

2 Samuel 21:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD'S oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

Analysis

But the king spared Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, because of the LORD'S oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul.

This verse contributes to the narrative of Famine and Giants, emphasizing justice, covenant obligations. The three-year famine traced to Saul's treaty violation demonstrates God's demand for covenant faithfulness and justice. The execution of Saul's descendants and Rizpah's faithful vigil over their bodies presents complex ethical questions. The Philistine giant battles demonstrate ongoing threats. Theological themes include multi-generational covenant obligations, the high cost of treaty violations, God's demand for justice, and His provision of strength for continued battles.

Historical Context

The historical setting of 2 Samuel 21 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 justice, covenant obligations 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

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen your understanding of justice, covenant obligations?
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

וַיְחַמֵּל	הֶמֶל לְךָ	עַל	מִפִּיבֹשֶׁת	בֶּן	יְהוֹנָתָן	בֶּן
spared	But the king	H5921	Mephibosheth	the son	and Jonathan	the son
H2550	H4428		H4648	H1121	H3083	H1121
שָׁאוּל:	עַל	שָׁבַע	יְהוָה	אֲשֶׁר	בֵּינֵנוּ	בֵּין
of Saul	H5921	oath	because of the LORD'S	H834	H996	H996
H7586		H7621	H3068			
	דָּוִד	וּבֵין	יְהוֹנָתָן	בֶּן	שָׁאוּל:	
	that was between them between David	H996	and Jonathan	the son	of Saul	
	H1732		H3083	H1121	H7586	

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 20:8 (References Lord): Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy servant; for thou hast brought thy servant into a covenant of the LORD with thee: notwithstanding, if there be in me iniquity, slay me thyself; for why shouldst thou bring me to thy father?

1 Samuel 18:3 (References David): Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul.

1 Samuel 20:15 (References Lord): But also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth.

1 Samuel 23:18 (References Lord): And they two made a covenant before the LORD: and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house.

2 Samuel 4:4 (Parallel theme): And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son that was lame of his feet. He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.

1 Samuel 20:17 (References David): And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

1 Samuel 20:42 (References Lord): And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

2 Samuel 9:10 (Parallel theme): Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org