

1 Samuel 25:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

Analysis

And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the LORD, that hath pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and hath kept his servant from evil: for the LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

David's response to Nabal's death combines theological reflection with practical action. His blessing identifies God as the one who 'pleaded the cause' (Hebrew 'rav')—God acted as David's advocate. The phrase 'my reproach' (cherpati) refers to Nabal's insults. God 'kept his servant from evil'—David recognizes his restraint was divinely enabled. The principle 'returned the wickedness...upon his own head' echoes biblical justice: sin rebounds on the sinner. David's immediate marriage proposal to Abigail demonstrates appreciation for her wisdom and character. This swift courtship suggests David had recognized her exceptional qualities during their encounter.

Historical Context

Ancient widows needed protection and provision quickly. David's proposal secured Abigail's future while gaining a remarkably wise wife. His rapid action was culturally appropriate rather than disrespectful to the deceased.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does David's blessing summarize the theological lessons of the entire episode?
2. What does his immediate proposal to Abigail reveal about his appreciation for wisdom?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁמַע	וְדָוִד	כִּי	יָמָת	נָבָל	וַיֹּאמֶר	בָּרְכֵהוּ	יְהוָה
heard	And David	H3588	was dead	of Nabal	he said	Blessed	be the LORD
H8085	H1732		H4191	H5037	H559	H1288	H3068
אֲשֶׁר	כִּבְּ	אֶת	רֵיב	חֲרִפְתִּי	מִיָּד		
H834	that hath pleaded	H853	the cause	of my reproach	from the hand		
	H7378		H7379	H2781	H3027		
נָבָל	וְאֶת	עַבְדּוֹ	חָשָׁה	רָעָה	וְאֶת	רָעָה	נָבָל
of Nabal	H853	his servant	and hath kept	from evil	H853	from evil	of Nabal
H5037		H5650	H2820	H7451		H7451	H5037
יָשָׁב	יְהוָה	בְּרֹאשׁוֹ	וְשָׁלַח	וְדָוִד			
hath returned	be the LORD	upon his own head	sent	And David			
H7725	H3068	H7218	H7971	H1732			
וַיִּדְבֹּר	בְּאַבִּיגַיִל	לְקַחְתָּהּ	לְ	לְאִשָּׁהּ			
and communed	with Abigail	to take	H0	her to him to wife			
H1696	H26	H3947		H802			

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 22:23 (References Lord): For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

1 Samuel 25:34 (References Lord): For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall.

1 Samuel 25:26 (Evil): Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal.

Psalms 7:16 (Parallel theme): His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate.

1 Kings 2:44 (Evil): The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head;

1 Samuel 24:15 (References Lord): The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

1 Samuel 25:32 (Blessing): And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:

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