

2 Samuel 21:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant.

Analysis

And there was yet a battle in Gath, where was a man of great stature, that had on every hand six fingers, and on every foot six toes, four and twenty in number; and he also was born to the giant.

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

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

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

וַיְהִי	עַד	מִלְחָמָה	בְּגֵת	וַיְהִי יוֹם	אִישׁ	
H1961	H5750	H4421	H1661	H1961	H376	
And there was yet a battle		in Gath	where was a man			
מִדֹּם	וְאֶצְבָּעַת	יָדָיו	וְאֶצְבָּעַת	בְּגָלְיוֹ		
H4067	H676	H3027	H676	H7272		
of great stature		fingers	that had on every hand	fingers	and on every foot	
וַיִּשֶׁשׁ	וַיִּשֶׁשׁ	עֶשְׂרִים	וְאַרְבַּע	מִסְפָּר	וַיְהִי	וַיִּשֶׁשׁ
H8337	H8337	H6242	H702	H4557	H1571	H1931
six		and twenty	four	in number		
וַיֵּלֶד	לְהַרְפָּה:					
H3205	H7497					
and he also was born		to the giant				

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 21:16 (Parallel theme): And Ishbi-benob, which was of the sons of the giant, the weight of whose spear weighed three hundred shekels of brass in weight, he being girded with a new sword, thought to have slain David.

2 Samuel 21:18 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass after this, that there was again a battle with the Philistines at Gob: then Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Saph, which was of the sons of the giant.