

I WANT TO KNOW MY BIBLE

The Unusual Story of Mephibosheth

TEXT: 2 Sam 4-21

Introduction:

Most of us know the big stories that come out of David's life, and I hope at least some of the applications that flow out of those stories to our own lives.

- **David's anointing as King**
- **David and Goliath**
- **David's flight from Saul but his refusal to snatch the crown**
- **David's heart for worship, expressed in bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and his desire to build the temple**
- **David's sin with Bathsheba and his ultimate repentance and confession**
- **The Davidic Covenant with God's promise for Israel's Eternal King**

But amid all of these headlines there is a quieter story that does not scream so loudly for our attention, yet has powerful application to us all. It is the story of Mephibosheth.

Mephibosheth – I love that name. I urged Jeremy and Amanda to choose the name Mephibosheth for their baby boy before he was born. Now, don't get me wrong. Finley is a great name, but Mephibosheth goes so well with Maitland, Malley, and Mimi. And do not be surprised when after I finish telling you the marvelous story of Mephibosheth that Bro. Jeremy and Amanda may be rushing down to the courthouse to at least add Mephibosheth to the birth certificate for Finley Johnson.

Now, I know most of you already know who Mephibosheth is, because his name has appeared in our readings three out of the first four weeks of December. You read it 15 times in 13 verses spread throughout the book of Second Samuel.

But we have guests here this morning, so for their sake let me introduce this man of distinctive name.

Who is Mephibosheth?

- **Do not confuse him with Ishbosheth.**

- **Ishbosheth was the son of Saul and usurper of the throne of Israel.**

2 Samuel 4:4 Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son *who was lame in his feet*. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth.

- **Mephibosheth was the crippled son of Jonathan, David's closest friend.**
- **Therefore Mephibosheth was the nephew of Ishbosheth.**

The unique and profitable story of Mephibosheth unfolds in three parts:

I. MEPHIBOSHETH WAS THE RECIPIENT OF GRACE GIVEN THROUGH COVENANT.

2 Samuel 9:1–13

¹ Now David said, “Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?”

² And *there was* a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba. So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?”
He said, “At your service!”

³ Then the king said, “Is there not still someone 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 lame in his feet*.”

⁴ So the king said to him, “Where *is* he?”

And Ziba said to the king, “Indeed he *is* in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar.”

⁵ Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar.

⁶ Now when Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, “Mephibosheth?”

And he answered, “Here is your servant!”

⁷ So David said to him, “Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.”

⁸ Then he bowed himself, and said, “What *is* your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?”

⁹ And the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, “I have given to your master's son all that belonged to Saul and to all his house.¹⁰ You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in *the harvest*, that your master's son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's son shall eat bread at my table always.” Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

¹¹ Then Ziba said to the king, “According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will your servant do.”

“As for Mephibosheth,” said the king, “he shall eat at my table like one of the king's sons.”¹²

Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Micha. And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants of Mephibosheth.¹³ So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet.

Mephibosheth lived 15 years unaware that grace was for him.	How many years did you live before you knew the grace of God? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responded to the grace of God • Angry at God for circumstances of life
As a relative of Saul, he thought death was always around the corner.	Until we respond to the grace of God, spiritual death is always around the corner!
The king had entered a covenant with the father of Mephibosheth.	Our King made a covenant with Abraham.
Because of the covenant, the king extended grace to Mephibosheth.	Because of God's unconditional covenant, grace is extended to us.
Mephibosheth became as one of the king's sons.	Through Christ, we become sons of the King!

How many years did you live before you knew the grace of God?

- Responded to the grace of God
- Angry at God for circumstances of life

II. MEPHIBOSHETH WAS THE BENEFICIARY OF DAVID'S FAITHFULNESS.

- A. Jonathan was long since dead and gone.
- B. David was faithful to his word, faithful to his promise.
- C. We are the beneficiaries of God's faithfulness.
 1. God never made a promise He did not keep.
 2. He is still keeping His promises to those who are His children by faith in Christ.
 - I will never leave you nor forsake you.
 - No one can snatch you out of my Father's hand.
 - I give you eternal life.
 - I will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to endure.
 - With every temptation shall be a way of escape.
 - My grace is sufficient for you.
 - Those whom I love, I chasten, as a father does his son.
 - I will come again for you and receive you to myself.
 - I will wipe away every tear.
 - I will make all things new.

III. MEPHIBOSHETH RESPONDED BY LOVING HIS BENEFACTOR MORE THAN THE BENEFITS.

The story:

- A. 2 Samuel 15 recounts the treason of David's son Absalom, and David's retreat from the throne in Jerusalem.
- B. Chapter 16 told us how Ziba lied to David, and tried to make Mephibosheth appear ungrateful and disloyal.
- C. Chapter 19 records David's return after the death of Absalom.
 - 1. Mephibosheth was the first one to greet King David when he entered the city.
 - a. Probably harder for him to get there than anybody else!
 - b. Often time the most faithful are the ones for whom faithfulness is the most difficult!
 - 2. Mephibosheth was a mess!
 - a. Toenails on his lame feet had not been cut since David left.
 - b. His mustache had not been trimmed.
 - c. His clothes had not been washed!
 - d. Why?
 - e. Because he had been in mourning over David being away!
- D. David is confused because of Ziba's false accusations.
- E. So David says, you two divide the land and the money.
- F. Mephibosheth says, "Ziba can have it all. All I care about is you!"
 - 1. I want you in Jerusalem.
 - 2. I want you on the throne.
 - 3. I want to eat with you at your table.
 - 4. I want to be like your sons.

Mephibosheth cared more about his benefactor than he did the benefits.

Does Christ find us to be equally

- Grateful?
- Loyal?
- Loving?

Servants as was the man who was lame in his feet named Mephibosheth.