

2 Samuel 21:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you.

Analysis

And the Gibeonites said unto him, We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house; neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel. And he said, What ye shall say, that will I do for you.

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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

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

אָמַר יִם ל' וְ הַגִּבְעֹנִי יִם ל' י אֵין כֶּסֶף
And he said ^{H0} **And the Gibeonites** ^{H369} ^{H0} **unto him We will have no silver**
^{H559} ^{H1393} ^{H3701}

אִישׁ ל' נֹ וְאֵין וְעַם בֵּית וְעַם שָׂא וְעַם וְזָהָב
nor gold **of** **Saul** **of** **nor of his house** ^{H369} ^{H0} **any man**
^{H2091} ^{H5973} ^{H7586} ^{H5973} ^{H1004} ^{H376}

אָמַר יִם אֶתְּ מָה אָמַר יִם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָמָּ יִת
neither for us shalt thou kill **in Israel** **And he said** ^{H4100} ^{H859} **And he said**
^{H4191} ^{H3478} ^{H559} ^{H559}

אֶעֱשֶׂה לָכֶם:
that will I do ^{H0}
^{H6213}