. my, wicked, fool
5. False; David asked Nabal for food and drink for him and his men.
6. False; David wanted to take revenge on Nabal.
7. False; David and his men protected Nabal's shepherds.
8. His heart stopped and he became like a stone.
9. courage, wisdom, faithfulness, and/or peace-loving
10. Answers may vary.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

1. God wants us to live in peace with one another.

Let's take some time to think about this with our students. What does God want us to do when conflicts arise at school, at home, or at church? When a troublemaker walks up to us wanting to make us feel sad, what should we do? In Matthew 5:9, our Lord says, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the sons of God." How can we be a true peacemaker to solve conflicts among ourselves and our friends? Here are a few principles to think about:

1. Blaming others only makes conflict worse.

In Hannah's case, she could have easily blamed everything on Penninah since she was obviously the troublemaker here. However, Hannah didn't want to make things worse or bring more conflict to her family. She chose to stay quiet and didn't even say a word to her husband. [Have students reflect on any conflict(s) they have had in the past and if blaming others ever worked in making the situation better.]

2. Conflict brings opportunities for us to glorify God.

By handling conflict in the right way, we get a chance to glorify God and become a better person. Out of Hannah's sorrow and pain, she knelt down and prayed to God. She glorified God by trusting that He would take away her pain and solve the problem for her. Because of her faith and undoubting trust, God eventually answered her prayer.

3. Forgiveness is powerful.

By forgiving someone, we let go of our hurt and take in God's comfort wholeheartedly. During Hannah's prayer in the temple, she poured out all her sadness to God and let God comfort her heart. She was able to forgive and have a new start after her prayer. [Ask your students how they have solved their conflicts in the past, and how they can now learn from Hannah to forgive and glorify God.]

- a. Draw the following table on the white board and also distribute a copy to each student, listing out and comparing the characteristics of Abigail and Nabal:

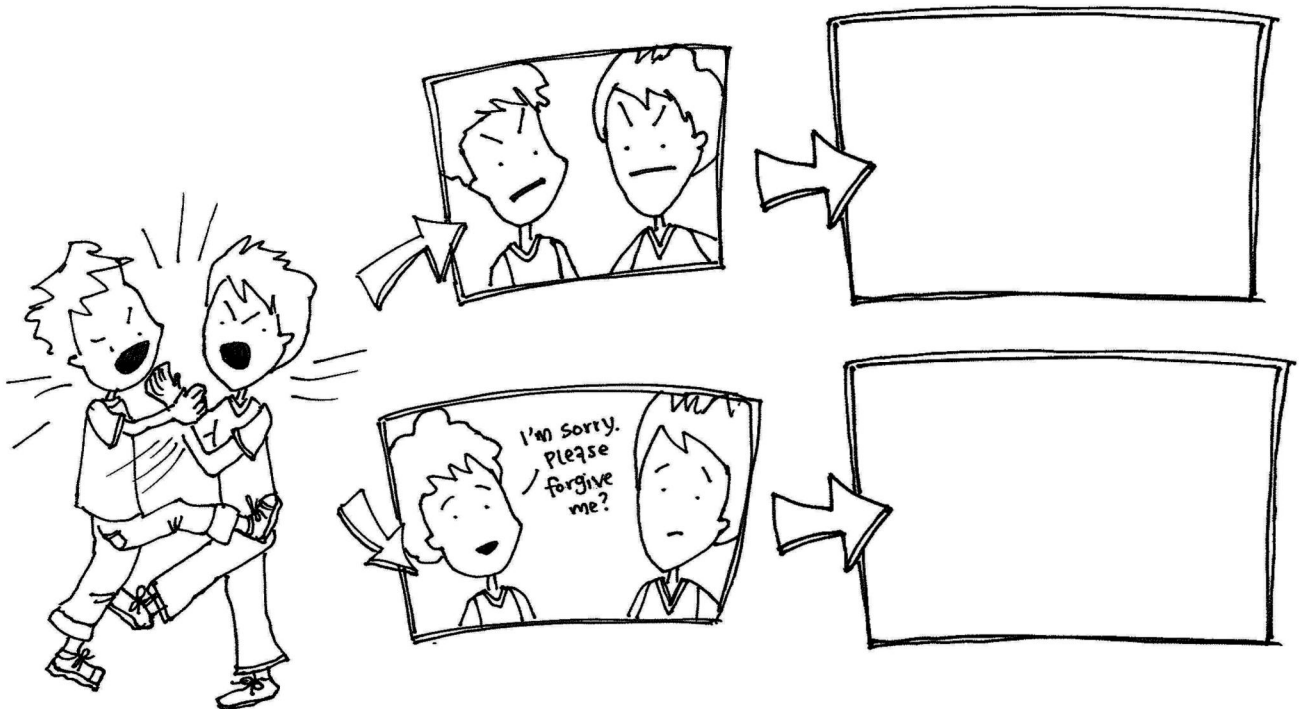
Smart Characteristics (Abigail)	Foolish Characteristics (Nabal)
e.g., Peace-loving	e.g., Causes trouble for others

