

=KINGS OF THE BIBLE=

Lesson 2

David and Mephibosheth

AIM: to teach my pupils the beautiful story of Mephibosheth and David and the truths found therein.

POINT OF CONTACT: Since Mephibosheth was crippled, start off by asking the class someone they know who is crippled and what is wrong with him. Discuss for a while those who are handicapped by being crippled. A few testimonies might even be given as to what a blessing the handicapped are to us.

INTRODUCTION: Though this series of lessons concerns the kings of the Bible, this lesson, however, will vary somewhat. It is about a king, but it is simply an incident from his life that is worth nothing. The king is David, and the main character of our story is Mephibosheth.

Mephibosheth was Jonathan's son. He was five years old when the tidings came of his father's death and his grandfathers' death at Gilboa. Under the influence of panic, his nurse took him up in her arms and fled with him; but in her flight she let him fall, so that he became crippled in both his feet. Notice II Samuel 4:4. For a long time he lived in Lo-debar, which was a poor country east of the Jordan River. One day King David decided to try to show kindness to some relative of Jonathan for Jonathan's sake. His servant, Ziba, told him of Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, who was still living in Lo-debar. David sent and brought him to his court to show him kindness for his father's sake, restoring to him the estates of Saul and appointing to him a place at the royal table.

- I. MEPHIBOSHETH WAS AN ORPHAN. He was cared for by another member of his family. Hence, see if the class can think of some orphans. Discuss with the class what they can do to help the life of an orphan. Then remind the class how grateful they ought to be for their parents, if they are still living. Remind them that, but for the grace of God, they could be orphans also.
- II. MEPHIBOSHETH WAS CRIPPLED. See II Samuel 4:4. Discuss with the class the fact that we should be kind and helpful to the handicapped. Talk with them about the deaf and the blind of our church. Tell them about the retarded children and the class we have for them. Discuss the work carried on with the shut-ins. All of these works are for the handicapped people. Remind the class of things we should do for the handicapped and to the handicapped. Have a time of thanksgiving for healthy feet, legs, and bodies.
- III. DAVID SHOWED GRATITUDE TO SAUL AND JONATHAN EVEN AFTER THEIR DEATHS. Read II Samuel 9:1. Gratitude is a wonderful thing. How we ought to have it and express it! David even had it after the death of his friend, so that he showed kindness to the friend's family in his honor. This is a wonderful thing. Someone has said the greatest sin in the world is ingratitude.
- IV. MEPHIBOSHETH IS A TYPE OF THE SINNER SAVED BY GRACE.
 1. He was crippled by a fall. In II Samuel 9:3, notice the words, "which is lame on his feet." We, too, were crippled by a fall. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve fell into sin, and the human race fell. We became crippled by the fall.
 2. The king sent a messenger to seek the lad. Notice II Samuel 9:5. The Holy Spirit came to convict us of our sin and to tell us that the King wanted us. The servant represents the Holy Spirit coming to convict us of sin.
 3. He was invited by the king to come to the palace to live. Every person in the world has this same invitation. Jesus, the King of kings, invites us to come to live in Heaven forever in Heavenly palaces.
 4. His invitation was for the sake of another. It was for Jonathan that Mephibosheth was honored. It was because of Jonathan that David could offer Mephibosheth this inheritance. Our salvation is also for the sake of Another! Jesus Christ intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father, and it is for Jesus' sake that God forgives us and saves us.
 5. The land of Saul was given to Mephibosheth. We, too, will inherit the land some day. All that belongs to God belongs to us.

6. The crippled lad was invited to eat at the king's table. Read II Samuel 9:10. What a privilege it is for us, after we have been saved, to eat constantly from King's meat at the King's table. Notice if you would, please, this blessed fact: When Mephibosheth sat around the table as one of the king's sons, a white linen tablecloth struck him across the waist. From the waist up he was normal; he was crippled from the waist down. This was not seen, however, as he sat at the king's table, for it was covered by the linen tablecloth. As God's people, our weakness, sin and infirmities are also covered! This is a beautiful picture of justification. Our sins are covered by the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. To be sure, Mephibosheth was still crippled, but that condition was covered. To be sure, we are imperfect, but God does not see our sins because they are covered in the blood of Christ.
 7. He was one of the king's sons. See II Samuel 9:11. He was not really a king's son, but was an adopted one. He was accepted because of his father into the family of the king. We, too, have been accepted into the family of the King. We were born the first time by nature as sons of Adam, but then at the new birth we became sons of the King. Though we are not as Jesus, having been a Son all along, we are nevertheless one of the sons of God and are classed as such. What a beautiful picture of salvation!
- V. MEPHIBOSHETH BECAME DISLOYAL TO THE KING. When King David left Jerusalem because of the insurrection and rebellion of Absalom, Mephibosheth did not go with him. Many of his followers did, but Mephibosheth was disloyal. This is a sad fact! Many of us oftentimes are not willing to go all the way with Christ and suffer with Him, even though He has done so much for us. Let us always stand with Him, whether He is on the throne or off the throne, whether He is popular or unpopular.