

2 Samuel 12:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died.
And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

Analysis

And it came to pass on the seventh day, that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead: for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice: how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead?

This verse contributes to the narrative of Nathan's Rebuke, emphasizing conviction, repentance, consequences. Nathan's prophetic confrontation using parable demonstrates effective rebuke methodology. David's immediate repentance ("I have sinned against the LORD") contrasts with Saul's defensive self-justification. The child's death demonstrates that forgiveness doesn't eliminate all consequences. Theological themes include God's hatred of sin, the necessity of repentance, the distinction between eternal and temporal consequences, and God's grace that continues despite devastating sin.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 12 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 conviction, repentance, consequences 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 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of conviction, repentance, consequences?
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

וַיָּהִי יוֹם	הַשְּׁבִיעִי	מָת	הָיָה לְדָוִד
H1961 day H3117	And it came to pass on the seventh H7637	died H4191	Behold while the child H3206
וַיִּירָאוּ	וְעֲבָדָיו	לְדָוִד	לְהַגִּיד
feared H3372	And the servants H5650	of David H1732	to tell H5046
		H0	H3588
			died H4191
הָיָה לְדָוִד	כִּי	נֹאמְרָם	בְּהִיּוֹת הֵנָּה
Behold while the child H3206	H3588	for they said H559	H2009
			H1961
			Behold while the child H3206
וְהָיָה	וְנֹאמְרָם	וְלֹא	שָׁמַע
was yet alive H2416	we spake H1696	H413 H3808	unto him and he would not hearken H8085
וְנֹאמְרָם	וְלֹא	שָׁמַע	וְהָיָה
unto our voice H6963	H349	for they said H559	H413
			died H4191
			Behold while the child H3206
וְעָשָׂה	וְעָשָׂה		
himself H6213	vex H7451		