

David Administers Justice and Kindness

Sharise typed in her cell phone number and pushed “send” on the email. It was to her former co-worker, Karen. Karen had retired early, and Sharise didn’t know why at the time. Now, she understood. Pancreatic cancer.

Karen was a member on the search committee for the job Sharise now held—speech language pathologist at Jackson Performing Arts Academy. Sharise’s presentation included a wealth of knowledge, a high caliber of expertise and excellent references.

Still, five of the six women on the search committee had relegated her and her resume to the bottom of the pile. That was before Karen Bernard took a threatening stand. The result was that Sharise’s resume was passed along to the Director of Human Resources and eventually to the school principal.

Somehow, Sharise heard the back story. When she mentioned it to Karen, the white woman brushed it off as “only doing the right thing.” So, when Sharise learned of Karen’s “Go Fund Me” page, she responded immediately.

“I cannot believe that you would want to give this amount,” Karen wrote in the email, along with a request for Sharise’s cell phone number.

When Sharise’s phone rang, she knew who would be on the other end. “You can take it, and you will,” Sharise said. “I can’t repay you for having a righteous heart. But I can express my love.”

1. *When someone does something kind to you that you don’t expect, how does that make you feel?*

2. *How has the Lord used you to show kindness to others in some way?*

3. *How is showing kindness in the Lord’s name different than just being kind to others?*

Kindness Sought Out

2 Samuel 9:1-4, KJV

1 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?

2 And there was of the house of Saul a servant whose name was Ziba. And when they had called him unto David, the king said unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he said, Thy servant is he.

3 And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet.

4 And the king said unto him, Where is he? And Ziba said unto the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, in Lodebar.

2 Samuel 9:1-4, NIV

¹David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

²Now there was a servant of Saul's household named Ziba. They summoned him to appear before David, and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?"

"At your service," he replied.

³The king asked, "Is there no one still alive from 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."

⁴"Where is he?" the king asked.

Ziba answered, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."

Several years after David became king over all of Israel and was certain there were no potential threats from the royal house of Saul, he took time to remember his friend Jonathan by asking if there was anyone left of Saul's family to whom the king could show "kindness" (vs. 1). The Hebrew word for kindness, *hesed*, is also translated "mercy" or "lovingkindness." It is easy to see that *hesed* is an attribute of God. By His lovingkindness, He extends mercy to all who put their faith in Him. Furthermore, kindness is a

characteristic that God's people should have toward others.

Even though Saul had not shown kindness to David, David chose kindness over vengeance. David asked Ziba, a servant of Saul, if there were any of Saul's house to whom the king could show God's kindness. Ziba stated that one of Jonathan's sons was still alive, though he was lame in both feet. After further examination of Ziba, David learned where he could find Jonathan's son.

4. *What did David seek to do for the house of Saul?*

5. *What did Ziba, a servant of Saul's house, reveal to the king?*

6. *Where could David find Jonathan's son?*

Kindness Shown

2 Samuel 9:5-7, KJV

5 Then king David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir, the son of Ammiel, from Lodebar.

6 Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant!

7 And David said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the land of Saul thy father; and thou shalt eat bread at my table continually.

2 Samuel 9:5-7, NIV

⁵So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.

⁶When 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.

⁷"Don't be afraid," David said to him, "for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."

Having sought out the opportunity to show kindness

to the house of Saul, David took the next step by having Jonathan's son Mephibosheth brought before him. Jonathan's son had at least two reasons to be fearful. First, it was customary at that time for the conquering king to kill all potential rivals to the throne. Second, considering Saul's hatred for David, perhaps the king still desired vengeance. So Mephibosheth bowed low before the king and proclaimed himself to be David's servant.

After David assured Mephibosheth that he had nothing to fear, the king went even further in his kindness by promising first to restore all the land that had belonged to Saul. This was indeed a great act of kindness, because in the eyes of some, Mephibosheth would have been considered a rival to David's throne; having the land could have strengthened Mephibosheth's claim as the legitimate king as the grandson of Saul. And if this were not kindness enough, David opened his own home to his friend's son, inviting him always to dine at the royal table.

