

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'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

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 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

וַיִּחַר	לְאַבְנֵר	מְאֹד	עַל	דְּבַר־י	אִישׁ	בִּשְׁתֵּי
wroth	Then was Abner	very	H5921	for the words	H0	of Ishbosheth
H2734	H74	H3966		H1697		H378
וַיֹּאמֶר	רֹאשׁ	כִּי לֹב	אֲנֹכִי	אֲשֶׁר	רַחֲמָנָה	לְיְהוּדָה
and said	head	Am I a dog's	H595	H834	which against Judah	
H559	H7218	H3611			H3063	
הַיּוֹם:	אֶעֱשֶׂה	חֵסֶד	עִמָּךְ	בֵּית־י	שָׂא וְלֹ	אֶל
me to day	do shew	kindness	H5973	unto the house	of Saul	thy father
H3117	H6213	H2617		H1004	H7586	H413
אֶחָיו	וְאֶל	מִרְעֵהוּ	וְלֹא	הִמָּצִיתָ	בָּ	
to his brethren	H413	and to his friends	H3808	and have not delivered		
H251		H4828		H4672		
בְּיָד	דָּוִד	וַתִּפְקֹד	עָלַי	עִוֹן		
thee into the hand	of David	that thou chargest	H5921	with a fault		
H3027	H1732	H6485		H5771		
הָאִשָּׁה	הַיּוֹם:					
concerning this woman	me to day					
H802	H3117					

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.