

2 Samuel 9 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

2 Samuel 9:1
2 Samuel 9:2
2 Samuel 9:3
2 Samuel 9:4
2 Samuel 9:5
2 Samuel 9:6
2 Samuel 9:7
2 Samuel 9:8
2 Samuel 9:9
2 Samuel 9:10
2 Samuel 9:11
2 Samuel 9:12
2 Samuel 9:13

Chart from recommended resource Jensen's Survey of the OT - used by permission
2 Samuel Chart from Charles Swindoll

TIMELINE OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL, KINGS & CHRONICLES									
1107	1011				971	931	853	722	586
1 Samuel	2 Samuel				1 Kings	1 Kings	2 Kings		
31	1-4	5-10	11-20	21-24	1-11	12-22	1-17	18-25	
1Chr 10		1 Chr 11-19		1 Chr 20-29	2 Chronicles 1-9	2 Chronicles 10-20	2 Chronicles 21-36		

Legend: B.C. dates at top of timeline are approximate. Note that 931BC marks the division of the Kingdom into Southern Tribes (Judah and Benjamin) and Ten Northern Tribes. To avoid confusion be aware that **after the division** of the Kingdom in 931BC, the Southern Kingdom is most often designated in Scripture as **"Judah"** and the Northern Kingdom as **"Israel."** Finally, note that 1 Chronicles 1-9 is not identified on the timeline because these chapters are records of genealogy.



Map of David's Kingdom-[ESV Global](#)

Map of Cities in 2 Samuel

2 Samuel 9:1 Then David said, "Is there yet anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

BGT 2 Samuel 9:1 κα ε πεν Δαυιδ ε στιν τι πολελειμνος τ ο κ Σαουλ κα ποι σω μετ α το λεος νεκεν Ιωναθαν

LXE 2 Samuel 9:1 And David said, Is there yet any one left in the house of Saul, that I may deal kindly with him for Jonathan's sake?

KJV 2 Samuel 9:1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

NET 2 Samuel 9:1 Then David asked, "Is anyone still left from the family of Saul, so that I may extend kindness to him for the sake of Jonathan?"

CSB 2 Samuel 9:1 David asked, "Is there anyone remaining from Saul's family I can show kindness to because of Jonathan?"

ESV 2 Samuel 9:1 And David said, "Is there still anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

NIV 2 Samuel 9:1 David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

NLT 2 Samuel 9:1 One day David asked, "Is anyone in Saul's family still alive-- anyone to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

- **show him:** 2Sa 1:26 1Sa 18:1-4 1Sa 20:14-17,42 1Sa 23:16-18 1Ki 2:7 Pr 27:10 Mt 10:42 Mt 25:40 Mk 9:41 Joh 19:26,27 Phm 1:9-12 1Pe 3:8

Related Passages:

1 Samuel 18:1-4+ Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. 2 Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. 3 Then **Jonathan made a covenant with David** because he loved him as himself. 4 Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.

1 Samuel 20:14-17+ (**NOTE THIS SECOND COVENANT INCLUDES DESCENDANTS**) "If I am still alive, will you not show me the **lovingkindness** ([hesed](#); Lxx - [eleos](#)) of the LORD, that I may not die? (**NOTE:** He does not say "the lovingkindness of David" but of [Jehovah](#), the source of all true lovingkindness - and yet clearly Jehovah uses vessels of honor to bestow His lovingkindness upon others), 15 "You shall not cut off your

lovingkindness from my house forever, not even when the LORD cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." 16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD require it at the hands of David's enemies." 17 Jonathan made David vow again because of his love for him, because he loved him as he loved his own life.....**42+** Jonathan said to David, "Go in safety, inasmuch as we have sworn to each other in the name of the LORD, saying, 'The LORD will be between me and you, and **between my descendants and your descendants forever.**'" Then he rose and departed, while Jonathan went into the city.

1 Samuel 23:16-18+ And Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David at Horesh, and encouraged him in God. 17 Thus he said to him, "Do not be afraid, because the hand of Saul my father will not find you, and you will be king over Israel and I will be next to you; and Saul my father knows that also." 18 So the **two of them made a covenant before the LORD**; and David stayed at Horesh while Jonathan went to his house.

1 Samuel 24:21, 22+ (**SAUL DOES NOT CUT COVENANT BUT DOES SEEK DAVID'S FAVOR**) So now swear to me by the LORD that you will not cut off my descendants after me and that you will not destroy my name from my father's household." David swore to Saul. And Saul went to his home, but David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Proverbs 27:10 Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away.

1 Peter 3:8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

DAVID'S DESIRE TO SHOE COVENANT KINDNESS

NOTE: FOR ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION SEE MEPHIBOSHETH.

While the word "[covenant](#)" does not appear in 2 Samuel 9, this story is nevertheless one of the most beautiful illustrations of the [solemn and binding](#) nature of covenant in all of Scripture.

William Blaikie makes an excellent observation regarding King David **'It is proof that the bloody wars in which he had been engaged had not destroyed the tenderness of his heart, that the very chapter which follows the account of his battles opens with a yearning affection -- a longing for an outlet to feelings of kindness...** This period of David's life was its golden era, and it is difficult to understand how the man that was so remarkable at this time for his regard for God and his interest in his neighbour should so soon afterwards have been betrayed into a course of conduct that showed him most grievously forgetful of both. (**Ed:** Yours truly is continually reminded of 1Cor 10:12, which should be a "watch word" for every saint. Fallen flesh never improves and waits for an opportune time to pounce on us and ensnare us! cf Ge 4:6-7+) ([The Second Book of Samuel](#))

G Campbell Morgan commenting on 2 Samuel 9:1 writes that "There is an exquisite tenderness about the story of this chapter. David's love for Jonathan was still fresh. One can easily imagine how, in the days of his growing prosperity, the king would often think of the old strenuous times, and of his friend's loyalty to him under circumstances so full of stress and peril. For David, the house of Saul, which had caused him so much suffering, was redeemed by his love for (and covenant with) Jonathan; and therefore he instituted inquiry as to whether there were any left of that house, to whom he might show kindness ([hesed](#) - a covenant term) for the sake of his friend."

Then David said, "Is there yet anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness([hesed](#); Lxx - [eleos](#)) for Jonathan's sake - Note it does say house of Jonathan but house of Saul, another evidence that David harbored no ill-will, unforgiveness or bitterness toward Saul even after having been pursued by him for 10 years. This is another aspect of the character of a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22+).

THOUGHT - Are you challenged? I hope so, because this challenges my heart which has difficulty forgiving even a momentary "misstep" by another human being. I am prone to quickly respond in kind, yet David sets the bar so high that the only way we can "jump" it is by continual dependence on the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. This is the only way we can be "forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you." (Eph 4:32+). Remember David had flesh just like all of us, but 1Sa 16:13 says "the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward." So David like us had continual access to source of superhuman power and here in 2 Samuel 9:1 he clearly is speaking as a Spirit empowered man. O, that we (I) might remember this the next time a "Saul" throws a spear (figuratively) at us (me). In Jesus' Name and for His glory. Amen.

A key phrase is **kindness for Jonathan's sake**, which speaks of the solemn covenant they had made (see [passages above](#)), a covenant which cannot be broken by death or by time (cf "descendants" and "forever" in 1Sa 20:42+)! Keep in mind that Mephibosheth now had a son so he was probably about 20yo. If we compare 2Sa 4:4 he was 5 when Jonathan died. So while David is doing good to ask this question, one might ask why did not David ask this question in the previous 15 years when Mephibosheth was in hiding and undoubtedly daily fearing for his life (which would certainly have been the case after his uncle Ish-bosheth was assassinated!) Kudos to David for even recalling the covenant and seeking to fulfill it if there were any descendants. Given the passage of years, and his increasing success as king, it would have been easy for him to forget about the "forever" clause in 1Sa 20:42.

An intimate component of covenant is lovingkindness which David desired to display because of his loyalty and faithfulness to the covenant he had made with Jonathan. **Hesed** refers primarily to mutual and reciprocal rights and obligations between the parties of a relationship (especially Jehovah and Israel). But hesed is not only a matter of obligation but is also of generosity. It is not only a matter of loyalty, but also of mercy. **Hesed** implies personal involvement and commitment in a relationship beyond the rule of law. Notice that David is seeking for someone to whom he can show mercy. The person needing mercy is not seeking David the king. How like our Great God Who sought us and bought us with the price of blood when we were lame, unlovely and uninterested in Him!

Believer's Study Bible - True friendship is not easily dismissed. David, having established his kingdom, searched for any offspring of Saul to whom he might show kindness. The discovery of the lame son of Jonathan, Mephibosheth (Or Merib-Baal), provided David the opportunity to be faithful to the promises of his friendship with Jonathan. (**ED: WHILE THIS COMMENT IS NOT INCORRECT, IT IS INCOMPLETE - THE ULTIMATE REASON FOR DAVID'S PURSUIT OF DESCENDANTS OF JONATHAN IS BECAUSE OF THEIR SOLEMN, BINDING AGREEMENT THAT INCLUDED THE DESCENDANTS IN 1Sa 20:42+. FRIENDSHIP IS ITSELF A COMPONENT OF COVENANT. SEE NOTE ON FRIEND, A COVENANT TERM**).

Lovingkindness (02617) **hesed/chesed/heced** is the idea of faithful love in action and often in the OT refers to God's lovingkindness expressed in His covenant relationship with Israel (His "loyal love" to His "Wife" Israel [cp Hos 2:18, 19, 20+, Is 54:5, Je 31:32+] = His "loyalty to covenant"). God's **hesed** His denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy, a relationship in which He seeks after man with love and mercy (cp God immediately seeking man Ge 3:9+, who was immediately hiding Ge 3:8+ trying to cover their shame Ge 3:7 - contrast God's lovingkindness manifest by spilling blood to provide skins to cover their shame! Ge 3:21+). In general, one may identify three basic meanings of **hesed**, and these 3 meanings always interact -- **strength**, **steadfastness**, and **love**. Any understanding of **hesed** that fails to suggest all three inevitably loses some of its richness. **Love** by itself easily becomes sentimentalized or universalized apart from the covenant. Yet **strength** or **steadfastness** suggests only the fulfillment of a legal (or similar) obligation.

Phil Newton has two illustrations about how changing circumstances make it expedient to forget and forgo our former vows, something David could have easily done regarding his covenant with Jonathan considering that (1) Jonathan was dead, (2) no one else knew about it as far as I can discern (except of course God) and (3) that covenant had been cut almost 2 decades earlier.

Illustration: Former President George Bush was defeated for reelection in 1992, according to many pundits, because of one line: "Read my lips: no new taxes!" Then, caught in political maneuvering, he raised taxes. Promises made then laid aside were costly.

Illustration: Franklin Delano Roosevelt's speech in Pittsburgh in 1932 advocated restraint in government spending. Four years later he wanted to speak in favor of government spending. The solution according to his advisors: deny you made a speech in Pittsburgh in 1932.

David could have done the same - I Samuel 20's covenant with Jonathan. Now, 15 years later, all enemies vanquished and the lone rival to his throne was Mephibosheth. But David honored covenant love: "life under covenant gives you a firm place to stand and ought to evoke a sense of security, privilege, and wonder from you" (Ralph Davis).

J D Watson - Mercy [and] Grace chesed [and] chānan - While not interchangeable, **hesed** (mercy) and **chānan** (grace) are closely related. While **mercy** is the withholding of what is deserved (e.g., death and hell), **grace** is the bestowing of what is not deserved (e.g., life and heaven). 2 Samuel 9 gives one of the most graphic pictures in all the Bible of both mercy and grace, with ten startling parallels to the Savior and sinner:

First, Mephibosheth, the son of King David's friend Jonathan, was crippled by a fall (2Sa 4:4), just as each of us was crippled by Adam's fall, even rendered "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1-3).

Second, as David wanted to show Mephibosheth "kindness [chesed] for Jonathan's sake" (2 Sam. 9:1), God

has shown us mercy and grace for the sake of the Lord Jesus (Eph. 4:32).

Third, that kindness was neither deserved nor earned by Mephibosheth, who could do little for himself, much less do anything for the king of Judah and Israel. We in turn deserved nothing but death, and there are not enough works in the universe to save a single soul (Eph. 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5).

Fourth, Mephibosheth was sought by the king (2Sa 9:1, 5), again picturing unmerited favor. Likewise, not a single person has ever "[sought] after God" by his own power (Ro 3:11). "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," Jesus declared (John 15:16). A dead man can do nothing, so "no man can come to [Christ], except the Father which hath sent [Him] draw him" (John 6:44; 65; Acts 16:13, 14).

Fifth, David ordered and empowered servants to fetch Mephibosheth (2Sa 9:5), a graphic picture of evangelism. God has likewise called and empowered each of us as witnesses (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19, 20).

Sixth, a result of all this was that Mephibosheth revered the king (2Sa 9:6), a challenge to us to worship Jesus.

Seventh, he became a servant of the king (v. 6), as are we of Christ (e.g., Ro 6:16).

Eighth, he was given riches and security (v. 7), just as we have spiritual riches (Eph. 1:3) and security in Christ (John 10:28, 29; Ro 8:29-39).

Ninth, he was made a king's son (v. 11), as we are God's children (John 1:12, 13, Ro 8:14).

And **tenth**, his physical condition was hidden from view when he sat at the king's table (v. 13). We, too, have been sanctified by Christ (Heb. 9:12-15) and "sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6).

THE POWER OF COVENANT Ralph Davis gives the following illustration of the power of covenant - The works of B. B. Warfield, the esteemed biblical theologian of old Princeton Seminary, are still known and read in the evangelical church today. What is not so well-known is the tale of his marriage. Warfield was pursuing studies in Leipzig, Germany, in 1876-77. This time also doubled as honeymoon with his wife Annie. They were on a walking tour in the Harz Mountains when they were caught in a terrific thunderstorm. The experience was such a shock to Annie that she never fully recovered, becoming more or less an invalid for life. Warfield only left her for his seminary duties, but never for more than two hours at a time. His world was almost entirely limited to Princeton and to the care of his wife. For thirty-nine years. One of his students noted that when he saw the Warfields out walking together 'the gentleness of his manner was striking proof of the loving care with which he surrounded her.' For thirty-nine years. That is the power covenant exercises.

Is there anyone left of the house of Saul that I may show him [kindness \(hesed\)](#) - Several observations can be made...

First, note that David initiates the search for a possible relative of Jonathan and not vice versa.

Second, keep in mind as discussed above that David's query occurs some 15-20 years after the death of Saul and Jonathan. He could have easily reasoned, it's been almost two decades since I cut covenant with Jonathan, so I am free of any obligation. Besides no one else even knows about the covenant we cut.

