

David's Kindness to Saul's House

2 Samuel 9

Lesson Outline

I. Pursuing Saul's Family: 2 Samuel 9:1-8

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- B. David Looked for Mephibosheth: 2 Samuel 9:5-8

II. Providing For Saul's Family: 2 Samuel 9:9-13

- A. Mephibosheth Established: 2 Samuel 9:9-10
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Pursuing Saul's Family

2 Samuel 9:1-8

David Learned of Mephibosheth: 2 Samuel 9:1-4

David Remembered Jonathan

Several years went by but David's fondness for Jonathan never faded. Because of their strong friendship, he was curious if any of Saul's family had escaped danger. The years of war had been hard on the former king's house making it difficult to find anyone that remained. It did not take long for his family to disappear, with many dying and some living in obscurity, afraid or ashamed to be known publicly. Sadly, this was the result of Saul's sin and rejection (1 Samuel 15:23-26).

1. *Sin's destruction* – sin never exalts and only destroys (James 1:13-15).
2. *Sin's punishment* – sin will eventually catch up to the sinner (Numbers 32:23; Galatians 6:7-8).
3. *Sin's extension* – sin affects many, including family and friends.

David searched the land for Saul's family. The noble quest was unlimited in its scope. David looked for anyone related to Saul, not just someone that could benefit him. This effort was made for the sake of Jonathan and David's promise to him (1 Samuel 18:3, 20:8-17, 23:18). Since Jonathan stood by David when times got tough, David hoped to return that favor to his family (1 Samuel 20). To David, it mattered no that Saul became his enemy he was determined to keep his word to Jonathan (Matthew 5:44).

1. *Position* – the fact he was king did not prevent him.
2. *Power* – the fact he was a legendary conqueror did not prevent him.

3. *Prosperity* – the fact he was wealthy did not prevent him.

David could have excused himself from this obligation but his care for Jonathan provided motivation. The believer is directed to be good unto all, including those that oppose them, not because they deserve it but for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 3:1; Matthew 5:44; 1 Peter 2:13).

David Enquired of Ziba

Ziba was one of Saul's servants, and apparently was employed while Saul was King. Perhaps David or some of his officers remembered Ziba, and figured if anybody knew the whereabouts of Saul's family it would be him. He was called before David to provide information concerning the location of Saul's descendants. David made it clear he wanted to extend his generosity, so Ziba or anyone related to Saul, had nothing to fear. This was important because many ancient kings looked to eliminate those they believed would threaten the throne.

Ziba provided necessary information concerning Saul's family. He told David about Jonathan's son Mephibosheth.

1. *Mephibosheth's situation* – lame on both feet since the age of five, he was unable to provide for himself.
2. *Mephibosheth's location* – he lived in Lodebar with Machir, who appears to be a generous man (2 Samuel 17:27).

Lodebar was located on the east side of the Jordan River in Gilead. Mephibosheth abided in obscurity, apparently forgotten in the nation his father and grandfather served for many years. He lived life as a fugitive, perhaps attempting to hide from David. This man, who was born into royalty, lived a poor life in a desolate city. Nothing is guaranteed, so be grateful for the blessings the LORD has allowed you to have (James 4:14).

David Looked for Mephibosheth: 2 Samuel 9:5-8

David Retrieved Mephibosheth

David immediately sent for Mephibosheth. He was quickly found then taken from his home to Jerusalem in order to stand before the king. The hasty endeavor probably came as a surprise. Without a moments notice, his life completely changed. He may have had little or no information concerning the relationship between David and his dad Jonathan, since he was only five when Jonathan was killed in battle. As far as Mephibosheth was concerned, the entire event was puzzling. Why was his presence required and what was David's intention?

The lame Mephibosheth approached David with great respect, falling on his knees before the king. Knowing the custom of the day concerning the family of former kings, he may have believed his execution was near.

David Rewarded Mephibosheth

David addressed him by name, a personal greeting, and encouraged him not to be afraid. Perhaps David recognized fear in Mephibosheth. The king did not plan to rebuke or harm him in any way, so he calmed his nerves. His life was not in danger; rather, he was about to be blessed because of his father. After calming Mephibosheth's nerves David graciously bestowed great blessings upon him.

1. *Restored land* – the land belonging to his family and forfeited because Mephibosheth's rebellion was given to Mephibosheth. For a poor man living in another's house, this was a great blessing.
2. *Restored fellowship* – he was invited to eat at the Royal Palace with David, not once but continuously. Mephibosheth had access to the king and his palace. Perhaps he resided in a nearby room or apartment.

David did not reform his pitiful life but provided Mephibosheth a new one (2 Corinthians 5:17). He took him away from Lodebar and placed him in Jerusalem to live amongst the leaders of the nation. Mephibosheth was humbled at David's generosity. He was extremely grateful, understanding he was unworthy of being blessed in that manner. The king did all of this for the sake of Jonathan. David had good reason to be upset at Saul's family, since Saul and others opposed him, but was able to forgive and bless because of Jonathan. God forgives and blesses sinners because of Jesus Christ. Likewise we can forgive others for Christ's sake (Ephesians 4:32).

Providing For Saul's Family

2 Samuel 9:9-13

Mephibosheth Established: 2 Samuel 9:9-10

Ziba Informed

Ziba was called in after David spoke to Mephibosheth. He was informed that Mephibosheth was given all that pertained to Saul, including his land, houses, and servants. Evidently it was a large estate with plenty of fields and vineyards (1 Samuel 9:1, 22:7). It was an extremely valuable gift that may have surprised all that heard about it.

By grace, Mephibosheth went from having nothing to possessing great riches. David spared no expenses when it came to providing for Jonathan's son. God acts in a similar fashion when He saves a soul. Salvation is a free gift due to the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ (John 3:16, 14:6; Romans 5:8).

Ziba Commissioned

Ziba was ordered to work for Mephibosheth, along with his sons and servants. With fifteen sons and twenty servants, he had plenty of men to assist him in working the land and caring for the estate. David took care of the details for Mephibosheth, providing land and also the workers for the land. Mephibosheth did nothing but accept David's gifts of kindness.

Ziba was given responsibility concerning the estate. Being Saul's servant, he was probably familiar with the property. He was to till the land and gather the harvest for Mephibosheth. Ziba was to bring the food in to supply Mephibosheth and his family, which also included the servants of the house. With this arrangement, Ziba and his house would be taken care of. If he failed than his family would also suffer.

Mephibosheth Exalted: 2 Samuel 9:11-13

Received Care

Ziba understood his role and accepted it. He planned to take care of the estate, while Mephibosheth would take his place in the palace as one of David's sons. Mephibosheth was given a position in the kingdom and treated with great kindness. Later, David protected him from the Gibeonites (2 Samuel 21:7).

David accepted Jonathan's son as his own, blessed him with great gifts, provided for his welfare, and protected him. Here we find a good picture of God's acceptance of sinners into His family (Romans 8:17; Galatians 4:7). It is an act of grace with the LORD providing everything for sinners to receive a new life (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Remained in Jerusalem

Evidently Mephibosheth was given a room or house in the area near the king's palace. He neither returned to Lobedar nor took up residence on Saul's estate. Instead he remained in Jerusalem where he lived as royalty. He had a son named Micha and continued to eat at the king's table.

Mephibosheth provides an excellent picture of saving grace. He was an unworthy outcast unable to lift himself out of his misery. He received help from David, though he did nothing to deserve it. He was exalted to a position of royalty, brought into the palace, and given a new life. David was a kind and considerate man. He kept his word to his friend Jonathan and assisted Mephibosheth though he did not have to.