

2 Samuel 18:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen.
And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

Analysis

Then said Joab to Cush, Go tell the king what thou hast seen. And Cush bowed himself unto Joab, and ran.

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

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

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

אָשַׁר	לֵךְ	לֵךְ	הַגִּדְ	לֵךְ	כּוֹשׁ י	לְיוֹאָב	בְּ	וַיֹּאמֶר
Then said	Joab	And Cushi	H1980	tell	the king	H834		
H559	H3097	H3569		H5046	H4428			
וַיִּרְץ:	לְיוֹאָב	בְּ	כּוֹשׁ י	וַשְׁתַּחֲוֶה	חֹו	רָא	יְהִי	
what thou hast seen	bowed	And Cushi	Joab	and ran				
H7200	H7812	H3569	H3097	H7323				