

The Grace of the King

2 Samuel 9

May 14, 2023

- Good morning, please turn with me to **2 Samuel 9**. If you are using the pew Bible, you can find that on page
- As you are turning there, I want to once again say Happy Mother's day to all of the Mother's who are with us this morning! We are so grateful for you all and we appreciate all that you do!
- Last week, we studied **chapter 8** together, looking at the summary account of many of David's victories as king of Israel
- And today, as we come into **chapter 9**, we encounter a beautiful picture of grace from King David!
- More than a few commentators agree that outside of Christ's sacrifice for His children on the Cross, this may be the most amazing picture of grace in all of Scripture!¹
- Whether you know of the story of David and Mephibosheth or if this is your first time hearing it, I pray that this message, would serve as a massive source of encouragement for you this morning!
- And as I was thinking about preaching on this chapter, I began to also think about the fact that today is the day that we celebrate Mother's Day.
 - And most of the time, in a Mother's day sermon, the focus is often times centered on encouragement.
 - Matt Chandler jokes that on Mother's day, we talk about how wonderful our mothers are and how much of a difference you have made in your children's lives
 - And then we get to Father's Day, and on father's day, we tell all the dads they need to get their acts together!
- And so anyways, in light of that trend, it works well for all of us today (certainly not just the mothers) as we see this incredible narrative with David and the kindness he shows to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth,
 - Really seeing how the kindness that David shows to Mephibosheth is in many respects a very clear picture of the grace that Christ has shown to us!
- I remember the first time I really heard this chapter explained. I was working as a counselor at a Christian summer camp in Pennsylvania, and many of you would know the name, it was called Summer's Best Two Weeks.
- And one of the leaders there was teaching one morning and he was teaching on 2 Samuel 9.
- And I just remember sitting there as he taught thinking, "How have I never heard this before?"
- So as you can probably tell by this point, I am very excited to unpack this chapter with you all this morning.

¹ David – A Story of Passion and Destiny, Chuck Swindoll, p.169

- And what I would really like to do as we look at this chapter is to kind of walk through this chapter as a whole, and then at the end, look at how this narrative points us to the greater grace that Christ has shown to His children!
- As we consider this concept of grace this morning, I would ask that you also show me grace as this is now the second week in a row that I have given you a blank outline.
- So if you are taking notes, there will really only be two major sections:
 - 1. **A Picture of Grace**
 - 2. **The Scope of Grace**
- So without further ado, let's read this chapter, starting in **v. 1**... let's pray!

“Father, we ask that you would encourage us through your Word this morning! Father as we encounter this beautiful passage in Scripture, would you use it to remind us of your goodness in our lives! Help us to recognize that you are a God of Grace who delights in bringing lost sinners home. Be with us now, we pray, AMEN!

A Picture of Grace

- As we get into this chapter, we see the first question that David asks, “**Is there anyone left in the house of Saul, so that I can show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?**”
- In the previous chapter, we see that David spends time setting up his government, so to speak. And during this time and after this, the text seems to imply that there was a season of peace and quietness in David's life.
- And it would not be a stretch to say that a time of peace would allow for reflection for David.
- And of course this is only speculation, but I imagine David began to recount his past and all of the ways that the Lord had blessed him, not only through deliverance in battle or in becoming king, but also through the friendships he had.
- And I think he began to specifically think about Jonathan, and as he thought about his love for his dear friend, he began to think about the promise that he had made with Jonathan, which is what prompts this question, “**Is there anyone in the house of Saul that is still alive and so I can show kindness to them?**”
- The word that should really be used is not “kindness” but “Grace.”²
 - “That I may show *Grace* for Jonathan's sake”
- Grace is a demonstration of love that is undeserved, unearned, and unrepayable.³
- And David wants to extend this grace to the household of Jonathan.
 - And why is this?
- In short, David had made a promise with Jonathan wants to keep that promise
- Back in **1 Samuel 20**, David is on the run from Saul, and he and Jonathan made a covenant with one another.

² David – A Story of Passion and Destiny, Chuck Swindoll, p.170

³ Ibid.

