

“We will (let us) go into his tabernacles: we will (let us) worship at his footstool. Arise, O LORD, into thy rest; thou, and the ark of thy strength. Let thy (people) priests be clothed with righteousness; and let thy saints shout for joy. For thy servant David's sake turn not away the face of thine anointed.” Ps.132. 7-10

Always Loving the KING!

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2 Samuel 19:24 – 30

This morning I would like to take a break from our studies on Isaiah 53 and I want to speak on the subject of “Always Loving the King.” Most of us are familiar with the life and story of Mephibosheth. Remember in 2 Samuel 9 we have that great story of David’s love, kindness, mercy and forgiveness to Mephibosheth. In that narrative Mephibosheth was the grandson of Saul, who was David’s archenemy, he was Jonathan’s son. David had blessed Mephibosheth with such kindness so that he would even sit at the king’s table. Remember again, Mephibosheth, was crippled, being lamed on both legs and had known nothing but great love from King David.

Times have changed and many have forsaken David when his son Absalom had sought to usurp and dethrone David, but God intervened and now David’s kingship and throne are restored to its fullness, but David had not seen Mephibosheth since that incident in chapter 9 and was curious as to what had happened to Mephibosheth and in reality wanted to know where Mephibosheth’s heart was because of the many that had forsaken him. He wanted to know where Mephibosheth’s heart was just as God every once and awhile wants to know where is your heart? Thus the title of our sermon: “Always Loving the King.”

In chapter 19 of 2 Samuel Mephibosheth is the second person to meet David, the first one was Shimei who was a deceiver and put on a religious show like Ziba, Mephibosheth’s servant had done. This passage of verses 24-30 is an obscure passage in the Old Testament which many overlook. What is so impressive about this story is that we witness the reunion of King David with a poor, lame outcast who really loved the king more than his own life. I believe we can glean a valuable lesson as children of the most High God. Let us emulate the testimony of Mephibosheth in loving our great King, the LORD Jesus Christ.

We are commanded in the Old as well in the New Testament to love our God, Deuteronomy 6:5, *“And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”* Mark 12:30, *“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.”* Remember the words of the Apostle Paul how that when God saves us He puts His love in us, *“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”* Romans 5:5.

Other verses:

- Joshua 23:11, *“Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.”*
- Psalms 31:23, *“O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD preserveth the faithful...”*
the generous, disinterested spirit displayed by Mephibosheth was worthy a son of the noble-hearted Jonathan.
- Psalms 116:1, *“I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.”*
- Song of Songs 1:4, *“Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.”*
- Song of Songs 5:8, *“I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am sick of love.”*
- Luke 24:32, *“And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”*
- 1 Peter 1:8, *“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”*
- 1 John 4:19, *“We love him, because he first loved us.”*
- 1 Cor.16:22, *“If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.”*

The Word of God is replete with verses on loving our God supremely. We might speak of loving our God, but do we demonstrate that love? This is what I want you to concentrate on as I preach this message. God is not interested in lip service, but heart service. Not in saying but in doing. Not in talking about love but walking in love. If we grasp anything from this message, it's how deep is my love for my Savior, who loved me and gave Himself for me? May our love and devotion to Him be kindled, or if you wish, let us put a log of love in our hearts in order to keep the fires burning in our souls for Him! Let us take the words of the Apostle Paul and apply it to our hearts. Eph.3:17-19, *“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”* May God grace us to love Him above all things and above all persons. Let now look at the trials and triumphs of Mephibosheth, so that perhaps we can learn something about how to LOVE the King!

I have 3 things I want to set before you this morning:

- I. **Loving the King with a Fixed Affection.** (Passion – Devotion)
- II. **Loving the King with a Fixed Allegiance** (Pledge – Dedication)

III. Loving the King with a Fixed Adoration (Pleasure – Delight)

Before I continue, I want to qualify the term fixed. First, by fixed I mean a heart that is firm, resolved, ascertain, established, stable, constant, unwavering, committed, conviction, secured and determined. Secondly, notice how David used this term in Psalms; Ps.57:8; 108:1; 112:7 in other words there was no flip flopping by David. Going back and forth, being hot then being cold, lethargic then excited, no it was a constant inflexible heart poured out to his God.

