

Over the past several months, as we have been considering the life of David, I've mentioned several times we must view David in three ways (1) Historically as the King of Israel—that is, we must remember that David was a unique historical figure.

(2) Typically as a shadow of Christ—that is, David was a picture of Christ, who is often called David and David's Son. Ezek.37:23-24—"Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God. David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd."

(3) Practically as an example of Christian living—that is, David is an example of a man who loves God in a world that doesn't. Thus, the majority of the trials, temptations, and joys that David experienced, are experienced by NC Christians as well. It's for this reason, we can read through the Psalms and relate to the general experiences of David.

Thus, as we consider David's covenant faithfulness to Jonathan's house, while we can learn various things about being faithful to our covenant promises, I want to point out how in David, we behold the covenant love of Christ His people.

- I. A Covenant Promise (v1)
- II. A Royal Summons (vv2-8)
- III. A Gracious Treatment (vv9-13)

I. A Covenant Promise (v1)

1. Chapter 9 recounts an event that happened after David was enthroned as king and defeated his surrounding enemies.
2. Having conquered his enemies, the last part of chapter 8 describes David establishing order within the kingdom.
3. So here's David—he's king over all Israel, he's defeated his enemies, and he's set up leaders within the kingdom.
4. And what does he do next—well, he desires to fulfill a promise that he made 15 years before to his friend Jonathan.
5. V1—"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.'"
6. If you remember, Jonathan was Saul's son, who loved David, and helped him escape for his life (from his own father).
7. As a result of their mutual love for one another, David and Jonathan entered into a covenant together (1Sam.20).
8. 1Sam.20:14-15—"And you shall not only show me the kindness of the LORD while I still live, that I may not die; but you shall not cut off your kindness from my house forever, no, not when the LORD has cut off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth."
9. In short, Jonathan was asking David to vow that he would show mercy to Jonathan but also to his house forever.
10. Notice, Jonathan expressly asked David to remember his house, "after the LORD has cut off all of his enemies."
11. This effect took place at least 15 years before—David promised that he would show kindness to Jonathan's house.
12. David made a covenant with Jonathan, that after he was delivered from his enemies, he would remember Jonathan's house.
13. This is what David's in doing in chapter 9—he is fulfilling a covenant promise made 15 years before, to Jonathan.
14. Now, keep in mind, that the word rendered "kindness" (v1, v3, and v7), refers to a "covenant love or kindness."

15. David was desirous to express covenant love or kindness to Jonathan's house, in fulfillment to a covenant promise.
16. According to v1, David initiated the search for a descendant of Jonathan, in order to fulfill his covenant promise.
17. Thus, in David we find an example of covenant or faithful love—love that upholds its word regardless of cost.
18. Thus, an application for us today would be, let us, as David did, fulfill our covenant vows made spouse, church, and Savior.
19. But while it's proper to make that application, I want to suggest that 2Samuel 9:1 provides a more important application.
20. Just as David showed kindness to Mephibosheth as the result of a covenant promise, so Christ shows mercy to us as a result of a covenant promise.
21. Now, in 2Samuel 9, David shows mercy in fulfillment to his covenant with Jonathan, but who did Christ covenant with?
22. Well, you might know, that Christ covenanted with His Father in eternity past about the salvation of His people.
23. Perhaps I can say—from eternity past, the Son promised to show mercy to a people given to Him by His Father.
24. Thus, every time Christ bestows saving kindness upon a sinner, He does so in fulfillment to His covenant promise.
25. But this is not only true of Christ but also the Father—every time the Father bestows saving mercy upon a sinner, He does so for Christ's sake.

II. A Royal Summons (vv2-8)

1. From v2 we find, that David's men have an idea—there was a man named Ziba, a servant of Saul, let us ask him.
2. So they called him to David, and the king said, v2—"Are you Ziba?' He said, 'At your service.' Then the king said, 'Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?'"
3. V3—"And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet"—he was crippled in his feet.
4. 2Sam.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."
5. Here's what happened—news of Saul's and Jonathan's defeat and death, reached Israel, and fear and panic resulted.
6. And so as, Mephibosheth and his nurse, sought to flee in haste, the boy fell and was crippled (made lame) as a result.
7. Thus, he's called lame because he was crippled—he was not able to use his feet—he was not able to walk on his own.
8. And so, I want you to think for a few minutes about this young boy—his father and grandfather were killed together.
9. He suffered a serious injury so that he became crippled—with the death of Saul and Jonathan he lost his inheritance.
10. As David eventually became king, he no doubt became fearful of what David would do with the house of Saul.
11. And so, here he is—a crippled orphan who was cast upon the mercy of others, afraid of what David would do to him.
12. V4—"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.'"
13. It shouldn't be surprising to learn that Mephibosheth lived outside of Jerusalem—Lo Debar was a town in Manasseh.

