

# 2 Samuel 9

## 2 Samuel 9:1–9

## David Shows Grace to Mephibosheth, Saul's Grandson

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Doctrines Covered		Doctrines Alluded To	
Black Liberation Theology		Slavery	

Psalms Alluded To			
Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			

Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			
1Chronicles 8			

Definition of Terms	
<b>Client Nation</b>	Client-Nation, is a national entity in which a certain number of spiritually mature Christians (the salt of the earth) have formed a pivot sufficient to sustain the nation and through which God specifically protects this nation so that believers can fulfill the divine mandates of evangelism, communication and custodianship of Bible doctrine, providing a haven for Jews, and sending missionaries abroad. The United States is a client-nation to God. A client nation must have freedom: Freedom to seek God, freedom to use one’s own volition and self-determination to succeed or fail, freedom from anarchy and tyranny, freedom for evangelism, freedom for believers to hear Bible teaching without government interference and, therefore, to grow spiritually, and freedom to send missionaries to other nations.
<b>Cycles of Discipline</b>	A national entity which is a client nation to God is under both God’s protection and His discipline (much like the individual believer). As a nation moves further and further from God, God may impose disciplinary measures on that nation, which include economic disaster, illness, civil unrest, military defeat, and even invasion which may include a slavery or dispersion of the people. These cycles are found in Lev. 26. Although these warnings are designed for Israel, all client nations to God may face similar downward historical trends.
<b>Fifth Cycle of Discipline</b>	The fifth cycle of discipline involves complete loss of personal and national sovereignty, the destruction of the family and the nation. Offerings to God are unacceptable. Nations which have undergone this destruction have experienced slavery, cannibalism, and the assimilation of its surviving citizens into other cultures.

Some of these definitions are taken from  
<http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml>  
<http://www.bigrick.org/pubs/terms.pdf>  
[http://www.gbible.org/\\_files/pdf/Doctrine\\_of\\_The\\_Divine\\_Decree.pdf](http://www.gbible.org/_files/pdf/Doctrine_of_The_Divine_Decree.pdf)  
<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d&sf=rea&did=28>  
<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/chastisement.html>

### An Introduction to 2Samuel 9

**Introduction:** 2Sam. 9 seems to be located in an odd place. You will recall from 2Sam. 8, we have a list of the nations that David has defeated. In 2Sam. 10, there will be the conflict between David and both Ammon and Syria. However, in between, David will locate Saul’s only remaining relative and show grace to him, based upon his friendship and love for Jonathan. A parallel occurs to me, although I do not know if this is what was intended. The end of the Age of Israel is one of many wars, where God defeats and destroys all of Israel’s enemies. Then there will be a time of peace, the Millennium, where God shows grace to the remnant of believers who are still alive. However, at the end of the Millennium, Satan will be let out of his confinement and he will inspire the Gog and Magog revolution, a revolution against perfect environment.

I do not know if this was intentional, but there is a simple parallel which can be set up between 2Sam. 8–10 and the end times.

2Samuel 8–10: A Possible Parallel	
2Samuel 8–10	The End Times
2Sam. 8: David is at war with Israel’s many enemies.	The end of the Age of Israel (the Tribulation): Jesus Christ is at war with Israel’s many enemies.
2Sam. 9: David shows grace to the remnant of the line of Saul (that is, to all who remain alive in his line).	God shows grace to those who remain alive at the end of the Tribulation. This is the Millennium, where there is perfect environment.
2Sam. 10: David wars against Syrian and Ammon.	Satan is loosed at the end of the Millennium and he foments the Gog and Magog revolution against God.

An intentional parallel as we find here would handily explain why we find David’s grace toward Mephibosheth sandwiched between two chapters of war.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines**

What could also be the case is, David is Jesus Christ in shadow form. He executes justice and righteousness throughout the land (which included the destruction of Israel's enemies—2Sam. 8). However, God is also a God of love and compassion and forgiveness, and that is what we find here. David holds no grudge against the house of Saul. David has fond memories of his close friend Jonathan (Saul's son, and apparently David's closest friend). David has been promised by God an eternal dynasty (2Sam. 7). Therefore, David does not have to be concerned about Saul's line somehow inserting itself and become prominent once again. So David will show grace to Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul; just as God shows grace to us, and does not recall the past to hold it against us.

When examining any historical chapter or book, it is always important to realize that there is more being developed than simply filling in some missing historical gaps. The Bible does not give us a complete history of Israel. One of the missing portions of Israel’s history are details about how the Zadok line assumed the priesthood responsibilities after Saul had killed all of the priests in Nob. We know details about Saul’s order to kill these priests, and how Abiathar escaped to David, but we are given precious little information about how Zadok took it upon himself to restore the priesthood from a different line of Aaron.

Let me give you another example: Hezekiah, one of the good kings in the Southern Kingdom, was about to die the sin unto death, and God gave him 15 more years to live. We are given almost no additional information on Hezekiah’s life after that point in time. My point is, the Bible is not designed to give us a complete and total picture of Israel’s history. Therefore, what history we are given often has some significance beyond simply recording historical events which struck the fancy of the historian who writes them down.

This chapter has a beginning, an end, and 3 conversations in between. David was a very different sort of king. When some kings had some time off, they would perhaps organize games, get together with their drinking buddies, collect a few more wives or mistresses, or do whatever based upon their power as king. David has, so far, concerned himself with the Ark; then he was concerned that the Tabernacle of God was not sufficiently grand; and now, David will seek to show grace to anyone who remains in the line of Saul. There is a dramatic difference between David and other kings; most kings would think about themselves and how to spend time doing something for themselves; David concerns himself with the things of God and with other people.

David’s closest friend was Jonathan, and because of Jonathan, David would like to bless the line of Saul. So he asks if there is anyone remaining in the line of Saul so that he could show them grace (most kings would have already located all relatives from the opposing party and had them executed) (v. 1). David is told that there is one of Saul’s former slaves who might shed light on this situation: Ziba; so David calls Ziba in (v. 2). It turns out that Jonathan has a son who is lame in both feet, and that Machir ben Ammiel took him in (vv. 3–4). So David fetches

Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth and promises to return all of Saul's land and possessions to him (vv. 5–7). Mephibosheth is extremely grateful, if not taken aback, by David's graciousness (v. 8). Then David calls Ziba back in. Ziba should have been taking care of Mephibosheth, but, when Saul's family died in battle, Ziba just began his own life, ending up with 15 sons and 20 servants, and with all of Saul's land and possessions. David assigned Ziba (and his family) to Mephibosheth (as his slaves); returned all of Saul's land to him; and had Mephibosheth as a regular dinner guest in the palace (vv. 9–10). Mephibosheth had a young son and began to take his meals with David in the royal palace (vv. 11–12).

I divided this chapter into an introduction, a conclusion, and 3 conversations in between. Clarke outlines it differently:

Clarke and Henry's Outline of 2Samuel 9		
Passage	Clarke's Description	Henry's Description
2Sam. 9:1-4	David inquires after the family of Jonathan, and is informed of Mephibosheth his son	The kind enquiry he made after the remains of the house of Saul, and his discovery of Mephibosheth
2Sam. 9:5-8	He sends for him and gives him all the land of Saul	The kind reception he gave to Mephibosheth, when he was brought to him
2Sam. 9:9-13	David appoints Ziba the servant of Saul, and his family, to till the ground for Mephibosheth	The kind provision David made for Mephibosheth and his family

From Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 9 (chapter comments) and from Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 9 (chapter comments; slightly edited).

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What we learn from this chapter will be **discussed** at the end of **2Sam. 9**.

Keil and Delitzsch place the timing of this chapter at about the middle of David's reign. Mephibosheth is a 5 year old child back when Saul and Jonathan had been killed (2Sam. 4:4) and here he has a young child of his own (2Sam. 9:12). Essentially, this blocks in a period of time for us. I would place this somewhere between David's 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> years as ruler over all Israel. There is an undetermined period of time when there is no king over Israel after Saul and Jonathan are defeated in battle. Then David rules for 7 years over southern Israel. And, so far in David's reign, he has apparently brought the Ark into Jerusalem, he has been given the Davidic Covenant, and he has had many military victories. The verbiage of 2Sam. 9:12 tells us that, when all of this came about, Jonathan had a young son.

Several authors refer to 2Sam. 9–20 as a succession narrative or as court history. That is, someone just sat down and wrote all of this. They see the final 4 chapters of 2Samuel as appendices, added later to complete 2Samuel. 1Kings 1–2 are often included in this succession narrative. Some go so far as to claim that this was written to justify Solomon as being king over Israel after David, despite the fact that (1) there are no prophecies within this narrative which specifically name Solomon as David's successor and (2) Solomon is born to David and Bathsheba, whose union was an adulterous one. An author could have covered this up, and yet stuck with the facts (for instance, so much has been written about John Kennedy, but without having to refer to his many affairs as president).

In the reading which I have done on this (which reading has been admittedly brief), I personally do not have an opinion. Why previous chapters are left out of this succession narrative, I could not say; although the final chapters of Samuel do appear to be added in there, as somewhat of an *oh-by-the-way, this-also-happened-during-David's-reign* approach.

However, there are reasons why at least chapters 9–20 are considered to be successive chapters (I would chapters 1–20 at least). We have the phrase *now it came to pass after these things* (or something similar to this phrase) in 2Sam. 8:1 10:1 11:1 13:1 and 15:1 (I may have missed some other occurrences). This is a phrase which lays out a chronology. The second reason we have a chronology is, Mephibosheth is spread out throughout the book of Samuel. We find him in 2Sam. 9 16 19 and 21; and each time, the narrative is advanced. We may briefly look at these other passages, so that we take David and Mephibosheth in a complete arc.

As for these chapters being written simply to allow Solomon to be king over all Israel is simply human viewpoint. God made Solomon king over Israel, as per the wishes of David, which coincided with divine design. And the fact that Solomon is a product of what began as an adulterous affair is inconsequential. Only a legalist looks at that and sees a problem. David was a man after God's own heart; and Solomon, for much of his life, did the same thing (although he certainly became a fan of human viewpoint himself for many years).

Symbolically, what is going on? David is a shadow of Jesus Christ and Mephibosheth is you and I. Who is Ziba? He represents Satan. All of this will be summed up at the end of this chapter, so that you can see the reason why this is included in the Word of God.

In any case, the bulk of 2Samuel stands in stark contrast to 1Samuel, where there seem to be contributions from at least a half-dozen people, arranged chronologically, but without any reference to any change in authorship, although the narratives would require different authors. Most of 2Samuel was probably authored by David.

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## David Desires to Show Grace to the House of Saul

Slavishly literal:

**And so says David, “[Is] that a being still who remains to a house of Saul and I will make with him grace because of Jonathan?”**

2Samuel  
9:1

Moderately literal:

**So David said, “[Is] there [lit., for, that, because] still existing [one] who remains to the house of Saul? Then I will manufacture grace for [lit., with, by, near] him because of Jonathan.”**

**So David said, “Is there anyone who remains from the house of Saul? I would like to show grace toward him because of Jonathan.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation<sup>1</sup>; George Lamsa's translation<sup>2</sup>, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

<sup>1</sup> I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use [www.latinvulgate.com](http://www.latinvulgate.com).

<sup>2</sup> For some odd reason, the text for 2Chronicles is available at <http://www.peshitta.org/pdf/ot/> but not 1Chronicles.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Latin Vulgate	And David said: Is there any one, <u>think you</u> , left of the house of Saul, that I may show kindness to him for Jonathan's sake?
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says David, "[Is] that a being still who remains to a house of Saul and I will make with him grace because of Jonathan?"
Peshitta (Syriac)	And David said, Is there yet any one left of the house of Saul, that I may show kindness to him for Jonathan's sake?
Septuagint (Greek)	And David said, Is there yet anyone left from the house of Saul, that I may deal kindly with him for Jonathan's sake?
Significant differences:	My English version of the Latin inserts the words <i>think you</i> , which are not found in the Masoretic text or in any of the other ancients texts.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	One day, David thought, "I wonder if any of Saul's family are still alive. If they are, I will be kind to them, because I made a promise to Jonathan."
Easy English (Pocock)	One day David asked, 'Is anyone from Saul's family still alive? If so, I want to be kind to that person because of the promise that I made to Jonathan.'
Easy-to-Read Version	David asked, "Is there any person still left in Saul's family? I want to show kindness to this person. I want to do it for Jonathan."
Good News Bible (TEV)	One day David asked, "Is there anyone left of Saul's family? If there is, I would like to show him kindness for Jonathan's sake."
<i>The Message</i>	One day David asked, "Is there anyone left of Saul's family? If so, I'd like to show him some kindness in honor of Jonathan."

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

NIRV	David asked, "Is anyone left from the royal house of Saul? If there is, I want to be kind to him because of Jonathan."
New Jerusalem Bible	David asked, 'Is there anyone belonging to Saul's family left, to whom I might show faithful love for Jonathan's sake?'

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English And David said, Is there still anyone of Saul's family living, so that I may be a friend to him, because of Jonathan?

Context Group Version And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him family allegiance { Hebrew: hesed } for Jonathan's sake?

HCSB David asked, "Is there anyone remaining from Saul's family I can show kindness to because of Jonathan?"

JPS (Tanakh) David inquired, "Is there anyone still left of the House of Saul with whom I can keep faith for the sake of Jonathan?"

NET Bible® Then David asked, "Is anyone still left from the family<sup>2</sup> of Saul, so that I may extend kindness to him for the sake of Jonathan?" When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Ancient Roots Translinear David said, "Do any still exist preserved from the house of Saul, to do mercy because of Jonathan?"

Concordant Literal Version And David said, `Is there yet any left to the house of Saul, and I do with him kindness because of Jonathan?

Thieme Then David said, "Is there anyone left in the dynasty/house of Saul, that I may manufacture {`asah - out of maximum doctrine in his soul} grace {cheched} for the sake of Jonathan?"

Young's Updated LT And David says, "Is there yet any left to the house of Saul, and I do with him kindness because of Jonathan?" .

**The gist of this verse:** David asks if there is anyone still alive from the house of Saul toward whom he could show grace to. .

<b>2Samuel 9:1a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâvîyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** So David said,... There are periods of time when even a man like David has some spare time to think things over. We saw this earlier when David recognized that here he was, in this marvelous palace, and the Ark of God was in a tent. It seem incongruous to him. At this point, he is thinking of his friend Jonathan, who stuck by him in some very difficult times. Jonathan died on the battlefield with his father Saul at the end of 1Samuel. Most of the line of Saul had been killed. However, David wonders if there is anyone in Saul's line who is still alive.

**Application:** Our character might be best defined by what we do with our down time. There occasionally comes a time in our lives where we have a spare minute here or there; or a few extra hours. How do we fill this time? This chapter will speak to the character of David.

We do not know exactly to whom David is speaking. I picture him in his palace speaking to his trusted aides, or at a meal with family and friends.

## 2Samuel 9:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hă (ה) [pronounced <i>heh</i> ]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>when, that, for, because, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
These combine to certainly mean something, but I could not locate it in BDB.			
yêsh (יש) [pronounced <i>yaysh</i> ]	<i>being, substance, existence; used as a substitute for to be (without reference to number or tense); to be present, to be ready, to exist</i>	substantive; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #3426 BDB #441
ôwd (וד) [pronounced <i>ghod</i> ]	<i>still, yet, again, again and again, repeatedly, in addition to; more, farther, besides; as yet, yet, still, even yet</i>	adverb	Strong's #5750 BDB #728
âsher (אשר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
yâthar (יתר) [pronounced <i>yaw-THAHR</i> ]	<i>to be left over, to be left behind, to remain; to excel, to be superior [to the rest]; to gain a victory</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Niphal perfect	Strong's #3498 BDB #451
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bayith (בית) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i> ]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Shâ'ûwl (שאול) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:**... "[Is] there [lit., *for, that, because*] still existing [one] who remains to the house of Saul? The language here is rather confusing, but the overall meaning is clear. *Are there any survivors from the family of Saul?* is all that is being asked here.

If you will recall, Saul and several of his sons (including Jonathan), were killed in battle by the Philistines. This would have been nearly 20 years ago. It seems more reasonable to me that David thought about this situation



early on in his reign, but, as should be obvious, David has had to deal with a lot of things (wars from nations on every side, as well as bringing the Ark) to Jerusalem.

This does give us a clue as to David's value system. Doctrine first, his nation second, people third, himself last. #1 on his list is the Ark of God and building a Temple to God (2Sam. 6–7). Then he will consider the safety of his nation (2Sam. 8–10). Thirdly, David look at the line of Saul and whom he can bless from this line (2Sam. 9). In 2Sam. 11, David will start thinking about his own needs, so to speak.

### 2Samuel 9:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>ġeem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by, near</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced <i>KHEH-sed</i> ]	<i>grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
baʿăbûwr (בְּעִבְרָה) [pronounced <i>bah-ġu<sup>b</sup>-VOOR</i> ]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that; while</i>	preposition/conjunction; substantive always found combined with the bêyth preposition	Strong's #5668 BDB #721
Actually a combination of the bêyth preposition ( <i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before</i> ) and ʿăbûwr (עִבְרָה) [pronounced <i>ġaw<sup>v</sup>-BOOR</i> ] which means <i>a passing over, a transition; the cause of a crossing over; the price [of transferring ownership of something]; purpose, objective</i> . Properly, it is the passive participle of Strong's #5674 BDB #720. Strong's #5668 BDB #721.			
Y <sup>e</sup> hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y<sup>e</sup>-hoh-naw-THAWN</i> ]	alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220

There are two primary ways of spelling *Jonathan*: Y<sup>e</sup>hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *y<sup>e</sup>-hoh-naw-THAWN*], which is found 83 times, and Yōwnâthân (יוֹנָתָן) [pronounced *yoh-naw-THAWN*], which is found 42 times.

**Translation:** *Then I will manufacture grace for [lit., with, by, near] him because of Jonathan.* David and Jonathan had a wonderful and meaningful relationship. I have had that with one person of my gender, and to a lesser extent, with 3 or 4 others. We never are really told much about how and why Jonathan and David were close, but their closeness continued after death, and having had that close friend of mine pass on, I can testify as to the importance of such a close friendship. I should be quick to point out, there is nothing gay about having a close relationship with a member of the same gender. In fact, such a relationship is uncomplicated by physical attraction and defined on the basis of soul compatibility (which does not necessarily mean that we agree on everything). This is the sort of friendship which David and Jonathan had, and their friendship continued even beyond the grave.

To the best of my knowledge, only one person is every identified as David's friend, and that is Jonathan, Saul's son.

### The Doctrine of David and Jonathan

1. David did not have a close relationship with his brothers nor did he receive much respect from any from his family.
  - a. When Samuel came to David's father's house to find Israel's next king, no one thought about David as a possible king. 1Sam. 16
  - b. When Goliath was calling out any man from Israel's army to fight him, one-on-one, David's oldest brother disparaged David for asking questions about this situation. 1Sam. 17:26–30
2. After David had killed Goliath, King Saul called him in. Jonathan and David became quick and close friends at that point. 1Sam. 18:1–4
  - a. Based upon this and based upon my own personal experience, some of the closest friends that you will ever have are those developed in your youth.
  - b. This is one argument in favor of late teen or early 20's marriages. There is a closeness developed at a young age, and this closeness can be maintained and built upon, just as a same-gender relationship over several decades.
3. Saul's greatest problem was, he became jealous of David, and this colored his relationship with David forever more. Jonathan seemed unconcerned over David's popularity. 1Sam. 18:10–16
4. Although Saul ordered David's death, Jonathan informed David and protected him. Jonathan also stood up to his father, explaining to him why he was wrong about David. 1Sam. 19:1–7
5. When Saul began to go after David to kill him, Jonathan plotted with David to keep him safe. Realizing Jonathan's love for David, Saul becomes extremely angry with Jonathan. Jonathan recognizes that there is no hope, and helps David to escape from Saul's city. 1Sam. 20
  - a. Jonathan put his money where his mouth is. He did not simply say to David words of friendship, and then, behind his back, say something else.
  - b. Jonathan, by sticking up for David, put his life on the line before Saul. Saul could have killed Jonathan as well over this friendship. 1Sam. 20:32–34
6. David and Jonathan had one last meeting in 1Sam. 23. David had successfully eluded Saul until the people of Keilah required David's help. David doing battle on their behalf caught Saul's attention. However, Jonathan also went, found David and encouraged him, telling him that he would become the next king over Israel.
7. Although David had 2 chances to kill Saul, but did not, as it was not his place to kill the anointed of God; part of David's reasons may have been his friendship with Jonathan.
8. Jonathan was killed with his father Saul during a war with the Philistines. 1Sam. 31:2 2Sam. 1:4
9. The love between David and Jonathan was stronger than David's love for women at the time that David eulogized Jonathan (2Sam. 1:26). Although we are not given a running tabulation and comparison, it is likely that Bathsheba was David's right woman, and their love was greater than David and Jonathan's love for one another.
10. Jonathan and David made an alliance covenant before David became king, with the understanding that David would become king. By finding Mephibosheth and protecting him, David was fulfilling this covenant to his old friend. 1Sam. 23:15–18 2Sam. 21:7
11. The last thing that I will deal with is the allegation that David and Jonathan are gay (some individuals and groups make such a claim). For two men to have a close friendship is not an unusual thing. There is nothing in the language of the Bible in dealing with the relationship between David and Jonathan which suggests such a thing. People who make such allegations (1) do not know the Bible and (2) are unaware that normal people can have very strong bonds of love without this love being sexual or exploitive. Parents can feel this way toward their children; older children can return this love to their parents; siblings can have this love; two male friends can have this love; and two female friends can have this love—again, without sex and/or exploitation being factors in the relationship. People who make such allegations often have some sort of agenda (as many people do when approaching the Bible) or are, sadly, quite unaware of the bonds of a close friendship.
  - a. God has designed our greatest happiness to be found in one sexual relationship with a member of

## The Doctrine of David and Jonathan

- the opposite sex.
- b. This special relationship does not preclude close friendships or close relationships of a non-sexual nature.
  - c. Any person who makes such an allegation reveals more about himself than about David and Jonathan.

Having had a very close friendship like this since my youth, it is easy for me to personally relate to the friendship which David and Jonathan had.

It is not unusual for a husband and wife to have this sort of a soul relationship. For a husband and wife to consider themselves best friends is a wonderful thing and the ideal marriage.

