

1 Samuel 24:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

Analysis

And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

David's refusal to harm Saul despite opportunity and justification demonstrates respect for God's authority structures even when those in authority act wickedly. His conviction that he cannot 'stretch forth my hand against the LORD's anointed' teaches the principle of leaving vengeance to God rather than taking matters into one's own hands. David's restraint shows mature faith that trusts God to vindicate and promote in His timing. This passage warns against using apparent opportunities to advance personal interests when doing so requires violating godly principles.

Historical Context

The establishment of monarchy around 1050-1010 BCE represented a dramatic political and theological shift for Israel. Unlike surrounding nations where kings were considered divine or semi-divine, Israel's kings were supposed to function under God's ultimate authority as laid out in Deuteronomy 17:14-20. The Benjamite tribe occupied strategic territory between Ephraim and Judah, making Saul's selection a politically astute choice to balance tribal rivalries. Archaeological remains from this period show increased fortification and centralization of settlements, confirming the transition to state-level organization.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen our understanding of God's character, purposes, and ways of working in human history?
2. What specific heart attitudes, thought patterns, or life practices does this passage call you to examine or change?
3. How does this passage connect to the larger biblical narrative of redemption and point toward Christ and the gospel?

Interlinear Text

וַיְהִי	אַחֲרֵי	כִּי	וַיִּךְ	לֵב	דָּוִד	אֶת
H1961	And it came to pass afterward	H3651	smote	heart	that David's	H853
	H310		H5221	H3820	H1732	
לְאִשְׁרָאֵל	אֲשֶׁר	כָּרַח	אֶת	כָּנָף	אֲשֶׁר	לְאִשְׁרָאֵל
H5921	H834	him because he had cut off	H853	skirt	H834	Saul's
		H3772		H3671		H7586

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 24:10 (References David): And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.

2 Kings 22:19 (Parallel theme): Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation

and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.

2 Samuel 12:9 (Parallel theme): Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

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