

2 Samuel 12:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

Analysis

And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

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

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is 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

וַיָּקֵחַ ח	וַיַּחֲמֵל ל	הָעָשִׁיר	לֹא יֵשׁ	הַלֵּךְ	הֵבָּ א
to take	and he spared	unto the rich	it for the man	a traveller	And there came
H3947	H2550	H6223	H376	H1982	H935
לְאִיֹּחַ ח	וַיַּעֲשֶׂה ה	וּמִבְּקָר ו	מִצֹּאֲנוֹ		
for the wayfaring man	and dressed	and of his own herd	of his own flock		
H732	H6213	H1241	H6629		
הֵבָּ אִישׁ	לֹא יֵשׁ	כֶּבֶדֶשֶׁת	אֶת	וַיָּקֵחַ ח	ל ו
the poor	it for the man	lamb		to take	
H7326	H376	H3535	H853	H3947	H0
אֵלָיו:	הֵבָּ א	לֹא יֵשׁ	וַיַּעֲשֶׂה ה		
	And there came	it for the man	and dressed		
H413	H935	H376	H6213		

Additional Cross-References

James 1:14 (Parallel theme): But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.