

# 1 Samuel 21:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.

## Analysis

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**So the priest gave him hallowed bread: for there was no bread there but the shewbread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot bread in the day when it was taken away.**

The priest's decision to provide the showbread represents a remarkable pastoral judgment. The Hebrew construction emphasizes that this was the only bread available—literally 'there was no bread except.' The detail about replacing old bread with fresh 'hot bread' indicates this occurred on the Sabbath when the exchange happened (Leviticus 24:8). Thus David received bread that had just completed its week of sacred service. Jesus cited this incident to demonstrate that God's law was made for humanity's benefit, not to impose burdens. Ahimelech's act of mercy would cost him everything, yet Scripture presents his decision as commendable—a priest who understood that compassion fulfills the law's deepest intent.

## Historical Context

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The showbread was replaced every Sabbath. The old bread, having served its symbolic purpose before the Lord for seven days, was then consumed by the priests in a holy place. Ahimelech's distribution to David stretched but did not violate the spirit of this provision.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. When has God provided for you through unconventional means?
2. How do you balance respect for sacred things with responsiveness to urgent human needs?

## Interlinear Text

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וַתֵּן	לֹ	הַכֹּהֵן	קִדְּשׁ	כִּי	לֹא	הָיָה	שָׁם	לֶחֶם
<b>gave</b>	H0	<b>So the priest</b>	<b>him hallowed</b>	H3588	H3808	H1961	H8033	<b>bread</b>
H5414		H3548	H6944					H3899
כִּי	אִם	לֶחֶם	מִלִּפְנֵי	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	מִלִּפְנֵי	יְהוָה		לָשׂוֹם
H3588	H518	<b>bread</b>	<b>from before</b>	<b>that was taken</b>	<b>from before</b>	<b>the LORD</b>		<b>to put</b>
		H3899	H6440	H5493	H6440	H3068		H7760
לֶחֶם	חֹם	בִּיּוֹם	הִלָּקְחוֹ:					
<b>bread</b>	<b>hot</b>	<b>in the day</b>	<b>when it was taken away</b>					
H3899	H2527	H3117	H3947					

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