

2 Samuel 8-9

- Tonight we cover the final summary chapter in the section chronicling David's successes and blessings upon the nation of Israel
 - Beginning in Chapter 5, the writer has shown us the magnitude of David's impact on the nation of Israel
 - A nation that had previously been a small, weak and persecuted people surrounded by enemies were now turning into a superpower
 - As a result of God's anointing upon David and his rise to power as king, he has seen blessing as have the people of Israel
 - And those blessings have come in the form of David's growing family and wealth, and the nation's military, economic and religious strength
 - In the chapters we've studied already, we've watched as David has established the nation's capital in Jerusalem
 - He has moved into a place and fathered many sons and daughters
 - He has brought the ark to Jerusalem, expanded the borders of the nation and defeated many of its enemies
 - The nation is growing in number, prospering in the land and establishing a peaceful existence in the land
 - And then last week, we studied the moment the Lord blessed David and the people with blessings that will extend far beyond David's lifetime
 - The Lord established a covenant with David promising to preserve David's dynasty forever through a ruler to come
 - And under that ruler, the world will experience a kingdom that never ends and fulfills the promises God gave to Israel
 - This Kingdom is many years away, but David is overwhelmed at the grace of God and expressed his thanks at the end of Chapter 7
- And now in the final chapter in this section, we return to where we started: a review of David's military success against Israel's enemies

- We start with the description of a series of conquests that David accomplished early in his reign as king

2Sam. 8:1 Now after this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them; and David took control of the chief city from the hand of the Philistines.

2Sam. 8:2 He defeated Moab, and measured them with the line, making them lie down on the ground; and he measured two lines to put to death and one full line to keep alive. And the Moabites became servants to David, bringing tribute.

2Sam. 8:3 Then David defeated Hadadezer, the son of Rehob king of Zobah, as he went to restore his rule at the River.

2Sam. 8:4 David captured from him 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers; and David hamstringed the chariot horses, but reserved enough of them for 100 chariots.

2Sam. 8:5 When the Arameans of Damascus came to help Hadadezer, king of Zobah, David killed 22,000 Arameans.

2Sam. 8:6 Then David put garrisons among the Arameans of Damascus, and the Arameans became servants to David, bringing tribute. And the LORD helped David wherever he went.

- As I mentioned at the start of this section of 2 Samuel, Chapters 5-8 are a summary of David's impact on the nation as king
 - As such, they are organized topically, not chronologically, so these scenes jump around in time
 - Last week in Chapter 7 we studied an event that took place near the end of David's life
 - He was in his palace, wealthy and at peace having defeated all Israel's enemies in his day
 - And now the writer takes us back to the beginning of David's reign to learn how David defeated those enemies
 - But the opening of v.1 is confusing because it starts with "now after this..." indicating these battles came after Chapter 7
 - But the opening verse of Chapter 7 says specifically that chapter happened *after* David defeated his enemies
 - The most logical explanation is that the writer is referring back to his prior chapter on military conquests, which is Chapter 5

- Notice how Chapter 5 ends...

2Sam. 5:25 Then David did so, just as the LORD had commanded him, and struck down the Philistines from Geba as far as Gezer.

- As Chapter 5 ends, David has defeated the Philistines throughout the land
- And now jumps to the start of this chapter, and the action picks up right where it left off in Chapter 5...

2Sam. 8:1 Now after this it came about that David defeated the Philistines and subdued them; and David took control of the chief city from the hand of the Philistines.

