

Foolish Nabal and Wise Abigail

1 Samuel 25; 27:3; 30:5



Old Testament 6
Part 1: David

SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 6 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

1 Samuel 25; 27:3; 30:5,18; 2 Samuel 2:2; James 3:13-17

MEMORY WORK:

“Happy is the man who finds wisdom, and the man who gains understanding” (Proverbs 3:13).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“The Wise Man Built His House Upon a Rock”](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [King David and His Sons Bible fact cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 6 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)
- “Summary of the Bible” from “[Kids Prep](#)” CD by Jeff Miller
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- David the King A Beka Flash-A-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*; card 2.1: No one knows what the cherubim looked like, other than having wings; card 5.6: The text says that Absalom's head was caught. Whether it was by his hair or neck is unknown.)
- Make a “Bible Opposites” flipchart: find pictures to use to contrast opposites in this story—foolish/wise; angry/calm; lazy/eager to help; etc.
- Pictures of owls
- Make a “Wisdom Tree” to illustrate James 3:13-18: Make a large tree to put on the wall. Cut out fruit shapes and label them with characteristics of wise people found in James 3. (You may also want to put “rotten” fruit on the ground labeled with characteristics of the unwise.)



PERSONAL APPLICATION:

God wants me to learn from His Word how to be wise and make good decisions.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

From whom is David running? Why is he running from him?

What does it mean if you are wise? What does it mean if you are foolish? How do you think God wants us to act? Today we are going to learn about a woman who saved her family because she made a wise decision. Listen to see what happens!

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week's lesson

Discuss with the children the difference between acting wisely and acting foolishly. (Let them give examples of wise and foolish behavior they have seen.) What happens a lot of times when we act foolishly? (We get into trouble/make mistakes.) Today we're going to learn about a foolish decision a man made that not only got him into trouble, but almost got his family killed. Then his wife made a very wise decision and saved her family.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. David was moving from place to place hiding from King Saul, who wanted to kill him. David had at least 600 men who were traveling with him, because they were unhappy with their lives under King Saul and wanted to be David's followers. Many of them had wives and children traveling with them. David and the other men had to find ways to provide food (and safety) for such a large group.
2. In 1 Samuel 25, we learn that while David and his men were trying to stay away from King Saul, they were also providing protection for the flocks of a man named **Nabal** near the towns of Carmel and Maon (about 15 miles west of the Dead Sea). First Samuel 25:2 describes Nabal as "very rich," having 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. He was also known to be a very harsh man who was "evil in his doings." He was fortunate to be married to a beautiful and intelligent (literally, "of good understanding"—1 Samuel 25:3, ASV) woman named Abigail.



NOTE: Nabal was also described by one of his servants as "a **worthless man** that no one can speak to" (1 Samuel 25:17, NAS; a "**scoundrel**," NKJV). The description of Nabal is literally a "son of Belial" (KJV), which is a worthless person.

3. Since David had many people to feed and since he and his men had provided protection for Nabal's flocks, he felt it would be fair to ask Nabal for food. David sent ten of his men to Nabal to ask for food that he thought he and his men deserved, but Nabal refused. David became so angry that he told his men to prepare to attack and destroy Nabal and all that he had. One of Nabal's servants heard about David's plans and went to Abigail to warn her.



HISTORICAL NOTE: During the time of sheep shearing (1 Samuel 25:11), it was customary for those who cared for the sheep to be included in the owner’s celebration.

4. Abigail told the servant not to tell Nabal where she was going or what she was planning to do. She hurriedly prepared a great deal of food to take to David and his people. She met David and his men just in time, as they were coming toward her home. She hurriedly went to David and bowed to the ground. She asked David to charge her with the offense of her husband—to forgive her husband and accept her gifts. She repeatedly called herself David’s “maidservant” and referred to David as “my lord.” She was literally laying down her life for her husband and her household.



