

David Blesses Mephibosheth

2 Samuel 9

PPT Title

David Blesses Mephibosheth

Main Point: God pours His grace out on those who accept His gift.

Key Verse: *Give praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Those blessings come from the heavenly world. They belong to us because we belong to Christ.* - Ephesians 1:3

Props: A plate of delicious food (as from a king's banquet table); Small crust of bread

BACKGROUND/REVIEW



Say: Last week we talked about Saul's overwhelming jealousy of David. It seemed at every turn, Saul was trying to set another trap for David. Last week, we just scratched the surface of Saul's hatred for David. Saul and his men hunted for David (1 Samuel 24:11). David hid from Saul in the desert and even in a cave. But God always remains with those who trust Him. The Lord was with David, and He spoiled all of Saul's attempts to kill David (1 Samuel 23:14).



One of the ways God protected David was by sending him the wonderful friendship of Saul's son, Jonathan. God knit these two men's hearts together. Jonathan encouraged David to be brave and trust in the Lord (1 Samuel 23:16-17). They made a promise to be loyal to each other for all of their days. Part of this promise included David taking care of Jonathan's family. David promised to accept and care for Jonathan's family because of his relationship with Jonathan. He knew Jonathan was faithful and righteous before God, and David wanted to honor the family of Jonathan on Jonathan's behalf. We are going to see that David kept his word, because he was a faithful friend and a man after God's own heart.



Say: Near the end of 1 Samuel, we read something very sad. Saul and Jonathan died in the battle against the Philistines. Saul did not live a life of faith. He turned his back on God and refused to worship Him. One of the things that we see in the Bible is that when people choose to disobey God, they actually bring hurt and ruin upon themselves! Saul's sin caused ruin and destruction for him and the entire nation of Israel. Perhaps it isn't so surprising that his family died tragically in this battle. Remember, sin spoils everything. **It may sometimes be hard to lead a righteous life, but when we look at how the life of Saul ends, we see that it's even harder to lead a sinful, rebellious life** (Proverbs 13:15).

Ask: How do you think David responded when he heard the news that Saul, the King who was determined to kill him, was dead? *Listen for answers.* **Ask:** If someone were trying to kill you for several years, would you be glad that he was no longer a threat to your life? Would you be happy that you were safe at last? **Say:** Let's read how David responded when he heard that Saul and Jonathan were dead.



Then David took hold of his clothes and tore them. All of his men did the same thing. All of them were filled with sadness. They sobbed over the whole nation of Israel. They didn't eat anything until evening. That's because Saul and Jonathan and the Lord's army had been killed with swords. - 2 Samuel 1:11-12

Say: Of course we would expect that David mourned for Jonathan. But can you believe that he also mourned for Saul? Even though David had been hurt, threatened, and chased by Saul, he didn't rejoice when the King died. David didn't treat Saul as Saul treated him. David treated Saul with honor and respect. Why did David do this? David was a man after God's heart. David was saddened that the King of God's people had died so tragically. David knew that God had intended to bless Saul as King of Israel, and David was sad that Saul chose disobedience that led to death. If Saul had chosen to obey, he would have experienced many blessings of a faithful life. **Sin spoiled Saul's life, the life of his son Jonathan, and deeply hurt the heart of David.**

Note to Teacher: This is a sobering passage to those of us who are parents. It has been said, "The blessings of the child are linked to the obedience of the parent." See also Exodus 20:5-6.

DAVID BECOMES KING (2 Samuel 2)

David chose not to follow Saul down the path of sin and death. After he mourned the loss of Saul and Jonathan, he made a choice to continue to listen to God.



After Saul and Jonathan died, David asked the Lord for advice. "Should I go up to one of the towns of Judah?" he asked.

The Lord said, "Go up."

David asked, "Where should I go?"

"To Hebron," the Lord answered. - 2 Samuel 2:1

Application: David talked to God, listened to God, and then followed God. After a painful experience like losing a best friend, we are sometimes tempted to run from God in our sadness and anger. But David didn't. He believed that God had a plan, and he wanted to follow it with his whole heart. Just like David, when we are sad, we should turn to God. When you need to know what step to take next, turn to God.