- b. Get students to share their thoughts and experiences:

When you are at school, have you ever met schoolmates like Nabal who like to irritate you and cause trouble, even though you have always tried to be kind and friendly towards them? How do you deal with the situation?

2. Do not be quick to anger. David was very angry when he heard Nabal's reply. Imagine if Abigail had not come out to seek peace; the result would have been very terrible.

Ask the students to use their imagination to come up with 2 possible reactions (quick to anger and seeking forgiveness). Draw out the 2 different outcomes in the empty boxes.



ACTIVITIES

1

Reading and Writing Poems

"Abigail"

Abigail was smart;
 She saved Nabal, her husband;
 She gave David food.

"Nabal"

Nabal, a rich man,
 Had a very bad temper;
 He didn't like David.

"David"

David was angry.
 He planned revenge on Nabal;
 He was insulted.

You may think that poems always have to rhyme. Actually, poems can be about imagery, rhythm, and emotion as well. Try writing a poem like the ones above. It should have three lines.

The first line should have five syllables, like this:

Abigail was smart;

The second line should have seven syllables, like this:

She saved Nabal, her husband.

The third line should have five syllables again:

She gave David food.

Write your poem on these lines. Here is a hint: Begin with a name, like David.

David _____

_____.

2

What Would You Do?

Play a game called "What would you do?" On index cards, print a variety of situations where your students could practice being "peacemakers."

A few suggestions:

- 1) One of your friends is telling you how much she dislikes another friend.
- 2) Your brother just took one of your favorite toys.
- 3) Two classmates at school are fighting with each other.
- 4) Your mom or dad just asked you to clean up your room, something you really don't like to do.

Put all of the index cards into a box and let each student come up and draw one. Read the situation to them and let them answer. Use these situations as discussion starters to let the students think of ways to be peacemakers.

E1 Year 2 Book 1 Lesson 11—Abigail Makes Peace

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: The Lord wants us to live in harmony with one another.**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To strive to be peacemakers.
2. To understand the four characteristics of a virtuous person: courageous, full of wisdom, faithful, and peace-loving.**Bible Reading:** Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Matthew 5:9)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

1. Write down the memory verse for this week.

Multiple Choice

2. _____ : What was Nabal doing at Carmel when David's messenger came to him?
- Eating
 - Shearing sheep
 - Talking to his servants
3. _____ : What happened after Abigail came to talk to David and gave him some food?
- David calmed down.
 - His men attacked Nabal's household.
 - David refused to accept Abigail's gift.

Fill In the Blank

4. Abigail said, "My lord, this is all _____ fault. Please allow me to speak to you: Please don't pay any attention to that _____ man Nabal. He is just like his name, which means '_____.'"

True or False

5. David asked Nabal to give him some clothes and a place to stay. _____
6. David was calm and did not get angry when the messengers told him what Nabal said. _____
7. David's men were mean towards Nabal's shepherds, which was why Nabal was angry at David and would not give him any food. _____

Short Answer

8. When Nabal heard that Abigail had given food and drink to David's men, what happened to him?

9. List 2 good characteristics of Abigail.

Life Application

10. Give one example of what you can do to be a peacemaker.
