

2 Samuel 4:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth rib: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

Analysis

And they came thither into the midst of the house, as though they would have fetched wheat; and they smote him under the fifth rib: and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped.

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, מִשְׁפָט) 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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

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

וְאֵלֶּה עַד וְבָבֶן תְּבִנָה
H2007 H935 H5704 H8432 H1004

And they came thither into the midst of the house

לְקַחַת וְאֵלֶּה יְמִינָה
H3947 H2406 H5221 H413 H2570

as though they would have fetched wheat and they smote him under the fifth

נִמְלַטָה אֶחָד וְבָנָה הַרְכָב
H7394 H1196 H251 H4422

rib and Rechab and Baanah his brother escaped

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 2:23 (Parallel theme): Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still.

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