

We must needs die (Quality: very good)

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Preacher: Moore, Ronald (1920-1994)

- [0 : 00] Lord, we will turn to the second book of Samuel, chapter 14 and verse 14.
- Second book of Samuel, chapter 14 and the 14th verse. For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again.
- Neither doth God respect any person, yet doth he devise means that his banished be not expelled from him.
- A word, especially to our younger friends, who may sometimes be troubled on this particular point.
- Namely, is the Bible or the scriptures the word of God, or do they only contain the word of God?
- [1 : 35] I have heard both opinions put forward. It is true that our text is part of a dialogue between a wise woman and King David.
- In that sense, the words of our text are not the words of God himself. God's servant here on Wednesday evening last, as some of you will know, preached from Acts 26, part of verse 1.
- Namely, thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Those words were the words of an ungodly man.
- So how could they have been the word of God? Scriptures contain the words of many, many different people, many of them very wicked people.
- So in that sense, the word of God, or Bible, contains the word of God, and the word of many others beside.
- [2 : 57] Yet, the truth is that the Bible is entirely, wholly the word of God. Some will ask, how can that be?
- How can these two things be reconciled with each other in this way, dear friends? A man writes a book.
- And in that book, he makes quotations from other writers or authors. He quotes their sayings. But that book is the book of the author, and is not the book that belongs to those whom he quotes.
- And so with the word of God. The word of God is the word of God because God put it together, because God is the author of it.
- Once I was troubled on this particular point, but no longer am I. The word of God as we know it, the scriptures of truth as we have them, are the word of God from beginning to end.
- [4 : 06] And a text this morning is taken from the word of God. God would have that these words are incorporated in the scriptures of truth.
- Therefore, they are the words of God. Now, we will look briefly at the background or context of this verse.

Take David, King David first of all. He was left to commit some very, very grievous sins. We say he was left to do those things.

And that is true. He was. But he wasn't authorized to do them. To be left to sin must never be taken as authority to sin.

God never has authorized sin. God is not the author of sin. James tells us clearly that.

[5 : 14] Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. For God does not, he cannot tempt men to sin. And if he leaves them to sin, they have no license from him to commit that sin.

They have no authority to sin. If you, friends, are looking for some authority, some grounds for sinning in what you think is a lawful manner, you are deceived.

There are no such grounds in the word of God. Let us be clear on that point. As to the context, why David sinned, plotted the murder of a faithful man, a faithful soldier of his own, in order to cover up another sin he had committed.

And he did not succeed in his attempt. What we have here is this. The Lord visiting the iniquity of the father upon the children, so that he has lust, adultery, murder, amongst his own family.

Absalom slew his brother Amnon, and we are told why he did that.

[6 : 49] He did it in revenge. Having done it, he goes off a long distance, a long distance for those days, and in that small country, to the land of Geshe, to the king of Geshe, who was in fact his grandfather.

And there he stayed, for a long while, three years, wasn't it? Why did he flee? Because of a guilty conscience.

Because he must escape from his father, from the hand of justice. Justice required that he, a murderer, should himself be murdered.

But he wasn't. God did not take away his life, any more than God took away the life of his father, who was, to all intents and purposes, a murderer himself.

God spared these men until the time that the decree of God, in one way or another, should be revealed.

[8 : 04] And they were taken from off the face of the earth. Joab, by no means a godly man, but nevertheless a faithful man, a faithful servant of David, saw that the face of David, the king, the heart of David, was towards Absalom.

And I cannot but feel that the heart of Absalom was toward his father. But see the situation that they were both in. David had his kingly honour to maintain.

Should he not send for his son Absalom and have him slain? What was he to do? After all, he was his father's son, though a wicked son.

Have you a wicked son, a wicked daughter, a wicked child? Many of God's people have, but they're still their children, still their sons, still their daughters.

They cannot cut them off. They dare not expel them or banish them. They dare not. Why not?

[9 : 32] Because, one, God would not have it so, and two, they dare not so because of the relationship that still exists.