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- So the writer has doubled back to the topic of David's military victories, and picks up again where he left off with the Philistines defeated
 - David has taken control of the Philistine's greatest city, Gath, and is now the undisputed leader of the land previously held by the Philistines
 - This was no small thing in that day nor in the annals of history
 - The land of Canaan had been largely under Egyptian rule for the better part of 500 years
 - As Egyptian control waned, the Philistines exerted their power hoping to fill the vacuum left by the Egyptians
 - But now David has defeated the Philistines and established Israel as the emerging superpower in the fertile crescent, and successors to Egypt
 - The Philistines had occupied the lands directly west of Israel along the Mediterranean coast and coastal plains
 - Now Israel's western border was free of any enemy
 - From here the writer describes additional campaigns that took place in the east, north and south, removing Israel's enemies from all sides
 - We already see the Philistines mentioned in v.1, and they were the power along the western coast
 - Then in v.2 the writer describes the battle against the Moabites

- When David defeated the Moabites, he employed an unusual method of determining who to allow to live and who to execute
 - David had the men of Moab lie down on the ground and measured their height according to a “line”
 - Those men measuring one “line” were allowed to live, while those that measured more than one line (i.e., two lines) died
 - The point being that David allowed young men, probably under the age of adulthood, to live while killing all full grown males
 - Those left alive became servants of David, subjects of his kingdom, and brought tribute
 - Now as we hear this, we might think this was cruel or unnecessary on David’s part
 - But we need to see it in light of the customs of warfare in that day
 - Customarily, a defeated enemy was entirely wiped out by the victors leaving no one left alive, not men or women or children
 - The defeated nation was eradicated so that they could never again threaten the victors
 - So in allowing young men to live, David was showing unusual restraint and kindness toward Moab
 - Perhaps David did this because his grandmother, Ruth, was a Moabite
 - It was also a risky move on David’s part, because it opened the possibility the Moabites would rise up in a future generation
- Next, in vs.3-11 we’re told of David’s victories in the north against Zobah and Aram
 - It started with David defeating Hadadezer, the king of Zobah near the river Euphrates
 - His name means “Hadad is help”, and Hadad was a chief god of the Arameans
 - After defeating Hadadezer, David makes a point of dismantling their means of waging war against Israel

- In v.4 we're told that David captured 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers
 - But in 1 Chronicles 18, the same story reports 7,000 horsemen with 1,000 chariots
 - Because we have 1 Chronicles, we can know that the text in 2 Samuel was miscopied
 - So since the actual number was 7,000 horsemen with 1,000 chariots, that means at least 7,000 horses
- David "hamstrung" those horses, which means he cut tendons in their legs rendering the horses useless as an animal of war
 - These animals could still live in this condition though they could never support a rider again
 - Once more, David shows restraint and mercy while ensuring that an enemy of Israel couldn't prosecute war again
- As David was engaged in battle against Hadadezer, we're told in v.5 that the king called for help from an ally, Aram
 - Aram had been a long-standing negative influence on Israel and an enemy
 - In the time of Judges, the people of Israel followed after the idols of Aram among other nations
 - And so Aram's allegiance with Zobah gave David the opportunity to defeat Israel's enemy on the north
 - David defeats Aram as well and kills 22,000 Arameans, which was essentially their entire standing army
 - David then stationed garrisons of Jewish soldiers in the land of Aram to subdue the people and guard the territory
 - And in v.6 we're told that these too became servants of David and brought tribute to David
 - At this point, the writer felt the need to emphasize that these amazing military victories were evidence of the Lord helping David
 - David gained these incredible victories over great distances and against powerful enemies because God wanted David to win

- The Lord was bringing about a result that served His purpose in blessing David and Israel
- But the Lord was also producing a picture of Jesus through David, which He does time and again
 - Once more, we have a picture of what God will do for Israel in the times of the Kingdom
 - When the Kingdom arrives on earth, the enemies that surround Israel will become servants of Israel

Deut. 30:4 “If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back.

Deut. 30:5 “The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers.

Deut. 30:6 “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

Deut. 30:7 “The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you.

- And in the book of Ezekiel, we’re given specific prophecies concerning how the Lord will deal with Moab, Aram and others
- So in David’s day, the Lord shows a picture of what the Messiah will do in His day, though in a greater and permanent way

2Sam. 8:7 David took the shields of gold which were carried by the servants of Hadadezer and brought them to Jerusalem.

2Sam. 8:8 From Betah and from Berothai, cities of Hadadezer, King David took a very large amount of bronze.

