

2 Samuel 1:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

Analysis

It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

This verse contributes to the narrative of David Learns of Saul's Death, emphasizing honoring God's anointed, genuine grief. The Hebrew terminology emphasizes David's respect for God's anointed (mashiach, מָשִׁיחַ) even after death. David's lament (vv. 19-27) represents some of Scripture's finest poetry, expressing genuine grief without compromising theological truth about Saul's disobedience. Cross-references to 1 Samuel demonstrate narrative continuity while developing themes of covenant faithfulness and proper mourning.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 1 occurs during David's reign (circa 1010-970 BCE) over Israel's united monarchy. Archaeological discoveries, including the Tel Dan inscription mentioning the 'House of David,' corroborate biblical historicity. Ancient Near Eastern customs regarding honoring God's anointed, genuine grief provide crucial background. The geopolitical situation involved regional powers—Philistines, Ammonites, Arameans, Moabites, Edomites—as David consolidated and

expanded Israel's territory. Cultural practices concerning kingship, warfare, covenant relationships, family dynamics, and religious observance differed significantly from modern Western contexts, requiring careful attention to avoid anachronistic interpretation while extracting timeless theological principles applicable across cultures and eras.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of honoring God's anointed, genuine grief?
2. What does this verse reveal about God's character, and how should that shape your worship and obedience?
3. In what specific ways can you apply this truth to your current circumstances and relationships this week?

Interlinear Text

בַּיּוֹם תַּיִהְיָה	הַשְׁלִישִׁי	וְיָהּוּ	אֵשׁ
H1961 day	It came even to pass on the third	H2009 that behold a man	
H3117	H7992		H376
בָּבָא	מִן	בְּמִקְרָבָה	מִעַל
and so it was when he came	H4480	out of the camp	H5973
H935	H4264		H7586
רָאשׁ	עַל	תְּאַדְמָה	תִּיהְיָה
with his clothes	rent	and earth	H1961
H899	H7167	H127	H5921
בָּבָא	אֶל	תְּאַדְמָה	רָאשׁ
and so it was when he came	H413	to David	H7218
H935	H1732	H5307	H776
אֶל	יָפֵל	תַּהֲזִיב	אֶל
and did obeisance			
H7812			

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 4:12 (Parallel theme): And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.

2 Samuel 4:10 (Parallel theme): When one told me, saying, Behold, Saul is dead, thinking to have brought good tidings, I took hold of him, and slew him in Ziklag, who thought that I would have given him a reward for his tidings:

Joshua 7:6 (Parallel theme): And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.

1 Samuel 25:23 (References David): And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

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