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The last time that David and Jonathan were together, it went like this: [Then Saul's son Jonathan came to David in Horesh and encouraged him in his faith in God, saying, "Don't be afraid, for my father Saul will never lay a hand on you. You yourself will be king over Israel, and I'll be your second-in-command. Even my father Saul knows it is true." Then the two of them made a covenant in the LORD's presence. Afterwards, David remained in Horesh, while Jonathan went home \(1Sam. 23:16–18\).](#) And the time before that, this is how David and Jonathan ended their meeting: [And Jonathan said to David, "The LORD, the God of Israel, be witness! When I have sounded out my father, about this time tomorrow, or the third day, behold, if he is well disposed toward David, shall I not then send and disclose it to you? But should it please my father to do you harm, the LORD do so to Jonathan and more also if I do not disclose it to you and send you away, that you may go in safety. May the LORD be with you, as he has been with my father. If I am still alive, show me the steadfast love of the LORD, that I may not die; and do not cut off your steadfast love from my house forever, when the LORD cuts off every one of the enemies of David from the face of the earth." And Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "May the LORD take vengeance on David's enemies." And Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own soul...Jonathan then said to David, "Go in the assurance the two of us pledged in the name of the LORD when we said: The LORD will be a witness between you and me and between my offspring and your offspring forever." Then David left, and Jonathan went into the city \(1Sam. 20:12–17, 42\).](#) David has just been in several wars where a peace was established because David destroyed his enemies. However, he developed some key alliances as well, which alliances were probably sealed with covenants. And prior to that, God made a covenant with David. So David looks back upon his covenant with Jonathan, his nonaggression pack with Jonathan; a covenant which would extend between his progeny and Jonathan's progeny forever. Jonathan knew that David would become king of Israel. That was clear to him; and Jonathan had a family. In the ancient world, when one dynasty superceded another dynasty, the latter dynasty often wiped out the entire family of the first. There will always be people out there devoted to the former dynasty, and willing to latch on to anyone with the same name, regardless of their character, achievements or lack of charisma (the Kennedy family in the United States, for instance). Jonathan knew this and sought, reasonably, to protect his own family; and he knew that he could rely upon the friendship and honor of his friend David. Therefore, he proposed to David to a covenant, which covenant was still in David's mind as he thought about his old friend. Whereas most kings would have sought out and killed any relatives of their political rivals, David does not do this. God showed grace to David and David is showing grace toward Jonathan, his friend whom he loved. [And you, who were once alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled \[you to Him\] \(Col. 1:21\). But God commends His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life \(Rom. 5:8–10\).](#)

This tells us a great deal about David's character. Jonathan was no longer alive; no one else heard this covenant, except for God. David is faithful in keeping his covenant with Jonathan, just as God is faithful in keeping His covenant with us ([Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved](#)). We do not deserve God's faithfulness; we do not deserve God's promises; but He made these promises to us, and we may claim them. If David is faithful

to his promises to Jonathan, how much more is God faithful in His promises to us? The reason that we find this verse in the Bible is because it illustrates God's faithfulness to His Word.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

### David's First Conversation with Ziba, Saul's Slave

And to a house of Saul a servant and his name, Ziba. And so they call to him unto David. And so says the king unto him, "[Are] you Ziba?" And so he says, "Your servant."

2Samuel  
9:2

And [there was] to the house of Saul a servant and his name [was] Ziba. Therefore, they summoned him to David. And the king said to him, "[Are] you Ziba?" And he said, "[I am] your servant."

And there was to the house of Saul a servant and his name was Ziba. Therefore, they summoned him to David. And the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Now there was of the house of Saul, a servant named Siba: and <u>when the king had called him to him, he</u> said to him: Are You Siba? And he answered: <u>I am Siba</u> your servant.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And to a house of Saul a servant and his name, Ziba. And so they call to him unto David. And so says the king unto him, "[Are] you Ziba?" And so he says, "Your servant."
Peshitta (Syriac)	Now there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And they called him to David, and the king said to him, Are you Ziba? And he said, I am your servant.
Septuagint (Greek)	And there was a servant of the house of Saul, and his name was Ziba. And they brought him to David. And the king said to him, Are you Ziba? And he said, I am your servant.

Significant differences: Although the English translations change a noun into a verb in the Latin, the first sentence means the same thing in all languages. The second phrase in the English translation from the Latin has David calling for Ziba, as opposed to *they* (obviously, members of his staff), as is found in the other ancient texts.

*The king* then speaks in the ancient texts; in the Douay-Rheims, it is simply *he*. Ziba's answer has the additional words *I am Ziba* in the Douay-Rheims. All of this is quite unusual as, for the most part, the Latin and the original Hebrew are most often in perfect agreement. However, bear in mind, I am working with the Douay-Rheims text, which is an early English translation from the Latin. In any case, the differences are not significant enough to significantly change the meaning of the text.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV David called in Ziba, one of the servants of Saul's family. David said, "So you are Ziba." "Yes, Your Majesty, I am."

Easy English (Pocock)	Now Saul's family had a servant called Ziba. David's officials called Ziba to go to David. Then King David asked him, 'Are you Ziba?' Ziba replied, 'Yes, I am your servant.'
Easy-to-Read Version	There was a servant named Ziba from Saul's family. David's servants called Ziba to David. King David said to Ziba, "Are you Ziba?"
Good News Bible (TEV)	There was a servant of Saul's family named Ziba, and he was told to go to David. "Are you Ziba?" the king asked. "At your service, sir," he answered.
New Living Translation	He summoned a man named Ziba, who had been one of Saul's servants. "Are you Ziba?" the king asked. "Yes sir, I am," Ziba replied.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

God's Word™	Now, Saul's family had a servant whose name was Ziba. He was summoned to come to David. "Are you Ziba?" the king asked him. "Yes, I am," he answered.
NIRV	Ziba was a servant in Saul's family. David sent for him to come and see him. The king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" "I'm ready to serve you," he replied.
New Jerusalem Bible	Now Saul's family had a servant whose name was Ziba. When he had been summoned to David, the king said, 'Are you Ziba?' 'At your service,' he replied.
Revised English Bible	A servant of Saul's family named Ziba was summoned to David, who asked, 'Are you Ziba?' He answered, 'Your servant, sir.'

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	Now there was of Saul's people a servant named Ziba, and they sent him to David; and the king said to him, Are you Ziba? And he said, I am.
Context Group Version	And there was of the house of Saul a slave whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David; and the king said to him, Are you Ziba? And he said, Your slave is he.
HCSB	There was a servant of Saul's family named Ziba. They summoned him to David, and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" "I am your servant," he replied.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

English Standard Version	Now there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba, and they called him to David. And the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "I am your servant."
Thieme	Now there was a steward in the castle of Saul whose name was Ziba. {Note: Ziba was a master of the art of flattery. He is the villain of the chapter. He was crafty and the master of 'CYA' (cover your anterior-portion).} And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, "Are you Ziba?" And he said, "Your servant." {NOT the polite version - see verse 6b 'Behold your servant' is the polite address before the king}.
A Voice in the Wilderness	And there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba. So when they summoned him to David, the king said to him, Are you Ziba? And he said, At your service!
Young's Updated LT	And the house of Saul has a servant, and his name is Ziba, and they call for him unto David; and the king says unto him, "Are You Ziba?" and he says, "Your servant."

**The gist of this verse:** Those in David's staff are aware of a previous servant to the house of Saul who is near enough to bring to the palace. When he shows up, David confirms his name and he responds, "[I am] your servant."

## 2Samuel 9:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i> ]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>B</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** [And \[there was\] to the house of Saul a servant...](#) Inquiries were made, and apparently, there was a man who was a servant to Saul's family. I become interested in some of the details. Were there records in the palace? Were inquiries made? David would have known the most influential people in his land, but they would have been very different from those who served under Saul. This might be like comparing the Clinton and Bush administrations; there simply would not have been many people in common—probably no one, since Abner (Saul's general) had been murdered.

Unlike some, who would have searched out their enemies to eliminate them, David was far too busy with establishing his kingdom and with spiritual matters. Given the political intrigue of [2Sam. 3–4](#), it is fair to say that David himself did not give any thought to destroying his political enemies (real or imagined), although those under him were so disposed.

This gives us yet another illustration of God's love—we are God's enemies. We are born at enmity with Him. And yet God does not destroy us. God will vindicate us, if we believe in Jesus Christ. He will bring us into Himself as sons.

It was determined that there was still a servant of Saul's family who was still alive, and he would be the key to whether anyone else was still alive in Saul's line. Although no one in Saul's family needed to fear David, there are those who would have made themselves scarce, simply because of the murder of Abner. Any of those close to Saul probably knew few details of Abner's death; but they probably knew that he had been murdered, so one would expect that others from Saul's administration made themselves scarce.

## 2Samuel 9:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

## 2Samuel 9:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Tsíybâ' (הַבֵּיצ) [pronounced <i>tsee-BAW</i> ]	<i>statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850

**Translation:** ...and his name [was] Ziba. The name of Saul's servant was Ziba, which probably means *post, statue*, and therefore indicates *strength*.

## 2Samuel 9:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרַק) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e/</i> ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דִּיּוֹד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** Therefore, they summoned him to David. David's men located Ziba and asked him to come speak with David. We do not know where Ziba was living. Saul had Israel's capitol in Gibeah, whereas David was about 15 miles south in Jerusalem, the new capitol of Israel. However, there were two big events which occurred: first, the Philistines overran central Israel, having defeated Saul in battle; and second, David was made king over all Israel. So, anyone related to Saul could be living anywhere, given such turmoil over the past couple decades.

## 2Samuel 9:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

## 2Samuel 9:2d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ:) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'el (אֶל) [pronounced e]	unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
hă (הַ) [pronounced heh]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced aht-TAW]	you (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular	Strong's #859 BDB #61
Tsîybâ' (צִיבָא') [pronounced tsee-BAW]	statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850

**Translation:** And the king said to him, “[Are] you Ziba?” I assume that what David is doing here is simply a formality. There is nothing in this context to indicate that David was confused as to Ziba’s identity.

## 2Samuel 9:2e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced GE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	slave, servant	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** And he said, “[I am] your servant.” R. B. Thieme Jr. has an interesting take on this, suggesting that Ziba is a villain of sorts, saying that his response to David is not as polite and deferential as it ought to have been. He says that the correct response is, *behold, I [am] your servant*. Ziba is speaking to the King of Israel, and he inserts no formalities. He essentially says the least he can say here. He answers David in one word plus the suffix: *your servant* is all that he says. Certainly you have purchased this or that, or asked help from a younger person, and you said, “Thank you” and he said, “No problem” as if it was no problem. Personally, I don’t get riled at this young person, because it is obvious that no one taught him anything about the realm of polite society. However, this is the servant to a royal family. He knew the royal protocol. But all he says is, *your servant*. If David would have said, “Thanks for coming here” he would have answered “No problem.”

Here is a more substantial problem concerning Ziba: he was a servant to the house of Saul, and he was aware of one of Saul’s descendants as being still alive and in obvious need of help and support. However, we are going to find out that Saul’s grandson was not being cared for by Ziba or by Ziba’s extensive family, but by someone else



entirely. Ziba, as a servant of Saul, had been greatly blessed, as we will see with his number of children. The idea that Ziba would know about Mephibosheth, but saw no reason to look out for him, is shameful.

There is disagreement about Ziba's current status and how he achieved it. Josephus says<sup>3</sup> that Saul freed him. The Law allows for slaves to be inherited (Lev. 25:44–46). In either case, given that Ziba knows about Saul's son, he should have also taken care of this boy (now a young man).

**And so says the king, “[Is there] none still a man to a house of Saul that I will make with him grace of Elohim?”**

2Samuel  
9:3

**The king then said, “[Is there] no man yet to the house of Saul for whom [lit., *with him*] I will manufactory the grace of Elohim?”**

**And so says Ziba unto the king, “[There is] still a son to Jonathan; stricken of feet.”**

**And Ziba said to the king, “[There is] yet a son of Jonathan's; crippled of feet.”**

**The king then asked, “Is there no man of the house of Saul to whom I may show the grace of God to?”**

**And Ziba answered the king, saying, “There is the remaining son of Jonathan, who is lame.”**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And the king said: Is there any one left of the house of Saul, that I may shew the mercy of God unto Him? And Siba said to the king: There is a son of Jonathan left, who is lame of his feet.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so says the king, “[Is there] none still a man to a house of Saul that I will make with him grace of Elohim?”

Peshitta (Syriac)

And so says Ziba unto the king, “[There is] still a son to Jonathan; stricken of feet.”  
And the king said to him, Is there any one still left of the house of Saul, that I may show kindness to him for the sake of God? And Ziba said to the king, There is yet a son left to Jonathan, who is lame in his feet.

Septuagint (Greek)

And the king said, Is there yet a man left of the house of Saul, that I may act towards him with the mercy of God? And Ziba said to the king, There is yet a son of Jonathan, lame *in* his feet.

Significant differences:

David begins his question with a negative. The other ancient texts apparently do not.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV

David asked, "Are any of Saul's family still alive? If there are, I want to be kind to them." Ziba answered, "One of Jonathan's sons is still alive, but he can't walk."

Easy English (Pocock)

David said, 'Is there anyone still alive in Saul's family? I want to show him God's kindness.'

Ziba replied, 'Yes, one of Jonathan's sons is still alive. He cannot walk because of an injury to his feet.'

Easy-to-Read Version

The king said, "Is there any person left in Saul's family? I want to show God's kindness to this person."

<sup>3</sup> Josephus, Antiquities I. 7. c. 5. sect. 5.

Good News Bible (TEV)	The king asked him, "Is there anyone left of Saul's family to whom I can show loyalty and kindness, as I promised God I would?" Ziba answered, "There is still one of Jonathan's sons. He is crippled."
<i>The Message</i>	The king asked, "Is there anyone left from the family of Saul to whom I can show some godly kindness?" Ziba told the king, "Yes, there is Jonathan's son, lame in both feet."
New Life Bible	The king said, "Is there not still someone of the family of Saul to whom I may show the kindness of God?" And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who cannot walk because of his feet."
New Living Translation	The king then asked him, "Is anyone still alive from Saul's family? If so, I want to show God's kindness to them." Ziba replied, "Yes, one of Jonathan's sons is still alive. He is crippled in both feet."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king asked, 'Is there anyone left from the house of Saul upon whom I should be showing the mercy of God?' And Ziba said: 'There is still one of JoNathan's sons. one whose feet have been damaged.'
<i>God's Word™</i>	David asked, "Is there someone left in Saul's family to whom I can show God's kindness?" "Jonathan has a son who is disabled," Ziba answered.
New American Bible	Then the king inquired, "Is there any survivor of Saul's house to whom I may show God's kindness?" Ziba answered the king, "There is still Jonathan's son, whose feet are crippled."
NIRV	The king asked, "Isn't anyone left from the royal house of Saul? God has been very kind to me. I would like to be kind to someone in the same way." Ziba answered the king, "A son of Jonathan is still living. Both of his feet were hurt."
Today's NIV	The king asked, "Is there no one still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness?" Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is lame in both feet."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And the king said, Is there anyone of Saul's family still living, to whom I may be a friend in God's name? And Ziba said, There is a son of Jonathan, whose feet are damaged.
Context Group Version	And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may show the family allegiance { Hebrew: hesed } of God to him? And Ziba said to the king, Jonathan has yet a son, who is lame of his fee.
HCSB	So the king asked, "Is there anyone left of Saul's family I can show the kindness of God to?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still Jonathan's son who is lame in both feet."
JPS (Tanakh)	The king continued, "Is there anyone at all left of the House o Saul with whom I can keep faith as pledged before God?" Ziba answered the king, "Yes, there is still a son of Jonathan whose feet are crippled."
NET Bible®	The king asked, "Is there not someone left from Saul's family,4 that I may extend God's kindness to him?" Ziba said to the king, "One of Jonathan's sons is left; both of his feet are crippled."
New International Version	The king asked, "Is there no one still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness?" Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in both feet."

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

**Ancient Roots Translinear** The king said, "Is no man still in the vanquished house of Saul, that I can do the mercy of God for him?" Ziba said to the king, "Jonathan still *has* a son, smitten in his feet."

*The Amplified Bible* The king said, Is there not still someone of the house of Saul to whom I may show the [unfailing, unsought, unlimited] mercy and kindness of God? Ziba replied, Jonathan has yet a son who is lame in his feet.

**Concordant Literal Version** And the king said, `Is there not yet a man to the house of Saul, and I do with him the kindness of Elohim?' And Ziba said unto the king, `Jonathan has yet a son--lame.

**English Standard Version** And the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, that I may show the kindness of God to him?" Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is crippled in his feet.

**Thieme** And the king said, "Is there anyone left in the dynasty/house of Saul, that I may manufacture {`asah - out of maximum doctrine in his soul} grace {cheched} of 'Elohiym/Godhead toward him?"  
And Ziba said unto the king, "Jonathan has yet a son, who is lame in both feet." {Mephibosheth was introduced in II Samuel 4:4}.

**Young's Updated LT** And the king says, "Is there not yet a man to the house of Saul, and I do with him the kindness of God?" And Ziba says unto the king, "Jonathan has yet a son—lame."

**The gist of this verse:** David asks Ziba if there is anyone still alive from the house of Saul, and Ziba tells him about Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, who is crippled.

**2Samuel 9:3a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אמר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
melek <sup>e</sup> (מלך) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
hă (ה) [pronounced heh]	interrogative particle which acts almost like a piece of punctuation, like the upside-down question mark which begins a Spanish sentence. The verb <i>to be</i> may be implied.		Strong's #none BDB #209
'epheç (אפס) [pronounced EH-fes]	no farther, none besides; not, without; nothing; only	adverb	Strong's #657 BDB #67
'ôwd (ועוד) [pronounced gôhd]	still, yet, again, again and again, repeatedly, in addition to; more, farther, besides; as yet, yet, still, even yet	adverb	Strong's #5750 BDB #728
'yish (איש) [pronounced eesh]	a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35

## 2Samuel 9:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוּל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** The king then said, “[Is there] no man yet to the house of Saul... David is a gracious man. Ziba’s answer was curt and lacked the graciousness generally afforded a king. However, David does not make a big thing out of it.

Let me give you a recent example. A general (I am unsure of his rank) was providing information for a Senator during a hearing, and he said, “Yes, Mam” at one point to the Senator. The Senator stopped him right then and there, told him she wanted to be addressed as Senator because of how hard she had worked to get her office. The general immediately addressed her respectfully as *Senator* (as if he had not worked for or sacrificed his own office).<sup>4</sup> David is like that general and the Senator is the polar opposite of David. David knows that he is not being addressed properly (there was nothing improper in the way the Senator was addressed), but David let it go. He was dealing with an adult slave to royalty. He should have known the protocol (and probably did), but he was either being impolite or he had just flat-out forgotten his manners. In any case, this was not a problem for David. David is interested in showing grace to any relative of Saul’s.

The situation here is quite sad, in a way. Saul, once king over Israel, had 4 sons; and they could have populated a city or even a county. However, Saul turned against God and His Word (his mental illness never being allowed as an excuse), and his family is now reduced to just a few men. There was a period of time when Bob Thieme Jr. used to say, “You either adjust to the justice of God or the justice of God will adjust to you.” That is exactly what happened here. Saul, who could have had a dynasty which lasted forever, turned against God, rejecting the authority which God had vested in Samuel, and so, the justice of God adjusted to him, wiping out his family and, therefore, his dynasty.

David’s actions in this chapter will be the polar opposite of Saul’s. David will show grace to Saul’s family because of Jonathan. Rather than spend his downtime in pleasures of the flesh, David seeks out anyone from the family of Saul in order to show grace to them.

## 2Samuel 9:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ‘gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

<sup>4</sup> In this exchange, the general showed incredible graciousness. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0CprVYsG0k> or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVtQ7M0V15M>

## 2Samuel 9:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by near; like; from; against; toward; as long as; beside, except; in spite of</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced <i>KHEH-sed</i> ]	<i>grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
’Ēlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i> ]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #430 BDB #43

**Translation:** *...for whom* [lit., *with him*] *I will manufacture the grace of Elohim?* David would like to show grace to any relative of Saul's which remained. It was not David's desire to kill Saul or any of his men or any of his offspring, if that could be helped. It is important to note that in many ancient cultures, it was common for a king to kill all of the remaining rivals; particularly those of another family (even in the Jewish culture; see Judges 8:5 2Chron. 22:10–11). The political intrigue of **2Sam. 3–4** gives us a better idea of how men function when there is a change of dynasty. David, on the other hand, was not concerned with his potential political rivals.

David's attitude toward the house of Saul was summed up later by Peter in 1Peter 3:9: **Never give back evil for evil, or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, giving blessing, knowing that you are called to this so that you might inherit blessing.** Despite the despicable way Saul treated David (and he is not given a pass in the Bible due to his mental illness), David treats Saul and those in Saul's line in grace.

## 2Samuel 9:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
’âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Tsîybâ’ (הַבֵּיטָה) [pronounced <i>tsee-BAW</i> ]	<i>statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850
’el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>el</i> ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** *And Ziba said to the king,...* The Hebrew here is very respectful; however, this is a writer of this book injecting this respectfulness. In any case, Ziba apparently believes the king, and does not think that this is some sort of a ruse in order to kill any political enemy who remains (this is an assumption which I am making).

## 2Samuel 9:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿôwd (עוּד) [pronounced <i>gohd</i> ]	<i>still, yet, again, again and again, repeatedly, in addition to; more, farther, besides; as yet, yet, still, even yet</i>	adverb	Strong's #5750 BDB #728
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Y <sup>e</sup> hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y<sup>e</sup>-hoh-naw-THAWN</i> ]	alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220

**Translation:...** “[There is] **yet a son of Jonathan’s**;... Again, Ziba answers David in shorthand, giving him just a smattering of basic information. Literally, he says, “Yet a son to Jonathan.” Given this, it is possible the Ziba’s curtness was simply his manner of speaking.

