

1 Samuel 25:2-3 (T.W.P. Wolston, Editor) 209293

The Gospel Messenger: Volume 9 (1894), "Fool is His Name, and Folly is With Him." (25:2-3)

HE had possessions in a fruitful place, and was very great. He had thousands of sheep and goats; he belonged to a privileged people. And he had a handsome and intelligent wife. But he himself was a churl, and evil in his doings, living in thorough selfishness, scraping gold together, and utterly indifferent to the claims of God (1 Sam. 25:2, 3). His name was Nabal, which means "a fool" and as his own wife said of him, when he openly manifested his character, "As is his name, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him" (vs. 25).

What a striking picture of the flourishing man of this world! How many thousands are enjoying innumerable blessings, given to them of God, surrounded with luxury, but living entirely for self, the heart set on this world, and the claims of God and His Son forgotten and refused. How many are churlish and evil in their doings like Nabal.

David, the anointed of God, the future king, was in need. Rejected, he and his followers were hungry. It was the time of sheep-shearing, when Nabal's business was at its best, and David sent him a gracious message of peace, and a request for a portion. "Greet him in my name; and thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be to all that thou hast...; give, I pray thee, to thy son David" (vers. 5-8).

Hear his reply, "Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse?... 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?" (vers. 10, 11).

And today a greeting of grace comes down from the very glory, a message of peace from the Son of God. It is sounded forth far and wide; but, alas, how many thousands are answering in blind infidelity, and in the selfishness of their hearts, "Who is Jesus? who is the Son of God? Shall I give up something here for one I have never seen?"

It was all I and my with poor Nabal. So utterly wrapt up in himself, that he calls even the very water, which flows freely for all, my water, and would hold even that from the anointed of God. Nabal reigned in Nabal's heart, and David had no place. So is it with us all in the flesh; we don't want Christ. Self reigns. Deceived by Satan, sin, and our own hearts, I and my are the ruling principles which govern us; and God and Christ are shut out. What does it matter to the poor blind selfish worldling that Christ has been anointed with the Holy Ghost, but is now rejected, and coming again as King? What is all that to me? oft says the prosperous man of business in the great and thriving cities of this world. The heart is set on other things.

However, when David received the reply of Nabal, he said, "Gird ye on every man his sword." And he girded his on also. He would judge the sender. Fool was his name, and folly was with him, and his folly should come on his own head. Sinner, selfish worldling, prosperous man of this world, living without God, and refusing the claims of Christ, behold the Judge standeth before the door (James 5:9). The sword is girded, yea, outstretched o'er the poor world, and o'er your guilty head. Who knows how soon it will be executed? Little did the deluded Nabal dream of the danger to which he was exposed, little did he think he was so near death in the midst of his prosperity. And little do thousands today dream of the judgment that is hanging over them, and that at any moment they may be overtaken by death, called from the midst of their prosperity, selfishness, and worldliness, to meet a stern and inexorable Judge.

Oh, selfish, careless sinner, how truly do the words of Nabal's wife apply to you: "Fool is his name, and folly is with him." You live for self, time, and sense; you reject Christ, salvation, and glory. Remain impenitent to the end of your short span of life, and your folly will cost you an eternity of woe, and you shall forever own the justice of these words.

Now, as judgment was looming over the head of Nabal, one of the servants came to Abigail, his wife, with sound advice, — "Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do, for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household: for he is such a son of Belial, that a man cannot speak to him" (1 Sam. 25:17). And we would press these words home upon the hearts and consciences of our readers. Judgment is coming upon this world of unbelief and selfishness, now know and consider what you will do. Evil is determined, and will reach you among the rest, if you go on without God and Christ. "The day of judgment is appointed" (Acts 17:31). Will you be wise like Abigail, while it is called today (2 Cor. 6:2). She made haste (see also verses 23, 42) and went to meet David (1 Sam. 25:18-20). Hear her confession, as she falls at his feet, "Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be"; and then intercedes for Nabal. Sinner, will you haste, and take that place? There is no time to be lost; delays are dangerous. Have you had to do with God Himself? Have you taken your place in truth before Him, in self-judgment at the feet of Jesus? Have you ever owned that you deserve the judgment of iniquity?

There and there only is the spot where mercy will meet you, and grace through righteousness put your iniquity away. "I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thy handmaid" (vs. 28). The sense of sin, and the prayer for forgiveness today, are the sure proofs of God's work in your soul; and if that is what you have been brought to through grace, there is a way of blessing and salvation for you through Him. Judgment is at the door, but God be praised, the Judge has taken the guilty culprit's place.

Hear the glorious news! Herald it to earth's remotest bound! The Son of God, the gift of His love, came into this world of sin. His name is Jesus. And He gave Himself, a sacrifice, at Golgotha. Divine justice smote the sinless One. He died; His blood was shed! Enough, God is glorified thereby. Sin's judgment has been borne. He lives again, forever lives, Jesus, the Christ, our Lord, in glory above. Are your sins burdening your conscience in God's presence; are you filled with dread and fear at the thought of His holy and righteous retribution; are you longing for pardon and deliverance? Believe on His blessed name. Trust now in Him. His blood was shed for such as you. It cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7). The vilest, the guiltiest, the most selfish, are made whiter than snow in that precious flood. Take then your place at His

feet; hide nothing, confess all, own your desert, and look to Him alone just as you are. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Now hear the answer of David to Abigail: — "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou... go up in peace to thine house; see, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person" (1 Sam. 25:32-35). And shall it be less for you? Nay, nay. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:6). You can go in peace to your house; your voice is heard, and henceforth you are accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6); in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7).

Then Abigail came to Nabal. And how was he occupied? At the very moment that, but for Abigail's intercession, he would have been smitten, he was feasting like a king, merry, and very drunken. And how is the world occupied today? Living in surfeiting and drunkenness, merriment, and folly, without God, without Christ, and without hope, at the very moment when judgment is threatening. And in the morning, when Nabal was more sober, his wife told him. And his heart died within him, and he became as a stone, and ten days after, the Lord smote him that he died (1 Sam. 25:36, 87). Truly, fool was his name, and folly was with him. Take care, sinner, lest the Lord smite you. Sporting, frolicking, dancing, drinking, living in merriment and feasting, take care that your heart does not become hardened like a stone, and unsoftened by the love of Christ, you die in your sins, and are damned. Thousands perish so. Of every one it can be truly said, "Fool is his name, and folly is with him."

See, in conclusion, what is recorded in verse 39: David said, "The Lord hath returned the wickedness of Nabal upon his own head. And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife."

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Nabal sowed folly and sin, and reaped its fruit in the judgment of God. Abigail sowed wisdom, &c., and reaped the fruit in blessing and privileges. Follow the course of Nabal, poor selfish worldling, and you too will meet the righteous retribution of a holy God, in death, judgment, and everlasting woe. Be wise while 'tis called today. Bow before, and believe on the anointed One of God, Jesus, His Son in glory on His throne, and pardon, peace, and acceptance are yours now; and in the future you shall form part of that glorious company, viewed in the day of glory as the bride, the Lamb's wife (Rev. 21:9).

Nabal, so to speak, is written on every soul of man who lives for self and refuses Christ. "Fool is his name, and folly is with him." Take warning, then, from him, and learn, while you may, from Abigail. Come to Jesus now, in the hour of His rejection, and in the day of His manifestation you shall most surely share with Him the glorious fruits of the wondrous and blessed purposes of God.

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