

DAVID AND MEPHIBOSHETH

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To Study: 2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13.

To Read in class: 2 Samuel 9:1-13.

Memory Texts:

Younger: Romans 5:8 "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Older: 1 John 4:10. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

OBJECTIVES: To Teach that:

1. The sins of individuals can cause repercussions in the lives of their descendants.
2. The condition in which the sinner is found is: at a distance from God, poor, fearful, useless due to a fall and a future without hope.
3. The desire to show mercy originates in the heart of God.
4. The principle of mercy is to treat someone with kindness, when it is not deserved.
5. God's blessing is complete and free. He first seeks and finds individuals and then seats them at a richly supplied table.

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SCENE 1. (I-15) VISUAL AIDS: In the palace, figures of David speaking to a servant and Siba. Inset: Figures of Jonathan delivering his belongings to David when they made a pact of friendship.

DEVELOPMENT:

- The desire is born in the heart of David the king to seek and bless one who had been his enemy.
 - David asks, "Is there yet any ... left of the household of Saul?" (v.1).
 - David wants to show him "the kindness (grace) of God".
 - He uses his servants to carry the message that will put into effect his good desire.
- Cns.** Today, teachers should regard themselves as servants of the King, occupied in the mission of taking the message of invitation to needy ones such as Mephibosheth.
- Given his condition and his situation, Mephibosheth himself does not dare to draw near to David.
 - David prepares the way for Mephibosheth to be in his presence.
- Apl.** The attitude of David is a reflection of the heart of God towards the sinner. David exemplifies the love of God mentioned in 1st John 4:10.

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SCENE 2. (J-8) VISUAL AIDS. Near the Jordan River on the way to Lodebar in the land of Gilead. Figure of Mephibosheth's nurse fleeing with him in her arms. This figure is changed for one of the child falling to the ground.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Cns.** Mephibosheth is a type of the sinner who is the object of the mercy of God.
- Mephibosheth's problem is due to two factors: 1. A fall, and 2. the family to which he belonged which had been against David.
 - Because of his fear, Mephibosheth hides from David, the very person who can help him.
- Apl.** In the beginning, when Adam was created, he was destined to have lordship over the earth.
- Cns.** Since Mephibosheth belonged to the royal family, he was destined to rule. However, he had lost the right to govern, due to the sin of his grandfather Saul.
- Cmt.** Adam fell into sin and lost his right to reign. In this condition he hid from God in fear, just as Mephibosheth hid from David.
- Cns.** Mephibosheth had suffered a fall and was living in a deplorable condition, "hiding" from David.
- Apl.** The human race lost its right to govern on account of sin. See "All have sinned and come short (are destitute) of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23).

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- Cns.** Rom. 5:12, 18-19 teaches that Adam's sin had repercussions on his descendants.
- Cns.** The obedience of the Lord Jesus has repercussions on His "descendants" (Rom. 5:18 -19).
 - Mephibosheth and his family were going to be blessed through David.
- Apl.** The sinner is of no use to God until he receives new life and is made fit to be in God's presence and able to serve Him.
 - Poor and unknown to most, Mephibosheth lived on the east of the River Jordan, in Lodebar, a "Place of no Pasture", near the desert.
 - Mephibosheth lived in ignorance of David's plans. Someone had to take him the good news.
- Apl.** The sinner is far from God and unaware that God wants to bless him. For this reason the good news of salvation must be taken to him.
 - Mephibosheth had nothing. He lived in someone else's house. He was destitute.
- Apl.** The sinner is "short (destitute) of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
 - Lame on both his feet, Mephibosheth could do nothing to better his situation.
- Cmt.** The teacher can refer to what is described in Romans 3:12 where an "x-ray" of the sinner reveals the effect of sin on the human race. "They are together become unprofitable".
 - Due to his handicap, Mephibosheth could not even dream of offering himself to David as a soldier, guard, messenger or helper of any kind.
 - While he was still in this condition, a message of hope reaches him.
- Apl.** Teachers will no doubt become enthused about the gospel message presented in this story. It is a privilege to communicate a note of hope to students who are far from God.

