

引言 INTRODUCTION

There are some common watershed moments we may go through. For example, choosing your career, marriage or relocating to another city. You may seek advice from your parents, good friends or teachers when making decisions. Their inputs can even completely change the course of your path. In some cases, that force is called love. I did not like celery at all since a kid. The characteristic odor of celery is not appealing to me. I switched 180 degrees after I met one of my former girlfriends. She loves celery. We were eating at a restaurant one day. She said: “Why don’t you try some?” I could not tell if it was a mutation in my mind or my taste-buds. But since then I like celery a lot. One girl’s suggestion changed me. In 1 Samuel 25, the insight from a lady also changed David’s plan. David would become a future king. He was not only a leader but also God’s agent to exercise righteous judgement. As such, David needed some wise people to help him in his ruling. Back in chapter 22, Abiathar the priest joined David’s band. In our story today, another unexpected assistant came to David. As a result, David resolved a conflict not with his hands but with his head. He learned not to act on gross impulse, but act on godly insight. Up till now, 600 men were following David. If we add wives and children to the mix, then there were a lot of mouths to feed. Those people were constantly running away from Saul’s pursuit. It was impossible for them to settle in one location and produce food in the usual way. The story in this chapter is about finding for food for them. Besides David, two other main characters in the passage were a couple, named Nabal and Abigail. We shall learn from David’s experience that whose opinions we listen to can lead to contrasting outcomes.

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 硬著心腸 Hard-Hearted

First, we will look at Nabal. He proved to be a hard-hearted guy. The passage tells us that Nabal was a rich guy lived in Maon. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. Those animals can provide a constant source of income. That day, David sent a few messengers to Nabal and asked for a favor. Let us read from [verse 4-8](#). Shearing is to trim off the wool from sheep. The fur can be used for clothing, and it is also a trading commodity. It was a joyful time of the year like a harvest. David might have expected that a wealthy and happy Nabal should be generous too. His men greeted Nabal on behalf of David. They wished Nabal, his family and all that he had well. They reminded Nabal that the shepherds from both sides tended sheep before in Carmel. They had never taken advantage of Nabal’s men. In fact, a servant of Nabal testified to Abigail later that David’s men were like a wall protecting them. David now asked Nabal for food and water. Nabal’s response in [verse 10-11](#) was not quite friendly: [10 And Nabal answered David’s servants, “Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants these days who are breaking away from their masters. 11 Shall I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers and give it to men who come from I do not know where?”](#) Nabal insulted David by calling him “the son of Jesse” and an unknown renegade running away from his master. Perhaps Nabal did not want to drag himself into trouble. After all, David was the most-wanted fugitive in the country. Nabal could also be a stingy person. Why should he give

away food to a rebel group? Now we flip the argument and consider why Nabal should give support to David. First, it was a way to repay David for the kindness of his shepherds. Several thousand years ago there was no police department. Therefore, building friendship between clans was a way to protect one another. In Genesis, when Lot was captured by some tribal kings, Abraham sent a team of his strong men on a rescue mission. Therefore, giving each other help was a norm. Second, the Old Testament Law requires people to show compassion to even orphans, widows and traveling foreigners. Nabal did not live up to the social custom! There are a lot of wealthy people in the world who are stingy to even themselves. But Nabal was not one of them. Verse 36 describes: **...he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk...** Nabal surely knew how to live large! We can picture a self-centered person who enjoyed life, but he had no mercy on needy people. The servants described him as a mean guy and no one could reason with him. The name Nabal actually means "fool." What parents would give their son such a name? It may be a nickname that matches his personality. In the Bible, the same word "fool" refer to people not with a low IQ, but a low spiritual intelligence. They are simply too smart to admit that there is a God above them. Jesus once told a parable about such a fool in Luke 12. A landlord had a great harvest. He was anxious about where to store all the grains. He decided to tear down his barns and build some bigger ones. He said to himself that he had many years to eat, drink and be happy. Jesus told us the lesson of the story in verse 20-21: **20 "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."** What is the point of having all that wealth if he does not have a life to enjoy it? God sees this man as spiritually dumb. It is not a wrong thing to enjoy God's blessings. But it is a foolish thing to only indulge in materials and pleasure. Nabal was a man like that. He only cared about himself. He did not have God or other people in his eyes. Do not be a fool like him. Our earthly life is so short compared to eternity. People whom God consider wise are those who live today with a heavenly perspective.

