



BURUBURU COMMUNITY CENTRE CHURCH OF GOD NAIROBI

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THE KINDNESS OF GOD

TEXT: 2 SAMUEL 9:1-13

SERMON PREACHED ON 23RD SEPTEMBER, 2018.

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❖ Introduction and outline

This chapter records the kindness David showed to Jonathan's seed for his sake.

- 1) The kind enquiry he made after the remains of the house of Saul, and his discovery of Mephibosheth, (2 Samuel 9:1-4)
- 2) The kind reception he gave to Mephibosheth, when he was brought to him (2 Samuel 9:5-8)
- 3) The kind provision he made for him (2 Samuel 9:9-13)

❖ David's inquiry

David makes an enquiry after the remains of the ruined house of Saul, (2 Samuel 9:1). This was a while after his accession to the throne, for it should seem that Mephibosheth, who was but five years old when Saul died, had now a son born, (2 Samuel 9:12). David had too long forgotten his obligations to Jonathan, but now, at length, they are brought to his mind.

Lesson: It is good sometimes to rethink ourselves whether there be any promises or engagements that we have neglected to make good. In this regard, David:

1. Sought an opportunity to do good. He might perhaps have satisfied his conscience with the performance of his promise to Jonathan if he had been only ready, upon request or application made to him by any of his seed, to help and support them. But he does more, he enquires of those about him first (2 Samuel 9:1), and, when he met with a person that was likely to inform him,

asked him particularly, *Is there any yet left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness?* (2 Samuel 9:3)

"Is there any, not only to whom I may do justice (Numbers 5:8), but to whom I may show kindness?"

Lesson: Good men should seek opportunities of doing good.

2. Those he enquired after were the remains of the house of Saul, to whom he would show kindness for Jonathan's sake: *Is there any left of the house of Saul?* Saul had a very numerous family (1 Chronicles 8:33), enough to replenish a country, and was yet so emptied that none of it appeared; but it was a matter of enquiry. *Is there any left?* See how the providence of God can empty full families; see how the sin of man will do it. Saul's was a bloody house, no marvel it was thus reduced, (2 Samuel 21:1). But, though God visited the iniquity of the father upon the children, David would not.

"Is there any left that I can show kindness to, not for Saul's own sake, but for Jonathan's?"

Saul was David's sworn enemy, and yet he would show kindness to his house with all his heart and was forward to do it.

Jonathan was David's sworn friend, and therefore he would show kindness to his house. This teaches us,

- 1) To be mindful of our covenant. The kindness we have promised we must diligently perform, though it should not be claimed. God is faithful to us; let us not be unfaithful to one another.
- 2) To be mindful of our friendships, our old friendships.

Lesson: Kindness to our friends, even to them and theirs, is one of the laws of our holy religion. *He that has friends must show himself friendly,* (Proverbs 18:24). If Providence has raised us, and our friends and their families are brought low, yet we must not forget former acquaintance, but rather look upon that as giving us so much the fairer opportunity of being kind to them: then our friends have most need of us and we are in the best capacity to help them.

The kindness he promised to show them he calls the *kindness of God*; not only great kindness, but:

- 1) Kindness in pursuance of the covenant that was between him and Jonathan, to which God was a witness. (1 Samuel 20:22).
- 2) Kindness after God's example; for we must be merciful as he is. He spares those whom he has advantage against, and so must we. Jonathan's request to David was (1 Samuel 20:14-15),

"*Show me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not, and the same to my seed.*"
The kindness of God is some greater instance of kindness than one can ordinarily expect from men.

It is kindness done after a godly sort, and with an eye to God, and his honour and favour.

❖ Information given to David concerning Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan.
Ziba was an old retainer to Saul's family, and knew the state of it. He was sent for and examined, and informed the king that Jonathan's son was living, but *lame* (how he came to be so we read before, (2 Samuel 4:4), and that he lived in obscurity, probably among his mother's relations in Lo-debar in Gilead, on the other side of the Jordan, where he was *forgotten, as a dead man out of mind.*

❖ The bringing of him to Jerusalem.

