

Lesson 15

David and Mephibosheth

II Samuel 9

Memory Verse

“Be kind to one another,
tenderhearted, forgiving
one another even as God
in Christ forgave you”
(Ephesians 4:32)

Teacher’s Objective

At the end of the session,
the
students should be able
to:

Define the word *servant*

Locate on a map
the Jordan River
and Lo Debar

Describe how we
please God when
we are kind to others

Express in their own
words how they
will show kindness
to others

Materials Needed

See “Teaching Activities”
for specific details

Teacher’s Bible Study

Our story this week takes place after the death of King Saul and after David has become King. David was king of Judah first and then later to all Israel. The ark had been brought to Jerusalem and David desired to build a temple for the Lord. When David had things well under control, he turned his attention to a promise he had made to Jonathan. Jonathan was the son of Saul and David’s closest friend. Both Saul and Jonathan had been killed in a battle. David sought to find relatives of Jonathan. He found Mephibosheth, who was Jonathan’s son.

Mephibosheth (muh-FIB-uh-sheth) had been called Meribaal after the pagan gods. He was born as a normal and healthy child, heir to the throne of King Saul. When he was five years old, news arrived that King Saul and Jonathan were dead at the hands of the Philistines. The nurse taking care of Mephibosheth was frightened. While she was running to escape danger, she dropped Mephibosheth, crippling him in both feet (II Samuel 4:4).

In ancient times, there were many kinds of servants. There were those who were actually slaves, captured prisoners of war, and others who were hired for wages. Ziba was a servant of King Saul. After Saul’s death, he was more than likely a slave. As a slave, Ziba and his family faced a lifetime of servanthood. After many years of loyal work, a servant such as Ziba may have been put in a position of stewardship. A steward was someone who was responsible for taking care of the master’s household and supervising the work of the other servants. There are examples of servants who were so admired that they were asked to choose a wife for the master’s son (Genesis 24), inherit property (Genesis 15:2), and marry into the master’s family (I Chronicles 2:35). Female servants acted as wives when their master’s wives were unable to bear children (Genesis 16:2; 30:3–5, 9).

After Saul and Jonathan were killed, some members of the family fled to Lo Debar. Mephibosheth was one such member. The city, Lo Debar, was also known as Debir. This is not the Debir southwest of Jerusalem. This Debir was probably located east of the Jordan River and in the land of Gilead.

In preparing for this week’s lesson, read the following scriptures:

Jonathan and David	I Samuel 18:1–7
Jonathan protects David	I Samuel 20
David’s sorrow	II Samuel 1
David and Mephibosheth	II Samuel 9
Love chapter	I Corinthians 13

Presenting the Bible Story

II Samuel 4:4

Mephibosheth
(muh-FIB-uh-sheth)
was a member of the
enemy family

It was the custom during Bible times that when a new king came into power, he would search out the sons of the former king to put them to death. This was done so that they could not become king. Mephibosheth could have been in danger as he was the grandson of King Saul and the son of Jonathan, King Saul's son. Both King Saul and Jonathan were dead. Now David was King.

I Samuel 20:13–17

Mephibosheth is a picture of all of us before God. We are an enemy of God if we break His laws, think wrong thoughts, or if our desires come before God. This does not show love toward God, and these actions do not please God (Colossians 1:21). All of us have sinned and sin comes between you and God. No one is righteous (Romans 3:10).

II Samuel 9:1–8

Jonathan and David had made a covenant with one another. They promised to show love and kindness to one another's household.

Locate Lo Debar
on a map. It is east
of the Jordan River

One day, King David inquired if there was anyone left alive from Saul's family. The pledge he had made with Jonathan was not forgotten. Ziba, a former servant of King Saul, was called. David may not have known of Jonathan's son Mephibosheth. He may have been born after David fled from Saul (I Samuel 20:42).

II Samuel 9:9–13

In order to please God, we must show kindness to others. This is what David did. God loves each and every one of us. God says, "Yes, I have loved with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you" (Jeremiah 31:3). The love and kindness of God is shown to us in so many ways. Now David wanted to show his love and kindness toward anyone who was left in Jonathan's family.

Mephibosheth must have been somewhat frightened when he received the summons to appear before King David. When he arrived, he fell down on his face in complete humility and he referred to himself as David's servant and as a "dead dog."

Because of the deep love David had for Jonathan, David restored to Mephibosheth all the land that belonged to his grandfather, Saul. Ziba, his 15 sons and 20 servants were to farm the land for Mephibosheth, and David gave Mephiboseth the privilege of eating at his table.

Mephibosheth did not deserve the kindness that David showed—just as we do not deserve God's kindness. God welcomes us into His family because His Son, Jesus Christ, died for our sins. We please God when we obey God. One way to obey God is to show kindness to others, kindness to our enemies.

Romans 5:9,10: "Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when

Art and Activities

Teaching Activities

Young children

Provide your students with the appropriate Activity Page.

Older children

Provide your students with the appropriate Activity Page.

Explore with your students the following questions:

Explore the Subject

1. If you turn your back on God, are you His enemy?
2. Does sin separate you from God?
3. Is there even one person that is righteous?
4. What is a servant and what is the name of the servant in today's story?
5. How did King David show kindness to Mephibosheth?
6. Does it please God when we show kindness?
7. Is it easy to be kind and tenderhearted?