## 2Samuel 9:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâkeh (נָכֵה) [pronounced <i>naw-KEH</i> ]	<i>stricken; physically stricken: crippled, lame, maimed; figuratively stricken: contrite, dejected</i>	masculine singular adjective; construct form	Strong's #5223 BDB #656
regel (רֶגֶל) [pronounced <i>REH-gel</i> ]	<i>foot, feet</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #7272 BDB #919

**Translation: ...crippled of feet.** Not only is there a relative of Saul’s remaining, but he is helpless.

Why is God the Holy Spirit telling us about this? Mephibosheth, Saul’s grandson (Jonathan’s son) is helpless. There is nothing which he can do for himself. He is living his life far from the royalty which he once knew as a young child. God takes the helpless and He elevates them. God takes the crippled and He heals them (actually and metaphorically speaking). David, who represents Jesus Christ in His graciousness, will reach out to Mephibosheth in grace and he will show grace to Mephibosheth. This describes how God has reached out to us; how He comes to us in grace and gives us more grace. Mephibosheth is unable to reach up to David, but David can reach down to him. Similarly, we are unable to reach up to God. We could dedicate the rest of our lives to doing good deeds, and we could no more stand before God than Mephibosheth could stand before David. However, God is able to reach down to us. All of this, although a real historical incident, is a picture of God’s grace.

And so says to him the king, “Where [is] he?”

The king then says to him, “Where [is] he?”

And so says Ziba unto the king, “Behold, he [is at] a house of Machir ben Ammiel in Lo-debar.”

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And Ziba says to the king, “Listen, he [is at] the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.”

The king then asked him, “Where is he?”

Ziba answered the king, “Look, he is at the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	Where is he? said he. And Siba said to the king: Behold he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel in Lodabar.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says to him the king, “Where [is] he?” And so says Ziba unto the king, “Behold, he [is at] a house of Machir ben Ammiel in Lodebar.”
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the king said to him, Where is he? And Ziba said to the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Gammir, in Lo-debar.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king said, Where is he? And Ziba said to the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo Debar.

Significant differences: The Douay-Rheims version leaves out *the king* in the first phrase.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	"Where is he?" David asked. Ziba replied, "He lives in Lo-Debar with Machir the son of Ammiel."
Easy English (Pocock)	`Where is he?' the king asked. Ziba answered, `He is in the town called Lo Debar. He lives at the house of Makir, the son of Ammiel.'
Easy-to-Read Version Good News Bible (TEV)	The king said to Ziba, "Where is this son?" "Where is he?" the king asked. "At the home of Machir son of Ammiel in Lodebar," Ziba answered.
<i>The Message</i> New Century Version	"Where is he?" "He's living at the home of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar." The king asked Ziba, "Where is this son?" Ziba answered, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."
New Life Bible	So the king said to him, "Where is he?" Ziba answered the king, "See, he is in the family of Machir the son of Ammiel in Lo-debar."

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And the king asked, `Where is he?' And Ziba replied, `Look! In the house of Machir, the son of AmiEl of Lodabar.'
NIRV	"Where is he?" the king asked. Ziba answered, "He's in the town of Lo Debar. He's staying at the house of Makir, the son of Ammiel."

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	So the sovereign said to him, “Where is he?” And Tsib?a said to the sovereign, “See, he is in the house of Maḳir son of Ammi’ēl, in Lo <u>De</u> bar.”
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**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

LTHB	And the king said to him, Where <i>is</i> he? And Ziba said to the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.
A Voice in the Wilderness	And the king said to him, Where is he? And Ziba said to the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar.
Young's Updated LT	And the king says to him, "Where is he?" and Ziba says unto the king, "Lo, he is in the house of Machir, son of Ammiel, in Lo-Debar.

**The gist of this verse:** David asks for the location of Mephibosheth, and Ziba tells David that Mephibosheth is living in the house of Machir ben Ammiel.

**2Samuel 9:4a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
melek° (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'êyphôh (אֵיפֹה) [pronounced <i>â-FOH</i> ]	<i>where; what manner, what kind</i>	interrogative singular adverb	Strong's #375 BDB #33
hûw' (הוּ) [pronounced <i>hoo</i> ]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

**Translation:** The king then says to him, "Where [is] he?" David asks Ziba the exact whereabouts of Mephibosheth.

**2Samuel 9:4b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Tsîybâ' (צִיבָא) [pronounced <i>tsee-BAW</i> ]	<i>statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850



## 2Samuel 9:4b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced eʃ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced hin-NAY]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
hûwʾ (אוּו) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Mâkîyr (מַכִּיר) [pronounced maw-KEER]	<i>sold; salesman; transliterated Machir; used poetically of Manasseh</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4353 BDB #569
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʿAmmîyʿel (אֲמִיֵּיֶל) [pronounced gahm-mee-ALE]	<i>one of the family of God; my kinsman is God; transliterated Ammiel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5988 BDB #770
b <sup>e</sup> (בְּ) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Lôw D <sup>e</sup> bar (וּלְדֶבַר) [pronounced low-dehb-AWR]	<i>without a pasture; not a pasture; transliterated Lo-debar</i>	proper singular noun	Strong's #3810 BDB #520

**Translation:** *And Ziba says to the king, "Listen, he [is at] the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar."* Notice that Ziba knows exactly where Mephibosheth lives. He feels no loyalty towards Mephibosheth. We have no indication that Ziba, having served Saul's family, heard about Mephibosheth and took him in. In fact, Ziba probably paid off Ammiel to look after Mephibosheth, or simply ignored the existence of Mephibosheth from the very beginning. Recall that, when the news came that Saul and Jonathan had been killed in battle, Mephibosheth's nurse carried him off to safety. By the time Philistia loosened its grip on Israel, Ziba had probably made claim on Saul's land and holdings.

What you will find fascinating is how these people all become a part of David's life, their lives intersecting his at various points—after this chapter, we will see Ziba, Mephibosheth and Machir ben Ammiel again. Here, we see them interacting with David as king of Israel; later we will see them interacting with David, the deposed king of Israel.

It is possible that Ammiel will also be a peripheral part of David's life, as he is the father of Bathsheba (1Chron. 3:5 whose name is reversed in 2Sam. 11:3). However, *Ammiel* is a moderately common name in Israel (Num. 13:12 1Chron. 26:5). If they are the same person, it is a fascinating intersection.

Where is Lo-debar?	
Background Information on Lo-debar	
Theologian	Commentary
<b>Barnes</b>	Lo-debar is evidently on the east of Jordan River, and in the neighborhood of Ish-bosheth's capital, Mahanaim (2Sam. 17:27), but not identified by any modern traveler. Thought by some, not improbably, to be the same as Debir from Joshua 13:26. <sup>5</sup>
<b>Easton</b>	Lo-debar, which means, <i>no pasture</i> (2Sam. 17:27), is a town in Gilead not far from Mahanaim, north of the Jabbok (2Sam. 9:4-5). It is probably identical with Debir (Joshua 13:26). <sup>6</sup>
<b>Fausset</b>	Lodebar is east of Jordan (2Sam. 17:27). Here at the house of Machir, son of Ammiel, Mephibosheth found a home after Saul's death (2Sam. 9:4-5) Perhaps the Debir of Joshua 13:26, where Lidebir is the Hebrew (the "l" is part of the word, not as KJV "of"). Machir remembered David's kindness to Mephibosheth in the distress of the latter, therefore sent provisions to David in his distress at Mahanaim (west of Lodebar). The name means the driving out of flocks (Gesenius), else without pasture. <sup>7</sup>
<b>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</b>	Lo-Debar [pronounced <i>loh-DAY-bahr</i> ] (ול רבד) is a place in Gilead where Machir, son of Ammiel, dwelt; the man who sheltered Mephibosheth, son of Saul, after that monarch's death (2Sam. 9:4), until he was sent for by David. This same Machir met David with supplies when he fled to Gilead from Absalom (2Sam. 17:27 f). Possibly it is the same place as Lidebir in Joshua 13:26. No certain identification is possible; but Schumacher ( <i>Northern 'Ajlūn</i> , p. 101) found a site with the name lbdar about 6½ miles East of Umm Keis, North of the great aqueduct, which may possibly represent the ancient city. Lidebir, at least, seems to be placed on the northern boundary of Gilead. The modern village stands on the southern shoulder of Wādy Samar. There is a good spring to the East, a little lower down, while ancient remains are found in the neighborhood. <sup>8</sup>
<b>Keil and Delitzsch</b>	Lodebar (רבדול, written רבדאל in 2Sam. 17:27, but erroneously divided by the Masoretes into two words in both passages) was a town on the east of Mahanaim, towards Rabbath Amman, probably the same place as Lidbir (Joshua 13:26); but it is not further known.

<sup>5</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 9:4 (slightly edited).

<sup>6</sup> M.G. Easton M.A., D.D., *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*; 1897; from e-Sword, topic: Lo-debar (slightly edited).

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Lodebar (slightly edited).

<sup>8</sup> *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Lo-debar (slightly edited).

## Background Information on Lo-debar

Theologian	Commentary
<b>Kukis</b>	What is probably going on here is a play on words, which resulted in the change of the name of this city. First of all, the passages alluded to place the cities of Debir on Lodebar in the same geographical area. In <b>Joshua 13:26</b> , we have a lamed preposition affixed to Debir which is generally not translated or alluded to (if your Bible calls this city <i>Lidebir</i> in that passage, then it is taking into account the lamed preposition). That means, <i>with reference to pastureland</i> . Over the years, either to overgrazing or a lack of rain, the pastureland in that area became considerably smaller, so that residents there began to call it Lodebar, a play on words of the original name; so that is now means <i>without pastureland</i> . This is simply a theory, but a damn good one.
<b>Smith</b>	Lodebar [pronounced <i>loh-DE-bar</i> ], meaning <i>without pasture</i> . A place named, with Mahanaim, Rogelim and other Trans-Jordanian towns (2Sam. 17:27), and therefore, no doubt on the east side of the Jordan. It was the native place of Machir-ben-Ammiel (2Sam. 9:4-5). <sup>9</sup>

You may recall that Saul was very popular east of the Jordan because of his defeating the evil Ammonites in **1Sam. 11**.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

It would not be out of the question for people in this area to take in Mephibosheth, fearing for his life under a new dynasty, and several expositors suggest this. However, the Bible tells us a different story: Mephibosheth was moved east of the Jordan in fear of the impending Philistine takeover of central Israel. Compare 1Sam. 31 and 2Sam. 4:4 (**And Jonathan, Saul's son, had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five years old when the news of Saul and Jonathan came out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up and fled. And as she made haste to flee, he fell and became lame. And his name was Mephibosheth.**).

Although we do not have a specific time period given, David would have taken over southern Israel (Judah) within a few years of Saul being defeated on the battlefield in central Israel (2Sam. 2:1 gives us no timetable).

At this point, you ought to have some first impressions of these different men. Machir ben Ammiel seems like a stand-up guy, a man who stepped in to take care of Mephibosheth. We will see him again in **2Sam. 17**, where his character will be solidified as a stand-up guy (i.e., a man with character and compassion). You ought to have a first impression of Ziba who, despite his personal success and prosperity, has done nothing for his master's grandson. How do you think he will behave in the future? We will study that in **2Sam. 16 19**.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

## David's Conversation with Mephibosheth, Saul's Grandson

**And so sends the king David and so he takes him from a house of Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar.**

2Samuel  
9:5

**Then David, the King, sent [his servants] and brought him [Mephibosheth] from the house of Machir son of Ammiel from Lodebar.**

<sup>9</sup> Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Lodebar (slightly edited).

**Then King David sent his servants to fetch Mephibosheth from the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	Then King David sent, and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel of Lodaba.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so sends the king David and so he takes him from a house of Machir ben Ammiel from Lo-debar.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then King David sent and took him from the house of Machir, the son of Gammir, from Lo-debar.
Septuagint (Greek)	And King David went, and took him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo Debar.
Significant differences:	None.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	David sent some servants to bring Jonathan's son from Lo-Debar.
Easy English (Pocock)	So David sent men to fetch him from Makir's house.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then King David sent some of his officers to Lo Debar to bring Jonathan's son from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So King David sent for him.
<i>The Message</i>	King David didn't lose a minute. He sent and got him from the home of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.
New Century Version	Then King David had servants bring Jonathan's son from the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.
New Life Bible	Then King David sent men to bring him from the family of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.
New Living Translation	So David sent for him and brought him from Makir's home.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	So King David sent men to get him from the home of Ammiel's son Machir in Lo Debar.
NIRV	So King David had Mephibosheth brought from Makir's house in Lo Debar.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	Then King David sent, and had him taken from Lo-debar, from the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel.
HCSB	So King David had him brought from the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.
JPS (Tanakh)	King David had him brought from the house of Machir son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar;...

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

English Standard Version	Then King David sent and brought him from the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar.
WEB	Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar.

Young's Updated LT

And king David sends, and takes him out of the house of Machir son of Ammiel, of Lo-Debar.

**The gist of this verse:**

David sends for Mephibosheth, and brings him from the house where he is staying.

**2Samuel 9:5a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâlach (שָׁלַח) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAKH</i> ]	<i>to send, to send for [forth, away], to dismiss, to deploy, to put forth, to stretch out, to reach out</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7971 BDB #1018
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** Then David, the King, sent [his servants]... Whereas Ziba had done nothing for Mephibosheth, David immediately dispatches some of his servants to where he is staying.

David is king over all Israel, and, as such, could have spent his spare time considering different ways to tax his people to use the money to have fun; or to build great edifices by which he might be glorified over the years. The King David Emporium and the King David Stadium. This was not the kind of man that David was. Here, he deals with a small matter, doing something that most kings would never do and never even think about doing (unless it was to locate Mephibosheth to kill him). This is no doubt a picture of Jesus Christ searching us out to give grace to us.

**Application:** The key to life is your thinking; what goes on in your mind. David has a mind filled with doctrine, and his every action reveals that.

**Application:** This situation (David seeking out Mephibosheth to bless him) ought to tell us two things: God is there just waiting to pour grace out upon us and we ought to be faithful in the little things. I don't care how minor it is, if it is the right thing to do, then do it (but make certain that you are filled with the Holy Spirit before you do it). You will find out that this will make all the difference in your job, your education, your vocation, your friendships and your marriage.

**2Samuel 9:5b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 2Samuel 9:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take from, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize, to take possession of; to send after, to fetch, to bring; to receive</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Mâkiyr (מַכִּיר) [pronounced maw-KEER]	<i>sold; salesman; transliterated Machir; used poetically of Manasseh</i>	masculine singular, proper noun	Strong's #4353 BDB #569
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
‘Ammîy’êl (אֲמִיֵּיֵל) [pronounced ‘ahm-mee-ALE]	<i>one of the family of God; my kinsman is God; transliterated Ammiel</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5988 BDB #770
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
Lôw D <sup>e</sup> bar (וּלְרֵבֶד) [pronounced low-dehb-AWR]	<i>without a pasture; not a pasture; transliterated Lo-debar</i>	proper singular noun	Strong's #3810 BDB #520

In Owen, the lâmed is doubled here, which makes little sense. I will have to check with another source on this. I think that this is a typo, as we do not find the same doubling in the previous verse.

**Translation:** ...and brought him [Mephibosheth] from the house of Machir son of Ammiel from Lodebar. By order of the king, David's servants brought Mephibosheth from where he is staying, at the home of Machir ben Ammiel. They brought him from Lodebar, east of the Jordan River, to Jerusalem, west and then south of the Jordan River.

Wesley<sup>10</sup> makes an interesting and reasonable conjecture: Machir did not take in Mephibosheth to indicate his opposition or resistance to the rule of David (this will become clear in subsequent chapters). Machir took Mephibosheth in as a matter of grace.

<sup>10</sup> John Wesley; *Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible*; courtesy of e-sword, 2Sam. 9:5.

And so comes Mephibosheth ben Jonathan ben Saul unto David. And so he falls upon his faces and so he bows down.

So Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David. He fell upon his face and he bowed down.

2Samuel  
9:6

And so says David, "Mephibosheth."

David said, "Mephibosheth."

And so he says, "Behold, your servant."

And he said, "Behold, [I am] your servant."

So Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David and he fell upon his face before David and he did obeisance before David.

David said, "Mephibosheth."

And Mephibosheth answered, "Here, I am your servant."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

And when Miphiboseh the son of Jonathan the son of Saul was come to David, he fell on his face and worshipped. And David said: Miphiboseh? And he answered: Behold your servant.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so comes Mephibosheth ben Jonathan ben Saul unto David. And so he falls upon his faces and so he bows down. And so says David, "Mephibosheth." And so he says, "Behold, your servant."

Septuagint (Greek)

And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan the son of Saul came to the King David, and he fell upon his face and bowed down before him. And David said to him, Mephibosheth; and he said, Behold your servant.

Significant differences:

The plural of *face* in the Hebrew and the singular of the corresponding word in the Latin and Greek is simply the way the language is used.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Easy English (Pocock)

Mephibosheth was the son of Jonathan, who was the son of Saul. When Mephibosheth came to David, he lay down with his face on the ground. Mephibosheth did this to show honour to David. David said, 'Mephibosheth!' Mephibosheth said, 'I am your servant.'

Easy-to-Read Version

Jonathan's son Mephibosheth came to David, and bowed with his face low to the floor.

Good News Bible (TEV)

When Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul, arrived, he bowed down before David in respect. David said, "Mephibosheth," and he answered, "At your service, sir."

*The Message*

When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan (who was the son of Saul), came before David, he bowed deeply, abasing himself, honoring David. David spoke his name: "Mephibosheth." "Yes sir?"

New Life Bible

Mephibosheth the son of Saul's son Jonathan came to David and fell on his face to the ground in respect. David said, "Mephibosheth." And he answered, "Here is your servant!"

New Living Translation

His name was Mephibosheth[a]; he was Jonathan's son and Saul's grandson. When he came to David, he bowed low to the ground in deep respect. David said, "Greetings, Mephibosheth."

Mephibosheth replied, "I am your servant."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, King David sent for him and brought him from of the house of Machir. 6 And when MephiBosheth (the son of JoNathan and grandson of Saul) came to King David, he fell to his face and bowed before him. Then David said, `MephiBosheth!' And he replied, `Look. your servant!'
God's Word™	When Mephibosheth (son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul) came to David, he quickly bowed down with his face touching the ground. "Mephibosheth!" David said to him. "Yes, sir," he answered.
New American Bible	When Meribbaal, son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David, he fell prostrate in homage. David said, "Meribbaal," and he answered, "Your servant."
NIRV	Mephibosheth came to David. He was the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul. Mephibosheth bowed down to David to show him respect. David said, "Mephibosheth!" "I'm ready to serve you," he replied.
New Jerusalem Bible	On entering David's presence, Meribbaal son of Jonathan, son of Saul, fell on his face and prostrated himself. David said, 'Meribbaal!' He replied, 'Here I am, at your service.'
Today's NIV	When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor. David said, "Mephibosheth!" "At your service," he replied.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

JPS (Tanakh)	...and when Mephibosheth son of Jonathan son of Saul came to David, he flung himself on his face and prostrated himself. David said, "Mephibosheth!" and he replied, "At your service, sir."
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### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Ancient Roots Translinear	Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David. He fell toward his face, bowing. David said, "Mephibosheth!" He answered, "Behold your servant!"
English Standard Version	And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, son of Saul, came to David and fell on his face and paid homage. And David said, "Mephibosheth!" And he answered, "Behold, I am your servant."
LTHB	And Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan the son of Saul came to David and fell on his face, and prostrated himself. And David said, Mephibosheth! And he said, Behold, your servant.
Thieme	And, Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and 'prostrated himself'/'humbled himself' {shachah - Hithpael stem} And David said, "Mephibosheth." And he answered, "Behold your servant {a polite response - protocol before the king}!"
Young's Updated LT	And Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, son of Saul, comes unto David, and falls on his face, and does obeisance, and David says, "Mephibosheth;" and he says, "Lo, Your servant."

**The gist of this verse:** Mephibosheth bows before David, David calls his name, and Mephibosheth presents himself to David as his subject.



## 2Samuel 9:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
bôw' (בּוֹא) [pronounced boh]	to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
M <sup>e</sup> phîybôsheth (מִפְּיִבּוֹשֶׁת) [pronounced meh-f-ee-BOH-shehth]	dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; a shameful thing from the mouth; exterminating an idol; transliterated Mephibosheth	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	son, descendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Y <sup>e</sup> hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced y <sup>e</sup> -hoh-naw-THAWN]	alternate spelling; transliterated Jonathan	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	son, descendant	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
'el (אֶל) [pronounced el]	unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced daw-VEED]	beloved and is transliterated David	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187

**Translation:** [So Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David.](#) This is quite surprising here for the author of Scripture to use the Qal imperfect of bôw'. Mephibosheth had no easy way of moving from point A to point B, since he was lame in both feet. The king has sent out men to bring Mephibosheth to him; so we would expect to see the Hiphil (causative stem) here. This would mean that David caused him to be brought to him. But David did not send some tough guys to Mephibosheth telling him, "We're taking you to the king; you do not have a choice here." Or, there are other verbs which would indicate that Mephibosheth was somehow carried or transported to David. However, we have the common, simple verb *to come, to go* used here, which indicates volition. This indicates that Mephibosheth was called by his king and he responded by coming to David using his own volition.

## 2Samuel 9:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## 2Samuel 9:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâphal (נָפַל) [pronounced naw-FAHL]	<i>to fall, to lie, to die a violent death, to be brought down, to settle, to sleep deeply; to desert</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #5307 BDB #656
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ʿah]	<i>upon, against, above</i>	preposition	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פְּנֵיַם) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular) with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, ʿâl and pânîym mean *upon his face of, facing him, in front of him, before (as in preference to) him, in addition to him, overlooking him.*

**Translation:** [He fell upon his face...](#) Again, we have a verb that we would not expect to find. With two bad feet, Mephibosheth has great difficulty moving about. However, he goes to great pains to show respect to David. He recognizes David's authority and places himself at David's mercy.

**Application:** Again, this is analogous to our relationship with God. We ought to recognize God's authority and place ourselves at His mercy. Just as Jesus calls to us, *"Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."* (Matt. 11:28–30). *"If you know these things, blessed [happy] are you if you do them."* (John 13:17). *"Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."* Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and We will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love Me does not keep My words. And the word that you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me." (John 14:21–24). For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ (2Cor. 10:3–5).

## 2Samuel 9:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced shaw-KHAW]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005

**Translation:** [...and he bowed down.](#) This is a second phrase to indicate that Mephibosheth prostrated himself before David. This is almost humorous, except for the fact that Mephibosheth is lame in both feet. Mephibosheth

is somehow sitting before David, unable to easily move on his own. Yet, he is able to fall upon his face and to bow before David, two phrases which indicate some sort of a double-bow.

