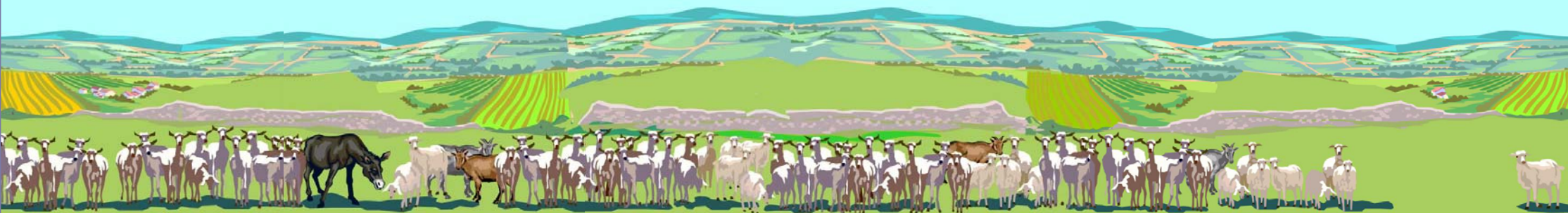




David and Abigail

a story about wisdom, courage and kindness





his book has been designed for Abigail, the daughter of my friends XXXXX and XXXXX, using the desktop publishing programme Microsoft Publisher 2003.

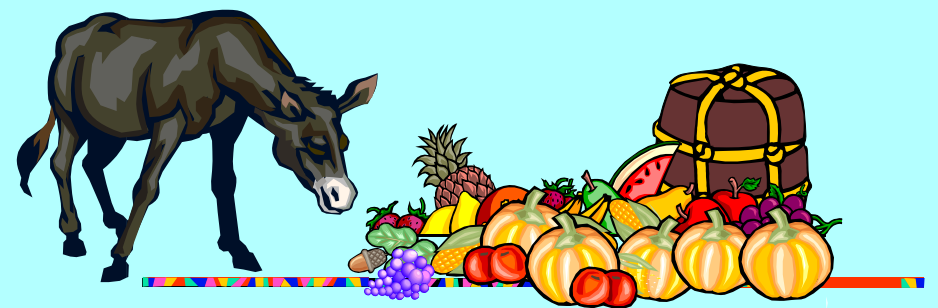
The body text has been typeset using Garamond, while the illuminated capitals have been created using MS Wordart and the typeface is Goudy Old Style.

All illustrations are composites from edited clip art using the drawing functions found in Microsoft Publisher 2003, and are downloaded from the Microsoft Clip Art and Media website found at <http://office.microsoft.com/clipart>

Printed on the Epson Stylus PHOTO 900 printer



DESIGNED, TYPESET AND BOUND BY GORDON MACINTOSH
November 2004



for Abigail



David and Goliath



Once a huge, tall man named Goliath who lived many years ago. And at that time there was a young boy named David, a gentle but brave shepherd who looked after his flocks in a land called Israel, protecting them from wild animals such as lions and bears. David would one day become a great leader and king of Israel.

Goliath was a bully and a boastful Philistine who hated the Israelites, and he fought against their armies. He would stand in front of the Israelites, taunting the soldiers and challenging them to come out and fight against him. This huge and boastful giant cursed and mocked all the Israelite soldiers, shouting that their God was not able to protect them.

One day, when David's father told him to visit his brothers there on the battlefield he saw how this boastful bully frightened all the soldiers, and so he decided to punish him for insulting God.

So, in the same way as he protected his father's sheep, he placed a stone in his sling and ran towards Goliath, shouting to him that he was not afraid of his threats and that he would kill him at that very moment, and punish him. And that is just what he did.

That was the kind of boy David was - he was brave and frightened of no one. So Saul, the king of the Israelites rewarded David, and at the same time David became very popular with everybody. As David grew more popular King Saul grew jealous of him and tried to kill him many times. So David had to run away to the wild desert areas of Israel, and there he surrounded himself with many dangerous men, who had also run away from King Saul.





