

**TO TELL
THE STORY**



LUKE ITALIANO

The Insult of the Fool

The two men wore dirty clothes and stank of the fields. Nabal wrinkled his nose. “Well? What do you want?”

The two men looked at each other and approached. “Sir. We have been sent by David. He is a great man. We have lived in the hills and protected your shepherds for a long time. We see that it is time to shear the sheep, and our master has sent us to you to see if there might be anything you might possibly share with us.”

And Nabal scowled. “David? Who is this David? Is he some slave run away from his master? If so, he should be punished! There are so many people separating from their masters these days! Why, why should I take my hard-earned food and just share it with a nothing like David?” And Nabal kicked them out of his house.

David’s men went back to the mountains – a journey of more than a few hours. And there they reported to David in front of his men everything Nabal had said.

And as they spoke, David’s scowl grew deeper and deeper.

How dare this Nabal? How dare he? David had sacrificed so much to protect Nabal’s sheep! He had done so much, and if Nabal had said no, that would have been fine. But he had to insult David and his men?

Finally, David spoke to his men with one single command: “Put on your swords.”

And four hundred men, ready to murder, set out.

Meanwhile, back at Nabal’s house, the servants ran to Nabal’s wife, a beautiful woman named Abigail. “Mistress! Mistress! Your husband – our master! David came! David’s men came a....aaand asked for food! And David’s men were always so good to us! We never had to worry about any wild animals or...or or brigands or any kind of anything bad happening to us when we were in the fields! They protected us! And Nabal sent them away empty-handed, and he insulted them! We gotta do something!”

And Abigail wasted no time. She gathered a feast and loaded it up on donkeys and set out with the servants.

Can you imagine it? The Bible says that they met each other in a ravine. Coming down one side of the ravine is David and four hundred men. They have their swords on, and they are ready to kill. And the only thing standing between them and murder is a woman and a few servants.

But as David rushes on, Abigail gets off her donkey and puts her face in the dirt, bowing down before David. And she says, “My lord, let the blame be on me alone. Let your servant speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. May my lord pay no attention to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name — his name is Fool, and folly goes with him. But as for me, your servant, I didn't see the men my master sent.”

And she begs his forgiveness for something she did not do. And then Abigail proves her courage and tells David that he must not sin, and one day he will be king. That this needless bloodshed would be staggering to him. That the guilt would weigh him down.

And what would a man like David do? A man ready to kill over an insult? What will he do to this woman who dares tell him that he does the wrong thing?

When Abigail finally falls silent, David says, “Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. Otherwise, as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak.”

And David accepted the feast that Abigail brought to him and his men, and they went on their way.

Brothers and sisters,

This is a mark of greatness: Greatness repents. It admits when it is wrong.

And this story is true.

I Samuel 25

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