



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

1 Samuel 25:1-44

“David and Abigail”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Now, we’re turning for our Scripture reading to 1 Samuel chapter 25, and I’m going to read through the entire chapter. It will take us ten minutes or so and, therefore, the message will be a little shorter. I know you’ll grieve over that. [Laughter] But I think it’s so important that we read this entire chapter. It’s one of the great chapters of this book. It begins.

“Then Samuel died; and the Israelites gathered together and lamented for him, and buried him at his home in Ramah. And David arose and went down to the Wilderness of Paran.”

You’ll notice in the Bible that, often, the physical activities of some of the leading characters adumbrate their spiritual experiences. Abraham went down and had difficulty in Egypt. And, likewise, David went down to the Wilderness of Paran and were it not for God’s marvelous grace, he would have entered into some very difficult experiences.

“Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.”

That was, incidentally, a time of celebration because the shearing of the sheep was like the bringing in of the harvest and it was the time that they had a feast to celebrate the fact that the sheep had born good wool and a lot of it. And this was the case in this instance.

“The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance; but the man was harsh.”

I like the Authorized Version rendering because it means to me exactly what this Hebrew word means, which is a word that means something like hard, churlish.

“And evil in his doings. He was of the house of Caleb. When David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep, David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, “Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name. And thus you shall say to him who lives in prosperity ‘Peace be to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have! Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel.’”

They were in the territory where David’s men were and, obviously, David’s men protected the shepherds and the sheep from the rustlers.

““Ask your young men, and they will tell you. Therefore let my young men find favor in your eyes, for we come on a feast day. Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David.”

Incidentally, it's helpful to remember that in the Law of Moses, it was specifically stated that those who had sufficiency and more than sufficiency as Nabal were obligated to care for the others that belonged to the nation, Israel.

“So when David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and waited. Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, ‘Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master. Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?’ [You notice I've laid a little bit of extra stress on the first person pronouns.] So David's young men turned on their heels and went back; and they came and told him all these words. Then David said to his men, “Every man gird on his sword.” So every man girded on his sword, and David also girded on his sword. And about four hundred men went with David, and two hundred stayed with the supplies. Now one of the young men [Now, this is not one of David's young men, but one of Nabal's young men.] told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, “Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them. But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep. Now, therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him.” [That's a man of mael, a scoundrel] Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five seahs of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and loaded them on donkeys. And she said to her servants, “Go on before me; see, I am coming after you.” But she did not tell her husband Nabal. So it was, as she rode on the

donkey that she went down under cover of the hill; and there were David and his men, coming down toward her, and she met them.

Now David had said, “Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him. And he has repaid me evil for good. May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who belong to him by morning light.” Now when Abigail saw David, she dismounted quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. So she fell at his feet and said, “On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be! And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant. Please, let not my lord regard this scoundrel Nabal. [That is, don’t set any store by him.] For as his name is, so is he, Nabal is his name, and folly is with him! [As you can tell, the name Nabal means fool, in the Hebrew.] But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent.]

Incidentally, I didn’t say this at 8:30 service, but obviously, his name was not fool, so there is a little bit of play upon the name. He, evidently, had a name that was very close to that and, therefore, he came to be called this, and no one would name their child fool. So there’s something lying there that is not revealed in the text. But that’s what he was, anyway.

“But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent. Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, since the Lord has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now then, let your enemies and those who seek harm for my lord be as Nabal. And now this present which your maidservant has brought to my lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my lord. Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For the Lord will certainly make for my lord an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the

Lord, and evil is not found in you throughout your days. [A little bit of flattery here.] Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, as from the pocket of a sling. And it shall come to pass, when the Lord has done for my lord according to all the good that He has spoken concerning you, and has appointed you ruler over Israel, that this will be no grief to you, nor offense of heart to my lord, either that you have shed blood without cause, or that my lord has avenged himself. But when the Lord has dealt well with my lord, then remember your maidservant.” Then David said to Abigail, “Blessed is the Lord, God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! And blessed is your advice and blessed are you because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. For indeed, as the Lord, God of Israel, lives who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!” So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, “Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person.”

