

1 Samuel 25:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.

Analysis

And she said unto her servants, Go on before me; behold, I come after you. But she told not her husband Nabal.

Abigail's tactical approach continues her wisdom. Sending servants ahead with provisions allowed time for gifts to create favorable impression before her personal appeal. The Hebrew 'hinneni' (behold I) indicates she would follow shortly. The crucial detail—'she told not her husband Nabal'—reveals her assessment that informing him would only make matters worse. This action, bypassing her husband's authority in emergency, has occasioned much discussion. Given Nabal's characterization as a fool who 'cannot be spoken to,' Abigail's independent action represents wisdom responding to emergency rather than rebellious defiance. She saved her household when her husband's foolishness endangered it.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern households expected wifely submission, but Abigail's action falls within recognized exceptions for preventing household disaster. Her silence toward Nabal reflects the servant's assessment that speaking to him was impossible. She acted to save, not to subvert.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. When might emergency circumstances justify acting without consulting those in authority?
2. What does Abigail's withholding information from Nabal teach about wisdom in impossible situations?

Interlinear Text

אָמַרְתִּי מִן־הַבָּנִים־לִפְנֵי עַבְרָהָן לְנַעַר יְהָנֵם
And she said unto her servants Go on before after
H559 H5288 H5674 H6440 H2005 H310

הָגִידָה: לְאַנְתָּם בְּאַהֲרֹן וְלֹא־אִישׁ הַנְּבָא
me behold I come not her husband Nabal you But she told
H935 H376 H5037 H3808 H5046

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 32:20 (Parallel theme): And say ye moreover, Behold, thy servant Jacob is behind us. For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me.

Genesis 32:16 (Parallel theme): And he delivered them into the hand of his servants, every drove by themselves; and said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove.

