

General Church Education



# David Is Kind to Jonathan's Son

2 Samuel 9:1-13

## Lesson 26

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 5: The Lord Is Our King

For ages 10-11

## David Is Kind to Jonathan's Son

2 Samuel 9:1-13

### Teacher Background

David assumed the throne of Israel and restored the Ark, however the time had not yet come to build the Ark a house in Jerusalem, David's new capital city. In spite of the fact that Saul and his son Jonathan had died, David kept his promise to show kindness to their descendants. David inquired about Jonathan's descendants and learned from Saul's servant Ziba that Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth who was crippled in both feet. David brought Mephibosheth to Jerusalem and restored Saul's property to him. Then David charged him to dine at his table. He assigned Ziba to farm his lands and care for his needs.

This story depicts David as a person who follows the Lord by keeping his promises. He did not complain about not building the temple or seek revenge for the hurtful way in which Saul treated him, and he found a home for Jonathan's lame son, Mephibosheth. By caring for Mephibosheth David acted kindly and consistently when he did not have to do so.

### Focus Points

- As a powerful king, David looked for an opportunity to be kind to Saul's descendants.
- On learning of Jonathan's lame son Mephibosheth, he sent for him.
- David restored Saul's land to Mephibosheth and honored him by inviting him to dine at the king's table.

### Readings from the Writings

All love holds intercession within it, and so does all mercy since mercy is the characteristic of love. Anyone who has love or who has mercy is interceding constantly. For example, the husband who loves his wife wishes her to be well-received and well-treated by others. Parents do the same thing for their children whom they love. It is likewise what a person governed by charity does for his neighbor, and what one moved by friendship does for a friend. These examples show that intercession is present unceasingly in all love. See *Arcana Coelestia* 8573

“When a person feels or perceives within himself that he has thoughts regarding the Lord which are good and thoughts regarding the neighbor which are good, and he wishes to perform acts of kindness for him, but not for the sake of any gain or for ... his own position, and when he feels that he has pity for anyone who suffers misfortune, and more so for him who errs in regard to the doctrine of faith, he may then know that ... there are with him things of an internal nature by means of which the Lord is working.” *Arcana Coelestia* 1102

## Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers the following choices:

### Recitation

Learn the Lord's Word by heart.

"The Lord is king forever and ever;  
The nations have perished out of His land." (Psalm 10:16)

### Projects and Activities (see back of lesson for answers)

David and the House of Saul True or False?

Read statements and write a T or an F on the line next to each one.

Defeating the Nations

David conquered nations that threatened Israel as the Lord commanded and established the Lord's kingdom. We must also conquer bad habits that oppose the Lord's kingdom in ourselves. Choose five habits to change and think of ways you can change them.

Song: Jonathan and David

David was kind to Jonathan's injured son Mephibosheth. Learn and sing a song about the special friendship between Jonathan and David. Listen online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-jonathan-and-david/>

### Additional Project and Activity Choices

Discussion: What Would It Be Like to Have a Physical Disability?

Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, had difficulty walking because his legs were injured when he was young. In what ways did the story tell us this affected him? How did David help Mephibosheth? What changes might we need to make to our home/classroom to make Mephibosheth feel welcome here? How might your life be different if you had a physical disability?

Project: David the Musician

Use a metal hanger and an incandescent light bulb to create shaker. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/ss-project-1samuel17-david-the-musician-9-11.pdf>

# David Is Kind to Jonathan's Son

## 2 Samuel 9:1-13

### Vocabulary

**harass**—aggressively make small attacks on someone

**oppress**—keep someone under harsh authority

**justified**—doing something for the right reasons

**lame**—to walk with difficulty due to a leg or foot injury or illness

### David Expands the Kingdom

David took the Ark to Jerusalem. He wanted to build a temple to keep it in, but the Lord told him that it was not yet time to do that. The Ark could stay in the tabernacle where it had been for many years. The Lord reminded David of the battles he had fought and the success He had brought him. He wanted David to conquer more of the land He had promised the Israelites.

“I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more; nor shall the sons of wickedness oppress them any more.” (2 Samuel 7:10)

David used Jerusalem as his capital as he fought enemies around Israel and extended Israel's borders. With the Lord's help he overcame the Philistines, the Moabites, the king of Zobah at the river Euphrates. He also conquered the Syrians, the Edomites, and the Ammonites. Therefore, these powerful nations could no longer oppress Israel.



“So David reigned over all Israel; and David administered justice and judgment to all his people.” (2 Samuel 8:15)

### David Keeps his Promises

David had promised Saul that he would not harm his descendants. He had also pledged to be kind to Jonathan and his family. Now that Saul and Jonathan were dead, it would have been easy for David to forget these promises.

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David was now a powerful king. He could have tried to make sure that none of Saul and Jonathan's descendants lived to threaten his throne. It was not unusual for a new king to protect himself from the relatives of a previous king by having them killed.

But David did not forget his promise to Jonathan. Jonathan had helped him escape from Saul, and had saved his life on several occasions. So he asked if any of Saul's family were still alive.

