

## **When the Sacred is No Longer Valued – 1 Samuel 22:6-23**

### **Introduction:**

This chapter outlines the tragic outcome from David's visit to the priests at Nob. As David fled from King Saul he lost perspective, and though he sought the Lord at the temple, and asked for some food and a weapon, he was not aware of the consequences of his actions. His focus was on himself, and surviving the threats of King Saul, and he paid little attention to the consequences of his actions to others. How many times does that happen in our lives? We are facing some trouble and our focus is only on how we will get out of this, forgetting the people around us? Fear, grief and anger can all blind us to how our actions are affecting those around us. David will learn a hard lesson in this chapter about being aware of the people around him, no matter what he is facing. No doubt there are lessons in this for us as well.

### **Saul's Rant Against His Men – 1 Samuel 22:6-10**

1. Verse 6 starts with the mention of something that happens in Saul's life that triggers him to anger. What is it?
2. Verse 6 also gives us a picture of the king that is less than flattering (reminiscent of 14:2). David is on the move, gaining followers and strength, and where is King Saul and what is he doing?
3. Who does King Saul address in verse 7? Why this group? What "fact" does the king bring to the attention of his advisers?
4. Read verse 8 again. What is the impression that we get about King Saul in this verse? What is his state of mind?
5. King Saul accuses David of conspiring to do something in verse 8. What is it? Is the accusation true?
6. In the midst of all the King's accusations and threats to revoke his favours on the leadership, who steps forward with information for the king?
7. What does Doeg say he witnessed (v.10)?

## **Ahimelech is Called to Task – 1 Samuel 22:11-19**

8. After hearing Doeg's information, what does King Saul do (v. 11)?
9. What does King Saul accuse Ahimelech of in verse 13?
10. What is Ahimelech's defense to the king (vss. 14-15)? What is Ahimelech's opinion of David, and his relationship to the king?
11. Does the King accept the defence of Ahimelech (v. 16)? What does the king conclude must happen? Does this seem fair?
12. Despite the ranting of the king and his command to kill all the priests, how do the guards at his side respond (v. 17)? Why?
13. The king then passes his command on to someone else. Whom does he command to kill the priests (v. 18)? Why this person?
14. How does this Edomite respond to the command of the king (v. 18)? What damage does he inflict on the house of Ahitub?
15. What further destruction does Doeg inflict (v. 19)? Why might he do this?

## **One Survivor – 1 Samuel 22:20-23**

16. Who survives the slaughter inflicted by Doeg (v. 20)? Where does he go to escape King Saul?
17. What sad news did he bring to David (v. 21)?
18. What observation/confession does David make in verse 22? How does David feel about this?
19. What invitation does David give to Abiathar? What do David and Abiathar have in common? Why would Abiathar want to stay with David?

## **Conclusion:**

David is grieved because his actions have caused the death of not only Ahimelech but the whole village of the priests at Nob. Priests, women, children and even livestock were slaughtered by Doeg at the command of King Saul. King Saul was commanded to totally destroy the Amelekites by God as their punishment for what they did to the Israelites as they came into Canaan. But he did not. He allowed the soldiers to keep the best of the cattle and sheep, and he did not kill the king. God rejected him as king at that time. But here he is willing to put to the sword all the village of the priests, including women, children and animals. King Saul was ready to slaughter the innocent and save the guilty.

The prophet Isaiah said, "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:20-21)

King Saul has totally lost his perspective, as his eyes are not on God. David, on the other hand, is learning more and more to turn his eyes towards God, no matter what he was facing. Even now, while his life is threatened, he turns his eyes towards God.

On the journey, David has learned another important lesson: what he does affects the lives of others. So often people are so focused on their issues that they do not see that what they are doing and saying is hurting the people around them. Sadly, today many people spout all kinds of opinions on social media that cause harm to others, or worse, bring shame to the name of Jesus and His church. David will grieve the effects of his actions and the price the priests paid. May we also be aware that what we do, what we say, will affect the people around us. And may we be bringers of life and grace, not pain and sorrow through God's help.