

Ryan Clarke 22 August 2021

(Sermon Summary)

Mephibosheth's journey: a picture of the Lord's grace and kindness

Reading: 2 Samuel 9:1-13

Mephibosheth's journey

Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan and grandson of King Saul. He had been crippled when his nurse dropped him as they fled, following the deaths of Saul and Jonathan in battle. At the beginning of this account, he was living in Lo Debar, east of the Jordan, in another man's house. This was an inhospitable region (Lo Debar means 'no pasture') where Jews lived among the Gentiles. The name Mephibosheth means 'shame' and he was a man without hope.

David's decree to seek out a descendant of Saul was not a random utterance. David had made a covenant with Jonathan to deal kindly with his descendants, and now David is keeping his promise. His kindness is part of his greatness. Like the Lord, David is a covenant-keeping king.

David sent for Mephibosheth in an act of pure grace. Mephibosheth was unable to come of his own accord: he could not walk and would have had no right to come into the king's presence. Imagine how Mephibosheth must have felt when Ziba, servant of Saul and of Jonathan, knocked at his door, saying "The king is calling you". Mephibosheth responded humbly, falling on his face before the king. A hopeless man has been offered grace, and his response is that of a humble heart.

Mephibosheth leaves behind the barren land of Lo Debar and instead is given all Saul's land, with plenty of food to eat. Now he is treated as a son of the king, and experiences grace continually:

- the orphan receives sonship
- he passes from death to life
- he moves from the wilderness to a land of milk and honey.

Applying the picture to ourselves

This is a vivid picture of the grace of God towards sinners. It's healthy for us to consider our 'Lo Debar' - a far-off land where we were unable to help ourselves, and were strangers to the covenant. "At that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12).

In the eternal covenant of redemption (John 17), Christ promised to draw in His people and bring them to the heavenly Jerusalem. “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13).

A king much greater than David has come, and He calls to us, “Come to me, and I will give you rest”. Have you seen the servant of the King calling you? Have you come to ‘Jerusalem’ to meet with the King of Kings, or are you still in ‘Lo Debar’? Death is certain - don’t gamble with your life!

Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem and ate continually at the king’s table. The king provided for him for the rest of his days, giving him assurance and certainty. This is a beautiful picture for believers. Jesus is the bread of life who gives life to the soul and provides for His people all of their days.

The account concludes by pointing out that Mephibosheth continued to be lame. He relied wholly and continually on the provision and grace of King David. Though we are at the King’s table, we need to remind ourselves of our constant need of Him. Christ is our All in All. Let us look to Him to keep us from falling.