14. The term Lo Debar literally means "a place without pasture" and the actual name Mephibosheth means "a thing of shame."
15. Thus, we can understand why Mephibosheth was afraid when he was summoned by David and brought to Jerusalem.
16. V6—"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!'"
17. V7—"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.'"
18. Mephibosheth was no doubt afraid at what David could do to him—he likely thought he would be put to death.
19. V8—"Then he bowed himself, and said, 'What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?'"
20. This was Mephibosheth's description of himself—Hebrews generally looked upon dogs with disdain and disgust.
21. The only thing more worthless than a dog was a dead dog—thus, Mephibosheth viewed himself as unworthy of David's kindness.
22. (1) His condition—Mephibosheth's condition in many ways mirrors or illustrates man's native condition in Adam.
23. (a) His fall—Mephibosheth was from a royal line with great privilege, all of which was lost and taken from him.
24. His grandfather was the king of Israel and his father was the heir-apparent—he was raised in a palace with privilege.
25. But all of this changed when the kingdom was taken from Saul and given to David—he fell from his native privilege.
26. Perhaps we can say—the fall of Saul had serious consequences for all of the descendants of Saul (including Mephibosheth).
27. But what does this have to do with us and our fall—well, surely brethren you know that Adam was created a king.
28. We are told that he was given dominion, as creation was placed beneath his feet, for him to govern and to rule.
29. And so, when Adam fell (and the kingdom was taken from him), so it was taken from all of his decedents to come.
30. What a tragedy! Man who was created to rule as God's king on earth, has fallen in Adam, and lost his inheritance.
31. (b) His inability—Mephibosheth lacked all ability to remedy his situation—he could do nothing to change his situation.
32. This of course is similar to all men by nature, for the Scripture describes us as moral and spiritual cripples (lame).
33. Rom.5:6—"For when we were still without strength (when we will helpless), in due time Christ died for the ungodly."
34. Again, this wasn't always true of man, for man was created (in Adam) upright and able to walk with God in fellowship.
35. But now, because of fall (similar to Mephibosheth), made has been made a spiritual cripple, unable to walk or fellowship with God.
36. (c) His fear—just as Mephibosheth lived in Lo Debar in fear of David, so Satan holds native man in fear of death.
37. Brethren, we can hardly imagine what Mephibosheth went through those 15+ years in Lo Debar, fearing a summons from David.
38. Envision him there in his little cottage, hiding in his room, fearful that at any time royal servants will knock on the door.
39. Well actually, this is a sad but accurate description of all men by nature, who know (in the deepest part of the soul), that they've rebelled against God and at any time, He will summon them to be judged and executed.

40. Heb.2:14-15—"through death He destroyed him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and released those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."
41. All men, through fear of death, are subject to bondage—this is another way of saying, we are all by nature afraid to die.
42. We are all like Mephibosheth, sitting in our little houses afraid that at any moment, death will knock on our door.
43. Now, this doesn't mean that we always show this fear—in fact, oftentimes, we do all that we can to cover it over.
44. We fill our lives with material things, drugs, relationships, counseling, all in an attempt to remove the fear—but it remains.
45. There's a sense in which native man does all that he can to distract himself from crippling fear that death is coming.
46. And let's be clear about this—it isn't merely death that man fears, it's what happens after death that frightens him.
47. He knows, within the deepest parts of his soul, that he has offended the King, and will eventually face His wrath.
48. (2) His summons—just as David sent his servants to bring Mephibosheth to Jerusalem, so Christ sends ministers with a summons for sinners to return to God.
49. Thus, I want to suggest three ways in which David's summons of Mephibosheth, showed our summons by Christ.
50. (a) It was gracious—there was nothing in Mephibosheth that rendered him deserving of David's kindness (mercy).
51. Perhaps another way of putting this would be—David took the initiative in sending for Mephibosheth in Lo Debar.
52. O brethren, I want you to put yourself in Mephibosheth's shoes—what was he doing in Lo Debar that merited David's kindness?
53. (b) It was specific—by this I mean, David sent his servants to Lo Debar, specifically to bring Mephibosheth to him.
54. Now, I think most of us are familiar with the Biblical distinction between God's general and special call or summons.
55. While the general call comes to all men (within the sound of the gospel), the special call comes to specific people.
56. What we have illustrated in 2Samuel 9 is God's special or specific summons of His elect people through His word.
57. It's as if Christ says to His Father—"Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God."
58. And then the Spirit says—"There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet (who at present is sitting in a drug rehab in Michigan)."
59. And then the Spirit comes to that individual with a special and specific summons from the King of heaven and earth.
60. (c) It was effectual—by this I mean, David not only invited Mephibosheth to Jerusalem, but he brought him to Jerusalem.
61. V5—"Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar."
62. Remember, Mephibosheth was lame (he was crippled)—he was not able to come to David in and of his own ability.
63. Furthermore, Mephibosheth's inability was not partial but total—both feet were lame—he lacked all ability to come.
64. This means, Mephibosheth's response to David's summons, was totally dependent upon David's servants to bring him.
65. This is what God does when He intends to bring His elect people to Himself—He sends and brings us to Himself.