2. 魯莽行事 Hot-Headed

David's messengers returned empty-handed. We see David reacted like a hot-headed maniac in **verse 12-14** after he heard the servants' report. In case you have any doubt about David's intent, let me refer you to **verse 21-22**. David swore to God and his followers that he would completely destroy Nabal. David might think that it was useless to argue with Nabal. Why bother? It is hard to drag a donkey up a hill if it does not budge. David did not ask his men to go elsewhere and seek help from another wealthy landlord. Instead, he allowed his boiling emotion to get the best of him. David felt humiliated and unfairly-treated. All he wanted was to get even. When all that David concerned about was to fight for his face, he forgot that he should be fighting for God's name. He was a leader and a future king. Followers would evaluate his character based on his actions. David was not a barbaric gangster who did whatever he wished. He was supposed to be a man after God's own heart. By pouring his rage on Nabal's family, David would be no different from the cold-blooded Saul. The king slaughtered the residents of Nob out of anger. David would also act like Nabal himself too by showing no compassion to others. He would have stubbornly imposed his will to his subordinates. He would have carried out wicked deeds and became worthless in God's eyes. David should be better than the two fools, Saul and Nabal. David says to his men in verse 21 that Nabal **"has returned me evil for good."** He thought retaliation was a

right thing to do. The Bible gives us a better option. Paul tells us in Romans 12:21 – **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.** Instead of paying back evil with evil, we should return evil with good. It is difficult to display God’s kindness when we are under attack. We feel being violated. We reason that we need to do something to make it right. But when we only focus on our own rights, we neglect God’s righteousness. If you are a child of God, then you no longer belong to yourself. You are an ambassador of Jesus. People will interpret what you believe by how you behave. Whether wise or dumb decisions, they will affect the people around you. They can be your family members, classmates, colleagues or neighbors. Do you want people to label you as a hot-headed fool because of your violent temper? Besides, you do not want to do or say things that you will regret later. I made a ton of foolish decisions as a dad. Once in a while I have a conversation with my younger son about how I disciplined him when he was little. He would jokingly say: “Yeah, you spanked me really hard.” Then I would reply: “Come on, all these years you still haven’t forgiven me?” I love my two sons but I hate my bad mistakes. We need God’s help when we are like a time-bomb ready to explode. James 1:19-20 teach us: **19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.** God’s people: do not let anger be the driving force in your decisions. Otherwise, it will lead to damaging actions you cannot undo and hurtful words you cannot delete. James advises us to **slow down**. Your instinct may stink without godly insight. Besides slowing down, it goes without saying that we must also **cool down**. Let God’s abundant grace quench the fire on the inside. Walk away, take a deep breath and ask yourself: “Why am I so angry? Does my manner make God look good? What should be a better way to handle the situation?” Other than slow down and cool down, the third step will be to **kneel down**. We must think and pray before we act.

