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Manners or Murder?

Key References: 1 Samuel 25:1-35; *Patriarchs and Prophets*, chap. 65, pp. 664-668; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 4, pp. 41-45; Our Beliefs, nos. 7, 22, 11.















powertext

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

Have you ever felt that you were not being treated respectfully or fairly? Do you always treat others with respect? Since we are all God's children, we owe each other consideration and respect.

powerpoint

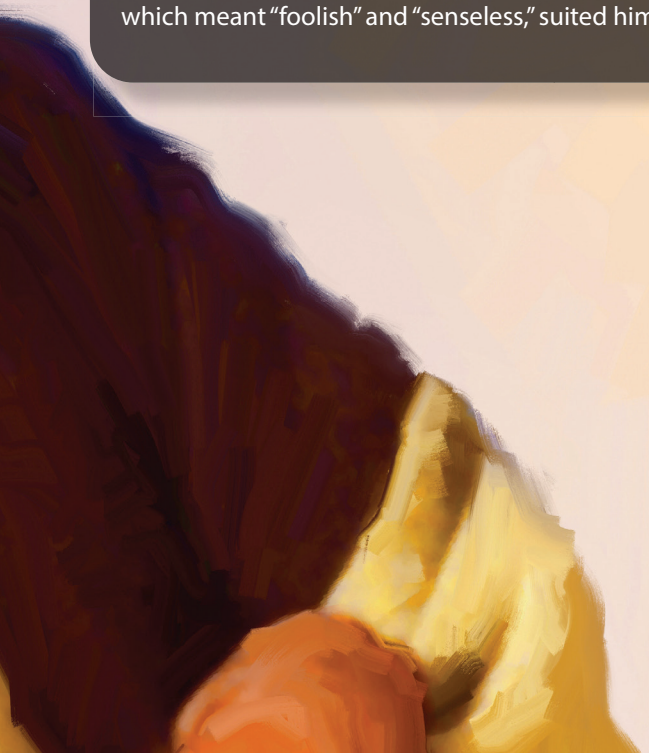
God's grace empowers us to treat each other fairly.

David and his men still lived in the wilderness. They were not totally alone. Nearby camped 1,000 goats, 3,000 sheep, and the men who watched over them. David and his men protected them from wild animals and robbers who threatened them. Life for the shepherds was better because of these wilderness warriors.

Then sheepshearing time arrived. All the animals and those who cared for them had gone home to the estate of their owner, Nabal. Nabal was rich, but he wasn't very nice. He had a terrible attitude and even worse manners. On top of that, he was stingy. In fact, his name, which meant "foolish" and "senseless," suited him very well.

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 102.



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Sunday

READ Read 1 John 4:11-16 and this week's story, "Manners or Murder?"

DRAW Draw a small pair of footprints, to represent you, beside a larger pair of footprints, to represent God. Around the footprints, write the power text. Don't forget the reference. Memorize it.

PRAY Pray for help to be a positive influence on others.

Monday

READ Read 1 John 4:17-19.

WRITE Rewrite the verses using *I* and *me* for *us* and *we*.

THINK What is a better course than getting revenge?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to show you what these verses mean.

Tuesday

READ Read 1 Samuel 25:2-17.

LIST List the characters mentioned in these verses, along with their personal characteristics. Do you think David's request was reasonable? Why? Do you think Nabal's response was reasonable? Why?

CARE Make a commitment that in your interactions with others you will treat them fairly, considerately, and respectfully.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God for a spirit of kindness and fairness toward everyone—especially toward your family members.

David was short of food, as usual. So he decided to send 10 men to Nabal to ask for some supplies. David gave a very polite and respectful speech for his men to deliver to Nabal. He told them to wish peace on Nabal and his house, to explain that they hadn't taken any animals of his, and to describe how they had protected them.

Nabal, true to his nature, did not think twice about what David and his men had done for him. All he could think about was himself and not wanting to part with what was his.

"Who is this David?" Nabal bellowed. "How do I know these men aren't just runaway servants? Why should I give them anything of mine?"

