Sorry for not having written much of late. I have been away on holiday for a week at a special tent mission with a friend, and I have been quite busy attending meetings and programming. And I don't like writing articles just for the sake of it. I need to be inspired before I can write. So that's why I haven't been updating the site as much recently. But I enjoyed reading this morning about a man called Ahimelech. I enjoy Bible character studies, because it encourages me to try and be more like people I read about, something that I fail terribly at. Ahimelech's name in Hebrew means 'brother (or by implication a friend) to the king'. I used to think that Ahimelech and Abimelech were the same name, only one was slightly misspelled. But studying Hebrew has given me a greater understanding of the meaning of people's names and their significance. The name 'Abimelech' of course means 'father to the king'. But I was thinking about what this man's name meant, and his reaction to the difficult circumstances in which he found himself.

Saul was king over Israel at the time. Saul, or 'Shaul' in the Hebrew, means 'asked for'. The nation of Israel had rejected God as King over them, in asking for a man to lead them like the nations round about (1st Samuel 8:7). That act of rejection of divine headship over the nation of Israel was later to be repeated in their rejection of the King of Kings at His first coming (Zechariah 9:9, John 19:15). "We have no king but Caesar", they would say. And the nation would suffer as a result of that choice. Saul started off as a humble man who was of the least of the families of the tribe of Benjamin (1st Samuel 9:21). But the youth who was head and shoulders above the people became headstrong after he was made king. And through disobedience and self-will, he was ultimately rejected by God (1st Samuel 15:26, Hosea 13:11). When he was confronted with his sin, he made excuses for his behaviour. And rather than repenting of his sin, he became filled with hatred and envy for the man that God had chosen to replace him. It was said of David, whose name means 'beloved', that the Lord had found a man after His own heart (1st Samuel 13:14). David had a shepherd's heart (2nd Samuel 7:8), following after the example of of his own Shepherd, the Lord (Psalm 23:1). And although David sinned on several occasions, he always repented of his sin and sought the forgiveness and mercy of God (1st Chronicles 21:13).

But Saul, who represents the carnal man, sought to destroy David, a picture of the heavenly man. The choice of the people had set himself against God's elect (Psalm 2). Thus David was forced to flee for his life. And David came to the city of Nob. Last time we read about Naboth and his vineyard, and we learned that 'Naboth' in Hebrew means 'fruitful'. The word 'Nob' in Hebrew also means 'fruit'. And it seems that this city may not have only been known for its argicultural produce, but also for its spiritual fruit. For in 1st Samuel 22:19, Nob is called the "cit y of the priests
". It is there that David meets Ahimelech, the son of Ahitub. As we have said, Ahimelech's name means a 'friend to the king'. His father's name means 'friend of goodness'. And Ahimlech proved to be a true friend to the future King David. For when David was in need of sustinance, Ahimelech was there to help him. And he stood up for David, even when it meant risking the wrath of an angry king. Doeg the Edomite, one of King Saul's servants, happened to be in Nob when David was there. The name 'Doeg' means one who is 'anxious' or 'afraid'. And of course, being an Edomite, a descendant of Esau (Genesis 25:20), he represents the carnal man who

only thinks of himself. When Saul demanded to know which of his servants were conspiring with David, Doeg revealed David's whereabouts to the king. His betrayal would later inspire David to write a Psalm based on the experience (Psalm 52). So King Saul has the priests of Nob brought before him. And Ahimelech is accused of being a traitor, aiding the escape of the king's enemies. Of course Doeg's accusations were completely false. Ahimelech did not even know David's business (1st Samuel 21:2), never mind enquiring of the Lord for him. But Ahimelech and the priests of the Lord, speaking up on behalf of David before the king, experience the full weight of Saul's wrath. The king gives the command, and Doeg slays eighty-five priests of the Lord. And the city of Nob is wiped off the map.

But one of the sons of Ahimelech escape. Abiathar tells David the story of how his family were slain by the king. Abiathar's name means 'father of abundance'. And David comforts him, saying, "Abide thou with me, fear not: for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life: but with me thou shalt be in safeguard ." (1st Samuel 22:23). And he was. Ahimelech, the 'friend of the king', the son of the 'friend of goodness', gave his life for the sake of David. And out of this carnage, the true nature of Abiathar, the 'father of abundance', shines forth. Praise God that we also know a Friend of the King who has died in our place. It is through His goodness in giving His life for ours upon the cross of Calvary, that we can experience His abundant blessing of salvation and the forgiveness of sins. And through His sacrifice we can also be made Ahimelechs, or 'friends of the King'. Those who sought His life, Satan and the Doeg's of this world, seek to take ours too. But if we abide with Him, there is saftey. Why don't you trust Him for salvation today.

Proverbs 22:11
He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.