

1 Samuel 22:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son in law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?

Analysis

Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son in law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thine house?

Ahimelech's defense appeals to David's public reputation and official standing. The Hebrew 'ne'eman' (faithful/trustworthy) challenges Saul's conspiracy narrative with David's documented loyalty. Three credentials are cited: son-in-law (royal family member), obedient servant (military subordinate), and honored courtier. The priest essentially argues: how could helping the king's most trusted servant constitute treason? His rhetorical question assumes shared knowledge of David's status. Ahimelech's defense is legally sound but politically naive—Saul had already rejected these facts. Truth spoken to power sometimes seals rather than saves the speaker.

Historical Context

Ahimelech's defense reflects standard legal argumentation: David's official position should have legitimized any assistance. As the king's son-in-law and military commander, David would reasonably receive priestly support. The defense assumes rational proceedings.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. When has speaking truth to power failed to produce just outcomes?
2. What does Ahimelech's reasoned defense teach about the limits of logic against irrational hatred?

Interlinear Text

בְּכָל וּמְיֻמָּד אֲחִים לְהַעֲנֹד וְיַעֲנֹד
answered Then Ahimelech H853 the king and said H4310 H3605
H6030 H288 H4428 H59

בְּמִלְּמָד יְמִלְּמָד קָדְשָׁךְ | נָאָמָן | יְמִלְּמָד |
among all thy servants as David And who is so faithful son in law the king
H5650 H1732 H539 H2860 H4428

בְּבִיתְךָ: | יְמִלְּמָד | מְשֻׁמְעָת בְּאֶל | יְמִלְּמָד |
and goeth H413 at thy bidding and is honourable in thine house
H5493 H4928 H3513 H1004

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 20:32 (Parallel theme): And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?