Third, note that David does not seek descendants of Jonathan to assassinate (as occurred with most regime changes in that day) but to show [lovingkindness \(hesed\)](#). Ralph Davis defines hesed as "*love that is willing to commit itself to another by making its promise a matter of solemn record*". In a sense David is seeking one who by all other reasoning might be considered as his potential enemy (e.g., Mephibosheth would have been the heir apparent to Jonathan's kingdom), and he is doing so in order to demonstrate kindness, not vengeance.

As an aside, it is surprising to read a number of commentaries that question David's motives for his actions in this chapter, saying that he wants to "keep an eye" on Mephibosheth. It seems they are almost oblivious to the obvious repetition of the word **lovingkindness** which is clearly David's motivation reflecting his commitment to covenant with his beloved friend Jonathan.

Fourth, notice that David is motivated to do this for the sake of Jonathan. This clearly demonstrates the loyal, faithful love [hesed](#) that David had for Jonathan and which was a central component of the covenant they cut ([1Sa 20:8](#) "kindly" = hesed). David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), was a man of his word, and understood the solemn and binding nature of covenant. And even though he was in a sense bound by the covenant to show [lovingkindness \(hesed\)](#) ([1Sa 20:14, 15](#)) to Jonathan's descendants, there is no hint that David is doing so as a "legalistic" obligation but as an act of his covenant love (See [Love that Motivates Cutting Covenant](#)) for his departed [friend \(covenant term\)](#) Jonathan. Such is the nature of covenant for it is undergirded and energized by love not law.

THOUGHT - Are you having difficulty in your marital covenant? Perhaps its a covenant you made 20 years

ago, but for a variety of reasons you are now even considering leaving your spouse. Beloved, may God find us faithful to the end. May we not be covenant breakers, but emulate David, a covenant keeper, remembering that...

The promise made in the past
directs fidelity in the present
--Ralph Davis

So despite the passage of time, David's loyalty to covenant was steadfast and so much so that it controlled his thoughts and actions in 2 Samuel 9. Little wonder David is called a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22)!

What a picture of the **steadfast lovingkindness of Jehovah** ([Play Don Moen's "Your Steadfast Love"](#))...

O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good;
For His lovingkindness is everlasting.
(1Chr 16:34)

Greg Laurie - DROPPED (2 Samuel 9:1)

Mephibosheth was only five years old when his father Jonathan and his grandfather Saul were killed on the battlefield. Imagine, if you will, life as he had known it up to this point. The privilege and potential of his present could not have prepared him for the hard life he would face in the future. There was life in the palace as a young prince ... people waiting on him hand and foot ... being raised by his godly father Jonathan. Life was good for this young boy.

But there were dark clouds gathering in his world. In one moment, through no fault of his own, his entire life would change forever. Jonathan knew things were going to change. Thus, he persuaded David to make an agreement to look out for his descendants. He made David promise to show kindness to his family forever. David made that promise. And he kept it.

When news hit the palace that Saul and Jonathan had been killed on the battlefield, the nurse who was caring for Mephibosheth, in her frenzied state, dropped this little boy on the ground. As a result, he was crippled for life.

Perhaps you have gone through hardships in your childhood. Maybe something traumatic has happened to you. You have been dropped in life, so to speak. You wonder if anything good can come out of your life.

Mephibosheth was dropped in life, but God intervened. In fact, God specializes in taking people who have been dropped in life and picking them back up again. That is just what David did for Mephibosheth. That is just what God will do for you.

P G Matthew - Daily Delight —2 Samuel 9:1

What does Mephibosheth mean? In Hebrew, bosheth means "shame," so I believe it means "big shame." Mephibosheth represents all sinners who are redeemed. We must therefore give special attention to 2 Samuel 9 because it speaks of the redemption of God's people.

Mephibosheth deserved death. His grandfather Saul was an unregenerate who refused to obey God's command and sought his own glory instead. After David ascended to the throne, it would have been proper and just for him to kill all the descendants of his rival Saul, as kings normally did in those days. As a direct descendant of Saul, Mephibosheth son of Jonathan knew and acknowledged that he was liable to being killed. He later said as much to King David after

Absalom's rebellion: "All my grandfather's descendants deserved nothing but death from my lord the king" (2 Sam. 19:28).

But David had made a covenant with Jonathan, and he wanted to honor it. After being established by God as the undisputed king of Israel, David expressed his desire to show kindness to any living descendant of his mortal enemy Saul. And so we find the amazing language seen in verse one above.

That invitation is still going out even this day wherever the gospel is preached. It is the invitation of the great King, who, rather than showing justice, chooses to show kindness to his enemies. What is the invitation? "Come unto me; I will give you rest." This is what the gospel is all about. We are all, by nature, Mephibosheths—sinners, people of great shame, enemies of God and deserving of his wrath. But God in mercy sends out his great gospel invitation, and we are saved. Why? "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

This is the great theme of this chapter: God's covenant mercy shown to the Mephibosheths of the world. The great King, of his own initiative, shows his kindness, grace, and unfailing mercy, not to well-deserving, or even ill-deserving people, but to his hell-deserving

shameful enemies. And, like Mephibosheth, we are given a place at the banqueting table of the great King.

William MacDonald - Truths to Live By (2 Sam. 9:1)

Mephibosheth was a grandson of King Saul, who had repeatedly tried to take David's life. He therefore came from a rebel family that might have expected to be wiped out when David came to the throne. In addition to that, Mephibosheth was a helpless cripple, having been dropped by his nurse when he was young. The fact that he lived in someone else's home in Lo-debar, meaning "no pasture," suggests that he was impoverished. Lo-debar was on the east side of the Jordan and therefore "afar off" from Jerusalem, God's dwelling. There was no merit in Mephibosheth as far as David's favor was concerned.

In spite of all that, David inquired concerning him, sent messengers after him, brought him to the royal palace, assured him that there was nothing to fear, enriched him with all Saul's land, provided him with a retinue of servants to wait on him and honored him with a permanent place at the king's table as one of the king's sons.

Why did David show such mercy, grace and compassion to one who was so unworthy? The answer is "for Jonathan's sake." David had made a covenant with Jonathan, the father of Mephibosheth, that he would never cease to show kindness to Jonathan's family. It was an unconditional covenant of grace (1 Sam. 20:14-17).

Mephibosheth realized this, for when he was first ushered into the king's presence, he prostrated himself and said that "a dead dog" like he did not deserve such kindness.

It should not be difficult for us to find ourselves in this picture. We were born of a rebel, sinful race under the condemnation of death. We were morally deformed and paralyzed by sin. We too dwelt in a land of "no pasture," spiritually starved. Not only were we doomed, helpless and impoverished, we were "afar off" from God, without Christ and without hope. There was nothing in us to draw forth God's love and kindness.

Yet God sought us, found us, delivered us from the fear of death, blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies, brought us to His banqueting table, and raised the banner of His love over us.

Why did He do it? It was for Jesus' sake. And it was because of His covenant of grace under which He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world.

The fitting response for us is to prostrate ourselves in His presence and say, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?"

2 Samuel 9:2 Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant."

BGT 2 Samuel 9:2 κα κ το ο κου Σαουλ πα ς ν κα νομα α τ Σιβα κα καλο σιν α τ ν πρ ς Δαυιδ κα ε πεν πρ ς α τ ν βασιλε ς ε σ ε Σιβα κα ε πεν γ δο λος ς ς

LXE 2 Samuel 9:2 And there was a servant of the house of Saul, and his name was Siba: and they call him to David; and the king said to him, Art thou Siba? and he said, I am thy servant.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:2 And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he.

NET 2 Samuel 9:2 Now there was a servant from Saul's house named Ziba, so he was summoned to David. The king asked him, "Are you Ziba?" He replied, "At your service."

CSB 2 Samuel 9:2 There was a servant of Saul's family named Ziba. They summoned him to David, and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" "I am your servant," he replied.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:2 Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant."

NIV 2 Samuel 9:2 Now there was a servant of Saul's household named Ziba. They called him to appear before David, and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" "Your servant," he replied.

NLT 2 Samuel 9:2 He summoned a man named Ziba, who had been one of Saul's servants. "Are you Ziba?" the king asked. "Yes sir, I am," Ziba replied.

- **a servant:** Ge 15:2,3 24:2 39:6
- **Ziba:** 2Sa 16:1-4 2Sa 19:17,27-29

DAVID SEEKS ANSWER FROM SAUL'S SERVANT

Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant- David initiates the seeking. Mephibosheth was not seeking. He was hiding! One's character will eventually be shown for what it truly is in times of testing. In 2Samuel 9 Ziba appears in a good light, but subsequent events would show him for what he really was, a self-seeking conniving scoundrel. And so in this chapter David commands Ziba and his entire household to serve Mephibosheth ([2Sa 9:9,10, 11](#)), he subsequently proves himself to be a dishonest and disloyal servant to Mephibosheth.

The King said to him - It is interesting that when David addresses Ziba the text refers to him as **'the King'** (2Sa 9:2, 3, 4, 9) but when he addresses Mephibosheth he is referred to as **"David"** (2Sa 9:6, 7)

2 Samuel 9:3 The king said, "Is there not yet anyone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?" And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet."

BGT 2 Samuel 9:3 κα ε πεν βασιλε ς ε πολ λειπται κ το ο κου Σαουλ τι ν ρ κα ποι σω μετ α το λεος θεο κα ε πεν Σιβα πρ ς τ ν βασιλ α τι σιν υ ς τ Ιωναθαν πεπληγ ς το ς π δας

LXE 2 Samuel 9:3 And the king said, Is there yet a man left of the house of Saul, that I may act towards him with the mercy of God? and Siba said to the king, There is yet a son of Jonathan, lame of his feet.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.

NET 2 Samuel 9:3 The king asked, "Is there not someone left from Saul's family, that I may extend God's kindness to him?" Ziba said to the king, "One of Jonathan's sons is left; both of his feet are crippled."

CSB 2 Samuel 9:3 So the king asked, "Is there anyone left of Saul's family that I can show the kindness of God to?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still Jonathan's son who was injured in both feet."

ESV 2 Samuel 9:3 And the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet."

NIV 2 Samuel 9:3 The king asked, "Is there no one still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness?" Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in both feet."

NLT 2 Samuel 9:3 The king then asked him, "Is anyone still alive from Saul's family? If so, I want to show God's kindness to them." Ziba replied, "Yes, one of Jonathan's sons is still alive. He is crippled in both feet."

- **the kindness of God:** De 4:37 Dt 10:15 1Sa 20:14-17 Mt 5:44-45 Lu 6:36 Titus 3:3-4
- **yet a son:** 2Sa 4:4 2Sa 19:26

Related Passage:

Romans 2:4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that **the kindness of God** leads you to repentance?

2 Samuel 4:4+ Now Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the report of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened that in her hurry to flee, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.

DAVID'S SEEKING UNCOVERS A CRIPPLED SON OF JONATHAN

The king said, "Is there not yet anyone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?"- David repeats his question from 2Sa 9:1, but here he says not just "kindness" but **kindness of God**, God's kind of **kindness**!

What does the **kindness of God** look like? Paul gives us a glimpse into the incomprehensible, infinite kindness of God writing that all of us "once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when **the kindness of God** our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit." (Titus 3:3-5) One could say much about this great passage but what screams out is a painful list of how wretched and wicked and undeserving we were to even be considered to be recipients of God's kindness. And yet in spite of all the reasons we should have have received kindness, God demonstrated His kindness to us! This calls for a "Hallelujah!" "Thank You Lord!"

Kindness of God - David had asked Jonathan to show "**the lovingkindness ([hesed](#)) of the LORD**" (1Sa 20:14) and now desires to show the same to any in Jonathan's house. The Almighty God used David as a "**vessel of honor**" (2Ti 2:21-[note](#), cp Acts 9:15) to convey **His lovingkindness**.

Is this not the privilege the Everlasting God (Ge 21:33) has granted to us beloved, Paul writing for example...

And so, as those who have been chosen ([eklektos](#)) of God, holy ([hagios](#)) and beloved ([agapao](#)), **put on** ([enduo](#) - in the [aorist imperative](#) = do this now!) a heart ([splanchnon](#)) of compassion ([oiktirmos](#)), **kindness** ([chrestotes](#)), humility ([tapeinophrosune](#)), gentleness ([prautes](#)) and patience ([makrothumia](#)) ([Col 3:12-note](#))

And **be** ([present imperative](#) = command to make this your supernatural lifestyle - only possible as we yield our will to His sweet will and enabling grace through His Spirit - see fruit below) **kind** ([chrestotes](#)) to one another ([Study the "one anothers"](#)), tender-hearted ([eusplanchnos](#)), forgiving ([charizomai](#) from grace - [charis](#) = when we "forgive" we in a sense bestow God's *grace* to others] in the [present tense](#) = make this your Spirit filled and enabled supernatural lifestyle!) each other, just as God [in Christ](#) also has forgiven you. (Ep 4:32-[note](#))

Luke adds Jesus' exhortation...

But **love** ([present imperative](#) = command to make this your supernatural lifestyle see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) your enemies, and **do good** ([present imperative](#) = command to make this your supernatural lifestyle see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)), and **lend** ([present imperative](#) = command to make this your supernatural lifestyle see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)), expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. (Luke 6:35+)

Comment: God's children are never more like their Father (Ep 5:1+) then when they demonstrate His lovingkindness to those who do not deserve it (which of course is all of us)!

God's children are to bear the indelible stamp
of His moral character.

And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet."- 2 Samuel 4:4+ says "Now Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the report of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened that in her hurry to flee, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth." We do not know exactly how old Mephibosheth was at this time but 2Sa 9:11 tells us he "had a young son whose name was Mica." So clearly Mephibosheth was married suggesting he is around 18-20 years of age as his son is not described as an infant. This means that he has been hiding out, in fear for his life, never experiencing a truly peaceful nights sleep, etc, etc, for about 15 years! What is sad is that he was unaware of the covenant his father Jonathan had made with David. Had he been aware, he likely would have contacted David.

THOUGHT - Many people in the world are like Mephibosheth -- they are afraid of death, they have no sense of lasting peace, and they are not aware that the Son of David has cut a covenant in blood which they can enter into by grace through faith!

TSK Note - That is, the highest degree of kindness; as the hail of God is very great hail; the mountains of God exceeding high mountains; besides which, this kindness was according to the covenant of God made between him and Jonathan.

It is interesting that Ziba does not specify Mephibosheth's name but instead chooses to focus on his physical deformity. And David when confronted with the boy's disability, does not respond "Isn't there someone else who is not lame?" In so doing David once again shows why he is a man after God's own heart "for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (1Sa 16:7)

THOUGHT - How often we too are like Ziba and look primarily at the physical appearance of others while we fail to see what is really of eternal value to God! Almighty God please give us Your eyes that me might be enabled to see others the way you see them for the sake of Thy Son. Amen.