7. *What was the next step David took to show kindness to Mephibosheth?*

8. *How did Mephibosheth respond upon entering David's presence?*

9. *What was the king's response to Mephibosheth's respectful, even fearful entrance?*

Kindness Secured

2 Samuel 9:9-12, KJV

9 Then the king called to Ziba, Saul's servant, and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.

10 Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt

2 Samuel 9:9-12, NIV

⁹Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's steward, and said to him, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. ¹⁰You and your sons and your servants are to farm the land for him and bring in

bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.

11 Then said Ziba unto the king, According to all that my lord the king hath commanded his servant, so shall thy servant do. As for Mephibosheth, said the king, he shall eat at my table, as one of the king's sons.

12 And Mephibosheth had a young son, whose name was Micha. And all that dwelt in the house of Ziba were servants unto Mephibosheth.

the crops, so that your master's grandson may be provided for. And Mephibosheth, grandson of your master, will always eat at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)

¹¹Then Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do whatever my lord the king commands his servant to do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.

¹²Mephibosheth had a young son named Mika, and all the members of Ziba's household were servants of Mephibosheth.

David then finalized his actions in a decree to Saul's steward Ziba. David put the steward in charge of overseeing Mephibosheth's affairs. Ziba, along with his sons and servants, would farm the land and gather the harvest on Mephibosheth's behalf. In so doing, of course, Ziba would also be providing for his own family and servants, especially since Mephibosheth would eat at the table of David as if he were one of the king's own sons. Such is often the case when kindness is shown—it overflows and blesses others, as well. This is a very good reason to show kindness to others.

10. *What did David do to ensure his plans for Mephibosheth were implemented?*

11. *How were Ziba and his household also blessed by the kindness that David extended to Mephibosheth?*

12. *In what ways can God's people show kindness to others to His glory?*

The Least of These My Brethren

There is no shortage of opportunity to extend goodwill toward our fellowman—homeless, starving, orphaned, grieving; our world and humanity are in need of natural and spiritual meat. The harvest is truly ripe. The Lord is sending us into the harvest.

In Matthew 25:31-40, Jesus explained the correlation between what we do to others being equivalent to what we have done to Him. I can't give directly to the Lord because everything belongs to Him, but when we show lovingkindness to someone who can't reciprocate back to us, then we've shown kindness to the Lord. He said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (vs. 40, KJV).

David never had an opportunity to demonstrate his gratitude to Jonathan. Therefore, David did the next best thing. He found Jonathan's son Mephibosheth and restored to him Saul's wealth, land, and goodwill that he could afford. He gave him a seat of honor at his table so that Mephibosheth never had to hunger, beg, or thirst again. He became the heir and recipient of a promise made to his father.

We have become the heirs of God because of the sacrifice of His only Son. As Galatians 3:29 says, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." We show the Lord our heartfelt appreciation for all He did for us in making us His sons and daughters. As grateful children, we serve Him by serving others.

13. *Is it the lack of time or the lack of opportunities that keep us from demonstrating lovingkindness to others? Explain your answer.*

14. *Why do we withhold good from others when we are obligated to help them?*

15. *Why is it more blessed to give than to receive?*

Showing Lovingkindness

Hebrews 4:12 (KJV) reads, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

► *Ask God to help you show lovingkindness to someone that you have felt compelled to give, forgive, visit, or pray for, but have not yet done so.*

KEY VERSE

And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?

—2 Samuel 9:1, KJV

David asked, “Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?”

—2 Samuel 9:1, NIV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK’S LESSON

Week of December 13 through December 19

(See *The Quiet Hour* and *Cross* devotionals on these passages.)

Mon. Leviticus 19:1-2, 11-18—God’s Holy People.

Tues. Psalm 89:14-21—Righteousness and Justice.

Wed. 1 Timothy 6:6-12—Be Content; Pursue Righteousness.

Thurs. Micah 6:1-8—Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly.

Fri. Matthew 6:25-34—Seek God’s Kingdom and Righteousness.

Sat. Isaiah 11:1-9—God’s King Will Judge with Righteousness.

Sun. Isaiah 9:1-7—God’s Light Has Shined.