66. Micah 4:6-7—"In that day, says the LORD, I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted; I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation; so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever."
67. This is prophecy of Christ, who would assemble the lame and gather the outcast and afflicted into a strong nation.
68. Now, it's true that in our Savior's earthly ministry, He literally healed the lame and gathered the outcast and afflicted.
69. Matt.11:4-5—"Jesus answered and said to them, 'God and tell John the things which you hear and see: the blind see and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear.'"
70. In other words, Christ is doing the very things that the OT foretold the Messiah would do—gather the lame, outcast, and afflicted.
71. But notice Micah 4:6-7 says that Christ would gather the lame, outcast, and afflicted and make them into a remnant, a strong nation—"so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever."
72. In other words, our Savior's ministry to the physically lame and afflicted, were pictures of what He does to the spiritually lame and afflicted.
73. "I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and the afflicted"—I will gather them to Myself in Jerusalem, to reign over them forever.
74. This is exactly what David did to Mephibosheth—he gathered him from Lo Debar, brought him to Jerusalem, and made him a part of his kingdom.
75. And this is precisely what Christ does to every Mephibosheth he saves—He assembles or gathers them to Himself.
76. But here I must clarify—there are important differences in the way Christ brings His people to Himself, and David brought Mephibosheth to himself.
77. Christ works in the heart of His people, enabling them to hear, understand, and believe His word (or summons).
78. He doesn't bring us from the far country to Himself as if we were a stone—He doesn't merely pick us up and carry us to Himself.
79. No, He changes our hearts and opens our ears, and makes us willing to come—He heals our natively crippled legs.
80. Jn.10:16—"And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd."
81. Notice the phrases, "I must bring them" and "they will hear My voice"—they He brings them is by enabling them to hear His voice.
82. (3) His response, v8—"Then he bowed himself, and said, 'What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?'"

III. A Gracious Treatment (vv9-13)

1. It's here that our story becomes even more amazing, for David bestowed upon Mephibosheth three blessings that echo our blessings in Christ.
2. (1) He relocated him to Jerusalem—that is, he restored him to the city and people of God that he might worship God.
3. Remember, at this time, true worship took place in Jerusalem—only there were the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant.
4. Thus, in bringing Mephibosheth from Lo Debar to Jerusalem, David brought him from the far country to the city of God.
5. Micah 4:6-7—"In that day, says the LORD, I will assemble the lame, I will gather the outcast and those whom I have afflicted; I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcast a strong nation; so the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on, even forever."
6. (2) He gave him an inheritance, v7—"I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather."
7. What was the inheritance that Adam lost? Well, it was nothing less than the world, over which he was to rule.

8. And so too, what inheritance does Christ restore to us but the new heavens and earth—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."
9. (3) He brought him to his table, v13—"So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table."
10. To eat at David's table not only meant fellowship and intimacy, but it also meant sonship and all of the benefits that brings.
11. V11—"As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table like one of the king's sons"—he was treated as David's son.
12. And this is what God has done for us in Christ—He's not only returned us to His favor, given us an inheritance, but has adopted us as sons.
13. What a beautiful rags-to-riches story we find in Mephibosheth—he went from a poor orphan to a son of the king.
14. But my dear brethren, what is this in comparison to our story—for we've gone from a worst condition to a far greater one than Mephibosheth!
15. But I find it very interesting, that the chapter ends with this statement, v13—"And he was lame in both his feet."
16. Why does it end like this? Well I suggest it's to remind us of what we are by nature—while we are sons who sit at the table, by nature, we are but crippled sinners saved by grace.