God's Gift A British factory worker and his wife were excited when, after many years of marriage, they discovered they were going to have their first child. According to author Jill Briscoe, who told this true story, the man eagerly relayed the good news to his fellow workers. He told them God had answered his prayers. But they made fun of him for asking God for a child. When the baby was born, he was diagnosed as having Down's syndrome. As the father made his way to work for the first time after the birth, he wondered how to face his co-workers. "God, please give me wisdom," he prayed. Just as he feared, some said mockingly, "So, God gave you this child!" The new father stood for a long time, silently asking God for help. At last he said, "I'm glad the Lord gave this child to me and not to you." As this man accepted his disabled son as God's gift to him, so David was pleased to show kindness to Saul's son who was "lame in his feet" (2 Sam. 9:3). Some may have rejected Mephibosheth because he was lame, but David's action showed that he valued him greatly. - Our Daily Bread, April 6, 1994

2 Samuel 9:1-13 SPECIAL PEOPLE

"Be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted." - 1 Peter 3:8

Hubert H. Humphrey, former senator, vice-president, college professor, and family man, spoke proudly and lovingly of his family in a television interview. Then his eyes moistened as he recalled the birth of a very special granddaughter with Down's syndrome. "It happened several years ago," he said, "and do you know, that little girl has brought more love into our family circle than had existed before."

A few years later Humphrey died, and after the graveside service the family found it difficult to leave the cemetery. But it was this grandchild who lifted their spirits. "Grandpa is in heaven, not in this casket," she said. What a blessing that little girl with a disability has been to the Humphrey family!

As king, David could have eliminated Saul's household for Saul's attempts to kill him. But he desired instead to show favor to any living member of Saul's family for Jonathan's sake. When told about Mephibosheth, who was "lame in his feet" (2 Samuel 9:3), David showed him special kindness. I believe his physical condition, as well as his place in Saul's household, brought out the best in David.

People with disabilities fulfill a unique place in God's plan. Let's learn from David's example.- H. V. Lugt [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

They will not realize right away
The leading role they're asked to play,
But with this child sent from above
Comes stronger faith and richer love.-
- Massimilla

People with a disability have a unique ability to teach us how to love.

F B Meyer - 2 SAMUEL 9 MEPHIBOSHETH

David's kindness to Mephibosheth is a beautiful incident in his history, and strikingly illustrates the grace of our Lord Jesus.

It was unexpected and unsought. -- The young prince was spending a retired life with one of the great families of the trans-Jordanic region. The thought of becoming an inmate of David's palace never occurred to him; and his great nervousness needed David's most careful reassurances. "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord"

It was unlikely. -- He was lame. This sad infirmity dated from his birth (2Sa 4:4). We, too, are lame in our powers of spiritual obedience. We cannot do anything to merit the Divine regard.

It was not without good reason. -- Probably Mephibosheth knew nothing of the covenant into which David and Jonathan had entered so long before (1Sa 20:14-16). But to David it was sacred; and even the unlovable son was dear to him for his father's sake. For a similar reason does God look on us. We are loved in Him in whom we have been chosen. God will ever be mindful of His

covenant with His well-beloved Son.

It admitted him into the royal circle. -- Though consciously unworthy, he received again Saul's family estate (2 Sam. 9:7), was admitted to the royal table, and treated as one of the king's sons (2 Sam. 9:11); he had, in Ziba and his household, a retinue worthy of a prince (2 Sam. 9:10). All was due to the unmerited favor of the king; and is a type of all those spiritual blessings with which the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed us in heavenly places in Him (Eph. 1:3).

2 Samuel 9:4 So the king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel in Lo-debar."

BGT 2 Samuel 9:4 κα ε πεν βασιλε ς πο ο το ς κα ε πεν Σιβα πρ ς τ ν βασιλ α δο ν ο κ Μαχιρ υ ο Αμιηλ κ τ ς Λαδαβαρ

LXE 2 Samuel 9:4 And the king said, Where is he? and Siba said to the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Amiel of Lodabar.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:4 And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar.

NET 2 Samuel 9:4 The king asked him, "Where is he?" Ziba told the king, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.

CSB 2 Samuel 9:4 The king asked him, "Where is he?" Ziba answered the king, "You'll find him in Lo-debar at the house of Machir son of Ammiel."

ESV 2 Samuel 9:4 The king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "He is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar."

NIV 2 Samuel 9:4 "Where is he?" the king asked. Ziba answered, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."

NLT 2 Samuel 9:4 "Where is he?" the king asked."In Lo-debar," Ziba told him, "at the home of Makir son of Ammiel."

- **Machir:** 2Sa 17:27-29
- **Lo-debar:** Jos 13:26.

JONATHAN'S SON IN LO-DEBAR

So the king said to him, "Where is he?" - David's seeking heart. David is seeking the frightened son of Jonathan. Grace is unmerited favor and clearly other than covenant Jonathan's son had no reason to expect kindness. One wonders what he would have done had he known about and understood the solemn covenant vows his father Jonathan had made with David some 15-20 years earlier.

THOUGHT - It begs the question dear saint in the New Covenant with God's Son, do you really know and understand the privileged position you have entered into because of this Covenant cut almost 2000 years ago? Are you still fearful? (Afraid that God is an angry Judge who is watching your ever move ready at any moment to punish you or even kill you?) Are you filled with shame for past sins which have been covered by the blood of the New Covenant (cp Mephibosheth's name)? Are you living in spiritual poverty (cp Lo-Debar) because you don't know about or really understand the infinite riches which are yours as an heir of God and co-heir of Christ

And Ziba said to the king, "Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel in Lo-debar- Machir means "sold" and **Lo-debar** means "place of no pasture." Mephibosheth had been sold to a place of no pasture, no future. One can only imagine how often he must have looked over his shoulders wondering if this might be the day David's soldiers come to take him back to be executed. Indeed, when David's men came to take him to David, his initial reaction was surely this is the beginning of the end. He would reason like men reason, knowing full well that his grandfather had tried for 10 years to snuff out David's life. And now it was time for Mephibosheth to reap the sins of his grandfather! But whereas his grandfather had a heart after man's heart (or worse yet his own heart), he did not know that David had a heart after God's heart!

Machir the son of Ammiel - Machir means "selling, sold". Ammiel means "the people of God." We encounter Machir again in 2Sa 17:27, 28, 29 which says that he (among others) brought supplies to David the fugitive King, suggesting that Machir was relatively well off. He certainly seems to be a man filled with great compassion, having harbored and supported Mephibosheth for some 15-20 years prior to David's calling him to court. And for all Machir knew, King David may have held him guilty for harboring a relative of the rival monarchy, which could have meant the death sentence not only for Mephibosheth but himself, had David been so disposed (and as was frequently the case when a new regime came into power).

Lo-Debar - No pasture. A good word picture of Mephibosheth's condition. Even as David made a way out of the "wilderness wandering" for crippled Mephibosheth, our Greater David **will make a way (play this song)** for you dear reader. You may have been a believer for some time but because of circumstances (and people) you feel now like you are in a place of "no pasture", filled with fears and anxieties, perhaps trapped in the shame (**bosheth** = shame) of past (forgiven) sins, haunted by thoughts that have virtually "crippled" your walk of faith. Our Greater David desires not just eternal life for you but abundant life today (Jn 10:10b). May David's bestowal of the **lovingkindness of God** on an undeserving cripple named Mephibosheth stir the embers of your flickering **hope** (See **Believer's Blessed Hope**) into full flame for the sake of His Name. Amen. **Meditate** on Mephibosheth's dire condition which was changed by grace to Davidic communion, and allow the Spirit of your Greater David to renew your mind with this truth about how God deals with the downcast. The psalmist would have you ask and answer these questions dear child of God...

Why are you in despair, O my soul?
And why have you become disturbed within me?
Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him
For the help of His presence.
(Psalm 42:5+)

2 Samuel 9:5 Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

BGT 2 Samuel 9:5 καὶ πῶλεν βασιλεὺς Δαυὶδ καὶ λαβὼν αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου Μαχὶρ υἱοῦ Ἀμμιὲλ ἐκ τῆς Λαδαβάρ

LXE 2 Samuel 9:5 And king David went, and took him out of the house of Machir the son Amiel of Lodabar.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar.

NET 2 Samuel 9:5 So King David had him brought from the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.

CSB 2 Samuel 9:5 So King David had him brought from the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:5 Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.

NIV 2 Samuel 9:5 So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.

NLT 2 Samuel 9:5 So David sent for him and brought him from Makir's home.

DAVID SENDS FOR JONATHAN'S SON

Then - Marks progression in the narrative.

King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar One senses David moves swiftly to bring Jonathan's son to the palace. KJV says David "fetched" Mephibosheth. David did not just send for him and tell him to pick up his crutches and make your way to Jerusalem. David made a way for him and provided the means for him to come. That's the lovingkindness of God through David on behalf of the covenant cut with his father Jonathan. It's a picture of the lovingkindness of God to those who have been crippled by the fall to come to His Throne Room through the New Covenant of His Son.

David is a beautiful picture of our Greater David, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who calls "Mephibosheths" crippled by the fall (Ro 5:12+) to **Come just as you are (Play this beautiful song)**.

Have you come? Will you come? Hear the King's grace filled invitation...

And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come."
And let the one who hears say, "Come."
And let the one who is thirsty Come;
Let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.
-- Rev 22:17+

From [Lo-Debar](#) ("No Pasture") - **Julie Martin** poetically describes the picture of crippled Mephibosheth in a place called "no pasture" to all people outside of Christ...

Grace in a "Barren Place"

I was that Mephibosheth
Crippled by my twisted pride and
hiding from You in a barren place
where You could not find me
where You would not give me what I deserved.

But somehow You found me and
I don't understand why but You
give me what I do not deserve.

You not only spared my desolate life but
You made it bountiful
And here at Your table
I will thank You, my King.
—Julie Martin

Gingrich comments on the **kindness** shown to Mephibosheth (2Sa 9:5, 6, 7)

- (1) **The essence of this kindness**—David caused Mephibosheth to prosper both materially and socially.
- (2) **The nature of this kindness**—It was "the kindness of God," 2Sa 9:3, the kind of kindness that God shows to men unmerited and gracious kindness.
- (3) **The cause of this kindness**—David showed Mephibosheth this kindness for Jonathan's sake, 2Sa 9:1, 7: 1Sa 20:14, 17. (Gingrich, R. E. The Book of 2nd Samuel. Memphis, TN.: Riverside Printing)

2 Samuel 9:6 Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and prostrated himself. And David said, "Mephibosheth." And he said, "Here is your servant!"

BGT 2 Samuel 9:6 κα παραγ νεται Μεμφιβοσθε υ ς Ιωναθαν υ ο Σαουλ πρ ς τ ν βασιλ α Δαυιδ κα πεσεν π πρ σωπον α το κα προσεκ νησεν α τ κα ε πεν α τ Δαυιδ Μεμφιβοσθε κα ε πεν δο δο λ ς σου

LXE 2 Samuel 9:6 And Memphibosthe the son of Jonathan the son of Saul comes to the king David, and he fell upon his face and did obeisance to him: and David said to him, Memphibosthe: and he said, Behold thy servant.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

NET 2 Samuel 9:6 When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed low with his face toward the ground. David said, "Mephibosheth?" He replied, "Yes, at your service."

CSB 2 Samuel 9:6 Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul came to David, bowed down to the ground and paid homage. David said, "Mephibosheth!" "I am your servant," he replied.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:6 And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, "Mephibosheth!" And he answered, "Behold, I am your servant."

NIV 2 Samuel 9:6 When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor. David said, "Mephibosheth!" "Your servant," he replied.

NLT 2 Samuel 9:6 His name was Mephibosheth; he was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson. When he came

to David, he bowed low to the ground in deep respect. David said, "Greetings, Mephibosheth." Mephibosheth replied, "I am your servant."

- **Mephibosheth:** 1Ch 8:34 1Ch 9:40, called Meribbaal
- **he fell:** Ge 18:2 33:3 1Sa 20:41 25:23

Related Passages:

1 Chronicles 8:34 The son of Jonathan was Merib-baal, and Merib-baal became the father of Micah.

1 Chronicles 9:40 The son of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal became the father of Micah.



MEPHIBOSHETH'S HUMBLE RESPONSE TO DAVID

Mephibosheth - His name means "dispeller of shame." "exterminator of shame (i.e., of idols." He is also called **Merib-baal** ("contender with Baal").

Don't confuse Jonathan's son Mephibosheth with Saul's son Mephibosheth, by his concubine [Rizpah](#) who caused a rift between Abner and Ish-bosheth in 2Sa 3:7+. Jonathan's son was shown kindness, while Saul's sons were handed over to the Gibeonites...

So the king took the two sons of [Rizpah](#) the daughter of Aiah, Armoni and Mephibosheth whom she had borne to Saul, and the five sons of Merab the daughter of Saul, whom she had borne to Adriel the son of Barzillai the Meholathite. 9 Then he gave them into the hands of the [Gibeonites](#), and they hanged them in the mountain before the LORD, so that the seven of them fell together; and they were put to death in the first days of harvest at the beginning of barley harvest. (2Sa 21:8, 9+) (See [Was the killing of Saul's descendants a just response to Saul's killing of the Gibeonites?](#))

The son of Jonathan the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and prostrated himself - Fear. Dread. Reverence. Humility. Mephibosheth must have had a range of reactions to seeing face to face the one his grandfather had relentless sought to exterminate. Mephibosheth bows to honor the man who is surely about to pronounce a guilty verdict on him. The text does not say but the fact that David has to tell him to fear not indicates that Mephibosheth was likely quivering, trembling, shaking from fear of the words he was about to hear!

Lying prostrate was an act of respect to authority figures especially kings (cp 1Sa 24:8; 25:23; Esther 8:3). In addition lying prostrate was also a frequent expression of fear. The beloved apostle John in exile on the Isle of Patmos fell down before his glorified Lord and heard words similar to those David spoke to Mephibosheth...

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as a dead man. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying, **Do not be afraid**; I am the first and the last (Rev 1:17+)

In the early days of the reign of David an Amalekite came and "fell to the ground and prostrated himself" before David, but David had him executed for saying he had killed God's anointed, King Saul. Many years later Saul's grandson comes and assumes the same humble, subservient posture and is amazed by grace bestowed on him by David. There is a bit of a pun in that they one who fell when his father and grandfather fell (to the Philistines) in turn fell before David.

