

2 Samuel 11:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

Analysis

And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

This verse contributes to the narrative of David and Bathsheba, emphasizing devastating consequences of sin. David's adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah represent the nadir of his reign. The Hebrew narrative's sparse, matter-of-fact reporting heightens the horror. The phrase "but the thing that David had done displeased the LORD" (v. 27) marks divine displeasure. This chapter demonstrates that even "a man after God's own heart" can fall catastrophically when neglecting spiritual disciplines and succumbing to temptation. Cross-references to Psalm 51 reveal David's repentance.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 11 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 devastating consequences of sin 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

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of devastating consequences of sin?
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

וַיִּכְתֹּב ב	בִּסְפָר	לֵאמֹר	קָבַל ו	אֶת	אֲוִרְיָה	אֶל	מֹל
And he wrote	in the letter	saying	Set	H853	ye Uriah	H413	H4136
H3789	H5612	H559	H3051		H223		
פְּנֵי	הַמִּלְחָמָה	הַחֲזָקָה	וְשָׁבַת מִ	מֵאַחֲרָיו			
in the forefront	battle	of the hottest	and retire	ye from him			
H6440	H4421	H2389	H7725	H310			
וְנִכָּה	וּמָת:						
that he may be smitten	and die						
H5221	H4191						

Additional Cross-References

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.

1 Samuel 18:17 (Parallel theme): And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab, her will I give thee to wife: only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD'S battles. For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.

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