



SHEKINAH

(Heavenly Glory)

You are the light of the world. Matt. 5:14a

February 2007

Inking my thoughts ...



Pastor Daniel Israel

Now the Lord spoke to Paul in night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:9,10)

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SPEAK, AND DO NOT KEEP SILENT

There is an ongoing war between the Calvinists and the Armenians for the past 400 years. Try quoting this Scripture (Acts 18:9,10) to them. You talk about "feeding frenzy"! The Calvinist will pounce on it and say, "See, God has predestined His elect already. All we have to do is just proclaim the gospel to all the people, and pull those elect out of this wicked world". But the Armenian will reply that God has already softened the ground, and it is conducive for harvesting, and hence, we must proclaim the Gospel boldly, and gather all those people who respond.

If we carefully study these verses, we can see clearly that Jesus is not teaching us either Calvinism or Armenian theology. Sometimes, it is really a good idea to ignore these theological nuances, and follow the simple commandments of Jesus in these verses. Jesus is just encouraging us to proclaim the gospel boldly.

First of all, Jesus told Paul, not to be afraid of any man! Paul had come to Corinth recently, and he was blessed with the friendship of Aquila and Priscilla. They were of same faith, same profession, and of the same Jewish race. Paul was also encouraged by the arrival of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia. At that time, he was not only encouraged by his Jewish friends, but also he was constrained and compelled by the Holy Spirit to testify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. (Spirit may compel us to preach to certain kind of people, even though they may not respond. We should never judge our call by the response of those people). But the Jews rejected Paul. They opposed him and blasphemed him. So, Paul shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the gentiles! His first convert was a gentile (Justus). But his second convert was the ruler of the synagogue, a Jew! Even though, Paul walked away from the Jews, God brought a Jewish leader to him! You never know, what kind of people God will bring to you. Every soul, whom God brings, is so precious! Don't aim for one particular racial mix. Let God provide the mix as He sees fit! Make sure that no one despises the mix that God has given us!

Secondly, Jesus admonished Paul to "Speak, and not be silent!" It can be a very simple commandment for all of us. Just speak to some one about Jesus. Just keep talking about Jesus. "Be instant in season, and out of season" (2 Tim.4:2). When we stop talking about Christ, we stop harvesting also. Remember, only when we talk, people start responding. Everyone must speak, and not just the pastor or the elder. *Contd. On Pg. 3*

When we read the bible about women, Abigail, is a good example of a woman of faith.

Abigail was Nabal's wife who later became David's wife. In this Bible study, the scripture narrative unfolds a God loving character and an example of prudence

Abigail: her name in Hebrew means "the father's joy"

The first thing the story tells us is that Nabal was a rich man. In the times and lands of the Bible, to have 3000 sheep and 1000 goats made you extremely wealthy, a big stock keeper and not only that, the Word says 'he was very great', implying he was well-known as well.

The first thing we know about Abigail is that she had good understanding of the laws and Word of God. The Bible also tells us that she was a beautiful lady. What a great combination- beautiful and smart! But her husband, Nabal had a bad disposition, and he was inclined to anger. Also it says that he was evil in his doings.

We go on to read that David pleads to have the same kindness Nabal's shepherds had received from him. The shepherds know David and his men. We can think that not only David's men did not harm those shepherds but that they protected them in the wilderness also. We read in **1Sam 25:9** *And when David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David, and ceased. 1Sam 25:10* *And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants now a days that break away every man from his master.*

Look at this man's answer! He dares to ask 'who is David', as if he did not know. All Israel knew David. He does not only insult them by implying that they are runaways but he personally attacks David. **1Sam 25:11** *Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?*

Nabal makes such a big deal on the property he had in the provisions of his table. He sounds like many today. Nabal uses 3 times the word 'I' and 4 times the word 'my' in one sentence, overemphasizing his possessive attitude. He thinks he is the lord of all he has, like we do, many times today. He forgot that he is nothing but a steward and he definitely glories like he did not receive it, rather as though he earned it.

One of Nabal's men tells Abigail what happened. The servant had so much confidence in Abigail that he went and told her what he saw. She knew very well what kind of a man her husband was, so what did she do? She did not argue at all, she did not talk about it, neither did she panic. She went straight into action. She took 5 sheep out of 3000. Just the fact that they needed more than one donkey to carry all this means that it was not sufficient enough to carry all this provision. That fact alone was a great sign of the kind of manager, planner and organizer she was. She is about to atone for Nabal's denial of David's request.

She fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground. This behavior is very submissive and very humble, a petitioner's place. Just by looking at her posture we see respect and reverence to the person of David. Both her attitude and her body language makes the fullest amend for the disrespect her husband had shown. What are her first words? "upon me let this iniquity be." She and her husband are one flesh, so from one viewpoint it is her iniquity as well. On the other hand as **Ezek 18:20** *says The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*

She surrenders. She asks just for one thing, to be heard and she calls herself his handmaid. What else does Abigail say? She mentions her own ignorance of the matter. She does not excuse her husband's conduct, she imputes it to his natural weakness and lack of understanding. She does not blame him, she just tells the truth. She does not depend upon her own reasoning, but on God's mercy and grace, to soften David. She speaks as if it has already been done. Isn't that faith? **Heb 11:1** *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* She takes it for granted that she has gained her point already; and she thanks God for it!

