

A Covenant, A Kid, And A King



By Minister Bonita Easter – Noon Bible Study

Scripture: 1 Samuel 20:14-15; 2 Samuel 9:1-13

Background Reading: 2 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 16:1-4; 2 Samuel 19:24-30; 2 Samuel 21:7

Key Verse: ¹⁴ But show me unfailing kindness like the LORD's kindness as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, ¹⁵ and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family—not even when the LORD has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth.” **1 Samuel 20:14-15.**

Introduction: Kindness (Hebrew: hesed or mercy) is one of the greatest traits of human character. And the spirit of kindness is one of the greatest needs within human society. If the spirit of kindness hung over the world, the world would be a far different and better place than it is today. Just imagine for a moment what would happen if the spirit of kindness dominated mankind: no more wars, wrath, lying, loneliness, deception, selfishness, to name a few.

A spirit of kindness hovering over the earth would create a different atmosphere, a different world. A kindness that loves one's neighbors as oneself, a kindness that reaches out to serve and to help others when they need help. This is a picture of David reaching out. This is a picture of our story.

Every page of Scripture whispers the name of Jesus. Sometimes we see Him in prophecy. Sometimes we see Him in symbols. Sometimes we see Him in people whose lives point beyond themselves. The story of Mephibosheth is one of those stories. At first glance, it appears to be about a crippled man receiving kindness from King David. But underneath the surface, it is really the Gospel. **The story of Grace that always seeks the undeserving.**

Background: David's search for someone from Saul's household was not motivated by politics, pity, or public opinion. It was motivated by a covenant he had made years earlier with Jonathan (1 Samuel 20:14–15). David lost his best friend in battle.

In the ancient world, new kings often eliminated the previous king's male descendants to protect their throne. Everyone would have expected David to destroy Saul's family. Instead, David demonstrated God's faithfulness by extending mercy rather than judgment.

Before Mephibosheth ever knew David was looking for him, David had already decided to show him kindness.

That is the picture of God's grace toward us.

Lesson Text: A Covenant – The Promise (1 Samuel 18:3; 1 Samuel 20:14-15)

Scripture – (1 Samuel 18:3) And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. (1 Samuel 20:14-15)- But show me unfailing kindness like the Lord's kindness as long as I live, so that I may not be killed, ¹⁵ and do not ever cut off your kindness from my family—not even when the Lord has cut off every one of David's enemies from the face of the earth.”

Key Points

Covenant relationships are found throughout the Bible. There are personal covenants between two individuals (e.g., David and Jonathan in 1 Samuel 20), political covenants between two kings or nations (e.g., King Solomon and King Hiram in 1 Kings 5), legal covenants with a nation (such as the laws about freeing Hebrew slaves), and so forth. Entering into covenants was a major part of what it meant to live in the Ancient Near East. This covenant was different. It was a covenant that would transcend time and kingdoms. The Christlike love that Johnathan demonstrates toward David is the same Christlike love that God expects of each believer today.

Christ Revealed

- Before we ever searched for God...God searched for us.
- Before we loved Him...He loved us.
- Before we called His name...He called ours.
- David sought Mephibosheth because of Jonathan.
- God seeks us because of Jesus Christ.
- Salvation begins in the heart of God—not in the efforts of humanity.

Grace begins with God's covenant, not man's worthiness.

Golden Nuggets

- Many people spend their lives believing they have been forgotten because of family failures, poor decisions, broken relationships, or painful circumstances.
- But God's covenant is stronger than our circumstances.
- He knows exactly where we are—even in our own "Lo-Debar."



Lesson Text: A Kid – The Search (2 Samuel 9:1-8)

- a) A Covenant Remembered (vv. 1-4)
- b) Leaving Lo-Debar (vv. 5-6)
- c) Grace Restores (vv. 7-8)

Scripture – 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?”

Key Points - Mephibosheth had every reason to fear. He belonged to the family of the former king. Lo-Debar represents life apart from God's fellowship. A place with no pasture. A place with no word. A place of obscurity. A place where hope appears forgotten. Every believer has lived in a spiritual Lo-Debar, separated by sin, and unable to rescue ourselves.