### 2Samuel 9:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דִּיֵּד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
M <sup>e</sup> phîybôsheth (תְּשֻׁבַּת־יָפֶת) [pronounced <i>mehf-ee-BOH-shehth</i> ]	<i>dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; a shameful thing from the mouth; exterminating an idol; transliterated Mephibosheth</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937

**Translation:** David said, "Mephibosheth." David calls his name to him.

Let's just take a moment to see what others have to say about Mephibosheth:

### Commentators on Mephibosheth

Scripture	Text/Commentary
<b>Easton</b>	The son of Jonathan, and grandson of Saul (2Sam. 4:4). He was but five years old when his father and grandfather fell on Mount Gilboa. The child's nurse hearing of this calamity, fled with him from Gibeah, the royal residence, and stumbling in her haste, the child was thrown to the ground and maimed in both his feet, and ever after was unable to walk (2Sam. 19:26). He was carried to the land of Gilead, where he found a refuge in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, at Lo-debar, by whom he was brought up.
<b>Easton (continued)</b>	Some years after this, when David had subdued all the adversaries of Israel, he began to think of the family of Jonathan, and discovered that Mephibosheth was residing in the house of Machir. Thither he sent royal messengers, and brought him and his infant son to Jerusalem, where he ever afterwards resided (2Sam. 9:1–13).
<b>Easton (continued)</b>	When David was a fugitive, according to the story of Ziba (2Sam. 16:1–4) Mephibosheth proved unfaithful to him, and was consequently deprived of half of his estates; but according to his own story, however (2Sam. 19:24–30), he had remained loyal to his friend. After this incident he is only mentioned as having been protected by David against the vengeance the Gibeonites were permitted to execute on the house of Saul (2Sam. 21:7). He is also called Merib-baal (1Chron. 8:34; 1Chron. 9:40). <sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> M.G. Easton M.A., D.D., *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*; 1897; from e-Sword, topic: Mephibosheth.

## Commentators on Mephibosheth

Scripture	Text/Commentary
<b>Fausset</b>	Saul's grandson, son of Jonathan. Originally Merib-baal, an ancestor being named Baal (1Chron. 8:24, 30, 33 9:36). When Saul and Jonathan fell at Gilboa Mephibosheth was but five years old. His nurse at the sad tidings took him up and fled; in her haste she let him fall from her shoulders (Josephus Ant., vii. 5, section 5), whereon children in the East are carried, and he became lame of both feet (2Sam. 4:4 9:13). He had been for a considerable time living in obscurity with Machir in Lodebar beyond Jordan, near Mahanaim, his uncle Ishbosheth's seat of government, when David through Ziba heard of him, and for the sake of Jonathan, and his promise respecting Jonathan's seed (1Sam. 20:15; 1Sam. 20:42), restored to him all the land of Saul and admitted him to eat bread at his table at Jerusalem continually. (See MACHIR.)
<b>Fausset (continued)</b>	Ziba, from being a menial of Saul's house, had managed to become master himself of 20 servants; with these and his 15 sons he, by David's command, tilled the land for Mephibosheth, for though Mephibosheth was henceforth David's guest, and needed no provision, he had a son Micha (1 Samuel 9 1Chron. 8:34-35) and a retinue to maintain as a prince. His deformity, added to the depression of Saul's family, produced in him an abject fear and characteristic humility which are expressed in a manner sad to read of when one remembers the bygone greatness of Saul's house. It is a retribution in kind that the representative of Saul's family now calls himself before David by the contemptuous title which once David in self abasement used before Saul, "dead dog" (2Sam. 9:8 1Sam. 24:14).
<b>Fausset (continued)</b>	The same depressed spirit appears in 2Sam. 19:26-28. Seventeen years subsequently, in Absalom's rebellion, Ziba rendered important service to David by meeting him as he crossed Olivet, with two strong "he donkeys" (chamor) ready saddled for the king's use, bread, raisins, fruits, and wine. With shrewd political forecast, guessing the failure of the rebellion, Ziba gained David's favor at the cost of Mephibosheth, whom he misrepresented as staying at Jerusalem in expectation of regaining the kingdom (2Sam. 16:1-4). David in hasty credulity (Prov. 18:13 John 7:51) on the spot assigned all Mephibosheth's property to Ziba. On David's return to Jerusalem Mephibosheth made known the true state of the case, that Ziba had deceived him when he desired to saddle the donkey and go to the king, and had slandered him (2Sam. 19:24-30). His squalid appearance, with unwashed feet, unattended beard, and soiled clothes, indicating the deepest mourning ever since the king departed, attested his truthfulness.
<b>Fausset (continued)</b>	David saw his error, but had not the courage to rectify it altogether. Ziba's service to him in his extremity outweighed his perfidy to Mephibosheth. Impatiently (for conscience told him he had been unjust to Mephibosheth and still was only half just) David replied, "Why continue to speak any more of your matters? You and Ziba divide the land." Mephibosheth had everything to lose and nothing to gain from Absalom's success. A cripple and a Benjamite could never dream of being preferred by Judah to the handsome Absalom; interest and gratitude bound him to David. Ziba had it completely in his power to leave him unable to stir from Jerusalem during the rebellion, by taking away the asses; the king and his friends were gone. So not merely servility, but sincere satisfaction at David's return, prompted his reply: "let Ziba take all, forasmuch as my lord is come again in peace." David's non-mention of Mephibosheth on his death bed is doubtless because Mephibosheth had died in the eight years that intervened between David's return and his death.

## Commentators on Mephibosheth

Scripture	Text/Commentary
<b>Fausset (continued)</b>	Mephibosheth typifies man once son of the King; then having lost his right by the fall, as Mephibosheth did by Saul's and Jonathan's death at Gilboa. Bearing a name of reproach like Mephibosheth, instead of his name of innocence; banished to the outskirts of the moral wilderness, like Mephibosheth in Lodebar; liable to perish by the sword of justice, as Saul's other sons (2 Samuel 21); paralyzed by original sin, as Mephibosheth lamed from infancy in both feet; invited by the Lord and Savior, after having spoiled principalities, to sit down at the royal table (Matt. 8:11 Rev. 19:7, 9), as Mephibosheth was by David after conquering all his foes, on the ground of the everlasting covenant (Jer. 31:3); as David regarded Mephibosheth because of his covenant with Jonathan (1Sam. 20:15, 42). Fear is man's first feeling in the Lord's presence (Luke 5:8); but He reassures the trembling sinner (Isa. 43:1 Rev. 2:7), as David did Mephibosheth, restoring him to a princely estate. <sup>12</sup>
<b>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</b>	Mephibosheth is the grandson of Saul, son of Jonathan, and nephew of Mephibosheth (Saul's son by a mistress) (2Sam. 4:4). He was 5 years old when his father and grandfather were slain. He was living in charge of a nurse, possibly because his mother was dead. Tidings of the disaster at Jezreel and the on-sweep of the Philistines terrified the nurse. She fled with her charge in such haste that a fall lamed the little prince in both feet for life. His life is a series of disasters, disappointments, and anxieties. It is a weary, broken, dispirited soul that speaks in all his utterances. The nurse carried him to Lo-debar among the mountains of Gilead, where he was brought up by Machir, son of Ammiel (2Sam. 9:4). There he evidently married, for he had a son Mica when he returned later at David's request. When David had settled his own affairs and subdued his enemies, he turned his inquiries to Saul's household to see whether there were any survivors to whom he might show kindness for Jonathan's sake (2Sam. 9:1). The search caused the appearance of Ziba, a servant of Saul's house (2Sam. 9:2), who had meanwhile grown prosperous by some rapid process which can only be guessed at (2Sam. 9:9–10). From him David learned about Mephibosheth, who was sent for. His humble bearing was consistent with his chronically broken spirit. David put Ziba's property (which had belonged to Saul) at Mephibosheth's disposal and made Ziba steward thereof. Mephibosheth was also to be a daily guest at David's table (2Sam. 9:11–13).
<b>ISBE (continued)</b>	Seventeen years pass, during which Mephibosheth seems to have lived in Jerusalem. Then came Absalom's rebellion. David determined to flee, so distraught was he by the act of his son. At the moment of flight, in great depression and need, he was opportunely met by Ziba with food, refreshment and even means for travel. Naturally, the king inquired for Ziba's master. The treacherous reply was made (2Sam. 16:1–4) that Mephibosheth had remained behind for his own ends, hoping the people would give him, Saul's grandson, the kingdom. David believed this and restored to Ziba the property lost.

<sup>12</sup> Andrew Robert Fausset, *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*; from e-Sword, topic: Mephibosheth.

## Commentators on Mephibosheth

Scripture	Text/Commentary
<b>ISBE (continued)</b>	Not till many days after did the lame prince get his chance to give David his own version of the story. He met David on his return from quelling Absalom's rebellion. He had not dressed his feet, trimmed his beard nor washed his clothes since the hour of David's departure (2Sam. 19:24). At David's anxious request Mephibosheth told his story: his servant had deceived him; he wanted to go with David, had even asked for his beast to be saddled; but Ziba had left him, and had slandered him to the king. But he would not plead his cause any more; David is "as an angel of God"; whatever he decides will be well! (2Sam. 19:26–27). Thus characteristically continued the speech of this lame, broken, humble man, son of a proud family (2Sam. 19:28).
<b>ISBE (continued)</b>	David wearily settled the matter by dividing the property between the prince and his servant, the prince expressing utmost content that Ziba should take all so long as David remained friendly (2Sam. 19:29–30). That David accepted Mephibosheth's explanation and was drawn out in heart toward the character of the broken man is shown by the fact that when some expiation from Saul's household was considered necessary to turn away the famine sent by an offended deity, Mephibosheth is spared when other members of Saul's household were sacrificed (2Sam. 21:7). The character of Mephibosheth well illustrates the effect of continued disaster, suspicion and treachery upon a sensitive mind. <sup>13</sup>
<b>Smith</b>	The son of Jonathan, grandson of Saul, and nephew of Mephibosheth (Saul's son by a mistress); called also Merib-baal. 1Chron. 8:34. His life seems to have been, from beginning to end, one of trial and discomfort. When his father and grandfather were slain on Gilboa, he was an infant, but five years old. At this age, he met with an accident which deprived him, for life, of the use of both feet. 2Sam. 4:4. After this, he is found a home with Machir ben-Amiel, a powerful Gadite, who brought him up, and while here, was married.
<b>Smith (continued)</b>	Later on, David invited him to Jerusalem, and there treated him, and his son, Micha, with the greatest kindness. From this time forward, he resided at Jerusalem. Of Mephibosheth's behavior during the rebellion of Absalom, we possess two accounts -- his own (2Sam. 13:24-30), and that of Ziba (2Sam. 16:1-4). They are naturally, at variance with each other. In consequence of the story of Ziba, he was rewarded by the possessions of his master. <sup>14</sup>

This should give you a complete background on Mephibosheth.

I've discussed Mephibosheth's name Meri-Baal back in [2Sam. 4](#) in the doctrine [Baal versus Bosheth](#). However, the short version is, *Baal* came to stand for a false god (it originally meant *someone in authority*); and because of this association with a false god, some with the name *Baal* affixed to their names either changed them or someone else changed them to *Bosheth*, which means *shame*.

Mephibosheth means *scattering or destroying shame*. His other name, Merit-baal (1Chron. 8:34 9:40), means *contending with Baal*.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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<sup>13</sup> *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*; James Orr, Editor; ©1956 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.; © by Hendrickson Publishers; from E-Sword; Topic: Mephibosheth.

<sup>14</sup> Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: Mephibosheth.

## 2Samuel 9:6e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>b</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** [And he said, "Behold, \[I am\] your servant."](#) We might better render this, *observe, your servant*. Mephibosheth added the additional word *hinnêh* in speaking to the king. R.B. Thieme Jr. suggests that this is a more formal way to respond to the king than Ziba's slightly more curt response.<sup>15</sup> But there is a much greater difference in Mephibosheth's actions. He fell on his face before David and then, somehow, he bowed again. Ziba did not bother with any sort of genuflecting. So their actions revealed very different men in their attitudes toward David.

[And so says to him David, "Do not fear for \[in\] making, I will make with you grace because of Jonathan your father and I have caused to return all land of Saul your father; and you will eat bread upon my table continually."](#)

2Samuel  
9:7

[Then David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will certainly manufacture grace with you because of your father Jonathan. Also, I will return all of the land \[which belonged to\] Saul your grandfather. Furthermore, you will eat bread at my table always."](#)

[Then David said to him, "Do not be afraid, for I will certain show grace to you because of your father Jonathan. Also, I will return all of the land which formerly belonged to your grandfather Saul. Finally, you will take your meals with me from here on out."](#)

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate

[And David said to him: Fear not, for I will surely show you mercy for Jonathan your father's sake, and I will restore the lands of Saul the father, and you shalt eat bread at my table always.](#)

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

[And so says to him David, "Do not fear for \[in\] making, I will make with you grace because of Jonathan your father and I have caused to return all land of Saul your father; and you will eat bread upon my table continually."](#)

Septuagint (Greek)

[And David said to him, Fear not, for I will surely deal mercifully with you for the sake of Jonathan your father, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul the father of your father; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.](#)

<sup>15</sup> From [http://syndein.com/ii\\_samuel\\_09.html](http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_09.html) accessed July 25, 2009.

Significant differences: The causal approach of returning the land of Saul to Mephibosheth is lost in the Greek and Latin.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	David said, "Don't be afraid. I'll be kind to you because Jonathan was your father. I'm going to give you back the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul. Besides that, you will always eat with me at my table."
Easy English (Pocock)	David said, `Do not be afraid. I will be kind to you because Jonathan was your father. I will give back to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul. And you will always eat your meals at my table.'
Easy-to-Read Version	David said to Mephibosheth, "Don't be afraid. I will be kind to you. I will do this because of your father Jonathan. I will give back to you all of the land of your grandfather Saul. And you will always be able to eat at my table."
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Don't be afraid," David replied. "I will be kind to you for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will give you back all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always be welcome at my table."
<i>The Message</i>	"Don't be frightened," said David. "I'd like to do something special for you in memory of your father Jonathan. To begin with, I'm returning to you all the properties of your grandfather Saul. Furthermore, from now on you'll take all your meals at my table."
New Living Translation	"Don't be afraid!" David said. "I intend to show kindness to you because of my promise to your father, Jonathan. I will give you all the property that once belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will eat here with me at the king's table!"

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Then David said, `Don't be afraid, because [the reason why I called you] is to show you mercy because of JoNathan your father. I'm going to give you back all the fields of your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table.'
New American Bible	"Fear not," David said to him, "I will surely be kind to you for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the lands of your grandfather Saul, and you shall always eat at my table."
NIRV	"Don't be afraid," David told him. "You can be sure that I will be kind to you because of your father Jonathan. I'll give back to you all of the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul. And I'll always provide what you need."
New Jerusalem Bible	David then said, 'Do not be afraid; I will indeed treat you with faithful love for your father Jonathan's sake. I shall restore all your grandfather Saul's estates to you, and you will always eat at my table.'

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And David said to him, Have no fear: for truly I will be good to you, because of your father Jonathan, and I will give back to you all the land which was Saul's; and you will have a place at my table at all times.
Context Group Version	And David said to him, Don't be afraid; for I will surely show you family allegiance { Hebrew: hesed } for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore you all the land of Saul your father; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.
HCSB	"Don't be afraid," David said to him, "since I intend to show you kindness because of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all your grandfather Saul's fields, and you will always eat meals at my table."
JPS (Tanakh)	David said to him, "Don't be afraid, for I will keep faith with you for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will give you back all the land of your grandfather Saul; moreover, you shall always eat at my table."



NET Bible®

David said to him, "Don't be afraid, because I will certainly extend kindness to you for the sake of Jonathan your father. I will give back to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will be a regular guest at my table."

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Ancient Roots Translinear

David said to him, "Fear not: for I *will* ||do|| mercy to you because of Jonathan your father, and return to you all the fields of Saul your father. You *will* eat bread over my table continually."

Thieme

And David said to him, "You will not fear me.

Because I will manufacture grace to you for the sake of Jonathan, your father, and will restore you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat at my table continually."

WEB

David said to him, "Don't be afraid of him; for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore you all the land of Saul your father; and you shall eat bread at my table continually."

Young's Updated LT

And David says to him, "Be not afraid; for I certainly do with you kindness because of Jonathan Your father, and have given back to You all the field of Saul Your father, and you will eat bread at my table continually."

**The gist of this verse:**

David promises to show grace to Mephibosheth for the sake of Jonathan, who was David's closest friend. David also promises to have Mephibosheth eat at his table

**2Samuel 9:7a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
Dâvid (דָּוִד); also Dâviyd (דָּוִד) [pronounced <i>daw-VEED</i> ]	<i>beloved and is transliterated David</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #1732 BDB #187
'al (אֲלֵ) [pronounced <i>a</i> ]	<i>not; nothing; none</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAY</i> ]	<i>to fear, to be afraid; to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431

**Translation:** Then David said to him, “Do not be afraid,.. In the ancient world, when one dynasty replaced another, what often happened was, the new reigning dynasty would find every single possible heir to the throne from the previous dynasty and kill them. You have no doubt seen *The Godfather*, and the final scene gives that same general idea. This occurs with some despots today who will use the law to imprison many of their foes.

David is just the opposite. There is one remaining man of the house of Saul, and David seeks to show this man grace. David reassures Mephibosheth that he has not been hauled in to be harassed and then murdered.

Guzik: *Mephibosheth must have been terrified when messengers from David knocked at his door and demanded that he come with them to see the king. In the back of his mind he anticipated the day when David would do as other kings did and massacre every potential rival to his throne:*<sup>16</sup> Guzik makes the same mistake, however, that many expositors make, claiming: *The knock on the door also meant that Mephibosheth was no longer hidden from David. He felt secure as long as he believed the new king didn't know about him. Remember why Mephibosheth's nurse was fleeing in 2Samuel 4; she feared David would come and slaughter all the potential heirs to the throne of Saul.*<sup>17</sup> Scripture clears this up for us: **Saul's son Jonathan had a son whose feet were crippled. He was five years old when the report about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she was hurrying to flee, he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth (2Sam. 4:4).** The Bible tells us that Mephibosheth fled, not because of David, but because of Saul and Jonathan had been killed by the Philistines (1Sam. 31).

**Application:** There are two things of note here: first of all, Mephibosheth lost his property because of the invasion of the Philistines, but David restores it to him. His ownership based upon his family royalty is respected. Furthermore, David shows respect toward Mephibosheth's inherited station in life. David does not say, “In your name, I have donated all of your father's holdings to the poor.” We are born to unequal stations in life, and David does nothing to change that. There are inherent and inherited inequities in life; David, as the ruler of Israel, as a man after God's own heart, never seeks to smooth out these inequities. Furthermore, David, as the government, does not take away 50% of Mephibosheth's land by some phoney inheritance tax. David is restoring Mephibosheth's proper inheritance to him. I mention these things because Liberation Theology has greatly distorted the Bible in these areas.

Now, for the parallel: what we lost in the garden to Satan, God will restore to us. Satan came in and took authority over the earth (He is called *the god of this world* and *the prince of the power of the air* in 2Cor. 4:4 Eph. 2:2), like the Philistines, and dispossessed Mephibosheth and others. God will come in and restore us to authority over the earth, just as David restores Mephibosheth to his property.

## 2Samuel 9:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>when, that, for, because, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ‘gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	Qal infinitive absolute	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ‘gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

<sup>16</sup> David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 9:1–13.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

## 2Samuel 9:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i> ]	<i>with, at, by near; like; from; against; toward; as long as; beside, except; in spite of</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
cheçed (חֶסֶד) [pronounced <i>KHEH-sed</i> ]	<i>grace, benevolence, mercy, kindness</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2617 BDB #338
ba‘ăbûwr (בְּעִבּוּר) [pronounced <i>bah-gûb-VOOR</i> ]	<i>because of, for, that, for the sake of, on account of, in order that; while</i>	preposition/conjunction; substantive always found combined with the bêyth preposition	Strong's #5668 BDB #721
Actually a combination of the bêyth preposition ( <i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before</i> ) and ‘ăbûwr (עִבּוּר) [pronounced <i>gaw<sup>w</sup>-BOOR</i> ] which means <i>a passing over, a transition; the cause of a crossing over; the price [of transferring ownership of something]; purpose, objective</i> . Properly, it is the passive participle of Strong's #5674 BDB #720. Strong's #5668 BDB #721.			
Y <sup>e</sup> hōwnâthân (יְהוֹנָתָן) [pronounced <i>y<sup>e</sup>-hoh-naw-THAWN</i> ]	alternate spelling; transliterated <i>Jonathan</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3083 (& #3129) BDB #220
‘âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

**Translation:** ...for I will certainly manufacture grace with you because of your father Jonathan. We have the Qal infinitive absolute and the Qal imperfect of the same verb. This is the way the Hebrews indicated great emphasis and certainty. What David is promising to do for Mephibosheth is to shower him with grace.

David, because of his love for Jonathan, is motivated to look after Mephibosheth.

## 2Samuel 9:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>to cause to return, to bring, to be caused to turn back mentally, reminisce, to return something, to restore, to bring [send, turn] back, to regain, to recover, to make restitution, reconsider, think again, to be caused to return</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #7725 BDB #996

## 2Samuel 9:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced <i>saw-DEH</i> ]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
Shâ'ûwl (שָׂאֻל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father</i> , both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; <i>founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3

**Translation:** Also, I will return all of the land [which belonged to] Saul your grandfather. Saul's family had land, as did all the families of Israel (apart from the Levites, whose kingdom was not of this world). Saul's land was somehow taken, and Mephibosheth had no ability to get it back. Recall that, when Saul was defeated in battle, the Philistines took over certain portions of Israel for a time. When David came into power, he defeated the Philistines on at least two occasions, which restored the sovereignty of Israel over its own land. However, in all of this chaos, whatever land belonged to Saul fell into the hands of someone else. I would not be shocked to find out that Ziba took it over; however, I do not mean to impugn his character. David, as the new king, may have ownership of Saul's land (however, they operated in different cities).

One point of syntax: the verb *to return, to restore* is in the perfect tense. This means that David had already gotten the deed and put the land into Mephibosheth's name. However, land ownership was indicated (which I assume had to be in writing), David already took care of the paperwork side of things.

The word here, generally translated *father*, means *head of a household, clan or tribe*; and may reasonably be translated *grandfather* in this instance.