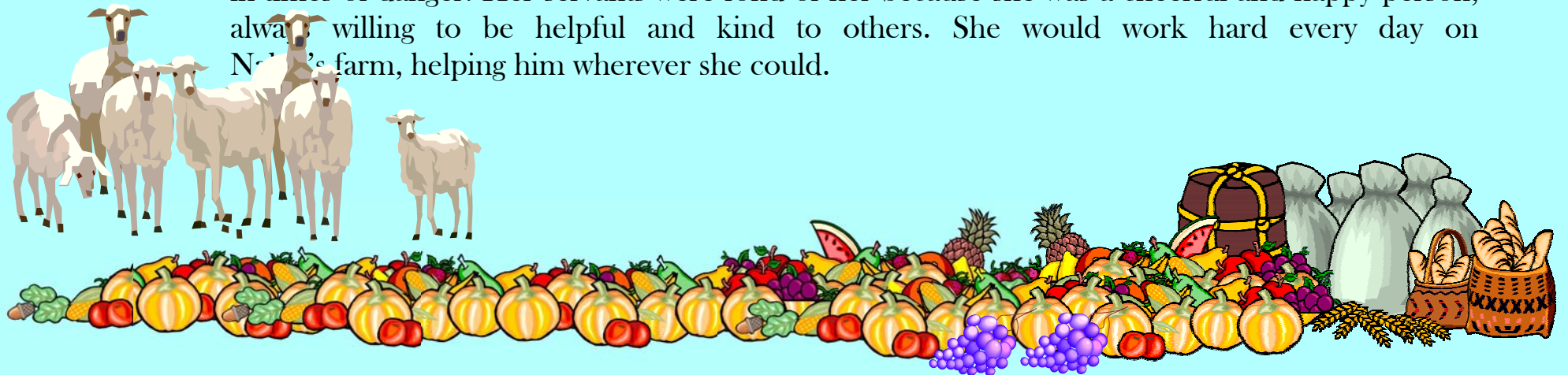
Abigail

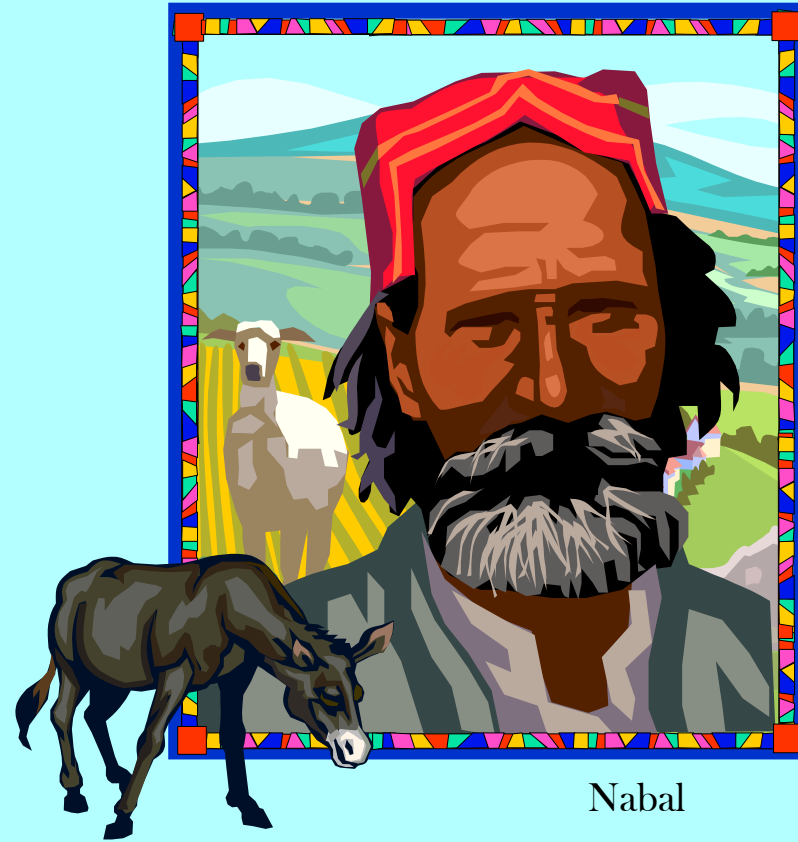


David stayed as far away from Saul as he possibly could. He moved from place to place, sometimes staying with Saul's enemies in their walled cities and sometimes staying in the wilderness, where there were a few farms and towns. Whenever Saul's enemies asked David to help them fight against Israel, he would ask God to guide him so that he could avoid fighting against his own people. Even though David was being chased by Saul all over the wilderness he still remained a faithful subject of the King .

