

**I. Introduction.**

**II. Saul massacres the priests of Nob. 22:6-23**

**A. Saul holds a royal pity party. v. 6-8**

1. Saul sits with his royal entourage. v. 6-7a 14:2
2. He reminds his fellow tribesmen of the spoils (earmarks) they receive from his administration. v. 7b
3. He has become the corrupt king about whom Samuel warned. 8:11-18 Pr. 29:12
4. Though Saul seems to have all of the power, he remains fearful and insecure. 18:29
5. In his paranoia Saul accuses his closest advisors of conspiracy. v. 8
6. Saul feels sorry for himself. v. 8b
7. Saul fits the pattern of the typical angry abuser. Pr. 22:24 29:22
8. Saul is frustrated because he is fighting God by trying to destroy the LORD's anointed (which makes Saul like antichrist).

**B. Doeg the Edomite seizes his opportunity to gain the king's favor. v. 9-10**

1. He reports how Ahimelech the priest helped David. v. 9-10 21:1-9
2. Doeg leaves out the fact that Ahimelech thought David was serving Saul. 21:2

**C. Saul summons Ahimelech the priest. v. 11-15**

1. Ahimelech comes willingly. v. 11-12
2. Saul accuses Ahimelech of treason and conspiracy. v. 13
3. Ahimelech makes his defense. v. 14-15

**D. Saul executes Ahimelech, the other priests, and all the people of Nob. v. 16-19**

1. Saul, in stark violation of God's law, pronounces the death sentence upon Ahimelech and his household. v. 16 Deut. 17:6 24:16
2. Saul acts just like the tyrannical kings of the other nations. 8:5 Dt. 17:14-20
3. Saul's servants are unwilling to kill the priests of the LORD. v. 17 Acts 5:29
4. The Edomite Doeg is more than willing to murder the LORD's priests. v. 18
5. Saul brings the total destruction (*haram*) he was supposed to upon the Amalekites upon the innocent city of Nob. v. 19 15:1ff Deut. 20:13ff
6. Saul, who was supposed to be Israel's deliverer, has become their destroyer – in contrast to David who continues to deliver Israel. 23:1ff Rev. 13:7 Dan. 7:21
7. Tyrants still violate justice and wage war on their own people.

**E. One priest, Abiathar, escapes and flees to David. v. 20-23**

1. This is one of several cases in which one special person is saved from a mad murderer. Ex. 2:1ff II Ki. 11:1ff Mt. 2:13ff
2. David humbly takes responsibility for his part in this tragedy. v. 22
3. David promises to protect Abiathar who becomes a key man for him. 23:6,9 30:7 II Sam. 8:17
4. Our chapter ends with the contrast between Saul, the destroyer of the priesthood, and David who preserves it from extinction in Israel.

**III. Application: What is God doing in the midst of evil?**

**A. Why does God allow injustice and suffering? Isa. 45:7**

1. Shouldn't Ahimelech have been blessed for blessing God's anointed? Gen. 12:3

2. What about all of the faithful martyrs throughout history?
  3. In our day it often seems that the bad guys have all the power and are getting by with murder. I Jo. 2:18
  4. Those who associate with Jesus Christ are at risk of winding up like Ahimalech. Acts 7:54ff 12:1ff II Tim. 3:12
  5. We have no right to question God's goodness or sovereignty. Ro. 9:19ff 11:33ff
- B. God works out His sovereign and good purpose, in spite of evildoers.**
1. Saul's evil action fulfilled a previous prophecy against Eli's house. 2:31-36 4:11ff I Ki. 2:26ff
  2. Joseph acknowledged that the evil done by his brothers was used by God for good. Gen. 50:20
  3. The most wicked act in human history, the crucifixion of the son of God, was according to God's perfect and gracious plan. Acts 2:23
  4. Our sovereign God is working His good purpose through everything which happens in your life. Ro. 8:28
- C. In the end the LORD brings justice by punishing the evildoers and vindicating those who are righteous. Psalm 52 is written by David in connection with these events.**
1. David complains about the wickedness of arrogant evildoers like Doeg. Ps. 52:1-4
  2. The LORD will utterly destroy the wicked in the end. Ps. 52:5-7 2:4 Ro. 12:19
  3. The righteous will be ultimately be established in the LORD's covenant faithfulness forever. v. 8-9
  4. God will bring justice to the wicked who oppress His people. Rev. 6:10
  5. Our ultimate hope is not in this life, but in the life to come. Js. 5:1ff II Co. 4:7ff
  6. When you face injustice pray the Psalms.

#### IV. Conclusion: Where do we see Christ in this tragic passage?

- A. God has entered into our suffering and has subjected Himself to the full extent of evil for our sakes. Mark 14:32ff 15:33ff Isa. 53 Jo. 1:1ff
- B. By suffering evil and injustice Christ has ensured the elimination of evil and injustice.
- C. Jesus has been vindicated through the resurrection. Acts 2:24ff
- D. We can flee to Jesus and find safety. v. 23 Ps. 57:1 Rev. 21

#### Discussion questions

1. In what ways does Saul violate God's law in his treatment of Ahimelech?
2. In what ways is Saul like antichrist?
3. What contrasts are brought out between David and Saul in this passage?
4. Name some tyrants like Saul throughout history and today.
5. Why does the LORD deliver David, but not Ahimalech? John 21:18-23
6. How could a victim of injustice and tyranny find comfort in praying Psalm 52?
7. Is it wrong to pray for God to judge the wicked?
8. What would you say to someone who claims they can't believe in God because of all of the evil in the world?
9. How does this passage point us to Christ?