Preschool–Grade 6

Abigail, David and Nabal

Sunday School Lesson for Preteens (Ages 11–12), 45–60 minutes

Main point: Be a peacemaker: answer anger with wisdom and kindness, listen to good advice, and leave payback to God.
Bible passage: 1 Samuel 25:2–42. Students read it out loud themselves.
Memory verse: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." *Proverbs 15:1 (KJV)* and "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." *Matthew 5:9 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible for each student, paper or a notebook and a pen for each student, a whiteboard and a marker, and one take-home sheet for each student.
Before class: read 1 Samuel 25:2–42 and Romans 12:17–21. Write both memory verses on the board. Decide who reads which verses, or go around the room a few verses each.

1. Opening game: Fuel or Water? (5–10 minutes)

Read a situation and an answer. Students call out "Fuel!" if the answer would make the fire of anger bigger, or "Water!" if it would help put it out. 1) A teammate yells at you for missing the ball. You yell back. 2) Your sister says you took her pencil. You say, "Let's look for it together." 3) A friend posts something unkind about you. You post something worse. 4) Someone bumps you in line. You say, "It's okay." Ask: *Which answers were harder to say? Why?* Say: "Today two men were about to start a war over words, and one wise woman stood in the middle."

2. Bible story: Students Read It (15 minutes)

Read out loud: 1 Samuel 25:2–21, then 25:23–33, then 25:35–42. Students take turns, a few verses each.
Skip verses 22 and 34: they hold David's angry oath in rough words. Tell them instead: "David swore that by morning he would leave no man of Nabal's house alive."
Old words in this passage:

- **churlish** (25:3): rude and harsh; **of a beautiful countenance** (25:3): beautiful to look at
- **in prosperity** (25:6): doing well; **railed on** (25:14): shouted insults at; **son of Belial**, **man of Belial** (25:17, 25:25): a worthless, wicked man
- **abode by the stuff** (25:13): stayed with the supplies; **requited me evil for good** (25:21): paid back good with evil
- **made haste** (25:18): hurried; **ready dressed** (25:18): ready to cook; **parched corn** (25:18): roasted grain
- **covert of the hill** (25:20): a hidden place by the hill; **lighted off** (25:23): got down from
- **iniquity**, **trespass** (25:24, 25:28): wrong; **handmaid** (25:24): servant woman; **folly** (25:25): foolishness
- **withholden** (25:26): held back; **causeless** (25:31): for no good reason; **hearkened** (25:35): listened

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3. Questions to ask (15 minutes)

1. Nabal answered David's "Peace be both to thee" (25:6) with "Who is David?" (25:10). How did his grievous words stir up anger (Proverbs 15:1)?
2. David said Nabal "requited me evil for good" (25:21). He was right about that, but was his plan right? What does Romans 12:19–21 say to do instead?
3. Abigail "made haste" (25:18) and went herself. What does a peacemaker risk? What gave her courage?
4. Abigail reminded David that the LORD would make him ruler over Israel (25:30). How did pointing him to God's plan help him calm down?
5. David said, "blessed be thy advice" (25:33) and "I have hearkened to thy voice" (25:35). Why is it a sign of wisdom to change your plan when someone gives you good advice?
6. David did not take revenge, and God dealt with Nabal (25:38–39). What does that teach about leaving payback to God?

4. Memory verse (5 minutes)

Old words in Proverbs 15:1 and Matthew 5:9: a **soft answer** means gentle, kind words; **turneth away wrath** means turns away anger; **grievous words** means harsh, hurtful words; **stir up** means make bigger; **blessed** means happy and favored by God; **peacemakers** are people who help others make peace.
Read both verses together. Then students cover one phrase at a time and quiz a partner. Say Proverbs 15:1 this week; keep working on Matthew 5:9 next week too.

5. What this means for us (5–10 minutes)

Say: "Abigail fell at David's feet and said, 'Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be' (1 Samuel 25:24, KJV). She stood between angry David and foolish Nabal. Jesus did far more: He 'his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree' (1 Peter 2:24, KJV). God loves you, and 'all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, God who came as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures' (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, KJV). We obey the gospel the way Peter preached it: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) We **repent**, turning from sin, and our old self dies (Romans 6:6). We are buried with Jesus by baptism in His name, all the way under the water. **Remission** means our sins are washed away, and we rise to walk in newness of life, a brand-new life (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). And God fills us with the Holy Ghost, and we speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance, which means as He gives the words (Acts 2:4). Jesus called this being born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5)."
Pray with the students, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

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6. Activity: Journal (10 minutes)

Each student writes privately. No one has to share. Write these three prompts on the board:

1. Where is there a fight or hard feelings in my life right now (at home, at school, with a friend)?
2. What soft answer or kind act could I bring, like Abigail brought her present? Write the words I could say.
3. Write a short prayer asking God to help me be a peacemaker (Matthew 5:9) and to leave payback to Him.
   If there is time, invite a few volunteers to share one sentence.

This week: when you feel like answering back, stop and pick the soft answer. Notice what happens to the anger.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that a soft answer turns away wrath. Give us courage to make peace like Abigail, humble hearts to listen to good advice like David, and help us leave payback to You. Thank You for loving us and making a way to save us through Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a student asks about Nabal's death or David's other wives: stay with what the passage says. Nabal heard what had happened, "his heart died within him," and about ten days after "the LORD smote Nabal, that he died" (1 Samuel 25:37–38). The lesson ends where the passage ends, with Abigail becoming David's wife (25:42).

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