

BOOK OF 2 SAMUEL
A PICTURE OF GOD'S GRACE
2 SAMUEL 9

Introduction

2 Samuel 9 is a part of what scholars call *THE SUCCESSION NARRATIVE OF DAVID*. In other words, it is a detailed account of what we have been looking at for a number of weeks now: **Israel's transition from Saul's rule to the establishment of David's reign.**

We have seen in this Book of 2 Samuel how David has accomplished some great military victories and is enjoying peace, power, and prosperity.

It is said that there are two seasons of life that test and reveal a person's character: **seasons of adversity** and **seasons of prosperity**. This season of prosperity and success in David's life clearly demonstrates that he was truly a *"man after God's own heart."*

I want us to look at David's heart as revealed in his kindness to this one called Mephibosheth, so that through it we might see God's kindheartedness and grace toward us!

Now we need to understand that 2 Samuel 9 is an actual historical event that took place. The Books of 1 and 2 Samuel record historical events that happened in the lives of His nation Israel! However, there are some beautiful types and pictures that we see in what is recorded here. As such, I want us to look beyond the historical story and see how this historical event also functions as a parable and a picture of the wonderful grace of our LORD!

David's kindness to Mephibosheth illustrates the grace of God that seeks us, welcomes us, and enriches us through Jesus Christ.

I. THE GRACE OF GOD REACHES OUT TO THOSE WHOSE LIVES HAVE BEEN RUINED BY A FALL!

The first mention of Mephibosheth actually begins in **2 Samuel 4:4**. He belonged to the royal line, but was made a cripple by a fall.

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2 Samuel 8 describes David as being in a place in his life where he did not need anything. But in 2 Samuel 9, the one who did not need anything was searching for something: **SOMEONE TO SHOW COVENANT KINDNESS TO.**

9:3 makes it clear that David understood that his kindness was derived from the kindness of God in his own life. In other words, David wanted to be kind in order to imitate God, who is the first and ultimate kindhearted sovereign that is seeking and searching for someone to be gracious to.

We often speak of conversion to saving-faith in Christ in terms of seeking God. But Romans 3:10-11 says, *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."*

Unrighteous people do not seek God. Every sinner does what the first sinners did. Adam and Eve tried their best to hide from God. But it is impossible to hide from our God Who is omnipresent!

When God called out to Adam as he attempted to hide from God, it is a picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ did when he came into this world!

In Luke 19:10, Jesus said of Himself, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save the lost."

A. God Reaches Out To Us Because Of Who He Is! (Vs 3)

Nothing forced David to seek out Mephibosheth!
No one pressured him to do it!

Something within David moved him to reach out and act in kindness! It was the fact that God had reached out and acted in kindness to David!

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Listen, God does not owe us anything good!

The only thing God owes each of us is divine justice, holy wrath, and eternal punishment. **(Romans 6:23)**

This is why His grace is such a marvelous thing! God has not treated us as our sins deserve. Instead, He has reached out to us with His love, His mercy, and His grace!

Look at **Ephesians 2:1-9!**

God Reaches Out To Us Because Of Who He Is!

B. God Reaches Out To Us For The Sake Of Another!
(Vs 1)

The external reason why David sought out someone to show kindness to was because of Mephibosheth's father, Jonathan.

Jonathan and David were best friends. Jonathan loved David so much that he protected him from Saul's wrath and supported his ascension to the throne of Israel, even though he was Saul's son and rightful heir to the throne.

In 1 Samuel chapters 18 and 20, David and Jonathan entered into a covenant with one another. David promised to be kind to Jonathan's house after his promotion and Jonathan's death.

In 2 Samuel 9 here, Saul and Jonathan were dead and David sought someone from the house of Jonathan to whom he could show the kindness of God.

David was gracious to Mephibosheth for the sake of another – JONATHAN. God is gracious to us for the sake of another – JESUS.

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*1 John 2:12–“I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for **his name's sake.**”*

*Ephesians 4:32–“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, **even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.**”*

The Grace Of God Reaches Out To Those Of Us Whose Lives Have Been Ruined By A Fall.