2Sam. 8:9 Now when Toi king of Hamath heard that David had defeated all the army of Hadadezer,

2Sam. 8:10 Toi sent Joram his son to King David to greet him and bless him, because he had fought against Hadadezer and defeated him; for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi. And Joram brought with him articles of silver, of gold and of bronze.

2Sam. 8:11 King David also dedicated these to the LORD, with the silver and gold that he had dedicated from all the nations which he had subdued:

[2Sam. 8:12](#) from Aram and Moab and the sons of Ammon and the Philistines and Amalek, and from the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

- Not only did the Lord grant David military success, but He also blessed Israel with considerable wealth as a result of these victories
 - Each victory yielded David and Israel something of value
 - The shields captured from Hadadezer were gold (likely gold plated or embossed)
 - The cities of Hadadezer provided a very large amount of bronze
 - And then other nations began to send David wealth as tribute
 - In v.9 we hear of Toi of Hamath, which was northeast of Aram, who had long been at war with the Arameans
 - So when David defeats Aram, Toi sends his son to David to bless David with silver, gold and bronze
 - This gift probably came as part of a covenant of peace between David and Toi
 - Then in vs.11-12 David takes all that he obtained through the defeat of various enemies and dedicated it to the Lord
 - This probably means it was set aside for use in a future temple, though when that time came God told David to wait
 - This comment tells us that these campaigns in the north probably took place late in David's reign
 - They happened as David was contemplating building a temple, and after the events that we will cover in Chapters 10-12
 - The author's tendency to move events around in time can be confusing for someone reading the book straight through
 - But remember the author is arranging the content to summarize David's impact on the nation of Israel
 - When you consider that David ruled 40 years, you quickly realize that a 24 chapter book isn't nearly enough to contain everything
 - So the author selected key moments and achievements in David's life and arranged them by theme

[2Sam. 8:13](#) So David made a name for himself when he returned from killing 18,000 Arameans in the Valley of Salt.

[2Sam. 8:14](#) He put garrisons in Edom. In all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became servants to David. And the LORD helped David wherever he went.

- While David was fighting in the north, the Edomites in the south tried to take advantage of David's absence and invade Israel
 - And in this verse we find another copyist error, which we again discover because we can compare it to 1 Chronicles 18

[1Chr. 18:12](#) Moreover Abishai the son of Zeruiah defeated 18,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

[1Chr. 18:13](#) Then he put garrisons in Edom, and all the Edomites became servants to David. And the LORD helped David wherever he went.

- David was fighting the Arameans in the north, where he killed 22,000 men according to v.5
 - Meanwhile, in the Valley of Salt, which is south of the Dead Sea, David's commander, Abishai killed 18,000 invading Edomites
 - Once defeated, Israel established garrisons of Jewish soldiers in Edom, a longtime historical enemy of Israel going back to Jacob
 - Once again, this remarkable victory showed that the Lord was helping David even in places where David was not present
- Back to the error, v.13 says David killed 18,000 Arameans in the Valley of Salt, but that's not what we know happened according to 1 Chronicles 18
 - 1 Chronicles 18 says that while David was away killing Arameans, 18,000 Edomites died in the Valley of Salt
 - A copyist inadvertently ran the two thoughts together at this point, combining "18,000" with "David away fighting Arameans"
 - We know that both 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel suffer from a number of these minor copyist errors, more than any other book
- And this fact reinforces our trust in the accuracy of the Bible, because it highlights the degree of precision in the manuscripts we possess today

- The copies of Scripture are so meticulously preserved even to this day that even small differences like this catch our attention
- And the Lord has provided a way for us to know these errors exist and to find correction through other texts of Scripture
- So that even when errors are introduced as we see here, they only serve to reinforce our trust in the text
- When someone suggests we can't know what the Bible said because it's been changed throughout history, they show their ignorance
 - The Bible has been so carefully preserved throughout history that we know when even one word has been changed
 - Those changes are easy to detect by comparing one manuscript against the tens of thousands of copies that exist
 - And even then, the differences are so minor (as in this case) that they do nothing to change the general meaning or teaching
- So David has subdued enemies in the west, east, north and now the south, with garrisons stationed in all directions
 - The only major enemy not mentioned here are the Ammonites, because David's battle with them is part of the story of Bathsheba
 - But clearly, this is a new age for Israel, a time when the nation casts off fear, oppression and weakness
 - It ushers in a time of plenty and carefree living in the land

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[2Sam. 8:15](#) So David reigned over all Israel; and he administered justice and righteousness for all his people.

