

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

לְעָלִי אָתָּה וְשָׁמָעַ עִי אָמַר הַצְּעִיק הִי
heard And when Eli H853 What meaneth the noise of the crying he said
H8085 H5941 H6963 H6818 H559

מִן הַצְּעִיק כִּי הַבָּהָמָן וְאֵרֶב מִן הַבָּהָמָן
What meaneth the noise of this tumult And the man in hastily
H4100 H6963 H1995 H2088 H376 H4116

לְעָלִי וְיָדְךָ אָתָּה
came and told And when Eli
H935 H5046 H5941

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