

2ND SAMUEL

Week 14, chapter 9 and 10

After further consideration, I want to spend just a little more time with 2nd Samuel chapter 9. So indulge me please because the reason is that I see in this chapter an amazing God-pattern and prophecy developed that has direct impact on us. This is (on the surface) the story of King David and Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth is Jonathan's son, Saul's grandson. But underneath it is a hidden message that could not have been recognized until Messiah came and the Church age advanced. In the Hebrew teaching methods this message should probably be placed in the Sod category as it definitely has a mystical and messianic nature about it. And since chapter 9 is a relatively short one, and since I see an important underlying message (perhaps even a warning) that needs to be revealed to the modern Church, I want to take just a couple of minutes to re-read it so that we have the full context.

RE-READ 2ND SAMUEL CHAPTER 9 all

In a nutshell, King David asks the hired caretaker of Saul's estate if there is anyone left alive of Saul's family. At the bottom of David's interest is that more than 2 decades earlier he had made a vow before the Lord to be kind to Saul's and Jonathan's descendants once he became king. Inherent in David's question is: if a hereditary member of Saul's family is alive, why isn't that family member in charge of Saul's estate instead of a gentile foreigner, a household servant (a fellow named **Tziva**)?

Last week we found out that the back story for this narrative is that most of Saul's family had recently been executed by some Gibeonites in an act of blood vengeance (a typical Middle Eastern vendetta for perceived wrongs committed by the former king). Even though David was not personally involved with the killings he did approve them; however he told the Gibeonites that they must not harm Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son (a remnant of Saul's family must live on or the family line would come to an end). Even so, Mephibosheth went off into hiding among the clan of **Makhir**, part of the tribe of Manessah that was located in the Trans-Jordan (a place outside of the official Promised Land) because it was understood that the Gibeonites would not

quit until they had killed Mephibosheth (it was a matter of honor for them).

Upon **Tziva** admitting that Mephibosheth was still alive and well, David ordered that Mephibosheth be brought to the City of David to appear before him. Interestingly **Tziva** makes it a point to mention that although an heir of Saul's estate was alive, alas he was a cripple. And in the Bible era cripples and blind people were despised by society and seen as useless burdens whose afflictions were usually divine curses in consequence of displeasing God in some way. David assured Mephibosheth that (despite his lame condition) not only would he be welcomed back into the Promised Land and even live in the capital city of Jerusalem, but that the King would protect and provide for him.

Further, Mephibosheth was to be given legal possession and authority over Saul's former estate, and (in a reversal of fortune) **Tziva** was to work on his behalf in order to provide for Mephibosheth's family and whatever remained of Saul's descendants. **Tziva** submitted to this request but made it clear to David that Mephibosheth had been eating at **Tziva's** table, meaning that **Tziva** (as the headman in charge of Saul's estate) had graciously seen to it that Mephibosheth was given enough to live and was not being neglected.

This was actually quite an arrogant and boastful attitude on the part of **Tziva** because he in no way owned or possessed Saul's estate. Saul's estate was not his; **Tziva** merely benefited from it because of circumstance, but it was neither his own merit nor legal entitlement to the estate that allowed him to benefit. Rather it was David's **chesed**, the King's kindness, that permitted this gentile foreigner to partake of what rightfully belonged to an Israelite family (Saul's). Now to be clear; **Tziva** had apparently been a reasonably faithful caretaker of the estate. This was not an evil man or an enemy of David's kingdom. However he did overestimate his own position and to a degree misappropriated for himself what was by nature a Hebrew inheritance. Thus although David put Mephibosheth into ownership of the estate (that was his legally anyway), David in no way punished or even chastised **Tziva**. Rather, it's just that their roles were straightened out: the Israelite Mephibosheth was now the owner-in-possession and **Tziva** the gentile was still a supervisor and still allowed to benefit from the land and the relationship, but no longer as the self-appointed ultimate authority above that of even the hereditary family of Saul.

We ended last time by reading a portion of Romans 11, and most of you seem to have made the intended connection, but some apparently did not.

What I feel certain about is that what we have here (in addition to a real and literal event as recorded in chapter 9) is a significant prophecy and a God-pattern that has been overlooked. We have a pattern that foreshadows the relationship of Hebrews to gentiles (especially as it pertains to the gentile Church), and a hint of the return of the Jews to the Promised Land from the Roman exile. What needs to be remembered about prophecy is that characteristically prophecies happen, and then they happen again at a later time (sometimes more than once).

