

*Womanhood*  
**HIDDEN JEWELS**  
CHARACTER STUDIES OF SOME LESSER KNOWN WOMEN IN THE BIBLE

**FACILITATOR'S GUIDE**  
**NOVEMBER 2010**



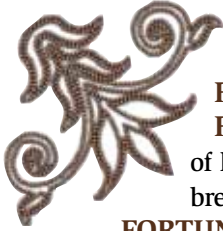
**ABIGAIL: ROCK OF WISDOM**

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# Solitaire

## ABIGAIL



**FOCUS:** We must not hesitate to willingly take risks when we have wisdom to impart, faith to share, and help to offer.

**FOOTPRINT:** 1 Samuel 25:2-44; 30:1-20; Proverbs 31:10-31

**FACET:** “She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness” (PROVERBS 31:26-27).

**FORTUNE:** “What is better than wisdom? Woman. And what is better than a good woman? Nothing.” —Geoffrey Chaucer.



At the end of the day, do you ever feel like someone stuck a pin in you and all your air is gone like a deflated balloon? The demands on our time are stretching us to the limits of despair and exhaustion. How can we be Proverbs 31 women in this race we call life? Abigail's life reads like an entire bouquet of balloons, not just one. She had issues we can hardly even imagine. She had a husband, lost a husband, got a new husband, had to share her husband, and when kidnapped, was rescued by her husband. Did you get all that?

Where did Abigail obtain the strength she needed and the fortitude to survive her situation and the unusual circumstances of her world? She certainly did not get any help from her ugly, harsh, abusive husband. If anything, he was the cause of many heartaches for this young woman. So how could she stay with him? Why didn't she just pack up her camel and leave? Isn't that what women of today do when troubles come their way? Abigail has some tips for us. She had courage, determination, and character which came from her relationship with the Lord. Somewhere in her life, she had learned to depend on the Creator of the Universe to sustain and comfort her within her dwelling place. She would live with her husband because he was her husband, have the protection of his servants, a home over her head and food on her table. This was the way she was taught by her parents, and she would not dishonor them. Her life was destined to be mundane and difficult.

Then along came David. Being murdered by a group of soldiers was not how Abigail wanted out of this horrible marriage. She used her wisdom and fear of the Lord to diffuse a situation that would have been disastrous for all concerned. Abigail trusted God to give her the words to say to this man who was going to be king. She had no idea that someday he would end up being her husband. She did not set out with any kind of romantic notions in her head. She just wanted to save her life and the lives of those in her household. She stretched her hand to David, and he received it in the manner it was offered—with friendship and kindness. Abigail had no way of knowing that by doing this, Nabal would react in such a way to cost him his life, dying from natural causes. (Does this speak to anyone else besides me? We need to be careful of our reactions in our daily lives and not get so stressed out. I am definitely speaking to myself here.) Abigail's spiritual adorning gave her beauty and wisdom for which each of us need to strive. As you study this month, try to put yourself in Abigail's sandals and feel some of what she felt. Don't you know David recognized a jewel when he saw one? He realized he had discovered a rare woman of virtue whose price would be far above rubies.

## A PRICELESS WOMAN

- ✧ Write the FACET on a 3x5 card for review and inspiration this week. “She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness” (Proverbs 31:26-27).
- ✧ Go over Week One by reading the paragraphs and the questions. Discuss the answers together.
- ✧ Do you know many women who are both beautiful and intelligent?



