

Haydn Primrose
Text: 2 Samuel 9:1-13
January 26, 2020
United Church of Broomfield

- I. 2 Samuel 4:4 is the story of how Mephibosheth became crippled, after news of Saul and Jonathans death became known, the nurse of Jonathans son, Mephibosheth, grabbed him and ran away with him. He was only 5 years old at the time. While the nurse was running she dropped him and he became handicapped in both feet.
- II. Why was the nurse trying to protect Mephibosheth? Because in those days, when a new king took over, there was to be no heirs remaining from the previous kingdom, all of them were to be put to death. The story of Mephibosheth starts with him being crippled and it ends with him being crippled. This is the beauty in this story as by the end we see his disability completely differently.
- III. Mephibosheth is living in a place called Lo Debar, meaning no communication or no pasture. He may have wanted to have no communication with new king. If he gets found out, it could mean his death since he is a rightful heir to the throne that David holds.
- IV. David remembers his covenant with Jonathan and ask his court if there is anyone from the line of Saul that David can show Chesed, or grace and mercy and loving kindness toward. Covenant comes from the Hebrew word “to cut” meaning that it was bound by blood as in a blood agreement. Like the blood agreement on the cross.
- V. One of Saul’s servants, Ziba says that there is one child of Jonathan named Mephibosheth but you need to know something about him, he is crippled in both feet.
- VI. David does not bat an eye, he just turns and says bring him to me. David did not ask how bad is he? What will people think if he is around? Is he going to fit in here? Do I really want to fulfil my promise I made to Jonathan? David did not care about his condition, he only cared about the covenant he made. Just like God does not care how bad we are, God only cares about the covenant God made with us through his son Jesus.

- VII. Imagine Mephibosheth seeing the royal entourage coming toward him. Imagine what he was thinking as he realized they were coming for him. The heir to the throne is now being called by the new king for a visit. Imagine how Mephibosheth must have felt going on the long travel back to Jerusalem to face King David. Imagine thinking the entire time that he was going to be killed. Imagine the terror that he was going through as he made that journey thinking with each roll of the wheel that he was one rotation closer to the end of his life. Imagine feeling like you have nothing left and everyone has given up on you and now it is just your time to die.
- VIII. Give the story of the girl who was about to die and she miraculously lived even though doctors said she was never going to get brain function again. She lived because someone never gave up on her. Someone saw her worth. Just like God sees our worth.
- IX. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God Romans 3:23
- X. Wages of sin is death Romans 6:23,
- XI. Ephesians 2:5 we are dead in our trespasses. You see, we humans bring nothing to the table of God. We bring nothing but filthy rags in the sight of God. However, we have Ephesians 2:8-9
- XII. Ephesians 2:8-9, for by grace you are saved through faith, not of works, lest any of you should boast
- XIII. David pursued Mephibosheth because of his covenant with Jonathan. God pursues us because of his covenant with us through Jesus.
- XIV. We are heirs with Christ, we will dine at the table to eat forever with God
- XV. Theologically we would probably all agree we believe that we will go to heaven because of what Christ did for us on the cross and our belief in Jesus. Theologically, we would probably all agree to this because of God's grace towards us.

- XVI. What is grace though? Grace is something that we did not earn and we don't deserve. But we have it because of something someone else did in our stead. Please bookmark this definition in your mind for just a little bit later.
- XVII. So we talked about this from a theological perspective, but what about in practical perspective. Mephibosheth means "from the mouth of shame." We don't see the world as God does, through grace, but through the eyes of shame.
- XVIII. Shame is I'm not good enough, I am not holy enough, I'm not whatever enough. Shame is the feeling that we are bad. Guilt is the feeling that we have done something bad. Guilt can make us change to be a better person. Shame can only tear us down and make us feel like we cannot be better. Since we are celebrating our 16th anniversary of being ONA, I'll make this personal. Shame can be "I'm Gay or I'm Trans or I'm bi or I'm not gender or sexually conforming" and that means I cannot go to heaven. I am bad because I am part of the LGBTQIA community.
- XIX. In the biblical times, your name was EVERYTHING. Now Mephibosheth's name is shame and he is handicapped. Keep in mind this was way before the times of the Americans With Disabilities Act. There were no ramps, wheelchairs, orthopedic surgeons, or even pavement for that matter. Just dirt and rocks. Imagine living in that environment as a crippled person with a name of shame. And we think we have problems?
- XX. Genesis 19 is the line of Noah's sons. Ham, Shem, and Japheth. Moses (allegedly) breaks up the story about the lineage of Shem to tell the story of the Tower of Babel. Why?
- XXI. In the Tower story, they were wanting to build a tower to heaven so that they may make a name for themselves. What is the Hebrew word for name? Shema. They were making a Shema in the lineage of Shem. Even though Shame was his name, there needed to be no shame there. For a wonderful gift was going to be given to him
- XXII. When Mephibosheth arrived at the temple, he threw himself at David's feet trembling with the fear of life and death coursing through his veins. I am a dog and I am a servant master David, said Mephibosheth. I bring nothing to the table. I have nothing to offer. I can give you nothing but my prostration.

- XXIII. David said DO NOT FEAR for you will dine at my table as if you were one of my sons. You now have a family with me.
- XXIV. What does Jonathan mean in Hebrew? It means gift from Yahweh. Just as David gave a gift to Mephibosheth through the one who is named gift of God, so too, does God give a gift to us through the one named Jesus, the Christ. David gave a gift of family, land, money, honor, dignity, and prestige to a man who did not deserve, did not earn it, could not repay it, and received it because of something that someone else did for him in his place.
- XXV. We do not deserve heaven, we do not deserve life, but because of what Jesus did for us, we receive grace, remember from earlier? We receive the gift of eternal life even though we did not earn it, we do not deserve it and we only got it because of Jesus and that covenant that God made with us through Jesus.
- XXVI. Shame leaves us in Lo Debar, it will never allow us to get to the table where our King has called us to be.
- XXVII. God doesn't want us to leave communication. God doesn't want us to live in shame. God wants us to live in grace. God wants us to live in the freedom of Christ.
- XXVIII. God does not see us as Gay Christians or straight Christians, God sees us as children. Worthy of love. Worthy of acceptance. Worthy of Grace.
- XXIX. God sees us all with grace and we are accepted and affirmed no matter who we are or where we are on life's journey. No matter who you are, at God's table, you are welcomed there.
- XXX. Mephibosheth was handicapped by a drop from his nurse, we are handicapped by sin. But thank God that David's covenant restored Mephibosheth and God's covenant restored us. His story and ours starts with us being crippled and ends with us being crippled, but our handicaps are covered by our blood covenants. May our church continue to be one that welcomes the crippled, and may our church continue to be an open table to those in our community regardless of their background. May we always be open to all, affirming of each person's dignity, and may we always be closed to none.

XXXI. Blessings to you and may we understand that through Grace, we can come out of Lo Debar. We can come out of shame and we can come back to the table that has had a place set just for us the entire time.