And David said, "Mephibosheth." And he said, "Here is your servant!"- At the sound of his name from the lips of the king, Mephibosheth responds that he is David's servant, that he is willing to do whatever David asks. Notice that Ziba had not specified this name but had referred to him as **"the son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet."** While the Bible does not allow us to hear

the tone or inflection of David's voice, the context would certainly support the presumption that the King spoke with a gentle, soft tone, not a harsh, condemning tone. Don't miss this magnificent display of grace. It is what David did not say that is dramatic - He did not "the cripple". He did not say "my former enemy's grandson". He did not even say "Jonathan's son". Instead David calls him by his name, "**Mephibosheth**". Can you imagine what went through Mephibosheth's mind at that moment? "He knows my name. The King knows my name!" And the "Greater David" King Jesus also knows your name and calls you personally and intimately by name. He calls you by name to join Him at the table for communion and fellowship. How wonderful that David called this frightened, shame-filled "dead dog" by name, and sought to lift him out of his fear, his shame and his poverty and place him on a higher plane.

THOUGHT - Is this not a manifestation of the lovingkindness of God through David as he stoops in his royal robe to reach out and lift up this crippled man by calling his name? Is this not what the Greater David, the Lord Jesus Christ, has done for all who have entered into communion and fellowship with the King of kings by grace through faith? Hallelujah! Amen!

Mephibosheth - The root of this name includes the Hebrew word "**bosheth**" which means shame or shameful thing and in turn is from a root meaning to fall into disgrace through failure of self. This name certainly is apropos for the state of Jonathan's surviving son. However the first portion of Mephibosheth's name means something like to scatter or to exterminate and so the full meaning of Mephibosheth is exterminate, scatter or destroy shame, in fact something that did transpire because of the gracious bestowal of the lovingkindness of God by King David! The reader should be aware that there is a second individual in Scripture who is named **Mephibosheth** (2Sa 21:8). This latter Mephibosheth is a son of Saul who is later executed by the Gibeonites to avenge Saul's bloodguiltiness for attempting to exterminate the Gibeonites during his reign (See 2Sa 21:1-9-[See discussion of how this bloody revenge relates to the seriousness of the covenant Joshua cut with the Gibeonites some 300-400 years earlier!](#))

In the book of First Chronicles we also learn that **Mephibosheth** was also named **Merib-baal**...And the son of Jonathan was **Merib-baal**, and Merib-baal became the father of Micah. (1Chr 8:34, 9:40)

Comment: [Meri-baal](#) means from the "mouth of Baal", "contender with Baal" or the "mouth of the Lord" (*baal* means "lord" or "master"). While we cannot be absolutely certain it seems that **Merib-Baal** was changed to **Mephibosheth** to keep from having to pronounce the name "Baal", which was also the name of the horrible Canaanite deity and was a source of great shame to Israel. Thus the second part of Mephibosheth's name was changed from "baal" to "bosheth" or "shame".

Here is your servant (Hebrew = ebed; Lxx = [doulos](#)) - Mephibosheth refers to himself as "**servant**" five times (2Sa 9:6, 9:8, 19:26, 27, 28). **What does this say about Mephibosheth?** His reply suggests a humble attitude, an interpretation which is supported by the following passages. Like the apostle Paul (Ro 1:1-[note](#)) Mephibosheth seems to have understood the call and commitment that this great word "servant" pictures.

Robert Neighbour - The picture of Mephibosheth's appreciation. Jonathan's son came with no sounding of trumpets, as though he had accomplished some worthy feat. He came in humility, confessing his own worthlessness. He said, "What is thy servant that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" Grace excludes boasting, because grace is bestowed where there is no worth. The sinner cannot begin to recount before God his merits. There is no merit. The sinner deserves nothing but the house of Machir, nothing but Lo-debar. The sinner deserves no more than judgment and eternal death. The sinner will not so much as lift up his face, but beating upon his breast he says: "God be merciful unto me the sinner."

In Lovingkindness Jesus Came
by Charles H Gabriel

In lovingkindness Jesus came
My soul in mercy to reclaim,
And from the depths of sin and shame
Through grace He lifted me.

Refrain

From sinking sand He lifted me,
With tender hand He lifted me,
From shades of night to plains of light,
O praise His Name, He lifted me!

He called me long before I heard,
Before my sinful heart was stirred,
But when I took Him at His word,
Forgiv'n, He lifted me.

Refrain

His brow was pierced with many a thorn,
His hands by cruel nails were torn,
When from my guilt and grief, forlorn,
In love He lifted me.

Refrain

Now on a higher plane I dwell,
And with my soul I know 'tis well;
Yet how or why I cannot tell
He should have lifted me.

Refrain

Spurgeon - If there be a **Mephibosheth** anywhere who is lame or halt, help him for Jonathan's sake. If there be a poor tried believer, weep with him, and bear his cross for the sake of him who wept for thee and carried thy sins. Since thou art thus forgiven freely for Christ's sake, go and tell to others the joyful news of pardoning mercy. Be not contented with this unspeakable blessing for thyself alone, but publish abroad the story of the cross. Holy gladness and holy boldness will make you a good preacher, and all the world will be a pulpit for you to preach in. Cheerful holiness is the most forcible of sermons, but the Lord must give it you. Seek it this morning before you go into the world. When it is the Lord's work in which we rejoice, we need not be afraid of being too glad.

2 Samuel 9:7 David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan, and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you shall eat at my table regularly."

BGT 2 Samuel 9:7 κα ε πεν α τ Δαυιδ μ φοβο τι ποι ν ποι σω μετ σο λεος δι Ιωναθαν τ ν πατ ρα σου κα ποκαταστ σω σοι π ντα γρ ν Σαουλ πατρ ς το πατρ ς σου κα σ φ γ ρτον π τ ς τραπ ζης μου δι παντ ς

LXE 2 Samuel 9:7 And David said to him, Fear not, for I will surely deal mercifully with thee for the sake of Jonathan thy father, and I will restore to thee all the land of Saul the father of thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew 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.

NET 2 Samuel 9:7 David said to him, "Don't be afraid, because I will certainly extend kindness to you for the sake of Jonathan your father. You will be a regular guest at my table."

CSB 2 Samuel 9:7 "Don't be afraid," David said to him, "since I intend to show you kindness because of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all your grandfather Saul's fields, and you will always eat meals at my table."

ESV 2 Samuel 9:7 And David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table always."

NIV 2 Samuel 9:7 "Don't be afraid," David said to him, "for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."

NLT 2 Samuel 9:7 "Don't be afraid!" David said. "I intend to show kindness to you because of my promise to your father, Jonathan. I will give you all the property that once belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will eat here with me at the king's table!"

NRS 2 Samuel 9:7 David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan; I will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you yourself shall eat at my table always."

- **Do not fear:** Ge 43:18,23 50:18-21 1Sa 12:19,20,24 Isa 35:3,4 Mk 5:33,34 Lu 1:12,13,29,30

- **for I will:** 2Sa 9:1,3 Ru 2:11,12 2Ti 1:16-18
- **you shall eat at my table regularly:** 2Sa 9:11 19:28,33 1Ki 2:7 Ps 41:9 Jer 25:33,34 Mt 6:11 Lu 22:30 Rev 3:20

DO NOT FEAR FOR YOU WILL HAVE RESTORATION & FELLOWSHIP

David said to him, "Do not fear - What a picture of the great Son of David Christ Jesus, for these words showing acceptance and not rejection were continually on His lips. The Septuagint (LXX) translates the Hebrew **do not fear** with the Greek "**me phobou** " (from phobos) using the present imperative with a negative which calls for one to cease something they are already doing, in this case cease fearing retribution and revenge from King David. Indeed, Mephibosheth was surely filled with dread at this first sight of his grandfather's archenemy (as least from Saul's perspective) and knew that his first words would call for the end his life. Yes, Mephibosheth's life would soon "end", but not as he had expected, not with his head on a platter before the king (Mt 14:6, 7, 8, 11) but with a privileged position at the royal table with the King! From fear of gallows to fullness with gastronomic delights! Amazing grace. Incomparable lovingkindness. And so King David quickly seeks to quiet Mephibosheth's fear and anxiety. (Related topic: [Fear, How to Handle It](#)) And on what basis does David take such incredible action? It flows out of covenant, and the loyal, steadfast covenant love that David had for Mephibosheth's father Jonathan. As someone has well said "What goes around, comes around." and this is especially true if it is based on covenants that have been cut that include the households of the covenanting parties (1Sa 20:14-17).

Indeed, many years earlier Jonathan had spoken similar words of comfort to David...

Thus he (Jonathan) said to him, "Do not be afraid (present imperative + negative = calls stop being afraid), because the hand of Saul my father will not find you, and you will be king over Israel and I will be next to you; and Saul my father knows that also." (1 Sa 23:17)

God often speaks these same comforting words to those who are His (Ge 15:1, Lk 12:32, Rev 1:17) and in fact this was one of the most frequent commands of Jesus (Mt 10:26, 28,31, 14:27, 17:7, 28:10 Mk 5:36, 6:50, Lk 5:10, 8:50, 12:4, 7, 32, Jn 6:20)

For - Term of explanation. David explains why he does not need to fear. David does not just say "Fear not," but gives three tangible reasons that should demolish any fear in Mephibosheth.

I will surely (Hebrew = kiy) **show kindness to you** Don't miss the Spirit inspired addition of the Hebrew adverb "surely" (kiy) -- Not just "show kindness" but "**surely**" show kindness, words calculated to dissolve all the doubts and fears that surely must have shackled Mephibosheth. Many of the translations unfortunately do not render this little Hebrew particle "**kiy**" (03588) and thus miss the added emphasis intended by David. **Kiy** means indeed, surely, truly and is a marker of emphasis which strengthens the statement which follows (eg, Ge 18:20 = "indeed"; 1Sa 14:44, 1Sa 21:5). When used in this sense, "**kiy**" is almost equivalent to a positive assurance.

for the sake of your father Jonathan - For introduces David's explanation. This is a clear reference to Jonathan's covenant with David (1Sa 20:14, 15, 16) which he would not break.

and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; Given that Saul was King, this is no small gift David bestows on Mephibosheth. David could have given Mephibosheth a few acres in proximity to the Holy City and that would have been grace (unmerited favor) But this is not the generous heart of David, who goes far beyond the letter of the law, even as the Greater David has done to those who believe in Him...

For of His (Jesus') fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. (Jn 1:16-17).

Comment: How often we forget this truth which speaks of waves of God's amazing grace that continually break over our heads, washing us clean, strengthening us for the good fight, the worthy walk. Grace piled upon grace. Overflowing. Abundant. Never ending. Amazing!

and you shall eat at my table regularly - (HCSB - "you will **always** eat meals at my table", ESV "you shall eat at my table **always**") He not just given a one time, but an open invitation to eat regularly, a picture of fellowship and communion. Little wonder that the greater Son of David calls us to eat at His table Paul writing

When He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you;**d o** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood;**d o** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He

comes. (1Cor 11:24-26+)

Ryken comments "It was a mark of great favor to "eat at the king's table," an honor bestowed by King David on Mephibosheth (2Sa 9:7, 13) and the sons of Barzillai (1Kings 2:7). To dine at the king's table is an honor; it is to enjoy the favor, protection, prosperity and power of the king (2Sa 9:7-13; 19:28; 1 Kings 2:7). Refusing the king's invitation insults him (1Sa 20:29; Esther 1:12). To be disinvited from sitting at the king's table and reduced to "eating the crumbs" from underneath it instead is a picture of humiliation and defeat (Jdg 1:7; used figuratively in Ezek 39:20 and Mt 15:21-28). (Ryken, L., Wilhoit, J., Longman, T., Duriez, C., Penney, D., & Reid, D. G. Dictionary of biblical imagery Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press)

IVP Background commentary notes that "Mephibosheth had good cause to be afraid of David. There is wide precedent in Mesopotamian texts for the elimination of all rival claimants to the throne when a king comes to power (compare Baasha's murder of Jeroboam's family in 1Kings 15:29). Such purges also occurred years later as a form of revenge for political opposition or rebellion attempted against previous rulers. For example, Ashurbanipal mutilated, executed and fed the bodies of his grandfather's rivals to dogs as part of his first official acts as king of Assyria. David, however, treats Mephibosheth, the only surviving male member of the royal family, as the rightful heir to Saul's estates. His generosity is coupled with the command to eat at David's table. In this way Mephibosheth is treated with honor, though some have noted it also keeps him under observation should he be inclined to subversion. (Matthews, V. H., Chavalas, M. W., & Walton, J. H.. The IVP Bible background commentary: Old Testament. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press)

James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - THE LAME PRINCE. Bible "Fear Not, No. 4.

"And David said unto him, Fear not, for I will surely show thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake" (2 Sam. 9:7).

How welcome this royal "Fear not" must have been to the trembling and fearful prince, Mephibosheth! How unexpected it was! What a surprise it was to him, being altogether different to what he really expected.

The King's "Fear not" would fall on his ears as a peal of silvery bells. But who was this Prince Mephibosheth? He was Jonathan's son, the last survivor of the royal house of Saul. When news of the death of King Saul and his sons on the fatal battlefield of Gilboa reached the royal palace, the nurse, snatching up in her arms this infant son of Jonathan, fled with him to Lo-debar. In the hurry she let him fall, when his feet were permanently injured. Sixteen years had passed when, upon David inquiring, "Is there any that is left of the house of Saul that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" and hearing of the survival of this lame prince, sent and had him brought into his royal presence. Tremblingly must Mephibosheth have made that journey; and, at last, ushered into the king's presence, must have expected his death. When lo! nothing but grace was meted out to him. It is a lovely picture of salvation. Convicted of sin, and aware of your lost and ruined condition, do you feel you dare not entertain any hope of securing His grace and favour? Then listen and take to heart this story.

I. He was the King's Enemy, owing to his relation to Saul, though, thank God, the king was not an enemy of the poor trembling prince. We are by nature at enmity with God, though God is not at enmity with us, and is ever beseeching us to be reconciled to Him.

II. He was Lame Through a Fall. And so is it with us. What moral and spiritual weakness and sickness and infirmities are ours by the Fall.

III. He was in a Far Country, away from the king. Far, far away from Jerusalem, the place of blessing, of peace and worship, at Lo-debar, "the place of no bread." We, too, are by nature in the far country, away, far away, from God.

IV. He was Sought Out by the King. No, it was not a matter of Mephibosheth seeking the king, but the king seeking him. Wherein do you think our Christian faith differs from all other faiths that have ever been or are? In this, and this alone, all other faiths represent man, in the first instance, seeking God (which is not true, for man, left to himself, does not want God), but the Christian faith represents God as seeking man, which alone is true to fact. Man is indifferent to God; but God is not indifferent to him.

