

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, מִשְׁפָּט) and righteousness (tsedeq, צֶדֶק) 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

וַיָּבֹאוּ H2007	לְמִקְרָב H935	עַד H5704	תּוֹךְ H8432	בֵּית יְהוָה H1004
And they came thither into the midst of the house				
כִּי־לִקְחָהֶם H3947	חֵטְאִים H2406	וַיִּכּוּהוּ H5221	אֶל H413	חֵמֶשׁ מֵחֵמֶשׁ H2570
as though they would have fetched wheat and they smote him under the fifth				
וְרֵכָב H7394	וּבָעֶנָּה H1196	אָחִיו H251	נִמְלָטוֹ 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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