

Thou shalt not die

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 01 January 2000

Preacher: Rev Iain Macaskill

- [0 : 0 0] We shall turn to God's Word again, this time in 2 Samuel chapter 19, the second portion we read. We will find our text at verse 23.
- 2 Samuel chapter 19, verse 23. 3 Samuel chapter 19, verse 23.
- 3 Samuel, verse 23.
- 4 Samuel, verse 23. And there are three characters that actually came before King David as he was getting ready for battle.
- Now the history of this time was that David's own beloved son, Absalom, had rebelled against David. And Absalom was getting a lot of people on his side.
- [1 : 4 2] He was ready to attack King David and try and prize the kingdom and try and prize Israel from his own father. And here in chapter 16, David is getting ready for battle.
- And David wants to know who's on his side and who are against him. And as we read here in chapter 16, we find three people and we find them again in chapter 19.
- First of all, we read there that a man called Seba, who was a servant of the household of Saul and now a servant of Mephibosheth. But we find Seba comes before the king.
- And then later on we see another man coming. And this man is called Shimei. And he is also of the household of the family of Saul. And Mephibosheth should have been before the king.
- But for some reason he's posted missing. So tonight I want to look at these three characters with you together. Seba, Shimei and Mephibosheth as they come before the king.
- [2 : 4 6] As he prepares for battle, to do battle with his beloved son Absalom. So here is Seba then in chapter 16. And Seba comes before David. And Seba, it would seem, is going to be loyal to David.
- He comes there in verse 1. And he comes and he meets them with a couple of asses saddled. And upon them 200 loaves of bread, 100 bunches of raisins, 100 or some of fruits and a bottle of wine.
- And the king says to Seba, what meanest thou by this or by these? And Seba says, the asses are for the king's household to ride on. The bread and some of fruit for the young men to eat.
- And the wine that such be faint, as be faint in the wilderness, may drink. So Seba is showing his true colors. Seba is, as it were, from the outward anyway, looking a man who was right behind the king.
- Someone who was showing his loyalty. Someone who was expressing his loyalty with all these lovely gifts to the king. And David says to him, that's great. That's superb.
- [3 : 5 2] But where is Mephibosheth thy master? And Seba says to him, oh, you can forget about Mephibosheth. He's staying at home. He's praying that today the kingdom will be passed over to your son Absalom.

And he's praying that when that kingdom goes over, that he then will have the kingship. That he then will be the rightful heir. Because he is the grandson, remember, of Saul, who had had the kingdom taken from him.

And maybe we can look for a moment how Mephibosheth had got favor in the eyes of David. And I suppose we all know it. But it's good for us to look at it for a minute. In 2 Samuel chapter 9 and verse 7, we read there.

And David said unto him, fear not, for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake. And will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father.

And thou shalt eat bread at my table continually. And then the king, in verse 9, called Seba, Saul's servant, and said to him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertain to Saul and to all his household.

[4 : 58] And look after Mephibosheth, because Mephibosheth was lame on his feet. And Mephibosheth there in verse 13 says, So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he did eat continually at the king's table, and was lame on both feet.

But Seba is saying, forget Mephibosheth David. You showed him kindness. You let him sit at your table. But today he's staying at home because he wants to see what's happening in the battle.

And if Absalom wins, he's transferring his loyalty over to your son. And David reacts like this. Today, he says to Seba, in verse 3, Today shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father.

That's what Seba says about Mephibosheth. And then David says to Seba, You will get all that was Mephibosheth's. It is now yours. Because Mephibosheth was not here to support me.

And Seba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord the king. Because the king had said to him, Behold, thine are all that pertained into Mephibosheth.

[6 : 09] So there is Seba. For all, from all intensive purposes, Seba is with the king. He looks good. He does the right things.

He says the right things. He brings all these gifts before David. And David can say, well, at least I've got Seba on my side. And he says to Seba, what was Mephibosheth's is now all yours.

And then later on we see another man coming. And this man is called Shimei. Now, Seba was a friend. But Shimei, from the outward at least, is showing that he hates David.

Shimei, in verse 5, The son of Gerah came forth and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David. And at all the servants of King David.