V. He was Received In his Deformity, just as he was, without any attempt to improve himself. Ah, that we must remember:

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee:
O Lamb of God, I come."

VI. He was Received for Another's Sake, for the sake of Jonathan. And we are received for Another's sake, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Accepted in the Beloved."

VII. He Learned to Estimate Himself Aright, but only after he came to David When Mephibosheth said, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" he may have simply indulged in an Eastern's habit of self-depreciation in the presence of his superior. Yet it may have been a genuine and sincere expression of his deepest feelings. But, pray note, he only expressed this view after he came to David. It is only after we come to the Lord Jesus that we take low and truer views of ourselves, and get to see sin in the light of Heaven.

VIII. He Got in David More than he had Lost. What he had lost he regained, plus David's friendship and fellowship. We gain more in Christ than we lost in Adam.

IX. He Dwelt with the King in the royal palace, and upon royal fare: "For he did eat continually at the king's table." Oh, what blessed news! And we, too, may leave the pit and the dunghill and dwell in the holiest of all by the Blood of Jesus.

Poor conscience-stricken sinner, fearful of just and deserved judgment, listen to our blessed Lord's "Fear not, for I will surely show thee kindness for Jesus' sake." Dare, therefore, to entertain hope of finding mercy, and cling to the Rock of Ages.

Jerry Bridges - AT THE KING'S TABLE

You shall eat at my table always. (2 Sa 9:7)

There's a beautiful story in the life of King David illustrating God's grace to us through Christ. Mephibosheth was the son of David's bosom friend, Jonathan, son of Saul. He'd been crippled in both feet at age five. After David was established as king over all Israel, he desired to show kindness to anyone remaining of Saul's family, "for Jonathan's sake." So Mephibosheth—crippled and destitute, unable to care for himself and living in someone else's house—was brought into David's house and "ate at David's table like one of the king's sons" (2 Samuel 9:11, NIV).

Why was Mephibosheth treated this way? It was for Jonathan's sake. We might say Jonathan's loyal friendship with David "earned" Mephibosheth's seat at David's table. Mephibosheth, in his crippled and destitute condition, unable to improve his lot and wholly dependent on the benevolence of others, is an illustration of you and me, crippled by sin and unable to help ourselves. David, in his graciousness, illustrates God the Father, and Jonathan illustrates Christ.

Just as Mephibosheth was elevated to a place at the king's table for Jonathan's sake, so you and I are elevated to the status of God's children for Christ's sake. And just as being seated at the king's table involved not only daily food but other privileges as well, so God's salvation for Christ's sake carries with it all the provisions we need, not only for eternity but for this life as well.

This account both begins and ends with the statement that Mephibosheth was crippled in both feet(2 Sa 9:3, 13). Mephibosheth never got over his crippled condition. He never got to the place where he could leave the king's table and make it on his own. And neither do we. (Borrow [Transforming grace : living confidently in God's unfailing love](#))

Spurgeon - From this story (OF MEPHIBOSHETH) we learn to remember past kindnesses. If in his prosperity any man has been good to us, let us deal well with him if we ever see either him or his children in want. Never let it be said that a child of God is ungrateful to his fellow-men. If we are to do kindness to those who have treated us ill, much more are we bound to repay the favours of those who have been our friends. A further lesson may be found in the fact that David and Jonathan had made a covenant, and that David was faithful to it, even though Jonathan's son was both obscure in his abode, poor in his estate, and deformed in his person. The Lord also is true to his covenant; he will not forsake those who put their trust in him. Though many of his people are, spiritually, as lame as Mephibosheth, yet he remembers them, and even deigns to invite them to sit at his table in familiar intercourse with him. The Lord is not ashamed of the poor; feeble friends of Jesus, but out of love to their well-beloved Lord and Master he will grant to them to eat continually at the king's table, even though they be lame on both their feet.

Poor, weak, and worthless, though I am,
I have a rich almighty Friend;
Jesus, the Saviour, is His name:
He freely loves, and without end.

He cheers my heart, my wants supplies,
And says that I shall shortly be
Enthroned with him above the skies:
Oh! what a friend is Christ to me!

God is gone up with shouts of joy,
And angels harping round;
Our Lord is welcomed to the sky

With trumpet's joyful sound.

Open, ye heavenly gates, to let
The King of glory in;
The Lord of hosts, of saying might,
Who vanquished death and sin.

And shall not mortals join their songs,
Though poor their notes may be?
The lisping of believing tongues,
Makes heavenly minstrelsy.

Wade Horton - The Lame Prince 2 Samuel 9:7

INTRODUCTION: How welcome this royal "Fear not" must have been to the trembling and fearful prince, Mephibosheth! How unexpected it was!

What a surprise! So different from what he had expected! The king's "Fear not" fell on his ears like the peal of silvery bells, like the sound of clear water running in a fountain. But who was this prince, Mephibosheth? He was Jonathan's son, the last of the house of Saul. When the news of Saul's death on the battlefield of Gilbos reached the royal palace, the nurse grabbed Jonathan's infant son and fled to Lo-debar. In hurrying, she let him fall, and his feet were permanently injured. Sixteen years had passed when David inquired, "Is there any left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" They bought the prince into his royal presence. The prince expected death, but nothing but grace was meted out to him. This is a wonderful picture of salvation! A sinner, convicted of sin, dare not entertain the hope of securing favor. So says the devil. But God says, "Come unto me" (Matthew 11:28).

I. HE WAS THE KING'S ENEMY.

- A. Owing to his relation to Saul, he was the king's enemy. But King David was not an enemy to the poor, trembling prince.
- B. We, by nature, are at enmity with God. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God..." (Romans 8:7).
- C. God is not at enmity with us. He ever beseeches us, "Be ye reconciled..." (2 Corinthians 5:20). Isaiah 1:18—"Come now, and let us reason together." 2 Corinthians 5:18—"Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ..."

II. HE WAS LAME THROUGH A FALL.

- A. So it is with us. What moral and spiritual weaknesses and infirmities are ours through the Fall?
- B. When Adam fell, we fell with him. What a terrible fall... banishment from God!

III. HE WAS IN A FAR COUNTRY.

- A. Far away from the king; far away from Jerusalem, the "place of blessing," and from Lo-debar, the "place of no pasture."
 - B. We are by nature, in a far country—far, far from God. We are "strangers and pilgrims" (Hebrews 11:13; 1 Peter 2:11).
- Ephesians 2:17-19—"And came and preached peace to you which were afar off.... For through him we both have access by one Spirit.... Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God."

IV. HE WAS SOUGHT OUT BY THE KING.

- A. Mephibosheth was not seeking the king. But the king was seeking him!
- B. Man himself does not want God. Man is indifferent to God; but God is not indifferent to man.
- C. Matthew 11:28—"Come unto me." "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Revelation 22:17).

V. HE WAS RECEIVED IN HIS DEFORMITY.

- A. Just as he was, without any attempt to improve himself, Mephibosheth was accepted.
- B. "Just as I am! without one plea, But that Thy blood, was shed for me, And that Thou bidst me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come! I come!"
- C. Romans 5:6—"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Jesus loves

and saves (Hebrews 7:25).

VI. HE WAS RECEIVED FOR ANOTHER'S SAKE.

A. Mephibosheth was received for the sake of Jonathan.

B. We, also, are received for another's sake—"his [Jesus'] sake" (Romans 4:23).

John 1:11, 12—"He came unto his own and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God."

VII. HE LEARNED TO ESTIMATE HIMSELF ARIGHT.

A. After coming to David, Mephibosheth said, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" (2 Samuel 9:8).

B. It was an Eastern custom of self-depreciation, abasement, in the presence of a superior. Yet it may have been a sincere feeling, a genuine expression of Mephibosheth's humble place before a king.

C. It is only after we come to Christ that we take a low position—that we see sin in the light of heaven (James 4:10).

D. Daniel, John, and other outstanding saints fell down before God.

VIII. HE GOT IN DAVID MORE THAN HE HAD LOST.

A. What the prince had lost he regained, along with David's friendship and fellowship.

B. Likewise, we gain more in Christ than we lost in Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45-49).

IX. HE DWELT WITH THE KING.

A. "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table" (2 Samuel 9:13).

B. What blessed news: we may leave the pit and the dunghill and dwell in the holiest place of all through the blood of Jesus (Psalm 40:2; Hebrews 10:19).

CONCLUSION: Poor, conscience-stricken sinner, fearful of judgment, listen to God: "Fear not, I will show you kindness for Jesus' sake."

2 Samuel 9:8 Again he prostrated himself and said, "What is your servant, that you should regard a dead dog like me?"

BGT 2 Samuel 9:8 κα προσεκ νησεν Μεμφιβοσθε κα ε πεν τ ς ε μι δο λ ς σου τι π βλεψας π τ ν κ ν α τ ν τεθνηκ τα τ ν μοιον μο

LXE 2 Samuel 9:8 And Memphibosthe did obeisance, and said, Who am I thy servant, that thou hast looked upon a dead dog like me?

KJV 2 Samuel 9:8 And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?

NET 2 Samuel 9:8 Then Mephibosheth bowed and said, "Of what importance am I, your servant, that you show regard for a dead dog like me?"

CSB 2 Samuel 9:8 Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant that you take an interest in a dead dog like me?"

ESV 2 Samuel 9:8 And he paid homage and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?"

NIV 2 Samuel 9:8 Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?"

NLT 2 Samuel 9:8 Mephibosheth bowed respectfully and exclaimed, "Who is your servant, that you should show such kindness to a dead dog like me?"

- a dead dog: 2Sa 3:8 16:9 1Sa 24:14,15 26:20 Mt 15:26,27

Related Passage:

2 Samuel 3:8+ Then Abner was very angry over the words of Ish-bosheth and said, "**Am I a dog's head that belongs to Judah?** Today I show kindness to the house of Saul your father, to his brothers and to his friends, and have not delivered you into the hands of David; and yet today you charge me with a guilt concerning the woman.

MEPHIBOSHETH'S SELF DISPARAGEMENT AS A DEAD DOG!

Again he prostrated himself Reflecting his humility and amazement at such unexpected kindness.

THOUGHT - Have you ever fallen prostrate before the Lord in utter amazement at the grace and mercy He has poured out in your life? In an "exercise crazy" society, this is good exercise for the soul!

and said, "What is your servant, that you should regard a dead dog like me- To the Jews, a dog was bad enough and they were held in great contempt but to call oneself a dead dog makes the picture even more despicable, someone contemptible and useless. Mephibosheth expresses his abject humility for David's incomprehensible kindness. Notice David does not answer Mephibosheth's question - grace does not answer the question!

THOUGHT - As someone has said when you move from, "I'm a good person", to the realization of you being dead in trespasses and is where our salvation begins.

THOUGHT - Mephibosheth recognized he brought nothing to plate (so to speak) that would merit David's mercy and kindness. That is a good place for us to be with our Father, overwhelmed and in awe of His great undeserved love on us, John writing "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him." (1Jn 3:1) Or Peter's recognition that Jesus was God and declared "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (Lk 5:8).

Ryken notes that "Although the phrase "a dog's life" epitomizes a life of ease devoid of anxiety in contemporary Western society, a "dog's life" in a biblical context shocks the reader with visions of squalor, dismal poverty and the life of a pariah at the bottom of the social scale. Dogs are repeatedly depicted in terms of their disgusting and inadequate diet. Typically they devour what is left over after humans are finished eating, and that is usually described as mere crumbs (Mt 15:26, 27; Mk 7:27, 28). One certainly does not give them quality fare (Mt 7:6). Consequently dogs are never satisfied and are constantly on the lookout for nourishment. Since what they manage to scavenge is inadequate, they may consume what is repulsive (Pr 26:11; 2Pe 2:22) or what is not fit for human consumption (Ex 22:31). Of all the domesticated animals there is a particular revulsion for the dog, who alone is willing to eat humans corpses, a fact that is reprehensible to every human and exploited uniquely by the book of Kings as a curse that comes upon wicked dynasts (1Ki 14:11; 16:4; 21:23, 24; 2Ki 9:10, 36)... To identify oneself as a dog is therefore to draw attention to one's miserable condition as an inconsequential creature. **A dead dog** is a cheap life: "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king?" (2Sa 16:9). David's comparison of Saul's pursuit to hunting "after a dead dog" (1Sa 24:14) craftily combines two meanings. David is not worth hunting, and doing so is an act of cowardice. (Ryken, L., Wilhoit, J., Longman, T., Duriez, C., Penney, D., & Reid, D. G. Dictionary of biblical imagery Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press)

Kay Arthur writes that "**Mephibosheth** prostrates himself and says, "What is your servant, that you should regard a dead dog like me?" (2Sa 9:8)

A "**dead dog**" was a Hebrew expression for an embarrassing piece of garbage. That's how Mephibosheth saw himself. Compassion and lovingkindness were flowing from the throne, but Mephibosheth couldn't take it in. Why? Because, beloved, like so many of us, he did not have the facts straight. Mephibosheth knew only what he had been told by people who perpetuated Saul's point of view. Mephibosheth had lived in utter ignorance of the covenant his father, Jonathan, had cut for him - a covenant made for just such an occasion as this.

And what about you, precious one? Are you crippled because you've been living in fear of God, ignorant of the covenant cut for you? Have you been dwelling in the barrenness and the poverty of [Lo-Debar](#) rather than in the riches of the inheritance that belongs to those of covenant? Have you feared that, if you ever came and bowed before God and gave Him your life, He would do something terrible to you, He would exact some horrible price-giving you cancer, or killing your loved ones, leaving you single, and alone, or sending you off to some hostile foreign land? Have you believed you can only be safe by fighting for the throne, shaping your own destiny, taking care of yourself rather than trusting the God you have heard about?

May I ask you this: How well do you know the One who sits upon the throne? Are you fully aware that He administers justice for all His people? Or are you the hopeless victim of rumors about God? Do you feel that God would never find you acceptable and fit to

enter His city because you are lame? Do you sometimes feel that He (and everyone else) must view you as worthless? Quit trembling, beloved. You have heard lies. Such reasoning knows nothing of the covenant cut for you from eternity. There is hope for you. There is a future because of covenant.

And yet here was Mephibosheth his own choosing an enemy of David's, a man lame in both feet, crippled because of fleeing from David, worthless and embarrassing in his own eyes yet bidden by the king to come and dine! Why? It wasn't because of Mephibosheth. It was because of Jonathan...