[2Sam. 8:16](#) Joab the son of Zeruiah was over the army, and Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud was recorder;

[2Sam. 8:17](#) and Zadok the son of Ahitub and Abimelech the son of Abiathar were priests, and Shavsha was secretary;

[2Sam. 8:18](#) and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the Cherethites and the Pelethites, and the sons of David were chiefs at the king's side.

- As the writer concludes this multi-chapter section summarizing David's many achievements, he lists the key leaders in David's government

- In v.15 we're told David reigned and administered justice and righteousness for all his people
- That's a very ambitious statement, and we wonder just how true it could have been?
- Clearly, there could not be total righteousness and justice in Israel in that day, and therefore it must be an allusion to the Kingdom again
 - David's rule was a suggested fulfillment of things to come in the Kingdom under Jesus, where true justice and righteousness lives
 - Later, Isaiah makes this connection for us

Is. 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
 And the government will rest on His shoulders;
 And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
 Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Is. 9:7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace,
 On the throne of David and over his kingdom,
 To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness
 From then on and forevermore.
 The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

- Jesus' reign in the Kingdom will bring a government of peace and justice and righteousness for all people
 - But in David's day, the phrase is speaking only in relative terms
 - In comparison to previous times in Israel, the times under David were just and righteous
 - And these outcomes were the direct result of the Lord working through David and David walking closely with the Lord
- Finally, we see in vs.15-18 the leaders and their areas of responsibility in David's government
 - Among those listed is Joab, the one who entered Jerusalem to become the commander
 - David also had a secretary who recorded the events of his reign, and a private security guard made up of Gentiles

- Both the Cherethites and Pelethites immigrated from the island of Crete, and as such they were related to the Philistines
- It was not uncommon to choose body guards from foreigners since they were less likely to sympathize with Jewish rivals
- David also installed his sons as ministers in his government
- Altogether, David has refashioned the entire nation and brought it very nearly to the height of all God had promised though only as a picture
 - The kingdom of David now stretched far and wide and included capture or subjugation of many of Israel's traditional enemies
 - And up to this point, 2 Samuel has described a remarkable turn for the nation overall
 - It's turned from Saul's rebellion and failures to David's obedience and successes
 - It has defeated enemies that usually got the best of the nation, it's seen its ark returned and land expanded
- The sense we're left with at the end of Chapter 8 is that there is nowhere left to go but down (at least until Messiah arrives)
 - And so we now enter a longer section running from Chapter 9 to Chapter 20 chronicling David's troubles
 - In some ways, David's story parallels the story of Saul in 1 Samuel
 - The start of Saul's reign showed such promise but then it came crashing down
- But Saul's achievements were never so great as David's, nor were David's troubles nearly as great as Saul's
 - Still the story of David's troubles serve to define him and his reign more than the story of his achievements
 - And that's in keeping with how most believers' testimonies follow
 - Our victories walking with the Lord may be glorious, but our stumbles echo louder
- The first of these chapters, Chapter 9, may seem like an odd chapter to include in a section on David's stumbles, because it tells of David's faithfulness

- In fact, Chuck Swindoll called this chapter the greatest illustration of grace in the Old Testament
 - But as we will see later in the book, it also reflected David's weakness in seeking approval from Saul's allies
 - And that tendency later gets him into trouble and leads to rebellion in the nation
- We'll cover the impact of this chapter later in the study, so for now we will simply study the good aspects of David's faithfulness

2Sam. 9:1 Then David said, "Is there yet anyone left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

- We can safely date the events of this chapter to very early in David's reign, probably soon after consolidating his power
 - After receiving the loyalty of all tribes, David asks if there is anyone left of the house of Saul to whom David can show kindness?
 - David is thinking back to the covenant he established with Jonathan before Jonathan died
 - David and Jonathan entered into a covenant back in the day when David was under attack from Jonathan's father Saul
 - Jonathan was the heir to Saul's throne, but rather than contend with David for the seat of power, Jonathan gave his support to David
 - They entered into a covenant together

1Sam. 18:1 Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself.