And at all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and were on his left. And he said to David, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial.

[7 : 14] The Lord hath returned unto all the blood of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned. And the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son. And behold, thou were taken in mischief, because thou art a bloody man.

And we read on. As David and his servants walked on, this man runs after them. Cursing him. Throwing stones at them. Casting dust at them. And this man comes up to David and says, Look, he's cursing the Lord's anointed.

He's cursing the king. Let me chop off his head. And David says, No. Let him be. Let him curse. And he shows this restraint.

That maybe we see in the New Testament. Remember, when they came to arrest the Lord Jesus Christ. There is Peter, impetuous, chopping off Marcus' ear.

And the Lord says, Put your sword away, Peter. That's not the way. And he restores Marcus' ear. So if Seba was with David, Shimei was most certainly against him.

[8 : 21] He hated him. He was cursing the Lord's anointed. And remember the words in James there. James chapter 3 and verses 4 to 6. This is what the tongue does.

And we see the tongue in action here. The likes of Shimei. There is nothing but cursing and hatred.

In foul language. In cursing the Lord's anointed. And that happens in our own day. The Lord Jesus Christ is cursed. Foul language coming out of even people in this town that has been so blessed by the Lord.

But it happens. He hated the king. And for the likes of Shimei. He wanted vengeance. He wanted to get his own back.

He wanted to kick lower than he had been kicked. He was desperate to see David defeated. So there we have it. David goes to battle.

[9 : 43] David goes to battle against his own beloved Absalom. And we read in chapter 19. That the king returns. Chapter 19 verse 15.

Where we took up the reading. The king returns. And he comes to Jordan. And the king is victorious. David has won the battle. Absalom is defeated.

He has cried over his beloved son. Absalom, Absalom. How I would have died for you. But Absalom is dead. The kingdom is restored to David.

And lo and behold. The people come before him again. And lo and behold. Who do we see coming before the king?

We have Seba. We have Shimei. And this time Mephibosheth himself arrives on the scene. Seba comes with Shimei.

[10 : 48] And they come and meet the king. And they want to escort him over in the ferry. And they're trying to do everything for him. And Mephibosheth comes.

And David's saying. Ah. Mephibosheth is here. Mephibosheth was nowhere to be seen when I needed him. But now that I won. And he's judging all this.

On what Seba had told him. You see the mistake David did? He took one man's witness. Against what the scripture says. As we were looking at the other night. It needs two or three witnesses to establish the proof.

And he didn't need to disbelieve Seba. But he could have let Mephibosheth speak for himself. But he said. No. Leave Mephibosheth. Give the kingdom to Seba. The land.

Sorry. Saul's land to Seba. And he says to Mephibosheth. We see there. Verse 24. And Mephibosheth.

[11 : 49] The son of Saul. Came down to meet the king. And he had neither dressed his feet. Nor trimmed his beard. Nor washed his clothes from the day the king departed.

Until the day the king came in peace. And if we saw Mephibosheth tonight. Would say. What a true again. What a poor man. There he is.

Undressed. Not dressed very well. Not washed at all. Not trimmed his beard. Unshaven. Smelly. You wouldn't want to be associated with him.

He was not very good. He was not nice to look at. He wouldn't have been nice to sit beside him. And I said the same of the Lord. He came in.

He was a man. And he looked so cruel. The Lord. He had no way to lay his head. And here's Mephibosheth. And David says to him.

[12 : 50] Wherefore went thou not with me, Mephibosheth? Why didn't you go with me, Mephibosheth? Where were you when I needed you? It's all very well coming now that you know that I've won.

But where were you? Mephibosheth says to him. My Lord, O King. My servant deceived me.

Seba, he says, deceived me. For thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass. That I may ride thereon and go to the king because thy servant is laid.

And they have slandered thy servant unto my Lord the King. But my Lord the King is an angel of God. Do therefore what is good in thine eyes. For all of my father's house were but dead men before the Lord the King.

What right therefore have I yet to cry anymore unto the king? And the king said, don't speak anymore, Mephibosheth.

[13 : 58] You and Seba can divide the land. David was confused. King David was confused. Here is a man with a totally different story.

Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth is saying, look, I would have been here. But my servant Seba said, you stay there and I'll saddle you an ass. And he left me there because you know I'm lame on my feet.

But since the day my Lord the King went out to battle, I have prayed for you. I haven't eaten. I haven't washed myself. I've been praying for you that you would come back victorious.

And my Lord is as an angel of God. My servant deceived me and he deceived you. What is David to do?

A different story here. He had already given the land over to Seba. Because he had believed Seba's report. So he says, just divide the land between.

[15 : 00] Remember that incident at the beginning of King Solomon's reign. Where that first great test of Solomon's wisdom.

Where these two harlots, these two prostitutes came to him. One with a baby that was alive and the other with a baby that was dead. And what had happened was, and you know the story yourselves.

You see it in scripture. That one prostitute, one harlot, had rolled over in her bed. And squashed and suffocated her son. And she got up and transferred her own baby.

And took the other woman's baby. And when they got up in the morning. The true mother says, this baby is dead beside me. But it's not my baby. And there was this great argument. They said, we'll have to go to the king.

And the king said, divide the baby that is alive and two. The false mother said, okay. But the true mother says, no.

[15 : 59] Let her have the baby. And Solomon knew then who was telling the truth. And that's what Mephibosheth does here. Verse 30.

Said to the king, let him take it all. For as much as my lord the king is come again in peace into my own heaven. David, you should have seen that here was the man that was telling the truth.

Seba was lying. Seba was deceiving. Oh, he came with his loaves. He came with his answers. He came with his wine. He came with his fruit. He came with his lying. And David, King David, you made a mistake.

And you treated this loyal friend of yours wrongly. And now Cúr Mephibosheth has left but only half his land. And Seba, conniving, lying as he was, is still 50% better than he was at the beginning because he has left the land.

You see, flattery, we hear this phrase flattery, will get us nowhere. But for Seba, it's very nearly got him everywhere. But he's probably content with half the land.

[17 : 11] He comes guilty after the battle. But yet he goes with half Mephibosheth's blood. And remember that man Shimei.

That man who was cursing the Lord's anointed. That man who was casting stones. That man who was calling the Lord's anointed. You are a bloody man. He comes. What's he going to say to David?

Well, he comes. And we read it there in chapter 19. Verse 16. And Shimei, the son of Gerah, a Benjamite which was of Bahurim, hastily came down with the men of Judah to meet King David.

Verse 19. And Shimei said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me. Neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart.

For thy servant doth know that I have sinned. Therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.

[18 : 29] He comes confessing his guilt. He comes acknowledging that he has done wrong. And Abishai, the man who wanted to chop up his head at the very beginning, comes to David and says, Look, surely you are not going to fall for this.

He has cursed the Lord tonight. This dead dog has cursed the Lord tonight. Ending civil war. Today is the day that the kingdom has come back into my hands.

I am this day king over Israel. And he says to Shimei, Thou shalt not die. And the king swearing.

You might say, What's that to do with me tonight? You might say, Well, this man asked for forgiveness and he got it.

And he got it from the king. This is where scripture is so important. We read in scripture that David is on his deathbed.

[19 : 43] King David, some years after this, is on his deathbed. He's about to hand the kingdom over to Solomon's son. He's literally taking his last breath when he says in 2 Kings 2, And verse 8.

He says this to Solomon. And behold, thou hast with thee Shimei, the son of Gerag, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahe.

But he came down to meet me at Jordan. And I swear unto him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. This is it.

Now therefore hold him not guilty, for thou art a wise man. Let his grey head go down to the grave of blood.

He swore by the man that he was forgiven. He told him, Thou shalt not die. But on his deathbed, he says to Solomon, I swore to him by the Lord, but I want him killed now.

[21 : 12] And I want you to do it for me. And we read that King Solomon left this situation for this man Shimei. And Shimei falls into a trap.

And we read, he fell, and he died. Today, tonight, we are individuals.

I look at you all tonight. I see the outside tonight. Where are you?

Where are you before the King? Not King David. But the King that we were singing about. Who of glory is the King? The mighty Lord is this, the Lord of hosts, and none but he, the King of glory.

