



Abigail

Unusual Women in the Bible Zoom Bible Study

June 14, 2022

Review

We got to know this incredible woman, Abigail, last week. How would you describe her?

What do you admire most about Abigail?

Now we see the last chapter of this story of Abigail.

1 Samuel 25:36 – 39

When Abigail went to Nabal, he was in the house holding a banquet like that of a king. He was in high spirits and very drunk. So she told him nothing at all until daybreak. ³⁷ Then in the morning, when Nabal was sober, his wife told him all these things, and his heart failed him and he became like a stone. ³⁸ About ten days later, the LORD struck Nabal and he died.

³⁹ When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Praise be to the LORD, who has upheld my cause against Nabal for treating me with contempt. He has kept his servant from doing wrong and has brought Nabal's wrongdoing down on his own head."

The lesson here is that when you and I let God take care of a situation, he does a much better, more thorough, and more righteous thing than we could ever do.

Romans 12:19:

Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.

Isaiah 35:4:

"...say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you."

Thanks to Abigail, David left room for God's wrath, and God took care of Nabal. Obviously, David was very much impressed with Abigail, so he makes his move:

1 Samuel 25:39b - 44

Then David sent word to Abigail, asking her to become his wife. ⁴⁰ His servants went to Carmel and said to Abigail, "David has sent us to you to take you to become his wife."

⁴¹ She bowed down with her face to the ground and said, "I am your servant and am ready to serve you and wash the feet of my lord's servants." ⁴² Abigail quickly got on a donkey and, attended by her five female servants, went with David's messengers and became his wife. ⁴³ David had also married Ahinoam of Jezreel, and they both were his wives. ⁴⁴ But Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Paltiel son of Laish, who was from Gallim.

It was certainly a good move on David's part to marry such a wise woman. But we see something troubling: David was already married to Ahinoam, and Michal, Saul's daughter, had been given to him as his wife as well.

Let's take a look at David and his many wives and ask some questions about this situation.

This is how Michal became David's wife:

1 Samuel 18:17 – 30

Saul said to David, "Here is my older daughter Merab. I will give her to you in marriage; only serve me bravely and fight the battles of the LORD." For Saul said to himself, "I will not raise a hand against him. Let the Philistines do that!"

¹⁸ But David said to Saul, "Who am I, and what is my family or my clan in Israel, that I should become the king's son-in-law?" ¹⁹ So when the time came for Merab, Saul's daughter, to be given to David, she was given in marriage to Adriel of Meholah.

²⁰ Now Saul's daughter Michal was in love with David, and when they told Saul about it, he was pleased. ²¹ "I will give her to him," he thought, "so that she may be a snare to him and so that the hand of the Philistines may be against him." So Saul said to David, "Now you have a second opportunity to become my son-in-law."

²² Then Saul ordered his attendants: "Speak to David privately and say, 'Look, the king likes you, and his attendants all love you; now become his son-in-law.'"

²³ They repeated these words to David. But David said, "Do you think it is a small matter to become the king's son-in-law? I'm only a poor man and little known."

²⁴ When Saul's servants told him what David had said, ²⁵ Saul replied, "Say to David, 'The king wants no other price for the bride than a hundred Philistine foreskins, to take revenge on his enemies.'" Saul's plan was to have David fall by the hands of the Philistines.

²⁶ When the attendants told David these things, he was pleased to become the king's son-in-law. So before the allotted time elapsed, ²⁷ David took his men with him and went out and killed two hundred Philistines and brought back their foreskins. They counted out the full number to the king so that David might become the king's son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.

²⁸ When Saul realized that the LORD was with David and that his daughter Michal loved David, ²⁹ Saul became still more afraid of him, and he remained his enemy the rest of his days.

³⁰ The Philistine commanders continued to go out to battle, and as often as they did, David met with more success than the rest of Saul's officers, and his name became well known.

Saul wasn't happy because this didn't turn out the way he expected or wanted it to, so Michal is not immediately given to David as his wife.

