**David Remembers Jonathan**

**2 Samuel 9:1-13**

**Key Verse 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.”***

Good morning! In chapters 1-8, we saw how David became king, first over Judah at Hebron, than throughout all of Israel, in Jerusalem; and finally, how he defeated the Philistines, the age old enemy, that had even killed Saul and his son, Jonathan. David was now firmly established as king. Now in chapter 9, David turns his attention to fulfill the covenant he had made toward Jonathan. I Sam. 20:14-15 reads, “**14**But show me unfailing kindness like the Lord’s kindness as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, **15**and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family—not even when the Lord has cut off every one of David’s enemies from the face of the earth.” David’s actions in today’s passage were not only based on his intense feelings of friendship toward Jonathan, but more importantly on the covenant he made with Jonathan. David had not forgotten the covenant he had made with Jonathan so many years earlier; now he was in a position to finally fulfill that promise.

David demonstrates covenant loyalty to the crippled leftover from former times. Today’s passage reminds us of God, who never forgot His covenant towards Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, nor to their descendants, who had failed so badly so many times. It reminds us that we are all like Mephibosheth. It reminds us of his unfailing love to all who have put their faith in Christ. But David’s grace to Mephibosheth is also a pattern for us in serving and ministering to others. We love because we have been shown unfailing love.

**Part I-** **“Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul?” (1-4)**

Look at verse 1, “David asked, “Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?” In II Sam. 17:1-17 David asked, “What can I do for God?” He desired to build a temple for the Lord. Now David asks another question, “What can I do for others?” It reminds us of the two great commandments: Love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind. And love your neighbor as much as yourself. David was firmly established as king, and he could have easily forgotten both God and his neighbor, but instead he remembered both. Saul had done this very thing, once he was made king, he became proud in his own eyes and forgot that it was God who had established him as king. He became God’s enemy. Saul also loved his position more than his neighbors. Even willing to kill the priests of Nob and try to kill David in order to hold onto his kingship. As God blesses us more and more it is easy to forget where we came from and what God has done for us. It is easy for us to turn our love away from God, just like the nine lepers who were healed by Jesus, but never came back to thank Him. They say absolute power corrupts absolutely; but absolute blessing can easily be taken for granted and forgotten. David in today’s passage is a good example of someone who didn’t.

Look at verses 2-4, “**2**Now there was a servant of Saul’s household named Ziba. They summoned him to appear before David, and the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?” “At your service,” he replied. **3**The king asked, “Is there no one still alive from 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 lame in both feet. **4**“Where is he?” the king asked. Ziba answered, “He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.”

David could only find out that there was a descendant of Jonathan through a servant of Saul’s household. This revealed that Mephibosheth was hiding and not seeking to claim the throne of his father. David had to inquire to find him, and not the other way around. It reminds us of God who sought out Adam, who was hiding in the garden after he had sinned. It reminds us of God who sought us out, until we were found.

David wanted to show God’s kindness to someone from the house of Saul. This phrase “God’s kindness” is key to understanding David’s motivation throughout this whole chapter. David wanted to show someone else the same kindness God showed to him. David did not forget the kindness shown him. We all have received God’s kindness, more than we can measure. May we never forget it and may we show it to others as well.

Mephibosheth was lame in both feet. II Sam. 4:4 tells the story how it happened. It reads, “Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was lame in both feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, he fell and became disabled.  His name was Mephibosheth.” She fearfully believed that David would execute every male heir of Saul’s in order to secure his own kingship. So she ran off with Mephibosheth, but in her haste, she dropped him and he became lame in both feet. At one time, he was healthy, but now he was lame.

Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan, which means he had a rightful claim to the throne of his father. He could have been a rival of David’s and a threat to his own kingdom. Ishbosheth was Mephibosheth’s uncle, and he waged a bloody civil war against David for the throne of Israel for two years. Mephibosheth could have done a similar thing. David could have seen him as a threat, but instead David sought him out to show God’s kindness to him.

Mephibosheth was living in the house of Makir. He wasn’t living in his own house; he was living in the house of another man. He was living incognito, in hiding. He had nothing of his own. At one time, he was heir to the whole of Israel, and now he didn’t even have his own place to call his own. Nor was he able to take care of himself. He used to have a personal nurse, but now he was living off of the charity of others. Mephibosheth’s position in life had fallen to the rock bottom.

**Part II-“I will surely show you kindness” (5-13)**

Look at verses 5-6, “**5**So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel. **6**When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor. David said, “Mephibosheth!” “At your service,” he replied.” When the knock upon the door came, it must have been a day of dread for Mephibosheth. It was a day he had feared might one day come. A day he hoped would never happen. It meant David now knew where he was and would finish eradicating the line of Saul once and for all. Mephibosheth had good reason to be fearful and dread this day.