King Jesus. King Jesus. How do you come to him? Well, you might come like Seba came to King David.

[22 : 33] You might look good. You might do good. You might say good. You might fool me. You might fool your minister.

You might fool every elder in this building. You might fool your neighbour, your friend, your wife, your husband. But what's your motive? There are empty places tonight.

And some of these places would be filled by the Mithubishaps of this world if they could get here. Those who are lame. Those who are infirmed.

But they can't come. But they're playing maybe in their own homes tonight. Maybe elderly ladies playing and gentlemen playing in their own homes tonight.

Maybe we're judging wrongly when people don't come. But maybe they can't come. And David judged wrongly against Mephibosheth. And Mephibosheth arrives on the scene and there he is.

[23 : 43] Not very nice to look at. Not well kept. But his heart was in the right place. My Lord is like an angel of God.

I don't care if he gets the land. I'm just happy that my Lord the King is saved. And we read many stories of revivals throughout the land.

Where they began maybe with two or three Mephibosheths praying on their own. for ministers for neighbors for friends for family.

And maybe we judge them wrongly from the earth. And then there's Shimea. He comes with a confession. He falls on his knees before the King.

And he says to the King I know I have sinned. Do not impute this iniquity to him. And the King and the King says to him thou shalt not die.

[24 : 50] And he swears a note. But later on in Scripture we see the King reverses the decision. And Shimea dies. His grey head goes down to the grave and blood.

My message for you this evening. King Jesus' message for you this evening is this. King Jesus does not make mistakes.

King Jesus when he says when we come to him thou shalt not die he means when we come confessing our sins when we come and say my Lord let not this iniquity be imputed to me.

Do not remember what thy servant has done perversely. Do not hold this guilt against me for I know that I have sinned. When we come to King Jesus like that he says to us thou shalt not die.

And the King swears an oath unto him. And King Jesus swears an oath unto everyone in here tonight. No matter if you see yourself like a Seab or a Shimea or a Mephibosheth no matter your condition no matter what you've done or said or thought no matter how you've fooled everyone in here up to now if you come truly confess the King will forgive you and the King will not change his mind.

[26 : 34] King Jesus saves sinners. King Jesus died for sinners. That's why he came.

That's why King Jesus came and was born in the stable in Bethlehem. Who is there in yonder stall? It is the King of glory. He came.

He walked as the Galilean peasant. He had nowhere to lay his head. The birds of the air have nests. The foxes have holes but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.

He looked like a Mephibosheth. He looked a nobody but here was God in time. And he is now interceding on the right hand of God.

He is now the King and his throne in all his glory and splendor. And the angels are bowing down before him tonight. But tonight he is here. And tonight he says come to me and confess to me.

[27 : 36] come like this man came and say do not impute my iniquity to me. I know I have sinned against you hitherto. And you have this guarantee that he will say thou shalt not die.

He will give you eternal life. He will give you eternal life. And he will not change his mind. He will never walk out on you when you become his bride.

a husband that will never walk out. Someone who will put up with you forever and a day. Someone who will stay closer than any brother.

Someone who will never leave you nor forsake you. The King says tonight to everyone in here who comes confessing, who comes acknowledging that we have been wrong and we have done wrong, if you come tonight and say forgive me, he will take you.

Come unto me all ye that are weary. Ask, seek, knock. Jesus, King Jesus, the King of glory, says tonight to every sinner, confessing their sin, thou shalt not die.

[29 : 01] will it be you? Will it be you? King is here.

King knows you inside out. King is seeing your heart tonight. The King does not make mistakes, great as King David was.

he made mistakes, he got it wrong. This King never gets it wrong. Who can stand thou with mark anything?

None of us forgives. we praise thy name, O God, that we have a King, and that we have a King who does not make mistakes, and that we have a King who has said to many in this building, thou shalt not die.

we have that assurance that nothing and no one and no power will pluck us out of his hand.

[30 : 31] Lord, we pray that thou art moving in our midst, that thou art opening hearts that hitherto have been closed. May we come confessing our sin before a holy and just King, that a King forgives sinners and saves sinners.

Bless us, we pray, in his name. Amen.