

2 Samuel 4:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled.

Analysis

And when Saul's son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his hands were feeble, and all the Israelites were troubled.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Ish-bosheth Murdered, emphasizing righteous vs unrighteous means. The assassination of Ish-bosheth and David's execution of the murderers demonstrates crucial distinctions between godly and ungodly means. While the result (removing Saul's dynasty) aligned with God's purposes, the method (treacherous murder) violated divine standards. Hebrew concepts of justice (mishpat, מִשְׁפָּט) and righteousness (tsedeq, צְדָקָה) permeate David's response.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 4 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 righteous vs unrighteous means 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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of righteous vs unrighteous means?
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

וְשָׁמַע	בֶּן	וְשָׂא וְל	כִּי	מֵת	אֲבִנֵּר	בְּחֶבְרוֹן
heard	son	And when Saul's	H3588	was dead	that Abner	in Hebron
H8085	H1121	H7586		H4191	H74	H2275
וְרַפּוּ	יָדָיו	וְכָל	יִשְׂרָאֵל	לְ	נִבְהָלוּ:	
were feeble	his hands	H3605	and all the Israelites		were troubled	
H7503	H3027		H3478		H926	

Additional Cross-References

Ezra 4:4 (Parallel theme): Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,

Isaiah 13:7 (Parallel theme): Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt:

Jeremiah 6:24 (Parallel theme): We have heard the fame thereof: our hands wax feeble: anguish hath taken hold of us, and pain, as of a woman in travail.

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