

2 Samuel 18:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do.
And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came
out by hundreds and by thousands.

Analysis

And the king said unto them, What seemeth you best I will do. And the king stood by the gate side, and all the people came out by hundreds and by thousands.

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

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

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

וַיֹּאמֶר	אֵלֵיהֶם	הַמֶּלֶךְ	אֲשֶׁר	יֵט ב	בְּעֵינֶיךָ ׀
said		And the king		you best	unto them What seemeth
H559	H413	H4428	H834	H3190	H5869
אֶעֱשֶׂה	וַעֲמַד	הַמֶּלֶךְ	אֶל	יְדֵ	הַשַּׁעַר
I will do	stood	And the king		side	by the gate
H6213	H5975	H4428	H413	H3027	H8179
וְכָל					
הָעָם	וַיָּצֵא ו	לְמֵאוֹת	וְלָאֲלָפִים:		
and all the people	came out	by hundreds	and by thousands		
H5971	H3318	H3967	H505		

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 18:24 (Parallel theme): And David sat between the two gates: and the watchman went up to the roof over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold a man running alone.

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