Here's the mysterious connection I want you to see: David is an intended illustration of Messiah Yeshua. Mephibosheth is an intended illustration of the exiled Israelites (or as we say in modern vernacular, the Jews). **Tziva** is an intended illustration of the gentile Church. And Mephibosheth's return from his hiding place in the Trans-Jordan to Yerushalayim is an illustration of the Jews coming home from being scattered and exiled to foreign lands, living under the authority of foreigners.

Let me carry this through in a way that may help you to see it better by following the story the line of 2nd Samuel chapter 9 and inserting the prophetic characters. Israel's King (Messiah) asks the gentile Church (the temporary caretaker of the Israelite estate) if there are any hereditary Israelites left who claim allegiance to Israel's God and thus have rightful land claims? And this is because if there are any hereditary Israelites left then the Messiah has picked this moment to bring them back to their own land inheritance (which they have legal right to), and set them in charge of it once again.

The gentile caretaker (the church) who was essentially assigned the job of taking care of the Israelite estate, but in doing so has generally held itself aloof over the Israelites, tells the Messiah (the King) that indeed there are natural hereditary Hebrew members of the land still living, however they are disabled. That is the church tells Messiah that the Jews are so spiritually crippled and so despised in the world that they are totally incapable of assuming the role as possessors and owners of what at one time had been their exclusive inheritance. And in fact it was their crippled state that caused their authority to be held back from them and given instead to a gentile caretaker. On top of that the gentile caretaker (the church) is a bit offended and put-off when after many years of this arrangement (of the gentile church lording over the Israelite estate and over the Jews) the church is suddenly (out of the blue) challenged by the King (the Messiah). The King makes it clear that He certainly doesn't see the gentile church (**Tziva**) as the NEW owner of the Israelite inheritance, to the exclusion of the living legal owner (the Jews), even though the caretaker (the church) felt he had earned that privilege and was confident that the king (Messiah) had intended to give it to him.

So at an unexpected moment, after years of it being otherwise, the Messiah (the King)

reverses the pecking order. The King of Kings sets the spiritually crippled and formerly oppressed and despised (but legal) Hebrew land owner over the gentile caretaker who had overseen matters for many years. The Hebrews who are related to the King are restored to their rightful position and brought back from the 4 corners of the earth to their own land inheritance as originally promised to Abraham.

In fact, simply living in the land (back on their estate) isn't good enough for the King; the Hebrews must also live in the capital city, Jerusalem, next to where the King lives. There the Messiah (the King) will protect them and provide for them (they will eat at the King's table). And as you are probably aware, modern Israel moved back into their land as the legal owners in 1948, but didn't recover Jerusalem until 1967. God intended for them to have both, just as we see that Mephibosheth was to have both his own estate inside the land of Israel but also the security and privilege of living in Jerusalem, near the King.

Now, maybe this doesn't impact you as it did me. I laughed, I shed tears, and I got shivers down my spine when this struck me. But then as I investigated Mephibosheth's future AFTER he was restored, I found even more. You see, this isn't the last time that we'll hear of Mephibosheth in the Bible.

First, since time is short and we're only going to read a few verses, the context is that David's own son has rebelled against him and has pulled off a coup. **Avshalom** has tried to take over the throne of Israel, has succeeded to some measure, and David is on the run.

READ 2ND SAMUEL 16:1 – 4

This is really interesting as the characters from 2nd Samuel chapter 9 again appear to us. The gentile **Tziva** (who in a role reversal is now under **M'fivoshet's** authority) comes to King David with offerings and gifts and tells King David that he is personally bringing these to him because **M'fivoshet** preferred not to come (by his own choice, almost as a defiance). Rather **M'fivoshet** was comfortable and not at all honoring of the King's precarious position and need for support and comfort at the moment. But **Tziva**, who says he valued David as the King of Israel, was here instead.

The King is angry and upset and tells Tziva: **"Everything that belongs to M'fivoshet is now**

yours.” Now in many ways this seems to shoot holes in a lot of what I just taught to you. And it especially seems to uphold the doctrine held by much of the modern Church that follows Replacement Theology (the notion that the gentile church has replaced Israel as God’s chosen; God has rejected His favored people). In other words, using the pattern of the story of David and Mephibosheth as prophetic, we have Messiah telling Israel that since the gentile church is more faithful to him than Messiah’s own fellow Jews are, He is taking everything away from the Jews that He had at one time given to them, and instead is giving it all to the gentile church. Is this not exactly what many of us grew up being told in the Church? Is this not what so much of the Church vehemently espouses today and therefore it supposedly validates their despising the Jewish people and believing that the Jews have no right to the Land of Canaan?

