

# 2 Samuel 21:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:

## Analysis

**And David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the men of Jabesh-gilead, which had stolen them from the street of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them, when the Philistines had slain Saul in Gilboa:**

This verse contributes to the narrative of Famine and Giants, emphasizing justice, covenant obligations. The three-year famine traced to Saul's treaty violation demonstrates God's demand for covenant faithfulness and justice. The execution of Saul's descendants and Rizpah's faithful vigil over their bodies presents complex ethical questions. The Philistine giant battles demonstrate ongoing threats. Theological themes include multi-generational covenant obligations, the high cost of treaty violations, God's demand for justice, and His provision of strength for continued battles.

## Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 21 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 justice, covenant obligations 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

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of justice, covenant obligations?
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

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עֲצָמוֹת	וְאֶת	שָׁא	וְלָ	עֲצָמוֹת	וְאֶת	שָׁא	וְלָ	עֲצָמוֹת	וְאֶת	שָׁא	וְלָ	עֲצָמוֹת	וְאֶת	שָׁא	וְלָ		
H1980	And David	and took	H853	and the bones	Saul	H853	and the bones	H1980	And David	and took	H853	and the bones	Saul	H853	and the bones		
H1732		H3947	H6106		H7586	H6106		H1732		H3947	H6106		H7586	H6106			
אֲשֶׁר	גָּלַע	ד	יְבֵן	וְיְהוֹנֶת	מֵאַת	בָּעֵל	יְבֵן	וְיְהוֹנֶת	מֵאַת	בָּעֵל	יְבֵן	וְיְהוֹנֶת	מֵאַת	בָּעֵל	יְבֵן		
of Jonathan	his son	H853	from the men	of Jabeshgilead	H1568	H834		of Jonathan	his son	H853	from the men	of Jabeshgilead	H1568	H834			
H3083		H1121	H1167		H3003			H3083		H1121	H1167		H3003				
אֲשֶׁר	רָשֵׁב	בְּ	מִרְחָה	בְּ	אֶת	מִ	בֵּית	אֲשֶׁר	רָשֵׁב	בְּ	מִרְחָה	בְּ	אֶת	מִ	בֵּית		
which had stolen		H853	them from the street	H0	of Bethshan	H834		which had stolen		H853	them from the street	H0	of Bethshan	H834			
H1589			H7339		H1052			H1589			H7339		H1052				
אֶת	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	בְּ	הַכְּזֵבֶת	בְּ	בְּ	וְ	הַכְּזֵבֶת	בְּ	אֶת	פְּלִשְׁתִּים	בְּ	הַכְּזֵבֶת	בְּ	אֶת			
had hanged	H8033	the Philistines	H6430	them when	H3117	H5221	had slain	H6430	had hanged	H8033	the Philistines	H6430	them when	H3117	had slain	the Philistines	
H8511									H8511								
בְּגִלְבּוֹעַ:	שָׁא	וְלָ							בְּגִלְבּוֹעַ:	שָׁא	וְלָ						
Saul	in Gilboa	H1533							Saul	in Gilboa	H1533						
H7586									H7586								

## Additional Cross-References

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**Joshua 17:11** (Parallel theme): And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher Bethshean and her towns, and Ibleam and her towns, and the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of En-dor and her towns, and the inhabitants of Taanach and her towns, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns, even three countries.