

“Tablecloth of Grace!”

I. INTRO:

- A. As Luther said, “Let’s shake some **passages** till fruit fall from its **branches**.”
- B. I believe this ch. is the **high point** in David’s life. *His finest hour!*
- C. **Theme: Kindness**, that state of being that includes the attributes of loving affection, sympathy, friendliness, patience, pleasantness, gentleness, and goodness.
1. Henry Drummond said, “The greatest thing a man can do for his heavenly Father is to be **kind** to some of His other children.”
- D. *Hesed* חֶסֶד could & should be translated “Grace”.
1. **What is Grace?**
 - a) What a **ballet dancer** has when she shows dignity & elegance?
 - b) What we say **before we eat**...*We say grace!*
 - c) What we are allowed when a **payment is extended** for a period of time.
 2. **No, biblical Grace is...**
 3. **Grace is** unmerited favor; **or** its extending favor to someone **who doesn’t deserve it, who hasn’t earned it, & can never repay it.**
 4. **Grace is** *positive & unconditional acceptance in spite of* the other person.
 5. **Grace is** a demonstration of love that is *undeserved, unearned & unrepayable.*
- E. Here we get to witness **the greatest illustration of grace** in the whole OT! :)
- F. This event illustrates God’s *Kindness & Grace* to **us** in Christ.
1. Eph.2:7 **that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.**

II. TABLECLOTH OF GRACE!

- A. **THE LAME PRINCE!** (1-4)
- B. (1) **Do you take time to reflect these things?** (God 7:1; fellow man 9:1)
1. **Who might be a Mephibosheth in your life you can show kindness to?**
- C. (3) A sad infirmity dated back to kindergarten 4:4 (5 yr old).
1. We too, were lame spiritually from birth.

- D. Yes, but he's crippled. He's got a serious disability. How will that look in your court?
1. David moves right on...Where is he? Not, how bad is it? Does it look gross?
 2. That's the way grace is. Grace isn't **picky**. Grace doesn't look for things that have been done that **deserve** love. Grace operates apart from the **response** or the **ability** of the individual. Grace is **one-sided**.¹
 3. *I repeat*, Grace is God giving Himself in full acceptance, to someone **who** does not **deserve** it & can never **earn** it & will never **repay** it.
 - a) So, a strong & famous king stoops down & reaches out to one who represents everything David is not!
- E. (4) *Lo Debar* - *Lo*/no; *Debar*/pasture or pastureland. [Literally, "*Not a Pasture*"]
1. He lives out in some *obscure, barren field* in the house of Machir.
- F. (5) He must have thought, "**Well this is the end!**"
- G. (6) Picture this permanently disabled man, crippled in both legs, **throwing himself down on his face** before the king.
1. **Expecting a sword** to strike his neck...**only** to hear the words in vs.7.
- H. (7) He didn't have to **fear** *because* David would keep his word.
1. You don't need to fear because the Son of David/Jesus will keep His word.
 2. **There was nothing to worry about!**
 3. Listen to this and ask yourself...**Why should I worry?** (Eph.1:3; 2:4-10)
- I. He might **not** have even known about this covenant; **but** to David it was **sacred**.
1. Even the unloveable son was dear to him, for his fathers sake.
 2. **You** may never have known about this *redemptive covenant* before this morning; **but** to Jesus it is **sacred!**
- J. (8) **What is your servant, that you should look upon a dead dog such as I?**
1. When you move from, "I'm a pretty good person", **to** the realization of you being dead in trespasses & sin, is where it all begins.
 2. **Notice Grace doesn't even answer the question.**
- K. (9,10) Though consciously **unworthy**, he received again Saul's family estate.

¹ Charles Swindoll, David, pg.172.

L. Mephibosheth's story is **our story** of redemption!

1. He belonged to a royal line, but was **made cripple** by a fall (4:4).
 - a) Adam was of a royal line **but** then was made spiritually cripple because of his fall.
2. He was **sought** by the king(1-4).
 - a) We didn't "find God", He found us. *There is none who seeks after God.*
 - b) **Today**, God is still seeking people who are *spiritually disabled*, dead due to depravity, lost in trespasses & sins, hiding from God, broken, fearful, & confused.
3. He was **lame** in his feet(3b).
 - a) We are lame in our powers of spiritual obedience.
4. He **lived in exile** from the king.
 - a) Mephibosheth *didn't even try* to win the king's favor. He was *hiding* from the king.
 - b) Same is true of us. **We deserved nothing, had nothing, & could offer God nothing. We were hiding when He found us.**
 - c) **From** Lo Debar **to** Mnt Zion.
 - d) **From** a hiding place where there was no pastureland **to** a place of plenty!
 - e) **From** where we were **to** where He is!
5. He was remembered because of a **covenant**.
 - a) Our sin separated us from our King, **but** there exists this incredible covenant!
 - (1) Jer.31:31-34 **But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."**
6. He was **brought** to the king(5).
 - a) We were called into the king's presence & exalted because of the merits of another.
7. He was **called** by name (6).
8. He responded in **humility** (6b).
9. He was told **not to fear** (7a).
10. He received **3 promises** [kindness, restoration & a place at the big table] (7b).
11. He responded in **humility** again (8).
 - a) **There's something freeing about Grace.** It takes away all of the demands & it puts all of the response on **God's shoulders** as He comes to us & says, ***"You're mine. I take you just as you are, crutches & hang-ups & liabilities, & all."***