Now, in introducing our story to you we must look quickly at another passage to set the stage before us. Turn 2 Samuel 16:1-4. *“And when David was a little past the top of the hill, behold, Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth met him, with a couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine. And the king said unto Ziba, What meanest thou by these? And Ziba said, The asses be for the king's household to ride on; and the bread and summer fruit for the young men to eat; and the wine, that such as be faint in the wilderness may drink. **And the king said, And where is thy master's son?** And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. **Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth.** And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.”* (“In the day of David’s sore need, Mephibosheth had prepared an elaborate and serviceable present, and had ordered his servant to saddle an ass that he might ride unto the fugitive king. But instead of obeying orders, the servant, Ziba, had himself ridden to the king, offered the present as a gift from himself, and had then grievously slandered and lied about his master (2 Sam. 16:1-4). All through the time of his absence David had labored under a misapprehension of the loyalty of Mephibosheth; but now the truth was to be revealed.” A.W. Pink)

This is the last thing David remembered regarding Mephibosheth. Within David’s heart I’m sure there was some hurt and some confusion. Why would Mephibosheth act like this after I spared his life? How can he do this to me after I spared his life? How can he be such a traitor? Or, how can he be such a backstabber? In other words, David could not understand Mephibosheth’s apparent reaction to everything that was going on. David must press on at this point because he almost lost the throne, but he was very confused by Mephibosheth’s action and attitude. Let just say that David was not the only one confused by this, to many commentators Mephibosheth is both an enigma and an anomaly. Well I can see why David was confused but for the life of me I don’t understand the commentators, many have written a bad report regarding Mephibosheth. I think they are wrong and have their eyes crossed spiritually. You don’t have to agree with my analysis of this, but I believe that Mephibosheth’s was right the whole time in his dedication, devotion and delight to see King David.

Let’s look at our first point:

I. Loving the King with a Fixed Affection. (Passion – Devotion)

My first observation of this is that Mephibosheth had his affection towards David the king. In other words he had an ardent passion for the King. I believe Mephibosheth demonstrates his absolute devotion, yea, his fixed affection to the king. Let’s look at

the sincerity of Mephibosheth. What cause Mephibosheth to have such a love, such a devotion and such a fixed affection? Well again the reason for this is that David loved him first. 1 John 4:19, *"We love him, because he first loved us."* We must understand that by nature we don't love God, we love ourselves first, we love our sins so much and we love just about anything and anyone else before God. The only time we seek to give consideration to God is when we need something from Him, up to then we don't need Him. If had not love us first, we would never have loved Him. Thus, our love for God is rooted in the fact that He loved us first. Mephibosheth loved David because David loved him first. Mephibosheth did not go looking or seeking for David, no David came to him, David came to where Mephibosheth was. This is what God does for us when He saves us, He come to us where we are. Turned to 2 Samuel 9, here we see the Covenant of Grace, or the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant. David loved Mephibosheth because of Jonathon; God loves us because of Jesus Christ. If this does not instill a devotion, a love, a fixed affection for God something is wrong with you. if this does not cause you to say as Solomon in Song of Songs 1:4, *"Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee,"* something is wrong with your heart, perhaps you have left your first love as our Lord Jesus Christ says in Rev.2:4, *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."*

You see Mephibosheth was the next in line to ascend to the throne of Saul and in reality; he was a rival to David for the throne to become king. But, David, in mercy and kindness which was in his heart, instead of acting with swift justice and putting Mephibosheth to death, as he had done to other members of Saul's family, he extended, love in place of justice, grace instead of condemnation to this little, crippled man. David had every right to kill Mephibosheth, but because of his great love for Jonathon, he spared Mephibosheth's life. This again is the whole essence of God loving us. Turn quickly to Ezekiel 16:1-8, 62. Isaiah 55:3, *"Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."* Hebrews 13:20, *"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."* When we stop and consider what God has wrought for us through the Person of His Son Jesus Christ, it is very clear and plain why we are to LOVE Him with our whole heart, our whole soul, with all of our mind and with every fiber of our strength! May I ask you a question? When was the last time you said to God, I LOVE YOU!