It would be hard to argue with that IF we stopped the story there, but it continues. In 2nd Samuel 19 something astounding happens.

Before we read it, here’s the context: David’s son **Avshalom** is dead. The rebel son of David has died and thus God’s anointed is now restored to the throne of Israel. David is on his way back to Jerusalem when he is met by none other than the lame Mephibosheth.

READ 2ND SAMUEL 19:25 – 30

It turns out that **Tziva** the gentile caretaker, Mephibosheth’s servant, deceived his master and he deceived the King. I think he also deceived himself. Mephibosheth was (properly so) in process of preparing to follow the King, and to bring to him the appropriate offerings and gifts as a show of allegiance, when the gentile caretaker took everything his Hebrew master had prepared, presented it to the King as though it was from himself, and then lied and said that the Israelite Mephibosheth had no interest in following the King.

David immediately saw he had been duped by the foreigner, but David’s solution was surprising and interesting: OK he said, split it. You’ll both have a portion in the Kingdom of God. After all, **Tziva** had been a long-term caretaker of the estate even though the estate was technically Mephibosheth’s legal inheritance. **Tziva** had elevated his own self-importance, but that was not a disqualifier; each would benefit from the estate; each in their own way, the gentile and the Hebrew, both had a reasonable claim to participation in the benefits of Israel’s land and their covenants.

Folks, do you see this? Do you see the prophetic illustration and condemnation of what the Church (us!) has done over the centuries to the Jewish people, and of the Jews' incorrect idea that nobody but they have a place before the God of Israel, as well as God's view of the situation as both having rights? We have deceived the Israelites and we have deceived ourselves. We have told them that they are only welcome to follow their own Israelite Messiah, and partake in the benefit of their own legal inheritance, if they essentially give up their Hebrew heritage and become as gentiles. We have been saying, "**you** may join **us** in what is OURS under certain conditions".

The Hebrews were getting ready to follow their Messiah, but the gentiles came along and wrested away control and made the Hebrews feel unwelcome and disinherited. The gentiles took the offerings the Israelites had prepared for the Messiah, and confiscated the inheritance that had been prepared for the Israelites, and claimed it all as our own. Then we went to King Messiah and said: "These are from us (the gentile church) because the Israelites you put in charge of the royal estate didn't want to follow you". But it wasn't true. For a time the gentile **Tziva** (the church) goes back to the Israelite estate and assumes control, believing he has attained his rightful place that he's earned by means of his own declaration and in consequence of the Israelite's spiritual lameness.

But later the King finds out from the Israelite Mephibosheth that the gentile had misled him. The Hebrew **M'fivoshet** had fully intended on following the King (the Messiah) but the gentile interrupted the process, took the gifts, claimed the inheritance for himself and thus wrongly put himself above the Hebrew (even effectively excluding the Hebrew).

Later after the Kingdom had been wrestled back from the rebel, and as the King (the Messiah) nears his bittersweet return to Jerusalem He sees the crippled and disheveled Hebrew (Mephibosheth) bearing gifts, and asks, "Why didn't you follow me before now"? The Hebrew responds, "I was going to follow you but the gentile deceived me, took my offering, lied to you and then came and claimed my inheritance. And now I'm not even sure I have a place in it anymore and have no right to ask for such a thing". And the King (Messiah) essentially says, "there is no need for this; of course you have a place. In fact you both have a place in the Kingdom, you are to be seen as on equal footing", and He splits the right to partake of the estate.

(Rom 3:29-30 CJB)

²⁹ Or is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't he also the God of the Gentiles? Yes, he is indeed the God of the Gentiles;

³⁰ because, as you will admit, God is one. Therefore, he will consider righteous the circumcised on the ground of trusting and the uncircumcised through that same trusting.

In our time the King of Kings has restored Mephibosheth to his rightful inheritance; but the gentile caretaker is not very comfortable with this turn of events and is struggling with all that it means. Where do we (the church) fit in now that the prophetic has become reality? How do we handle that all these centuries of erecting a wall between us and the Jewish people is now being challenged and dismantled by God? What do we do about all of those foundational manmade church doctrines that take Israel's inheritance from them and give it us, now that it is so very clear that those doctrines were misguided from their inception?

I'd like to think that this is at the core of what Seed of Abraham Ministries, and Torah Class, is all about. I could spend quite a long time talking about the history of the church as relating to this story, but I'm going to assume that the reason you are even here (or listening) is that the God has already opened your spiritual eyes to these realities.