So they cannot cut them off. other parents might cut them off for you, but you cannot do what other parents might well like to do.

So, Joab, also, it seems, desirous that father and son should be reunited, as far as they could be, that is, divided a plan.

and this is the only plan he could conceive. It was a wise plan to select a wise woman who should put her wisdom into practice to bring about a reconciliation between David and Absalom.

Joab put certain words in the mouth of this wise woman from Tekoa, but then, I suppose, after that, would leave her to her own wisdom to speak as was appropriate according to whatever questions the king might put to her.

[10 : 55] And so, she went feigning to be a widow woman. She probably was that, but one in mourning for her late husband.

And she did her part very well, very successfully. truth. And these words we have read in verse 14 are words that contain very much sound truth, sound, practical, and yet spiritual truth.

truth. And leaving the issue of this meeting between the wise woman and King David, we will now confine our remarks as help we trust by the Lord to this verse and its contents.

She says in her little speech to King David, for we must needs die. We must needs die.

She herself and in due time Absalom and in due time David, we must all needs die.

[12 : 14] die. What a humbling truth this is. Although we must needs ask ourselves the question, am I humbled by it?

Am I affected by it? We must all needs die. Recently our pastor here said this in preaching as he did that Lord's Day.

He said he did not want to frighten the young people especially about the reality of death and eternity. But he wanted to be faithful to them and he was faithful to them.

He spoke very faithfully and very necessarily in speaking of death and eternity as awaiting every one of us.

we must needs die. Why? Why must we needs die? For more reasons than one.

[13 : 23] First I will name is this. Because of sin. Because of sin we must needs die. The sentence of death was pronounced against their first parents but not before they had sinned.

The sentence no doubt was in the eternal mind of God in reserve for the proper time. But the sentence of death was passed when their guilty parents sinned and disobeyed their creator's word.

words. And so death passed upon all men. This woman is speaking the truth. For we must all needs die.

It was nothing new. And it mustn't be something new to you or to me. It's not a new thing.

Where are our parents, our grandparents, our great grandparents? Where are the reformers? Where are the translators of the Holy Scripture?

[14 : 43] Where are the early church fathers and the patriarchs? Where are they? As to their bodies, they have returned to the dust from whence they were taken.

In other words, they closely, minutely resemble this water which this woman mentions. We are as water spilt on the grounds.

We must need die because of sin. And death is the just recompense or the proper wages of sin. So we are earning death.

We are meriting death. we are awaiting death. And although some might regard the thing I'm going to say as rather if not very severe, I'm going to say it for all that.

It is the saying of someone else who said this, if wicked men knew how the devils were waiting for their souls and their relatives waiting for their money and possessions and the worms waiting for their bodies, they would live very differently.

[16 : 13] There's a lot in that, is there not? Let those words serve to humble us, to bring us down, to lay us low in the dust called by some and rightly so, the dust of self abasement, the dust of self abhorrence.

Secondly, we must needs die because God says we must. That's God's word, not yours, not mine, it's God's word.

His decree has gone forth. In dying thou shalt die. That's God's word. We must needs die.

Thirdly, we must needs die in order that the honor, the justice, the holiness, the very veracity of their God should not be violated but should be met in their death.

If men did not die, what would become of God's word that says we must die, that we shall die. We must need die, my friends, in the next case, to make room for others.

[17 : 38] Have you ever thought of that? Suppose people did not die. There would be no room left for any successors.

the world would become overcrowded. I know that's a different line of things, but it's a thought. We must need die to make room for others. We must give up our professions.

We must retire for others to take up what we lay down. This is in the order of things, in the wisdom, the wisdom of our God and our creator.

But now, let us turn to God's people. They must need die in a spiritual sense. They must be made dead unto sin.

And the only way to that is this, to be made dead unto sin by the body of Christ. And as the truth of Christ and the grace of Christ our Savior is revealed to them and found in them.

[18 : 51] The love of God forbids that we should be other than dead unto sin. God's people must need die in that sense spiritually.