There are two theories as to why Mephibosheth did not have control of his father's land, and both may be true to some extent. In the ancient world, it was common for a new dynasty to completely wipe out any member of the previous dynasty, so Mephibosheth could have intentionally chosen to lay low, to stay out of David's radar. Given the kind of man that Ziba appears to be, he may have set all of this up. That is, he may have warned Mephibosheth that his life was in danger as long as David was on the throne, and suggested that he watch over Saul's property, while Mephibosheth hid out at another house. We do not know if this sort of craftiness occurred, but Ziba will lie to David in the future in order to gain back these lands (2Sam. 16:1–5); therefore, it is not hard to imagine that he did something similar after the Philistines defeated Israel in battle (1Sam. 31) and David came to power (2Sam. 1–6).

## 2Samuel 9:7d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'attâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i> ]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular	Strong's #859 BDB #61
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i> ]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced <i>LEH-khem</i> ]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536
'al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah]</i>	<i>upon, against, above</i>	preposition	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
shul <sup>o</sup> chân (שֻׁלְחָן) [pronounced <i>shool<sup>o</sup>-KHAWN</i> ]	<i>a table; a skin or leather mat laid on the ground</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #7979 BDB #1020
tâmîyd (תָּמִיד) [pronounced <i>taw-MEED</i> ]	<i>continuously, continuity; regularly, at regular intervals; continuity, perpetuity</i>	masculine singular noun/adverb	Strong's #8548 BDB #556

**Translation:** *Furthermore, you will eat bread at my table always.* The next gracious act of David was to allow Mephibosheth to sit at his table.

My thinking here is, David was actually there at these meals, and that there was a great preparation and that many people participated in this meal—David's staff, Mephibosheth, and perhaps some relatives of David (his wives and children). However, I do not know the customs of those times. There could have simply been a royal meal which was provided, a meal that David did not necessarily attend himself, but was prepared for staff and others. It appears as if ancients had two meals a day (Luke 14:12). Whether Mephibosheth participated in both of those meals with David or with David's staff is unknown. In any case, Mephibosheth joined in with some sort of a regular meal which is probably held in the palace and this would not have been a secondary meal in the back with the servants; David was treating Mephibosheth as royalty (which he was).

All of this is grace and it illustrates what God does for us. We are like Mephibosheth, members, as it were, of the opposing political party. We are in sin, and God's perfect character condemns that sin. However, instead of killing or banning us, God has restored mankind to life under grace. All that was given to us in the Garden of Eden is ours again; and all of the provisions for life and sustenance are a part of this graciousness. What David does here is a real, historical incident; but, like many things recorded in Scripture, it also has application to us.

What David promises Mephibosheth is analogous to what God promises us.

### A Summation of David's Promises to Mephibosheth (and what they mean to us)

David	The Parallel
<i>And David said to him, "Do not be afraid;...</i>	This is one of the commandments which we find hundreds of times in the Bible. We are told over and over again, not to be afraid. Fear is a mental attitude sin like any other.

## A Summation of David's Promises to Mephibosheth (and what they mean to us)

David	The Parallel
"...for I will certainly manufacture grace to you because of your father Jonathan." You may recall that Jonathan and David made a covenant to one another back in 1Sam. 20, and this is a fulfillment of that covenant.	God has made a covenant with Israel and with us, and what God has promised, He will deliver. God manufactures grace to us because of Jesus Christ.
"And I will give back to you all the land of your father Saul."	This is analogous to God giving us back more than we lost in the garden. Quite obviously, this is grace, as we do not deserve this.
"And you shall eat bread at my table continually."	David will faithfully provide for Mephibosheth. This indicates fellowship. Jesus told His disciples, "And I appoint a kingdom to you, as My Father appointed to Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:30), so this is a fulfillment of that promise.

This incident in the lives of David and Mephibosheth is a true, historical incident. However, God the Holy Spirit records this in the Word of God to communicate to us what God has provided for us. Mephibosheth's statement ("What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I am?" 2Sam. 9:8b) will indicate that Mephibosheth is fully aware that David is operating in grace.

This comes, in part, from *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 9.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

In the Old Testament system, there was, in the Law, provisions for the poor and the helpless. These statutes of the Mosaic Law required that they worked for these provisions. That is, a corner of a field had to be left unpicked, so that the poor could come into the field and take some of the produce for themselves. When Ruth had moved to Israel with her mother, Naomi, this was her means of support for awhile.

David, as a mature believer, is doing the same for Mephibosheth. David had no idea what the descendants of Saul would be like, and he had no idea that Mephibosheth would be this helpless, but God used David to bless Mephibosheth. This is an example of blessing by association. God has poured blessings upon David; and since Mephibosheth will be in David's periphery, God will bless him as well.

**Application:** This is not the same as giving millions of people welfare in order to secure their vote. Our government, in the name of compassion, has destroyed Black families, Black businesses, and Black initiative. Even though, some of the legislation may have been done with the best of intentions, the end result has been a huge, dependent class of people—people who could work, but choose not to, since the government pays for everything.

And so he bows down and so he says, "What [is] your servant that you have turned toward unto the dog, the dying one, who, like I?"

2Samuel  
9:8

He bows down again and says, "What [is] your servant that you have turned toward a dying dog, such as I?"

Mephibosheth bowed again before David and said, "Who am I, your servant, that you would look toward me with favor, though I am no more worthy than a dying scavenger dog?"

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	He bowed down to him, and said: Who am I your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I <u>am</u> ?
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he bows down and so he says, "What [is] your servant that you have turned toward unto the dog, the dying one, who, like I?"
Septuagint (Greek)	And Mephibosheth bowed down and said, Who am I your servant, that you have looked upon a dead dog like me?
Significant differences:	I do not see any significant differences, apart from an extra verb which may or may not be in the original Latin.

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	Mephibosheth knelt down again and said, "Why should you care about me? I'm worth no more than a dead dog."
Easy English (Pocock)	Mephibosheth lay down again to give honour to David. Mephibosheth said, 'The king should not think about me. I am hardly better than a dead dog.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Mephibosheth bowed to David again. Mephibosheth said, "I am no better than a dead dog, but you are being very kind to me."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Mephibosheth bowed again and said, "I am no better than a dead dog, sir! Why should you be so good to me?"
New Living Translation	Mephibosheth bowed respectfully and exclaimed, "Who is your servant, that you should show such kindness to a dead dog like me?"

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	And Mephibosheth bowed again and said, 'Who am I your servant, to find your favor? For I'm no better than a dying dog.'
New American Bible	Bowing low, he answered, "What is your servant that you should pay attention to a dead dog like me?"

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	And he went down on his face before the king, and said, What is your servant, for you to take note of a dead dog such as I am?
Context Group Version	And he did obeisance, and said, What is your slave, that you should look at such a dead scavenger { lit. dog; on the same order as a rat in the ancient Middle East } as I am?
HCSB	Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant that you take an interest in a dead dog like me?"
JPS (Tanakh)	[Mephibosheth] prostrated himself again, and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog like me?"
NET Bible®	Then Mephibosheth <sup>10</sup> bowed and said, "Of what importance am I, your servant, that you show regard for a dead dog like me?"

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Ancient Roots Translinear	He bowed and said, "What is your servant, that you face toward a dead dog similar to me?"
English Standard Version	And he paid homage and said, "What is your servant, that you should show regard for a dead dog such as I?"
Thieme	Again he {Mephibosheth} prostrated himself, and said, "What is your servant that you should regard/'turn your face at' a dead dog like me?"

WEB

He did obeisance, and said, "What is your servant, that you should look on such a dead dog as I am?"

Young's Updated LT

And he bows himself, and says, "What is your servant, that you have turned unto the dead dog—such as I?"

**The gist of this verse:**

Again, Mephibosheth bows himself before David, and asks, essentially, why is David showing such grace to a man like him. He compares himself to a dead dog, which was thought of as repulsive in ancient times.

**2Samuel 9:8a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
shâchah (שָׁחָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-KHAW</i> ]	<i>to bow down, to prostrate oneself, to do obeisance to; to honor [with prayers]; to do homage to, to submit to</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hithpael imperfect	Strong's #7812 BDB #1005

**Translation:** He bows down again... Mephibosheth bows down yet once again before David. Mephibosheth is going to be seated on the ground to begin with, and yet, he manages a bow to David anyway.

**2Samuel 9:8b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
mâh (מַה) [pronounced <i>maw</i> ]	<i>what, how, why</i>	interrogative; exclamatory particle	Strong's #4100 BDB #552
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>b</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>when, that, for, because, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
pânâh (פָּנָה) [pronounced <i>paw-NAWH</i> ]	<i>to turn, to turn away from, to turn toward, to turn one's face away from, to turn one's face to</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6437 BDB #815
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i> ]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to, in respect to; because of; according to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); expanded meanings given	Strong's #413 BDB #39



## 2Samuel 9:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
keleb (כֶּלֶב) [pronounced KEH-le <sup>b</sup> v]	dog	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3611 BDB #476
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced mooth]	dying, perishing; one who is dying [perishing]	masculine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	that, which, when, who, whom	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> ]	like, as, just as; according to; about, approximately	preposition of comparison or approximation; with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #453

Together, these two words probably have a very specific meaning; however, I was unable to find it in Gesenius. With the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix, we have the following renderings: (*such*) as I am, as I, like me.

**Translation:** ...and says, "What [is] your servant that you have turned toward a dying dog, such as I?" Mephibosheth knows that he is a nobody. He knows that he is of little value to David. He has no power, no charisma, and even the family servant deserted Mephibosheth, to let him fend for himself.

R. B. Thieme said, *A dog was the lowest creature of this day (today we would say a 'dead skunk') - dogs were scavengers - eating garbage - traveling in packs, and killed many humans.*<sup>18</sup>

In the ancient world, the lowest form of animal was the dog (see 1Sam. 24:14–15 2Sam. 3:8 16:9 Matt. 15:26–27). They were vicious scavengers with no regard for man. They were angry, dangerous and dirty. The average person in the ancient world would notice a living dog, and give him a wide berth. He would not want to be mauled or attacked. However, with a dying dog, one which is both harmless and disgusting, no one would give it any thought. This is Mephibosheth before David. He is a dirty disgusting creature; but harmless, so that David ought not to pay him any thought.

Based upon what Mephibosheth is saying here (and upon his mental attitude in subsequent chapters), Mephibosheth is in bad spiritual shape. Mephibosheth says very little, but we are going to assume that these things which he says are from his heart, and that he sees himself in David's eyes as a harmless and disgusting creature.

R. B. Thieme, Jr.: *People who are in the habit of doing something - do it under pressure - Mephibosheth was used to falling apart - so he did it here again regardless of his royal blood and upbringing - no poise, dignity etc. Many people use their handicap as an 'excuse'. For a believer in Jesus Christ, there are no excuses. Yes, their testing is great, but they have the tools available to deal with the obstacles. It is the mental attitude that makes the difference. Self-pity is never the order of the day.*<sup>19</sup>

Although there is not enough here for us to get an in-depth understanding of Mephibosheth's character, what he will say to David several years from now will certainly indicate a changed attitude (this will be touched upon at the end of this chapter when we examine **the Doctrine of Mephibosheth** (at the end of this chapter); and covered in much greater detail in 2Sam. 19).

<sup>18</sup> From [http://syndein.com/ii\\_samuel\\_09.html](http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_09.html)

<sup>19</sup> From [http://syndein.com/ii\\_samuel\\_09.html](http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_09.html) accessed November 23, 2009.

Again, the parallel. Before God, we are dirty, disgusting, but harmless, creatures. We daily are moving toward death. We ought not to be important to the God of the Universe. [O God], when I look at your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:3–6). Given who we are and What God is, how is it that He can pay any attention to us? Yet, in the fullness of time, God sent His Son to taste death for every man to save those who eagerly await Him (Gal. 4:4 Heb. 2:9b 9:28b).

R.B. Thieme, Jr. also comments upon Mephibosheth's handicap: *Many people use their handicap as an 'excuse'. For a believer in Jesus Christ, there are no excuses. Yes, their testing is great, but they have the tools available to deal with the obstacles. It is the mental attitude that makes the difference. Self-pity is never the order of the day.*<sup>20</sup>

God works through our problems and handicaps. One of the many publications from Berachah Church is called *Laura Kay's Legacy*, Although she was classified as mentally and physically handicapped, God functioned through her just as He functions through anyone else. God vindicated the doctrine in her soul. No matter to what station we are born, or with whatever real or imagined handicap we are born with (or, regardless of whatever advantages we believe ourselves to be born with), God is able to use us, as well as to simultaneously bless our lives. There are no boundaries or barriers in the plan of God that God has not already taken care of. I highly recommend this booklet to anyone, but particularly to those who think that God somehow gave them the short end of the stick: <http://www.rbthieme.org/laura.htm>

**Application:** Although I personally have not suffering any sort of a physical or mental handicap, I have had several situations in my own life where God provided for me. When in California, I could not find a permanent teaching position after hustling to find one for 4 years, and God had a job waiting for me in Texas. In retrospect, moving to Texas (bumper sticker: *I'm not from Texas, but I got here as fast as I could*) was the best thing to happen in my life. Then, after teaching for nearly 30 years, I could not hold on to a teaching job. Again, retiring from teaching was the best thing to happen in my life. God knew about these changes in eternity past and He made provision for them. At the time, I may have been overly concerned about what was going to happen next, but God had all of that worked out. God knows what He is doing in our lives.

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## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

### David's Second Conversation with Ziba

And so calls the king unto Ziba, a young man of Saul, and so he says unto him, "All which is to Saul and to all his house I have given to a son of your lord.

2Samuel  
9:9

Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's young servant, and he said to him, "All that belongs [lit., is] to Saul and to all of his house, I have given to the [grand] son of your lord.

Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's young servant, and said to him, "All that belongs to Saul and his house, I have given to your lord's grandson.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

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<sup>20</sup> From [http://syndein.com/ii\\_samuel\\_09.html](http://syndein.com/ii_samuel_09.html) accessed July 26, 2009.

Latin Vulgate	Then the King called Siba the servant of Saul, and said to him: All that belonged to Saul, and all his house, I have given to your master's son.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so calls the king unto Ziba, a young man of Saul, and so he says unto him, "All which is to Saul and to all his house I have given to a son of your lord.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the king called Ziba the servant of Saul, and said to him, All that belonged to Saul and to all his house have I given to the son of your lord.

Significant differences: None.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

CEV	David called in Ziba, Saul's chief servant, and told him, "Since Mephibosheth is Saul's grandson, I've given him back everything that belonged to your master Saul and his family.
Easy English (Pocock)	The king called for Ziba, Saul's servant. The king said, 'I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then King David called Saul's servant Ziba. David said to Ziba, "I have given Saul's family and everything he owns to your master's grandson (Mephibosheth).
<i>The Message</i>	David then called in Ziba, Saul's right-hand man, and told him, "Everything that belonged to Saul and his family, I've handed over to your master's grandson.
New Living Translation	Then the king summoned Saul's servant Ziba and said, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So you, your sons, and your servants will work his land for him, and you are to bring the son of your lord loaves of bread to eat. Also, MephiBosheth (the son of your lord) will always eat at my table.'
New American Bible	The king then called Ziba, Saul's attendant, and said to him: "I am giving your lord's son all that belonged to Saul and to all his family.
Revised English Bible	David summoned Saul's servant Ziba and said, 'I assign to your master's grandson all the property that belonged to Saul and his family.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	Then the king sent for Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, All the property of Saul and of his family I have given to your master's son.
HCSB	Then the king summoned Saul's attendant Ziba and said to him, "I have given to your master's grandson all that belonged to Saul and his family.
JPS (Tanakh)	The king summoned Ziba, Saul's steward, and said to him, "I give to your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and to his entire family.

#### **Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Thieme	Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's steward {Saul's major domo}, and said unto him, "All . . . {everything Ziba had apparently stolen from Saul} that belonged to Saul and to his estates I have given/decreed to your master's grandson.
WEB	Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said to him, "All that pertained to Saul and to all his house have I given to your master's son.
Young's Updated LT	And the king calls unto Ziba servant of Saul, and says unto him, "All that was to Saul and to all his house, I have given to the son of your lord.

**The gist of this verse:** David restored all of Saul's property (and possibly belongings) to Mephibosheth.

## 2Samuel 9:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
qârâ' (אָרָה) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lamed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e</i> ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
Tsîybâ' (צִיבָא) [pronounced <i>tsee-BAW</i> ]	<i>statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850
na'ar (נָעַר) [pronounced <i>NAH-ğahr</i> ]	<i>boy, youth, young man, personal attendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #5288 & #5289 BDB #654
Shâ'ûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced <i>shaw-OOL</i> ]	<i>which is transliterated Saul; it means asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982

**Translation:** [Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's young servant...](#) This is quite fascinating. David first called Ziba to him, and that led him to Saul's only descendant, whom he called in, and now he will call Ziba back in. Notice the change. Ziba is called *Saul's boy*; he is called *Saul's servant*. There are two reasons why David calls in Ziba, and one of them is to make sure that he does not have any personal property which belongs to Saul's family. It is very likely that Ziba is living on land or in a house which once belonged to Saul or to one of his sons.

## 2Samuel 9:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'amar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>e</i> ]	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

## 2Samuel 9:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kôl ʾăsher mean <i>all whom, all that [which]; whomever, all whose, all where, wherever</i> .			
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Shă'ûwl (שׂוֹאֵל) [pronounced shaw-OOL]	which is transliterated <i>Saul</i> ; it means <i>asked for</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #7586 BDB #982
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]	<i>Lord, Master, my Lord, Sovereign; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10

There are actually 3 forms of this word: ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; ʾădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced uh-doh-NAY]; and ʾădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced uh-doh-NEE].

## 2Samuel 9:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>], an older form of the <i>pluralis excellentiæ</i> (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix, hence, <i>my Lord</i> (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from <i>my lords</i>).</p>			

**Translation:** ...and he said to him, "All that belongs [lit., *is*] to Saul and to all of his house, I have given to the [grand] son of your lord. Saul, as king, would have had a lot of holdings, relatively speaking. Also, his family was rich (1Sam. 9:1). When he and his family were killed in battle, it is unclear as to how his land and possessions were taken and how the Philistines figured into this (it seems likely that they took control first). However, with Saul's former servants being in one place and Mephibosheth being in another, it is clear that Saul's property was never restored to its rightful owner. However, David takes care of that here. Everything which was Saul's would be returned to its rightful owner.

David is speaking to Ziba, and his lord is Saul; the (grand) son of Saul is Mephibosheth. So, all that belonged to Saul is naturally given to his remaining heir, which is Mephibosheth. This may seem fairly simple, but some people have taken this and distorted what is found here, over-thinking this passage.<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, Ziba and his family essentially stole this from the house of Saul, and have lived on Saul's property for a decade or two; so it is reasonable that they ought to pay Mephibosheth rent for that time and to make up for the situation that he was in. This was not so much punishment as it was to reimburse Mephibosheth.

David calling in Ziba here suggests that he might even be living on land and in a house which belonged to Saul or one of his sons. However, David keeps all of this fairly low-key. He does not make accusations or condemnations here.

In heaven, there will be some changing about of people's fortunes. There will be some of the poor of the church who were faithful in their spiritual gifts, and they will receive great blessings in the eternal state. There will be others, including pastors of mega-churches, who did not really exercise their spiritual gift properly, and they will be living in a shack on Dirt Street in heaven (relatively speaking, of course; no one will be in poverty). We all have equal opportunity in this life.

**And you have worked for him the ground—you and your sons and your slaves. And you have brought in [produce] and he [bread?] is to a son of your lord bread and to eat him. And Mephibosheth, son of your lord, eats bread upon my table. And to Ziba five-teen sons and twenty slaves.**

2Samuel  
9:10

**And you will work the ground for him—you and your sons and your slaves. And you will bring in [his produce] and bread for the son of your lord, to eat it. And Mephibosheth, son of your lord, will eat bread at my table." (Ziba [had] 15 sons and 20 slaves).**

**And you personally will work the ground for him—you and your sons and your slaves [Ziba had 15 sons and 20 slaves]. You will bring in his produce and his bread for the son of your lord, for him to eat. And Mephibosheth, the son of your lord, will eat bread at my table."**

<sup>21</sup> Clarke concerns himself whether or not this really refers to Machir, Mephibosheth's son. Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 9:9.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	You therefore and the sons and your servants will till the land for him: and you will bring in <u>food</u> for your master's son, that he may be maintained: and Miphiboseh the son of Your master will always eat bread at my table. And Siba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And you have worked for him the ground—you and your sons and your slaves. And you have brought in [produce] and he [bread?] is to a son of your lord bread and to eat him. And Mephibosheth, son of your lord, eats bread upon my table. And to Ziba five-teen sons and twenty slaves.
Septuagint (Greek)	And you, and your sons, and your servants, shall till the land for him; and you shall bring in <u>bread</u> to the son of your lord, and he shall eat bread; and Mephibosheth the son of your lord shall eat bread continually at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

Significant differences: The first verb in the Hebrew is presented as a completed action; in the Greek and Latin, it is in the future tense. Because of the nature of the statement, this is the way that most English translations deal with the perfect tense in this situation.

We expect to have a direct object associated with the verb *to bring in*. We have this in the Greek, Latin and in most English translations. It is lacking in the Hebrew. Whether the direct object is assumed or whether it dropped out of the Hebrew text, we do not know (2Sam. 9 is not found in the Dead Sea Scrolls).

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	You and your fifteen sons and twenty servants will work for Mephibosheth. You will farm his land and bring in his crops, so that Saul's family and servants will have food. But Mephibosheth will always eat with me at my table."
Easy English (Pocock)	You and your sons and your servants must farm the land for Mephibosheth. You must gather the crops in order to provide for him. However, Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will always eat his meals at my table.' (Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants.)
Easy-to-Read Version	You will farm the land for Mephibosheth. Your sons and servants will do this for Mephibosheth. You will harvest the crops. Then your master's grandson (Mephibosheth) will have plenty of food to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will always be able to eat at my table."
Good News Bible (TEV)	You, your sons, and your servants will farm the land for your master Saul's family and bring in the harvest, to provide food for them. But Mephibosheth himself will always be a guest at my table." (Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)
<i>The Message</i>	You and your sons and your servants will work his land and bring in the produce, provisions for your master's grandson. Mephibosheth himself, your master's grandson, from now on will take all his meals at my table." Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.
New Life Bible	You and your sons and your servants will grow food on the land for him. You will bring in the food so your owner's grandson may eat. But Mephibosheth your owner's grandson will always eat at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

New Jerusalem Bible You must work the land for him, you and your sons and your slaves; you must harvest the produce to provide food for your master's family to eat. But Meribbaal, your master's son, will always take his own meals at my table.' Now, Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty slaves.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English And you and your sons and your servants are to take care of the land for him, and get in the fruit of it, so that your master's son may have food: but Mephibosheth, your master's son, will have a place at my table at all times. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

Context Group Version And you shall till the land { or earth } for him, you, and your sons, and your slaves; and you shall bring in [ the fruits ], that your master's house may have bread to eat: but Mephibaal your master's son shall always eat bread at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty slaves.

