

2 Samuel 18:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

Analysis

And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Absalom's Death, emphasizing tragedy of rebellion. Absalom's death despite David's orders demonstrates the tragic consequences of rebellion against God's anointed. The graphic description of Absalom caught in oak branches suggests divine judgment. David's overwhelming grief ("O my son Absalom") reveals parental love even for rebellious children. Theological themes include the tragedy of rebellion, the reality that sin leads to death, parental love's persistence, and the danger of prioritizing family over kingdom responsibilities.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 18 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 tragedy of rebellion 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 tragedy of rebellion?
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

וַיִּזְקַע ע	יֹאָב ב	בַּשֹּׁפָר ר	וַיָּשָׁב	הָעָם:	מִרְדּוֹף
blew	And Joab	the trumpet	returned	and the people	from pursuing
H8628	H3097	H7782	H7725	H5971	H7291
אַחֲרָי	יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	כִּי	חָשָׁךְ	יֹאָב ב	אֶת הָעָם:
after	Israel	H3588	held back	And Joab	H853 and the people
H310	H3478		H2820	H3097	H5971

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 20:22 (Parallel theme): Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast it out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king.

2 Samuel 2:28 (References Israel): So Joab blew a trumpet, and all the people stood still, and pursued after Israel no more, neither fought they any more.

