



# editorial:

## *show God's kindness today*

The story of Mephibosheth<sup>1</sup> offers a remarkable parable of God's kindness to us.

After many years as a fugitive David is firmly established as King of Israel. His enemies have melted away and his kingdom is enjoying peace. 'God has been kind to me' argues the King. 'Can I pass that kindness on to someone else?'

The King's thoughts turned to Mephibosheth. He was the son of David's great friend Jonathan, the son of King Saul, who died in battle defending his country. When news arrived that Saul and Jonathan were dead the royal household fled. In the hurry and confusion the nursemaid carrying five year old Mephibosheth dropped him. From that day on he was crippled<sup>2</sup>.

'Maybe I could show kindness to Mephibosheth' thought David. So he ordered his servants to search for him and bring him to the palace. When Mephibosheth received David's invitation he was scared. He knew well enough how members of a deposed dynasty could expect to be treated. He may not have wanted to get involved with the new king. But David quietly won his trust. He restored Mephibosheth's lands. He arranged for him to have plenty of farm workers and gave him a suite in the royal palace and a permanent place at the royal table.

This must have been costly for David. It is always costly to have a stranger in one's home for an indefinite period, especially one who is handicapped. Amid all the pressures of state King David set aside time for Mephibosheth to talk about his problems.

David's words offer a model prayer for all of us at the start of a new day: God has been kind to me. He has blessed me in so many ways. He has made me his child and - amazing thought - his heir, with the prospect of living for ever in his palace. This kindness was costly: 'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son'<sup>3</sup>; 'the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me'<sup>4</sup>.

If we accept God's kindness without passing it on, we become like the Dead Sea. It receives water from the Jordan but gives out nothing.

So how can we show our gratitude to God for this kindness? For some time I have had a motto clipped to my desk diary: 'Every day I will praise you, and bless your name for ever and ever'. Now, inspired by the story of David and Mephibosheth, I have added another: 'Is there anyone to whom I can show God's kindness today?'

**David Short**

### References

1. 2 Samuel 9
2. 2 Samuel 4:4
3. John 3:16
4. Galatians 2:20