

1 Samuel 22:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod.

Analysis

And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod.

Doeg's willingness to slaughter where Israelites refused completes his villainous portrait. The Hebrew emphasizes his ethnic identity again—"Doeg the Edomite"—this foreigner did what God's covenant people would not. The 'linen ephod' identifies the victims as legitimate priests, ministers of the sanctuary. Eighty-five priests died—a catastrophic loss for Israel's religious establishment. Doeg's obedience to murderous command contrasts with the soldiers' righteous refusal. Psalm 52 pronounces God's judgment on Doeg: 'God shall likewise destroy thee for ever.' This massacre demonstrates how outsiders without covenantal loyalty become instruments of evil that insiders refuse to execute.

Historical Context

The linen ephod was the distinctive priestly garment (Exodus 28:4). Eighty-five priests represented a substantial portion of the Elide line. This massacre effectively destroyed Nob as a religious center and decimated the priesthood that had served since Eli's time.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What made Doeg willing to do what Israelite soldiers refused?
2. How does this passage warn about using outsiders to do what conscience-bound insiders will not?

Interlinear Text

בְּכֶן יְמִינָה אָמַר לְךָ גָּדוֹל וְאָמַר
said And the king And Doeg Turn H859 and he fell upon the priests
H559 H4428 H1673 H5437 H6293 H3548

בְּכֶן יְמִינָה אָמַר לְךָ גָּדוֹל וְאָמַר
Turn And Doeg the Edomite and he fell H1931 upon the priests and slew
H5437 H1673 H130 H6293 H3548 H4191

בְּכֶן יְמִינָה אָמַר לְךָ גָּדוֹל וְאָמַר
on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear ephod
H3117 H1931 H8084 H2568 H376 H5375 H646

לְכָל
a linen
H906