

1 Samuel 22:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.

Analysis

And one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.

Abiathar's escape preserves the priestly line amid catastrophe. The Hebrew 'vayimmalet' (escaped) suggests narrow deliverance from the slaughter. His flight 'after David' (acharei David) literally placed him in the fugitive's camp but figuratively aligned him with God's chosen king. Abiathar would become David's priest, bringing the ephod for divine consultation (23:6). From massacre came the priest who would serve the true king. This single survivor demonstrates God's preservation of His purposes—even through tragedy, the priestly line continued. Abiathar's escape fulfilled God's covenant faithfulness while Saul's violence fulfilled Eli's judgment.

Historical Context

Abiathar would serve as David's priest throughout his reign until Solomon removed him for supporting Adonijah (1 Kings 2:26-27). His survival ensured continuity of the Levitical priesthood. The ephod he brought became crucial for David's inquiries of God.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God preserve His purposes even through devastating tragedy?
2. What does Abiathar's escape and allegiance to David teach about providence amid persecution?

Interlinear Text

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Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 23:6 (References David): And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.

1 Samuel 30:7 (References David): And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David.

1 Samuel 23:9 (References David): And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod.

Job 1:19 (Parallel theme): And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

1 Samuel 4:12 (Parallel theme): And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.

1 Samuel 2:33 (Parallel theme): And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.

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