

2 Samuel 12:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

Analysis

Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat.

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

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

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

וַיָּקָם	דָּוִד	מִתַּחַת הָאָרֶץ	וַיֵּצֵא	וַיִּסָּךְ	
arose	Then David	from the earth	and washed	and anointed	
H6965	H1732	H776	H7364	H5480	
וַיַּחֲלֵף	שָׁמְלָתוֹ	וַיָּבֹא	בֵּיתוֹ	יְהוָה	
himself and changed	his apparel	and came	into the house	of the LORD	
H2498	H8071	H935	H1004	H3068	
וַיִּשְׁתָּחוּ	וַיָּבֹא	אֵל	בֵּיתוֹ	וַיִּשְׁאַל	וַיִּשֶׁן יָמָיו
and worshipped	and came	H413	into the house	and when he required	they set
H7812	H935		H1004	H7592	H7760
וּלְחֶם	וַיֹּאכֵל:				
H0	bread	before him and he did eat			
	H3899	H398			

Additional Cross-References

Job 1:20 (Worship): Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

Ruth 3:3 (Parallel theme): Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

Job 2:10 (Parallel theme): But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

Ecclesiastes 9:8 (Parallel theme): Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.

Matthew 6:17 (Parallel theme): But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

2 Samuel 7:18 (References Lord): Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, Who am I, O Lord GOD? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

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