

STUDY GUIDE



LET HOPE IN

DUTCHTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH

LET HOPE IN

HOPE NEEDED

2 SAMUEL 9:1-13

07/03/2016

MAIN POINT

You are never beyond hope.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Complete the following sentence: "I hope..."

How important is hope to you? Why?

Why might God want you to live a life filled with hope?

When we hope, we are looking to the future with a sense of optimism. And for the Christian, there is every reason to hope not only for ourselves but also for the sake of others. As we begin this study, we will see that no matter the person and no matter what the circumstance, you are never beyond hope when God is concerned.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

WATCH THE VIDEO SEGMENT FOR SESSION 1 FEATURING PETE WILSON.

This study is about hope, and as Pete said, all of us need hope. Do you think your life right now is more or less hopeful than it has been in the past? Why?

AS A GROUP READ 2 SAMUEL 9:1-13.

Put yourself in Mephibosheth's place. What kinds of emotions do you think he felt prior to hearing from David?

Can you relate to that? Have you ever felt that kind of hopelessness? When?

How does that sense of hopelessness affect your day-to-day life?

Pete also talked about being trapped by our past. Why does that happen so easily?

How do you know Mephibosheth was trapped by his own past?

Mephibosheth was living a reclusive life of self-loathing. He had no sense of significance and was convinced that life had nothing left to offer him. All of that came about because of circumstances beyond his control in his past. But as Pete said, there has to come a point when we release ourselves from our past in order to move forward in hope.

What was the turning point in Mephibosheth's life? How did the king offer him a new sense of hope and purpose?

How is what God does for us in Christ similar to this?

How have you personally experienced the hope God can bring?

Why is letting go of our past an essential part of moving forward in the hope of God?

As Pete said, it wasn't until Mephibosheth came into the presence of the king that he began to see what the future would be. Until then, he was paralyzed by his past. In Christ, we can also come into the presence of the King where we will find a place at God's table prepared for us.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Pete challenged us to think about the things we are holding onto from our past that have come to define who we are today. Is there anything you are still holding onto from your past?

What are other situations, fears, or relationships that might be keeping you from moving forward in hope today?

What is one practical way you can come into the presence of the King this week to find hope?

PRAY

Pray to close your group. Include any prayer requests that came up during the application time.

Visit lifeway.com to purchase the Bible study book for more in-depth individual and group study.

COMMENTARY

2 SAMUEL 9:1-13

9:1–3. Established on the throne in Jerusalem after having effectively put down both internal and external opposition, David

was now in a position to fulfill his commitment to “the house of Saul” (v. 1). Accordingly, at an unknown point in time but perhaps before the events of 2 Sam 21:1–10 (cf. esp. 21:7), he began a search for someone to whom he could “show kindness for Jonathan’s sake.” Ziba, a well-to-do (cf. v. 10) “servant of Saul’s household” (v. 2) who apparently managed the former king’s royal estate, was called in and questioned by the king.

The narrator’s seemingly unnecessary repetition of David’s question in v. 3 (cf. v. 1) is in fact significant in establishing the theme of this chapter. It underscores that David was not an enemy of “the house of Saul” (v. 3); in fact, he was an agent of “God’s kindness” working to benefit Israel’s former dynastic family.

9:4–10. Through his inquiry David learned that there was “still a son of Jonathan” (v. 4) apparently living with a wife and son (cf. v. 12) in a self-imposed internal exile “at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.” Makir, mentioned here for the first time, was a wealthy and powerful individual living east of the Jordan at Lo Debar in the Jordan river valley of Gilead. Later he proved to be one of David’s most loyal supporters (cf. 17:27–29).

Mephibosheth, known outside of 2 Samuel as Merib-Baal (cf. 1 Chr 8:34; 9:40), was “crippled in both feet” (v. 3) as a result of an accident in early childhood (cf. 4:4). David summoned him for appearance at the royal court. Appropriately—and perhaps somewhat awkwardly—the lame young man “bowed down” before the king “to pay him honor” (v. 6).

Using a dialogic script reflective of an interchange between a social superior and an inferior (cf. 1 Sam 3:9), David called out Mephibosheth’s name; in turn, Mephibosheth referred to himself as “your servant.” After establishing the sociological parameters of this relationship by giving the proper initial exchange, David issued a magnanimous decree that changed Mephibosheth’s fortunes forever. First, David restored to the disfigured, exiled Saulide “all the land that belonged to Saul” (v. 7). This would have meant that the family estate located about three miles north of Jerusalem in Gibeah would be returned to Mephibosheth. Second, David gave Mephibosheth a privilege that seemed to have perished the day his father Jonathan had died, the right to board at the king’s table “always.” Saul had accorded David this dispensation during his youth (cf. 1 Sam 20:5); now David returned the favor. Third, David provided Mephibosheth with a large contingent of servants and material wealth. He ordered “Ziba, Saul’s servant” (v. 9) along with his “fifteen sons and twenty servants” (v. 10), “to farm the land” that had originally belonged to Saul “and bring in the crops” for Mephibosheth so that Jonathan’s son “may be provided for.”

Mephibosheth’s response to the king’s magnanimous pronouncements was one of abject humility (cf. 2 Sam 7:18). After bowing down once again before David, he called himself “your slave” and “a dead dog” (cf. 1 Sam 24:14).

9:11–13. Ziba, whose destiny had also been changed by the king’s imperial edict, had no choice but to accept the new assignment—and this he did. However, when the opportunity presented itself, Ziba apparently tried to manipulate David to issue a different, more favorable edict (cf. 16:2–4).

Mephibosheth—and presumably his entire family, including “a young son named Mica” (v. 12)—was permanently relocated back in Benjamite territory “in Jerusalem” (v. 13). There Mephibosheth “always ate at the king’s table” even though “he was crippled in both feet.” David’s acceptance of a lame man in his house confirms that the royal pronouncement banning “the lame” in the royal residence was intended as a figurative reference to an ethnic group, not mobility-impaired individuals.