Say: David took his family and friends and settled in Hebron. The men of Hebron came and anointed David as King of Israel (2 Samuel 2:4). As David began his reign as King over Israel, there was only one thing that kept him from following Saul's path to disobedience, destruction, and death. There was only one thing that made David a great king.

PPT Verse

*David became more and more powerful. That's because **the Lord God who rules over all was with him.** - 2 Samuel 5:10*

Say: David didn't become powerful because he was the best warrior. His power didn't come because he was the celebrated hero that killed Goliath as a young man. **David became more powerful because the Lord was with him.** David listened to the Lord God Almighty, and the Almighty Lord was with him.

DAVID BLESSES MEPHIBOSHETH (2 Samuel 9:1-7)



Shortly after David became king, he remembered his covenant with Jonathan to show kindness to his family. David promised Jonathan that he would show loving kindness to his family forever (1 Samuel 20:14-17). David vowed to Saul that he would not kill any of the children that came after him (1 Samuel 24:21-22). Now that Saul and Jonathan were dead, and David was king, it would have been easy for David to forget his commitment. **But David not only remembered his commitment to Saul, he went far beyond it.**

David asked, "Is anyone left from the royal house of Saul? If there is, I want to be kind to him because of Jonathan." - 2 Samuel 9:1

David called one of the servants who used to serve Saul. His name was Ziba.

The King then asked him, "Is anyone still alive from Saul's family? If so, I want to show God's kindness to them."



Ziba replied, "Yes, one of Jonathan's sons is still alive. He is crippled in both feet."

"Where is he?" the king asked.

"In Lo-debar," Ziba told him, "at the home of Makir son of Ammiel."



So David sent for him and brought him from Makir's home. His name was Mephibosheth; he was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson. When he came to David, he bowed low to the ground in deep respect. David said, "Greetings, Mephibosheth."

Mephibosheth replied, "I am your servant."

"Don't be afraid!" David said. "I intend to show kindness to you because of my promise to your father, Jonathan. I will give you all the property that once belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will eat here with me at the king's table!" - 2 Samuel 9:3-7



Say: This is such a beautiful demonstration of love and acceptance, but it's even more beautiful when we understand the culture in which David and Mephibosheth lived. During this time in history, when one King took over another King's throne, the new King would kill the entire family of the former King. This was to insure that the family of the old King would not try to regain the power they once had. This explains why Mephibosheth bowed down out of fear. This also explains why David comforted him and told him not to be afraid. The tradition of the time would have called for David to kill Mephibosheth. But David treated Mephibosheth as an honored guest. **David didn't follow tradition. He didn't follow culture. He followed God.**



Mephibosheth had not done anything to **earn** this kindness and blessing from David. He was not a mighty warrior who had fought a great battle for the King. He had never gone to war because both of his feet were crippled from the time he was a young boy (2 Samuel 4:4). He was not courageous. In fact, he was deeply afraid to even appear before David. No, Mephibosheth did not earn the King's favor. David did not bless Mephibosheth because of anything he had done. These blessings were freely given to him as a gift. And they were a gift that he could never repay.

Ask: Does anyone know the word for blessings that are given to someone who has not earned them? *Grace.* (You may want to hint that it is a 5-letter word that begins with "G".) **Say:** Grace is "extending special favor to someone who doesn't deserve it, who hasn't earned it, and can never repay it...Grace is a demonstration of love that is undeserved, unearned, and unrepayable." (Chuck Swindoll)



But why Mephibosheth? David **made a promise** with Jonathan to protect his family. David showed grace, or unearned favor, to Mephibosheth because of Jonathan's worth and faithfulness. David offered to take all the blessings, honor and acceptance earned by Jonathan and shower them on Mephibosheth. This crippled man would be blessed because of the faithfulness of his father.

THE OFFER OF A KING (2 Samuel 9:8-13)

Say: This reminds me of another story. It involves you, God, and a man named Jesus.

Every person in this room was born with a disability like Mephibosheth. You may look down at your feet, think about what a fast runner you are, and try to argue this point. But we are all disabled in a way much worse than our feet. Our hearts are imperfect. Our souls and spirits are imperfect. Our minds are imperfect.



Romans 5:12 says, "Sin entered the world because one man sinned. And death came because of sin. Everyone sinned, so death came to all people." We may not be physically disabled, but we are all spiritually disabled.