- ❖ Do you enjoy being around these women?
- ❖ Are we to assume that Abigail had a happy marriage? (*Noting the description of her husband, churlish and evil, probably not—1 Samuel 25:3.*)
- ❖ Did she honor her marriage by being a submissive wife? (*Yes, to a point. Remember, Nabal was a mean man. We don't know if he was physically abusive to Abigail, but he probably was verbally abusive.*)
- ❖ How then was she submissive? (*She stayed with him, taking care of him and the household, which included many servants. Nabal was a rich man for that time. He had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats.*)
- ❖ How is this situation similar to Sarah's action when she allowed herself to be placed in Pharaoh's harem though she was Abraham's wife? (*She was only doing what Abraham asked of her, which is what Abigail had been doing—Genesis 12:12-15.*)
- ❖ What then do we find in 1 Peter 3:6? (*Sarah was commended for obedience to her husband.*)
- ❖ From what household did Nabal descend? (*The household of Caleb, one of the 12 spies—Numbers 13:2, 6, 16. Caleb is described as courageous—Numbers 13:30; consecrated to God—Deuteronomy 1:36; vigorous and faithful in old age—Joshua 14:6,7,10-11; and invincible—Joshua 15:14.*)
- ❖ What happened to Nabal? Does he appear to have any of these characteristics?
- ❖ Will our family name or character of our ancestors ensure we will be like them? (*Not all the time.*)
- ❖ Make an entry in your journal describing a situation where you needed wisdom from God or a situation in which you need it now. Try to be as specific as possible.
- ❖ Close in prayer, thanking God for your husband, family or someone important in your life. Pray that God will give you wisdom in caring for these people.

## A GOOD WOMAN

- ❖ Read the FACET aloud together.
- ❖ Go over the entire section including questions and answers on pp. 26-27.
- ❖ Do you remember why David was in Nabal's territory? (*Samuel had died, and David took his men and went to the wilderness of Paran—1 Samuel 25:1.*)
- ❖ Why was this a factor in David's leaving? (*Samuel was David's friend, advisor, confidant and counselor, the one to whom he had gone in times of need.*)
- ❖ How was this significant? (*Saul had been pursuing David for a long time. With Samuel gone, David realized the last hope of reconciliation with Saul had also died.*)
- ❖ Now we have the situation with Nabal. David is already upset, traumatized, hungry, and completely worn out. He can't take any more. How does David react when he hears that Nabal refuses his request? (*He tells his men to get their swords. David intended to go murder Nabal and his entire household. Do we think "crazy" here? Absolutely. Two wrongs never make a right.*)
- ❖ Action, or doing, is usually always our first instinct. We've got to fix the problem. Yet, what does God expect us to do? (*Wait on Him—Isaiah 40:31.*)
- ❖ Have you ever been guilty of trying to "fix" or solve a problem without seeking God's advice and counsel first? (*I know I have. That just seems to be a woman's nature. If we could only learn to not let our emotions outrun our thinking, we'd be better off.*)
- ❖ Would wiping Nabal and his household off the face of the earth help David in the long run? (*No, it would have hurt him and hurt God. David was to become king. He didn't need this on his conscience.*)
- ❖ Was David a man of restraint? (*No, he was a man driven by his passions. This was a problem throughout his life.*)
- ❖ Abigail save the day. How did she approach David with the provisions? Was she threatening and boisterous? (*She approached him in a spirit of gentleness and tenderness. She bowed before David and calmly helped him see reason.*)

- ❖ What distinguished David from Nabal? *(David listened and repented. Nabal did not listen.)*
- ❖ How did Abigail help David learn an important lesson? *(She helped him realize that he wasn't free to do as he pleased. He learned some restraint. David couldn't reign as king until he learned to let God reign in his life.)*
- ❖ In your journal, write of a time in your life when you should have shown restraint in some way.
- ❖ Close by reading Hosea 12:6. Then pray and ask God to help you show restraint in your life by learning to wait on Him.