HCSB You, your sons, and your servants are to work the ground for him, and you are to bring in *the crops* so your master's grandson will have food to eat. But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, is always to eat at my table." Now Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants.

JPS (Tanakh) You and your sons and your slaves shall farm the land for him and shall bring in [its yield] to provide food for your master's grandson to live on; but Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, shall always eat at my table."—Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty slaves.—

NET Bible® You will cultivate<sup>12</sup> the land for him — you and your sons and your servants. You will bring its produce<sup>13</sup> and it will be<sup>14</sup> food for your master's grandson to eat.<sup>15</sup> But Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, will be a regular guest at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Ancient Roots Translinear You, your sons, and your servants serve the earth for him. Come, *that* your lord's son has bread to eat. Mephibosheth your lord's son eats bread continually over my table." Ziba *had* fifteen sons and twenty servants.

Thieme Both you {Ziba} and your sons, and your "major domo's", shall cultivate the land for him {Ziba has been profiting off of Saul's land while Mephibosheth lived off of the charity of Machir - now Ziba will work for him - for his profit!} and you shall bring in the harvest, so that your master's grandson may have a livelihood but Mephibosheth, your master's grandson, {even now after Saul's death, David recognizes Saul's authority given to him by God} shall eat at my table continually." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty foreman/"major domo's"/managers.).

A Voice in the Wilderness You therefore, and your sons and your servants, shall work the land for him, and you shall bring in the harvest, that your master's son may have food to eat. But Mephibosheth your master's son shall eat bread at my table continually. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

WEB You shall till the land for him, you, and your sons, and your servants; and you shall bring in *the fruits*, that your master's son may have bread to eat: but Mephibosheth your master's son shall eat bread always at my table." Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

Young's Updated LT And you have served for him the land, you and your sons, and your servants, and have brought in, and there has been to the son of Your lord bread, and he has eaten it; and Mephibosheth son of your lord does eat continually bread at my table;" and Ziba has fifteen sons and twenty servants.



**The gist of this verse:**

David continues with his instructions to Ziba: he and his sons and servants would all take care of the land which has been restored to Mephibosheth. The writer of this portion of Samuel points out that Ziba has 15 sons and 20 servants.

**2Samuel 9:10a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gaw<sup>b</sup>-VAHD</i> ]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5647 BDB #712
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>le</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿêth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿădâmâh (אֲדָמָה) [pronounced <i>uh-daw-MAWH</i> ]	<i>ground, soil, dirt, earth, tillable earth, land, surface of the earth</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #127 BDB #9
ʾattâh (אַתָּה) [pronounced <i>aht-TAW</i> ]	<i>you</i> (often, the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular	Strong's #859 BDB #61
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿebed (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>b</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** *And you will work the ground for him—you and your sons and your slaves.* David puts the responsibility upon Ziba, who should have assumed this responsibility in the first place. There should have been no relative of Saul's in a helpless situation with Ziba alive. Had Ziba taken Mephibosheth into his home even as an equal, none of this would be necessary. However, Mephibosheth is royalty, David recognizes this, and Ziba is his slave by ownership. So, not only is Saul's land returned to Ziba, but so are the slaves of his family, essentially headed by Ziba (the rest of his family and slaves will go with him).

Having slaves in the ancient world was not an unusual thing. How a man treated his slaves was certainly a matter of personal integrity, and something that God noted as well (there are many laws in the Mosaic Law related to slavery and the treatment of slaves).

It is worth noting that Ziba, a former slave, acquired slaves himself.

Before 9/11 and before a lot of onerous legislation from Congress, it was not unusual for an American family to have an nanny or a housekeeper from outside of the country. The family was responsible to make certain this nanny or housekeeper had food and shelter and a little money. This arrangement is somewhere between slavery and employment and it is beneficial to all parties involved. This arrangement is still found in many parts of the world. This solved many problems for a foreign worker—he or she did not have to find a place to live; and transportation and food were not issues. Although there was no doubt some maltreatment of such people over the years, as there has been of slaves, that was not always the case.

You here is the 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, indicating the Ziba is the one responsible. He cannot simply assign a slave to Mephibosheth and that is it. He must oversee and take care of everything. First responsibility is the work the land. Furthermore, all of his family and his own slaves become enslaved to Mephibosheth.

I have been meaning to do a full doctrine of slavery; however, I have not gotten to that yet. So let me suggest *The Doctrine of Slavery* at <http://www.versebyverse.org/doctrine/slavery.html>

There is also a book called *The Christian Doctrine of Slavery*, by Geo. D. Armstrong, which book can be read in its entirety at <http://www.archive.org/stream/christiandocctrine00armsrich#page/n7/mode/2up> I have not read it, so I have no clue as to how good or bad it is.

Our schools have wrongly portrayed slavery as one of the greatest evils perpetrated by man against man. Although there are certain instances of extreme inhuman behavior related to slavery, and the method of collecting slaves and bringing them to America was certainly inhuman, the institution itself is not altogether evil. Although I am just dreaming in this regard, I would love to see some form of slavery for debtors (which was common at one time). People should not be able to walk away from debt so easily (nor should they be punished for the rest of their lives for debt). In a war, sometimes the appropriate thing to do is to take some of the population into slavery (which will essentially integrate them into the society of their conquerors).

Slavery in America, although certainly a wrong; also brought thousands of Blacks to America, and, as a result, millions of African-Americans have found Jesus Christ as their Savior. For many decades, some of the strongest believers in America were African-Americans, and God blessed them greatly (in the 1920's, for instance, unemployment was around 2–3% and Blacks had a lower unemployment rate than whites).

If we were to compare the lifestyle of a Black man in America today to one in any nation in Africa, it would be clear that African-Americans are far better off. In America, it is possible to save up enough money, to get the right kind of education (including language training) and move to any country in the world. Any American, with a desire and a willingness to work, could, within 5 years, place himself into any country in the world. Many people in the United States could do that tomorrow, if they so desired. This is tremendous freedom. On the other hand, a Black man in Africa can dream of a life in America (as people all over the world do), but only a small percentage of those who want to come here are actually able to come here.

Every African-American should thank God every single day that, 10–20 generations ago, his ancestors were brought to America in chains. God has given Americans great freedom; which requires, at the same time, great responsibility. This great freedom belongs to people of all different colors who live in the United States. As a patriotic American, it makes me proud to go about my own community and to come across dozens of people on any given day who came to America by choice, whose ancestors came to America by choice, or whose ancestors were brought here as slaves. We live in a great country; and, most importantly, God has made his exegeted Word more available in American than anywhere else. Walking about in this country with a chip on one's shoulder is the wrong mental attitude, and going on incessantly about slavery and prejudice is as well.

Furthermore, if you are African-American and you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then you know, this did not happen by accident. Your ancestors were not just random people grabbed up and brought to America; God chose each and every man and woman that He brought to the great country of America. You are not here by a random act, but by God's will and purpose. If you harbor any resentment about this, you need to take it up with God.

Every single one of us faces a number of roadblocks in our path, but God is with us. Our character is defined by the doctrine in our souls and the faith that we have in God; not by whether we have marched against racial prejudice or not. We work with what God has given us within the society God has placed us. In the United States, we are remarkably lucky. However, a person can fail miserably in the United States as well as anywhere else.

One of the saddest things in American history is not slavery, but the fall of the Black church over the past several decades. Martin Luther King, no matter how you view him, merged politics, social action and the local church, which destroyed many Black churches from within. African Americans for years had a rich spiritual heritage based upon faith in Jesus Christ and trust in His plan, and this was destroyed when churches became vehicles of political activity and human good. The logical progression was to move Black churches as being places of spiritual growth to vehicles for social change and finally to evil hotbeds of socialism (as in **Black Liberation Theology**).

For more information on this topic, see <http://kukis.org/Doctrines/liberationtheology.htm>

### 2Samuel 9:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bôw' (אוּב) [pronounced <i>boh</i> ]	<i>to take in, to bring, to come in with, to carry</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong's #935 BDB #97
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> °]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'ădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i> ]	<i>Lord, Master, my Lord, Sovereign; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10

There are actually 3 forms of this word: 'ădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*]; 'ădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NAY*]; and 'ădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced *uh-doh-NEE*].

This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יִימ) [pronounced *eem*], an older form of the *pluralis excellentiæ* (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix, hence, *my Lord* (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from *my lords*).

lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced <i>LEH-khem</i> ]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536
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## 2Samuel 9:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i> ]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #398 BDB #37

**Translation:** *And you will bring in [his produce] and bread for the son of your lord, to eat it.* It appears as though a portion of this verse was left out or that it was understood. There is the land which is restored to Mephibosheth, and that land must be farmed. Ziba is in charge of farming it, and the produce which is produced is to be brought in to Mephibosheth.

Ziba essentially stole all of Saul's possessions, by virtue of being his main servant. Although Mephibosheth was deserving of these things, Ziba pawned him off on Machir ben Ammiel. Since then, Ziba had been living off of Saul's land and possessions. David is simply restoring things to the way that they should be.

The bread is what results from grain being made into bread. So, it does not just stop with bringing in the produce. It must be prepared, which is what the word *bread* indicates.

So, this might confuse you—why does Ziba, his sons and his servants, take care of Mephibosheth's land, if Mephibosheth is eating with the king? If there are 2 meals a day, we do not know if Mephibosheth eats both meals with David; and we do not know if this is an every day occurrence. Furthermore, all of Ziba's household become servants to Mephibosheth. Servants have to eat as well. So, all of this production which is brought in will be, to some extent, consumed by those who bring it in.

Mephibosheth will be in charge of a household, and Ziba, his head servant, will be in charge of this household under him. This means that Ziba will oversee the land holdings, the farming and the day-to-day things, such as meals.

There are a number of perfect tense verbs in this verse, which generally denote completed action, separated by several wâw conjunction's. Since these things have not taken place yet, the perfect tense indicates that they are certain to take place. Certainty is emphasized over either future action or continual action of the verbs.

## 2Samuel 9:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
M <sup>e</sup> phîybôsheth (מִפְּיֹבֶשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>mehf-ee-BOH-shehth</i> ]	<i>dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; a shameful thing from the mouth; exterminating an idol; transliterated Mephibosheth</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937
bên (בן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

## 2Samuel 9:10c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i> ]	<i>Lord, Master, my Lord, Sovereign</i> ; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated <i>Adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10
There are actually 3 forms of this word: ʾădônây (אֲדֹנָי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i> ]; ʾădônay (אֲדֹנַי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i> ]; and ʾădônîy (אֲדֹנֵי) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NEE</i> ].			
This is a form of Strong's #113, where there are three explanations given for the yodh ending: (1) this is a shortened form of the plural ending, usually written -îym (יָיִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i> ], an older form of the <i>pluralis excellentiæ</i> (the plural of excellence), where God's sovereignty and lordship are emphasized by the use of the plural; (2) this is the actual, but ancient, plural of the noun, which refers to the Trinity; or (3) this is the addition of the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix, hence, <i>my Lord</i> (the long vowel point at the end would distinguish this from <i>my lords</i> ).			
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i> ]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
lechem (לֶחֶם) [pronounced <i>LEH-khem</i> ]	literally means <i>bread</i> ; used more generally for <i>food</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3899 BDB #536
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, against, above</i>	preposition	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
shul <sup>e</sup> chân (שֻׁלְחָן) [pronounced <i>shool<sup>e</sup>-KHAWN</i> ]	<i>a table; a skin or leather mat laid on the ground</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #7979 BDB #1020

**Translation:** [And Mephibosheth, son of your lord, will eat bread at my table.](#)" Interestingly enough, David is going to provide meals for Mephibosheth. It is unclear whether this will be normal meals or whether occasional meals. He had food being brought in from his own fields, but he is also given a place to eat at David's table.

However, as king, David is going to have a large staff, and a staff which needs to be taken care of; so we may reasonably assume that there will be daily meals with David and/or his staff and household. Ziba is being informed of this because Mephibosheth has to go from his home to David's.

There is only one problem, and that is, *where are Saul's land holdings?* We would expect for them to be in Gibeah of Saul, which is in Benjamin (Jerusalem is on the border of Judah and Benjamin). Now, even though this is 5–10 miles away, traveling back and forth between Saul's land holdings and David's palace is not going to be a daily affair. So, either Saul also has land closer to Jerusalem (which is very possible) or in Jerusalem (which is possible, but not as likely); or Mephibosheth will travel to David's palace periodically, but certainly not daily. Saul may have non-contiguous land holdings, some in Gibeah and some in Jerusalem; and Mephibosheth will oversee all of these land holdings.

R. B. Thieme Jr. suggests that Saul had 20 different properties, and that the 20 servants of Ziba are property managers, each one assigned a different property to oversee. This would allow for Saul to own property which is closer to Jerusalem.

Given Saul's holdings, which were certainly going to be extensive, it appears that Mephibosheth will use that wherewithal to purchase a place in Jerusalem (2Sam. 9:13) where he will live permanently, and therefore, be able to attend meals at the palace frequently.

Mephibosheth eating at David's table will accomplish 2 things: (1) This will be, in part, the grace that David shows to Mephibosheth (and it is over an extended period of time, as God's grace is to us); and (2) Ziba is to understand that he cannot pull a fast one on Mephibosheth, because Mephibosheth is dining at the king's palace every night. This will keep Ziba honest, as long as Mephibosheth eats at the palace and as long as David is running the palace (this is a very important point).

### 2Samuel 9:10d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
Tsîybâ' (הַיָּבֵיט) [pronounced <i>tsee-BAW</i> ]	<i>statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850
chămishshâh (חַמִּישָׁה) [pronounced <i>khuh-mish-SHAW</i> ]	<i>five</i>	feminine numeral construct	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
'âsâr (עָשָׂר) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWR</i> ]	<i>ten; –teen [resulting in numbers 11–19]</i>	masculine/feminine singular noun	Strong's #6240 BDB #797
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'es <sup>e</sup> rîym (עֶשְׂרִים) [pronounced <i>ges<sup>e</sup>-REEM</i> ]	<i>twenty</i>	plural numeral adjective	Strong's #6242 BDB #797
'ebed (עֲבָד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>b</sup>-ved</i> ]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:...**(Ziba [had] 15 sons and 20 slaves). The final line is an aside. Ziba came out of this deal quite well. It has only been 10–20 years since Saul died, and he now has 15 sons and 20 slaves. This I certainly a measure of great earthly prosperity. As discussed earlier, Ziba might even be living on some of the land which belonged to Saul or to one of Saul's sons. He very likely lives in one of their houses. However, Ziba is supposed to be under Saul's family's control (which is Mephibosheth), so David makes it clear that all of these are to serve Mephibosheth.

Again, RBT says that we are dealing here with 20 property managers or head slaves, each of which would be over a different household or property. However, there are no modifying words (e.g., *head slaves*), so I would personally lean more toward this being the sum total of the slaves Ziba has managed to snag, most of whom probably came from Saul's estate (he may have purchased some of them as well). Although Saul probably had much greater holdings, my guess is that Ziba had 20 slaves total and probably not all of Saul's previous holdings. However, David apparently restores all of Saul's land to Mephibosheth (2Sam. 9:7), which may include holdings which were not in Ziba's possession, and, therefore, holdings not discussed directly in this chapter. So, we

definitely know about Ziba and how his stolen holdings are transferred back to Mephibosheth; but there may have been other properties which David also restored to Mephibosheth, which would have included additional servants.

And so says Ziba unto the king, “As all that commands my lord the king his servant, so does your servant.” And Mephibosheth is eating upon my table as one from sons of the king.

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9:11

And Ziba said to the king, “Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do.” And Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one from the king’s sons.

And Ziba said to the king, “Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do.” Furthermore, Mephibosheth will eat at my table as one of the king’s sons.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Siba said to the king: As you, my lord, have commanded <u>your</u> servant, so will your servant do: and Miphiboses will eat at my table, as one of the sons of the King.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Ziba unto the king, “As all that commands my lord the king his servant, so does your servant. And Mephibosheth is eating upon my table as one from sons of the king.”
Septuagint (Greek)	And Ziba said to the king, According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so will your servant do. So Mephibosheth did eat at the table <u>of David</u> , as one of the sons of the king.

Significant differences: The English of the Latin Vulgate ignores two of the 3 particles found in the Hebrew at the beginning of Ziba’s quote. The LXX begins with *according*, which is a legitimate translation of the kaph preposition. In that same sentence, the Latin has *your servant* rather than *his servant*.

The second sentence is rather confusing. The Latin agrees with the Hebrew here, but the Greek and Syriac both have the *table of David* rather than *at my table*.

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

CEV	Ziba replied, "Your Majesty, I will do exactly what you tell me to do." So Ziba's family and servants worked for Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth was lame, but he lived in Jerusalem and ate at David's table, just like one of David's own sons. And he had a young son of his own, named Mica. [vv. 11–13]
Easy English (Pocock)	Ziba answered, 'I am your servant. I will do everything that you, the king, have ordered.' So, Mephibosheth ate all his meals at the king's table. He was like one of the king's sons.
Easy-to-Read Version	Ziba said to King David, "I am your servant. I will do everything that my lord the king commands."
Good News Bible (TEV)	Ziba answered, "I will do everything Your Majesty commands." So Mephibosheth ate at the king's table, just like one of the king's sons.
<i>The Message</i>	"All that my master the king has ordered his servant," answered Ziba, "your servant will surely do." And Mephibosheth ate at David's table, just like one of the royal family.
New Century Version	Ziba said to King David, "I, your servant, will do everything my master, the king, commands me." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as if he were one of the king's sons.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

New American Bible	[Ziba, who had fifteen sons and twenty servants], said to the king, "Your servant shall do just as my lord the king has commanded him." And so Meribbaal ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.
NIRV	Then Ziba said to the king, "I'll do anything you command me to do. You are my king and master." So David provided what Mephibosheth needed. He treated him like one of the king's sons.
Revised English Bible	Ziba, who had fifteen sons and twenty slaves, answered, 'I shall do all that your majesty commands.' So Mephibosheth took his place in the royal household like one of the king's sons. I have included a portion of v. 10 here, as the REB presents it as part of v. 11.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	Then Ziba said to the king, Every order which you have given to your servant will be done. As for Mephibosheth, he had a place at David's table, like one of the king's sons.
HCSB	Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do all my lord the king commands." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table just like one of the king's sons.
JPS (Tanakh)	Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do just as my lord the king has commanded him." "Mephibosheth shall eat at my table like one of the king's sons."
NET Bible®	Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do everything that my lord the king has instructed his servant to do." So Mephibosheth was a regular guest <sup>16</sup> at David's table, <sup>17</sup> just as though he were one of the king's sons.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Tsiba said to the sovereign, "According to all that my master the sovereign has commanded his servant, so your servant does." "As for Mephibosheth," <i>said the sovereign</i> , "he shall eat at my table as one of the sons of the sovereign."

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

English Standard Version	Then Ziba said to the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so will your servant do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table, like one of the king's sons.
NASB	Then Ziba said to the king, "According (O)to all that my lord the king commands his servant so your servant will do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table as one of the king's sons..
Thieme	Then Ziba replied the king, "According to all that my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do {not the servant of Saul - so Ziba never recognized Saul's authority - he only recognizes his own authority to use authority - a revolutionist at heart}."
Young's Updated LT	And Ziba says unto the king, "According to all that my lord the king commands his servant, so does Your servant;" as to Mephibosheth, "he is eating at my table ( <i>says the king</i> ) as one of the sons of the king."

**The gist of this verse:** Ziba promises to do all that David requested him to do. Mephibosheth will be eating either at the king's table or Ziba promises here that he will eat at his table.



## 2Samuel 9:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i> ]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
Tsîybâ' (הביצ) [pronounced <i>tsee-BAW</i> ]	<i>statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850
'el (אל) [pronounced <i>e]</i>	<i>unto, in, into, toward, to, regarding, against</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
melek <sup>e</sup> (מלך:) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced <i>k<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
kôl (לכ) [pronounced <i>koh]</i>	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
K <sup>e</sup> kôl (לכ) appears to mean <i>as all, according to all, just as all, exactly as all</i> .			
'âsher (אשר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
K <sup>e</sup> kôl 'âsher (לכ) appears to mean			
tsâvâh (צו) [pronounced <i>tsaw-VAW</i> ]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
'ădônây (אדני) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i> ]	<i>Lord, Master, my Lord, Sovereign; can refer to the Trinity or to an intensification of the noun; transliterated Adonai</i>	masculine plural noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #113 & #136 BDB #10
There are actually 3 forms of this word: 'ădônây (אדני) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i> ]; 'ădônay (אדני) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NAY</i> ]; and 'ădônîy (אדני) [pronounced <i>uh-doh-NEE</i> ].			
melek <sup>e</sup> (מלך:) [pronounced <i>MEH-lek</i> ]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
'êth (אח) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	generally untranslated; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'ebed (עבד) [pronounced <i>GE<sup>B</sup>-ved]</i>	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

## 2Samuel 9:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, thus; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted;</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
ʿebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced ĠE <sup>B</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5650 BDB #713

**Translation:** And Ziba said to the king, “Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do.” David laid it all out for Ziba, and Ziba was both shamed and willing to do what he should have originally done: take care of Mephibosheth. He promises to do all that David commands him.

Although it is not clear in this passage, we will find out later that Ziba is a lying scumbag. We can piece some of this information together simply from the fact that Ziba should have been in service to Mephibosheth all of this time; particularly because Mephibosheth was helpless. However, what Ziba did instead was acquire all of the land (and probably all of the servants) which should have belonged to Mephibosheth.