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SCENE 3. (I-22) VISUAL AIDS. In the palace, figures of David seated on the throne and Mephibosheth prostrate before him. Change this figure for one of Mephibosheth kneeling but looking into David's face.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Cmt.** The teacher ought to take the students step by step through Mephibosheth's experience.
- a.** Mephibosheth was found (v.4).
 - Apl.** God knows where each one is.
 - b.** In the condition in which he is found, he is shown kindness for Jonathan's sake.
 - Apl.** God does not expect the sinner to better himself, for he can nothing do to achieve this end.
 - c.** David paves the way so that Mephibosheth can draw near to him without hindrances.
 - Apl.** The way of salvation has already been prepared so that the sinner can draw near to God.
 - d.** Mephibosheth is encouraged and told not to fear (vv.6-7).
 - Apl.** Often when the Lord Jesus talked with persons mentioned in the New Testament, his first words were "Fear not".
 - e.** Mephibosheth is informed about David's plans for him and his possessions.
 - Apl.** In the gospel the sinner receives a message of hope. It comes from God and tells what God wants to do for us.
 - f.** Mephibosheth receives many blessings and benefits, all due to David's goodness.
 - Apl.** Mephibosheth would feel greatly blessed and privileged, for David assures him that he has a place reserved for him at the table of the King himself.
 - Cmt.** The teacher should prepare a list of the blessings and privileges that belong to those who are saved. These can include access to the Throne of Grace in prayer, the honour of being made a child of God, the ability to receive instruction from God, and the privilege of fellowshiping with others who are the people of God.
 - Lsn.** Three stages in the life of Mephibosheth are similar to three steps in the life of a saved person.
 - In the past.** Sadness, abandonment, fears (v.7).
 - In the present.** Preferential and merciful treatment.
 - In the future.** Permanent provision, supplied always from the table of the Lord.

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SCENE 4. (I-19) VISUAL AIDS. Palace dining room and figures representing the abundant provision that Mephibosheth would now enjoy. Inset: Figures of David with Mephibosheth at a table and the words, ACCEPTANCE, PROVISION, PROTECTION, SECURITY.

DEVELOPMENT:

- Besides the provision of daily food, it was a great honour to be seated at the table with the king.
- The future of Mephibosheth depended on David and his power as king.

Apl. The sinner that accepts the invitation to the table of salvation enjoys the provision of eternal life. His future is guaranteed.

- Mephibosheth was always to be present at the kings' table according to the unbreakable word of the David. No one could deny him that privilege.

Apl. Every blessing Mephibosheth received was because of:

- 1.** David's desire to favour an unworthy person. (Mephibosheth called himself a "dead dog".)
- 2.** Hearing and believing the message.
- 3.** Coming in faith and humility to receive a complete provision for the present and the future.

- His crippled legs, a source of embarrassment and a sign of his limitations, were hidden under the table.

Ctr. There will be no trace of sin in our new bodies in heaven.

- Mephibosheth formed part of the family, like a legitimate son of the king.

Sug. The teacher should encourage the students to think about how valuable it would be for Mephibosheth to learn from the king and listen to his advice. Then apply this to what the Christian can experience through reading the Bible and listening to teaching in Bible classes.

Cns. The Christian is even more privileged because he is able to talk directly to the Lord at any time, unlike Mephibosheth who was with David only at mealtime. At times David would not have been present, since he would have to go out to attend to matters of the kingdom.

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Note:

The principle of how to act in faith is clearly illustrated in this story

- a)** The desire to do something for Mephibosheth began in David's heart.
- b)** David communicated his intentions through a messenger.
- c)** The terms were made clear to Mephibosheth. "Go to the king. David has sent for you."
- d)** There were unknown details in the call, for Mephibosheth was unaware of the blessing that awaited him.
- e)** Although David provided everything, Mephibosheth had to respond to the call and accept the invitation.
- f) He drew near** in humility and faith.
- g)** He received an abundant provision. See Ephesians 3:20.

Cmt. All that David placed at his disposal would have been useless to Mephibosheth had he, after **1)** Listening and even **2)** Believing, **3)** Did not Act!

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