

# 1 Samuel 4:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son?

## Analysis

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The messenger identifies himself as an eyewitness: 'I am he that came out of the army.' His statement 'I fled to day' indicates same-day arrival, emphasizing urgency and recent experience of the disaster. Eli's question 'What is there done?' invites the terrible report. The Hebrew *mah hayah hadavar* ('what was the thing/word') requests the substantive news beneath the crying. Eli must hear the specific content of the catastrophe his failures have brought about.

## Historical Context

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Eyewitness testimony carried special weight in ancient cultures. The messenger's identification as a battlefield participant authenticated his report. Same-day arrival demonstrated the urgency of his mission.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. Why does the messenger emphasize his eyewitness status?

2. What weight does immediate, firsthand testimony carry in establishing truth?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֹּאמֶר	הָאִישׁ	אֶל	עַל י	אֲנֹכִי	הִנֵּה א	מִן
And he said	And the man	H413	unto Eli	H595	I am he that came	H4480
H559	H376		H5941		H935	
הַמַּעֲרָכָה	וַאֲנִי	מִן	הַמַּעֲרָכָה	וַיִּפְּתִי	הַיּוֹם	וַיֹּאמֶר
out of the army	H589	H4480	out of the army	and I fled	to day	And he said
H4634			H4634	H5127	H3117	H559
מָה	הֵיאָה	הַדָּבָר	בְּנִי:			
H4100	H1961	What is there done	my son			
		H1697	H1121			

## Additional Cross-References

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**2 Samuel 1:4** (Parallel theme): And David said unto him, How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me. And he answered, That the people are fled from the battle, and many of the people also are fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead also.