God Reaches Out To Us Because Of Who He Is!

God Reaches Out To Us For The Sake Of Another!

C. God Reaches Out To Us In Spite Of Us!

Ziba was Saul's servant who administered his master's estate. When David summoned him and inquired about the surviving members of Saul and Jonathan's family, Ziba singled out Mephibosheth – even though there were others he could have mentioned.

But he did not mention Mephibosheth by name. In verse 3, Ziba introduced Mephibosheth by his condition: “*which is lame on his feet.*”

We don't know, but it seems that Ziba reports Mephibosheth's condition to say that he was not worth David's time. He could neither help nor hurt the king.

But David was undeterred by Ziba's unflattering description, and asked, “*Where is he?*”

Ziba reported that Mephibosheth was hiding out in the home of benefactors in a place called *Lo-debar*. The name *LO-DEBAR* means “*no pasture.*” We do not know much about *Lo-debar*. But scholars agree that its name indicates that it was a **barren, unfruitful, terrible place.**

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Mephibosheth was a crippled man from a fallen dynasty living in a horrible environment. Yet David reached out to him in kindness. Verse 5 says that David sent for Mephibosheth and brought him from Lo-Debar.

That is what grace does for us! God reaches out to us in spite of us and brings us into His very presence!

THE GRACE OF GOD REACHES OUT TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN RUINED BY A FALL!

II. THE GRACE OF GOD WELCOMES IN THOSE WHO ARE AT ENMITY WITH HIM! (Vs 5-7)

When the king's soldiers knocked at his door and carried him to Jerusalem, Mephibosheth must have seen his whole life flash before his eyes. He knew how it went. When a new king arose, the family of the previous dynasty was put to death so there would be no revolts or rebellions later.

So we can understand that Mephibosheth must have entered David's presence like a cornered enemy. But David embraced him like a long, lost friend. David's warm welcome teaches us two important things about grace.

A. Grace Means That We Do Not Have To Be Afraid Of God's Wrath! (Vs 7)

Can you imagine the sense of terror that must have consumed Mephibosheth when he met King David?

He quite possibly thought he would be brutally tortured and executed. And there was absolutely nothing he could do about whatever was about to happen to him.

Imagine his surprise when King David said to him, "*Fear not: for I will surely show thee kindness...*"

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David's kindness removed Mephibosheth's fear. And God's grace does the same for us. We can confidently sing, *Psalm 27:1*—"*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?*"

Listen to me, we were the enemies of God, but then God's grace moved into our lives! And God's grace means that we do not have to fear the judgment, wrath, and condemnation of God any longer.

In *John 10:28-30*, Jesus says: "*And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one.*"

Praise God we don't have to be afraid of death, hell, and the grave any longer!

"What have I to dread? What have I to fear? Leaning on the Everlasting Arms! I have perfect peace, with my Lord so near...Leaning on the Everlasting Arms!"

Grace Means That We Do Not Have To Be Afraid Of God's Wrath!

B. Grace Means That We Do Not Have To Be Controlled By Our Fear And Weakness. (Vs 7)

David promised to show kindness to Mephibosheth. David vowed to restore Saul's estate to Mephibosheth. And David assured Mephibosheth a permanent place at the royal table.

These overwhelming gifts made Mephibosheth skeptical.

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Look at his response in **verse 8**.

One of the most degrading things you could call a person in David's day was a dog. And for a person to call himself a dog would be a great act of self-deprecation.

But note that Mephibosheth does not just call himself a dog. He calls himself a dead dog.

That's how Mephibosheth saw himself! Less than nothing!
Worse than the worst! Lower than rock bottom!

But that's not how David, in his kindness, saw him!

Listen, before grace moved in, our lives were also helpless and hopeless. And we were less than nothing when compared to God!

But after grace is a part of our lives, it should lead us to look at ourselves through the lens of God's amazing grace.

Mephibosheth's life had been controlled by his **fear** and by his **weakness**! But now David wanted to remove that fear and provide for Mephibosheth's weakness what Mephibosheth could not provide for himself!