Now Abigail went to Nabal, and there 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; therefore, she told him nothing, little or much, until morning light. So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him, and he became like a stone. [Evidently, something like a stroke.] Then it happened, after about ten days that the Lord struck Nabal and he died. So 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 His servant from evil! For the Lord has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head.” And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. When the servants of David had come to Abigail at

Carmel, they spoke to her saying, “David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife.” Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, “Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.” So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife.

You can, of course, note the wisdom of Abigail, but there may be some wisdom on David’s part, which is not specifically stated, because it was generally the case that if you married a widow, whose husband was rich, you inherited his riches. So, David, now though living in the fields and forests and hiding from Saul, has now acquired unusual amounts of property. Nothing is said about that here, but it would appear that that was likely the case.

“David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and so both of them were his wives. But Saul had given Michal his daughter, David’s wife, to Palti the son of Laish, who was from Gallim.”

May the Lord bless this reading of his word and let’s bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Now, Heavenly Father, we thank Thee and praise Thee for the Scriptures. How poor we would be if we did not have the word of God to give instruction and guidance and comfort and consolation to us as we live our lives upon this earth. We thank Thee for the wisdom found in the Scriptures and for the truth that is set forth in them. The truths of the fall of man, the truths of man’s sin, of man’s guilt, of man’s condemnation, of man’s weakness, of his tendencies to evil constantly, of his will that is disobedient and rebellious, of his affections that are corrupt, of his understanding that is blind, and especially of the redeeming work of the greater son of David, who in dying for our sins, assuming our place, acting as our representative, under the judgment of God, paying to

the full the price, crying out, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me,” rising from the dead to the right hand of the throne of God and there rests in the joy of the accomplished work as our representative. How marvelous to realize that we’ve been raised and have been seated in heavenly places, in Christ. May we be thankful and appreciative and responsive.

We pray for the whole Church of Jesus Christ, for our country in the midst of its present trials, we pray for those who are suffering, we pray for Judy’s family and ask Thy blessing upon them.

And, Father, we pray for Believers Chapel, particularly, for its leadership. Give wisdom and guidance to them and for those who are here in this service. Lord, touch our hearts and minds that we might by Thy grace order our lives more harmoniously to the teaching of the word of God. Bless now as we sing, as we hear the word.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.

[Message] The subject for the continuation of our series of studies in “The Life of David,” is “David and Abigail.” But we might more appropriately, perhaps, call it “David, Abigail, and Nabal” because the lessons that come from David’s experiences with Nabal are certainly great. When I look at this chapter and think of it, I think of one of the really immensely practical chapters of the word of God with a number of important lessons for each of us who live today in New Testament times. One of the things, immediately, that one thinks about in reading it is the ease with which the saints fall from the will of God. It’s no wonder the apostle said that “Whosoever that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall.” I think of the blessedness of being kept as David was kept from serious sin. And, remember, Peter’s words that “We are kept through faith, by the power of God. That we are guarded from stumbling as we look to him.” And David was in danger of some very serious stumbling, of having the blood of many men upon his conscience and upon his account before the Lord God.

The chapter also has an important lesson for the unbeliever as well. Life does not consist in the amount of possessions that we have. The Lord Jesus in his parable of the rich man makes the point so beautifully. A man's life does not consist in his possessions. It's difficult for us to learn that in the days in which we live. But it's one of the great truths of the word of God. And it also underlines the great truth of Hebrews chapter 9 in verse 27. It's appointed unto men once to die and after this, the judgment. Everyone of us has an appointment that we shall keep. It's appointed unto men once to die and after this, the judgment. Nabal had his appointment much sooner than he anticipated. But, nevertheless, he had his appointment and he kept his appointment.

I'm always reminded of the unknown saying that someone once made. I say unknown in the sense that whoever said it is unknown. “Exercise daily, eat wisely, die anyway.” [Laughter] And in the light of it, it's obviously true, according to the word of God. And the greatest benefits that you would ever obtain are benefits that come from God's word. You would be much more benefited by attending Believers Chapel once a week or even once a month or once a year than spending every day down at the corner, exercising the body. It's appointed unto men, once to die. Those in poor shape, those in great shape, have the same appointment. It's appointed unto men once to die. Nabal had his appointment and he was required to meet that appointment.

