

The Kingdom of David
1 Samuel 22:6-23
4/18/10

Overview

1. Saul learns of Ahimelech's assistance to David (v 6-10)
2. Saul kills all of the priests and their families (v 11-19)
3. Abiathar escapes and comes to David (v 20-23)
4. Difficulty explored

Saul learns of Ahimelech's assistance to David

Now Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men who were with him. Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the height with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him. And Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, people of Benjamin; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, that all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day." Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, and he inquired of the LORD for him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

1. *Now Saul heard that David was discovered, and the men who were with him.*
 - A. David's whereabouts is disclosed to Saul, along with information about the 400 men with him.
2. *Saul was sitting at Gibeah under the tamarisk tree on the height with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing about him. And Saul said to his servants who stood about him, "Hear now, people of Benjamin; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, that all of you have conspired against me? No one discloses to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day."*
 - A. Saul is concerned that none of his servants had given him this information. He seems somewhat paranoid that they had gone over to David (*the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, that all of you have conspired against me?*)
3. Saul's perspective is that David is lying in wait for him (even though it is really Saul who is pursuing David).

4. *Then answered Doeg the Edomite, who stood by the servants of Saul, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, and he inquired of the LORD for him and gave him provisions and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine."*

- A. Doeg reports what he saw while at Nob (Chapter 21)

Saul kills all of the priests and their families

Then the king sent someone to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's household, the priests who were in Nob; and all of them came to the king.

1. Saul not only summoned Ahimelech, but also summoned all of the priests of Nob
2. In obedience, they all came. ([Rom 13:1-7](#))

Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." And he answered, "Here I am, my lord." Saul then said to him, "Why have you and the son of Jesse conspired against me, in that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he would rise up against me by lying in ambush as it is this day?"

1. Saul assumes a conspiracy, based on the testimony of Doeg
 - A. Based on the assumed conspiracy, Saul concludes that this action has resulted in David's rebellion against his authority.

Then Ahimelech answered the king and said, "And who among all your servants is as faithful as David, even the king's son-in-law, who is captain over your guard, and is honored in your house? "Did I just begin to inquire of God for him today? Far be it from me! Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to any of the household of my father, for your servant knows nothing at all of this whole affair."

1. Ahimelech defends himself in several ways
 - A. Lists the character traits of David
 - i. Faithful
 - ii. Kindred
 - iii. Military might
 - iv. Honored
 - B. States that he has inquired of the Lord on David's behalf in the past (not just a one time occurrence)
 - C. States that he was ignorant of David's true situation, and thus, Saul's imputation of wrongdoing on his part (or on the part of any of the priests) is incorrect.

But the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's household!" And the king said to the guards who were attending him, "Turn around and put the priests of the LORD to death, because their hand also is with David and because they knew that he was fleeing and did not reveal it to me."

1. Saul issues the command to kill Ahimelech and all of the priests, based on his twisted logic (*because **their hand also is with David** and because **they knew that he was fleeing** and **did not reveal it to me.***)
 - A. [Pr 14:12](#) (repeated in [Pr 16:25](#)); [18:17](#)

But the servants of the king were not willing to put forth their hands to attack the priests of the LORD.

1. Other examples of 'righteous disobedience'
 - A. Hebrew midwives - [Ex 1:17](#)
 - B. Ahaziah's captain - [2 Kings 1:2-18](#)
 - i. This leader has the outstanding characteristic of looking out for the good of his men

Then the king said to Doeg, "You turn around and attack the priests." And Doeg the Edomite turned around and attacked the priests, and he killed that day eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. And he struck Nob the city of the priests with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and infants; also oxen, donkeys, and sheep he struck with the edge of the sword.

1. Doeg obeys and even goes beyond the command (*he struck Nob the city of the priests with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and infants; also oxen, donkeys, and sheep he struck with the edge of the sword.*)

Abiathar escapes and comes to David

But one son of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD.

1. The escape of Abiathar could possibly imply that the priests attempted to defend themselves, and in the ensuing melee, he managed to escape.
2. Clearly lays the massacre at the feet of Saul (*Saul had killed the priests of the LORD*).

Then David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have brought about the death of every person in your father's household. "Stay with me; do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life, for you are safe with me."

1. David accepts responsibility for the deaths
2. He invites Abiathar to stay with him
 - A. He encourages Abiathar (*for you are safe with me*)

Difficulty explored

1. How can God allow the slaughter of His priests?
 - A. Clearly were His priests - v 17 *Turn around and put the priests of the LORD to death*
2. Associated understandings
 - A. Saul has been rejected by God ([1 Sam 15:11](#), [35](#); [16:1](#))
 - i. Without God, Saul becomes worse and worse - [1 Sam 28:3-19](#)
 - B. David's sin of lying bears consequences - [1 Sam 22:22](#)
 - C. Our perspective is flawed
 - i. The victims not sinless - [Lk 13:1-5](#)
 - ii. To be with Christ is preferred - [Phil 1:21-23](#)
 - D. Eli's sin and the Lord's pronouncement - [1 Sam 2:12-36](#)
 - i. Eventually fulfilled when Abiathar is expelled from the priesthood by Solomon ([1 Kings 2:26-27](#))
 - a. The second commandment - [Ex 20:5](#)
 - b. Laws of Israel - [Dt 24:16](#)
 - i. A law for man, not for God
 - E. God is sovereign - [Rom 9:18](#)