She presents her offer and she calls the gifts a blessing, but speaks of them as unworthy of David's acceptance, and therefore she suggests they may be given to the young men that followed him. Let us not forget that this is the food they asked in the first place. It is interesting that by saying 'evil hath not been found in thee all thy days' she once again implies that doing what he had in mind was going to be evil. It is like saying 'since you have never done evil before, why do it now?' Up to that moment we also know that **1Ki 15:5** *David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord*

Contd. On Pg. 3

We must go out and speak to the unbelievers outside the church. Do not keep silent! Silence is like a cancer. It will snuff out the fire within us. Devil tries to tie our tongue so that we will not witness. He restricts us through shyness, and fear of rejection, so that we will not talk about Jesus to anyone. The best way to kindle our spirit is by speaking to an unbeliever, and witnessing about Christ. We have nothing to fear, because Jesus is with us, and He will protect us and preserve us.

Thirdly, Jesus says, "I have many people in this town!" In other words, Jesus has prepared many people, and the field is ripe for harvest! Whoever responds to the Gospel will be harvested. Basically, Jesus wants us to focus on the process of leading everyone to salvation. We should not be bothered about how those people are being elected. Our job is to proclaim the name of Jesus. Our God is just, righteous, and holy. He does give equal opportunity for all the people to respond to His call! Let us not try to judge our God through our theological whimsies, and blame Him unnecessarily. If anyone perishes, it is not due to lack of election, but because of that person's willful rejection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So let us focus on spending lot of time with the unbelievers, and speak to them about Jesus.



Abigail—a resourceful woman

She knew very well what God had said about David and that **He** is responsible for bringing it to pass. When we are tempted to sin, we should consider how it will appear when we think upon it afterwards. That is enough to stop us. David knows that if it wasn't for Abigail's intervention he would be a murderer. He didn't mind the reproof and as he grew older he even seeks it. **Psa 141:5** *Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.* The instance was one of his prayers later in the Psalms. **Psa 51:14** *Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.*

After all that he finally accepts the gifts. Abigail gets her first request: to be heard and even more than that, she was accepted. When we trust God we have a wonderful promise to claim. And God surely did more than what Abigail asked or thought as we will see later.

In **1Sam 25:36** we see that Nabal was dead drunk when Abigail came home and seeing he was drunk, she did not say anything. But when he got up the next morning, he was sober. And Abigail gives him the news and as we read in verse 9, his heart died within him. And ten days later, he died.

As is recorded in **1Sam 25:39** David once again remembers that revenge is in God's hands and not ours. 'The LORD hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head', is something we should remember. If we trust God and wait on the Lord, our enemies plan will turn against them.

David surely remembered Abigail. He asks her to be his wife. She married him in faith. He had no house of his own, she left the fortune she had from Nabal and believed all that God promised to David. She was willing to live in the wilderness with him.

Like those who join themselves to Christ we must be willing now to suffer with him, believing that we shall reign with him for eternity. **2Ti 2:12** *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him:*

What can we conclude about this bible woman, Abigail?

She loved God and His word.

She knew the spirit of the law and not just the letter.

She was prudent and caring.

She was hospitable.

She had respect for leadership.

She had hope and faith in the Lord God of Israel.

She cared so that her 'brother' did not commit evil.

James 5:20 *Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.*



Church of India

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Vision of our Church

- ✠ To reach out to all people for Christ .
- ✠ To reach out to all children and lead them to CHRIST.
- ✠ To help out the mission work in the Indian subcontinent.
- ✠ To be a light to this country and be a blessing to the needy people in the USA.

Directions From Route 29

Merge onto Baltimore National Pike (US 40) West
At the 5th traffic light, turn Right onto Pine Orchard Lane (0.1 miles)
Turn Right onto Corporate Ct (<0.1 miles)

Schedule for the month

Sunday Worship Service - 11 am
Children's Sunday School - During the service
Adult Sunday School - Sundays at 10:15 a.m.
Prayer Session every Tuesday 7:30pm—9pm
Women's Fellowship - Second Saturday at 2:30pm
Kidz Bible Club - Second Saturday at 4:30pm

Humor!

Youth & Kids Corner

Humor!

There once was a Rabbi who felt his son just didn't appreciate the Jewish religion so he sent him on a trip to the holy land of Israel to get a first hand look at Jewish culture. The boy came back from the trip and the father was asking him how it went.

"Oh it was really great dad, thanks! But, I must tell you that I'm a Christian now."

The father was not at all happy and felt he had to do something. He went to a fellow Rabbi with his problem. The Rabbi exclaimed, "don't look at me! I sent my son to Jerusalem and he came back a Christian also. They thought that it was a conspiracy and went to the Head Rabbi. The Head Rabbi exclaimed, "Don't look at me! I too sent my son to Jerusalem and he came back a Christian. this is something we MUST pray about." All three kneeled and prayed and God answered: "Don't look at me...."

A little boy opened the big family Bible with fascination, and looked at the old pages as he turned them. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible.

He picked it up and looked at it closely. It was an old leaf from a tree that had been pressed in between the pages.

"Mama, look what I found!" the boy called out.

"What do you have, dear?" she asked.

With astonishment in his voice, the young man replied, "I think it's Adam's suit!"

WORD for the month....

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world , and we can take nothing out of it . But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil .
1 Timothy 6: 6- 8, 10a

Let us reflect the Light of our Lord Jesus Christ