12. He was given a **glorious heritage** (9,10).
13. He received **sonship/adoption/relationship** (11, *like 1 of the kings sons*).
- As part of Saul's family Mephibosheth had *no claim* to the kingdom. Yet David treated him as one of his own sons.
 - God has adopted *every Jesus Follower* into His family.
 - 1Jn.3:1 **Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called *children of God!***
 - Sitting down at the table he was treated like *any other son* of the king.
 - Can you imagine sitting w/the rest of His sons/daughters?** There's Peter, Paul, John. *Hey James can you pass the potatoes?* Talking to Issac Watts, Martin Luther, Calvin, Wycliffe, the Wesley brothers, George Whitefield. **To** break bread w/Abraham, Esther, Isaiah, & King David himself. **And don't forget Mephibosheth.**
14. He received **esteem**(12b *servants*).
- Eph.1:3 **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with *every spiritual blessing* in the heavenly places.**
15. He received **a perpetual feast** (13 *continually*).
- Mt.8:11 **I tell you, many will come from east and west and *recline at table* with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.**
16. He enjoyed **uninterrupted fellowship** (13 *continually*).
- As Adam did, when God walked w/him in the cool of the day.
 - As 1 day we will enjoy uninterrupted fellowship w/God. **Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.** Rev.21:3
17. He received a seat at the kings **banqueting table** (13b)
- This is where the Lord ***covers our feet w/His tablecloth*** & says, "Have a seat. **You're mine. I choose you simply because I wanted to.**"
 - Reclining*** in Eastern fashion, it was the 1 place his disability would be completely unnoticed!
18. **Yet, he was *still lame* in both his feet.** (no miraculous healing; still had his old nature to struggle w/)
- But, our *continual problem w/Sin* is a *continual reminder of His Grace!*
19. **Being 1 of the Kings kids, we still are subject to persecution & slander (16:1-4)**
20. **We should be looking for our Kings return & not concerned for material things. (see 19:24-30)**

M. I like saying, when it came to my salvation, “I did my part & God did His part!”

1. **His part:** He called me, sought me, caught me, loved me, saved me, cleansed me, healed me, & delivered me. **My part...** was running away!
2. It really is **Amazing Grace!**

N. **Before Communion** I would like to give you the opp to **respond** to His **Amazing Grace**.

III. **Communion:**

A. Its hard for us to appreciate the *scandal* Jesus caused by *His table fellowship* w/sinners.

1. Remember to share a meal w/someone is a guarantee of peace, trust, fraternity, & forgiveness: the shared table symbolizes a shared life.
2. For an orthodox Jew to say, “I would like to share a meal w/you” was like saying, “I would like to enter fellowship w/you.”
3. That’s what the corrupt tax collector Zacchaeus heard when Jesus called him down from the sycamore tree. Lk. 19:7 **And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.”**

B. **Bread:**

1. Forgive us for **running** from You & **hiding** from You.
2. Forgive us for our **discontent** w/our **daily** bread; & only being content when we have tomorrows bread also, & our retirement bread, & lots of it.
3. Forgive us for leaning back on our **crutches** when we can lean on You.
4. Forgive us for thinking we **deserve** anything besides *death & hell*.
5. Forgive us for showing **pride** & not **humility**.

C. **Cup:**

1. Thank you for calling us by name!
2. Thank you for reminding us we don’t have to fear!
3. Thank you for being our **Jehovah Jireh**, our God that provides.
4. Thank you for proving **Your Son Jesus** as the Lamb that was needed for taking away our sins.
5. Thank you for our sonship, our **adoption**, our relationship w/You!
6. Thank you for the invitation to your **banqueting table...continually!**
7. Thank you for your tablecloth of grace!

D. **End:** Spend some time today just basking in the kindness God has shown you!