"Do not fear, for I will surely show kindness (hesed a covenant word) to you for the sake of your father Jonathan (for the sake of covenant)." ([2Sa 9:7](#))

You can feast at Jesus' table anytime. He who fed the multitudes, turned the water into wine, to the hungry calls even now, **Come and dine!**" (Rev 3:20-[note](#)) Oh, beloved, are you taking hold of all that is yours in your covenant with Him? (Borrow [Our covenant God : learning to trust Him](#))

Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?"—2 Samuel 9:8

If Mephibosheth was thus humbled by David's kindness, what shall we be in the presence of our gracious Lord?

**The more grace we have, the less we shall think of ourselves,
for grace, like light, reveals our impurity.**

Eminent saints have scarcely known to what to compare themselves, their sense of unworthiness has been so clear and keen. "I am," says holy Rutherford, "a dry and withered branch, a piece of dead carcass, dry bones, and not able to step over a straw." In another place he writes, "Except as to open outbreaks, I want nothing of what Judas and Cain had." The meanest objects in nature appear to the humbled mind to have a preference above itself, because they have never contracted sin: a dog may be greedy, fierce, or filthy, but it has no conscience to violate, no Holy Spirit to resist. A dog may be a worthless animal, and yet by a little kindness it is soon won to love its master, and is faithful unto death; but we forget the goodness of the Lord, and follow not at his call.

The term "**dead dog**" is the most expressive of all terms of contempt, but it is none too strong to express the self-aborrence of instructed believers. They do not affect mock modesty, they mean what they say, they have weighed themselves in the balances of the sanctuary, and found out the vanity of their nature. At best, we are but clay, animated dust, mere walking hillocks; but viewed as sinners, we are monsters indeed.

Let it be published in heaven as a wonder, that the Lord Jesus should set his heart's love upon such as we are. Dust and ashes though we be, we must and will "magnify the exceeding greatness of his grace." Could not his heart find rest in heaven? Must he needs come to these tents of Kedar for a spouse, and choose a bride upon whom the sun had looked? O heavens and earth, break forth into a song, and give all glory to our sweet Lord Jesus.

John Kitto - Daily Bible Illustrations - Sunday. A Dead Dog—II Samuel 9:8

When the son of Jonathan received the assurance of kindness and protection from David, he said, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I am?" This, according to Jewish notions and phraseology is the strongest expression of humility and unworthiness, nay of vileness, that could be devised, or that the language could express. On account of its various unclean habits, the dog was abhorred by the Hebrews, and became the type of all that was low, mean, and degraded—although, by reason of its usefulness, its presence was endured in certain capacities—chiefly in the care of flocks and in hunting. To be called a dog, was therefore the height of ignominious reproach and insult, and for a man to call himself a dog, was the depth of humiliation and self-abasement. The reader will call to mind many instances of this, which it is therefore not needful to point out. Now, if such were the disesteem in which the living animal was held if to be called "a dog" merely was so shocking—for one to be called, or to call himself, not merely a dog, but "a dead dog," is the strongest devisable hyperbole of unworthiness and degradation, for in a dead dog the vileness of a corpse is added to the vileness of a dog.

And who is it that uses this expression? One who was by his birth a prince, of whom we know nothing but what is good—whose sentiments, whenever they appear, are just, generous, and pious—whose private character appears to have been blameless, and his public conduct without spot. Yet this man calls himself a "dead dog"—that is, the most unworthy of creatures—the vilest of wretches. The phrase "I am a worm, and no man," is nothing to this. Allowing for the hyperbole, it may thus seem that Mephibosheth abused himself far more than he needed, and confessed himself to be that which he really was not.

This raises a question of wider meaning than the particular instance involves, and which concerns us very deeply. It touches upon one of the things that are foolishness to the wisdom of the world, and which its philosophy cannot apprehend, because it is spiritually

discerned. The world sees men like Mephibosheth, not only “decent men,” as they call them in Scotland, and “respectable men,” as they are called in England—men not only of stainless moral character, but men of distinguished piety, jealous in every work by which God may be glorified and mankind advantaged—men ready, if need be, to suffer the loss of all things, and to give their bodies to be burned for conscience’ sake, and who, like Count Godomar, would “rather submit to be torn to pieces by wild beasts than knowingly or willingly commit any sin against God;” the world sees this, and yet bears these very men speak of themselves in terms which seem to them applicable to only the vilest of criminals—the offscourings of the earth. This is a case the world’s philosophy has never yet been able to fathom. It sees but the alternative of either taking these men at their own valuation, and holding that whatever fair show they present, they really are what they say, and therefore unfit for the company of honest men—unfit to live upon the earth; or else, that they speak with a disgusting mock humility, in declaring themselves to be what they know that they are not; and there is, perhaps, a general suspicion in the world that these persons would not like to be really taken for such “dead dogs” as they declare themselves to be.

How does this matter really stand? The obligations of truth are superior to all others. A man must not consciously lie even in God’s cause, nor even to his own disparagement, nor to express his humility. He has no more right to utter untruths to his own disparagements than to his own praise. Truth is absolute. It is obligatory under all circumstances, and in all relations. There is nothing in heaven or on earth that can modify the obligation to observe it. Yet such is the tendency to think well of ourselves, that although it is counted ignominious and contemptible for a man to utter a falsehood, or even a truth, to magnify himself, it is not observed to be in the same degree dishonorable for him to speak in his own disparagement. Perhaps it might be so, were it supposed that he spoke the truth, or what he believed to be true; for so intense is the degree of self-love, for which men give each other credit, that perhaps no man is ever believed to be sincere in whatever he says to his own disadvantage; and it is because nobody believes him—because it is concluded that he either deceives himself, or says what he knows to be untrue, that self-disparagement is not regarded as dishonorable in the same degree with self-praise. Yet it is not less the fact, that if self-disparagement be knowingly untrue, it is not less culpable than self-praise.

Yet Mephibosheth calls himself a “dead dog;” Agur calls himself “more foolish than any man,” Proverbs 30:1–3; and Paul declares himself “the chief of sinners,” I Timothy 1:15. Nevertheless, Mephibosheth was a worthy man—and there were far more foolish men than Agur—far greater sinners than Paul. What, then, did they lie? By no means. The man of tender and enlightened conscience knows that in God’s sight the very heavens are not clean, and that he charges even his angels with folly. The more advanced he is in spiritual life the more clear is the perception which he realizes of the holiness of God, the more distinctly he feels how abhorrent all sin, of thought, word, or action, must be to Him, and how it separates the soul from Him. He knows not the heart of others, and he does not judge them. But he knows something of the evil of his own heart; he knows that he is to be judged according to his light—according to what he has, and not according to what he has not; and judging by that measure, considering how much has been given to him, he knows, he feels, that a doubt, a misgiving, an evil thought, a carnal impulse, involves him—with his light, and with the proofs of God’s love in Christ towards him, which have been brought home to his heart, in far greater sin than belongs to the grosser offences of less instructed men. He reasons also that if he, with eyes blinded by self-love, is able to see so much of the plague of his own heart, what must be the sight presented to the view of the pure and holy God, who sees far more of defilement in the best of our duties, than we ever saw in the worst of our sins. What man of wakeful conscience is there, who, when he looks well to the requirements of God’s holy law—meditates upon the essential holiness of the Divine character—considers his own neglected means and mercies—sees how the remaining depravities of his nature have defiled his holiest things—and knows how unthankful, how wayward, how rebellious, his heart has often been, is not compelled to smite upon his breast and cry out, “Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee?” Ah, it is well for him that he is not required to answer. Through the cloud of sin and grief, he hears that Voice which it is life to hear, “Son of man, be not afraid.” This is He who has taken the burden not only of his cares but of his sins. This is his Beloved; this is his Friend. All is well.

2 Samuel 9:9 Then the king called Saul's servant Ziba and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson.

BGT 2 Samuel 9:9 κα κ λεσεν βασιλε ς Σιβα τ παιδ ριον Σαουλ κα ε πεν πρ ς α τ ν π ντα σα σ τ ν τ Σαουλ κα λ τ ο κ α το δ ὠκα τ υ το κυρ ου σου

LXE 2 Samuel 9:9 And the king called Siba the servant of Saul, and said to him, All that belonged to Saul and to all his house have I given to the son of thy lord.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

NET 2 Samuel 9:9 Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's attendant, and said to him, "Everything that

belonged to Saul and to his entire house I hereby give to your master's grandson.

CSB 2 Samuel 9:9 Then the king summoned Saul's attendant Ziba and said to him, "I have given to your master's grandson all that belonged to Saul and his family.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:9 Then the king called Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson.

NIV 2 Samuel 9:9 Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family.

NLT 2 Samuel 9:9 Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba and said, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family.

- **I have given:** 2Sa 16:4 19:29 1Sa 9:1 Isa 32:8

DAVID INFORMS ZIBA OF MEPHIBOSHETH'S GIFT

Then the king called Saul's servant Ziba and said to him, "All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master's grandson - Notice he does not say "I will give" but "I have given!" It's past tense. It is done. There are no conditions that need to be met. There are no payments that need to be made. It is gratis. Indeed, it is grace, once again giving us insight into why David is called a man after God's own heart!

Paul Westervelt - You and I are Mephibosheths, too. The similarities between his life and ours are just too compelling. Before the Father drew us near by His own initiative, we spent our lives running from Him in brokenness and shame. We feared that entering His presence would bring judgment upon our heads. When finally we lay trembling at His feet, He touched us gently and said, "Don't be afraid." He lifted us up and said, "I'm going to give back to you everything you ever lost because of sin. I'm going to give you an inheritance, blessing, and riches in the heavenly places. But more than that, I want you forever in My presence, and I'm going to call you My child." And when we protested, "But why would You care about a worthless loser like me?" He said, "Because I know your brother Jesus. And for His sake, I'll do it all on your account." (Discipleship Journal, Issue 116 March/April 2000)

James Smith - Handfuls of Purpose - DAVID AND MEPHIBOSHETH;; OR, SAVED BY GRACE.

2 Samuel 9.

"Man's forgiveness may be true and sweet,
But yet he stoops to give it. More complete
Is love that lays forgiveness at thy feet,
And pleads with thee to raise it! Only Heaven
Means Crowned, not Vanquished, when it says Forgiven!"

—A. Procter.

Much food for reflection might be found in comparing this chapter with Romans 9-11. The purposes of God concerning Israel, as revealed in these chapters, ought to be better known than they are among believers everywhere. We might observe here—

I. Mephibosheth's Condition; or, The Sinner's Need.

1. **FEARFULNESS.** From the fact that such inquiry had to be made, we may learn that Mephibosheth was hiding from the king. They dread God who know not His love (v. 1). Hiding from his best friend. So like the sinner (Gen. 3:8).
2. **DESTITUTION.** "In the house of Machir (sold) in Lodebar" (without pasture) (v. 4). How true! The rebellious dwell in a dry land (Ps 68:6). Away from God the sinner is but lodging in the house of poverty (Isa. 44:20; Luke 15:16).
3. **HELPLESSNESS.** "Lame on both feet" (v. 13). At that time ye were without strength (Rom. 5:6). With regard to the things of God the unregenerated are heartless, handless, footless. Any ability we have is God-given (1 Peter 4:11).

II. David's Purpose; or, The Love of God. He wished to show kindness to the house of Saul (his enemy) for Jonathan's sake (the gift of God). What an illustration of 2 Corinthians 5:19. This—

1. **LOVE WAS SPONTANEOUS.** It was the voluntary impulse of a kind and merciful heart. "God is Love." God

takes the first step towards man's redemption (Eph. 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2). He so loved the world that He gave His Son. "We love Him because He first loved us."

2. LOVE WAS GRACIOUS. It sought out the undeserving. It offered favour to an enemy. While we were yet enemies Christ died for us. It was, indeed, the "Gospel of Grace" that David's servant carried to the poor cripple. What a privilege to belong to such "sent ones" (v. 5). This is a beautiful illustration of Romans 10:14, 15. What is the meaning of John 20:21?

3. LOVE WAS SELF-SACRIFICING. "I have given all that pertained to Saul" (v. 9). This was a great gift, but it was for Jonathan's sake. In John 3:16 we see a greater gift, and with this gift comes the pledge of all things (Rom. 8:32; 2 Peter 1:3).

III. Mephibosheth's Faith; or, Salvation Enjoyed.

He—

1. BELIEVED THE MESSAGE. So proved his faith by obeying the call. "He came unto David" (v. 6). See 2 Chron. 30:10, 11). The Master is come, and calleth for thee. We test the truth of the Gospel when we believe it.

2. HUMBLING HIMSELF. "He fell on his face." So well he may. He confesses himself to be as a "dead dog" (v. 8). You hath he quickened who were dead in sin—worse than a dead dog. The goodness of God leads to repentance (2 Cor. 5:14).

3. WAS ACCEPTED. "David said, Fear not, I will show thee kindness" (v. 7). The God who invites will surely receive (John 7:37). Think of His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:7).

4. WAS ADOPTED. "He shall eat at my table as one of the king's sons" (v. 11). Although he was lame on both his feet he sat continually at the king's table. His table of mercy covers many an infirmity (1 John 3:1, 2).

5. WAS MADE AN HEIR. "David said, I will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father" (v. 7). From poverty to plenty through the grace of the king (1 Peter 1:3, 4). By grace are ye saved through faith (Eph. 2:8).

2 Samuel 9:10 "You and your sons and your servants shall cultivate the land for him, and you shall bring in the produce so that your master's grandson may have food; nevertheless Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall eat at my table regularly." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

BGT 2 Samuel 9:10 κα ργ ατ τ ν γ ν σ κα ο υ ο σου κα ο δο λο σου κα ε σο σεις τ υ το κυρ ου σου ρτους κα δε ται α το ς κα Μεμφιβοσθε υ ς το κυρ ου σου φ γε ται δι παντ ς ρτον π τ ς τραπ ζης μου κα τ Σιβα σαν πεντεκα δεκα ο ο κα ε κοσι δο λοι

LXE 2 Samuel 9:10 And thou, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him; and thou shalt bring in bread to the son of thy lord, and he shall eat bread: and Memphibosthe the son of thy lord shall eat bread continually at my table. Now Siba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:10 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.

NET 2 Samuel 9:10 You will cultivate the land for him— you and your sons and your servants. You will bring its produce and it will be food for your master's grandson to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will be a regular guest at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)

CSB 2 Samuel 9:10 You, your sons, and your servants are to work the ground for him, and you are to bring in the crops so your master's grandson will have food to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, is always to eat at my table." Now Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:10 And you and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him and shall bring in the produce, that your master's grandson may have bread to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

NIV 2 Samuel 9:10 You and your sons and your servants are to farm the land for him and bring in the crops, so that your master's grandson may be provided for. And Mephibosheth, grandson of your master, will always

eat at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)

NLT 2 Samuel 9:10 You and your sons and servants are to farm the land for him to produce food for your master's household. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will eat here at my table." (Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.) Ziba replied,

NRS 2 Samuel 9:10 You and your sons and your servants shall till the land for him, and shall bring in the produce, so that your master's grandson may have food to eat; but your master's grandson Mephibosheth shall always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

NJB 2 Samuel 9:10 You must work the land for him, you and your sons and your slaves; you must harvest the produce to provide food for your master's family to eat. But Meribbaal, your master's son, will always take his own meals at my table.' Now, Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty slaves.

