

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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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

לֹא	כִּי הַדָּבָר	אִישׁ	מִהַר	אֶפְרַיִם	שֶׁבַע
H3808	H3651	H3588	H376	H2022	H669
	The matter	is not so but a man	of mount	Ephraim	Sheba
	H1697			H7652	
בֶּן	בִּכְרִי	שְׁמוֹ	נָשָׂא	יָדוֹ	בְּמַלְכֵּה
H1121	H1075	H8034	H5375	H3027	H4428
the son	of Bichri	by name	hath lifted up	his hand	against the king
בְּדָוִד	תִּנּוֹ	אֶת	לְבַדּוֹ	וְאֶלְכֶּה	מֵעִיר
H1732	H5414	H853	H905	H1980	H5921
even against David	deliver				from the city
					H5892
וַתֹּאמֶר	הָאִשָּׁה	אֶל	יֹאבָב	הִנֵּה	רֹאשׁוֹ
H559	H802	H413	H3097	H2009	H7218
said	And the woman		unto Joab		Behold his head
מִשְׁלַךְ	אֶל יָדְךָ	בְּעַד	הַחוֹמָה:		
H7993	H413	H1157	H2346		
shall be thrown		to thee over	the wall		