David's men returned empty-handed and reported to David. David's face turned red. "Get ready for a fight," he commanded. Not only had Nabal denied him what was fair; he had insulted him as well. David wasn't about to ignore this. Four hundred hungry men set off for Nabal's home. Two hundred stayed to guard the camp.

Meanwhile, at Nabal's home, one of the servants who had met David's men in the wilderness went quietly to Abigail, Nabal's beautiful and intelligent wife.

"Mistress," he wailed, "David sent messengers to give our master his greetings, but he hurled insults at them. These men were very good to us. The whole time we were out in the field with them, nothing



was missing. They were like a big wall of protection to us. Please, can you do something? I'm afraid something terrible is going to happen to this whole household."

Abigail whirled into action. She had had plenty of experience as a peacemaker. A man like Nabal had made many people upset. She started calculating as she headed for the cooking quarters. Two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep ready for the fire, 37 liters of roasted grain, 100 cakes of raisins, and 200 cakes of pressed figs ought to help. How



Wednesday

READ Read 1 Samuel 25:18-22.

DRAW These few verses tell of the hustle and bustle going on in both groups. Draw a picture or create a timeline (a chart of the sequence of events) of these events.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you be understanding of others in the same way that He is understanding of you.

Thursday

READ Read 1 Samuel 25:23-31.

FIND Abigail's kind words persuade David not to "get even" with Nabal. What respectful things did she do?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you show consideration and respect to others.

Friday

READ Read 1 Samuel 25:32-35.

THINK This is David's response to Abigail's speech. How do you think you might have reacted had someone come and told you to reconsider what you were about to do? What was David's response?

REPEAT Say your power text aloud by memory.

PRAY Thank God for Christian friends and family who can help you remember to treat others considerately and fairly.

many donkeys would she need to carry it? Abigail didn't stop until she and all her provisions were on the trail heading up the mountain ravine.

David, heading down the ravine with his men, had just finished saying, "What good was it, our watching after those shepherds and fighting off their enemies! I don't plan to leave one male alive of his entire household." Then he saw a loaded donkey train. A beautiful woman was riding on one of the donkeys. As she saw David and his men coming toward her, she halted the train, got off her donkey, and bowed to the ground.

David halted his men and stepped toward Abigail. She said, "Let this gift, which your servant has brought to my lord, be given to the men who follow you. Please forgive your servant's presumption. The LORD your God will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my lord, because you fight the LORD's battles, and no wrongdoing will be found in you as long as you live. Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my lord will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the LORD your God, but the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling" (1 Samuel 25:27-29).



