

2 Samuel 8:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.

Analysis

And he smote Moab, and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts.

This verse contributes to the narrative of David's Military Victories, emphasizing God granting victory and expansion. David's military campaigns demonstrate God's promise-keeping (Genesis 15:18-21) regarding territorial boundaries. The Hebrew emphasizes that "the LORD gave David victory wherever he went," attributing success to divine enablement rather than mere military prowess. Theological themes include God's sovereignty over nations, the legitimacy of defensive/offensive warfare under certain circumstances, and proper use of conquered wealth for God's purposes.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 8 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 God granting victory and expansion

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

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of God granting victory and expansion?
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

וַיִּךְ	אֶת	מוֹאָב	וַיִּמַּד	הֵן בָּל	
And he smote	H853	And so the Moabites	and measured	line	
H5221		H4124	H4058	H2256	
הִשְׁכֹּתָם	אֶת	אֶרֶץ	וַיִּמַּד	שְׁנֵי	הֵן בָּל
casting them down	H853	to the ground	and measured	even with two	line
H7901		H776	H4058	H8147	H2256
לְהַמִּית	וּמֵל	הֵן בָּל	לְהַחְיֵה	וְתֵהָ	
he to put to death	and with one full	line	to keep alive	H1961	
H4191	H4393	H2256	H2421		
מוֹאָב	לְדָוִד	לְעֲבָדָיו	וַיָּבִי	מִנְחָה:	
And so the Moabites	became David's	servants	and brought	gifts	
H4124	H1732	H5650	H5375	H4503	

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 24:17 (Parallel theme): I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

Psalms 60:8 (Parallel theme): Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe: Philistia, triumph thou because of me.

1 Samuel 10:27 (Parallel theme): But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no presents. But he held his peace.

2 Samuel 8:6 (References David): Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus: and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts. And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.