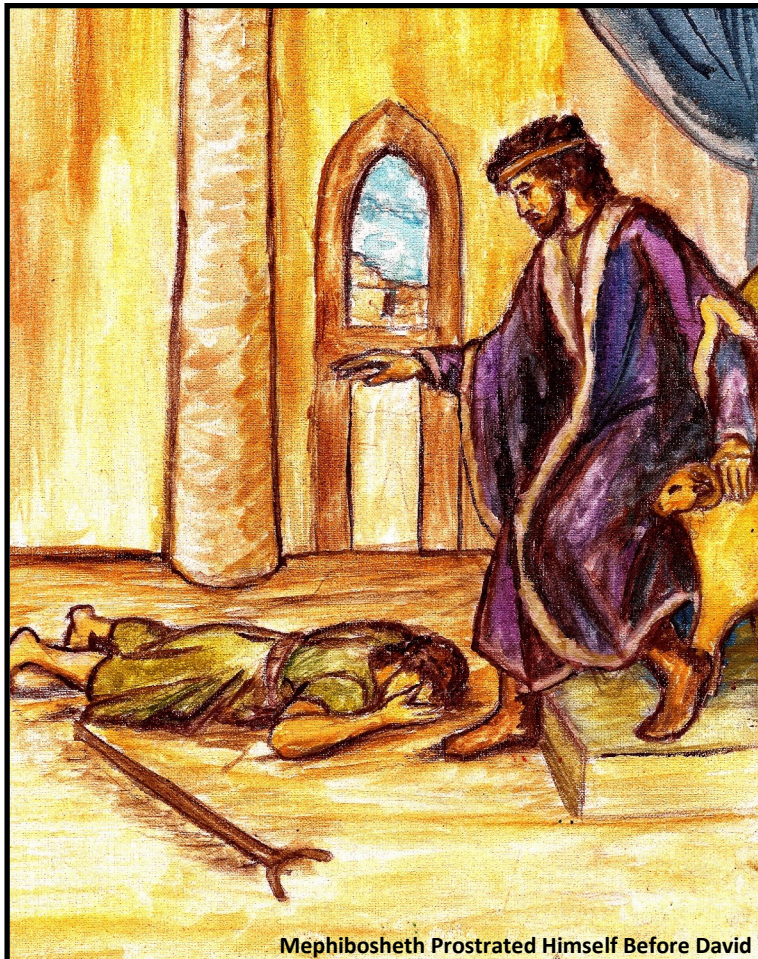
“Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?” (2 Samuel 9:1)

He learned that Ziba, Saul's servant might know the answer. So David called Ziba to the palace. Ziba told David about one of Saul's descendants who was still alive:

“There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet.” (2 Samuel 9:3)

The child was five years old when the Philistines killed his grandfather, Saul, and his father, Jonathan. When his nurse heard this awful news she ran for safety with the child. But she was in such a hurry to escape that the little boy fell and damaged his legs.

Jonathan's son was called Mephibosheth. As Saul's grandson, he should have been king after his brothers died. But the Lord had taken the kingdom away from Saul and given it to David.



Mephibosheth Prostrated Himself Before David

It is hard to imagine how Mephibosheth must have felt when he was summoned to appear before King David. He might have been afraid that David wanted to kill him so he could never claim the throne. When he saw David, he prostrated himself in front of the king—that means that he lay face down before him. David spoke kindly to the son of his friend:

“Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake.” (2 Samuel 9:7)

David showed his kindness by giving Mephibosheth back all the land that had belonged to his grandfather. Ziba and his fifteen sons and twenty servants were to plant and

harvest the crops on their master's land. Mephibosheth also received rent money from the people who lived on his land.

Sadly, in those days people treated someone who could not walk as if they were useless. David would not have been expected to treat his friend's injured son with respect. However, Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem and David treated him like an honored guest. He ate at the king's table, like one of David's own sons.

This story shows David using the power that the Lord gave him as a good steward. He defeated the nations around Israel and possessed the land that the Lord had promised Israel. He ruled with justice and judgment.

He also showed kindness to Saul's grandson, Jonathan's son. What does this show about David?



## Kindness

The Lord tells us in many places in His Word that we should love one another.

“A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” (John 13:34)

He says that if we truly love Him we will also love others. This means we will show them kindness. We will not stay angry with people even when we feel our anger is justified. David might have felt justified in killing Mephibosheth, but he appears to have been forgiving and generous to the only living descendant of the man who had hunted and tried to kill him for years.

All around us there are people who may need help. They may be sick, be differently abled, or have difficulty learning. Others might be treating them unkindly or ignoring them.

We are making the Lord king in our hearts when we try to help others or show them kindness just because they need help and we want to do something for them. In turn, we will feel blessed knowing that we have made another person's life better.

## Activity Overview

### Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“The Lord is king forever and ever;  
The nations have perished out of His land.” (Psalm 10:16)

### Projects and Activities (answers are at the back of this lesson)

Choose one or two.

