

# BROTHERLY KINDNESS

## 2 PETER 1:7

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<sup>7</sup> And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

Introduction:

A story is told about Mr. LaGuardia, who, when he was mayor of New York City during the worst days of the Great Depression and all of WWII, was called by adoring New Yorkers 'the Little Flower' because he was only five foot four and always wore a carnation in his lapel. He was a colorful character who used to ride the New York City fire trucks, raid speakeasies with the police department, take entire orphanages to baseball games, and whenever the New York newspapers were on strike, he would go on the radio and read the Sunday funnies to the kids. One bitterly cold night in January of 1935, the mayor turned up at a night court that served the poorest ward of the city. LaGuardia dismissed the judge for the evening and took over the bench himself.

Within a few minutes, a tattered old woman was brought before him, charged with stealing a loaf of

bread. She told LaGuardia that her daughter's husband had deserted her, her daughter was sick, and her two grandchildren were starving. But the shopkeeper, from whom the bread was stolen, refused to drop the charges. "***It's a real bad neighborhood, your Honor.***" the man told the mayor. "***She's got to be punished to teach other people around here a lesson.***" LaGuardia sighed. He turned to the woman and said "***I've got to punish you. The law makes no exceptions--ten dollars or ten days in jail.***" But even as he pronounced sentence, the mayor was already reaching into his pocket. He extracted a bill and tossed it into his famous sombrero saying: "***Here is the ten dollar fine which I now remit; and furthermore I am going to fine everyone in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a town where a person has to steal bread so that her grandchildren can eat. Mr. Baliff, collect the fines and give them to the defendant.***"

So the following day the New York City newspapers reported that \$47.50 was turned over to a bewildered old lady who had stolen a loaf of bread to feed her starving grandchildren, fifty cents of that amount being contributed by the red-faced grocery store owner, while some seventy petty criminals, people with traffic violations, and New York City policemen, each of whom had just paid fifty cents for the privilege of doing so, gave the mayor a standing ovation.

This story is a great example of Brotherly Kindness.

The word Kindness is also translated “goodness, grace, and favor.

Notice:

## 1. THE KINDNESS OR GRACE EXTENDED (VERSES 1-5)

### A. The Reason for the Grace (1)

#### 2 Samuel 9:1

<sup>1</sup> 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?

David desires to extend grace to a member of Saul’s family. This is amazing in light of the fact that in those days, when a new king came to power, he usually destroyed every member of the former king’s household, in an effort to prevent any rebellion by that family.

David had the right execute judgment, but he chose to demonstrate grace instead. David did this, not because the house of Saul deserved it, but because of his relationship with Jonathan, and because of two promises he had made years before. David had promised both Jonathan and Saul that he would not totally destroy their offspring.

#### 1 Samuel 20:13-17

<sup>13</sup> The LORD do so and much more to Jonathan: but if it please

my father *to do* thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my father. <sup>14</sup> And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the LORD, that I die not: <sup>15</sup> But *also* thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house for ever: no, not when the LORD hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. <sup>16</sup> So Jonathan made *a covenant* with the house of David, *saying*, Let the LORD even require *it* at the hand of David's enemies. <sup>17</sup> And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him: for he loved him as he loved his own soul.

#### 1 Samuel 24:20-22

<sup>20</sup> And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. <sup>21</sup> Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house. <sup>22</sup> And David sware unto Saul. And Saul went home; but David and his men gat them up unto the hold.

This grace was extended because of another.

### B. The Reach of this Grace (1)

When David decides to extend grace, he does so without any limits. He is looking for “***any that is left of the house of Saul.***” The house of Saul was the house of his predecessor and bitter enemy, but that did not matter. David also placed no limits on this grace. He was willing to extend it to “***any***” member of the house of Saul.

Note:

The key word in **verse 1** is “*any*”. David was not looking for people who met a certain criteria. But, anyone who was of the family of Saul was a candidate for grace. Our Lord’s amazing grace knows no boundaries! It extends to all men regardless of their past, their race, their social standing, or their deeds. God does not reach out to save the righteous, but the sinner.

### C. The Response of this Grace

David discovers that one of Jonathan’s sons is still living. He also hears the news that this man is crippled. Yet, the response of grace is not to ask what kind of man he is, or even how bad he is crippled. Grace does not concern itself with the man’s background, his surroundings, his abilities, his appearance, his future potential, etc. The response of grace is to ask “***Where is he?***” As soon as David hears where this man is, he sends his servants to “***fetch***” him. Grace said, “***I am not concerned about his condition, I want him just like he is.***”

## 2. THE KINDNESS OR GRACE EMBRACED (VERSES 6-8)

Just for a moment, let’s put ourselves in the shoes of Mephibosheth. He is one of the few remaining members of the house of Saul. He is living in a place called Lo-debar, which means “***no pasture.***” He is

probably living each day in fear for his life; afraid that King David will come and take his life way. No doubt he is a poor man. He does not have access to the wealth or the lands of his family. He is a crippled man.

