

Summer in Samuel – Week 10 – 2 Samuel 9

2 Samuel 9:1-13: *David asked, “Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?”*

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.”

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.

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?”*

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.*

¹² *Mephibosheth had a young son named Mika, and all the members of Ziba’s household were servants of Mephibosheth. ¹³ And Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king’s table; he was lame in both feet.*

INTRO to Series: “Summer in Samuel” – Throughout Scripture, we see that God uses imperfect people to accomplish His perfect will and purposes for this world. Those who are faithful are set apart because of their trust in Him, whether in successes or failures. Our “Summer in Samuel” study will take us into the books of 1 and 2 Samuel and a few of the Psalms, where time and again God demonstrates His faithfulness. The stories of people like Hannah, Samuel, and David will remind us that no matter the season—in good times and bad—those who put their trust in Him are not put to shame.

INTRO to **2 Samuel 9**: David remained faithful to God during this period of his kingship, and God blessed him with many successes and victories (see **2 Samuel 8:15** below). The story of David and Mephibosheth is an example of this faithfulness and the honoring of promises through both words and actions.

I. The King's Heart (vs. 1)

-A key theme of the story of David and Mephibosheth is the Hebrew word *hesed* (**vs. 1, 3, 7**), often translated “faithful love” or “covenant love.” God’s covenant love is described multiple times throughout Scripture with these words: *“The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.”*

-David is referred to as “a man after God’s own heart” in several places in Scripture. This story begins with David clearly expressing his intentions to “do kindness” in terms of demonstrating *hesed* love towards Jonathan and his family. David and Jonathan had made covenant promises to one another on multiple occasions (**1 Samuel 18:3-4, 20:14-15, 23, 42**). Even though Jonathan had died, David wanted to honor those promises and do what was right and just for Jonathan’s family.

II. The King's Promises (vs. 2-8)

-Though most of Saul’s household had died or been killed, there remained a highly successful servant named Ziba.

-David said to Ziba: “I want to show God’s kindness to someone from Jonathan’s family line.”

-According to Ziba, the only remaining descendant of Jonathan was his son with physical disabilities in both feet. In **2 Samuel 4:4** (see below), we learned that this son, Mephibosheth, had been seriously injured as a small child. Because of his condition, Mephibosheth did not qualify for a royal position of leadership.

-David had Mephibosheth brought from the place of refuge in which he had been hiding, most likely out of fear of retribution from David for the actions of Saul and his men.

-When Mephibosheth came before King David, he bowed in front of him as best he could. David called him by name – “*Mephibosheth!*” – and Mephibosheth, afraid of what might take place, pledged to serve David (**vs. 6-7**).

-Instead, David, pledged to do two things for Mephibosheth that were incredibly counter-cultural for a king in the ancient world:

- 1.) David would restore all of Saul’s land that had been taken back to Mephibosheth.

- 2.) David would welcome and show hospitality to Mephibosheth inside the palace and at his table for the rest of his life.

-Mephibosheth was surprised by David’s promises, especially considering his low status and the way many looked upon him: *Mephibosheth bowed down and said, “What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?”* (**vs. 8**)

III. The King's Actions (vs. 9-13)

-It's one thing to pledge to "show kindness" or to do something good, it's quite another to actually follow through with action.

-David summoned Ziba once again, and made final the promises that had been spoken to Mephibosheth. He also demanded that Ziba and his household serve Mephibosheth as they would have done for Saul, while adding, "*And Mephibosheth, grandson of your master, will always eat at my table.*" (vs. 10b)

-Ziba agreed, and so it came to pass that *Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.* (vs. 11b, 13)

-King David's heart, promises, and actions serve as a clear example that kindness is not weakness. True kindness reflects the heart of God Himself, and is evidence of the work of God's Spirit in our lives.

***God's kindness is seen most clearly in the True King, Jesus Christ, who has given us eternal life even though we were once dead in our sins and transgressions! (see **Ephesians 2:4-7** and **Titus 3:3-7** below)

Other Scriptures Referenced:

2 Samuel 8:15: *David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people.*

2 Samuel 4:4: *(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.)*

Ephesians 2:4-7: *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

Titus 3:4-7: *But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

Other Quotes/Resources:

-“The houses of dethroned kings were shown little to no mercy in the ancient world...yet David’s attitude towards Mephibosheth was clearly an act of kindness. Mephibosheth had no bargaining power, yet he was made like one of the king’s sons and instead of being a homeless refugee he began a life of flourishing.” –A.A. Anderson (paraphrase)