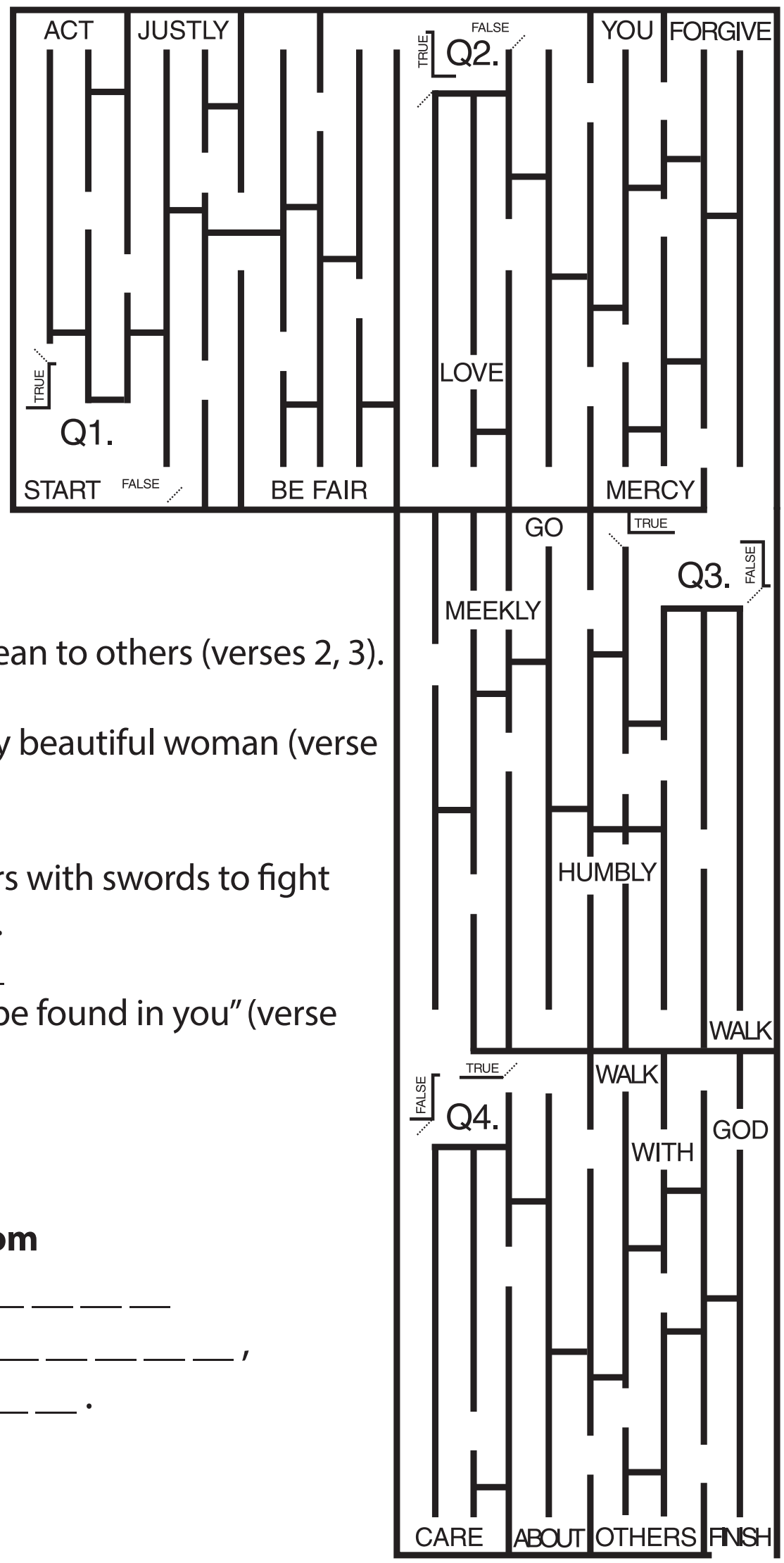
David studied the woman before him. Her words made sense. Her good judgment and considerate actions convinced him not to take matters into his own hands. He had been about to do wrong and treat Nabal without respect and consideration as a child of God. He decided he would allow God to be the judge between him and Nabal, just as he had done when Saul pursued him. David and his men gladly accepted the food that Abigail had brought and carried it back to their stronghold.

That night Abigail didn't tell Nabal what had almost happened. He was too drunk. The next morning she told him, and he was so afraid that his heart failed and he became paralyzed. About 10 days later he died. When David heard, he was glad that he had taken Abigail's advice and left things in God's hands.



GOD'S KINGDOM

Instructions: This maze is a true-and-false puzzle. Collect the answers by following the right pathway on your journey to God's kingdom. When you have answered the four questions, follow the maze one question at a time, putting the words in the answer box. The number of letter spaces will help you. Answers can be found in 1 Samuel 25.



Questions:

1. Nabal was a rich man who was mean to others (verses 2, 3).
   TRUE ______ FALSE ______
2. Abigail was an intelligent and very beautiful woman (verse 3).
   TRUE ______ FALSE ______
3. David's first reaction, using soldiers with swords to fight Nabal, was a wise one (verses 32, 33).
   TRUE ______ FALSE _______
4. Abigail said, "Let no wrongdoing be found in you" (verse 28).
   TRUE ______ FALSE ______

God's Kingdom

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