

The Life of David

Long Live the King

Study 11 | 2 Samuel 9:1-13

News and Needs

Upcoming Events:

June 18th, 7 pm- Ministry Leaders' Meeting at Hautamaki's

June 19th, 3-5 pm- Bowl to the Death; see site for details

"The Table of the King"

1. How can the demonstration of kindness change a person? Why does King David want to show kindness to someone in the house of Saul for the sake of Jonathan? What is significant about the kingship of David that he can show the kindness of God (verse 3)?

The scene in 2 Samuel 9 opens with David repeatedly asking whom he can show kindness to in the house of Saul for the sake of Jonathan. A couple of the events leading up to this scene help shed light on why King David is so determined to show kindness.

- a) 1 Samuel 20 – Saul was pursuing David to kill him, so David fled and came to Jonathan. David and Jonathan made a covenant with one another. Jonathan vowed to protect David from Saul and he made a request of David saying, “do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the Lord cuts off every one of the enemies from the face of the earth” (1 Samuel 20:15). Jonathan was faithful to David and helped protect him from Saul.

In 2 Samuel 8, the Lord was cutting off David's enemies from the face of the earth and giving David victory wherever he went. The time has come in 2 Samuel 9 for David to uphold the covenant he made with Jonathan.

- b) 2 Samuel 7 – King David could especially show the kindness of God himself because God blessed his kingship and his house. God made a covenant with David that ensured his kingdom would never fail (2 Samuel 7:16).

David has received kindness as a result of the covenant Jonathan made with him and the covenant God made with him. For this reason, David earnestly desires to lavish the “kindness of God” on someone in the house of Saul “for Jonathan's sake.”

2. What is noteworthy about the description of Mephibosheth in verses 3-4? What can we learn about the way God relates with us from the exchange between King David and Mephibosheth in verses 5-8? In what ways does the kindness of David change Mephibosheth?

“It is noteworthy that the name of the man is not mentioned (in verses 3-4). He is a no-name. He really does not matter, but he is entitled to the promise of David” (Brueggemann). “The exact meaning of Mephibosheth is uncertain. It

could be 'one who scatters shame' or 'from the mouth of shame,' but either way, Mephibosheth. . . includes the word 'shame'. . . When David found him, he was in 'Lo-debar' which means 'Nothing' or 'No-Word'. This grandson of Israel's first king had lost everything and was living in no man's land" (Leithart).

Mephibosheth was afraid that King David was going to cut him off like he was doing with the rest of his enemies. Instead, "David brought this man of shame from nowhere to the king's palace" (Leithart). God relates to us in the same way that David relates with Mephibosheth. God is not trying to hunt you down so that he might annihilate you. God is hunting you down so that he might take you from nothing and lavish his kindness upon you.

Mephibosheth, who was living nowhere, has the land of Saul restored to him. In addition, Mephibosheth, whose identity was associated with shame, was given rights to eat at David's table, like one of the king's sons. David's kindness to Mephibosheth extended so far as to make him his own child and give him all the privileges of his house.

3. In what ways does the kindness of God change us? What is different about our identity? What does it mean for us to eat at the table with God our King as a child? What is most significant about it?

In the same way, the kindness of God changes us from being an enemy of God into being a child of God! Our identity without God is much like Mephibosheth without David. We are unknown, living in no man's land, suffering from shame, having lost everything as a member of a house that is fallen and cursed. Yet, when we receive the kindness of God in our lives, our identity with God is much like Mephibosheth with David, we become children of God with all the privileges of his kingdom.

One of the greatest privileges of being a child of God is eating at the table with God our King. Eating at the table of God our King is an identity-marker; it means that we belong to him as his children. The most significant part about being a child of the King is that the King is present with us at the table and he offers himself to us in a way that we can be known. God our eternal King invites us to dine with him at his table where he offers his eternal self to us. The picture that we get of the new heavens and the new earth has a banqueting table where we get to dine with God himself.

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