What a group of characters we have here, David, the anointed king-to-be and then Abigail, the proof from Scripture that a beautiful woman may also have a brain [laughter] for that's what she had. That's what she was. Nabal, named so beautifully, what a fool he was, what a fool, a rich man with all of the possessions that he had and at the same time utterly without knowledge of the truths of the word of God evidently and certainly unresponsive to his responsibilities as a member of Caleb's line. Think of it, a descendant of Caleb, that great man of God. David's men? Samuel, the chapter begins with a reference to Samuel that he died. The Israelites gathered together and lament him, a remarkable man, the first of the prophets, the man responsible in the human ways for

David's dazzling career, Samuel anointing him at the commandment of the Lord God, and learning himself as finally he was pointed to David that the Lord does not see as men see. Men look on the outward. God looks on the inward. Samuel had to learn that even though a prophet of the Lord God. So he was a great, a great man but he too had an appointment and he met his appointment.

Now, we read, interestingly, in verse 25 that Israel gathered together and lamented for him and buried him in his home in Ramah. The interesting thing about it is that Samuel was a great man, a prophet, but while they gathered and lamented for him at his burial, the one thing they did not do was the thing they should have done and that was to have listened to him while he was living. How true it is. We do not listen when we should be listening. And when there is no opportunity to listen any longer then we lament, outwardly, at least and we garnish the tombs of the prophets and talk about how great they were. And we even have preachers who stand in this pulpit, in this particular pulpit, and talk about the great men of the past, the great Reformed men of the past, Luther, Calvin, and others, and we often do not follow in their steps. Human nature.

The characters in the story are very simple. There is Nabal, the fool, very great in possessions, but a churlish individual, rough, hard. As a matter of fact, he was evil in his doings. He was the living illustration of a rich hood in his day; a man, a degenerate plant of a noble vine, because he was of the house of Caleb. Think of it, the man who wholly followed the Lord. Here is Nabal, a man who didn't follow him at all.

Abigail, whose name means 'father of joy.' So the thought of joy dominates her, according to her name. Beautiful, but not dumb, a wise woman, who as the proverb said, "buildeth her house."

And David, David the anointed king-to-be, not yet on the throne, Saul desperately seeking to slay him if he possibly could, David went down to the Wilderness of Maon, that's probably the original Hebrew text at that point, rather than Paran. Went down, an

ominous note, right at the beginning. So the suggestion is made, it would seem, that David now is in danger of a serious fall.

David's request that he makes of Nabal is a very simple request and one that was true in the sense that it was needed. It was true in the sense that he and his men had preserved the shepherds as they cared for the sheep. And it was to be expected that Israelites would care for Israelites who were in need. And in the light of his care for the shepherds and the flocks of Nabal, at the time of the sheering of the sheep and the rejoicing in the benediction of the great amounts of wool that would be obtained, and the monetary returns from it, that they would share some of the largess, and so it was to be a time of lavish hospitality, normally. Later on, Absalom, in a particular place in the next book has a similar occasion and enjoys it. David is courteous and deserving. It may indicate a lack of trust, but the Scripture doesn't say anything about it, and so it's probably best for us not to surmise about that. But when the request comes to Nabal, his response to David and his servants is “Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master.” He even suggests that David is an individual who was the servant of someone and has gone out, like a brigand, and has gathered a bunch of men to him. “Shall I take my bread and my water and my mean that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?”

