

2 Samuel 3:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier.

Analysis

And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Abner's Defection and Death, emphasizing political maneuvering, revenge consequences. This chapter illustrates the complexity of political transition and personal revenge. Abner's defection using covenant language (brit, בְּרִית) contrasts with Joab's treacherous murder, demonstrating how personal vengeance undermines national purposes. The text develops themes of legitimate vs illegitimate authority, the corrupting power of revenge, and maintaining integrity when others act unethically.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 3 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 political maneuvering, revenge consequences 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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of political maneuvering, revenge consequences?
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

וַיֹּאמֶר	דָּוִד	אֶל	יֹאבָב	וְאֶל	כָּל	הָעָם	אֲשֶׁר
said	And David	H413	to Joab	H413	H3605	and to all the people	H834
H559	H1732		H3097			H5971	
אֵת	קָרַע	בְּגָדֵיכֶם	וְחָגַר	שָׁלַק	יָם		
H854	that were with him	Rend	your clothes	and gird	you with sackcloth		
	H7167		H899	H2296	H8242		
וְסָפַד	לִפְנֵי	אַבְנֵר	וְהָמֵלֶךְ	דָּוִד	הֵלֵךְ	אִתּוֹ	
and mourn	before	Abner	And king	And David	himself followed		H310
H5594	H6440	H74	H4428	H1732	H1980		
הַמִּטָּה:							
the bier							
H4296							

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 37:34 (Parallel theme): And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

Joshua 7:6 (Parallel theme): And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.

2 Samuel 1:11 (References David): Then David took hold on his clothes, and rent them; and likewise all the men that were with him:

2 Samuel 1:2 (References David): It came even to pass on the third day, that, behold, a man came out of the camp from Saul with his clothes rent, and earth upon his head: and so it was, when he came to David, that he fell to the earth, and did obeisance.

Judges 11:35 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the LORD, and I cannot go back.