

2 Samuel 16:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong.

Analysis

And Ahithophel said unto Absalom, Go in unto thy father's concubines, which he hath left to keep the house; and all Israel shall hear that thou art abhorred of thy father: then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong.

This verse contributes to the narrative of David's Humiliation, emphasizing suffering within God's sovereignty. David's humiliation through Shimei's cursing and Ziba's deception tests his faith in God's sovereignty. His refusal to punish Shimei demonstrates trust that God controls even unjust accusations. Ahithophel's counsel and Absalom's public sin with David's concubines fulfill Nathan's prophecy (12:11-12). Theological themes include suffering within God's sovereign plan, responding to unjust accusations with faith, and the full exposure of hidden sin.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 16 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 suffering within God's sovereignty 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

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of suffering within God's sovereignty?
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

פִּלְגָּשִׁי י	אֶל ב וְאֵל	אֲבִשָּׁל מ	אֶל	אֲחִית פֶּל	וַיֹּאמֶר
concupines	Go in	unto Absalom		And Ahithophel	said
H6370	H935	H53	H413	H302	H559
כָּל וְשָׁמַע ע	הַבַּיִת	לְשֹׁמֵר וְ	הֵנּוּ יָמָה	אִשָּׁה ר	אֲבִי יָד
shall hear	the house	to keep	which he hath left	of thy father	
H8085	H1004	H8104	H3240	H834	H1
אֲבִי יָד	אֶת	נִבֵּא שָׂתָה	כִּי	וְשָׂרָאֵל	
of thy father		that thou art abhorred		and all Israel	
H1	H854	H887	H3588	H3478	
אֲתֵרָה: אִשָּׁה ר	כָּל	יָד י	וְיָמָה זָקָה ו		
		then shall the hands	of all that are with thee be strong		
		H3027	H2388		

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 20:3 (Parallel theme): And David came to his house at Jerusalem; and the king took the ten women his concubines, whom he had left to keep the house, and put them in ward, and fed them, but went not in unto them. So they were shut up unto the day of their death, living in widowhood.

2 Samuel 15:16 (Parallel theme): And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house.

Zechariah 8:13 (References Israel): And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing: fear not, but let your hands be strong.

Leviticus 18:8 (Parallel theme): The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.

2 Samuel 2:7 (Parallel theme): Therefore now let your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them.

