

2 Samuel 18:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

Analysis

And they took Absalom, and cast him into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great heap of stones upon him: and all Israel fled every one to his tent.

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

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

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

וַיִּקַּח ו	אֶת	אֲבִשָׁל וּמִ	וַשָּׁל כֹּ	אֶת ו	בֵּי עֵר	אֶל	הַפִּ חַת
And they took		Absalom	and cast		in the wood		pit
H3947	H853	H53	H7993	H853	H3293	H413	H6354
וְגָד וּלְ	וַיָּצַב בּוֹ	עַל יוֹ	גִּל	אֲבָנֵי יָם	וְגָד וּלְ	מְאֹד	וְכָל
great	and laid		heap	of stones	great	a very	
H1419	H5324	H5921	H1530	H68	H1419	H3966	H3605
וְשָׁבָא לְ	נִסּוּ	אֶת יֵשׁ	לְאֶהֱלֹ:				
upon him and all Israel	fled	every one	to his tent				
H3478	H5127	H376	H168				

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 7:26 (Parallel theme): And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.

Joshua 8:29 (Parallel theme): And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and as soon as the sun was down, Joshua commanded that they should take his carcase down from the tree, and cast it at the entering of the gate of the city, and raise thereon a great heap of stones, that remaineth unto this day.

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