

# 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

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**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

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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

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בָּנָי	יְהוָנָתֶן	וְ	בָּנָי	יְהוָנָתֶן	וְ	בָּנָי
the son	and Jonathan	the son	the son	and Jonathan	the son	the son
H1121	H3083	H1121	H1121	H3083	H1121	H1121
מִפִּיבְשֵׁת	עַל	בְּפִי	לְגַם	לִיחַם	לְ	
Mephibosheth	the son	the son	But the king	spared	spared	
H4648	H1121	H5921	H4428	H2550		
שָׁאֹל	שָׁאֹל	תְּשַׁבַּע	עַל	שָׁאֹל	שָׁאֹל	
of Saul	of Saul	oath	because of the LORD's	I will be	because of the LORD's	
H7586	H5921	H7621	H3068	H834	H996	H996
שָׁאֹל:	שָׁאֹל:	בֵּין	אַשְׁר	רְאֵה	וְ	בֵּין
that was between them	that was between them	between	between	between	between	between
between David	between David	H1732	H996	H3083	H1121	H7586

## Additional Cross-References

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**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 shouldest 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.

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