3. 智慧賢妻 Wise Wife

David could hardly think straight at this moment. Therefore, God graciously sent him a helper. That person was none other but Abigail. She proved to be a wise wife of Nabal. A servant informed Abigail about the visit of David’s messengers. She sensed something serious was about to happen. David was no coward but a commander. He would not let this offense go away easily. Abigail took action immediately. She packed a ton of food items, and asked some servants to deliver them to David. Then she hopped on a donkey and followed behind them. Abigail wanted to quench David’s anger with food and drink. She then delivered a speech from verse 23 to 31 to try to make peace. We will only read from **verse 26-31**. Let us highlight a few things from Abigail’s attitude and words. First, she literally **pulled** down her face. She fell face down at David’s feet. That was not all. In this dialogue, she addressed herself as a servant six times. In contrast, she called David “lord” for a total of fourteen times! Put yourself in David’s shoes. It would be soothing to your ears to hear someone keep calling you a boss. But Abigail was no servant. She was a wealthy housewife! Her demeanor showed great humility. Second, she **professed** her guilt. She put all the blame on herself. She apologized for failing to show hospitality because she did not know the visit of David’s men. She also said sorry for the rude manner of her husband. She told David: “Just ignore my man. He acted like a fool that is consistent with his name.” Third, she **presented** the food as a compensation for David. She hoped that the gift would put out David’s rage and stop his urge for attack. Fourth, she **pleaded** for David’s forgiveness. Abigail did her part in confessing her wrongdoing. She hoped that David would graciously grant his pardon. Repentance can be a one-sided effort. Just say “I’m sorry”

and you do not need to wait for a response from the person you offended. You can even express that in writing. But reconciliation requires actions from both parties. The goal is not just to remove the fault, but to rebuild a relationship. Fifth, Abigail **praised** David for his integrity. This part really showed Abigail's wisdom. She tells David in verse 28 that he was **“fighting the battles of the Lord, and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live.”** Since David was an upright person, he should not harm any innocent life by causing a bloodshed. Doing so would tarnish his character. Abigail added that as David looked back after he became a king, there should be **“no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause”** (verse 31). Essentially, Abigail was telling David that a noble person like him should not act like a fool as her husband. David was convinced by Abigail's peace talk. He realized that Abigail was an agent sent by God to stop him from taking business into his own hands. He then retrieved his soldiers. A crisis was thus resolved. Abigail interceded on behalf of her husband and family. God can use us as peace-makers in our circumstances too. Proverbs 15:1 says: **A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.** We can use gentle words to calm people down. We show empathy to people who feel hurt. We propose ways to make up for the loss. Then we humbly ask for the possibility of reconciliation. At the end, God cast judgment on Nabal. He died of heart failure. When David heard the news, he thanked God for vindicating him and stopping him from a battle. Subsequently, David received Abigail as his second wife. The author made no comment about David's decision. It was customary for men in the ancient world, especially kings, to marry multiple wives. However, it clearly violates God's design of one husband and one wife. God allows certain things to happen does not mean He agrees with our wrong choices. Two sons of David from different wives later became enemies. It almost costed David his throne. But for now, David must be happy to take over both Nabal's wealth and his wife.

結論 CONCLUSION

Whose opinions we listen to can lead to contrasting outcomes. It would end in a tragedy if David had listened to his heart or Nabal's remarks. By God's grace, David chose to listen to Abigail. She played an intercessor to prevent a disaster. We can see traces of the gospel message in her effort. Jesus mediated for us to turn away God's wrath on us due to our sins. He humbled Himself and became a man. He took up our sins and died on the cross. In doing so, He offered a compensation for our sin debt to the Father. Jesus pleaded for God's forgiveness on our behalf. Those who receive Jesus' salvation grace by faith have been reconciled with God. They have become agents of God's peace wherever they go.

引言 INTRODUCTION

我們可能都會經歷一些相同的關鍵時刻。例如，選擇職業、結婚或搬到另一個城市。在做決定時，你可以徵求父母、好朋友或老師的意見。他們的提議甚至可以完全改變你的人生方向。有時候，這股力量是出於愛情。我從小就不喜歡吃芹菜，因為它那份獨特的氣味。當我認識到一位前任女友之後，我有 180 度的轉變。她喜歡芹菜。有一天我們在一家餐館吃飯。她說：「你為什麼不嚐一點呢？」我不知道是我的腦袋還是我的味覺發生了突變。從此之後我就愛上芹菜了。一個女孩的建議改變了我。在撒母耳記上 25 章，一位女士的洞見也改變了大衛的計劃。大衛將成為未來的君王。他不僅是個領袖，也是執行神公義審判的代表。因此，大衛需要一些有智慧的人來幫助他治理。在第 22 章，祭司亞比亞他加入了大衛的陣營。在我們今天的故事中，另一個意想不到的人也成為大衛的助手。結果，大衛是運用頭腦而不是出手來解決衝突。他學會了不要衝動做決定，而是要憑敬虔的洞見行事。到現在為止，大衛有 600 個跟隨者。如果我們加上妻子和孩子，那麼就有很多人要吃飯。他們不斷地逃避掃羅的追捕。因此他們不可能在一個地方定居並生產糧食。這一章的故事是關於他們尋找食物。除了大衛之外，這段經文中的另外兩個主要人物是一對夫婦，名叫拿八和亞比該。我們可以從大衛的經歷中體會到，我們聽從誰的意見會導致截然不同的結果。