David and the House of Saul True or False?

Read statements and write a T or an F on the line next to each one.

Defeating the Nations

David conquered nations that threatened Israel as the Lord commanded and established the Lord's kingdom. We must also conquer bad habits that oppose the Lord's kingdom in ourselves. Choose five habits to change and think of ways you can change them.

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## David and the House of Saul True or False?

2 Samuel 9

Decide if each statement is true or false. Write T for true, or F for false next to each statement.

1. \_\_\_\_ David wanted to know if there was anyone left alive of the house of Saul.
  
2. \_\_\_\_ Ziba had been Jonathan's servant.
  
3. \_\_\_\_ Ziba did not know where Jonathan's son lived.
  
4. \_\_\_\_ Mephibosheth was surprised that David treated him kindly.
  
5. \_\_\_\_ Mephibosheth was told that he would always eat at David's table.
  
6. \_\_\_\_ Mephibosheth was born lame.
  
7. \_\_\_\_ David kept his promise to Saul regarding his descendants.
  
8. \_\_\_\_ So far, David has shown himself to be a wise king.

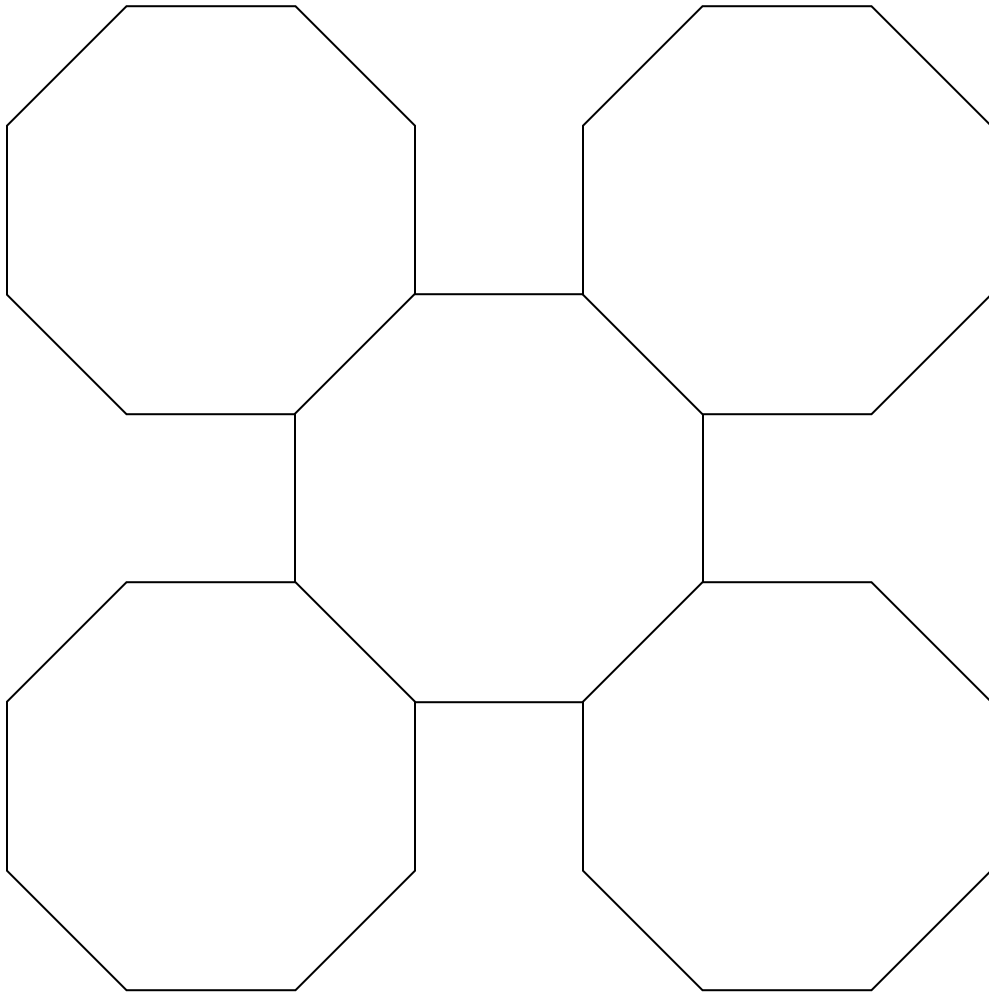


## Defeating the Nations

2 Samuel 8

David conquered many nations that threatened Israel as the Lord had commanded and established the Lord's kingdom. Like David, we need to conquer bad habits that oppose the Lord's kingdom in us. This happens when the Ten Commandments rule our lives.

Think of five challenges you face. Using one word, write one challenge you face in each octagonal stop sign. Then think of a way to fight against it and write a few words or draw a picture to remind you. Remember that the power to change comes from the Lord, but you make the decision to change!



# Answers

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David and the House of Saul True or False?

1. T, 2. F, 3. F, 4. T, 5. T, 6. F, 7. F, 8. T.