2 Samuel 3:13 – 15

"Good," said David. "I will make an agreement with you (*with Abner, who was a cousin of Saul and commander of Saul's army*). But I demand one thing of you: Do not come into my presence unless you bring Michal daughter of Saul when you come to see me." ¹⁴ Then David sent messengers to Ish-Bosheth son of Saul, demanding, "Give me my wife Michal, whom I betrothed to myself for the price of a hundred Philistine foreskins."

¹⁵ So Ish-Bosheth gave orders and had her taken away from her husband Paltiel son of Laish. ¹⁶ Her husband, however, went with her, weeping behind her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, "Go back home!" So he went back.

Saul continued to try to kill David, and Michal saved his life at one point.

1 Samuel 19:11 – 17

Saul sent men to David's house to watch it and to kill him in the morning. But Michal, David's wife, warned him, "If you don't run for your life tonight, tomorrow you'll be killed." ¹² So Michal let David down through a window, and he fled and escaped. ¹³ Then Michal took an idol and laid it on the bed, covering it with a garment and putting some goats' hair at the head.

¹⁴ When Saul sent the men to capture David, Michal said, "He is ill."

¹⁵ Then Saul sent the men back to see David and told them, “Bring him up to me in his bed so that I may kill him.” ¹⁶ But when the men entered, there was the idol in the bed, and at the head was some goats’ hair.

¹⁷ Saul said to Michal, “Why did you deceive me like this and send my enemy away so that he escaped?” Michal told him, “He said to me, ‘Let me get away. Why should I kill you?’”

So, we see more dysfunction in David’s family and in his relationships with his wives. Then when David moved the ark to the City of David, this marriage took another blow:

2 Samuel 6:16; 20 - 23

As the ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Michal daughter of Saul watched from a window. And when she saw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD, she despised him in her heart.

²⁰ When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around half-naked in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!”

²¹ David said to Michal, “It was before the LORD, who chose me rather than your father or anyone from his house when he appointed me ruler over the LORD’s people Israel—I will celebrate before the LORD. ²² I will become even more undignified than this, and I will be humiliated in my own eyes. But by these slave girls you spoke of, I will be held in honor.”

²³ And Michal daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death.

David’s attitude toward Michal and his response doesn’t seem like a man after God’s own heart. And it all began with David taking multiple wives—with his unrestrained desire for women.

King David’s Wives/Concubines

Wife #1 Michal 1 Samuel 18:27
Wife #2 Ahinoam 1 Samuel 25:43
Wife #3 Abigail 1 Samuel 25:42
Wife #4 Maaca 2 Samuel 3:3
Wife #5 Haggith 2 Samuel 3:4
Wife #6 Abital 2 Samuel 3:4
Wife #7 Eglah 2 Samuel 3:5
Wife #8 Bathsheba 2 Samuel 12:24
Others Concubines 1 Chronicles 3:9

Why did God allow multiple wives—polygamy?

The Bible does not endorse polygamy. Both the Old and New Testaments rigidly uphold monogamy as normative. The Bible never covers up sin even of those most honored by God.

Jesus had this to say with regard to sex and marriage:

Mark 10:2 – 9

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?”

³ “What did Moses command you?” he replied.

⁴ They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.”

“It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,” Jesus replied. ⁶ “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ ⁷ ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, ⁸ and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. ⁹ Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”

Jesus teaches that the account of God creating Eve and giving her to Adam establishes what is normative for human sexuality and marriage. As Moses writes, “That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24).

Explicitly kings were to have one wife:

Deuteronomy 17:17

He (the king) must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold.

David—as did many others—ignored this commandment to their great regret. Their hearts were led astray.

The New Testament follows the same pattern.

1 Timothy 3:2:

Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach...

The Old Testament intentionally shows the devastating consequences of deviating from God’s established pattern of monogamy.

The reason Scripture records so many instances of polygamy and concubinage is not to endorse these actions, but to condemn them and show just how destructive such sexual perversity proved to be. In every polygamous relationship recorded in the Bible, we find all kinds of trouble that resulted from a man having more than one wife. And while David was smart to take Abigail as his wife, she should have been his one and only wife. Imagine how much trouble David would have averted had he married only Abigail?