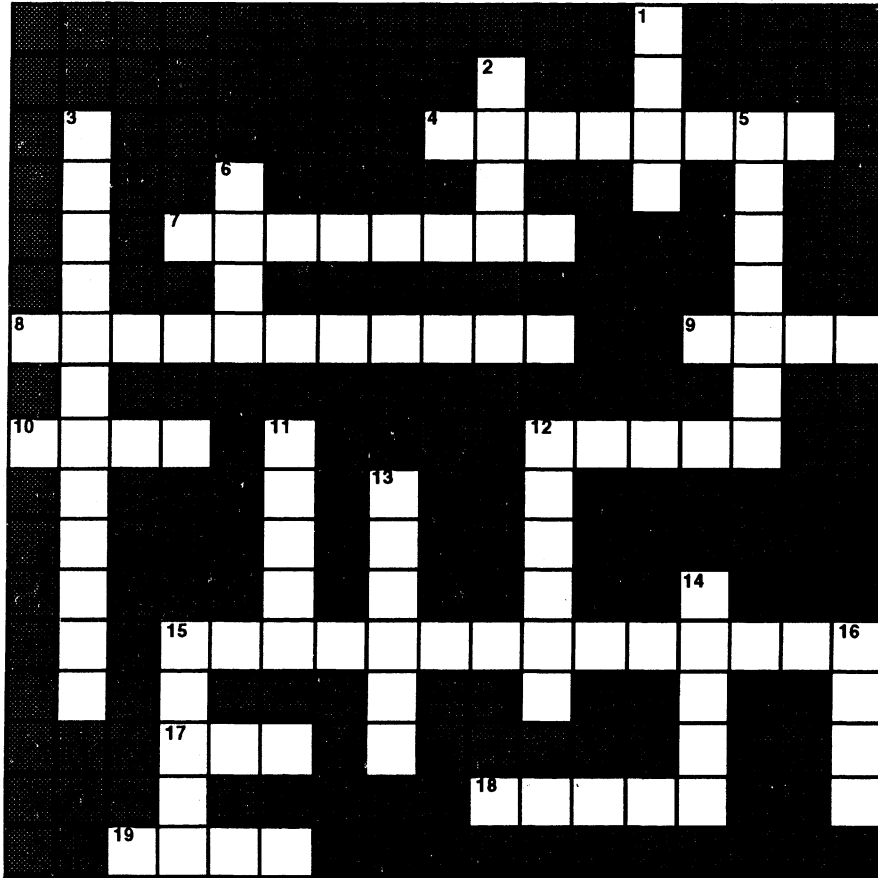
Always close your class with prayer

Respond and Reinforce

1. How will you show kindness this week to others?
2. Discuss memory verse.

Activity Page

David and Mephibosheth II Samuel 9



Across

4. An act of being kind.
7. King Saul's son, and David's beloved friend.
8. Ziba had _____ and twenty servants (see II Samuel 9:10; two words).
9. Crippled in the foot or leg; unable to walk correctly.
10. Any substance that can be metabolized by an organism to give energy and build tissue.
12. Edible part of a plant developed from a flower.
15. Ziba had fifteen sons and _____ (see II Samuel 9:10; two words).
17. To bend the knee, or incline the head, as in submission, reverence, or salutation.
18. Food, sustenance, or livelihood.
19. Plural for foot.

Down

1. Earth's surface not covered by water.
2. Servant of Saul.
3. The lame son of Jonathan.
5. A person working in the service of another.
6. Warm personal attachment to, and depth of feeling for the welfare of another person.
11. A family including ancestors and descendants.
12. The founder of a family.
13. Male head of a household.
14. The second king of Israel.
15. David said, "Mephibosheth shall eat at my _____, as one of the king's sons."
16. The first king of Israel.

Across: 4. Kindness; 7. Jonathan; 8. Fifteen sons; 9. Lame; 10. Food; 12. Fruit; 15. Twenty servants; 17. Bow; 18. Bread; 19. Feet; Down: 1. Land; 2. Ziba; 3. Mephibosheth; 5. Servant; 6. Love; 11. House; 12. Father; 13. Master; 14. Saul; 15. Table; 16. David.

Activity Page

David and Mephibosheth II Samuel 9

Read the scriptures and find the words listed below in the puzzle. Words will run diagonally, up, down, across, or read backwards.



DAVID	ZIBA	FATHER	TILL	SERVANTS
SAUL	LAME	EAT	LAND	FIFTEEN
HOUSE	FEET	BREAD	FRUITS	SONS
KINDNESS	MEPHIBOSHETH	COMMANDED	FOOD	MASTER
JONATHAN	REVERENCE	BOW	TWENTY	MERCY

Activity Page

David and Mephibosheth

Acts of Kindness

II Samuel 9

Materials needed:

Copies of framed picture
Sheets of colored
construction paper
Crayons or colored pens
Glue
Blunt scissors
Colored yarn

Instructions:

Have students color the picture, cut out, and glue to construction paper. Using a hole-punch make holes in the upper left and right corners. Cut a 6–8 inch piece of yarn. Insert each end of yarn through hole and secure.

To be used to remind students to remember the weak, and be kind.

*Blessed are those who
have regard for the weak;
the Lord delivers them
in times of trouble.*

Psalm 41:1



Activity Page

David and Mephibosheth Acts of Kindness II Samuel 9

Materials needed:

Precut colored construction paper flower petals
Precut circular centers
Precut green construction paper stem and leaves
Sheets of colored construction paper
Crayons or colored pens
Glue
Blunt scissors
Colored yarn

Instructions:

Give each student 6–8 precut flower petals, a stem, and two leaves for their “Friendly Flower.” Have students glue the precut flower petals to the outside edge of the center of the flower, and attach stem and leaves on their sheet of paper—flower center and stem are on the pattern for position. Using a hole-punch make holes in the upper left and right corners of their plaque. Cut a piece of yarn. Insert each end of yarn through holes and secure for hanging.

Make your flowers as simple or as complicated as you want.

This activity is to be used to remind students that like a flower is beautiful to us, acts of kindness and mercy are beautiful to our Creator.

