

Subject: Peacemaking
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Hymns: 9, 32, 126

The Bible

(The Good News Bible)

I Samuel 25:2-24, 25-28, 30-35

2 There was a man of the clan of Caleb named Nabal, who was from the town of Maon, and who owned land near the town of Carmel. He was a very rich man, the owner of three thousand sheep and one thousand goats.

3 His wife Abigail was beautiful and intelligent, but he was a mean, bad-tempered man. Nabal was shearing his sheep in Carmel,

4 and David, who was in the wilderness, heard about it,

5 so he sent ten young men with orders to go to Carmel, find Nabal, and give him his greetings.

6 He instructed them to say to Nabal: "David sends you greetings, my friend, with his best wishes for you, your family, and all that is yours.

7 He heard that you were shearing your sheep, and he wants you to know that your shepherds have been with us and we did not harm them. Nothing that belonged to them was stolen all the time they were at Carmel.

8 Just ask them, and they will tell you. We have come on a feast day, and David asks you to receive us kindly. Please give what you can to us your servants and to your dear friend David."

9 David's men delivered this message to Nabal in David's name. Then they waited there,

10 and Nabal finally answered, "David? Who is he? I've never heard of him! The country is full of runaway slaves nowadays!

11 I'm not going to take my bread and water, and the animals I have butchered for my sheepshearers, and give them to people who come from I don't know where!"

12 David's men went back to him and told him what Nabal had said.

13 "Buckle on your swords!" he ordered, and they all did. David also buckled on his sword and left with about four hundred of his men, leaving two hundred behind with the supplies.

14 One of Nabal's servants said to Nabal's wife Abigail, "Have you heard? David sent some messengers from the wilderness with greetings for our master, but he insulted them.

15 Yet they were very good to us; they never bothered us, and all the time we were with them in the fields, nothing that belonged to us was stolen.

16 They protected us day and night the whole time we were with them looking after our flocks.

17 Please think this over and decide what to do. This could be disastrous for our master and all his family. He is so mean that he won't listen to anybody!"

18 Abigail quickly gathered two hundred loaves of bread, two leather bags full of wine, five roasted sheep, two bushels of roasted grain, a hundred bunches of raisins, and two hundred cakes of dried figs, and loaded them on donkeys.

19 Then she said to the servants, "You go on ahead and I will follow you." But she said nothing to her husband.

20 She was riding her donkey around a bend on a hillside when suddenly she met David and his men coming toward her.

21 David had been thinking, "Why did I ever protect that fellow's property out here in the wilderness? Not a thing that belonged to him was stolen, and this is how he pays me back for the help I gave him!"

22 May God strike me dead if I don't kill every last one of those men before morning!"

23 When Abigail saw David, she quickly dismounted and threw herself on the ground

24 at David's feet, and said to him, "Please, sir, listen to me! Let me take the blame.

26 It is the Lord who has kept you from taking revenge and killing your enemies. And now I swear to you by the living Lord that your enemies and all who want to harm you will be punished like Nabal.

27 Please, sir, accept this present I have brought you, and give it to your men.

28 Please forgive me, sir, for any wrong I have done. The Lord will make you king, and your descendants also, because you are fighting his battles; and you will not do anything evil as long as you live.

30 And when the Lord has done all the good things he has promised you and has made you king of Israel,

31 then you will not have to feel regret or remorse, sir, for having killed without cause or for having taken your own revenge. And when the Lord has blessed you, sir, please do not forget me."

32 David said to her, "Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you today to meet me!

33 Thank God for your good sense and for what you have done today in keeping me from the crime of murder and from taking my own revenge.

34 The Lord has kept me from harming you. But I swear by the living God of Israel that if you had not hurried to meet me, all of Nabal's men would have been dead by morning!"

35 Then David accepted what she had brought him and said to her, "Go back home and don't worry. I will do what you want."

Matthew 5:9

Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children!

Science and Health

22:31-32

Revenge is inadmissible.

188:8-10

Passion, depraved appetites, dishonesty, envy, hatred, revenge ripen into action, only to pass from shame and woe to their final punishment.

96:12-15, 31-4

This material world is even now becoming the arena for conflicting forces. On one side there will be discord and dismay; on the other side there will be Science and peace.

During this final conflict, wicked minds will endeavor to find means by which to accomplish more evil; but those who discern Christian Science will hold crime in check. They will aid in the ejection of error. They will maintain law and order, and cheerfully await the certainty of ultimate perfection.

224:8-10

There should be painless progress, attended by life and peace instead of discord and death.

106:26-29

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."