THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Samuel: God's Shift Of Israel From Apostasy Under The Judges To David's Reign

II. 2 Samuel: The Reign Of David Over Israel

K. Heeding David's Example of Brotherly Kindness To Mephibosheth

(2 Samuel 9:1-13)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We live in a world where real brotherly love is becoming increasingly hard to find:

(1) A cartoon in the April 21, 2017 Republican-American, p. 8A ran a picture of an iPhone with the photo on it and a caption below about the evil man who murdered an innocent 74-year-old grandfather live on Facebook and another picture of another man looking at the Facebook photo of the event on his iPhone two hours later with the caption, "Thousands watch and share without reporting it . . . millions watch." A question in a caption running above both pictures asks, "What's more troubling?", the lovelessness of the killer murdering the 74-year-old grandfather live on Facebook or the lovelessness of the many who watched it and shared it on Facebook without contacting the police.

(2) Lovelessness afflicts our nation's politics: R. N. Collins of Plantsville, Connecticut wrote in his letter to the editor that was posted in the same paper (Ibid.), "(I)t's scary that the voters who elected Trump to make changes are being overwhelmed by far-left voters who will resort to anything, including violence, to further their agenda."

(3) Lovelessness affects the rich and famous: I attended a Red Cross blood drive in Bristol last Monday where a technician told me of the Aaron Hernandez funeral that occurred that day in town and of Mr. Hernandez' suicide when he had once had so much fame and fortune as a star football player with the New England Patriots. She told me that the murder he had committed had risen from someone's spilling an alcoholic drink on him. She marveled at why Mr. Hernandez had ruined his life by committing murder over such an insignificant incident versus simply ignoring it!

(4) However, lovelessness affects us locally: last Wednesday, caller after caller on "The Brad and Dan Show" on "The Talk of Connecticut" complained about reckless speeders on Interstate 84, that the lives of innocent people are constantly being threatened by the lack of State Police to stop such dangerous drivers.

Dan explained that due to budget problems, the state cannot afford to put enough patrol cars on Interstate 84, and that the state budget problem is tied up in knots over legal requirements having to do with the State Employees Retirement System pension-funding crisis. Accordingly, due to state politics and legal issues, everyone involved in leadership keeps looking out for his own interests instead of the general public's welfare on our highways!

Need: So, we ask, "In a world where true, spiritual brotherly love is increasingly hard to find, how can I have it?"

I. When David was anointed king, the Holy Spirit came upon him for the rest of his life, 1 Samuel 16:13.

II. Thus empowered, he made a covenant by God's Name of loyalty to his beloved friend Jonathan, Saul's son, to treat graciously both Jonathan and his descendants forever after him, 1 Samuel 20:14-17, 42.

III. Thus, after the deaths of Saul, his sons and Jonathan, when David ruled as king, he wondered if anyone of Saul's line survived for him to treat kindly for Jonathan's sake, 2 Samuel 9:1 KJV.

IV. The word "kindness" (KJV, v. 1, 3, 7) is the Hebrew term *hesed,* "loyal love," and it refers to David's duty to show loyal love to Jonathan's descendants in keeping with his covenant with Jonathan that he had sworn into existence by way of God's name, Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, footnote to 2 Samuel 9:1.

V. 2 Samuel 9:2-13 tells of David's fulfillment of this covenant to Jonathan's son Mephibosheth (as follows):

A. David heard about a servant of Saul named Ziba, so he summoned Ziba to ask if there was anyone of the house of Saul still alive that David might show the "loyal love" of God unto him, 2 Samuel 9:2-3a.

B. King David used a poetic word for "not" (KJV, v. 3a) that was rarely used in prose, the word ***'epes*** (B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 67), revealing intense emotion as he recalled the great love that existed between him and Jonathan, and this love explains David's acts to fulfill this covenant in 2 Samuel 9:3b-13:

1. Ziba replied that there remained one son of Jonathan, but that he was lame in his feet, 2 Samuel 9:3b.
2. David was not discouraged at having to deal good to a lame man, so he asked Ziba where he might be, and Ziba reported that he was living in a house in Lo-debar, the farthest north part of Gilead, 2 Sam. 9:4; Ibid., Ryrie, Map 4: The Twelve Tribes of Israel. This reveals that this son was living in fear of David:

a. Typically in the Ancient Near East, surviving heirs of a former dynasty are executed by the new dynasty king to protect his power to rule. (J. Vernon McGee, Thru The Bible, 1982, v. 2, p. 207-208)

b. Also, at the death of Saul and Jonathan when he was 5 years old, this boy's nurse had hurriedly picked him up to flee before dropping him, injuring his feet so that he became permanently lame, 2 Samuel 4:4.

c. The boy's name was Mephibosheth, and he had once known a life of ease as the king's grandson, but he now hid for his life as a helpless, crippled survival of the past dynasty. When his uncle, Ish-bosheth who had been crowned king of the Northern tribes by Abner in competition against David had himself been slain, Mephibosheth sought protection from David by going to live with people still loyal to Saul: (1) the men of Jabesh-Gilead never forgot Saul's rescue of them from the Ammonites, seen in their rescuing the bodies of Saul and his three sons from impalement by the Philistines on the wall at Beth-Shan, 1 Sam. 31:11-13 with 1 Sam. 11. (2) Mephibosheth then sought asylum with people in Gilead still supportive of Saul by living as far from David as was safe -- way up in the farthest north part of Trans-jordan Gilead!