You can see, there's a definite comparison between Nabal and Saul, because he is a small time Saul. He is an individual who is seeking to destroy David, ultimately; he does not care for him. And so the struggle, this chapter is set in between two chapters speaking of Saul and his attempt to slay David is probably intended by the author to suggest a likeness between Nabal and Saul. At any rate, David's response is thoroughly contrary to the word of God. The Apostle Peter tells us, when we are reviled, we should not revile again. But notice what David does. He says, like a John Wayne, before his time. He says, “Every man gird on his sword.” So having been repulsed by Nabal, he

immediately does what he should not do, and particularly as the anointed king of Israel. Men, get your holsters, get your guns, get your horse, we're going down and teach Nabal a lesson. But, I guess if someone were putting this in the language of a western, we would read verse 14, “Now, back at the ranch, this was taking place.” [Laughter]

Now, one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master, and he reviled them. And so, he wanted to say, you cannot speak to our master. He's such a scoundrel, such a man of Belial. So. It's so easy. One sin is always a stepping stone to another. David went down. Now, he's responding wrongly to Nabal's reviling of him and Nabal is having the same experience itself.

David's failure is being too occupied with second causes. Actually, what he should remember, should have remembered, it's so hard for us to remember this, what he should have remembered is the Lord, through Samuel the Prophet, has made it very plain that I am to succeed Saul. And so the experiences that I have are governed by that great future that God has promised me. And so what if I am reviled, what if I suffer, what if I have difficulties? The time is coming when I shall be the king that has been promised me by the Lord God.

So you know there are some beautiful illustrations that you and I may see if we just look at our lives as well. How often do we in the experiences of life remember what God has intended to do with us. We're occupied with second causes. We're occupied with men. We're occupied with the experiences we're having today. We forget that God has determined a beautiful, glorious future for every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. And all the experiences that we are undergoing are experiences that are governed by that. We should not be occupied with second causes, but with the first great determining will and the experiences of life are not pleasant for many of us, for most of us, probably, at one time or another. But they are not things that we would like, very often, but they are things within the determining power of the will of God. It's helpful to remember that.

David forgot it. You should never answer a fool according to his folly. And Nabal is a fool and filled with folly. And when David receives the message, he's not going to give us anything, he does exactly what he should not do, and that is, answer this fool according to his folly. Get your guns, your holsters, your horses, and let's go after him.

Now, Abigail, fortunately, in the will of God, incidentally, in the will of God is apprised of this. And when the servant of Nabal tells her of what has transpired, and that the servants cannot speak to Nabal because he's such a man of Belial, such a scoundrel, she immediately sees that what's going to happen is a slaughter. And that is precisely what would have happened. And so very quickly she takes this rather lavish sounding provision. But remember David has six hundred men and she tells her servants, “Go on before me, I'm coming after you,” but she didn't tell Nabal.

Now, David had said, “Surely in vain I protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him, and he's repaid me evil for good.” Well, Abigail, in the wisdom that God had given her, comes to David, dismounts quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David and bowed down to the ground, fell at his feet and said, “On me, my lord, on me, let this iniquity be.”

I often wonder how she came to understand what she came to understand, because she obviously understood a great deal. And, in fact, she understood some things that seem to be unrevealed in the word of God, at this point. But at least she acknowledges, she has known somehow that David is the anointed king-to-be. The word is out. He's the coming king. And so this was her faith's acknowledgment of the anointed king to be of Israel. And as she fell on her face before David, she acknowledges that. And she pleads with him to let the coming glory regulate his present actions, just precisely what we were talking about. She, in effect, says remember what God is going to do for you, and do not engage in this wicked act of slaying these individuals.

It beautifully illustrates the fact that the present is to be regulated by the future. I think of 2 Corinthians chapter 5 in verse 10 at this point. All of us, every one of us, shall

stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and we shall receive the things done in the body, whether they are good or worthless. There is coming a judgment seat of Jesus Christ for believing individuals and the judgment throne of God for unbelieving individuals. And the life that is not regulated by the future is the life that shall surely suffer in the judgments. So let the coming glory regulate the present actions. What a great lesson it is.

