

“The Hand that Rocks the Cradle”

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

The Hand that Rocks the Cradle
By William Ross Wallace (1819-1881)

Blessings on the hand of women!
Angels guard its strength and grace,
In the palace, cottage, hovel,
Oh, no matter where the place;
Would that never storms assailed it,
Rainbows ever gently curled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.

Infancy's the tender fountain,
Power may with beauty flow,
Mother's first to guide the streamlets,
From them souls unresting grow--
Grow on for the good or evil,
Sunshine streamed or evil hurled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.

Woman, how divine your mission
Here upon our natal sod!
Keep, oh, keep the young heart open
Always to the breath of God!
All true trophies of the ages
Are from mother-love impearled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.

Blessings on the hand of women!
Fathers, sons, and daughters cry,
And the sacred song is mingled
With the worship in the sky--
Mingles where no tempest darkens,
Rainbows evermore are hurled;
For the hand that rocks the cradle
Is the hand that rules the world.

Introduction: Contrasting motherhoods: Athaliah and Abigail.
1. 1Sam. 25; 1Kings 11:1-16; 2Chron. 22:2-3, 10-12

I. ATHALIAH

A. Athaliah means: "Jehovah has afflicted" - Her pedigree:

1. Granddaughter of Omri (Arabic name) the Idolater, sixth king of Israel and builder of the capital city of Samaria - 1Kings 16:25
2. Daughter of Ahab and Jezebel - 1Kings 16:30-33
- B. She was a bad mother and a wicked counselor - 2Chron. 22:2-3
- C. She was a vengeful person and usurped the throne by assassination.
 1. 2Chron. 22:10, 12
 2. Focused on herself.
 3. Vilified others while presenting herself as right.
 4. Chose to refuse God - 2Tim. 3:7
 5. Gods of personal pursuits and achievements; when one god fails, create another.
 6. Opposed those who were trying to serve God - Rev. 2:20-23 ("Jezebel" of Thyatira)
- D. She tried to do unauthorized things; like Omri, she had no right to the throne of Israel - 2Kings 11:3
- E. She was a consummate hypocrite - 2Kings 11:11-16

II. ABIGAIL

- A. Abigail's name means "Cause of joy" - 1Sam. 25
 1. Vs. 3 - A woman of good understanding.
 - a. Hebrew "sekel" - "intelligence, discretion, knowledge, prudence, sense, understanding, wisdom, wise" (Strongs, 07922)
 2. Vs. 14 - She was a woman of trust - normally all business was done by the males but here the servant risks punishment by going to Abigail and not Nabal.
 3. Vs. 18 - Abigail acted instead of reacting; she met the problem head on.
 4. Vs. 19 - She was an organizer.
 5. Vs. 23 - She was well informed; she knew David was to be king (vs. 30)
 6. Vs. 24 - She knew how to treat the king with respect.
 7. Vs. 26 - She stood in the gap, filling the role Nabal should have.
 8. Vs. 26 - "My Lord Nabal" - She had respect for her reprobate husband. (1Peter 3:1)
 9. Vs 31 - She understood conditions and the impact on people.
 10. Vs. 33 - She was a wise counselor.
 11. Vs. 39 - She was desirable because of her wisdom.
 12. Vs. 43 - David's big mistake: he should not have taken other wives, because Abigail was a great blessing.

Conclusion:

- A. "A mother is a person who seeing there are only four pieces of pie for five people, promptly announces she never did care for pie." (Tenneva Jordan)
 1. "An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy." (Rudyard Kipling)
 2. "A mother has far greater influence on her children than anyone else, and she must realize that every word she speaks, every act, every response, her attitude, even her appearance and manner of dress affect the lives of her children and the whole family. It is while the child is in the home that he gains from his mother the attitudes, hopes, and beliefs that will determine the kind of life he will live and the contribution he will make to society." (N. Eldon Tanner)
- C. The cradle that rocked the world - Luke 2:7, 48; Prov. 1:8-9