- And in this exchange, Jonathan says to David, “If I am still alive, show me the steadfast love of the Lord, that I may not die; and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.”
- Jonathan seeks to make this covenant with David because he knew that the Lord was going to establish David as king over Israel.
- In those days, it was the practice that when a new king would take over, all of the family members of the previous regime were to be killed to remove the possibility of them rising back to power.
 - And this wasn’t just something that only ruthless kings do, this was essentially the practice; the next logical step when you became king.
- Dale Davis comments, “When a new regime or dynasty came to power, the name of the game was purge. And you don’t have to go wandering into the ancient Near East to confirm this. You can stay within the pages of biblical history and watch Baasha in 1 Kings 15 or Zimri in 1 Kings 16 to find out what happens to the remnants of the previous regime. This was conventional political policy: solidification by liquidation. Everybody knew it; everybody believed it; everybody practiced it.”⁴
- This is why Jonathan essentially asks, “Would you mind breaking the trend for your friend? Will you take care of us and protect us, so that we will not be forgotten?”
- And without hesitation, we see that David agrees. His love for Jonathan prompted him to enter into a binding covenant with his friend.
 - We read in 1 Samuel 20:16-17, “And Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying “May the Lord take vengeance on David’s enemies. And Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul.”
- And one thing that I didn’t realize before is that David actually made this promise to Saul as well a few chapters later.
- In 1 Samuel 24:20-22, Saul says to David, “And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. Swear to me therefore by the Lord that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father’s house.” And David swore this to Saul.”
- What a noble man David was!
- David has made these promises to both Saul and to Jonathan and he intends on keeping his word.
- And now later in 2 Samuel 9, we find David thinking about this promise, which prompts the initial question.⁵
- And he asks if there is ANYONE!
- It’s interesting to note that he didn’t ask if there was anyone qualified, or anyone worthy, but rather he asked plainly, “Is there anyone?” Anyone still living who can be the recipient of grace?
- As one commentator says, this is “Unqualified acceptance based on unconditional love.”⁶

⁴ Dale Davis, 2 Samuel, 125

⁵ David – A Story of Passion and Destiny, Chuck Swindoll, p.171

⁶ Swindoll, 171

- And in **verses 2-3**, they found someone: “Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?” And he said, “I am your servant.” And the king said, “Is there not still someone of the house Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?” Ziba said to the king, “There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet.”
- I absolutely love this here! David is actively pursuing someone to show kindness to!
- I mean it would be generous enough if David just said, “You know, if I ever meet anyone from the house of Saul I will be sure to let them know they are safe and have nothing to worry about. I am not going to wipe them out or deal violently with them.” That alone would be counter-cultural, but David takes it so much further than that!
- David isn’t satisfied with passive grace; he is proactively looking to show grace! Chomping at the bit to do so.
- He’s performing Google searches to find someone from the house of Saul that is still alive; he is stalking Facebook profiles trying to connect some dots. he is dusting off phone books and trying to find a contact who will have more information about the house of Saul!
- And that is when he finds Ziba and summons him.
- And Ziba’s response to David about Mephibosheth seems to be very telling.
- One commentator notes that “If you read between the lines, you will feel an implication in the counsel Ziba gives the king.”⁷
- It seems that Ziba is trying to tell David that Mephibosheth is not going to “Look the part.”
 - He is saying, “This guy is going to stick out like a sore thumb in your courts David. He doesn’t have fancy clothes, he won’t fit the surroundings, and he has a serious disability.”
 - David asks if there is anybody. Ziba responds and says yes, but he is crippled.
- David’s response to this is amazing! He doesn’t even skip a beat!
- He moves right on to the next question, “Where is he?”
- He asks no follow-up questions about Mephibosheth’s condition or how he even came to be disabled. He just simply asks, “Where is he?”
- And in this, we see the way that grace is! Grace is not picky and it does not look for things that have been done to deserve love.
- As Chuck Swindoll says, “Grace is God giving Himself in full acceptance to someone who does not deserve it and can never earn it and will never be able to repay it.”⁸
- This is what makes the story of David and Mephibosheth so memorable!
- As strong king reaches out to an undeserving and disabled man. And David simply asks “Where is he?”
- Ziba answers in verse 4, “He is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-Debar.”
 - In other words, Mephibosheth is in hiding! He is living in a barren place at this time.
- Since it was the custom to kill anyone related to the previous king, if you fit that bill, you were either killed or you hid. Mephibosheth hid.
 - And the only one who knew where he was was Ziba, an old servant of Saul.

⁷ Ibid., 172

⁸ Ibid.