## A STRONG AND HONORABLE WOMAN



- ❖ Write the FACET in your journal. Describe what this means to you.
- ❖ Read the entire section along with the questions and answers on pp. 27-28.
- ❖ Have you ever been glad that someone died? *(You may not want to answer this aloud.)*
- ❖ How do people normally react when someone dies? *(They feel sorrowful.)*
- ❖ Do you think David knew what type person Nabal was before this incidence?
- ❖ Why was Nabal labeled a “fool”? *(In Hebrew, his name meant fool. Nabal had not made room for God. He had rejected God—Isaiah 32:6 [“vile person” literally translates “fool”], Psalm 53:1.)*
- ❖ Proverbs 28:26 notes two kinds of people in the world: wise men and fools. How would you define each of these? *(Wise men: people who respond to the truth of God in obedience. Fools: those who reject the truth of God and trust in their own hearts.)*
- ❖ Why did David expect that Nabal would be hospitable to him? *(This was a time of sheep shearing which was a festive occasion. People gathered together for a huge feast and the workers were fed. Hospitality was expected. David was asking no more than would normally be expected during this time.)*
- ❖ Did Nabal respond that way to the man who had been helping protect his large collection of animals? *(No, and it cost him his life. Someone could say he would have had the heart attack, stroke, or whatever anyway. Probably not—if he hadn't gotten so upset over the news that he almost caused a massacre—1 Samuel 25:37-38.)*
- ❖ What made Abigail such an honorable woman? *(Everything she did, she did under God's control. We know this from her speech and her actions. In 1 Samuel 25:29, Abigail tells David that his soul “shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God”. This statement is found on many tombstones of ancient Judah. What a tribute to Abigail that her words would be passed on this way.)*
- ❖ Do you consider yourself an honorable woman? *(Abigail kept her integrity throughout this entire account. Do we keep our integrity in every situation of life?)*
- ❖ Do you have an humble heart? *(My pastor's wife says, “We should always strive to be willingly humble and not have to have the Lord make us humble.”)*
- ❖ Make a list in your journal of women who need God's help with situations in their lives. Use this list in your prayer time.
- ❖ Close in prayer for the women of your class. Everyone is going through something. Ask each person to state one specific area where they need prayer. Pray for each request.

## A PRAISEWORTHY WOMAN

- ❖ If anyone memorized the FACET this month, have them say it. If not, read it together.
- ❖ Go over the section for Week Four. Discuss each question and answer on p. 29.
- ❖ Page 28 lists five characteristics Abigail displayed. Do you know anyone who displays these same characteristics in her life, maybe in different but similar situations?
- ❖ How do women face these trying circumstances without God?



- ✧ Read these Scriptures for strength in your daily life: Proverbs 3:5; Isaiah 26:3-4; Isaiah 50:10; Psalm 37:5; Psalm 34:22; Romans 5:1.
- ✧ How do you think Abigail came to trust in the Lord? (*Remember her name meant, “the joy of my father.” Her family must have loved and raised her in a secure home. Maybe this is how she came to know the Lord.*)
- ✧ Did Abigail stop to think whether or not she was being submissive to Nabal in this situation? (*There’s lots of room for debate on this subject, but keep the conversation geared to the topic at hand. Abigail acted on what she felt was the only option.*)
- ✧ Is it hard to be submissive to your husband? (Pray for wisdom and discernment in your life. Ask for meekness and guidance in your married life—1 Peter 3:1-4.)
- ✧ David praised Abigail for her discernment in 1 Samuel 25:32-33. Also, read Proverbs 31:30.
- ✧ How did Abigail respond to David in 1 Samuel 25:35? (*David said, “I have listened to you and accepted thy person [granted your request].” In Hebrew, the same phrase translates, “I have lifted up your face.” David is exalting her. These words, I’m sure, gave Abigail a sense of joy and hope.*)
- ✧ Make an entry in your journal and list the characteristics of the woman in Proverbs 31. Now think of these in relation to your own life. Put a star by any characteristics that need improvement. These include: Wise, industrious, strong, diligent, helpful, has a ministry, has forethought, sees to her household, has spiritual adorning, kindness, loves her husband, loves her family, devout, and fear of God.
- ✧ Close in prayer and ask God to give you praiseworthy characteristics. Thank God for Abigail’s example to us as modern women.

### *In Closing*

I’m so thankful to have been born on this side of the cross. Women of the Old Testament had to live and survive in circumstances we can hardly even imagine. They didn’t have modern conveniences, good homes, cute clothes, supermarkets, entertainment venues or churches like we have. Most importantly, they didn’t have the Bible, the Word of God, to rely on. Yet, several remarkable hidden jewels are indeed recorded for us in the Old Testament. These were truly women from whom we can learn. Jewels are precious, beautiful stones of immense value. Do you want to be a jewel in God’s crown? Are you willing to let the experiences of these women speak gems of wisdom to your heart?