

1 Samuel 4:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

Analysis

Eli hears the city's outcry and asks its meaning, showing his dependence on others due to blindness. The 'noise of the crying' indicates communal lamentation has begun before formal announcement. The messenger 'came in hastily' to bring news directly to the high priest. Eli, whose failure to act hastily against his sons brought this judgment, now must receive hasty news of that judgment's completion. The pace quickens as the narrative drives toward its climax.

Historical Context

News of military defeat would spread quickly in ancient communities. The city's communal cry reflected shared grief and alarm at disaster affecting the entire community, not just individual families who lost soldiers.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the city's communal response reflect the communal nature of the disaster?
2. What might Eli have feared as he heard the city crying out?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשְׁמַע	לְעֵלִי:	אֶת	קוֹל	הַצֹּעֵק הַ	וַיֹּאמֶר
heard	And when Eli	H853	What meaneth the noise	of the crying	he said
H8085	H5941		H6963	H6818	H559
מָה	קוֹל	הַקֶּהֱמֹן	הַזֶּה	וְהָאִישׁ	מְהֵרָה
H4100	What meaneth the noise	of this tumult	H2088	And the man	in hastily
	H6963	H1995		H376	H4116
וַיָּבֹא	וַיֹּד	לְעֵלִי:			
came	and told	And when Eli			
H935	H5046	H5941			

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