

2 Samuel 23:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow:

Analysis

And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the son of a valiant man, of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he slew two lionlike men of Moab: he went down also and slew a lion in the midst of a pit in time of snow:

This verse contributes to the narrative of Last Words and Mighty Men, emphasizing legacy, faithful servants. David's last words emphasize the eternal covenant God established (v. 5) and declare principles of righteous rule. The accounts of David's mighty men demonstrate extraordinary courage and devotion. The water-drawing incident reveals David's unwillingness to value his comfort above his soldiers' lives. Theological themes include the importance of final testimonies, the eternal nature of God's covenant, the value of faithful servants, and the necessity of sacrificial leadership.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 23 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 legacy, faithful servants 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

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of legacy, faithful servants?
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

וּבְנֵי הוּ	בֶן	יְהוֹיָדָע	בֶּן	אִישׁ	חַי	רַב
And Benaiah	the son	of Jehoiada	the son	man	of a valiant	who had done many
H1141	H1121	H3077	H1121	H376	H2428	H7227
אֲרָאֵל	שְׁנֵי יָ	אֶת	וְהָרָה	הָ	וָא	מְקַבְּצֵי לַ
lionlike men	two	also and slew	also and slew	also and slew	also and slew	acts
H739	H8147	H853	H5221	H5221	H5221	H6467
בֵּית וְ	הָאֵרֶץ יְהוּדָה	אֶת	וְהָרָה	יָבֵד	וְהָאֵל	מוֹאָב
in the midst	a lion	also and slew	also and slew	he went down	he went down	of Moab
H8432	H738	H853	H5221	H3381	H1931	H4124
הַשֶּׁלֶג:	בֵּי יוֹם	הַבִּי	אֶת	הַבִּי	אֶת	אֶת
of snow	in time	of a pit	of a pit	of a pit	of a pit	of a pit
H7950	H3117	H953	H953	H953	H953	H953

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 15:21 (Parallel theme): And the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah toward the coast of Edom southward were Kabzeel, and Eder, and Jagur,

2 Samuel 20:23 (Parallel theme): Now Joab was over all the host of Israel: and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and over the Pelethites:

2 Samuel 8:18 (Parallel theme): And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over both the Cherethites and the Pelethites; and David's sons were chief rulers.