NOTE: “Abigail made an interesting contrast between the two pouches used by the shepherd. ‘Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my master will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the Lord your God. But the lives of your enemies He will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling’ (1 Samuel 25:29). The ‘bundle of the living’ is the pouch that held food (usually the folded belt or waistband), and the hollow of a sling is the pouch that held the stone.” *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*, page 145

5. David was so impressed by this woman’s unselfishness, her wisdom, and her willingness to risk her life for her family, that he and his men left them alone, thanking Abigail for the great feast she had prepared for them.
6. When Abigail returned home, Nabal was having a great feast, “like the feast of a king,” to celebrate the end of the sheep shearing. He was very drunk. She didn’t say anything to him that night about what she had done to help David. She might have been afraid of him when he was drunk, or she might have wanted to make sure he was sober enough to understand what his foolishness had nearly caused. The next morning, when she told Nabal about taking food to David and persuading him not to harm their property or their family, Nabal became very sick (from fear or shame?). Ten days later, God struck Nabal, and he died.
7. Sometime later, when David heard about Nabal’s death, he sent a proposal to Abigail, asking her to be his wife. She agreed.



NOTE: Abigail became David’s third wife, after Michal, daughter of Saul, and Ahinoam of Jezreel. He eventually had 10 wives, but this was not part of God’s original plan for the family. This is another instance of sin that God tolerated but did not approve of.



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article “[Did Michal Have Children?](#)” by Caleb Colley on the Apologetics Press Web site for a study on an alleged discrepancy about David’s wife, Michal.

8. Nabal’s name means “fool,” and that’s exactly how he acted. He was selfish, arrogant, and had no self-control. [This would be a good opportunity to emphasize that drinking alcohol makes one act like a fool, like Nabal.] Abigail was wise. She was, “peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits,” as wisdom is described in James 3:17. Abigail used the knowledge she had to make wise choices. Proverbs 1:7 tells us that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.” We can become wise too if we study God’s Word and put into

practice what we read. [Spend as much time as you think appropriate for your class going over the description of wisdom in James 3:13-17.]

NOTE: David’s requests of Nabal occurred at sheep-shearing time, which was after the summer grazing season. After the shearing, profits were distributed and several days of celebration followed. Drunkenness became an accepted part of the festivities—much like so many parties of our day. [This setting provided, in at least one instance (2 Samuel 13:23), the perfect atmosphere and opportunity to commit murder.]



Raising sheep was sometimes a small-scale business, when family members took the role of shepherd, as in David’s family. Poor families frequently owned only a handful of sheep—sometimes only one. But there are several instances in the Bible of one man owning many thousands of sheep. Mesha, king of Moab, paid the king of Israel 100,000 sheep as “protection” and payment (2 Kings 3:4). At the end of the book bearing his name, Job had 14,000 sheep (Job 42:12). Solomon sacrificed 120,000 sheep at the dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8:63).

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- “[Foolish Nabal and Wise Abigail Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Make a “Wisdom Tree” illustration for each child (refer to “Recommended Visuals”). Cover the inside of a letter-size folder with blue felt or flannel. Cut out a tree and apples from felt for each child.
- Use a pattern to make an owl mask for each child. Let the children pretend to be “wise old owls”; talk to them about what it means to be wise.
- Make cutouts of five sheep, two skins of grape juice, two loaves of bread (representing 200 loaves), two fig cakes (representing 200 cakes), five grains (representing five sheaves), and a cluster of raisins (representing 100 clusters). Use colored construction paper (purple for the raisins; yellow for the grain; white for the sheep; etc.). Place the pieces in a small basket or sandwich bag as you tell the children the story of Abigail.

1st-2nd Graders:

- “Wise Owl” game: Have the children sit in a circle. Walk around them (like in “Duck Duck Goose”) for a few seconds, and then stand behind one child. Ask that child a question about this lesson or previous lessons. If he/she can answer correctly, he/she can go around the circle selecting the next person to be quizzed. Another variation would be to give each child a piece of colored paper (or a number). Divide an 8” x 8” (or larger) piece of cardboard or poster board into as many sections as you have children in the class. Add a spinner to the center of the board and label the sections either by color or number (whichever you give the students). Spin the spinner to choose which child (with the color or number selected by the spinner) will answer each of the review questions. ([Owl Cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
- “[Foolish Nabal and Wise Abigail Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- “[Foolish Nabal and Wise Abigail Word Search](#)” (provided in activity sheets)

- “The Wise Old Owl” game: Write words from this unit dealing with wisdom and wise behavior on clothespins. Write the definitions (from the dictionary the kids will use) on owl cutouts ([Owl Cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets). Make two sets. Divide the class into two groups, giving each group a kids Bible Dictionary and a set of words and definitions. Working with their group, have the kids look up the words and match them to the correct definition.
- Make cutouts of five sheep, two skins of grape juice, two loaves of bread (representing 200 loaves), two fig cakes (representing 200 cakes), five grains (representing five sheaves), and a cluster of raisins (representing 100 clusters). Use colored construction paper (purple for the raisins; yellow for the grain; white for the sheep; etc.). Place the pieces in a small basket or sandwich bag as you tell the children the story of Abigail.