解釋 EXPLANATION

1. 硬著心腸 Hard-Hearted

首先，我們要看看拿八。事實證明，他是一個硬著心腸的人。經文告訴我們，拿八是住在瑪雲的富翁。他有三千隻綿羊和一千隻山羊。這些動物可以提供穩定的收入來源。那天，大衛派幾個使者去見拿八，請求他的幫助。讓我們來看第 4-8 節。羊毛可以用來造衣服，也是一種貿易商品。這是一年中快樂的時光，就像收割一樣。大衛可能期望一個富有又快樂的拿八應該是慷慨大方。他的手下以大衛的名義向拿八問安。他們希望拿八、他的家人和他所擁有的一切都順利。他們提醒拿八，雙方的牧羊人以前曾在迦密一起放羊。他們從來沒有佔過拿八僕人的便宜。事實上，拿八的一個僕人後來向亞比該作見證說，大衛的手下好像一面牆保護他們。大衛現在向拿八要食物和水。拿八在第 10-11 節以不友善的態度回應：10 拿八回答大衛的僕人說：「大衛是誰？耶西的兒子是

誰？近來悖逆主人奔逃的僕人甚多，11 我豈可將飲食和為我剪羊毛人所宰的肉給我不知道從哪裏來的人呢？」拿八侮辱大衛，稱他為「耶西的兒子」，並形容他是一個逃離主人的不知名叛徒。也許拿八不想給自己惹麻煩。畢竟，大衛是國家的頭號通緝犯。拿八也可能是個吝嗇的人。他認為不應該把食物給一些革命黨。現在我們把論點倒轉過來，想想為什麼拿八應該幫助大衛。首先，這是報答大衛牧羊人恩慈的一種方式。幾千年前沒有警察局。因此，家族之間建立友誼是一種保護彼此的方式。在創世記中，當羅得被一些土皇帝俘虜時，亞伯拉罕派他下面的一些壯丁前去營救。因此，互相幫助是一種常規。另一方面，舊約律法要求人們對孤兒、寡婦和過路的外邦人表示憐憫。拿八違反了社會的慣例！世界上有一些有錢人，甚至刻薄自己。但拿八不是其中之一。第 36 節描述：…他在家裏設擺筵席，如同王的筵席；拿八快樂大醉…。拿八懂得如何享受人生！他是一個以自我為中心並喜歡享樂的人，但是他對有需要的人卻是視若無睹。僕人形容他是個大老粗，沒有人能跟他講道理。拿八這個名字的意思是「傻瓜」。哪個父母會給自己的兒子起這樣的名字？這可能是一個與他性格配合的綽號。在聖經中，「愚頑」不是指低智商的人，而是靈性低下的人。他們是太聰明了，不願意承認上面還有一位神。耶穌曾在路加福音 12 章中講過一個關於這樣一個傻瓜的比喻。一位地主豐收，他煩惱不知道要把農作物存放在哪裡。最後他決定拆除他現有的穀倉並建造一些更大的。他自言說語，他有很多年日可以吃喝快樂。耶穌在第 20-21 節告訴我們這個故事的教訓：20「神卻對他說：『無知的人哪，今夜必要你的靈魂；你所預備的要歸誰呢？』21 凡為自己積財，在神面前卻不富足的，也是這樣。」神認為這個人在靈裡面是愚拙的。享受神的祝福並沒有錯。但只沉醉在物質和享樂是愚昧的事情。拿八就是這樣的人。他只關心自己。他目中無人，也是目中無神。不要像他一樣傻。與永恆相比，我們塵世的生命是如此短暫。神認為有智慧的人是那些以屬天的眼光來活今生的人。