And listen to what she says to him. It's one of the great speeches, it seems to me, of 1 Samuel. It rivals David's before Goliath and some others that David made. Listen, she says, “Forgive the trespass of your maidservant. For the Lord will certainly make for my lord an enduring house because my lord fights the battles of the Lord, and evil is not found in you throughout your days.” Using the expression “enduring house” suggests the Davidic covenant, the *bayith amam*, the faithful house that God has promised to David. She knows, evidently, something of the Davidic promise although they are not fully revealed at this point. But not only that, she said in verse 26, “Now, therefore, my lord, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives.” Notice that, “As the Lord lives,” she's the eternal God. “As your soul lives, as the Lord lives, and as your soul lives,” linking the eternal longevity of the eternal God with the length of days of David's life. In other words, David is united with the Lord God. She understands something of that, affirming the union of the Lord and David. And, furthermore, in verse 29, underlines that. “Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life, but the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God; and the lives of your enemies He shall sling out, as from the pocket of a sling.”

So she understands David's union with the Lord God. She understands the Davidic promises that have been given to him. And what she is saying, in effect, is, “David, do not do what you are in the process of doing, for it's contrary to the glory that God has determined for you.” So many lessons here that you and I could profit from.

David is a bit different from me. It's difficult for me to take a reproof. Oh, how we need to have the ability to receive reproofs. They so often keep us from sin. Listen to the proverbs again. “As an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.”

Now, I want to let you into something that's very private. I have an excellent reprover in my house, who lives with me. She is an excellent reprover, and so often points out the things that are wrong in my daily life. I am grateful, Martha, for your reproofs, it's just difficult to respond to all of them because I think I'm afflicted with the kind of nature that David had. It's so easy for us to turn aside and not pay attention to the good reproofs that we receive from others. What a lesson, the need to receive reproofs that keep us from sin. And for David, that's what he did.

Notice what he says in verse 32, “Then David said to Abigail, “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! And blessed is your advice and blessed are you, because you have kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand.” Terrible for us to take vengeance into our own hands. Vengeance belongs to the Lord. So the great king-to-be is in danger of taking vengeance in his own hands, and doing the work of God, taking away God's work which is to do the vengeance.

And, furthermore, another lesson, there's such a remarkable parallel to the rich fool of Luke chapter 12. It would be nice to turn over and talk about the individual who was not rich toward God but rich in possessions. Rich toward God is the kind of wealth I would like to have. Wouldn't you? Rich toward God. How marvelous to have that said about us. Rich toward God.

Nabal was rich in goods, in sheep, in goats, in all of the possessions. And so the harvest was great, the sheep sheering was profitable, so they have a big feast and eat, drink and be merry, in our Lord's parable, is fulfilled in the case of Nabal. He's happy over his successful ranching. He's drinking and he's drunk and has been told nothing of

what has been really happening. And in the morning when the wine had gone from him, his head was still hurting, his wife had told him these things. His heart died within him and he became like a stone. He had a stroke.

You know, you’ve learned something here that’s very important. It’s very dangerous for us to take the part of God and seek to wreak vengeance on someone who may have harmed us. And Nabal had certainly harmed David. There’s no question about that. But to seek to take judgment into our hands is wrong. We are to regulate our lives by the future, not by the present. When reviled, we don’t revile back. But also don’t forget this. God does take care of those who disobey his word. Vengeance is his. And then it says, “I will repay, saith the Lord.” And so David is prevented by a sovereign determination of a providential God from carrying out something that would have been disastrous for him, blood, guiltiness upon his conscience. But at the same time, God takes it in hand to do what David should not have done and execute vengeance on Nabal. And so Nabal has a stroke. And then, evidently, a heart attack or at least Scripture says, “The Lord struck Nabal, and he died.”

There are so many lessons here. Everything that Nabal had, he doted upon. “My.” Did you notice all those pronouns again? My bread. My water. My wheat. My shearers. Those are things that God, they belong to God. They didn’t belong to him. They were in Nabal’s hands as a trust. It’s important that we remember that, as well.