Die they must, die we must, as to all hopes of salvation and reaching glory by their own works or merits.

We must die to self righteousness. We must die to self. We must die in the sense of denying ourselves. The next point, we must die, my friends, we must needs die in order to be with Christ which is far better.

Paul says like this, as you know, that whilst we are at home in the body, and sometimes we are very much at home in the body, aren't we?

And so loath to leave it. But Paul says that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

[20 : 03] The opposite side to that word of course being whilst we are not at home in the body, or in other words, absent from it, we are present with the Lord.

Are you at home in the body? Then you, my friends, are absent from the Lord. And if you are not at home in the body, in this sense, I mean, as Job puts it, regarding this life, he says, I loathe it, I would not live all way, if you know what that means in your soul's experience, then at least this can be said of you, friend, thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven.

And by the grace of your God, he himself will in due time, when this word has been fulfilled for you, we must all needs die and be as water spilt on the ground, then he will administer to you an abundant entrance into his kingdom.

I've no doubt that many other reasons could be advanced in connection with this first part of the verse, for we must all needs die.

The second clause reads, and are as water spilt on the ground. Notice this, the word does not read, and shall be when we die, shall be then and not before, as water spilt on the ground.

[21 : 55] She says we are. What wisdom there is in that? We are as water spilt on the grounds. You young children and those of us who are older, when we were your age, we often spilt water on the ground.

Perhaps we do now. I expect you have emptied your little buckets or piles of sea water onto the sand and wondered why it disappeared.

And if you made some attempt to gather it up, you didn't succeed because it found its own level. Water always does and incidentally dust always does as well as water.

What happened to that water you tipped out? What happened to the water we now tip out of the bucket or the watering can?

can't be gathered up. No, she says, we're like that. We can't be gathered up. And we shall not be until the day of the resurrection of the just and the dead.

[23 : 25] Then we shall be gathered up. That, of course, is a different line of doctrine or teaching. we must not go too much into that.

That awaits the dear people of God whose dust is mingled with the dust of the ground or earth and that shall yet be so mingled.

That's not the end, you know. No, that's not the end. The time was with me when I would much loved to have thought, to have really believed that that was the end, but is not the end, isn't it?

No. It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment, the judgment. Death is not the end.

Death is not the annihilation of the sinner or of the soul. It's not the end. What does Paul say about this?

[24 : 39] He says this, if in this life only we have hope in Christ, notice he says hope in Christ, he means hope in Christ and nothing else but that.

He says if in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. If death is the end, we are of all men most miserable.

And that's true. We would be of all men, of all men most miserable. The Lord give you and me grace enough, faith enough, wisdom enough, experimental knowledge enough to say to say like this, since by the grace of God I have hope in Christ as to this life and that which is to come, I am of all men most blessed, most happy.

We pass on. Neither doth God respect any person. Never take a word like this as intending or implying that God is disrespectful to some persons, that he has a preference for some persons as compared with other persons.

He has not. God is no respecter of persons. We have to recognize differences in positions I would approach the king or queen if ever I had to in a very different frame of mind as I would approach one of their selves.

[26 : 38] There was a proper respect to be paid to certain persons here below. But my friends, to our God, the beggar upon the dung hill is as much as the king or queen upon the throne.

God in that sense is not a respecter of persons. On the other hand, we've got to remember this, his own word, namely, to whom much is given, of him shall much be required.

That aside, I believe God is no respecter of persons. Neither doth he respect any person.

did she mean that David was not to have any respect for Absalom? That David was to disown his own guilty murderous son, Absalom?

She didn't mean that. It seems to me that she was seeking to elevate a certain status which David had as king and which he had as the father of his guilty son.

[27 : 55] In the same time to bring us down to the dust. Of course the object in hand was to effect a reconciliation, at least to bring them together in the flesh, if no more than that.

Yet doth he that is God, God doth devise means that his banished be not expelled from him. As much as to say if God does this for his banished ones, David, you must do something about your banished, your expelled son.