3rd-4th Graders:

- “Wise Owl” game: Give each child a piece of colored paper (or a number). Divide an 8” x 8” (or larger) piece of cardboard or poster board into as many sections as you have children in the class. Add a spinner to the center of the board and label the sections either by color or number (whichever you give the students). Spin the spinner to choose which child (with the color or number selected by the spinner) will answer each of the review questions. ([Owl Cutouts](#) provided in activity sheets)
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- Have the children read the following:
 - 1 Samuel 25 (as well as chapters 21-24 if they did not do so this quarter) [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the 1 Samuel 21-25 quiz from AP’s [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
 - “[Why Are Owls Wise?](#)” article in the January, 2000 issue of *Discovery*
 - *David and the Kingdom of Israel*, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing

SONGS:

“THE WISE MAN BUILT HIS HOUSE UPON A ROCK” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Ann Omley

The wise man built his house upon the rock. (3X) *(make building motion with fists)*
 And the rains came tumbling down. *(make rain falling motion with hands)*

Oh! The rains came down, and the floods came up.
(Make rain falling motion, then lift hands to show water rising.)
 The rains came down, and the floods came up. (REPEAT)
(Make rain falling motion, then lift hands to show water rising.)
 And the wise man’s house stood firm.

But the foolish man built his house upon the sand.
(Make building motion with fists, then spread out hands for sand.)
 The foolish man built his house upon the sand. (REPEAT)

(Make building motion with fists, then spread out hands for sand.)
And the rains came tumbling down. *(make rain falling motion with hands)*

Oh! The rains came down, and the floods came up.
(Make rain falling motion, then lift hands to show water rising.)

The rains came down, and the floods came up. (REPEAT)

(Make rain falling motion, then lift hands to show water rising.)

And the foolish man's house went SPLAT! *(Clap hands together when you say "Splat!")*

So build your house on the Word of Jesus Christ. *(make building motion with fists then point to Heaven)*

Build your house on the Word of Jesus Christ. (REPEAT)

(Make building motion with fists then point to heaven.)

And the blessings will come down.

Oh, the blessings come down as the prayers go up.

(Make rain falling motion, then hands folded in prayer lifting upward.)

The blessings come down as the prayers go up. (REPEAT)

(Make rain falling motion, then hands folded in prayer lifting upward.)

So build your house on the Lord Jesus Christ.

*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE "SUGGESTION" BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



Foolish Nabal and Wise Abigail

1 Samuel 25; 27:3; 30:5

LESSON 5



Old Testament 6
Part 1: David

WEDNESDAY EVENING

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PERSONAL APPLICATION:

God wants me to learn from His Word how to be wise and make good decisions.

INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 6 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 6 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T. 6 Review Questions](#) for example questions)

Spend more time talking about wisdom—what it is and how to have it (through study of God’s Word).

LESSON FROM NATURE:

We often think of **owls** as being wise animals. No one knows for sure where this idea got started. It may date back to the ancient Greeks who believed that owls represented wisdom and knowledge. We do know that for thousands of years, superstitious people thought owls could predict future events (deaths and births, for example). It was thought that because most owls hunt at night, their presence could only signal bad things in the future, since nighttime and darkness are often associated with evil. Some people thought that the hooting of an owl was a signal that someone would soon die.

Though owls are not as intelligent as some other animals—and are definitely not the most intelligent kind of bird—they do have the ability to see very well at night, and they have a very keen sense of hearing. They can turn their heads almost completely around, and some kinds of owls can turn their heads upside down! They use these God-given abilities to help them find food and protect themselves. Owls are not intelligent like we are, and they can’t gain wisdom and understanding (can’t learn right from wrong). But they know how to use the knowledge and talents God gave them to make good choices.

Refer to “Why Are Owls Wise?” article cited in recommended visuals for more information on owls.

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