You see there is a reason why Mephibosheth's heart was fixed upon King David, David had shown him compassion and love and now Mephibosheth shows great devotion and great love to David. How do we know this, it shows in his life and service to David. While many had turn on David when it seemed he would be defeated, Mephibosheth stay on course with his loyalty and fidelity to David. Mephibosheth has absolute faithfulness towards the king.

Let us look at some verses now in 2 Samuel 19. Verses 24 & 25 again says, *"And Mephibosheth the son of Saul came down to meet the king, and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his*

beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace. (25) And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?" It was Mephibosheth that came down to see David. Remember David only had the lies he heard from Ziba regarding Mephibosheth, but this whole time, Mephibosheth's heart would leap with excitement when he heard news of his beloved KING! David had no clue Mephibosheth was around, so I'm sure it surprised David when he saw Mephibosheth. But, I believe that Mephibosheth's heart just kept beating for His Lord and King, so when he heard news of David coming to Jerusalem, in his lame cripple body he went hastily to see his beloved king. I'm sure the whole journey he was saying, I can't wait to see him, I can't wait to seem him. He was overflowing with excitement, he's coming, he's coming. Just the fact that Mephibosheth came to see David speaks highly of his love and devotion, yea his fixed affection for the king. Not only did Mephibosheth come down to see the king, his apparel was strange. Notice again verse 24, "...and had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the king departed until the day he came again in peace."

No question that neglecting his dress and appearance; he somehow demonstrated his love and concern for David, but also his mourning and distress over David's situation in his absence from Jerusalem. This evidence of mourning and anguish was over the removal of David from his throne. He did not dress his feet, trimmed his beard, washed his clothes, from the day the king departed in 2 Samuel 9 until. We must not forget also that everything David had received from Ziba was really from Mephibosheth. The "...couple of asses saddled, and upon them two hundred loaves of bread, and an hundred bunches of raisins, and an hundred of summer fruits, and a bottle of wine ...". These were token of gratitude from Mephibosheth when David was hurting, but remember Ziba took the credit for them.

Now, it is also interesting to note that his appearance would have gotten him in trouble with Absalom, but Mephibosheth had the commitment, the courage, the conviction to take a public stand for David, though it might be perilous to his soul. Oh to God that we had many more Christians with this integrity like Mephibosheth, it was a true mark of love and devotion for the man he loved. You see we don't have to go around telling people we love God or Jesus, no it will clearly be seen in you action and devotion to Him. People will see either your commitment to God or your compromise. They'll see your conviction or your complacency, your true mark of sincerity to God of your true mark of hypocrisy it will tell on you.

As I read about Mephibosheth's dedication not to take care of himself or his dress as a devotion to David, I was reminded of something David did for God in setting forth His love for God. Ps.132: 1-18. Yes notice the same heart, same love, same devotion, same conviction, same FIXED HEART! Mephibosheth had something that David had, remember also according to God; David has a heart after Him! Notice the consistency in their devotion and dedication to God. Mephibosheth will not dress his feet not trim his beard nor change his clothes, David says, "*How he sware unto the LORD, and vowed unto the mighty God of Jacob; Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed; I will not give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids, Until I find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the*

mighty God of Jacob.” Mephibosheth was not going to do those things either UNTIL he saw his KING, his LORD!