If the goodness of God, if the grace of God is such that banished sinners, lost sinners, should for their benefit have divine means devised for their salvation, for their reconciliation, not be left to perish in their sins.

David, you must do something. You must command that your banished or expelled son comes back to Jerusalem and that you meet him again.

In this last part of the verse we have the gospel and that for a few minutes before we close is what we must try to speak upon.

[29 : 30] God then devises means. I believe that God is a God of means. If he were not then we might as well not be here on this occasion.

You are here if you have come rightly you have come here believing that God institutes means and intends that those means of his own institution shall be availed of by his people.

And what a despite is done to the spirit of grace in despising the means of grace such as the preaching of the word the reading of the word and prayer and so on.

We grieve the Holy Spirit if we despise the means which God has kindly lovingly graciously and wisely devised.

Yet doth he that is God devised means that he's banished. He's banished.

[30 : 51] As though she was saying David Absalom is your banished and God has his banished ones his expelled ones and he won't leave them to be always banished or expelled.

what means has God devised that his guilty hell deserving sinners should not forever be expelled from his presence and shut out of heaven he sends his beloved son to seek them to take their nature into union with his own so that of the twain spirit and flesh God and human nature there should be one one divine person one who is verily God and verily man the son of God and the son of man in one mysterious complex person or personality one person but two distinct natures the nature or being or essence of God as he represents

God and the nature the essence the sinless humanity he took in order to stand for us and to bring the two offended parties that is to say the offended and the offending together in one so that as it was with David and Absalom when they eventually met David kissed Absalom he kissed signifying reconciliation so much of course happened after that Absalom stole away the hearts of the people and entered upon a conspiracy against his own father prying to meet his meeting his death but we won't go into that or what a means our saviour has devised to have us friends

I do not think that God would or could have saved his people in any other manner I have heard it said and that from the pulpit that seeing God is almighty and omnipotent he could have saved his people in another way I don't like that sentiment I don't believe it how could God save in any other way there was no other way there wasn't man sinned by man came death by man must come salvation the second Adam is the second man the first man Adam who sinned the second man the Lord from heaven who saves from sin if man broke God's law man must make restitution for that breach of God's law but it must be a man who is holy and sinless and one with

God we have this in the person and the work the sacrifice the blood shedding of their saviour Jesus Christ what a means their God has devised for what that his banished should not be expelled now to expel is exactly the same as to be banished so the word might read that his banished should not be banished is expelled should not be expelled now we are banished from the presence of God because of their sin their shame their guilt their filthiness their disobedience and that justly because because we receive the just the due reward of their deeds whereas this man Christ hath done nothing amiss and

[35 : 35] God would not be alone as it were in heaven he would have a people with him a saved people a reconciled people a sanctified a justified people with him now do you feel banished do you feel expelled poor sinner has satan put you in a far off country are you at the ends of the earth in your present feelings you feel banished you feel to be in exile you feel cut off from God's presence we all are by nature but our God says as it were that nature must be undone that banishment must cease those far off sinners must be made nigh by the blood that I'm going to shed and have shed at

Calvary that the ends of the earth should see the salvation of our God are you banished you may be banished by Satan you may feel banished by the word of God that condemns you you may be shunned and expelled by your so called friends who do not want to know you what says their God he says banished ones cast your burden upon me guilty ones confess your sins to me weary heavy laden ones come unto me I'll give you rest I'll give you my peace my blood was shed for you my fullness is just for you all for you so he says come banished ones the way into the holiest of all is now made by the blood of

Jesus it is an open way a way that holds out welcome to poor lost wretched guilty sinners like you and like me you say there are no means for my reconciliation there are they are found in the gospel they are found in the grace of their saviour Jesus Christ and nowhere else all then poor far off sinner may you be coming unto the saviour who himself said this all that the father giveth me shall come to me nothing shall stop them no prison bars no chain shall hold them back they shall come to me and if that isn't enough what of this that follows and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out

Amen