- We don't know too much about Lo-Debar other than it was most likely a barren pasture and we know it is where Mephibosheth is living.
 - However, I will tell you even the name itself does not sound like a pleasant place to live.
 - "Lo-Debar" does not exactly sound like a vacation spot.
 - And as I was thinking of Lo-Debar, I actually immediately thought that Lo-Debar is probably a bit similar to Buffalo, New York in its undesirability.
- For years, the joke in Buffalo was that the city is bad, the weather is bad, and the sports are bad.
- Thankfully, the sports are turning the tide a bit, but that's how I picture Lo-Debar; a place with nothing to really offer.
 - When you go in, you are just excited to leave.
- One thing I find interesting is that David never asks for his backstory. He doesn't ask how he wound up in Lo-Debar, nor does he ask how he became crippled.
- However, we do get the answer in Scripture as to how he became crippled.
- In 2 Samuel 4:4, we read, "Jonathan, the son of Saul, had a son who was crippled 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 as she fled in her haste, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth."
- When the nurse heard that Saul and Jonathan were dead, she picked Mephibosheth up to get him out of danger. And as she ran, she tripped, and Mephibosheth fell out of her arms.
- And as a result of this fall, he became personally disabled, and had been hiding away his entire life, terrified of being caught.
- So could you imagine the sheer horror that must have come over him when a man sent from King David himself shows up on his doorstep?!
- And then after answering the door, Mephibosheth hears the terrifying truth that the King has requested to see him!
- Two weeks ago, Kierra got her summons for Jury Duty, and every night she would call the number, hoping that her number wouldn't be called upon.
- And here, Mephibosheth's number has been called. The only thing that he must have been thinking is, "Well, this is where my story ends!"
- He is then taken to Jerusalem, into the presence of David Himself! The scene is set, and what follows is absolutely beautiful!
- Looking at **verse 6**, "And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, "Mephibosheth!" And he answered, "Behold, I am your servant."
- What a moment this must have been. This man who must have been shaking in his boots, falls face down before the king, completely at David's mercy!
- David asks, "Are you Mephibosheth?" and he tells him he is.
- At this point, Mephibosheth had no idea what to expect, but he certainly was not expecting what we read next in **verse 7**: "And David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father, and you shall eat at my table always."

- Once again, can you imagine what Mephibosheth must have been feeling in that moment?
- Expecting a sentence to death, he instead hears these incredible words from the King!
- What a picture of undeserved favor!
- David promises immense kindness to Mephibosheth! In fact in the original Hebrew, verse 7 reads “I will surely show you kindness.”⁹
- As we have seen, the reason for this promised kindness had to do with a commitment that David had made before Mephibosheth was even born
- Mephibosheth did nothing to deserve it. The promise had a purpose that did not depend on Mephibosheth. As we read, it was “**For the sake of your father Jonathan.**”
- It is not unusual for promises in Scripture to be “for the sake of” something beyond the one who receives the promises.¹⁰
 - In 1 Samuel 12:22, we see that the Lord promised not to forsake his people Israel “**For His great name’s sake.**”
 - In 2 Samuel 5, God exalts David’s kingdom “**For the sake of His people**” and David understood in 2 Samuel 7 that the Lord had revealed His great purposes to David “**For the sake of your Word.**”
- And in a similar way it was David’s covenant with Jonathan that stood behind the promise to Mephibosheth.
- David’s kingdom would be one that would show kindness to those who would have reason to be enemies (Such as Jonathan and Mephibosheth) if they received David as their king.
- The kindness that David promised was expressed in two gifts to Mephibosheth.
 - First he says, “**I will restore to you all the land of Saul your father**”
 - This “land” did not refer to the land that Saul had ruled over, but rather the personal, private land that was possessed by Saul. These David says would be fully restored to Saul’s grandson.¹¹
 - He would suffer no loss in David’s kingdom.
 - Second and I would argue even more significant, David says “**You shall eat at my table always.**”
 - To eat at the king’s table was pretty clearly a very special privilege that many people did not have. But not Mephibosheth.
 - There would always be a place at the King’s table for him.
- The promise of David to this potential enemy is a beautiful picture of the Gospel of Jesus, which brings the fullness of God’s kingdom.
- And the parallels are quite clear here!
- Just as David said “**Do not fear**” to Mephibosheth, so the angel said to the shepherd in **Luke 2:10-11**, “**Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.**”
- As David promised kindness to Mephibosheth, we see in **Titus 3:4** that “**The goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior has appeared**” in Jesus Christ.¹²

⁹ John Woodhouse: 2 Samuel, 476

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 477

¹² Ibid.

