

2 Samuel 4:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

Analysis

And they brought the head of Ish-bosheth unto David to Hebron, and said to the king, Behold the head of Ish-bosheth the son of Saul thine enemy, which sought thy life; and the LORD hath avenged my lord the king this day of Saul, and of his seed.

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

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

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

וַיָּבִאוּ אֶת רֹאשׁ אִישׁ בַּשָּׂת אֶל דָּוִד
And they brought H935 **Behold the head** H7218 **of Ishbosheth** H378 **unto David** H1732

חֶבְרוֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֶל הַמֶּלֶךְ הַזֶּה רֹאשׁ אִישׁ
to Hebron H2275 **and said** H559 **the king** H4428 **Behold the head** H7218

אֶת בֶּקֶשׁ שׁ אֲשֶׁר אֵיבֶךָ מֶשֶׁא וּלְבִן בַּשָּׂת
of Ishbosheth H378 **the son** H1121 **of Saul** H7586 **thine enemy** H341 H834 **which sought** H1245 H853

הַזֶּה הֵיאֵם וְנִקְמָתוֹ הַמֶּלֶךְ לֹאדָנִי יְיָ הִנֵּה וְנַפְשִׁי בְּ
thy life H5315 **hath** H5414 **and the LORD** H3068 **my lord** H113 **the king** H4428 **avenged** H5360 **this day** H3117 H2088

וּמִזֶּרְעוֹ מֶשֶׁא וּלְ
of Saul H7586 **and of his seed** H2233

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 25:29 (References Lord): Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul: but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the LORD thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall he sling out, as out of the middle of a sling.

1 Samuel 23:15 (References David): And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life: and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood.

2 Samuel 22:48 (Parallel theme): It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the people under me,