His father was killed in battle and when the news came, his nurse tried to flee with the child and he was dropped and his legs were permanently damaged, **2 Sam. 4:4**. He was five when this happened. All of his life he has been warned that David might find him. He lives in fear and he lives in misery every day.

Then, one day it happens! There is the sound of horses and chariots outside the little house in Lo-debar. There is a knock at the door and in come men from Jerusalem. “***The king wants to see you***” they say. So, with a fearful heart you gather what meager possessions you have and you leave with the guards to go see the one man you never wanted to see.

After a while the chariots arrive at the King’s palace. Mephibosheth is carried into the King’s presence. When he arrives there, nothing is like he had imagined it. Mephibosheth has entered the presence of grace.

Notice how he embraces it.

## A. With a Humble Heart (6)

### 2 Samuel 9:6

<sup>6</sup>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!

When Mephibosheth comes into David's presence, he is aware that as a descendant of Saul he deserves nothing but judgment from the King. Therefore, he humbles himself in the presence of David.

## B. With a Happy Heart (6-7)

### 2 Samuel 9:6-7

<sup>6</sup>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! <sup>7</sup>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.

Instead of judgment, Mephibosheth experiences tenderness. He hears David call his name. And, then to his amazement, he hears David speak peace to his heart. He hears the King as he promises him restoration of all the wealth and glory that once belonged to the family of Saul. Then, the icing on the cake, David promises to give Mephibosheth a place at the King's table.

## C. With an Honest Heart (8)

### 2 Samuel 9:8

<sup>8</sup>And he bowed himself, and said, What *is* thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a dead dog as I *am*?

Mephibosheth is overwhelmed by the grace he has received. He acknowledges that he is undeserving of such love and mercy. Grace has been extended and it has been embraced and nothing will ever be the same in Mephibosheth's life again!

## 3. THE KINDNESS OR GRACE IS EXPANDED (VERSES 9-13)

When Mephibosheth came to David, he did not get what he deserved. He received grace. When he received grace, he also received more blessings than he could have ever imagined. Grace was expanded. Notice what grace provided to Mephibosheth and what saving grace provides to you and me.

### A. Grace Provided a Future (9-11)

### 2 Samuel 9:9-11

<sup>9</sup>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. <sup>10</sup>Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt 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. <sup>11</sup>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.

- We are promised security – **John 6:37-40; John 10:28; 1 Pet.1:5.**
- We are promised a home in Heaven – **John 14:1-3.**
- We are promised that our needs would be met – **Phil. 4:19, Matt. 6:25-34.**
- We are promised His presence all the way home to Heaven – **Heb. 13:5; Matt. 28:20.**

#### B. Grace Provided a Family (11b)

##### 2 Samuel 9:11

<sup>11</sup> 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.

Mephibosheth was adopted out of Saul's family and into David's. Grace gave him something that he did not have before it was extended to him. Grace gave him a family! Every day he lives, Mephibosheth was reminded by his surroundings and by the presence of the King that he was the recipient of grace. He was where he was because of the grace of the King!

#### C. Grace Provided Fulfillment (13)

##### 2 Samuel 9:13

<sup>13</sup> So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet.

Mephibosheth was a nobody in a house full of somebodies. There was Absalom, perfect and handsome. There were David's other sons. There were David's beautiful wives and daughters. There was Joab the general, proud and strong. There were princes and princesses; soldiers and statesmen; men of wealth and men of power. All of these took their place at the table of King David. But wait, as the family gathers, there is the sound of a crippled man coming down the hallway. There is the clump of his crutches and the sound of his feet being dragged. It is Mephibosheth and he takes his place at the King's table with all the rights and privileges as the rest. Then, when he takes his seat and the tablecloth falls across his legs. He looks just like the rest. Grace took a nobody from nowhere and made him a child of the King.

Close:

Julia Johnston penned a great hymn entitled "***Grace Greater Than Our Sin.***"

**1. *Marvelous grace of our loving Lord,  
grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt!  
Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured,  
there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.***

Refrain:

***Grace, grace, God's grace,  
grace that will pardon and cleanse within;  
grace, grace, God's grace,  
grace that is greater than all our sin!***

**2. *Sin and despair, like the sea waves cold,  
threaten the soul with infinite loss;  
grace that is greater, yes, grace untold,  
points to the refuge, the mighty cross.***

(Refrain)

**3. *Dark is the stain that we cannot hide.  
What can avail to wash it away?  
Look! There is flowing a crimson tide,  
brighter than snow you may be today.***

(Refrain)

**4. *Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace,  
freely bestowed on all who believe!  
You that are longing to see his face,  
will you this moment his grace receive?***