I remember an old story that I read of Mr. Truitt, who was the pastor of the First Baptist Church here in Dallas for so many years, a godly man. In one of his messages, he speaks of being entertained in the home of a wealthy oilman in Texas and after dinner, the man took him upstairs in his house, and he had a platform on the top of his house. And he took him up to the top of his house, a lavish home, but it was out in the country. And he spoke to him along these lines. He said, “Dr. Truett, I came to this country twenty-five years ago without a penny. Now, I own everything as far as you can see.” And Dr. Truett said, he motioned southward toward the oil derricks, then he turned

eastward toward the waving fields of grain, he motioned westward toward a great virgin forest and then to the north, huge herds of cattle. And then he said to Dr. Truett, “All this is mine. Twenty-five years ago I was penniless. But I worked hard and saved, and today I own everything you can see in any direction from this roof.” And he paused for a moment. And Dr. Truett said, he evidently expected me to give him a word of praise. But he said, actually, what I did was, I pointed upward. And I said to him, “How much do you own that way?” [Laughter] How important? That’s the important thing isn’t it? Rich toward God.

And so Nabal died, an indication of God’s retribution and requital, evidently, paralytic stroke and possibly a heart attack that followed. The certainty of the recompense of the wicked, the proverbs writes, “Behold” incidentally, in Proverbs 11:31, this is the only time the word behold is in the Book of Proverbs. “Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.” And frequently now as well, we see that in human history, if you’ll just look down through the history of men upon this earth, you’ll see that principle carried out constantly and always. Always. Israel a living illustration; the nation Israel by its disobedience and by its response to the ministry of the Messiah and the crucifixion of Christ, scattered to the four corners of the earth. And then, down through the years, those who have disobeyed the teaching of the word of God have always suffered. In more recent times, we think of the nation of Germany, with all of its disobedience, its persecution of the Jews and the Holocaust, and the suffering that later generations of German’s have had to suffer and will suffer in the light of what their parents did. The Lord smote him. Give place to wrath, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.

But the great illustration, the great truth, illustrated by this chapter, to my mind, if we were looking for one thing, it is that David is reminded of the providence of God that guides his steps and the certain future that he has. And further, that the life of faith is the faith by which we are to live.

That's something for you and me to reckon upon too. God in his word has given us great promises of eternal life, through Jesus Christ. He's outlined a marvelous future for us. We are associated with him in his resurrection, ascension, we are seated with him in heavenly places in Christ. That's our position and we are on the way to it as certain as our Lord is there, so shall we be there. But, we are to remember that in the daily affairs of our lives, the present is to be regulated by that great glorious future.

So if we are reviled, we don't revile back. If we suffer difficulties, we do not fight against God. We wait and we wait upon him in his providential care of us to provide for us. What a justification of the providence of God one finds here but also a justification of the life of faith. Every believer must live that life of faith and trust.

And David is taught by God's hand intervening, in his marvelous ways, through Abigail, what he intends for all of us to do in the experiences of life.

So let me sum it up in a word. The best of men is always in danger of a fall. Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. And, second, the worst of men face eternal judgment. Those who fail to recognize the Lord's anointed do not respond to the message concerning him. Nabal's death is only the beginning of sorrows for him. He had his pleasures and now he has his sorrows.

I've heard people say, I don't believe in hell. The only hell we shall experience is what we know in this life. No, you've got it wrong. That's the only heaven that you shall know; that which you know in this life, if you do not believe in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

If you are here today and you've never believed in him, we remind you that the anointed, the anointed, son of David has come and shed his blood for sinners. And sinners is such a wide term it includes all of us. He has shed his blood for sinners. And for those whose hearts have been enlightened to know that they are sinners, Christ is for you. Come to him. Trust him. Cast off the trust in your good works, for they are not good works in the sight of God. Cast off your trust in the ordinances, in baptism, in the

Lord's Supper, in good works, in culture, in education; in whatever it may be in which you have placed your trust, and turn to our Lord and rest upon Him and what he has done for time and eternity.

May God in his grace move your heart to that. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the great lessons of the word of God, so marvelously set forth for us. Give us wisdom and give us, Lord, submission to Thy truth. If there should be someone in this audience, Lord, who has not believed in our Lord, touch their hearts at this very moment. May they turn to Thee and say, I thank Thee Lord that Christ died for sinners. I am one. I thank Thee for the promise that life is from him. And I thank Thee that that promise is a gift of grace and, Lord, I receive it as the gift of grace and trust only in him now and forever.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.