

2 Samuel 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman?

Analysis

Then was Abner very wroth for the words of Ish-bosheth, and said, Am I a dog's head, which against Judah do shew kindness this day unto the house of Saul thy father, to his brethren, and to his friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David, that thou chargest me to day with a fault concerning this woman?

This verse contributes to the narrative of Abner Defects and Dies, 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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

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

בְּשַׁת אִישׁ דִּבֶּר יְלָאָן רַיְמָר
Then was Abner very for the words of Ishbosheth
H2734 H74 H3966 H5921 H1697 H0 H378

לִיהוֹדָה אֲשֶׁר אָשָׁר יָמַר
which against Judah
H3063

אֶל אָב יְהָנָן שָׁא וְלִבְנֵי
thy father and unto the house of Saul
H413 H1 H7586 H1004 H5973 H3611 H7218 H559

הַמְצִיאֵת בְּלֹא מְרַעַת הַוְאָן
and have not delivered and to his friends
H4672 H3808 H4828 H413 H251

בְּיַד עַל יְהָנָן וְתַפְלֵן דִּבֶּר
with a fault that thou chargest of David
H5771 H5921 H6485 H1732 H3027

בְּיַם: בְּאֵשׁ הַ
concerning this woman me to day
H3117 H802

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 9:8 (Parallel theme): And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?

2 Samuel 16:9 (Parallel theme): Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head.