Clarke says this of Mephibosheth: *The promises of Ziba were fair and specious, but he was a traitor in his heart, as we shall see in the rebellion of Absalom, and David's indulgence to this man is a blot in his character; at this time however he suspected no evil; circumstances alone can develop the human character. The internal villain can be known only when circumstances occur which can call his propensities into action; till then he may be reputed an honest man.*<sup>22</sup>

I believe that this is the proper place to end Ziba's quote (some extend it into v. 11b).

## 2Samuel 9:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
M <sup>e</sup> phîybôsheth (מְפִיבֹשֶׁת) [pronounced meh-ee-BOH-shehth]	<i>dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; a shameful thing from the mouth; exterminating an idol; transliterated Mephibosheth</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937
ʾâkal (אָכַל) [pronounced aw-KAHL]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #398 BDB #37
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced ġah]	<i>upon, against, above</i>	preposition	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

<sup>22</sup> Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 9:11.

### 2Samuel 9:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shul <sup>e</sup> chân (שׁוֹלְחָן) [pronounced shool <sup>e</sup> -KHAWN]	<i>a table; a skin or leather mat laid on the ground</i>	masculine singular noun with the 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix	Strong's #7979 BDB #1020
This tiny 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular suffix is the source of much controversy.			
kaph or k <sup>e</sup> (כ) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
'echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, off, out from, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	<i>king, ruler, prince</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572

**Translation:** *And Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one from the king's sons.* Believe it or not, this last phrase requires a lot of discussion to interpret.

I think that this is more clearly presented in a table:

### The 3 Interpretations of 2Samuel 9:11

Scripture	Text/Commentary
<p>And Ziba said to the king, "Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do. And Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one from the king's sons."</p>	<p>Some have interpreted this to be Ziba still speaking. He should have been taking care of Mephibosheth and treating him as royalty, regardless. Ziba promises that Mephibosheth will eat at his table like a king's son would. So this is Ziba saying, "Mephibosheth will eat at my table as the son of a king." However, the Qal active participle indicates that Mephibosheth will always eat at their table (we would have expected a Qal imperfect). This is what should have been. Ziba should not have needed David to call him in to tell him to do this. And using the Qal participle indicates that this is an action which has been going on for awhile and continues to go on. If this were the case, then Mephibosheth would not have been under the care of Machir. In other words, this interpretation is quite problematic.</p>

## The 3 Interpretations of 2Samuel 9:11

Scripture	Text/Commentary
<p>And Ziba said to the king, "Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do." [David then said,] "And Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one from the king's sons."</p>	<p>Other translations suggest that David says this. It is presented as a separate quote. The problem with this is, the Bible always identifies who is speaking for each quote. So, either some text dropped out (<i>and David said</i>) or the affixed 1<sup>st</sup> person singular suffix is a mistake. Secondly, we would not expect David to use a Qal participle in addressing Ziba. As above, this suggests that Mephibosheth eating at David's table is an ongoing thing, but it has not even started yet. However, even though the land had not been officially transferred to Mephibosheth, it is possible that he had already begun to eat with David.</p>
<p>And Ziba said to the king, "Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do." And Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one from the king's sons.</p>	<p>A third possibility, which is what I lean toward, is, David recorded this incident himself, as he is a writer; and slipped up. Where it was traditional to refer to oneself in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person, even when you are the writer and one of the people in the narrative, David accidentally here referred to the table as <i>my table</i>. So this is not David speaking to Ziba, David, but David writing, indicating what came to pass: <b>And so Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one of the king's sons.</b> So, he slipped up, in the realm of formal writing; but it suggests that David wrote this himself.</p>

The 3<sup>rd</sup> explanation, which I believe is the correct one, is not contradictory in any way; it simply means that David slipped up and referred to himself in the 1<sup>st</sup> person in a narrative.

No matter how we choose to read this, the overall interpretation is not changed. At some point in time, Mephibosheth joined David at his table to frequently dine.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

We see this chapter as a whole, and it often runs together for us; however, we have several discreet conversations in this chapter. This means, these are completely separate conversations.

## The Discreet Conversations of 2Samuel 9

Participants	Conversation
David and some of his aides (presumably).	David inquires whether there is anyone from Saul's family remaining. V. 1
David and Ziba	One of David's aides knows that there is Ziba, who used to be a slave to Saul's family. Ziba is called in and David asks him if anyone of Saul's family is still alive. Vv. 2–4.
David and Mephibosheth	David has Mephibosheth brought in, and all of the land of Saul is restored to him, and David promises him a place to sit at his table, as if a king's son. Vv. 5–8
David and Ziba	Ziba is called back in. He is not necessarily waiting out in the foyer, because it would have taken some time for David to have had Mephibosheth brought in. So, even though these conversations appear as if they all occur within a few hours of each other, they probably occurred on separate days and possibly with several days intervening time. David, in this conversation, tells Ziba what he has decided to do. Saul's land and possessions would be returned to Mephibosheth, which would include Ziba and his family and his slaves. Ziba agrees to David's judgment. Vv. 9–11
Summary	What became of Mephibosheth is given.

So, even though we have the line, *Mephibosheth will eat at my table* said twice, it is not because the writer of this narrative has lost track of what is going on, and keeps on reminding us of this. First it is David telling Mephibosheth what would happen; then it is Ziba saying what he will do; and finally, we are told what happened in the end.

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

What Ziba should have been doing all along is taking care of Mephibosheth. At the very least, Mephibosheth should have been treated as an equal. So, what appears to be happening here is Ziba recognizes how he has come short of his responsibilities and he is promising to meet them as he ought. This is what should have been happening. Ideally speaking, Ziba is shamed, and he realizes what he has done wrong, and says this to make up for his not taking care of Mephibosheth in the first place.

With Mephibosheth eating regularly with the king, it will be difficult for Ziba to re-steal this property from Mephibosheth. We will find out that Ziba will bide his time—for many years in fact—and pick his moment to steal from Mephibosheth again (we will cover this at the end of this chapter).

### Chapter Outline

### Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

## The Changed Life of Mephibosheth

**And to Mephibosheth a son young; and his name Micah. And all sitting of a house of Ziba servants of Mephibosheth**

2Samuel  
9:12

**Mephibosheth also [had] a young son, and his name [was] Micah. And all of [those] inhabitants of Ziba's house were the servants of Mephibosheth.**

**Mephibosheth also had a young son, and his name was Micah. And all of those living at Ziba's house were the servants of Mephibosheth.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Latin Vulgate	And Miphiboseth had a young son whose name [was] Micha: and all that <u>kindred</u> of the house of Siba served Miphiboseth.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And to Mephibosheth a son young; and his name Micah. And all sitting of a house of Ziba servants of Mephibosheth
Septuagint (Greek)	And Mephibosheth had a little son, and his name was Micha: and all those dwelling in the house of Ziba were servants to Mephibosheth.
Significant differences:	The English translation of the Latin text has <i>kindred</i> rather than <i>those sitting (dwelling)</i> .

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Easy-to-Read Version	Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica. All the people in Ziba's family became Mephibosheth's servants.
New Living Translation	Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica. From then on, all the members of Ziba's household were Mephibosheth's servants.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Now, MephiBosheth had a small son named Micha, and the whole of house of Ziba were MephiBosheth's servants,...
God's Word™	Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. Everyone who lived at Ziba's home became Mephibosheth's servant.
New American Bible	Meribbaal had a young son whose name was Mica; and all the tenants of Ziba's family worked for Meribbaal.
New Jerusalem Bible	Meribbaal had a young son whose name was Micha. All the people living in Ziba's household entered Meribbaal's service.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	And Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica. And all the people living in the house of Ziba were servants to Mephibosheth.
JPS (Tanakh)	Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica; and all the members of Ziba's household worked for Mephibosheth.
NET Bible®	Now Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. All the members of Ziba's household were Mephibosheth's servants.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And Mephibosheth has a young son, and his name [is] Micha, and every one dwelling in the house of Ziba [are] servants to Mephibosheth.
Hebrew Names Version	Mefivoshet had a young son, whose name was Mikha. All that lived in the house of Tziva were servants to Mefivoshet.
NASB	Mephibosheth had a young son whose name was Mica. And all who lived in the house of Ziba were servants to Mephibosheth.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And Mephibaal had a young son, whose name was Mica. And all who dwelt in the house of Ziba were slaves to Mephibaal.
Young's Updated LT	And Mephiboshes has a young son, and his name is Micha, and every one dwelling in the house of Ziba are servants to Mephibosheth.

**The gist of this verse:** These final two verses wrap everything up. Mephibosheth has a son named Micha (or Micah). Ziba's family and slaves became the servants of Mephibosheth.

The final two verses give us a summary of what came to pass with regards to David's treatment of Mephibosheth, and how Ziba figured into all of this.

**2Samuel 9:12a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## 2Samuel 9:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
M <sup>e</sup> phīybōsheth (מְפִיבֹשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>mehf-ee-BOH-shehth</i> ]	<i>dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; a shameful thing from the mouth; exterminating an idol; transliterated Mephibosheth</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937
bēn (בֶּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
qāṭān (קָטָן) [pronounced <i>kaw-TAWN</i> ]	<i>small, young, unimportant, insignificant</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #6996 BDB #881

**Translation:** **Mephibosheth also [had] a young son,...** Mephibosheth was a man in a hopeless situation. He had been the son of the king, but was injured in his feet permanently when he fled with his nurse. Through God's grace, carried out by King David, he had one of the greatest blessings a man could have on this earth: a son.

The verbiage here is important. We are not simply told that Mephibosheth had a son whose name was Micah, but that he had a *young (or small) son*. The writer is not simply telling us that, at unknown point in time, Mephibosheth has a son. If that were the case, the author would not call him a *young (small) son*. We do not have his wife giving birth to a child nor do we have a generic reference to having a son at some unspecified point in time. Therefore, when all of this took place, Mephibosheth had a young son. So, if he is 5 years old when Saul and Jonathan are killed (2Sam. 4:4); and now, at the time of this chapter, he has a young son, then Mephibosheth would reasonably be somewhere between 16 and 50. However, there is no indication that this occurs near the end of David's reign (why would he have waited so long to do this?), so Mephibosheth is reasonably between, say, 16 and 30; and David would have been about 10 or so years into his reign over all Israel, give or take a few years. This approximate timetable is in keeping with 2Sam. 1–8 occurring prior to this chapter and with 2Sam. 10–24 occurring after. Therefore, we are dealing with a timeline which makes perfect sense and needs no complex explanation.

One interesting aspect to this is, this takes place when Mephibosheth has a young son. That is, the text suggests that Mephibosheth had this going on already. He was already married and had a young son. So, despite the fact that Mephibosheth was somewhat of a charity case, rejected by the slaves of his father, and lame in both feet, God blessed him with a wife and with a young child. In other words, when David did all of this, some female gold-digger did not come along and decide, "Aha, gravy train here; King David is going to support Mephibosheth; and Mephibosheth now has a lot of land. So let me hook up to this guy." Mephibosheth apparently already had a wife and a young son. What David did to him was gracious, but did not give him assets enough to get married. So Mephibosheth's family and his restoration of property are all a matter of grace (something we ought to recognize as well).

Understanding this indicates to us that Mephibosheth's assets, previous to this, were in his soul. He found a woman and married her and had a young son based upon what was in his soul. This is something that we would reasonably suppose, given that his father was Jonathan, the most honorable member of Saul's family.

## 2Samuel 9:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## 2Samuel 9:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
shêm (שׁוּם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Mîykâ' (מִיכָא) [pronounced mee-KAW]	<i>who is like Yah; transliterated Micha, Micah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4316 BDB #567

**Translation:** ...and his name [was] Micah. Mephibosheth named his son *Micah*, which means *who is like Jah (Jehovah)*. He recognized that all he received was a matter of grace. He did not earn it nor did he deserve it; and Mephibosheth stands out as a product of God's grace.

The name of this son, apparently already born at the time when Mephibosheth comes to the palace of David, gives us some insight into Mephibosheth's character. Mephibosheth recognizes the grace of God, and he does this *before* David contacts him. That is the significance of telling us that Mephibosheth has a *small son* and that his name is *who is like Jehovah*. So, even though, on the surface, it appears as if we are told very little about Mephibosheth, we still know a great deal. Before David blesses Mephibosheth, he is married and he fathers a young son. This means that, on the basis of his soul, he found his right woman (I am assuming this is his right woman) and was blessed by a son. He recognizes God's grace and therefore, names his son *who is like Jehovah*. This is a man that, even before David plucks him out of his obscurity, recognizes the grace of God. My point here is, it is not just coincidence or chance that David chooses this time to find Mephibosheth and to take care of him. Mephibosheth is oriented to grace, and when that happens, God begins to pour on the blessing. Given Mephibosheth's actions in this chapter, and how we find him later, I would suggest to you that Mephibosheth began to grow spiritually before David went looking for him. As he began to grow, God began to pour on the blessings. Then, David calls him in. After his relationship with David, Mephibosheth begins to grow even more (as we will find out when we come across this man again).

Barnes uses this information to put a time to this chapter: *Mephibosheth was five years old at Saul's death. He may have been thirteen at David's accession to the throne of Israel. In the eighth year of David's reign over all Israel he would have been twenty-one. His having a son at this time indicates that we are about the 10th year of David's reign.*<sup>23</sup>

Another thing that we ought to notice is, the Bible records the descendants of Mephibosheth (1Chron. 8:34–40 9:40–44). What does the Bible tell us about the sons of Ziba? We know he has 15 sons. Nothing more. There is a principle here—honesty and integrity are a great legacy to leave behind; Ziba's lying and conniving gained him only a temporary fortune, which he lost (more on that in the [Doctrine of Mephibosheth](#)).

## 2Samuel 9:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

<sup>23</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword, 2Sam. 9:12.



## 2Samuel 9:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
môwshâb (בְּשׂוּמ) [pronounced moh-SHAH <sup>ps</sup> V]	<i>a seat, a place for sitting; a sitting down, an assembly; a settlement, a habitation; time of inhabitation; inhabitants</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #4186 BDB #444
bayith (תַּיִב) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
Tsîybâ' (הַבַּיִצָּ) [pronounced tsee-BAW]	<i>statue, post; strength; transliterated Ziba</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #6717 BDB #850
'ebed (עֶבֶד) [pronounced GE <sup>b</sup> -ved]	<i>slave, servant</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #5650 BDB #713
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>o</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to, belonging to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
M <sup>e</sup> phîybôsheth (תְּשׁוּבֵימָת) [pronounced mehf-ee-BOH-shehth]	<i>dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; a shameful thing from the mouth; exterminating an idol; transliterated Mephibosheth</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937

**Translation:** And all of [those] inhabitants of Ziba's house were the servants of Mephibosheth. Ziba did not do as he should have. He had a place in life, and that was serving the family of Saul. Once Saul and his sons were killed, all bets were off, as far as Ziba was concerned. He knew where Mephibosheth lived, but was not the one serving him. Quite obviously, Mephibosheth had no power over him.

Imagine just how different this would have been had Ziba been faithful to his calling. Imagine how he would have been treated, had it turned out that he continued to take care of and to look after Mephibosheth. David would have recognized and rewarded his faithfulness. David would have celebrated his graciousness and his dedication to Saul's family. All of them would have been exalted. As it was, David only lifted up Mephibosheth, and placed Ziba and his family under the control of Mephibosheth.

**Application:** Faithfulness is important. You need to be faithful when no one is looking. If God has given you a job, then you need to work hard at that job. You need to give all of your effort to this job. It does not matter if this is the deadest end job of all dead end jobs and you do not expect to earn an extra dime or to ever be promoted; you ought to be faithful. It does not matter if your co-workers are vicious gossiping hens and your boss (-es) is ruled by human viewpoint; you still give it your all. **"Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."** (Matt. 6:1-4). A mature believer in Jesus Christ does not need someone to come by every 5 minutes and say, *good job; keep up the good work*. Now, on the other hand, if you are the boss, the recognize that some of your workers are not believers and certainly not mature believers, so a little encouragement, respect and appreciation are in order from time to time.

**Application:** You ought to be faithful and honorable in all of your dealings. When you sign a contract, you ought to observe that contract, whether the other person is observing this contract or not. You need to display your own faithfulness, and then let God take care of the other person.

**And Mephibosheth is staying in Jerusalem for upon a table of the king regularly he was eating. And he [was] lame in two of his feet.**

2Samuel  
9:13

**Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem for he regularly ate upon the table of the king. And he [was] lame in both of his feet.**

**Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem for he regularly ate upon the table of the king. And he was lame in both of his feet.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Latin Vulgate	But Miphiboseeth dwelt in Jerusalem: because he ate always of the king's table: and he was lame of both feet.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Mephibosheth is staying in Jerusalem for upon a table of the king regularly he was eating. And he [was] lame in two of his feet.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he continually ate at the table of the king; and he was lame in both of his feet.
Significant differences:	None.

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Easy English (Pocock)	Mephibosheth had two bad feet and he could not walk. He lived in Jerusalem and he ate his meals with the king.
Easy-to-Read Version	Mephibosheth was crippled in both feet. Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem. Every day Mephibosheth ate at the king's table.
Good News Bible (TEV)	So Mephibosheth, who was crippled in both feet, lived in Jerusalem, eating all his meals at the king's table.
New Century Version	Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king's table. And he was crippled in both feet.
New Life Bible	So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, for he always ate at the king's table. Both his feet had been hurt and he could not walk.
New Living Translation	And Mephibosheth, who was crippled in both feet, lived in Jerusalem and ate regularly at the king's table.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	...and they lived in Jerusalem and always ate at the table of the king. However, he was lame in both of his feet since birth.
NIRV	Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem. The king always provided what he needed. Both of his feet were hurt.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	So Mephibosheth went on living in Jerusalem; for he took all his meals at the king's table; and he had not the use of his feet.
NET Bible®	Mephibosheth was living in Jerusalem, for he was a regular guest at the king's table. But both his feet were crippled.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem, for he ate continually at the king's table, [even though] he was lame in both feet.
Concordant Literal Version	And Mephibosheth is dwelling in Jerusalem, for at the table of the king he is eating continually, and he [is] lame of his two feet.
NRSV	Mephibosheth* lived in Jerusalem, for he always ate at the king's table. Now he was lame in both his feet.
Thieme	Consequently Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem for he did eat at the king's table continually. Furthermore, he was lame in both feet.
WEB	So Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem; for he ate continually at the king's table. He was lame in both his feet.
<i>Young's Literal Translation</i>	And Mephibosheth is dwelling in Jerusalem, for at the table of the king he is eating continually, and he is lame of his two feet.

**The gist of this verse:** In the end, Mephibosheth is living at Jerusalem and he eats with the king at the king's table.

**2Samuel 9:13a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
M <sup>e</sup> phîybôsheth (מְפִיבֹשֶׁת) [pronounced <i>mehf-ee-BOH-shehth</i> ]	<i>dispeller of shame; an advocate of shame; a shameful thing from the mouth; exterminating an idol; transliterated Mephibosheth</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #4648 BDB #937
yâshab (בָּשַׁב) [pronounced <i>yaw-SHAH<sup>b</sup>V</i> ]	<i>inhabiting, staying, remaining, dwelling, sitting</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, at, by, near, on, with, before, against, by means of, among, within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Y <sup>e</sup> rûwshâlayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) [pronounced <i>y'roo-shaw-LAH-yim</i> ]	<i>possibly means founded upon peace or city of the Jebusites (or both); it is transliterated Jerusalem</i>	proper singular noun, location	Strong's #3389 BDB #436
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>when, that, for, because, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>‘ah]</i>	<i>upon, against, above</i>	preposition	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
shul <sup>e</sup> chân (שֻׁלְחָן) [pronounced <i>shool<sup>e</sup>-KHAWN</i> ]	<i>a table; a skin or leather mat laid on the ground</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7979 BDB #1020

## 2Samuel 9:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
melek <sup>e</sup> (מֶלֶךְ) [pronounced MEH-lek]	king, ruler, prince	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4428 BDB #572
tâmîyd (תָּמִיד) [pronounced taw-MEED]	continuously, continuity; regularly, at regular intervals; continuity, perpetuity	masculine singular noun/adverb	Strong's #8548 BDB #556
hûw' (אוּ) [pronounced hoo]	he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced aw-KAHL]	to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy	Qal active participle	Strong's #398 BDB #37

**Translation:** [Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem for he regularly ate upon the table of the king.](#) You will recall that one of our problems was, Saul lived in Gibeah, and this was far enough from Jerusalem to make daily travel a burden. Even though it was only 5–10 miles away from Jerusalem, it is a long trip for a lame man to make. We run into minor problems like this throughout the Bible. Sometimes they are explained and sometimes they are not. Here, the mystery is quickly dispensed with—Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem. Since it is not likely that Saul held property in Jerusalem proper (although he may have), Mephibosheth certainly had the assets now to purchase a home in Jerusalem.

David probably had a banquet hall (possibly several, given that he had several wives), with the best chefs in all Israel preparing the food; and his family and some members of his staff and his honored guests would eat here. Now whether or not there are several dining rooms or several tables, it is unclear. However, [eating upon the table of the king](#) does not mean that Mephibosheth had an intimate dinner with David each evening, along with 3 or 4 other people. There would be at least one grand banquet hall, and the king may or may not attend the dinner each evening (I suspect there was a more private dining room elsewhere in the palace, when David chose to eat alone or with a small number of guests). My guess would be, there would be somewhere between 30–100 people eating dinner in this banquet hall each night.

Exactly what this looked like is hard to determine. There are tables recovered from the time of Herod, 1000 years later, which are made of stone and look like our tables. However, it appears that, in our Lord's time, a large banquet might be 3 large but low tables put in a U shape, and people actually laid upon these tables, with the food stuffs being inside the U. In other words, our picture of the Lord's Table may have looked nothing like that. Similarly, the way you or I may picture David's banquet hall may not have been anything like that.

## 2Samuel 9:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hûw' (אוּ) [pronounced hoo]	he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, personal pronoun	Strong's #1931 BDB #214

## 2Samuel 9:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
piççêach (פּוּצְעָח) [pronounced <i>pihs-SAY-ahkh</i> ]	<i>lame</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #6455 BDB #820
sh <sup>e</sup> nêy (שְׁנַי) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>n-Ā</i> ]	<i>two, two of, a pair of, a duo of</i>	dual numeral construct	Strong's #8147 BDB #1040
regel (רֶגֶל) [pronounced <i>REH-ge</i> ]	<i>foot, feet</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7272 BDB #919

**Translation:** *And he [was] lame in both of his feet.* Again, at the end of this chapter, the fact that Mephibosheth is lame is brought up again—why? The picture here is one of helplessness. We are reminded again and again that Mephibosheth is helpless, unable to raise himself up. He is treated as a son not because of anything which he has earned or deserved, but because of David's grace. This describes perfectly our relationship to God. There is nothing we can do to earn God's grace. He has provided all of it for us.

