

2 Samuel 20:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

Analysis

The matter is not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Sheba's Rebellion, emphasizing ongoing challenges to authority. Sheba's rebellion demonstrates that David's troubles continue despite Absalom's defeat. The wise woman's intervention prevents unnecessary bloodshed. Theological themes include ongoing resistance to God's appointed leader, the value of wisdom in crisis resolution, the danger of divisive rhetoric, and God's provision of unexpected solutions through unlikely people.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 20 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 ongoing challenges to authority 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

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of ongoing challenges to authority?
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

שׁ בְּעֵ אַפְרִים מִן שׁ בְּעֵ שׁ בְּעֵ

H3808 H3651 The matter H3588 is not so but a man H376 of mount H2022 Ephraim H669 Sheba H7652

H1697 H376 H2022 H669 H7652

בְּעֵ לְגַדְעָן נְשָׁא שְׁמָמָן בְּכָרְבָּן

the son of Bichri by name hath lifted up his hand against the king

H1121 H1075 H8034 H5375 H3027 H4428

בְּעֵ יְרֵמֵעַ לְאַלְכָה לְבָדָן אֶתְנָן בְּגִדְעָן

even against David deliver H853 H905 H1980 H5921 from the city

H1732 H5414 H5892

רָאֵשׁ וְהַבָּנָה יְוָא בְּאַל בְּאַשְׁר וְתַאֲמֵר

said And the woman unto Joab Behold his head

H559 H802 H413 H3097 H2009 H7218

בְּעֵד מְשַׁלְּג אַל יְכַנְּתָה מִשְׁלָג

shall be thrown to thee over the wall

H7993 H413 H1157 H2346

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