

1 Samuel 21:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.

Analysis

And David answered the priest, and said unto him, Of a truth women have been kept from us about these three days, since I came out, and the vessels of the young men are holy, and the bread is in a manner common, yea, though it were sanctified this day in the vessel.

David's response employs sophisticated theological reasoning. The Hebrew 'kelim' (vessels) metaphorically refers to their bodies, echoing 1 Thessalonians 4:4 where Paul uses similar language. David argues that necessity has effectively 'de-sanctified' the bread—a remarkable hermeneutical move later validated by Christ. The phrase 'in a manner common' (derek chol) suggests the holy has become permissibly ordinary given the circumstances. David's three-day separation indicates his flight began with some urgency but not total haste. This passage illustrates the biblical principle that human need takes precedence over ceremonial restrictions, a truth Jesus would explicitly affirm.

Historical Context

Ceremonial purity laws required abstinence from sexual relations before sacred encounters (Exodus 19:15). David's appeal demonstrates his familiarity with

Levitical requirements, likely gained during his time serving in Saul's court and his friendship with Samuel's prophetic community.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How did Jesus use this incident to teach about the relationship between law and grace?
2. What principles guide you in distinguishing essential commands from circumstantial applications?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	אַתָּה	בְּכָה	לֵאמֹר	כִּי	לֹא	לֵאמֹר	אָמַר
answered	And David	H853	the priest	and said	H0	H3588	unto him Of a truth
H6030	H1732	H3548	H559				H518
אֲשֶׁר	עָבָרָה	לְנֵוּ	כִּתְמַלֵּל	שְׁלַשׁ	מִ		
women	have been kept	H0	days	from us about these three			
H802	H6113	H8543	H8032				
בְּצָאתִי	בְּכָלֵן	בְּכָלֵן	בְּכָלֵן	קָדֵשׁ	וְהִיא		
since I came out	and the vessels	of the young men	are holy	H1931			
H3318	H1961	H3627	H5288	H6944			
בְּרִית	חַלְבָּן	חַלְבָּן	חַלְבָּן	כִּי	וּמְ	כִּי	וְהִיא
and the bread is in a manner	common	H637	H3588	this day			
H1870	H2455	H3117					
וְהִיא	בְּכָלֵן:						
yea though it were sanctified	and the vessels	H3627					
H6942							

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