- Just as David ensured that Mephibosheth would not lose out by becoming a servant of the King, so Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 19:29, “Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.”
- And as David welcomed Mephibosheth to his table “Always”, so Jesus said in Luke 13:29 that “People will come from east and west, and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God.”
- What a gracious Savior we serve!
- Understandably, this was probably a lot for Mephibosheth to take in and it seems he found this promise to be difficult to believe.
- In **verse 8**, we read that he “Paid homage and said, “What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?”
- Essentially, Mephibosheth asks David, “How can this be?”
- And I think it is interesting because if you recall back in **chapter 7** as David is reflecting on the promises that God has made to him and his house, he cries out in verse 18, “Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me this far?”
- This seems to me to be a very similar response to Mephibosheth’s!
- In 2 Samuel 9, this response is addressed to the King of Israel, whereas in 2 Samuel 7, the response is addressed to the King of Kings!
- And now in **verse 9** through the rest of the chapter, we see the aftermath of this promise. (READ TO THE END)
- After reading this, all I can say is “Wow!”
- We have said it a few times already, but this is a picture of what Grace is all about!
- And Chuck Swindoll actually encourages us to put ourselves at that table and picture what life would have looked like for Mephibosheth in the years to come! And I thought it was such a cool picture to visualize so that’s what I want to do now.
- But I want you to know that this is completely stolen from Swindoll and then slightly modified.
- But as we picture this scene, we see that the meal is prepared and the bell rings, signaling it is time for dinner.
- And as the food is being set on the table, one by one all of the family and guests enter into the room and take their seat at the table.
 - King David comes in and takes his seat
 - The next one to enter the room is Amnon, the firstborn son of the king. He takes his seat after a long day.
 - The next one to enter is Joab who is one of the guests. And being the commander of David’s army, he is about as muscular and masculine as they come, walking tall like the experienced soldier he is.
 - Next in the room is Absalom, a man that would have any modeling job he ever wanted. From his head to his toes, there is not a single blemish, and he goes and finds his seat.
 - Right behind Absalom is Tamar, the beautiful daughter of David. She comes in and sits down. After she sits down, Amnon then gets up and finds a seat next to her.

- And down the road, Solomon would eventually be joining the fold. He's had a long day studying, but he finally comes to the table as well.
- And as they are all situated, they look and see Mephibosheth hobbling and making his way to the table. He too comes and humbly joins the others as he takes his place at the table as one of the king's sons! Oh what a scene!

The Scope of Grace

- And what is so beautiful about this story is that it really isn't the end of the story.
- That story is still going on, reflected in the lives of God's children
- And what I would like to do now is look at how this account here serves as a powerful illustration of God's grace in the lives of His children, not only in who we are now in Christ, but also our condition before Christ stepped in! In many respects, this is a very clear representation of the Gospel in the Old Testament!

- 1. The first thing to note is that at one point, Mephibosheth enjoyed uninterrupted fellowship with his father, who was the son of King Saul.
 - So it was with Adam, who walked with the Lord in the garden and also enjoyed uninterrupted fellowship with the Lord!
 - Like Adam, Mephibosheth once knew what it was like to be in fellowship with the king.
- 2. When disaster struck and Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle, the nurse fled in fear and Mephibosheth fell. His fall left him crippled for the rest of his life
 - In the same way, when sin entered, Adam and Eve hid in fear. The first response of humanity was to hide from God. As a result, mankind became a spiritual invalid and apart from Christ, will remain so forever.
- 3. David out of sheer love for Jonathan, extended grace to his son.
 - So God, out of love for His Son Jesus, and the penalty Christ paid on the Cross, shows grace to the repentant sinner.
 - And He is still seeking people who are dead in their sins, who are hiding from God, broken, fearful, and confused.
 - Our God is a God who delights in saving sinners! And the Bible says if we turn from our sins and trust in Him for forgiveness, that we will be saved!
 - Believers are walking with God today because he demonstrated His grace to us out of love for His Son.
- 4. Continuing on with grace, we have already seen that Mephibosheth did not have anything to offer the King. He had nothing, he deserved nothing, and he could repay nothing. He was in hiding from the king.
 - The same is true of us. We deserved nothing, we had nothing, and we could not offer God anything. I am often reminded of a quote from Jonathan Edwards who said that **"The only thing we bring to our salvation is the sin that made it necessary."**
 - Some of you may be able to look back to a time in your life when you were involved in a very futile life, moving from one sin to the next, spending one confusing night after another, wondering when it was all going to end.

