

DAVID'S KINDNESS TO MEPHIBOSHETH

Introduction:

1. Though David sinned, his actions afterward demonstrated true repentance.
2. One event that revealed David's good heart was his kindness toward Mephibosheth.
3. This story paints a picture of true grace – and helps us to understand the grace of God.

- I. David's Promise (2 Samuel 9:1)
 - A. David asked if any of Saul's descendants remained so he could show kindness to them, for Jonathan's sake.
 - B. Thus, one must reflect upon the history of David's life.
 - C. First, it was not uncommon in those times for the descendants of one king to be killed when a new king took the throne.
 - D. Second, David's friendship with Jonathan was an important influence in his life.
 1. 1 Samuel 18:1-4 – Jonathan treated David as a part of the royal family.
 2. 1 Samuel 20:11-17, 42 – Jonathan and David made a covenant.
 - a. God willed that David (not Jonathan) would be King of Israel.
 - b. David pledged not to kill Jonathan.
 - c. David promised to show kindness to Jonathan's descendants.
 3. 1 Samuel 23:16-18 – They remained true and loyal friends.
 - E. Third, David's respect for Saul as King of Israel motivated him to make the same promise to Saul (1 Samuel 24:21-22) – even though Saul was trying to kill David!
 - F. David was a man of his word and had every intention of keeping his promise.
 1. This meant that he did not seek to kill the descendants of Saul.
 2. But, beyond that, David wanted to seek out Saul's offspring so he could do good for them!
 - G. Most of Saul's children had been killed in battle and Ishbosheth had been killed while trying to reign over Israel when David was king over Judah.
 - H. Yet, David still sought a way to keep his promise.
 1. We should take our word as seriously as did David.
 2. We should keep our promises.
 3. We should look for opportunities to remain true to our word.
 - I. God's grace is the result of His promise (Galatians 3:26-29; Titus 2:11).

- II. David's Loyalty (2 Samuel 9:1b)
 - A. David sought to keep his promise "for Jonathan's sake."
 - B. No matter what David went through, Jonathan was a true friend.
 - C. Thus, in honor of his friend, David would show kindness to his son.
 - D. God's grace is given to man for Jesus' sake (Eph. 1:6; 4:32).

- III. David's Compassion (2 Samuel 9:2-3)
 - A. David located a former servant of Saul named Ziba and asked him of Saul's descendants.
 - B. Ziba replied that Mephibosheth, a son of Jonathan, still lived – but he was lame.
 1. In truth, there were other descendants of Saul still living.
 2. Ziba seems to have been attempting to use Mephibosheth and his handicap for selfish motives (cf. 16:1-4; 19:24-30).
 - C. The Bible details how Mephibosheth came to be unable to walk (2 Sam. 4:4).
 - D. In spite of his lameness, David wished to show "the kindness of God" to him.

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- E. This was true grace – it was undeserved, had not been earned, and could not be repaid!
 - F. God's grace is given out of compassion to the undeserving (Eph. 1:7; 2:7-9; Rom. 5:8).
- IV. David's Comfort (2 Samuel 9:4-7)
- A. David asked, "Where is he?"
 - 1. A wicked king might have desired to know so he could kill him.
 - 2. In fact, Mephibosheth seems to be in hiding.
 - B. He was abiding in the house of Machir (cf. 17:27-29).
 - 1. Machir was a former friend of Saul.
 - 2. He seemed to live near Mahanaim, across the Jordan River.
 - 3. The name Lo-debar means, "A barren place" – thus, a deserted wilderness area.
 - C. Imagine the fear that must have been felt when David sent men to have him brought to Jerusalem and brought before the new King.
 - D. Yet, David's first words were, "Fear not."
 - E. David only desire to show kindness to the son of Jonathan.
 - F. He would restore to him all the land of Saul and he would grant Mephibosheth a place at the King's table.
 - G. God's grace removes man's fear and provides comfort (Heb. 4:16; 13:5-6).
- V. David's Provision (2 Samuel 9:9-13)
- A. To eat at the King's table was indeed an honor (cf. Jer. 52:31-34).
 - B. Mephibosheth was to become part of the royal family and to be treated as one of the King's sons.
 - C. Later, because of David's oath with Jonathan, the life of Mephibosheth was spared (21:7).
 - D. Also, Mephibosheth appears to have become a father due to David's kind treatment of him.
 - 1. He named his son Micha.
 - 2. This name means, "Who is like God?"
 - 3. Compare with Micah 7:18.
 - E. God's grace provides all that man needs – and more (Matt. 6:33; 26:29; Rom. 8:17; Phil. 4:19)!
- VI. The Humility of Mephibosheth (2 Samuel 9:8)
- A. He knew he was unworthy of David's kindness.
 - B. Yet, he accepted the offer of the King who had replaced his grandfather.
 - C. God's grace must be received by submissive obedience.
 - D. God's grace must be received with humility.