The king sent Ziba to bring him up to Jerusalem with all convenient speed, (2 Samuel 9:5). Thus he eased Machir of his trouble, and perhaps rewarded him for what he had laid out on Mephibosheth's account. This Machir appears to have been a very generous free-hearted man, and to have entertained Mephibosheth, not out of any disaffection to David or his government, but in compassion to the reduced son of a prince, for afterwards we find him kind to David himself when he fled from Absalom. He is named among those that furnished the king with what he wanted at Mahanaim (2 Samuel 17:27-29)

Lesson: Therefore we should be forward to give, because we know not but we ourselves may sometime be in want, (Ecclesiastes 11:2). *And he that waters shall be watered also himself,* (Proverbs 11:25)

1. Mephibosheth presented himself to David with all the respect that was due to his character. Lame as he was, *he fell on his face, and paid homage,* (2 Samuel 9:6). David had thus made his honours to Mephibosheth's father, Jonathan, when he was next to the throne (1 Samuel 20:41), *he bowed himself*

to him three times, and now Mephibosheth, in like manner, addresses him, when affairs are so completely reversed.

Lesson: Those who, when they are in inferior relations, show respect, shall, when they come to be advanced, have respect shown to them.

❖ David received him with all the kindness that could be.

1) He spoke to him as one surprised, but pleased to see him.

"Mephibosheth! Why, is there such a man living?"

2) He remembered his name, for it is probable that he was born about the time of the friendship between him and Jonathan.

He bade him not to be afraid: *Fear not*, (2 Samuel 9:7). It is probable that the sight of David put him into some confusion, to free him from which he assures him that he sent for him, not out of any jealousy he had of him, nor with any bad design upon him, but to show him kindness.

Lesson: Great men should not take a pleasure in the fearful approaches of their inferiors (for the great God does not), but should encourage them.

3) He gives him, by grant from the crown, *all the land of Saul his father*, that is, his paternal estate, which was forfeited by Ishbosheth's rebellion and added to his own revenue. This was a real favour, and more than giving him a kind word. Lesson: True friendship will be generous.

4) Though he had thus given him a good estate, sufficient to maintain him, yet for Jonathan's sake (whom perhaps he saw some resemblance of in Mephibosheth's face), he will take him to be a constant guest at his own table, where he will not only be comfortably fed, but have company and attendance suitable to his birth and quality. Though Mephibosheth was lame and unattractive, and does not appear to have had any great fitness for business, yet, for his good father's sake, David took him to be one of his family.

Mephibosheth accepts this kindness with great humility and self-abasement. He was not one of those that take every favour as a debt, and think everything too little that their friends do for them; but, on the contrary, speaks as one amazed at the grants David made him (2 Samuel 9:8): *What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I am?* How does he vilify himself! Though the son of a

prince, and the grandson of a king, yet his family being under guilt and wrath, and himself poor and lame, he calls himself *a dead dog* before David.

Lesson: It is good to have the heart humble under humbling providences.

❖ The matter is here settled concerning Mephibosheth.

1. This grant of his father's estate is confirmed to him, and Ziba called to be a witness to it (2 Samuel 9:9); and, it should seem, Saul had a very good estate, for his father was a mighty man of substance (1 Samuel 9:1), and he had fields and vineyards to bestow, (1 Samuel 22:7). Mephibosheth is now master of it all.
2. The management of the estate is committed to Ziba, who knew what it was and how to make the most of it, in whom, having been his father's servant, he might confide, and who, having a numerous family of sons and servants, had hands sufficient to be employed about it, (2 Samuel 9:10). Thus Mephibosheth is made very easy, having a good estate without care, and is in a fair way of being very rich, having much coming in and little occasion to spend, himself being kept at David's table.

❖ Conclusion:

David was a type of Christ, who let his kindness to Mephibosheth serve to illustrate the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards fallen man, which yet he was under no obligation to, as David was to Jonathan. Man was convicted of rebellion against God, and, like Saul's house, under a sentence of rejection from him, was not only brought low and disadvantaged, but lame and helpless, made so by the fall. The Son of God enquires after this perverted race, which enquired not after him comes to seek and save them. To those of them that humble themselves before him, and commit themselves to him, he restores the lost inheritance, he entitles them to a better paradise than that which Adam lost, and takes them into communion with himself, sets them with his children at his table, and feasts them with the elegance of heaven.

Amen.

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