3. David thus summoned Mephibosheth to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 9:5), and when he arrived in David's presence, Mephibosheth fell down on his face before David, likely thinking he was about to be executed as the last surviving heir to the throne of Saul's former dynasty, 2 Samuel 9:6.
4. However, David told Mephibosheth not to be afraid, that he would surely show him "loyal love" for the sake of his father Jonathan, and David announced just how that would occur in 2 Samuel 9:7a,b:

a. First, since Mephibosheth was Saul's sole surviving male heir, Saul's other heirs having been slain with him in battle (1 Sam. 31:6), David said he would restore all of Saul's land to Mephibosheth, 2 Sam. 9:7b.

b. Second, using the emphatic pronoun "<u>you</u>," David told Mephibosheth, "<u>You</u> will eat bread at my table 'continually,'" the Hebrew term being ***tamid,*** "regular repetition," Ibid., B. D. B., p. 556; 2 Sam. 9:7c. A meal in the Ancient Near East carried great cultural obligations for the host: he was responsible to protect his guests for the next three days or a 100-mile radius after the meal (<u>Z. P. E. B.</u>, v. Three, p. 214), so since David promised that Mephibosheth would eat regularly at his table, instead of being his executioner as the head of the new dynasty, David offered to be Mephibosheth's lifelong protector!

5. Mephibosheth was overcome with David's favor toward him, and expressed wonder at being treated so well when he saw himself as a "contemptible and useless" man, 2 Sam. 9:8; Ibid., Ryrie, ftn. to 2 Sam. 9:8.
6. David then ordered Ziba with his 15 sons and 20 servants to farm Saul's land for Mephibosheth's provision and honor as Saul's heir (2 Sam. 9:9-10), to which Ziba agreed (2 Sam. 9:11a), and David added that Mephibosheth would eat at his table as if he were one of David's own royal sons, 2 Samuel 9:11b.
7. Mephibosheth himself had a son named Mica, and this little boy also ate at David's table (2 Sam. 9:12a; <u>Z. P. E. B.</u>, v. Four, p. 186). The **marvel** of this event is seen in the Hebrew text at 2 Samuel 9:13: it reads literally, "And Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem because at the table of the king <u>continually</u> (emph. pos.) <u>he</u> (emph. pron.) ate and <u>he</u> (emph. pron.) was lame in both of his feet!" (Kittel, <u>Bib. Heb.</u>, p. 470)

<u>Lesson</u>: David relied on the Holy Spirit not only to make his covenant with Jonathan regarding showing loyal love to him and to his descendants, but also to keep that covenant, treating Jonathan's needy son as his own son. This event acts as a beautiful illustration of God's grace to us in Christ in His wonderful salvation.

<u>Application</u>: (1) May we trust in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) Then, may we rely on the Holy Spirit to practice loyal love to other people for God's sake as David did to Mephiboseth for Jonathan's sake. (3) May we also rejoice in God's rich grace to us in Christ, and (4) share the gospel of Christ's salvation with others who need salvation.

<u>Conclusion</u>: (To illustrate the message . . .)

When I attended the Red Cross blood drive in Bristol, Connecticut last Monday, I must admit that at first, I was not excited about donating blood. I had to give due to doctor's orders to get a therapeutic phlebotomy, and the detached way some of the technicians worked with the donors left me feeling unmotivated. However, in sharp contrast, I then overheard another donor on a gurney not far from mine tell the technician working with her how thrilled she was to be able to give blood for the first time in her life! She was there to save lives!

The attitude behind that lady's words also contrasted with those seen in the issues introduced in this sermon: (a) the murder of the innocent grandfather seen on Facebook and witnessed by thousands who did not report it, (b) the use of violence in political protests to push an agenda, (c) a senseless murder followed by the suicide of a former professional football player, (d) hazardous drivers in I-84 going unchecked due to state budget restraints over politics involving the state pension-funding crisis -- all of these issues were marked by selfishness and a lack of brotherly love, contrasting sharply with this woman's delight in giving blood for the first time in her life so she could save lives!

I learned from this event that the next time I give blood, as a believer in Christ, I need to give so others might have their physical lives prolonged enough hopefully to be able to hear the Gospel of Christ and be eternally saved!

May we trust in Christ to be saved. Then, may we rely on the Holy Spirit to treat others graciously!