2. 魯莽行事 Hot-Headed

大衛的使者空手而回。大衛在聽到僕人的報告後，在第 12-14 節的反應就像一個魯莽行事的瘋子。如果你對大衛的動機有任何疑問，請看看第 21-22 節。大衛向神和他的跟隨者起誓，他會消滅拿八一切所有的。大衛可能認為與拿八爭論沒有用。何必呢？如果一頭驢不肯動，就很難把牠拖上山。大衛並沒有要求他的手下到別處去向另一個富有的地主求助。他被沸騰的情緒所支配。大衛受到羞辱和不公平的待遇。他只想報復。當大衛只想到為自己的面子爭戰時，他忘記了他應該為神的名而爭戰。他是一位領袖，也是未來的君王。跟隨者會根據他的行為來評估他的品格。大衛不是一個為所欲為的野蠻土匪。他應該是一個合神心意的人。如果大衛將怒氣傾注在拿八的家人身上，那就與冷血的掃羅

沒有什麼不同。掃羅王因為生氣而屠殺了挪伯的居民。大衛也會像拿八一樣，對別人毫無憐憫之心。他將自己的決定強加給下屬。他的惡行在神眼中變得毫無價值。大衛應該比掃羅和拿八兩個傻瓜要好得多。大衛在第 21 節對他的手下說，拿八「以惡報善」。他認為報復是正確的做法。聖經給了我們一個更好的選擇。保羅在羅馬書 12:21 節告訴我們：**你不可為惡所勝，反要以善勝惡。**與其以惡報惡，不如以善報惡。當我們受到攻擊時，很難表現出神的恩慈。我們感到被冒犯。我們認為必須做一些事情來糾正。但是，當我們只關心自己的權利時，便會忽略神的公義。如果你是神的兒女，那麼你就不再屬於你自己了。你是耶穌的使者。人們會通過你的行為來衡量你的信仰。無論是明智還是愚蠢的決定，它們都會影響你周圍的人。可能是你的家人、同事或鄰居。你希望人們因為你脾氣暴躁而認為你是個「魯莽行事的傻瓜」嗎？此外，你不想做事後會後悔的行為或說出你事後會後悔的話。作為父親，我做了很多愚昧的決定。偶爾我會和小兒子談論他小時候如何被我管教。他會開玩笑說：「是的，你打我屁股很重。」然後我會回答：「拜託，這麼多年你還沒有原諒我嗎？」我愛我的兩個兒子，但我厭惡我的嚴重錯誤。當我們像一顆即將爆炸的定時炸彈時，我們需要神的幫助。雅各書 1:19-20 教導我們：**19 我親愛的弟兄們，這是你們所知道的，但你們各人要快快的聽，慢慢的說，慢慢的動怒，20 因為人的怒氣並不成就神的義。**弟兄姐妹：不要讓憤怒成為你做決定的驅動力。否則，它會導致無法撤消的破壞性行為和無法刪除的傷害性言語。雅各建議我們**放慢速度**。不帶著敬虔的洞察力，可能只是沒有智慧的直覺。除了放慢速度，當然我們也必須**冷靜下來**。讓神豐富的恩典熄滅內心的火焰。離開現場，深呼吸一口氣，問問自己：「我為什麼這麼生氣？我的舉動會否羞辱神的名？有什麼更好的解決辦法？」除了放慢速度並冷靜下來之外，第三步就是**跪下禱告**。在採取行動之前，我們必須深思和祈禱。

