



REDEMPTION STUDY #1

Leaving Nothing Town

The Redemption of Mephibosheth

THE STORY

2 Samuel 9:1-9

David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

² Now there was a servant of Saul's household named Ziba. They summoned him to appear before David, and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?"

"At your service," he replied.

³ The king asked, "Is there no one still alive from the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness?" Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is lame in both feet."

⁴ "Where is he?" the king asked.

Ziba answered, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."

⁵ So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.

⁶ When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor.

David said, "Mephibosheth!"

"At your service," he replied.

⁷ "Don't be afraid," David said to him, "for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."

⁸ Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?"

⁹ Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's steward, and said to him, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. ¹⁰ You and your sons and your servants are to farm the land for him and bring in the crops, so that your master's grandson may be provided for. And Mephibosheth, grandson of your master, will always eat at my table."

The little girl grew up as one of those energetic kids who never sat still. She was always doing cartwheels, flips, and generally bouncing off the walls whenever she got the chance. At age 4 she started learning gymnastics and she used that to burn off the endless energy. She competed in gymnastics until age 10, when she had a conversation with her parents that changed the direction of her life forever.



This young lady was born with fibular hemimelia – meaning that she didn't have fibulas, ankles, heels, and most of the other bones in her feet. At 18 months old, both of her lower legs were amputated so she could be fitted with prosthetic legs and learn to walk.

Then, as a 10-year-old, her parents had a hard talk with her. They told her that at some point she would have to wear prosthetics during gymnastics because she might damage her knees from all of the force she was subjecting them to.

She knew her future was no longer in gymnastics. With all of that energy needing a place to go, she began swimming competitively. In her first Paralympic Games she beat the current world record holder to win the gold medal. Since then she has taken many gold medals and is the top swimmer in the world in her class.

Jessica Long may have been born with two bad legs but no one ever told her that she had to stop. In today's world, with today's medical advancements, she has far surpassed what most swimmers can do with two perfectly healthy legs.

In the book of 2nd Samuel we meet a man, Mephibosheth that is introduced not once or twice but three times as being lame in both feet. We don't know too much about him and he is only mentioned in a couple quick places in all of scripture.

In 2 Samuel 8 we read about David and his time as King. David hasn't been king for all too long and has had great success in leading the Israelites and fighting battles. He has been defeating all that come against him. After a while he remembers his oath to Jonathan, the son of David.

1 Samuel 18:1-5

Now it came about, when he had finished speaking to Saul, that Jonathan committed himself to David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. ²And Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. ³Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. ⁴Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his military gear, including his sword, his bow, and his belt. ⁵And David went *into battle* wherever Saul sent him, *and always* achieved success; so Saul put him in charge of the men of war. And it was pleasing in the sight of all the people, and also in the sight of Saul's servants.

David and Jonathan had made a covenant to one another to look out for each other and care for one another. It was shortly after this that Jonathan's father, King Saul, attempted to kill David on several occasions and Jonathan stood behind his covenant with David and did all he could to protect him. It is interesting to me that the love of these men for each other was so strong that even though Jonathan was the rightful heir to the throne of Israel he still protected David. Jonathan knew that God had plans for David to become king (a position that should have been his) and yet he did all he could to protect him.

In 1 Samuel 31:1-6 it tells the story of Saul and Jonathan dying at the hands of the Philistines. For the next two years Saul's son, Ish-bosheth was the king of all Israel. At the end of two years Ish-bosheth was murdered and David became king of all of Israel and Judah.

In 2 Samuel 4:4 we are introduced to a 5 year old boy.

**BEAR
MAN**



4 Now Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was disabled in both feet. He was five years old when the news of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel, and his nurse picked him up and fled. But it happened that in her hurry to flee, he fell and could no longer walk. This was Mephibosheth. (2 Samuel 4:4)



There are a few things that we see in the life of Mephibosheth that are quite interesting.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN

1) HE WAS DROPPED

The scripture in chapter 4 verse 4 makes it clear that Mephibosheth was dropped by his nurse. If he hadn't been dropped he wouldn't have been lame in both feet. This is what put him in real need of David's offer that comes later in 2 Samuel 9.

2) HE SHOULD HAVE DIED

When Saul and David fell in battle on Mount Gilboa word came to all of Israel. The nurse of Jonathan grabbed Jonathan's son to flee so that the Philistines would not kill them. The normal pattern at that time would have been for the victors of a war to kill the entire family of the previous king.

There was probably also fear of whoever became king of Israel in replacement of Saul. It was also normal for an incoming king to put to death all of the previous king's family so there would never be an uprising. Either way the nurse of Jonathan's son was fearful and grabbed him and ran to hide him. In the process she dropped him and he became "lame in both feet".

Now David is finally King and he has had amazing success because of God's blessings. He has won every battle he has entered into and he is back home and remembers his covenant with his friend Jonathan. We read about David first asking about Jonathan's family. Then David said, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul, so that I could show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" (2 Samuel 9:1) David remembers what God desires, "3 Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. 4 Rescue the weak and needy; Save *them* from the hand of the wicked. (Psalms 82:3-4) This is what David does for Mephibosheth.

3) HE WAS LAME IN BOTH FEET

Mephibosheth couldn't get around on his own. As a matter of fact when they found him he was living in the house of Machir in the area of Lo-debar. The scriptures never explain why he was living in the house of Machir but we can probably assume that someone in that day that was lame couldn't provide for themselves.