Let's move on to 2nd Samuel chapter 10.

READ 2ND SAMUEL CHAPTER 10 all

David has reached his pinnacle in faith and in power. I spoke to you a few weeks ago in lesson 12 of our 2nd Samuel series about how it seems as though it is that AFTER the great Bible heroes have reached their spiritual zenith they succumb to their evil inclinations, outside temptations, and their flawed character. Thus what we have beginning with this chapter is a section of the Bible that could be titled The Decline of David.

The story is about the war with the Ammonites and the Syrians, and we'll look at it in depth. But as a kind of preliminary overview we can say that these 2 wars were likely the most

serious, the fiercest, and the most extraordinarily dangerous wars that happened during David's 40 years on Israel's throne.

Israel suffered greatly, the death toll was enormous, and exhaustion was overwhelming because no sooner had some hard won battle victories over the Syrians been celebrated than the Edomites overran the land in hopes of destroying God's chosen people. These battles and their consequences are told in a parallel account in 1Chronicles 19. Both this 2nd Samuel 10 and the 1Chronicles 19 accounts tell the war history in a typically Biblical scarcity of detail; however there were at least 2 Psalms that were written to express the anguish and distress of these times and they do add the emotion and inner turmoil that is otherwise missing. These Psalms are numbers 44 and 60 and I think that it is impossible to go forward studying 2nd Samuel 10 without the context of these two hard-hitting Psalms. The first one was written by a properly pious member of the Korah clan, a clan of Levites; the second one by David.

So let's pause to ready them both.

READ PSALM 44 all

READ PSALM 60 all

Both Korah and David knew something was terribly wrong. Whereas before nations trembled when the armies of God's Kingdom arrived, now they are confident and fearless. Whereas in an earlier part of David's reign the victories were certain and relatively easy, now the outcome was in question and the Israelite losses were horrible. Both Psalm writers had the good sense to pray and ask Yehoveh why it was this way; has the God of Israel abandoned His people? At the same time they asked for strength and redemption from Heaven because they knew that all victory is God's. It is fascinating that God's worshippers almost to a fault ask if God has abandoned them (when bad things happen), rather than asking the more logical question: how have I pulled away from Him?

The Midrash B'Midbar Rabbah says that this daunting episode is a clear illustration of the God-principle that whoever a leader of Israel might be that tries to deal with the evil and the

rebellious and God's sworn enemies in a kind or tolerant way is going to eventually himself suffer (as well as the Israelite people suffer) greatly for their folly of a foolishly misplaced humanitarian concern.

Thus while the first 2 verses of 2nd Samuel chapter 10 reports that while David behaved with noble intentions toward the nation of Ammon, his outstretched hand of friendship was misinterpreted as treachery and no doubt also as a sign of weakness. Thus instead of the results of his peace initiative being what David hoped for, the outcome was a bloody war that also had much to do with emboldening other enemy nations into thinking that perhaps this was their moment to annihilate God's people.

When David sought to show support for Ammon's new king Hanun, he also broke a Torah Commandment from Deuteronomy 23:7:

^{CJB} **Deuteronomy 23:7** *So you are never to seek their peace or well being, as long as you live. (Deut 23:7 CJB)*

David's ignoring this commandment proved costly for his nation. But it is instructional for us that this theological error seems to be where adherents to Judaism and to Christianity tend to wander. For some reason God's worshippers all fall so much in love with love, and with God's concern for humanity, that we believe we can disregard His other commandments with impunity. We tend to think (especially after several years as Believers or as leaders of ministries) that we now have license to make value judgments that supersede those written down for us in Holy Scripture. We so trust our own hearts (to the exclusion of God's Word) that we do what seems right in our own eyes and are shocked and disappointed when things don't turn out as we were so certain that they would.

Today our elder brothers in the faith, Israel, have succumbed to that trap. Over and over they offer an olive branch of peace to an enemy that only accepts Israel's demise and nothing less. And the result is always more violence and more hatred towards Israel by the world's community of nations who insist on even more unilateral concessions by Israel as the solution.

The Jewish community is known as some of the world's foremost humanitarians. At the same time, the Jewish community is despised and reviled (with few exceptions) the world over. A

good portion of the Church has taken on a similar humanitarian mantle and often comforts and serves God's enemies (while ignoring Israel's plight) in the name of following Christ. Pay very close attention to what happens in 2nd Samuel chapter 10 as it is but one of several examples in the Tanach of the results of thinking that our own morality is superior to God's commandments.

We'll continue with chapter 10 next time.