Say: When God created Adam and Eve, he wanted one thing from them - He wanted them to trust Him. But they chose to trust the devil, and they turned away from God. This made them spiritually crippled. In that instant, they changed from being pure to being contaminated by sin. It also caused the entire human race to be disabled by sin. When we think bad thoughts, it's because we have an impure, sinful mind. When we desire bad things, it's because we have an impure, sinful heart.



Mephibosheth's crippled feet kept him from running and playing as a child. His handicap kept him from being free to walk wherever he wanted to go. He was bound to beg for food because he couldn't work. Our sin-nature keeps us from entering God's kingdom. Our sin-nature keeps us separated from God, and sentenced to eternal punishment.

But God loves us, and He provided the way for us to "**eat at his table.**" God extends this grace, this unearned favor that we can't pay back, because of someone else. And it's not David, Jonathan, or Mephibosheth. God accepts His impure children because of his faithful Son, Jesus Christ. God gives us grace - blessings that we did not earn - because of Jesus' worth and faithfulness. God takes all the blessings and honor of Jesus and showers them down on his imperfect children.



When the world and everything in it became contaminated by sin, God sent his perfect Son to live among sinful people. Jesus lived with them, but He never became sinful like them. His thoughts, desires, and actions were always perfect. He lived a perfect life, yet He was sentenced to die in place of imperfect people. Jesus died in the sinner's place, proving that He was a faithful Son, Friend, and Savior. He rose from the dead three days later, proving that God has power over death.

Say: And this opened the door for us to receive God's grace through the faithfulness of Jesus. But how do we receive this grace?

Let's go back to the story of David and Mephibosheth.



When Mephibosheth came before David, he bowed down low and said, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?" (2 Samuel 9:8)

Just as Mephibosheth bowed before David, we must bow our hearts before God. We must realize that He is perfect and we are sinful. We must recognize we are spiritually broken. We must understand that we don't deserve this grace that God offers to us.



David promised to give Mephibosheth all of the land that once belonged to Saul. David even provided servants to farm the land so that Mephibosheth would be provided for. Then David said, "And Mephibosheth will always eat at my table." (2 Samuel 9:10)

What a wonderful offer for the undeserving, imperfect Mephibosheth. Notice that in this deal, Mephibosheth did not have to do anything but **accept** the blessings! Now Mephibosheth had a choice to make. He could say, "No. I like my life the way it is. Yes, every day is a struggle. I have to beg for food because I can't work. But I'm not sure I trust this King David. I would rather run my own life. I don't want to be near the King, eat at the king's table, or receive the good gifts he is offering. Take me back to my dismal little house." OR, He could give up his life of struggling and accept what the King offered him. **Ask:** What do you think he did? Let's read:



And Mephibosheth, who was crippled in both feet, lived in Jerusalem and ate regularly at the king's table. - 2 Samuel 9:13

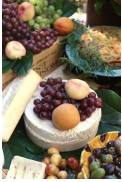
Mephibosheth trusted David. He accepted the blessings that the King offered him! He

traded in the crusts of bread that he once begged for, and received the rich food of the King's feast! **Teacher:** hold up the bread, and compare to the plate of delicious food.



Application: We must trust that God is a good and faithful King, and we must choose to believe that He is the only way to cure imperfect, sinful people. When we accept what Jesus did for us, we will receive the blessings of peace, joy, righteousness, and eternal life. After we accept the grace He offers us because of His faithful Son, His plan is for us to become His faithful disciples. We are called to eat at His table as His sons and daughters. This means we stay close to him, remain with Him, abide with Him, learn from Him, and enjoy His presence!

You may notice that Mephibosheth's feet remained crippled. Once we accept the grace of God, He no longer sees us as crippled. Instead, He sees His Son. He has forgiven our sins, and given us new life. As we live each day, we still choose to sin. But the longer we sit at the table with God, and the more we listen to Him, the more we learn what a blessing it is to trust and obey Him. When we trust Him more, we sin less. However, there are parts of us that will always be crippled. That is until we meet God face to face, and sit with Him at the table in heaven and enjoy a fabulous feast together. Then we will be completely healed.



But until that day, isn't it a blessing to be like Mephibosheth? We are undeserving, yet we are loved and accepted by a King - because of His faithful Son. What a privilege to eat daily at our king's table, crippled feet and all!

PPT Main Point

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