

21[1H2] And David went to Nob¹ to Ahimelech² the priest. And Ahimelech trembled to meet David and said to him, “Why are you by yourself and no men³ are with you?” [2H3] And David said to Ahimelech the priest, “The king commanded me something and said to me, 'Do not let a man know anything of the matter that I am sending you and what I have commanded you. And the young men I have directed to such and such a place.' [3H4] And now, what is there under your hand? Five bread give into my hand, or what is found.”

[4H5] And the priest answered David and said, “There is no common bread under my hand, except there is holy bread. If only the young men have been kept from a woman.”⁴ [5H6] And David answered the priest and said to him, “A woman has been restrained from us about three days⁵ ago in my going out. And the vessels of the young men are holy, and it is in a way common, even though that today it was holy in the vessel.” [6H7] And the priest gave to him holiness,⁶ for there was no bread there except the bread of the presence which was taken from before Yehvah to put hot bread on the day⁷ of it being taken.

[7H8] And a man was there from Saul's servants on that day detained before Yehvah, and his name was Doeg⁸ the Edomite, the chief of the shepherds that were Saul's. [8H9] And David said to Ahimelech, “And is there not here under your hand a spear or a sword, for both my sword and my equipment I did not take in my hand; because the king's matter was urgent.” [9H10] And the priest said, “Goliath's sword, the Philistine who you struck in the valley of the Terebinth, behold, she is wrapped in the garment behind the ephod. If you take for yourself, take, for there is not another besides this one.” And David said, “There's none like her. Give her to me.” [10H11] And David arose and fled on that day from before Saul, and he came to Achish,⁹ king of Winepress.

[11H12] And servants of Achish said to him, “Is this not David, the king of the

1 נוב (nov) “Nob” - found also in 1 Samuel 22:9, 11, 19; Nehemiah 11:32; Isaiah 10:32.

2 אַחִימֶלֶךְ (achimelek) “Ahimelech” = my brother is king; LXX Αβιμελεχ (Abimelech) Hebrew = “my father is king” – found also in 1 Samuel 21:2, 8, 22:9, 11, 14, 16, 20; 23:6; 26:6 “the Hitite” LXX Αχιμελεχ (Achimelech); 2 Samuel 8:17 LXX Αχιμελεχ; 1 Chronicles 24:3 LXX Αχιμελεχ “of the sons of Ithamar,” 6 LXX Αχιμελεχ “son of Abiathar,” 31 LXX Αχιμελεχ; Psalm 52:1. See also Mark 2:26 and footnotes.

3 אִישׁ (iysh) “men” LEB; “man” YLT, KJV; “one” NKJV, NAS – this is more literally “man” (singular), but this same exact word is used to mean “men” often (e.g. 1 Samuel 17:24 “men” of Israel, אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל [iysh yisrâ'êl]). And context dictates this is plural in meaning, since David was a captain (1 Samuel 18:13) and commonly coming and going with an army (1 Samuel 18:16). And, there were also some “young men,” נְאֻרִים (ne`ariym), here with David (vs. 4-5). So, context (greater and immediate) does not dictate he was absolutely by himself, but abnormally “alone” (i.e. no army).

4 Kept from a woman? See Exodus 19:15 and footnote.

5 “Three days” is the same amount of time given in Exodus 19:11, 15-16 (“third day”).

6 קֹדֶשׁ (qodesh) “holiness” (e.g. Exodus 15:11 “holiness” NKJV); “holy thing” YLT; “holy bread” NKJV. See also Joshua's comment on this event in Matthew 12:1-4//Luke 6:1-4.

7 The bread was to be there “always” (Exodus 25:30 see footnote) and replaced every Sabbath (e.g. 1 Chronicles 9:32).

8 דֹּעַג (do'êg) “Doeg” - found also in 1 Samuel 22:9, 18 & 22 (דֹּעַג [doyêg]); Psalm 52:1. Same root word as “anxious” in 1 Samuel 9:5 & 10:2. Same exact word as “worried” (CSB) in Jeremiah 38:19 (NKJV “afraid”).

9 אַחִישׁ (âkhiysh) “Achish” (evidently also called, “Abimelech,” Psalm 34:1//1 Samuel 21:13) - found also in 1 Samuel 21:11-12, 14; 27:2-3, 5-6, 9-10, 12; 28:1-2; 29:2-3, 6, 8-9; 1 Kings 2:39-40.

land? Do they not sing to this one in the dances, saying, 'Saul has struck his thousands and David his tens of thousands?'" [12H13] And David put these words in his heart and was very afraid before Achish, king of Winepress. [13H14] And he changed his discretion¹⁰ in their eyes and acted insane¹¹ in their hand. And he marked upon the doors of the gate and caused his saliva to go down to his beard. [14H15] And Achish said to his servants, "Look, you see a man who is crazy.¹² Why did you bring him to me? [15H16] Am I lacking crazies that you bring me this one to act crazy by me? Will this one come in to my house?"

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- 10 טַעַמוֹ (ta`mo) noun w/suffix, "his discretion"; NKJV "his behavior"; disguised "his sanity" NAS – this word is used for "taste" in Exodus 16:31; Numbers 11:8; 1 Samuel 14:24 (verb); 29 (verb), 43 (verb); 2 Samuel 3:35 (verb); 19:35(H36, verb); Job 6:6; 12:11 (verb); 34:3 (verb); Jeremiah 48:11; and for "discretion" in 1 Samuel 25:33 (YLT); Job 12:20 ("discernment" NKJV); Psalm 119:66 ("discernment" NKJV); Proverbs 11:22; 26:16 ("sensibly" NKJV); 31:18 ("perceives" NKJV); Jonah 3:7 (noun, "decree," verb "taste" NKJV); NKJV translates this word "behavior" in Psalm 34:1 and "taste" (NKJV) in Psalm 34:9, in this same context with David and Achish.
- 11 יִתְהַלֵּל (yitholél) hithpoel verb, "acted insane" - GW; NOG; "acted insanely" NAS; "feigned himself mad" KJV, YLT; "feigned madness" NKJV – used in this same way in Jeremiah 25:16 ("go mad" NAS); 46:9 ("drive madly" NAS); 50:38 ("they are mad" NAS); 51:7 ("going mad" NAS); Nahum 2:4(H5, "race madly" NAS).
- 12 מִשְׁתַּגֵּ'א (mishttagê`a) "who is crazy"