

Grace at the King's Table

Introduction: One of the great Old Testament narratives-Story of Mephibosheth

- ✓ Mephibosheth- “from the mouth of a shameful thing.”
- ✓ Son on Jonathan-David’s special friend and a grandson of King Saul (David’s predecessor-had tried to kill David)
- ✓ David had made covenant with Jonathan when both knew David would replace Saul (Jonathan warned David of his father’s plans)-“you shall not cut off your kindness from my house, forever...” (1 Samuel 20:15)
- ✓ After Saul’s death, David took the throne and was anointed King. His house and support grew stronger. (Judah)
- ✓ Saul’s son Ishbosheth tried to reign over Israel but his support grew weaker
- ✓ David sought peace but Ishbosheth would not relent and civil war followed. Ishbosheth was defeated and killed
- ✓ After civil war was over-David remembered his covenant with Jonathan-sought family members to bless
- ✓ Mephibosheth first introduced

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.
2 Samuel 4:4 NKJV

NOTE: At age of 5-news came about the death of father and grandfather, accident left him lame, and because of eastern tradition, every reason to think he was the King’s enemy. Forced to live as a fugitive

- ✓ Painful memories
- ✓ Who would feed and clothe him?
- ✓ Dreams shattered, hope dashed, life of sadness and misery
- ✓ Pain of watching other children playing-would never be a part
- ✓ Why me?
- ✓ One day, a knock on the door-the knock he had always dreaded-Ziba said, you will be taken to the King’s palace (no awareness of David’s intentions)
- ✓ Feared it would not end well
- ✓ In the inner court fell on his face-David called his name (maybe looked like Jonathan’s smile, facial gestures)
- ✓ Don’t be afraid-I will show you kindness for the sake of Jonathan-you will always eat at my table
- ✓ He expected the King’s wrath-instead he got grace

IMPORTANT: What David does for Mephibosheth in extending grace is a powerful portrait of God's grace extended to us

I. The Grace of God initiates His kindness.

A. God initiates out of His own sovereignty

NOTE: David was at a place in his life where he needed nothing but he sought someone to show kindness to

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 Samuel 9:1 NKJV

NOTE: In verse 3-David called it the “kindness of God”-he knew it was an extension of God’s kindness

1. God is so good-kindhearted sovereign, seeking and searching for someone to bestow kindness upon
2. It is not us pursuing Him-He pursues us

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Luke 19:10 NKJV

Don’t find Him-He finds you!

B. God initiates because of who He is!

NOTE: Nothing forced David to seek out Mephibosheth. No one pressed Him.

1. Something within Him moved Him to reach out in kindness
2. Because God is love-He moves toward us with kindness

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, Ephesians 2:4-6 NKJV

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God. 1 John 3:1a NKJV

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Romans 2:4 NKJV

3. God owes us wrath, penalty, judgment, but He does not treat us as our sins deserve-He extends goodness

C. God initiates in spite of us!

NOTE: Ziba's unflattering description

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." 2 Samuel 9:3-4 NKJV

1. Ziba was saying he is not worth your time
2. Crippled and living in Ladebar—"no pasture" (A barren, unfruitful, terrible, place)
3. He was a crippled man from a fallen dynasty
4. Grace reaches out in spite of us

II. The Grace of God Welcomes the Enemy

NOTE: The fear Mephibosheth might have felt when the king's soldiers knocked on his door and carried him to Jerusalem. (Life flashed before him).

Two Lessons

A. We need not fear God's wrath

The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? Psalms 27:1 NKJV

Kindness to Mephibosheth

(ILL) Jefferson riding horseback-swollen river-traveler at bank-asked Jefferson to carry him over. With President? Some faces say yes! Some no. His was yes.

NOTE: The face of Jesus is a yes!

Grace is the smiling face of God!

*What have I to fear, what have I to dread, leaning on the everlasting arms!
I have perfect peace with my Lord so near, leaning on the everlasting arms!*

B. We need not be ashamed of our weakness

Then he bowed himself, and said, "What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?" 2 Samuel 9:8 NKJV

1. Saw himself-not just a dog-a dead dog
2. Not how David saw him

(ILL) "The theory of the looking glass self"-see ourselves through the eyes of everyone else's lens. But grace leads us to look at ourselves through the eyes of God.

I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. 17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You. Psalms 139:14-18 NKJV

III. The Grace of God Lifts the Fallen (3 ways)

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." 2 Samuel 9:9-11 NKJV

- A. Gives underserved riches-note in one decree he went from living in someone else's house in Lodebar to owning his own royal estate!
- B. Gives unconditional favor-a permanent place at the king's table (4 times-v. 7, 10, 11, 13)

NOTE: Not just a guest at the royal table-a member of the royal family

So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table. And he was lame in both his feet. 2 Samuel 9:13 NKJV

*He remained lame, but it never mattered or was noticed at the King's table

- C. Gives unending love

(ILL) 2 Samuel 21-Saul had waged an unjust war against Gibeonites

- ✓ The punishment for sin did not come until David's reign
- ✓ 3-year famine struck the land

- ✓ David prayed-God told him about Saul's sin
- ✓ Went to Gibeonites to make restitution-demanded that 7 of Saul's family be handed over
- ✓ But...

But the king spared Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, because of the LORD's oath that was between them, between David and Jonathan the son of Saul. 2 Samuel 21:7 NKJV

(ILL) Couple adopting a troubled teen

- ✓ In the process, breaks their heart
- ✓ Friends-don't go through with it-not really your daughter
- ✓ I know, but I told her she was and I'm not going to change my mind

*Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not.
23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23 NKJV*

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39 NKJV

Conclusion: Mephibosheth found grace at the King's table

1. Food that leaves no hunger
2. Invitation that had no end
3. Covering that exposed no flaws
4. Access that had no limits