1Sam. 18:2 Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house.

1Sam. 18:3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

1Sam. 18:4 Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, including his sword and his bow and his belt.

- The covenant established here isn't described in detail, though by the circumstances we know what it's about

- Jonathan promises to support David, and David is promising to protect Jonathan when David becomes king

- We get those details in a later moment

1Sam. 20:12 Then Jonathan said to David, “The LORD, the God of Israel, be witness! When I have sounded out my father about this time tomorrow, or the third day, behold, if there is good feeling toward David, shall I not then send to you and make it known to you?”

1Sam. 20:13 “If it please my father to do you harm, may the LORD do so to Jonathan and more also, if I do not make it known to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. And may the LORD be with you as He has been with my father.

1Sam. 20:14 “If I am still alive, will you not show me the lovingkindness of the LORD, that I may not die?”

1Sam. 20:15 “You shall not cut off your lovingkindness from my house forever, not even when the LORD cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth.”

1Sam. 20:16 So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, “May the LORD require it at the hands of David’s enemies.”

1Sam. 20:17 Jonathan made David vow again because of his love for him, because he loved him as he loved his own life.

- Jonathan asks David to reaffirm their earlier covenant, and in the process we get to hear the details of their agreement
 - Jonathan will help David remain alive despite his father’s attempt to find and kill David
 - In effect, Jonathan is agreeing to become a spy for David and to rebel against his own father, the king
 - Jonathan is taking a serious risk here, since he could be put to death for this action
 - In return, Jonathan asks David to preserve Jonathan’s life once David assumes power, and this too was a significant request
 - Jonathan would be seen forever more as the rightful heir to the throne, and as such he serves as threat to David
 - So for a new king like David to leave his rival alive was a significant and unusual promise

- But Jonathan goes a step further in v.15 asking that David not cut off anyone in Saul's household even after David has taken full control
 - Hypothetically, had all of Saul's sons survived, David would have been obligated to leave them all alive
 - Here again this is a bold and unusual request, because David would have been weakening his position tremendously
 - But David has entered into this covenant, so he is bound by his life to keep this agreement
- We know that in the end Saul and all his sons die before David assumes the throne, the last being Ishbosheth
 - And by that fact, we get the sense that God didn't want this agreement to stand
 - In fact, it's reasonable to assume that David may have been wrong to enter into it in the first place
 - The Lord clearly didn't want any rival competing with David for this throne that God gave David alone
- And that's probably why this chapter falls in the section on David's troubles... David is now bound by an agreement he didn't need
 - And now that David has reached full authority, he remembers Jonathan's words asking David not to cut off Saul's house
 - Until recently, Ishbosheth was Saul's only surviving son, and though David tried to protect that man, he failed
 - David did execute the two men who murdered Ishbosheth in his home, but still David wants to be faithful to his covenant
 - So now David asks his court is there anyone from Saul's house that David can show himself faithful to Jonathan's covenant?

2Sam. 9:2 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."

2Sam. 9:3 The king said, "Is there not yet anyone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?" And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is crippled in both feet."

2Sam. 9:4 So the king said to him, “Where is he?” And Ziba said to the king, “Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.”

- A servant of David, Ziba, reports that there was one remaining male heir to Saul, a son of Jonathan
- But Ziba quickly adds that this surviving grandson of Saul is crippled in both feet
- We studied briefly about this boy back in Chapter 4 where we studied possible successors to Abner and Ishbosheth in the north

2Sam. 4:4 Now Jonathan, Saul’s son, had a son crippled in his feet. He was five years old when the report of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened that in her hurry to flee, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.