The Scriptures make a point to tell us that Mephibosheth is lame in both feet. In 2 Samuel 4:4, 9:3 and 9:13. It's interesting as to why Samuel would write "He was lame in both feet" three times. To be mentioned three times makes us have to think that it was very important.

Mephibosheth didn't need reminding that he was lame, he had been living it since he was 5 years old. I believe that the point is being made so that the reader can see that he can't redeem himself. He is in desperate need of someone to redeem him.

4) HE KNEW HE WAS NOTHING AND NEEDED A "SAVIOR".

David finds Mephibosheth and has him brought to the palace. When he is brought before David Mephibosheth falls prostrate before the King. He is no doubt still fearful of what the King wants with him, a member of Saul's family. Remember that in that time he would have been put to death just for being a descendant of Saul.

2 Samuel 9:6-8 David says, "'Mephibosheth.'" And he said, 'Here is your servant!' ⁷Then David said to him, 'Do not be afraid, for I will assuredly show kindness to you for the sake of your father Jonathan, and I will restore to you all the land of your grandfather Saul; and you yourself shall eat at my table regularly.' ⁸Again Mephibosheth prostrated himself, and said, 'What is your servant, that you should be concerned about a dead dog like me?'"

When Mephibosheth's father and grandfather were killed he became an orphan and his life had lost all value. He knew that he was at the King's mercy and that in that day's custom, his life was worthless (in man's eyes). However, David treats him as one of his own children. He not only maintains his life, he restores all of Saul's property and servants to Mephibosheth.

David saves his life and restores him as a child of the King.

5) HE IS REDEEMED

Mephibosheth was in need of someone to come alongside him and restore and redeem him. He could have refused David's more than generous gift. But it would have meant going back to his status as "Dead dog" (his words). Instead he accepts David's gift and is restored to what his place would have been if Saul was still alive or if Jonathan, his father, had claimed the throne.

Another interesting situation in this short chapter is that Mephibosheth is told by the King that he will sit at the King's table. Again, this isn't written once, but three times in the last 3 verses of chapter 9. The New American Standard Bible says that he "will eat at the King's table regularly." Other translations say "He shall eat at the King's table in perpetuity." Perpetuity; - In a way that never ends or changes. That means that Mephibosheth will eat at the King's table forever.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO US?

I love this story of Mephibosheth. But what does it mean to you and I today? This story is an amazing example of what salvation is through Jesus Christ. Like Mephibosheth we have all been dropped in life. We have been hurt in ways that sometime we only know. We all have physical and emotional scars that we have to deal with.

Some have been physically abused, emotionally abused and some even sexually abuse. Whatever has happened to us, it has left us lame. Some of us are only lame in one foot but most of us are figuratively lame in both feet. We have things that make it impossible to move forward on our own in life. We are in need of a savior.

Jesus Christ came to earth for all of those that are lame because of sin in this world (that is every one of us). If He hadn't come and lived, died on the cross and rose again three days later we were left to be lame and die in our sins. Mephibosheth should have died at the hands of the Philistines or at the hand of the incoming new King... but his life was spared and although he was lame, he's still alive.

We must all come to a place where we realize that we have nothing to offer to pay the price of our life. Mephibosheth fell in front of David and said that he was like a "Dead dog." We are in the same boat. There is nothing we can do to restore or redeem our lives on our own.

Isaiah 64:6 makes it clear what our righteousness is like. "For all of us have become like one who is unclean, all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our wrongdoings, like the wind, take us away."

We have no value. Even the most righteous of humans are like filthy garments. We need someone to redeem us. When Jesus came to earth to offer redemption He gave us a choice to accept His gracious gift or refuse it. By accepting the gift we are granted status as the child of the King, but not just any King we become children of the King of Kings. One of the benefits of being a child of the King is that we are invited and welcome at the King's table in perpetuity, forever.

In Luke 22:29-30 Jesus is talking to His disciples and says this to them, "Just as My Father has given Me a kingdom, I give you that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom." Once we come to Jesus Christ, accepting His gift of salvation, we are welcome at His table, not just in Heaven but starting the moment we believe and take the gift.

Those same words are for you and I. We are all like "Dead dogs", worthless. But we have been given an opportunity to be redeemed. All we have to do is believe on Jesus Christ and what He did for us. Acts 16:31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."

For those that have already accepted His gift and have been invited to the King's table today and for all eternity we need to not take it for granted. Too many of us have the right to eat at His table and we still choose to eat from the trash. We're like the prodigal son that had all he wanted at home with his father, but chose to live and eat in the pig pen. But when he decided to go home, his father was waiting with open arms.

**BEAR
MAN**



If you've gotten drawn away from the King's table, know that He is waiting with open arms to restore you to the place that was meant for you and that you have already received. Like Mephibosheth that was redeemed from certain death to eat at the King's table in perpetuity, we are the same opportunity at our heavenly Father's table.



DIGGING DEEPER

1) How have you been dropped in your life? By Whom?

2) How has being dropped left you lame? What are the results of being dropped? _____

3) When did you realize that you were as a "Dead dog"?

4) Are you currently eating at the King's table or have you starting eating from the trash again?

5) Do you have someone to talk to that can help get you restored to your seat the His table? Who?

6) Are you still in need of redeeming? Have you never accepted Jesus' Gift? If you want to talk to someone please feel free to contact us at www.TheBearMan.com
