

1 Samuel 9:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Behold that which is left! set it before thee, and eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

Analysis

And the cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul. And Samuel said, Behold that which is left! set it before thee, and eat: for unto this time hath it been kept for thee since I said, I have invited the people. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day.

The shoulder (shoq) was the priestly portion according to Levitical law (Leviticus 7:32-34), making its presentation to Saul highly significant. By giving Saul the portion normally reserved for priests, Samuel symbolically indicates Saul's sacred calling and special relationship to God. The phrase 'that which is left' (hanishar) may indicate the portion remaining after proper priestly portions were taken, or it may emphasize that this specific piece was 'reserved' or 'kept back.' Samuel's declaration that it had been 'kept for thee' (shamur leka) emphasizes divine appointment: from the moment Samuel planned this feast, this portion was designated for an unknown guest whom God would send. Saul's eating with Samuel establishes covenant fellowship between prophet and future king, consecrating their relationship.

Historical Context

The shoulder (thigh) was designated for Aaron and his sons in Levitical law as a wave offering. Samuel's giving this portion to Saul either indicates prophetic authority to modify ritual for special purposes or suggests this was a variant practice at high places before temple centralization. The symbolic weight of receiving priestly food would not have been lost on the assembled guests.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does receiving the 'priestly portion' suggest about the sacred nature of leadership in God's people?
2. How does the concept of something 'kept for you' since before you knew about it illustrate divine election?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּקַּח	הַ טֹבַח	אֶת	הַ שֵׁשׁ וּקְ	וְהֵעֵל יָהּ	שָׁם	לִפְנֵי יָהּ	וְשָׂא וּלְ
took up	And the cook	H853	the shoulder	H5921	set	it before	Saul
H7311	H2876		H7785		H7760	H6440	H7586
וַיֹּאמֶר	הִנֵּה הַ	הַנִּשְׁאָר	שָׁם	לִפְנֵי יָהּ	וְיָאֵל	כִּי	
And Samuel said	H2009	Behold that which is left	set	it before	did eat	H3588	
H559		H7604	H7760	H6440	H398		
לְמוֹעַד	שָׁמֹר	לְךָ	וַיֹּאמֶר	הָעָם			
for unto this time	hath it been kept	H0	And Samuel said	the people			
H4150	H8104		H559	H5971			
וְיָאֵל	וְיָאֵל	וְיָאֵל	וְיָאֵל	וְיָאֵל	וְיָאֵל	וְיָאֵל	וְיָאֵל
I have invited	did eat	Saul	with Samuel	that day	H1931		
H7121	H398	H7586	H5973	H8050	H3117		

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 24:4 (Parallel theme): Gather the pieces thereof into it, even every good piece, the thigh, and the shoulder; fill it with the choice bones.