- shall eat bread: 2Sa 9:7,11-13 19:28 2Ki 25:29 Lu 14:15

ZIBA TO CULTIVATE MEPHIBOSHETH'S LAND

You and your sons and your servants shall cultivate the land for him, and you shall bring in the produce so that your master's grandson may have food - NLT - "You and your sons and servants are to farm the land for him to produce food for your master's household"

Nevertheless Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall eat at my table regularly- Note repetition of **your master's grandson**, speaking of Saul's grandson. It is surprising he does not say Jonathan's son.

Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants - He had plenty of help to cultivate the land!

I love **Chuck Swindoll's** illustration of God's grace taken from the life of **Mephibosheth** writing that "the bible is a photo album filled with **pictures of God's grace**. One striking image is found in the pages of 2 Samuel. The setting is the palace of King David. Gold and bronze fixtures gleam from the walls. Lofty, wooden ceilings crown each spacious room. In the banquet room, David and his children gather for an evening meal. Absalom, tanned and handsome, is there, as is David's beautiful daughter Tamar. The call to dinner is given, and the king scans the room to see if all are present. One figure, though, is absent. *Clump, scraaape, clump, scraaape*. The sound coming down the hall echoes into the chamber. *Clump, scraaape, clump, scraaape*. Finally, the person appears at the door and slowly shuffles to his seat. It is the lame Mephibosheth seated in grace at David's table. And the tablecloth covers his feet. Now the feast can begin. (Borrow [The tale of the tardy oxcart and 1,501 other stories](#))

J Vernon McGee draws some wonderful lessons from this chapter...

1. A child of God recognizes that he is also a cripple in God's sight. We are told in Ro 3:15,16: "Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways." That is the report from God's clinic on the human race. Our feet lead us astray. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). Then the writer of the Book of Proverbs says, "There is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Pr 16:25). Our feet get us into trouble. The way that the soul and the feet are so closely connected in Scripture is quite interesting. I do not mean to make a bad pun; I am not talking about the sole of the foot.

Remembering that David for the rest of his life had a crippled boy who ate at his table, listen to the words of Ps 56:13, "For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from failing, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?" Ps 73:2 says, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped" David knew what it was to have lame feet! In Psalm 116:8 he says, "For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." My friend, all of us are actually cripples before God.

Modern philosophy and humanism present another picture of man. I once heard a liberal say that Christ came to reveal the splendors of the human soul! God says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, and it is a mess of bad things. You cannot expect any good from human nature. Paul could say, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Ro. 7:18). Paul had no confidence in the flesh. The Law is condemnation. Jn 14:6 says, "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." When we come that way, He will receive us.

2. David extended kindness to Mephibosheth for the sake of Jonathan. This is another facet of this amazing incident. You see, David did not know the boy. He did what he did for the sake of Jonathan whom he loved. When David looked upon this boy, he did

not see a cripple; he saw Jonathan. He had made a covenant with Jonathan. The kindness, mercy, and grace extended to a helpless person were for the sake of another.

We have seen how much Jonathan meant to David. When the news of his death reached him, he said: "How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle! O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (2 Sam. 1:25,26). Now God has saved you and me because of Another—the Lord Jesus Christ. When we accept Jesus Christ as Savior, Ephesians 1:6 tells us that we are "accepted in the beloved." When God sees you and me in Christ, He accepts us and saves us.

3. David said nothing about the lame feet of Mephibosheth. There is no record that David ever mentioned it or made an allusion to it. He never said to him, "It is too bad that you are crippled." He treated him like a prince. He sat at the king's table, and his feet were covered with a linen cloth. My friend, God forgets our sin because it is blotted out by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the only way God can forgive our sins. The writer of Hebrews put it this way: "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 10:17).

4. Mephibosheth said nothing about his lame feet. What do you think David and Mephibosheth talked about when they sat at the table? They talked about another person. Do you know who it was? It was Jonathan. David loved Jonathan. Mephibosheth loved Jonathan—he was his father. Jonathan was the subject of conversation. What should you and I talk about? Some Christians take a keen delight in talking about the old days when they lived in sin. It is too bad that when we get together we don't talk about Another. The Lord Jesus Christ should be the main subject of our conversation.

5. Others said nothing about Mephibosheth's lame feet. There was a large company that ate at the king's table. One day they saw David bringing this crippled boy to the table. The gossips did not say, "Did you hear how it happened?" Instead they listened to the king. They heard David praise Mephibosheth, They had no time to indulge in cheap talk. Their hearts went out in love to this boy. You see, love "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." Love "never fails" (1 Cor. 13:7–8).

As far as I can tell, David was never able to make this boy walk. If you see that you cannot walk well-pleasing to God, turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ said to the man with palsy, whose friends had let him down through the roof, "... Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.... Arise, and walk" (Matt. 9:2–5). The apostle Paul urges: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (Eph. 4:1–2). If you are failing in your walk, turn to Christ for help.

Christ is sending out an invitation today into the highways and byways and out into the streets of your town. He is saying, "Come to my table of salvation just as you are, crippled, and I will feed you." He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). He also says, "... If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37). What a wonderful picture of God's love is presented in this chapter! (Listen to Dr McGee's exposition - [2Samuel 9 Intro 2Sa 9:1-9 2Sa 9:10-13](#))

2 Samuel 9:11 Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant so your servant will do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons.

BGT 2 Samuel 9:11 κα ε πεν Σιβα πρ ς τ ν βασιλ α κατ π ντα σα ντ ταλται κ ρι ς μου βασιλε ς τ δο λ α το ο τω ς ποι σει δο λ ς σου κα Μεμφιβοσθε σθιεν π τ ς τραπ ζης Δαυιδ καθ ς ε ς τ ν υ ν το βασιλ ως

LXE 2 Samuel 9:11 And Siba said to the king, According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will thy servant do. And Memphibosthe did eat at the table of David, as one of the sons of the king.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

NET 2 Samuel 9:11 Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do everything that my lord the king has instructed his servant to do." So Mephibosheth was a regular guest at David's table, just as though he were one of the king's sons.

CSB 2 Samuel 9:11 Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do all my lord the king commands." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table just like one of the king's sons.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:11 Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons.

NIV 2 Samuel 9:11 Then Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do whatever my lord the king commands his servant to do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.

NLT 2 Samuel 9:11 "Yes, my lord the king; I am your servant, and I will do all that you have commanded." And from that time on, Mephibosheth ate regularly at David's table, like one of the king's own sons.

- **Ziba:** 2Sa 19:17
- **According:** 2Sa 16:1-4 19:26

ZIBA OBEYS MEPHIBOSHETH DINES

Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant so your servant will do." He is obedient now but later we will see him be deceptive ([See Ziba](#)).

So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons - He was one of the family by the covenant between Jonathan and David. While not necessarily indicative of adoption, it certainly presents a picture similar to adoption a term filled with the ideas of love, grace, compassion, and intimate relationship.

John MacArthur commenting on Mephibosheth writes that...

Perhaps the most touching adoption mentioned in the Old Testament was that of Mephibosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan and the sole remaining descendent of Saul. When King David learned about Mephibosheth, he gave him all the land that had belonged to his grandfather Saul and honored this son of his dearest friend, Jonathan, by having him dine regularly at the king's table in the palace at Jerusalem (see 2Sa 9:1-13). Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses out of pity and sympathy. And although Mordecai dearly loved Esther, his adoption of her was also prompted by family duty. But David's adoption of Mephibosheth was motivated purely by gracious love. In many ways, David's adoption of Mephibosheth pictures God's adoption of believers. David took the initiative in seeking out Mephibosheth and bringing him to the palace. And although Mephibosheth was the son of David's closest friend, he was also the grandson and sole heir of Saul, who had sought repeatedly to kill David. Being crippled in both feet, Mephibosheth was helpless to render David any significant service; he could only accept his sovereign's bounty. The very name Mephibosheth means "a shameful thing," and he had lived for a number of years in [Lo-Debar](#), which means "**the barren land**" (lit., "no pasture"). David brought this outcast to dine at his table as his own son and graciously granted him a magnificent inheritance to which he was no longer legally entitled.

That is a **beautiful picture of the spiritual adoption** whereby God graciously and lovingly seeks out unworthy men and women on His own initiative and makes them His children, solely on the basis of their trust in His true Son, Jesus Christ. Because of their adoption, believers will share the full inheritance of the Son. To all Christians God declares, " 'I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me,' says the Lord Almighty" (2Co 6:17,18). Paul gives us the unspeakably marvelous assurance that God has "predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will" ([MacArthur, J: Romans 1-8. Chicago: Moody Press](#)) (Bolding added)

Life Application Study Bible - 2 Samuel 9:1ff Most kings in David's day tried to wipe out the families of their rivals in order to prevent any descendants from seeking the throne. But David showed kindness to Mephibosheth, whose father was Jonathan and whose grandfather was King Saul. David was kind, partly because of his loyalty to God's previously anointed king (see the note on 1 Samuel 24:5, 6); partly for political reasons-to unite Judah and Israel (see the notes on 3:13, 14 and 3:29); and mainly because of his vow to show kindness to all of Jonathan's descendants (1 Samuel 20:14-17).

2 Samuel 9:3 How Mephibosheth became crippled is recorded in 4:4. Mephibosheth was five years old when Saul and Jonathan died.

2 Samuel 9:5, 6 Mephibosheth was afraid to visit the king, who wanted to treat him like a prince. Although Mephibosheth feared for his life and may have felt unworthy, that didn't mean he should refuse David's gifts. When God graciously offers us forgiveness of sins and a place in heaven, we may feel unworthy, but we will receive these gifts if we accept them. A reception even warmer than the one David gave Mephibosheth waits for all who receive God's gifts through trusting Jesus Christ, not because we deserve it, but because of God's promise (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

2 Samuel 9:7 His treatment of Mephibosheth shows David's integrity as a leader who accepted his obligation to show love and

mercy. His generous provision for Jonathan's son goes beyond any political benefit he might have received. Are you able to forgive those who have wronged you? Can you be generous with those less deserving? Each time we show compassion, our character is strengthened.

Greg Laurie - For Every Season - LIVING IN LO-DEBAR (2 Samuel 9:11, 13)

The Bible tells us that when David sought out Jonathan's son to show him kindness, Mephibosheth was living in Lo-debar. When the prophet Amos spoke of this place, he said, "And just as stupid is this bragging about your conquest of Lo-debar ..." (Amos 6:13NLT). The name really means "the place of no pasture." You didn't want to live in Lo-debar. It was a dry, parched, crummy place to live.

But where were we when Jesus Christ found us? We were living in Lo-debar, a parched, dried-up place. And just like David sought out Mephibosheth, Jesus Christ sought us. It is worth noting that it was not Mephibosheth who looked for David; it was David who looked for Mephibosheth. That might not seem significant, but it really is. David wanted to have a relationship with him. We read in 2 Samuel 9:5, "Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar." David was persistent. He would not give up on Mephibosheth.

This is a reminder to us that we need to reach out to our friends, neighbors, and even enemies who don't know Christ. They don't realize it, but they are living in Lo-debar. They are living in a parched place—separated from God. So we need to ask God to place an urgency in our hearts. We all know people who need someone to reach out to them. That is exactly what David did. And that is what we need to do.

GREATLY VALUED

"Mephibosheth...shall eat at my table like one of the king's sons." -2 Samuel 9:11

A British factory worker and his wife were excited when, after many years of marriage, they discovered they were going to have their first child. According to author Jill Briscoe, who told this true story, the man eagerly relayed the good news to his fellow workers. He told them God had answered his prayers. But they made fun of him for asking God for a child.

When the baby was born, he was diagnosed as having Down's syndrome. As the father made his way to work for the first time after the birth, he wondered how to face his co-workers. "God, please give me wisdom," he prayed. Just as he feared, some said mockingly, "So, God gave you this child!" The new father stood for a long time, silently asking God for help. At last he said, "I'm glad the Lord gave this child to me and not to you."

As this man accepted his disabled son as God's gift to him, so David was pleased to show kindness to Saul's son who was "lame in his feet" (2 Samuel 9:3). Some may have rejected Mephibosheth because he was lame, but David's action showed that he valued him greatly.

In God's eyes, every person is important. He sent His only Son to die for us. May we remember with gratitude how much He values each human life. -J D Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, may we see in those we meet
The imprint of Your image fair,
And may their special dignity
Grow stronger from our love and care.
-DJD

Everyone is valuable to God.

2 Samuel 9:12 Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. And all who lived in the house of Ziba were servants to Mephibosheth.

BGT 2 Samuel 9:12 κα τ Μεμφιβοσθε υ ς μικρ ς κα νομα ατ Μιχα κα π σα κατο κησις το ο κου Σιβα
δο λοι το Μεμφιβοσθε

LXE 2 Samuel 9:12 And Memphibosthe had a little son, and his name was Micha: and all the household of Siba were servants to Memphibosthe.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micha. And all that dwelt in the

house of Ziba were servants unto Mephibosheth.

NET 2 Samuel 9:12 Now Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. All the members of Ziba's household were Mephibosheth's servants.

CSB 2 Samuel 9:12 Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. All those living in Ziba's house were Mephibosheth's servants.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants.

NIV 2 Samuel 9:12 Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica, and all the members of Ziba's household were servants of Mephibosheth.

NLT 2 Samuel 9:12 Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica. From then on, all the members of Ziba's household were Mephibosheth's servants.

NRS 2 Samuel 9:12 Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. And all who lived in Ziba's house became Mephibosheth's servants.

- **son:** 1Ch 8:34-40 9:40-44, Micah
- **servants:** Mic 7:5,6

MEPHIBOSHETH'S PLATE WAS FULL

Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. And all who lived in the house of Ziba were servants to Mephibosheth - A man who thought he was doomed to die ends up with a son and servants because of David's kindness.

2 Samuel 9:13 So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate at the king's table regularly. Now he was lame in both feet.

BGT 2 Samuel 9:13 καὶ Μεμφιβοσθε κατὰ τοὺς ἡμέρας ἐβόσκει ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐπὶ τῇ τραπέζῃ τοῦ βασιλέως διὰ τὸ ὅτι πάντες οἱ σκλινοὶ καὶ οἱ χωλοὶ ἐβόσκει ἐν τῇ τραπέζῃ αὐτοῦ

LXE 2 Samuel 9:13 And Memphibosthe dwelt in Jerusalem, for he continually ate at the table of the king; and he was lame in both his feet.