One day he and the men who were with him went to an area in the wilderness called Paran. Whenever David stayed near farms and villages he would protect the farm animals, the shepherds and the people who lived there, making sure that none of the robbers and wild men who roamed those wilderness areas would harm anyone or steal their farm animals. Not a thing would ever be lost while David was in the neighbourhood. It was while he was at Paran that he and his men protected a farm owned by a man called Nabal, - his farm was near a town called Carmel.

Nabal had a young and faithful wife called Abigail. Not only was Abigail a beautiful woman, she was also intelligent, wise and resourceful, and she was able to quickly make decisions, especially in times of danger. Her servants were fond of her because she was a cheerful and happy person, always willing to be helpful and kind to others. She would work hard every day on Nabal's farm, helping him wherever she could.





Nabal



Nabal, who was Abigail's husband, was very different to his wife. While Abigail was kind and unselfish, Nabal was a mean and bad tempered man. He owned a large farm, had three thousand sheep and one thousand goats, and must have pastured them on lands all over Paran. He was very rich indeed.

While Nabal was shearing his sheep in Paran, David heard he was there and sent ten young men to find Nabal and politely greet him. This is what he told them to say: "David sends greetings, my friend, with his best wishes for you, your family, and all that is yours . . . We have come on a feast day, and David asks you to receive us kindly. Please give what you can to us your servants and to your dear friend David."

And what was Nabal's answer? This is what he said "David, who is he! I've never heard of him. I am not going to take my bread and water, and the animals I have slaughtered and give them to men who come from I don't know where!"

David was so furious when he heard Nabal's rude reply that he said "Buckle on your swords!" and they all did so. David also buckled on his sword and then they left with about four hundred of his men for Nabal's farm, to punish him for his rudeness.

At the same time as this happened, one of Nabal's servants told Abigail how rude Nabal had been, and of how good David's men had always been to Nabal's servants, and of how his men had never bothered anyone, instead protecting them from coming to any harm "and all the time we were in the fields nothing that belonged to us was stolen."





Nabal had three thousand sheep and one thousand goats. And of course he had some donkeys as well. In this picture you will find just eighty sheep and only four goats!

So can you imagine what a large picture we would need to have if we showed all three thousand sheep. The picture would have to be just over one hundred and one feet - or thirty-one metres, long! That is a very big picture. And it does not even include one thousand goats. Nabal must have had at least a hundred donkeys as well.

So as you can see, Nabal was a very rich man, and he certainly would not have missed much if he had been kind to David and his five hundred men. He would probably only have needed to supply seventy-five sheep, and maybe twenty-five goats, and of course some wine and fruit, as well as some wheat, which he grew on his large farm.

What a selfish and mean man Nabal was . . .

And how kind David and his men had been, in protecting all Nabal's property.





hen Abigail heard how Nabal had treated David's men, she did not waste a moment. She immediately realized that such rude behaviour would be sure to annoy David and his men, and would result in the killing of her husband and his servants.

So Abigail quickly collected as many gifts together as she could, loaded them onto donkeys and set off quickly with her servants along the road to stop David and his four hundred men who would be seeking vengeance for Nabal's impoliteness. David had sworn that he would kill every one of Nabal's men before the next morning.

Below you will see some of the gifts which Abigail loaded onto her donkeys for David.

As soon as she met David on the road, she hastily bowed down before him, asking forgiveness for Nabal's rude manners and telling him "not to pay any attention to Nabal, that good-for-nothing! He is exactly what his name means - a fool!"

And David said "Thank God for your good sense and for what you have done today in keeping me from the crime of murder and from taking my own revenge". So Abigail and her servants were able to return home safely to tell Nabal how she had saved his life.

Nabal, being the selfish man that he was, flew into a terrible rage and died a few days later. So David sent for Abigail, and married her, saving her from becoming a lonely widow.