What did Mephibosheth do when David called Mephibosheth and brought him before his throne? He bowed down before David to pay him honor. Up until this point Mephibosheth had never met David, and he was quite happy he never did. He wanted it that way. He was afraid of what would happen when they did meet. But, his fears were unfounded. David had not called him, in order to wipe out the last remnant of Saul’s line.

Look at verses 7-8, “**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.” **8**Mephibosheth bowed down and said, “What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?” David told Mephibosheth, “Don’t be afraid.” David understood Mephibosheth’s fear and told him he had nothing to fear from David. David had not sought him out to kill him; He sought him out in order to show God’s kindness to him for the sake of his father, Jonathan.

David’s intention was to restore all the land to him that belonged to his grandfather Saul. Mephibosheth was the rightful heir of the property, but he never thought he would see it returned. He was too afraid to make a claim on it. He was afraid the minute he did, he would be found out and seized and killed. But David sought to return all that once was his rightful inheritance.

David also gave Mephibosheth the right to eat at the King’s table continually. This goes far beyond giving Mephibosheth what was rightly his. He gave Mephibosheth the honor of a close relationship with the king; to sit and eat with him everyday. Mephibosheth was once a fugitive, but one of his own making, but now he was being told he would sit and eat with the King. This reminds us of what Jesus told His disciples in Luke 22:29-30a, which reads, “**29**And I confer on you a kingdom, just as My Father conferred one on Me, **30**so that you may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom…”

When Mephibosheth heard all this, all he could say, “What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?” It reminds us of the prodigal son, who told his father, “I am not worthy to be called your son.” It reminds us of the women who willingly accepted herself being called a dog, just to get the scraps of Jesus’ mercy. Mephibosheth could not dare to believe that David would do such a thing for him. It was true he was nothing more than a dead dog, but he did not know the depth of David’s intention or desire to show God’s kindness. Do we treat people like dead dogs? Or does our desire and intention to show God’s kindness to others outweigh all other considerations of whether they deserve it or not? Were we shown such kindness by God, despite who we really are?

Look at verses 9-12, “**9**Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul’s steward, and said to him, “I have given your master’s grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family.  **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.) **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.” Mephibosheth was crippled and unable to provide for himself. He could not take care of his restored lands. But David insured that Mephibosheth would not lose those lands in the future, by providing even coworkers to help take care of the land and to provide for Mephibosheth’s son and future family as well as Ziba and his family as well. This reminds us of Jesus’ promise, “Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well.” It reminds us of what God told David, ”The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you: **12**When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom.”

Look at verse 13, “**13**And Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king’s table; he was lame in both feet.” David kept his promise to Mephibosheth and did exactly what he set out to do. David’s faithfulness reminds us of the faithful and wise servants who when given the responsibility to feed their fellow servants did so, “**45**“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? **46**It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns.” (Mt. 24:45-46)

Mephibosheth now lived in Jerusalem, out in the open and no longer in hiding and fear in the darkness. He lived among God’s people and no longer as a fugitive. He ate continually at the king’s table: No longer in poverty and estranged from the King, now he was always in the presence before the King. But he also remained lame in both feet.  Mephibosheth’s weakness did not vanish. His life was far better, but he was still lame. He reminds us of Apostle Paul, who wrote the following in II Cor. 12:7b-9, “Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me.  **8**Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.  **9**But He said to me,“My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.”  Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

David’s kindness to Mephibosheth is a wonderful picture of God’s kindness to us.  *We are Mephibosheth*.

· We were hiding, poor, weak, lame, and fearful before our King came to us.

· We were separated from our King because of our sins.

· We were separated from our King because of our deliberate actions.

· We separated ourselves from the King because we didn’t know him or His love for us

· Our King sought us out before we sought Him out.

· The King’s kindness is extended to us for the sake of another, the promise He made to Abraham, which is ours.

· The King’s kindness is based on that covenant.

· We must receive the King’s kindness in humility.

· The King returns to us what we lost in hiding from Him.

· We have the privilege of provision at the King’s table.

· We are received as sons at the King’s table, with access to the King and fellowship with Him.

· We receive coworkers from the King.

· The King’s kindness does not immediately take away our weakness and lameness, instead His grace is sufficient at this time.

David’s grace to Mephibosheth is also a pattern for us in serving and ministering to others. *We are David*.

· We should seek out our enemies and seek to bless them. Go and make disciples of all nations!

· We should look for the poor, weak, lame, and hidden to bless them. Most of the time we look for the able and those with the most potential, but God sought out the despised and weak of this world.

· We should show God’s kindness to others even though we may know they don’t deserve it, and bless them more than they deserve.

· We should bless others for the sake of someone else, that someone else being Christ, who showed us such kindness.

· We must show the *kindness of God* to others, because this is God’s way.

**One Word:** David remembered Jonathan.