- Instead of judgment...He received mercy. Instead of death...He received restoration.
- Instead of rejection...He received an invitation. David called him by name. "Mephibosheth."
- Notice what David addressed first. Not his disability. Not his shame. Not his past. His name.

Christ Revealed

- Jesus also calls people by name. "Zacchaeus..." "Mary..." "Lazarus..." "Saul..."
- The Good Shepherd knows His sheep by name (John 10:11-18).
- God sees us before He sees our brokenness.
- Mephibosheth described himself as "a dead dog." Grace saw a son.
Many people still define themselves by failures, addictions, disappointments, divorce, illness, rejection, or shame.

God defines His children differently. Where the world sees brokenness...God sees redemption.

Golden Nuggets

- Your condition may explain where you are. It never determines what God can do.
- Brokenness does not cancel God's purpose.
- Many believers spend years allowing their weaknesses to define them.
- God defines us by His grace—not by our scars.



Lesson Text: A King- The Provisions (2 Samuel 9:9-13)

- a) Restored but not healed (vv. 9-10)
- b) Broken but not disqualified (vv. 11-13)

Scripture: 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.

Key Points: David restored everything Saul had lost. He assigned servants. He restored the inheritance. Then he did something unexpected. He invited Mephibosheth to eat continually at the king's table. When Mephibosheth sat at David's table, his crippled feet disappeared beneath the table. Everyone saw a son. That’s what grace does. God does not pretend our brokenness never existed; He simply refuses to let it define us.

Christ Revealed

- Jesus does the same things. He restores what sin destroyed; He gives us an inheritance we never earned.
- He adopts us into God's family. He prepares a table before us. He promises a place in His eternal kingdom.

The greatest miracle would not have been healed feet. The greatest miracle was a restored relationship. That is salvation.

Golden Nuggets:

- A king's table is more than a place to eat; it is a place of acceptance.
- A place of fellowship, a place of protection, a place of belonging, and a place where identity is restored.
- Likewise, Christ does not merely improve our lives. He makes us sons and daughters of the King.

Mephibosheth/Us	Christ/Gospel
Crippled by another's fall.	Humanity is crippled by Adam's sin (Romans 5:12).
Living on Lo-Debar ("no pasture").	Sinners are spiritually barren apart from Christ.
The king sought him first.	Jesus came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).
Brought because of Jonathan's covenant.	Believers are accepted because of God's covenant in Christ (Hebrews 13:20).
Told, "Fear Not"	Christ repeatedly says, "Fear Not" to those who come to Him.
Land Restored	Christ restores what sin has stolen (Joel 2:25; ultimately fulfilled in Him).
Seated at the king's table as a son.	Believers are adopted into God's family (Romans 8:15-17; Ephesians 2:19).
Protected by the covenant.	Our security rests in God's faithful covenant through Christ.
Rejoiced in the king's return more than in his possessions (2 Samuel 16).	The church eagerly awaits the return of King Jesus (Titus 2:13; Revelation 22:20).

Conclusion

As we close this lesson, remember that the story of Mephibosheth is not simply an account of an ancient king showing kindness to a forgotten man. It is the story of the Gospel. David becomes a picture of Christ. Mephibosheth becomes a picture of every sinner. Jonathan becomes a picture of the everlasting covenant. The king's table becomes a picture of salvation.

David sought a man who could offer him nothing in return. Mephibosheth did not earn the king's favor. He could not repay the king's kindness. He came to the palace broken, fearful, and believing he deserved judgment. Yet because of a covenant made long before he arrived, David extended mercy instead of condemnation, restored what had been lost, and welcomed him to the king's table as one of his own.

That is exactly what God has done for us through Jesus Christ.

Sometimes God changes our circumstances, and sometimes He changes our standing before Him while we are still walking through those circumstances. Grace does not always remove the scars. Grace always changes the story.

Final Thought to Remember

"Grace is God bringing us from Lo-Debar to the King's table—not because of who we are, but because of whose we are in Christ."