- You offered nothing to God. You had nothing that you could give Him, not one good work that you could offer. And yet the King of Kings set His heart on you! Think about that this morning. If you are in Christ, recognize that God set His heart on you, demonstrating love and forgiveness that we can't earn, that we don't deserve, and that we can't repay! That is grace!
- There is something freeing about grace! It takes away all of the demands, all of the pressures to perform, all of the expectations to live up to, and it puts it all on Christ's shoulders! Believers are children of God not because of what we do, but because of what Christ has Done!
- 5. David restored Mephibosheth from a barren place to a place of honor. He took this broken, handicapped person from a barren land and brought him into the courtroom of the king. The analogy is clear!
 - God has taken us from where we were and has brought us to where He is – to a place of fellowship with Him!
 - Through Christ, He has restored us to what we once had in Adam.
- 6. David adopted Mephibosheth into His family, and He became one of the King's sons.
 - This is what God has graciously done for the believing sinner – adopted us into the family of the heavenly king.
 - He has chosen us, brought us into His family, and said, *"You sit at my table and you enjoy my food. I give you my life."*
 - Every Christian is adopted as a family member of God.
- 7. We also see that Mephibosheth's disability was a constant reminder of grace.
 - In the life of Mephibosheth, he had nothing but crutches, and yet he was treated like royalty. Every time he limped from one place to the next, he was reminded, "I am in this wonderful position because of the grace of the king and nothing else!"
 - And so it is with the Father! Our continual problem with sin is a continual reminder of His grace.
 - 1 John 1:9 tells us that *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*
 - Every time we think of that verse, let us be reminded that grace remains available.
 - God has covered our sins and He says *"You're Mine. I have chosen you simply because I wanted to."*
- 8. And the last thing we see is that when Mephibosheth sat down at the table of the king, he was treated just like any other son of the king.
 - And the beautiful reality is that is the way it is now, and how it will be throughout eternity.
 - The cross has leveled us. We serve a God who does not show partiality and who has prepared a place for all His children to enjoy Him in glory for all of eternity!
- And we will feast with the King. What a day that will be!
- And speaking of eternity, it will take us an eternity to fully understand what this truth really means to us!
- The truth that He has chosen us in our sinful and rebellious condition and in grace has taken us from a desolate place and has given us a place at His table. As we said during our

Scripture reading, that “He has delivered us from the domain of darkness, and He has transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son!”

- **The story of Mephibosheth points us to the wonderful reality that God has restored us and given us a seat at His table through His Son! (TT)**

- This is the main truth I want you to see in this passage. What a God we serve!
(Repeat)
- This is the reality of all those who are in Christ!
- We have spent a great deal today talking about the Gospel, and this Gospel, this Good news is available to anyone who in faith turns from their sins and trusts in Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.
- John 3:16 is a very well-known verse: “For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten son, that WHOSOEVER believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.”
- Whoever turns from their sin and believes in Him will be saved!
- I said earlier that God does not show partiality. And He doesn’t reject anyone who genuinely calls on the name of the Lord, Scripture assures us that “EVERYONE who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
- This is the free gift available through Christ! If you are here today and you don’t know Christ, I urge you to seek Him today, asking Him to reveal Himself to you! Pray that He would show you your sinful state and your need for a Savior! And then cry out to Him! Ask Him to rescue you. This joy that we have talked about today is joy that is only available through Christ!
- And if you are here and you do know Christ, let these truths drive you to worship! Spend some time giving thanks to your Lord and Savior, thanking Him for rescuing you from a barren place and bringing you into His Kingdom! For loving you when you didn’t deserve it and showing grace though you had nothing to offer! As we sang earlier, “What a Friend we have in Jesus!” Let’s pray!

Father, we thank you for your Gospel! God, we recognize that we have only but scratched the surface of this glorious truth. Thank you for saving us God though we did not deserve it. Thank you for setting your heart on your children not because we had anything to offer, but strictly because of your grace. God help us to meditate on Gospel truths each and every day, never ceasing to be amazed by your love and your grace! There is a reason we sing Amazing Grace, because it truly is just that... AMAZING! I also pray now for those here who do not know you. Father, I pray that you would open their eyes and show them who you are. Use this message to convict them of their sin and help them through your leading to see their need for a Savior! We thank you Jesus, and we pray this in your name AMEN!