

THE TABERNACLE
AND THE TEMPLE

POLITICS: THE KING AND THE PRIESTS

I SAMUEL 21:1-4

(ALL SCRIPTURE IS NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION)

David went to Nob, to Ahimelech the priest. Ahimelech trembled when he met him, and asked, “Why are you alone? Why is no one with you?”

David answered Ahimelech the priest, “The king charged me with a certain matter and said to me, ‘No one is to know anything about your mission and your instructions.’ As for my men, I have told them to meet me at a certain place. Now then, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever you can find.”

But the priest answered David, “I don’t have any ordinary bread on hand; however, there is some consecrated bread here — provided the men have kept themselves from women.”

I SAMUEL 21:5-7

David replied, “Indeed women have been kept from us, as usual whenever I set out. The men’s things are holy even on missions that are not holy. How much more so today!” So the priest gave him the consecrated bread, since there was no bread there except the bread of the Presence that had been removed from before the LORD and replaced by hot bread on the day it was taken away.

Now one of Saul’s servants was there that day, detained before the LORD; he was Doeg the Edomite, Saul’s head shepherd.

I SAMUEL 22:6-8

Now Saul heard that David and his men had been discovered. And Saul, spear in hand, was seated under the tamarisk tree on the hill at Gibeah, with all of his officials standing around him. Saul said to them, “Listen, men of Benjamin! Will the son of Jesse give all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make all of you commanders of thousand and commanders of hundreds? Is that why you have all conspired against me? No one tells me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse. None of you is concerned about me or tells me that my son has incited my servant to lie in wait for me, as he does today.”

I SAMUEL 22:9-12

But Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul's officials, said, "I saw the son of Jesse come to Ahimelech son of Ahitub at Nob. Ahimelech inquired of the LORD for him; he also gave him provisions and the sword of Goliath the Philistine."

Then the king sent for the priest Ahimelech son of Ahitub and his father's whole family, who were the priests at Nob, and they all came to the king. Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub."
"Yes, my lord," he answered.

I SAMUEL 22:13-15

Saul said to him, “Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jesse, giving him bread and a sword and inquiring of God for him, so that he has rebelled against me and lies in wait for me, as he does today?”

Ahimelech answered the king, “Who of all your servants is as loyal as David, the king’s son-in-law, captain of your bodyguard and highly respected in your household? Was that day the first time I inquired of God for him? Of course not! Let not the king accuse your servant or any of his father’s family, for your servant knows nothing at all about this whole affair.”

I SAMUEL 22:16-18

But the king said, “You will surely die, Ahimelech, you and your father’s whole family.”

Then the king ordered the guards at his side: “Turn and kill the priests of the LORD, because they too have sided with David. They knew he was fleeing, yet they did not tell me.”

But the king’s officials were not willing to raise a hand to strike the priests of the LORD.

The king then ordered Doeg, “You turn and strike down the priests.” So Doeg the Edomite turned and struck them down. That day he killed eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod.

I SAMUEL 22:19-23

He also put to the sword Nob, the town of the priests, with its men and women, its children and infants, and its cattle, donkeys, and sheep.

But Abiathar, a son of Ahimelech, escaped and fled to join David. He told David that Saul had killed the priests of the LORD. Then David said to Abiathar: “That day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, I knew he would be sure to tell Saul. I am responsible for the death of your father’s whole family. Stay with me; don’t be afraid; the man who is seeking your life is seeking mine also. You will be safe with me.”

The Descendants of Aaron

I Chronicles 6:3-10

Aaron

Eleazar

Phinehas

Abishua

Bukki

Uzzi

Zerahiah

Meraioth

Amariah

Ahitub

Zadok

Ahimaaz

Azariah

Johanan

Azariah (Temple)

Ezra 7:1-5

Aaron

Eleazar

Phinehas

Abishua

Bukki

Uzzi

Zerahiah

Meraioth

Azariah

Amariah

Ahitub

Zadok

Shallum

Hilkiah

Azariah

Seraiah

Ezra

I Samuel 14:3

Eli

Phinehas

Ahitub

Ahimelech

Abiathar

QUESTIONS

Why did God allow the priests to be slaughtered?

After Saul murdered eighty five priests, what do you suppose would be the relationship of the priests and the king – any king?

The priests had coexisted with the Judges of Israel for 400 years, and the last Judge was Samuel, a Levite. He had fully appreciated the work of the priests, but now he had died (I Samuel 25:1). Could the priests trust David, the new king, the son-in-law of Saul?

I CHRONICLES 15:11-13

Then David summoned Zadok and Abiathar the priests, and Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel and Amminadab the Levites. He said to them, “You are the heads of the Levitical families; you and your fellow Levites are to consecrate yourselves and bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel, to the place I have prepared for it. It was because you, the Levites, did not bring it up the first time that the LORD our God broke out in anger against us. We did not inquire of him about how to do it in the prescribed way.”

I CHRONICLES 16:1-4

They brought the ark of God and set it inside the tent that David had pitched for it, and they presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before God. After David had finished sacrificing the burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD. Then he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of dates and a cake of raisins to each Israelite man and woman.

He appointed some of the Levites to minister before the ark of the LORD, to make petition, to give thanks, and to praise the LORD, the God of Israel.

I CHRONICLES 16:39-40

David left Zadok the priest and his fellow priests before the tabernacle of the LORD at the high place in Gibeon to present burnt offerings to the LORD at the altar of burnt offering regularly, morning and evening, in accordance with everything written in the Law of the LORD, which he had given Israel.

II CHRONICLES 1:1-3

Solomon son of David established himself firmly over his kingdom, for the LORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.

Then Solomon spoke to all Israel — to the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, to the judges and to all the leaders in Israel, the heads of families — and Solomon and the whole assembly went to the high place at Gibeon, for God's Tent of Meeting was there, which Moses the LORD's servant had made in the desert.

II CHRONICLES 1:4-7

Now David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath Jearim to the place he had prepared for it, because he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem. But the bronze altar that Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, had made was in Gibeon in front of the tabernacle of the LORD; so Solomon and the assembly inquired of him there. Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it.

That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

ANOTHER QUESTION

David clearly wanted to bring the Ark to Jerusalem, but he must have known that it belonged in the Tabernacle. So why did David not also bring the Tabernacle to Jerusalem and place the Ark where it belonged – in the Most Holy Place?

There is, it seems, one very good reason! And David was powerless to do anything about it. The priests insisted on maintaining the Tabernacle in Gibeon, where they could be relatively independent of the Jerusalem government.

Then the obvious solution dawned on David.

II SAMUEL 7:1-3

After the king was settled in his palace and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, “Here I am living in a palace of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.”

Nathan replied to the king, “Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the LORD is with you.”