- This son is called Mephibosheth, and the name literally means the dispeller of shame or the one cutting shame into pieces
 - We learned then that this crippled son was quickly shuffled out of public view because he could never be king
 - He is now about 20, and by preserving him for this moment, the Lord has done David a small favor
 - He has kept a relative of Saul alive who couldn’t threaten David and yet allowed David to fulfill His ill-advised promise
- So as David learns of this man’s existence, he is excited to know he can fulfill his word to Jonathan and calls for Mephibosheth to be brought to him

2Sam. 9:5 Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.

2Sam. 9:6 Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan the son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and prostrated himself. And David said, “Mephibosheth.” And he said, “Here is your servant!”

- Imagine what this young man thinks when he hears that his grandfather’s rival who replaced his uncle has called for him
 - We can safely assume that Mephibosheth assumes the worst, because naturally the new king always kills his rivals

- He goes to the palace fully expecting he is going to die for being a threat to David
- In v.6 he falls on his face before David prostrate when David calls his name, Mephibosheth answers that he is David's servant
 - Mephibosheth is trying to make sure that David knows he's not a rival to David's authority, but David already knows that
 - David hasn't called Mephibosheth here to test his loyalty, but rather to show Mephibosheth that David will be loyal to him

2Sam. 9:7 David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan, and will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you shall eat at my table regularly."

2Sam. 9:8 Again he prostrated himself and said, "What is your servant, that you should regard a dead dog like me?"

- David tells Mephibosheth not to fear, because David called him to show kindness for the sake of Jonathan and Saul
 - David says this man will from this point forward eat at the king's table
 - To eat with another person in that culture held great significance
 - It was a place of fellowship and privilege and implied protection
 - Covenants were usually established with meals, because you don't eat with enemies, you eat with friends
 - And to eat at the king's table was the highest privilege in any kingdom, since it implied friendship with the king
 - Ironically, David had the same privilege at Saul's table when Saul was king, and yet Saul was the epitome of unfaithfulness
 - So when Saul grew jealous of David, he began to treat David as an enemy though David was a friend and servant of Saul
 - And David almost lost his life eating with Saul when Saul threw a spear at David
 - Now David is going to great lengths to do the opposite...he calls a potential enemy to his table so he can show him friendship

- We should ask why is David going through with his arrangements on behalf of Mephibosheth?
 - Clearly, Mephibosheth did nothing to deserve it...the decision was merely dropped in Mephibosheth's lap
 - And in fact, David never even asks Mephibosheth whether he wants to sit at the table...he is simply placed there by the king
- Obviously, Mephibosheth knows he is receiving something he shouldn't receive nor had any expectation it could be his
 - Mephibosheth asks a rhetorical question...why are you showing regard for a dead dog like me?
 - The dog was the worst creature in Jewish eyes, and so the worst insult you could give was to call someone a dog
 - Mephibosheth knows that as a crippled man he has no worth to David, so he calls himself a dog
 - But more than that, David could reasonably see him as an enemy which makes him worse than useless
 - So Mephibosheth calls himself a dead dog, because the only thing lower than a dog would be a dead dog
 - David is showing Mephibosheth grace, undeserved favor, giving the man something that he did not deserve
 - This situation is grace for Mephibosheth because nothing he did brought it about
 - But that doesn't mean it's happening without cause or that David isn't obligated to do it
 - David is obligated to do this for Mephibosheth, but the things that obligates David is not Mephibosheth's behavior but David's word
 - David promised to show lovingkindness to Jonathan's house
 - And the word lovingkindness is a special word in Scripture...it always refers to a covenant promise
 - It's how the Lord describes His own character to keep promises

Ex. 34:6 Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, “The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;

Ex. 34:7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.”

- The Lord tells Moses and the people of Israel that He is a God who keeps lovingkindness, meaning keeps covenant
- He does this for those in covenant with Him, and we know He will keep His word because of His character
- Mephibosheth is the recipient of grace made possible by David’s faithfulness to a covenant he established with Jonathan
 - But notice the form this grace takes:

2Sam. 9:9 Then the king called Saul’s servant Ziba and said to him, “All that belonged to Saul and to all his house I have given to your master’s grandson.

