

1 Samuel 9:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall find him.

Analysis

As soon as ye be come into the city, ye shall straightway find him, before he go up to the high place to eat: for the people will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the sacrifice; and afterwards they eat that be bidden. Now therefore get you up; for about this time ye shall find him.

The maidens provide remarkably precise instructions, revealing both Samuel's central role in community worship and the specific window of opportunity available to Saul. The phrase 'the people will not eat until he come' establishes Samuel's priestly function: he blessed (barak) the sacrifice, consecrating the meal for sacred consumption. This detail shows Samuel functioning in a quasi-priestly capacity despite being an Ephraimite, authorized by his prophetic office and the disrupted state of the Levitical priesthood. The expression 'they that be bidden' (qeru'im, 'the called ones' or 'invited guests') introduces the concept of divine invitation that becomes significant when Samuel seats Saul in the place of honor. The repeated urgency, 'get you up,' propels the narrative forward toward its climax while reminding readers that divine appointments operate within human time constraints.

Historical Context

Blessing food before eating was standard Israelite practice, with the blessing acknowledging God as provider and consecrating the meal. Samuel's priestly functions reflect the transitional period when normal Levitical structures were disrupted. The invited guests likely included civic and religious leaders of the community, making Saul's later prominence at the feast even more remarkable.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Samuel's role in blessing the sacrifice reflect the integration of prophetic and priestly functions?
2. What does being among 'those who are invited' to God's table mean in your spiritual life?

Interlinear Text

בָּא	וְ	בָּא	וְ	כִּי	אַתָּה	וְ	תִּמְצָא	וְ	
As soon as ye be come		into the city		ye shall straightway		find		H853	
H935		H5892		H3651		H4672			
בָּטְרֵם	וְ	עַל	וְ	בָּבֶטֶן	תָּה	לֹא	כִּי	וְאָכַל	וְ
H2962		Now therefore get you up		to the high place		they eat	H3588	H3808	
		H5927		H1116		H398			
וְאָכַל	וְ	עַד	וְ	בָּא	וְ	הִיא	כִּי		
they eat		for the people	H5704	As soon as ye be come	H935	H1931			
H398		H5971							
וְאָכַל	וְ	אַפְרִי	וְ	בְּזַבְחָה		וְאָכַל	וְ		
because he doth bless		the sacrifice		and afterwards		ye shall straightway		H398	
H1288		H2077		H310		H3651			
וְאָכַל	וְ	כִּי	וְ	אַתָּה	וְ	כִּי	וְ		
that be bidden	H6258	Now therefore get you up	H5927	H3588	H853	for about this time	H3117		
H7121									
וְאָתָה	וְ	כִּי	וְ	אַתָּה	וְ				
find	H853								
H4672									

Additional Cross-References

John 6:11 (Parallel theme): And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.