3. 智慧賢妻 Wise Wife

大衛這時候無法冷靜地思考。因此，神派一個人來幫助他。那個人就是亞比該。事實證明，她是拿八的智慧賢妻。一個僕人告訴亞比該大衛使者的來訪。她感覺到事情不妙。大衛不是膽小鬼，而是一個軍官。他不會讓事情就這樣過去。於是亞比該立即採取行動。她打包了一大堆食物，讓一些僕人送去給大衛。然後她坐上驢，跟在他們後面。亞比該想用食物和水來平息大衛的怒氣。然後，她從第 23 到 31 節講話，希望促成和平。我們只會讀**第 26-31 節**。讓我們從亞比該的態度和講話內容中看幾個重點。首先，她**拉下了臉**。她臉伏於地向大衛扣頭。不只這樣子。在這段對話中，她六次稱呼自己為僕人。相比之下，她一共十四次稱大衛為「主」！請你設身處地去想。聽到有人一直稱呼你做「老闆」會肯定會讓你的耳朵覺得很舒服。但亞比該不是僕人，她是一個富

婆！她表現出極為謙卑的態度。另外，她**承認己罪**。她承擔所有的責任。她向大衛道歉，她因為不知道大衛的手下來訪而沒有招待他們。她還對丈夫的粗魯行為表示抱歉。她告訴大衛：「別理我的老公。他表現得像個傻瓜，就和他的名字一樣。」第三，她**獻上食物**作為對大衛的**補償**。她希望這份禮物能平息大衛的怒氣，停止他攻擊的衝動。第四，她**懇求**大衛的**饒恕**。亞比該盡了自己的力量，承認她的錯。她也希望大衛能樂意赦免他。道歉可能是單方面的表示。只要說一聲「對不起」，你不需要等待被你冒犯的人的回應。你甚至可以用書面形式表達。但和好需要雙方都採取行動。目標不只是彌補錯誤，而是重建關係。第五，亞比該**稱讚**大衛的**優點**。這部分確實展示了亞比該的智慧。她在第 28 節告訴大衛，他是「**為耶和華爭戰；並且在你平生的日子查不出有甚麼過來**」。大衛是一個正直的人，他不應該製造流血事件來傷害無辜的生命。這樣做會玷污他的品格。亞比該補充說，當大衛成為王之後回首過去時，「**必不致心裏不安，覺得良心有虧**」（第 31 節）。整體來說，亞比該告訴大衛，像他這樣高貴的人不應該像她的丈夫一樣的愚昧。大衛被亞比該的和談說服了。他意識到亞比該是神派來阻止他自作主張的使者。於是大衛撤回他的士兵。一場危機就此化解。亞比該代表她的丈夫和家人求情。神也可以使用我們作為建立和平的人。箴言 15:1 節說：**回答柔和，使怒消退；言語暴戾，觸動怒氣**。我們可以用溫和的語氣使人平靜下來。我們向受到傷害的人表示同情。我們建議彌補損失的方法。然後我們謙卑地提出和解的請求。結果，神審判拿八。他死於心力衰竭。當大衛聽到這個消息時，他感謝神為他主持公道並阻止他出兵。隨後，大衛娶了亞比該為第二個妻子。作者沒有對大衛的決定表達意見。古代世界的男人，尤其是君王，娶多個老婆是常見的。然而，這顯然違背了神一夫一妻的設計。神允許某些事情發生並不等於祂同意我們錯誤的選擇。大衛有兩個同父異母的兒子後來成為敵人，幾乎把大衛的王位都搶走。但就目前而言，大衛一定很高興接管拿八的財富和他的妻子。

結論 CONCLUSION

我們聽從誰的意見會導致截然不同的結果。如果大衛聽從了他的內心或拿八的話，結果肯定是個悲劇。靠著神的恩典，大衛選擇了聽從亞比該的話。她成為一個調解紛爭的中間人，阻止災難的發生。我們可以在她的努力中看到福音信息的點滴。耶穌成為我們的中保，消除神因我們的罪而對我們的憤怒。耶穌謙卑自己成為一個人。祂背負我們的罪，死在十字架上。如此，祂替我們償還了欠天父的罪債。耶穌也為我們懇求神的饒恕。那些憑信心接受耶穌救贖恩典的人已經與神和好。無論他們走到哪裡，他們都成為神的和平使者。