2Sam. 9:10 “You and your sons and your servants shall cultivate the land for him, and you shall bring in the produce so that your master’s grandson may have food; nevertheless Mephibosheth your master’s grandson shall eat at my table regularly.” Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

2Sam. 9:11 Then Ziba said to the king, “According to all that my lord the king commands his servant so your servant will do.” So Mephibosheth ate at David’s table as one of the king’s sons.

- First, Mephibosheth receives an inheritance in the land, specifically, all that belonged previously to Saul’s house
- So the man will instantly become rich in property in the tribe of Benjamin
- Secondly, Ziba’s family has been reassigned to work the land on behalf of Mephibosheth since obviously he couldn’t work the land himself
 - Why did David reassign his court servant, Ziba, to a lessor post like this?
 - Perhaps it was because the man had fifteen sons and twenty servants, which meant a lot of labor available

- Or maybe David wanted an ally close to Mephibosheth, and if so, this strategy pays off later for David
- So in v.11 we're told that Mephibosheth goes from dead dog to being treated like a son of the king eating at the table
 - All this because of the king's grace based on his word in covenant
 - And we all have much in common with this man, of course
- The parallels start easily enough with David picturing Jesus as our king
 - And of course, we are like Mephibosheth, probably in more ways than we prefer
 - First, we are born an enemy of the king, because we are part of a family that wanted to take the throne from Jesus
 - The Bible says we are all descended from Adam, and as such we share in Adam's nature at our birth
 - When Adam sinned, he rejected God's word and God's rule and instead was seeking to be like God, to rule himself
 - That rebellion became part of Adam's spiritual nature and he passed that nature on to all who descend from him, including you and me
 - In that sense, we're like one of Saul's relatives desiring to compete with David for the right to the throne
 - And if Jesus did what was easiest, He would just wipe out all His enemies, and Scripture says He has that right

Is. 59:17 He put on righteousness like a breastplate,

And a helmet of salvation on His head;

And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing

And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle.

Is. 59:18 According to their deeds, so He will repay,

Wrath to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies;

To the coastlands He will make recompense.

Is. 59:19 So they will fear the name of the LORD from the west

And His glory from the rising of the sun,

For He will come like a rushing stream

Which the wind of the LORD drives.

- God is prepared to repay His adversaries harshly as David did his at times, as is the right of the King and Judge
- But there is more to the story of Jesus' reign
- Even as the Lord destroys His enemies, He also remembers those who will receive His grace and mercy based on a covenant
 - And those who receive His mercy are those who are dead dogs, and lame in both feet
 - Interestingly, the Bible describes Gentile believers as "dogs"

[Matt. 15:25](#) But she came and began to bow down before Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"

[Matt. 15:26](#) And He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs."

[Matt. 15:27](#) But she said, "Yes, Lord; but even the dogs feed on the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."

- And we are also described as being "dead" in our sins

[Eph. 2:1](#) And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,

[Eph. 2:2](#) in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

- Finally, we are lame or crippled because of a "fall" in the sense of being spiritually fallen and useless...

[Rom. 3:12](#) ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS;
THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD,
THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE."

- So truly we are unable to help ourselves unless the King calls us into His presence by His Spirit and we receive His grace
 - We reach that moment through a covenant, which itself was made possible in death

- Without Jonathan's death, Mephibosheth would never have been blessed in the way that he was
- And without Jesus' death for sin, we couldn't receive God's mercy either
- Finally, we come into our blessing because of Christ's faithfulness to His word, specifically His word to Israel and to us
 - Those who have been included in a covenant with the Lord are granted an inheritance and the right to eat at the Lord's table

[Eph. 2:4](#) But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

[Eph. 2:5](#) even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

[Eph. 2:6](#) and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

[Eph. 2:7](#) so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

[Rev. 3:20](#) 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me.

[Rev. 3:21](#) 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

- David's choice to fulfill his word to Mephibosheth is a beautiful picture of Christ's faithfulness to us
 - And the Lord has turned David's mistake into a blessing for both David and Mephibosheth