

1 Samuel 22:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.

Analysis

Did I then begin to enquire of God for him? be it far from me: let not the king impute any thing unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father: for thy servant knew nothing of all this, less or more.

Ahimelech's final plea asserts complete ignorance. The Hebrew 'chalilah li' (far be it from me) expresses horror at the accusation. His denial that this was the first inquiry ('did I then begin') suggests regular priestly service to David as a royal official. The phrase 'nothing of all this, less or more' (Hebrew 'lo yada...katan vegadol') is a merism meaning absolutely nothing. He extends his plea to 'all the house of my father,' trying to shield his fellow priests. This desperate defense of collective innocence would prove futile. Ahimelech stands as a type of Christ—innocent, making intercession for others, condemned by corrupt authority, and killed despite blamelessness.

Historical Context

Priestly inquiry for royal officials was normal practice. Ahimelech's claim that he 'knew nothing' of any conflict between David and Saul is entirely plausible, as David had deceived him about his mission. The defense pleads both innocence and ignorance.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How did Ahimelech's intercession for his fellow priests reflect pastoral responsibility?
2. What does the failure of an innocent defense before corrupt power teach about trusting in God's ultimate justice?

Interlinear Text

הִי וּמ	הִחֵל תִּי	ל ו	ל ו	בְּאֵלֵהֶם יִמ	חָל יֵלֶה
Did I then	begin	to enquire	to enquire	of God	for him be it far from me
H3117	H2490	H7592	H7592	H430	H2486
י	אֵל לִי	יִשָּׁם	הִמָּ לְךָ	עֲבָדְךָ	יָדָבָר
H0	H408	impute	let not the king	for thy servant	any thing
		H7760	H4428	H5650	H3605
	בְּיֵת	אָבִי	כִּי	לֹא יָדָע	עֲבָדְךָ
	nor to all the house	of my father	H3588	H3808	knew
	H1004	H1		H3045	for thy servant
				H5650	H3605
זֹאת	יָדָבָר	קָטָן	אוּ	גְדוֹל:	
H2063	any thing	of all this less	H176	or more	
	H1697	H6996		H1419	

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 25:36 (Kingdom): And Abigail came to Nabal; and, behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a king; and Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken: wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the morning light.

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