David provided grace to one who was at enmity with him!

THE GRACE OF GOD REACHES OUT TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN RUINED BY A FALL.. WELCOMES IN THOSE WHO ARE AT ENMITY WITH HIM!

III. THE GRACE OF GOD LIFTS UP THE FALLEN!

Verses 6-8 record David's conversation with Mephibosheth. **Verses 9-11** record David's conversation with Ziba about Mephibosheth!

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These verses illustrate three ways in which the grace of God lifts up the fallen.

A. God's Grace Gives Undeserved Riches!

That's what David did for Mephibosheth. He restored to him all the land of Saul and Jonathan.

David did not have to go to that extent to keep his promise to Jonathan. He could have just put Mephibosheth on a kind of royal welfare system and kept Saul's estate for himself. But David gave it all to Mephibosheth!

It was so great that verse 10 says it would take Ziba's fifteen sons and twenty servants to care for the land! With one decree from the king, Mephibosheth went from living in someone else's house in Lo-debar to owning his own royal estate!

This is what grace does! God's grace enriches us!
2 Corinthians 8:9 says: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

Ephesians 1:3 says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"

God's Grace Gives Undeserved Riches.

B. God's Grace Gives Unconditional Favor.

Four times in this chapter – verses 7, 10, 11, and 13 – we are told that David gave Mephibosheth a permanent place at his royal table.

This was not a subtle form of house arrest to keep an eye on Mephibosheth. And it was not a handout to meet his physical need for food.

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David had given Mephibosheth so much land that it would take thirty-five people to care for it. So this was not about food.

It was about favor! Verse 11 says that Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons. David adopted Mephibosheth! Mephibosheth was not just a guest at the royal table! He was a member of the royal family!

Look at what **verse 13** says!
Mephibosheth remained crippled. But his crippled feet were hidden under the king's table! That's what grace does! It covers us!

Romans 5:20—"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, **grace did much more abound!**"

God's Grace Gives Undeserved Riches!
God's Grace Gives Unconditional Favor!

- C. **God's Grace Gives Unending Security!**
2 Samuel 21:1-7 illustrates David's ongoing protection of Mephibosheth. Saul waged an unjust war against the Gibeonites. But the punishment for Saul's sin did not fall on Israel until David's reign. A three-year famine struck the land. And when David prayed about it, God told him about Saul's sin. So David went to the Gibeonites to make restitution. And the Gibeonites demanded that David hand over seven of Saul's sons that they may hang them. David agreed. But look at **2 Samuel 21:7!**

This is how the grace of God treats us.
Look at **Lamentations 3:21-23.**

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Conclusion

So, How should we respond to the grace, goodness, and generosity of God? Let's look at **2 Samuel 19:24-30** for the answer.

David's kingdom was threatened by a political and military revolt led by one of his own sons, Absalom. During this conflict, David became a refugee in exile from his beloved city of Jerusalem. Ultimately, David prevailed. Absalom was defeated and killed in battle. And David finally returned to Jerusalem.

Upon his arrival, David confronted Mephibosheth. When David fled Jerusalem, Mephibosheth remained behind. Ziba told David that Mephibosheth stayed behind because he had turned against the king and sided with the enemy. **(He was subject to persecution and slander)**

When David returned, Mephibosheth who had not bathed or shaven since his departure met him and gave his side of the story. **(He lived a life of self-denial during the king's absence.)**

Ziba had left him. And being crippled, he had no other means of escape.

Not knowing whose story to believe, David split Saul and Jonathan's estate evenly between Ziba and Mephibosheth.

But in 2 Samuel 19:30 look at what Mephibosheth says.
"Oh, let him take it all, since my lord the king has come safely home."

He rejoiced at the return of the king and cared little for material things.

We ought to give our all to the Lord who has given so much to us!

"I hear the Savior say, "Thy strength indeed is small! Child of weakness watch and pray. Find in me, thine all in all! Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe, sin had left a crimson stain – He washed it white as snow!"