KJV 2 Samuel 9:13 So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

NET 2 Samuel 9:13 Mephibosheth was living in Jerusalem, for he was a regular guest at the king's table. But both his feet were crippled.

CSB 2 Samuel 9:13 However, Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem because he always ate at the king's table. His feet had been injured.

ESV 2 Samuel 9:13 So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he ate always at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.

NIV 2 Samuel 9:13 And Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king's table, and he was crippled in both feet.

NLT 2 Samuel 9:13 And Mephibosheth, who was crippled in both feet, lived in Jerusalem and ate regularly at the king's table.

- **he ate:** 2Sa 9:7,10,11
- **was lame:** 2Sa 9:3

AMAZING GRACE WITHOUT END

So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, From fear in "no pasture" (Lo-Debar) to security in God's holy city of peace all on the basis

of the "[kindness of God](#)" that flowed through a man after God's own heart!

for he ate at the king's table regularly - From poverty in "no pasture" to provision in the presence of the King with a permanent place at the King's table. Eating at the king's table regularly was another expression of the amazing grace David had bestowed on him. It is notable that this is the fourth time we are told Mephibosheth ate at the king's table emphasizing his communion and fellowship with David.

Now he was lame in both feet - But I thought we knew that. So clearly the inspired text means to make a point. One point would be to never forget the low state of Mephibosheth, which serves to even further magnify the lovingkindness of Jehovah. And by way of application, God does not want us to forget the point of His **lovingkindnesses** abundantly bestowed in spite of our **lameness**. Notice what Jesus' first coming brought about ([Mt 11:2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#)) and which serves as a foreshadowing of what He will do for the lame in the His **Millennial (Messianic) Kingdom** ([Isa 35:5](#), [6](#); [Jer 31:7](#), [8](#), [9](#); [Mic 4:6](#), [7](#)).

This is repeated so we don't forget David's kindness, just a hint of God's great kindness toward all of us who have been crippled by a fall. "Mephibosheth never got over his crippled condition. He never got to the place where he could leave the king's table and make it on his own. And neither do we." (Jerry Bridges)

Paul describes what has happened to those were born like "dead dogs", dead in their sins and transgressions, without hope in the world...

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and **raised us up with Him**, and **seated us with Him** in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in **kindness** toward us in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2:4-7).

Comment: Beloved, can you not see the parallel? Crippled by a fall, unable to walk in a pleasing way, no hope in the world, and God intervenes and raises us up from our fallen state, seats us with Him in Christ and for all ages to come shows us the kindness in our Covenant Head Christ Jesus. Amazing mercy. Amazing love. Amazing grace indeed. Hallelujah! Amen.

Henry Morris - Mephibosheth, in a sense, can be considered a type of the helpless sinner, saved by grace, and raised from his helpless condition to sup at the table of the King.

Spurgeon - Morning and Evening - "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet." —2 Samuel 9:13

Mephibosheth was no great ornament to a royal table, yet he had a continual place at David's board, because the king could see in his face the features of the beloved Jonathan. Like Mephibosheth, we may cry unto the King of Glory, "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?" but still the Lord indulges us with most familiar intercourse with himself, because he sees in our countenances the remembrance of his dearly-beloved Jesus. The Lord's people are dear for another's sake. Such is the love which the Father bears to his only begotten, that for his sake he raises his lowly brethren from poverty and banishment, to courtly companionship, noble rank, and royal provision. Their deformity shall not rob them of their privileges. Lameness is no bar to sonship; the cripple is as much the heir as if he could run like Asahel. Our right does not limp, though our might may. A king's table is a noble hiding-place for lame legs, and at the gospel feast we learn to glory in infirmities, because the power of Christ resteth upon us. Yet grievous disability may mar the persons of the best-loved saints. Here is one feasted by David, and yet so lame in both his feet that he could not go up with the king when he fled from the city, and was therefore maligned and injured by his servant Ziba. Saints whose faith is weak, and whose knowledge is slender, are great losers; they are exposed to many enemies, and cannot follow the king whithersoever he goeth. This disease frequently arises from falls. Bad nursing in their spiritual infancy often causes converts to fall into a despondency from which they never recover, and sin in other cases brings broken bones. Lord, help the lame to leap like an hart, and satisfy all thy people with the bread of thy table!

Mephibosheth Represents the Sinner - Adrian Rogers

Now Mephibosheth represents the sinner. My dear friend, you are like Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth pictures you. And how does Mephibosheth picture you?

1. He Was Deformed

Well, first of all, he was deformed—and so are we. He was crippled by the fall—and so are we. And so Mephibosheth was deformed. He couldn't come. He had to be brought. He did not want to come. He had to be sought. And that's the way we are. We are spiritually and morally crippled by sin.

2. He Was Dethroned

But not only, dear friend, was he deformed; Mephibosheth was dethroned. You see, he was a prince, but he was living in exile. Did you know that God made us to be kings and princes, but we've been living on the backside of nowhere without the Lord Jesus Christ, breathing dust and dragging our dead limbs behind us, when we ought to be sitting enthroned with our Lord? But here was a prince who had lost his kingdom. He was dethroned.

3. He Was Doomed

And not only was he deformed, and dethroned; but, friend, he was doomed. He knew he had the sentence of death on him. He knew that he was an enemy and that he deserved no mercy. He said, "Why should you do this to such a dog as I am?" (2 Samuel 9:8) He realized that the sentence of death was his. And so should we. "For the wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:20)

4. He Was Deceived

That's what we were. We were deformed, dethroned, and doomed; and I guess the worst thing is deceived. All of this time Mephibosheth was thinking David was his enemy, when David was his friend. Did you know that people feel that way about God? Did you know that God has to run us down in order to save us? Did you know that? We don't seek Him. We fear God. There's something—sin has put a negative attitude; the devil has done a trick on us. And the devil says, "God's out to get you; don't let Him save you." And you'll sit in a service like this and be negative toward God like somehow you've got to become one of those old Christians.

Oh, my dear friend, all God wants to do is to bless you, love you, and to share the blessings of the blood covenant with you. And here's Mephibosheth, who's been deceived about David. He's been told that David was his enemy, when David was really his friend. What a picture of a lost sinner is Mephibosheth! Jonathan pictures, my friend, the Savior, who made a blood covenant with you. Mephibosheth pictures the sinner, who needs to enter into the blood covenant.

What Mephibosheth Received

Now I want to show you what Mephibosheth received. And what Mephibosheth received is what you will receive if you enter into the blood covenant. And it's so very wonderful. There are four basic things that he received. And I want you to see them.

1. The King's Forgiveness

Second Samuel chapter 9—the very first thing he received is what I want to call the king's forgiveness. Look in verse 7: "And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness." (2 Samuel 9:7) Hallelujah! He deserved judgment, and he received kindness.

Friend, because of the covenant, you don't have to be afraid. Hallelujah! You don't! You deserve hell, but you're not going to hell, because of the blood covenant. And so he received the king's forgiveness.

2. The King's Fellowship

But not only did he receive the king's forgiveness; he received the king's fellowship. Four times it is mentioned that he is to eat with the king. Look, if you will, in verse 7: "Thou shalt eat bread at my table continually." (2 Samuel 9:7) Look, if you will, in verse 10: "Thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table." (2 Samuel 9:10) Look, if you will, at the last part of verse 11: "He shall eat at my table." (2 Samuel 9:11) Look, if you will, in verse 13: "He did eat continually at the king's table." (2 Samuel 9:13) Why does God say that? Because, my dear friend, a fellowship meal is the most intimate association that you can have.

Now if you were invited to meet with the President of the United States, that would be one thing; but, friend, if you were invited to dine with the President of United States, that would be something else, wouldn't it? It's saying, "You're not just going to have a once-in-a-while meal; you're going to sit at my table continually." You see, salvation, my friend, is not a funeral; it's a feast. Do you understand that? Listen. I'm not inviting you to something bad; I'm inviting you to something wonderful. Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him,"—and do what?—"and will sup with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20)

3. The King's Fortune

You see, there's the king's fellowship. But not only the king's forgiveness, and the king's fellowship; my dear friend, there's the king's fortune. And the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, "I have given unto thy master's son all that pertaineth to Saul and to all his house." (2 Samuel 9:9) Now, who was Saul? Saul was the king. And he's saying, "Mephibosheth, enough; and you don't understand enough; and you are not worthy."

The devil will say that to you, dear friend. I'm going to tell you something. Don't you argue with him, because you'll lose the argument. You are not worthy. Just point him to the blood covenant and step out of the argument. Now the argument is between him

and God—and he's going to lose.

Conclusion Dear friend, it doesn't make any difference: God has done it for Jesus' sake, and on the cross, with his rich, red, royal blood, He made a covenant for you. And you can enter into that covenant of life and peace. And I pray God you'll not miss it. (From "Enjoying Covenant Blessings" - Adrian Rogers)

Warren Wiersbe - Sharing God's kindness (2 Sam. 9:1–13)

"The kindness of God" is the one of two themes in this chapter (vv. 1, 3, 7), and it means the mercy and favor of the Lord to undeserving people. Paul saw the kindness of God in the coming of Jesus Christ and His work on the cross (Titus 3:1–7 [3:4]; Eph. 2:1–9 [2:7]), and we see in David's dealings with Mephibosheth a picture of God's kindness to lost sinners. David had promised both Saul and Jonathan that he would not exterminate their descendants when he became king (1 Sam. 20:12–17, 42; 24:21), and in the case of Jonathan's son Mephibosheth, David not only kept his promise but went above and beyond the call of duty.

The second major theme is the kingship of David. The name "David" is used by itself six times in the chapter: six times he's called "the king," and once the two are united in "King David" (v. 5). Nobody in all Israel except David could have shown this kindness to Mephibosheth because David was the king. He had inherited all that had belonged to King Saul (12:8) and could dispose of it as he saw fit. Surely we have here a picture of the Son of David, Jesus Christ, who through His death, resurrection, and ascension has been glorified on the throne of heaven and can now dispense His spiritual riches to needy sinners. The name "David" means "beloved," and Jesus is God's beloved Son (Matt. 3:17; 17:5), sent to earth to save lost sinners.

Finding Mephibosheth (2 Sa 9:1–4). It's important to note that David's motivation for seeking Mephibosheth was not the sad plight of the crippled man but David's desire to honor Jonathan, the father. He did what he did "for Jonathan's sake" (1 Sam. 20:11–17). Mephibosheth was five years old when his father died in battle (4:4), so he was now about twenty-one years old and had a young son of his own (v. 12). David couldn't show any love or kindness to Jonathan, so he looked for one of Jonathan's relatives to whom he could express his affection. So it is with God's children: they are called and saved, not because they deserve anything from God, but for the sake of God's Son, Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:6; 4:32). God in His grace gives us what we don't deserve, and in His mercy doesn't give us what we do deserve.

David found out where Mephibosheth was living by asking Ziba, who served as an "estate manager" for Saul. Ziba answered David's questions about Mephibosheth, but he turned out to be very deceitful and lied to the king about Mephibosheth when David fled from Absalom (2 Sa 16:1–4) and when David returned to Jerusalem (2 Sa 19:17, 24–30). The combination of David's impulsiveness and Ziba's deceit cost Mephibosheth half his property.

Calling Mephibosheth (2 Sa 9:5–8). What were the lame prince's thoughts when the summons came to appear before the king? If he believed what his grandfather had said about David, he would have feared for his life; but if he had listened to what his father told him about David, he would have rejoiced. Someone had to help the young man to the palace, where he fell before David—something difficult for a person with crippled legs—and acknowledged his own unworthiness. The king spoke his name and immediately assured him that there was nothing to fear. David then unofficially "adopted" Mephibosheth by restoring to him the land that his father, Jonathan, would have inherited from Saul, and then by inviting him to live at the palace and eat at the king's table. David had eaten at Saul's table and it had nearly cost him his life, but Mephibosheth would eat at David's table and his life would be protected.

The fact that David made the first move to rescue Mephibosheth reminds us that it was God who reached out to us and not we who sought Him. We were estranged from God and enemies of God, yet He loved us and sent His Son to die for us. "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8 NKJV). For David to rescue and restore Mephibosheth cost him only the land of Saul, which he had never paid for to begin with; but for God to restore us and bring us into His family, Jesus had to sacrifice His life. Our inheritance is much more than a piece of real estate on earth: it's an eternal home in heaven!

Enriching Mephibosheth (2 Sa 9:9–13). David took him into his own family, provided for him, protected him, and let him eat at his own table. It wouldn't be easy to care for a grown man who was lame in both feet, but David promised to do so. Whereas previously Mephibosheth had Ziba and his fifteen sons and twenty servants working for him (v. 10), now all the resources and authority of the king of Israel were at his disposal! Ziba and his sons and servants would still work the land for Mephibosheth and give him the profits, but those profits would be insignificant compared with the king's wealth. David's words "eat at my table" are found four times in the passage (vv. 7, 10, 11, 13) and indicate that Jonathan's son would be treated like David's son.

Mephibosheth looked upon himself as a "dead dog" (v. 8), and we were "dead" in our trespasses and sins when Jesus called us and gave us new life (Eph. 2:1–6). We have a higher position than that which David gave Mephibosheth, for we sit on the throne with Jesus Christ and reign in life through Him (Rom. 5:17). God gives us the riches of His mercy and grace (Eph. 2:4–7) and

“unsearchable riches” in Christ (Eph. 3:8). God supplies all our needs, not out of an earthly king’s treasury, but according to “his riches in glory” (Phil. 4:19). Mephibosheth lived the rest of his life in the earthly Jerusalem (v. 13), but God’s children today are already citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, where they will dwell forever with the Lord (Heb. 12:22–24).

This touching event in the life of David not only illustrates the believer’s spiritual experience in Christ, but it also reveals to us that David was indeed a man after God’s own heart (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22). He was a shepherd who had a special concern for the lame sheep in the flock.

One last fact should be noted: when some of Saul’s descendants were chosen to be slain, David protected Mephibosheth from death (21:1–11, especially v. 7). There was another descendant named Mephibosheth (v. 8), but David knew the difference between the two! The spiritual application to believers today is obvious: “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1 NKJV). “For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thes. 5:9 NKJV). “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18 NKJV).

Mephibosheth is a difficult name to remember and pronounce, but he reminds us of some wonderful truths about “the kindness of God” shown to us through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. (Borrow [Be restored : trusting God to see us through : OT commentary, 2 Samuel & 1 Chronicles](#))