Interestingly enough, although this sounds like the end of the narrative, it continues in 2Sam. 16:1–4 19:24–30 21:1–7, all of which will be covered briefly in [the Doctrine of Mephibosheth](#), to follow:

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### Addendum

[Return to Chapter Outline](#)

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[Exegetical Studies in Samuel](#)

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 9	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
David Desires to Show Grace to the House of Saul	
So David said, “[Is] there [lit., <i>for, that, because</i> ] still existing [one] who remains to the house of Saul? Then I will manufacture grace for [lit., <i>with, by, near</i> ] him because of Jonathan.”	So David said, “Is there anyone who remains from the house of Saul? I would like to show grace toward him because of Jonathan.”
David Speaks to Ziba, Saul's Former Servant	
And [there was] to the house of Saul a servant and his name [was] Ziba. Therefore, they summoned him to David. And the king said to him, “[Are] you Ziba?”	And there was to the house of Saul a servant and his name was Ziba. Therefore, they summoned him to David. And the king said to him, “Are you Ziba?”
And he said, “[I am] your servant.”	And he said, “I am your servant.”

<b>A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 9</b>	
<b>A Reasonably Literal Translation</b>	<b>A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase</b>
The king then said, “[Is there] no man yet to the house of Saul for whom [lit., <i>with him</i> ] I will manufactory the grace of Elohim?”	The king then asked, “Is there no man of the house of Saul to whom I may show the grace of God to?”
And Ziba said to the king, “[There is] yet a son of Jonathan’s; crippled of feet.”	And Ziba answered the king, saying, “There is the remaining son of Jonathan, who is lame.”
The king then says to him, “Where [is] he?”	The king then asked him, “Where is he?”
And Ziba says to the king, “Listen, he [is at] the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.”	Ziba answered the king, “Look, he is at the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.”
<b>David Searches out Mephibosheth and Speaks to him</b>	
Then David, the King, sent [his servants] and brought him [Mephibosheth] from the house of Machir son of Ammiel from Lodebar. So Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David. He fell upon his face and he bowed down.	Then King David sent his servants to fetch Mephibosheth from the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar. So Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David and he fell upon his face before David and he did obeisance before David.
David said, “Mephibosheth.”	David said, “Mephibosheth.”
And he said, “Behold, [I am] your servant.”	And Mephibosheth answered, “Here, I am your servant.”
Then David said to him, “Do not be afraid, for I will certainly manufacture grace with you because of your father Jonathan. Also, I will return all of the land [which belonged to] Saul your grandfather. Furthermore, you will eat bread at my table always.”	David said, “Mephibosheth.” Then David said to him, “Do not be afraid, for I will certain show grace to you because of your father Jonathan. Also, I will return all of the land which formerly belonged to your grandfather Saul. Finally, you will take your meals with me from here on out.”
He bows down again and says, “What [is] your servant that you have turned toward a dying dog, such as I?”	Mephibosheth bowed again before David and said, “Who am I, your servant, that you would look toward me with favor, though I am no more worthy than a dying scavenger dog?”
<b>David Talks to Mephibosheth Again</b>	
Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul’s young servant, and he said to him, “All that belongs [lit., <i>is</i> ] to Saul and to all of his house, I have given to the [grand] son of your lord. And you will work the ground for him—you and your sons and your slaves. And you will bring in [his produce] and bread for the son of your lord, to eat it. And Mephibosheth, son of your lord, will eat bread at my table.” (Ziba [had] 15 sons and 20 slaves).	Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul’s young servant, and said to him, “All that belongs to Saul and his house, I have given to your lord’s grandson. And you personally will work the ground for him—you and your sons and your slaves [Ziba had 15 sons and 20 slaves]. You will bring in his produce and his bread for the son of your lord, for him to eat. And Mephibosheth, the son of your lord, will eat bread at my table.”
And Ziba said to the king, “Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do. And Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one from the king’s sons.”	And Ziba said to the king, “Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do. Furthermore, Mephibosheth will eat at my table as one of the king’s sons.”

## A Complete Translation of 2Samuel 9

### A Reasonably Literal Translation

### A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

#### Mephibosheth and his son Eating at David's Table

Mephibosheth also [had] a young son, and his name [was] Micah. And all of [those] inhabitants of Ziba's house were the servants of Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem for he regularly ate upon the table of the king. And he [was] lame in both of his feet.

Mephibosheth also had a young son, and his name was Micah. And all of those living at Ziba's house were the servants of Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem for he regularly ate upon the table of the king. And he was lame in both of his feet.

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There still is a lot remaining for us to pull together about this chapter.

In fact, why are we told about Mephibosheth at all? How is this beneficial to us?

### Mephibosheth is a Testament to God's Grace

1. Mephibosheth has several strikes against him.
2. He has been lame since age 5.
3. He is a part of the deposed dynasty, and, as such, would have been subject to death.
4. He has not behaved as royalty.
5. One who should have been Mephibosheth's servant and managed to steal from him his kingdom.
6. We are Mephibosheth.
7. We are born into this world as a part of a deposed dynasty, and are subject to death for this reason.
8. We are lame; we are helpless to do anything about our condition.
9. We do not behave like creatures from the hand of God; we sin and are in rebellion against God.
10. Satan has usurped our authority over the earth from us.
11. The only hope that Mephibosheth had was in the grace of David.
12. The only hope that we have is in grace of God.
13. Mephibosheth, despite being in the opposing dynasty, was brought into the Davidic kingdom as one of David's sons.
14. We are brought into our Lord's kingdom, apart from any personal merit and despite the fact that we have not the means to ingratiate ourselves to God.
15. Mephibosheth, because of David's grace, is brought into the kingdom as a son.
16. God brings us into His kingdom as sons; because we are in Christ, we are His sons.

This is the amazing thing about the Word of God; it is all here for a purpose. God the Holy Spirit did not inspire David and say, "Here's a nice little story; let's include this in the book of Samuel." There is a reason that Mephibosheth is brought into the Word of God,

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I will admit, I was feeling quite proud of myself for putting together all of this together. However, Pastor David Guzik, I now see, came to essentially the same conclusions:

### Guzik's Summary of the Mephibosheth Narrative

Summary of Mephibosheth's End:

## Guzik's Summary of the Mephibosheth Narrative

a. Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: No longer hiding in fear of the king, this descendant of Saul now lived openly among the people of God.

b. He ate continually at the king's table: No longer in poverty and estranged from the king, now he had great privilege before the king.

c. He was lame in both his feet: Mephibosheth's weakness did not vanish. His life was far better, but he was still lame.

i. David's grace to Mephibosheth is a wonderful picture of God's grace to us. We are Mephibosheth.

- We are hiding, poor, weak, lame, and fearful before our King comes to us
- We are separated from our King because of our wicked ancestors
- We are separated from our King because of our deliberate actions
- We separated ourselves from the King because we didn't know him or His love for us
- Our King sought us out before we sought Him
- The King's kindness is extended to us for the sake of another
- The King's kindness is based on covenant
- We must receive the King's kindness in humility
- The King returns to us what we lost in hiding from Him
- The King returns to us more than what we lost in hiding from Him
- We have the privilege of provision at the King's table
- We are received as sons at the King's table, with access to the King and fellowship with Him
- We receive servants from the King
- The King's honor does not immediately take away all our weakness and lameness, but it gives us a favor and standing that overcomes its sting and changes the way we think about ourselves

ii. David's grace to Mephibosheth is also a pattern for us in serving and ministering to others. We are David.

- We should seek out our enemies and seek to bless them
- We should look for the poor, weak, lame, and hidden to bless them
- We should bless others when they don't deserve it, and bless them more than they deserve
- We should bless others for the sake of someone else
- We must show the kindness of God to others

Taken from *David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament*; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; 2Sam. 9.

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It is also important to note that this is not the end of the story of Mephibosheth. You have heard, *and they got married and lived happily ever after*. Marriage does not end the day a couple gets married. Similarly, we might say, *and he believed in Jesus Christ and lived happily ever after*. After salvation, 99.9% of us have a life to lead, and there will be trials and tribulations as well as blessing. Satan (Ziba) will still be there to lie about us before God, doing all that is in his power to take from us what the grace of God has given us. For this reason, we will continue to pop in on the life of Mephibosheth throughout 2Samuel.

Although this chapter of 2Samuel is completely narrative, we learn a great deal from it.

### Lessons from 2Samuel 9

1. We learn that David is a man of grace. He is not vindictive, he is not power mad, he is not concerned over losing his position as king, and he does not think of himself first.



## Lessons from 2Samuel 9

- a. These things are important, as David will have two major failures in his life, beginning with 2Sam. 11; so we need to know just what kind of a person David is.
  - b. Many kings are overly concerned with getting and keeping their power. Many kings would destroy all of their enemies or potential enemies. David does not; David showers grace upon Mephibosheth. This is a picture of Jesus Christ showering grace upon us. Rom. 5:10: **For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.** We are natural enemies of God. We are, by birth, against God. We have sin natures, we have Adam's original sin imputed to us, and we commit sins against God. Yet, **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us** (Rom. 5:8b).
  - c. David, in this way, is our model. When he has time off, he thinks about the Ark of God (Jesus Christ), he concerns himself with the Tabernacle of God (where we worship), and he concerns himself with Mephibosheth (his fellow man).
2. This chapter, as a part of 2Sam. 8–10, gives us an outline for future events.
    - a. 2Sam. 8 parallels the Tribulation and the many nations which gather to fight in Israel.
    - b. 2Sam. 9 parallels the Millennium and the graciousness which God pours out upon His people.
    - c. 2Sam. 10 parallels the final Gog and Magog revolution against God and against perfect environment.
  3. We learn about commitment which Ziba should have had to Saul's family. Ziba should have been the one to take Mephibosheth in. In fact, Ziba should have presented himself to Mephibosheth as his slave. However, when Saul's family was killed in battle, all bets were off, insofar as Ziba was concerned. This was wrong. Had David found Ziba serving Mephibosheth, he would have shown grace to both men and rewarded Ziba for his faithful service.
    - a. We need to be aware of our earthly obligations and service. Let me give you an example: I was technically let out of a debt, and yet I still paid that debt. Don't misunderstand me, I do not do the right thing in every instance; however, this was the right thing to do.
    - b. Whenever you have obligations, either by a handshake or by contract, then, as a believer in Jesus Christ, you keep to those obligations. I had a tenant at one time who began his own roofing company. As the owner of his company, he should have been responsible for every job that he did, even if it required him to come out and do the roof or whatever was undone. He did not do this. He saw himself as an executive, bidding jobs and sitting behind a desk with his feet up on the desk. However, he lacked the integrity and the follow through, and as a result, his company went nowhere.
    - c. You need to be faithful in all of your obligations.
  - 4.
  - 5.

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This will not be the last that we hear from Ziba or from Mephibosheth. Incidents in the future which involve David, Ziba and Mephibosheth are going to surprise you (as they did me). This is not the last time that we will hear from Machir ben Ammiel. If you need to read ahead, we will meet all of these people again in **2Sam. 16 17 19**.

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

### The Parable of 2Samuel 9

A Reasonably Literal Translation

The Parable

David Desires to Show Grace to the House of Saul

The Parable of 2Samuel 9	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	The Parable
So David said, “[Is] there [lit., <i>for, that, because</i> ] still existing [one] who remains to the house of Saul? Then I will manufacture grace for [lit., <i>with, by, near</i> ] him because of Jonathan.”	David represents God. Even though the house of Saul was against, David, David wanted to manufacture grace toward any survivors of that house. One might see Jonathan as Christ, having died; but his family would live because of him.
David Speaks to Ziba, Saul's Former Servant	
And [there was] to the house of Saul a servant and his name [was] Ziba. Therefore, they summoned him to David. And the king said to him, “[Are] you Ziba?”	Ziba represents Satan. Although angels were told that they were to serve man, Satan and the fallen angels had rebelled against God. Compared to Ziba, Mephibosheth is helpless. Ziba has taken all that belonged to Mephibosheth, as Satan has assumed authority over this world.
And he said, “[I am] your servant.”	
The king then said, “[Is there] no man yet to the house of Saul for whom [lit., <i>with him</i> ] I will manufactory the grace of Elohim?”	
And Ziba said to the king, “[There is] yet a son of Jonathan’s; crippled of feet.”	
The king then says to him, “Where [is] he?”	
And Ziba says to the king, “Listen, he [is at] the house of Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.”	
David Searches out Mephibosheth and Speaks to him	
Then David, the King, sent [his servants] and brought him [Mephibosheth] from the house of Machir son of Ammiel from Lodebar. So Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David. He fell upon his face and he bowed down.	David (God) brings the undeserved Mephibosheth into his house and offers him not just his land back (which is the earth), but that he will now have a seat at the table of David. This is grace which Mephibosheth has done nothing to deserve.
David said, “Mephibosheth.”	
And he said, “Behold, [I am] your servant.”	
Then David said to him, “Do not be afraid, for I will certainly manufacture grace with you because of your father Jonathan. Also, I will return all of the land [which belonged to] Saul your grandfather. Furthermore, you will eat bread at my table always.”	
He bows down again and says, “What [is] your servant that you have turned toward a dying dog, such as I?”	
David Talks to Mephibosheth Again	

The Parable of 2Samuel 9	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	The Parable
<p>Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's young servant, and he said to him, "All that belongs [lit., is] to Saul and to all of his house, I have given to the [grand] son of your lord. And you will work the ground for him—you and your sons and your slaves. And you will bring in [his produce] and bread for the son of your lord, to eat it. And Mephibosheth, son of your lord, will eat bread at my table." (Ziba [had] 15 sons and 20 slaves).</p> <p>And Ziba said to the king, "Just as my lord the king has commanded his servant, so your servant will do." And Mephibosheth is eating at my table as one from the king's sons.</p>	<p>God has the angels functioning as servants to mankind. They have carried the Word of God to us and they apparently provide that wall of fire (protection) around us.</p>
Mephibosheth and his son Eating at David's Table	
<p>Mephibosheth also [had] a young son, and his name [was] Micah. And all of [those] inhabitants of Ziba's house were the servants of Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem for he regularly ate upon the table of the king. And he [was] lame in both of his feet.</p>	<p>Despite being helpless and worthless, Mephibosheth (representing us) is shown great grace from David (representing God), giving us a place at His table.</p>

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The author (s) of Samuel do not compress David's relationship with Mephibosheth into one chapter. He is found in 5 different chapters in 2Samuel. Therefore, we are going to gather up these passages and examine the full narrative arc of Mephibosheth.

The Narrative Arc of Mephibosheth (the Doctrine of Mephibosheth)	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The story of Mephibosheth is scattered throughout the book of 2Samuel: 2Sam. 4:4 9:1–13 16:1–4 19:24–30 21:1–9</li> <li>2. Mephibosheth was 5 years old when the news of the defeat of Saul and Jonathan came to his city. A nurse grabbed him and carried him in their escape, but she dropped him, and he was lame in both feet. We live in an era where we can break our toes, various bones in our feet, tear a ligament, and doctors are able to repair this damage; at the time of Mephibosheth, an accident which involved the foot could leave a man lame for the remainder of his life. 2Sam. 4:4</li> <li>3. In between wars, King David was an odd king. Instead of being concerned about building monuments to himself, or chasing women, he was concerned with very different sorts of things. In 2Sam. 9, he wanted to show grace toward anyone who remained from the line of Saul. This is exactly the opposite of how most kings think. Most kings will remove their competition, so it is not uncommon for a new dynasty to remove all vestiges of the previous dynasty. In a similar fashion, we have 3<sup>rd</sup> world dictators today who will issue arrest warrants for war crimes, or whatever, for most or all of those in the previous administration. They are either arrested and sentenced, or they escape the country with their lives and (hopefully) family members. 2Sam. 9:1</li> <li>4. Saul's former servant, Ziba, had become reasonably prominent in those days, so his name was thrown</li> </ol>	

## The Narrative Arc of Mephibosheth (the Doctrine of Mephibosheth)

out there in order to locate some of Saul's clan. It will come to light that he is prominent because he is rich with all of Saul's possessions. 2Sam. 9:2

5. King David calls Ziba in and finds out that Saul's grandson (and Jonathan's son), Mephibosheth, is still alive and being taken care of in the house of Machir ben Ammiel in Lo-debar. 2Sam. 9:2–4
6. David sends for Mephibosheth, and brings him to his palace. David tells Mephibosheth not to be afraid and makes 3 promises to him: "I will certainly show grace to you because of your father Jonathan. And I will give back to you all the land of your father Saul. And you shall eat bread at my table continually." 2Sam. 9:5–7
7. Mephibosheth recognizes that he is not deserving of any of this, calling himself a dead dog. 2Sam. 9:8
8. The king calls Ziba back in and tells him that all which belonged to Saul now belongs to Mephibosheth, and that Ziba and his family and his servants will serve Mephibosheth. 2Sam. 9:9–12
9. Mephibosheth will then live in Jerusalem and regularly eat dinner at David's palace. 2Sam. 9:13
10. Ziba figured out a way to get these properties back when David was on the run from Absalom during a revolution. 2Sam. 16:1–4: *And David had passed on a little from the top. And behold, Ziba, the servant of Mephibosheth, came to meet him with a couple of saddled asses, and on them two hundred loaves and a hundred bunches of raisins, and a hundred of summer fruit, and a skin of wine. And the king said to Ziba, What are these to you? And Ziba said, The asses are for the king's household to ride on, and the bread and the summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine for the wearied to drink in the wilderness. And the king said, And where is the son of your lord? And Ziba said to the king, Behold, he is staying in Jerusalem, for he said, Today the house of Israel will give back to me the kingdom of my father. And the king said to Ziba, Behold, all that Mephibosheth has is yours. And Ziba said, I bow myself; may I find favor in your eyes, my lord, O king.* Ziba first shows up with abundant supplies for David, which is going to indicate his loyalty to David (although it is for show). He lies to David and says that Mephibosheth decided to remain in Jerusalem and take back his throne. David, believing this, gives all of Mephibosheth's wealth back to Ziba.
11. David and Mephibosheth do meet again, after the revolution was squelched. 2Sam. 19:24–30: *And Mephibosheth the son of Saul had come down to meet the king. And he had not dressed his feet, nor had shaved his upper lip. Yea, he had not washed his garment, even from the day that he went away till the day that he came in peace. And it happened when he had come to Jerusalem to meet the king, the king said to him, Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth? And he said, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me. For your servant said, I will saddle the ass for myself and ride on it and go with the king, for your servant is lame. And he spoke slander against your servant to my lord the king. And my lord the king is as a messenger of God; yet you do that which is good in your eyes. For all the house of my father would be nothing except men of death before my lord the king, and you have set your servant among those eating at your table. And what right is there to me any more, even to cry any more to the king? And the king said to him, Why do you speak any more of your matters? I have said, You and Ziba share the land. And Mephibosheth said to the king, Yes, let him take all, since my lord the king has come in peace to his house.* Mephibosheth was limited in what he could do, but he protested David's exile by not trimming his beard or changing his clothes. This would have made him a rather unappetizing dinner partner. Ziba had told Mephibosheth, "I will go out and deliver these things to the king; don't worry about it." David divides up Saul's assets, and they are to be split between Ziba and Mephibosheth. The reasoning behind this and whether Mephibosheth really gave up his half will be discussed when we exegete 2Sam. 19.
  - a. This is a fascinating decision on David's part. Here he is, removed from power; Ziba has connived David into giving him all of Mephibosheth's land and property, so David solves this problem by giving Mephibosheth back half of the land and property.
  - b. Despite all of Ziba's failings (and there were many), he did bring David supplies in a time of need.
  - c. David does one of the wisest things in his career, and splits up Mephibosheth's property in two and give half to Mephibosheth and half to Ziba.
  - d. Why doesn't David simply restore this property to Mephibosheth and make Ziba his servant again?
  - e. This is an executive decision. As long as Ziba and Mephibosheth are alive, Ziba is going to try to take Mephibosheth's property away from him. There are few things that we won't do for this

## The Narrative Arc of Mephibosheth (the Doctrine of Mephibosheth)

- property.
- f. This splits up Ziba and Mephibosheth forever. They go their own way, much as Lot and Abraham.
  - g. Since Saul was king, his property holdings were probably extensive. Therefore, half of a fortune is quite a blessing.
  - h. Most of us, if someone said, "I am only going to give you *half* of Bill Gates' fortune" would be fine with that.
  - i. However, Ziba, given his nature, will be forever angry about this; and never satisfied with only getting half of Saul's land. This will eat away at him until the day that he dies.
  - j. Mephibosheth, on the other hand, is willing to let it all go to Ziba; he is concerned with his relationship to the giver (David) more than he is concerned with the gift.
  - k. Whether David took all of the land and gave it to Ziba is not discussed. It is my opinion that, what Mephibosheth was saying here was more of saying, like, "I am happy where I am; if you want to give all of the land to Ziba, I would be fine with that." I think that David still divided up the land, as he knew this would be difficult for Ziba to deal with.<sup>1</sup>
12. Mephibosheth comes into view once more. King Saul had killed many Gibeonites (2Sam. 21:1), which is a violation of an early treaty which they made with Joshua (Joshua 9). 7 men from the house of Saul were delivered over to the Gibeonites, but David spared Mephibosheth. 2Sam. 21:1–9

Since we find Mephibosheth scattered throughout several chapters in Samuel, we may reasonably assume that Samuel, for the most part, is in chronological order.

<sup>1</sup> R. B. Thieme Jr. gave very similar points in his 1972 David series with regards to David splitting up Saul's land between Ziba and Mephibosheth. I reproduced much of what Thieme had to say on this subject from memory.

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The line of Mephibosheth is found in [1Chronicles 8](#). (he is called Merib-baal in this line, which will be explained in 1Chron. 8). [1Chronicles 8 PDF](#).

When I begin to examine a chapter of the Bible (for the past 4 years, it has been a chapter of Samuel), I never have any idea what I am going to find. After a simple reading of a chapter, I often think to myself, "I'll be able to complete this in a few weeks and 30 pages; there doesn't appear to be a lot here." And then I am amazed at what I find, the more I dig. These 13 verses somehow morphed into 85 pages of some of the most personally gratifying studying that I have done. It is a great blessing to be able to spend time thoroughly examining the Word of God.