Remember we are seeing this through the eyes of Mephibosheth. David has no clue of Mephibosheth’s love, devotion, dedication and so forth, thus the question of David. I’m sure it must of hurt Mephibosheth quite a bit, especially as he waited patiently for his king, he expected the same from David, because the last time David saw him, he showered Mephibosheth with kindness and mercy and love and allow him to sit at the king’s table. But, David only has the lie of Ziba and thinks that Mephibosheth’s loyalty is with Absalom. David considers him a traitor, notice again, 2 Samuel 16:3 & 4, “***And the king said, And where is thy master's son? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he abideth at Jerusalem: for he said, To day shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father. Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth.*** And Ziba said, *I humbly beseech thee that I may find grace in thy sight, my lord, O king.*”

Thus, through David’s eyes, it’s ah Mephibosheth, what are you doing here? Look at verse 25 of 2 Samuel 19, “*And it came to pass, when he was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest not thou with me, Mephibosheth?*” How this question must of hurt and surprised Mephibosheth, it must have pricked his heart to have his love and devotion to David questioned. Remember our Lord Jesus Christ asked Peter, not once, twice, but three times, Peter do you love me? This was a sharp question by David that must have shamed Mephibosheth before all those that were around him, it implied that Mephibosheth had changed loyalties to Absalom. They viewed him as a traitor, as one having no gratitude, an unthankful heart, what a low scum of the earth they must have thought. Let’s make a some application regarding this false accusation of Ziba that has really hurt Mephibosheth’s reputation. This teaches us that though we might be loyal and faithful to God, yet through the lies and deception of others we might be blame for something we really didn’t do. The sad thing is that this accusation might be accepted true by others who perhaps should know better. As one writer puts it, “*But always remember that reputation is not something you can control. You can control your character, however.*” Let us not get to upset or fret about being falsely accused. Our Lord was falsely accused and remained quiet. The problem is our pride. When our pride is injured, boy we want to defend it quick. Mark 15:3, “*And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.*” Matthew 5:11, “*Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*” 1 Peter 3:16, “*Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.*” 1 Peter 2:19-23, “*For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.*” Therefore brethren let us not get too offended about a stained reputation, let us be concerned about our character. Don’t let you character be stained because our Great God is more interested in your character than your reputation. David had an accusation against Mephibosheth, but Mephibosheth’s answer was great. Look at

verses 26-28, there is a lot here and I will not be able to deal with all these things but what I want you to notice that in Mephibosheth's answer, it seems that Mephibosheth understands what is at stake here, which is not Mephibosheth's stained reputation, but his KING'S GLORY! In other words he knew that it was not about him but about the king and the king only! Notice how carefully and respectfully he answers his king. He keeps saying over and over "my lord and my king." And when it was all over, as though Mephibosheth bows his head and says in great humiliation and adoration, in great love and respect to his king, "...do therefore what is good in thine eyes." Wow, talk about great faith and great trust, most of us would still be giving excuses, but he bowed to the Lordship of His King, what is in your heart, your eyes, whatever your will is I fully accept! Oh to God that we had hearts like Mephibosheth! What a humble man, LORD do that which is right in your eyes. He didn't complain about his rights and how bad he was wrong, no, no, no whatever is good in your eyes, you do according to your will MY LORD and MY KING!

This is what the meaning is regarding our Lord's words in Mark 8:34, "*And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*" Mephibosheth's fixed affection, love and devotion is seen is denying himself, taking up his cross and seeking to follow HIS KING! The best way to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength is to deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Him supremely!

You want to love the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, that is, the LORD Jesus Christ with a Fixed Affection, with a fixed passion, with a fixed devotion you must deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Him whole heartily. There are no short cuts in Christianity. I don't know where you are this morning, but if you are outside Christ, give Him your heart, give Him your devotion, give Him your life and follow HIM. Do it now. What are you waiting for, you are going to die one day and it will be too late to love or follow Him. Do it now while you are still breathing and have life! If you profess to be a Christian and you have left your first love, come to Him in repentance and ask Him to forgive you and give you a heart to follow Him. David had to do this in Psalms 51:7-12, "*Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.*"

**Let us love our God supremely regardless of the circumstances!
He has done more for us than what David did for Mephibosheth!
The Best part is that God will never question your love to HIM,
because He knows what is in our heart, David was but a mere
man. Better yet, HE has done more for us than what David did
for Mephibosheth!** Psalms 31:23, "*O love the LORD, all ye his saints: for the LORD
preserveth the faithful...*" Let's pray.