

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

CONTINUOUS EATING

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

II Samuel 9:13

The health advocates of today point out that one of the main problems facing our society is that of obesity. One does not have to look far to find the cause of that problem since it is directly connected to the amounts and types of food that are being consumed. We are in general a nation of continuous eaters and there is no shortage of providers of the necessary ingredients for our over indulgence. Of course it is necessary for men to continuously eat or they would perish, but it is equally necessary, in promoting good health, to eat the proper amounts of the right foods spaced out at the appropriate intervals.

The LORD has seen fit to provide HIS children with spiritual food and does restrict their diets to those things necessary for their proper growth. The natural men of this world have no taste for the food HE provides to HIS own and such a diet is considered by them as a poor one since it is lacking in the types of food they desire. Many, well meaning, religious individuals have tried to spice up this spiritual food and add their own touches to it to make it more palatable to the natural man but such a quest is fruitless. Unless the LORD gives a man a taste for this manna from heaven, it will be despised by all who would eat it regardless of its preparation or how it may be served.

The LORD feeds those who are hungry and who feel themselves to be perishing apart from HIS mercy. There is a multitude which claim to be desiring this bread yet manifest no such hunger. *"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* (John 6:35-37)

Nothing is more common than to hear men confessing that they believe in CHRIST; yet nothing is more rare than finding those who know themselves to be, naked, destitute, and poor. Multitudes line up to feast upon a "gospel" (so-called) with no substance, having for its main ingredients the free will of men and the endeavors of the flesh; a message which centers on what men will and should do rather than on what CHRIST has done. Someone once pointed out that rat poison is about ninety eight percent good food, but it is that two percent poison that is added that kills the rat. Any message which gives a man even a glimmer of hope in his own endeavor or ability; even his own faith, is just such a poison.

The mercy of GOD is revealed unto HIS children as HE is pleased, not only, to prepare a proper feast for them and command them to partake of it, but HE also causes them to hunger after it and in so doing compels them to come and dine with HIM. Even as Isaiah said, *"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy,*

and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” (Isa 55:1) None but the thirsty will have a desire for this WATER and only the hungry will yearn for this BREAD. Men by nature have no desire for either. Apart from the grace of GOD visited upon a man, none shall seek after HIM nor find any sustenance in those things HE provides. Yet those in whom HE is pleased to cause this hunger must ever testify with Peter of their desire to seek no other, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)*

Mephibosheth was the orphaned son of Jonathan, who was Saul’s son and David’s bosom friend. . We read that he was continuously provided for at the king’s table his whole life. He is typical of those who eat at the LORD’s table, even as David’s actions are typical of the mercies of our Heavenly FATHER.

David’s love for Mephibosheth is the only reason that he was fed while others went hungry. As Paul said, *“For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” (1Cor 4:7)* None of those who have the privilege of feasting upon that meat which HE has provided can find any reason they should be included at this feast except the grace and mercy of GOD. As Watts wrote, *“Why was I made to hear THY voice and enter while there’s room, when thousands make a wretched choice and rather starve than come.?”*

Mephibosheth could do nothing to gain favor with the king, since he was destitute and lame on both his feet. We often hear the workmongers and conditionalists tell us that the children of GOD can gain blessings and favor with the LORD by their obedience and efforts. Such men have evidently never been acquainted with their own wretched condition even as those spoken of by John, *“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:” (Rev 3:17)* The LORD will continually teach HIS own of their innate weakness and they will confess that they have no righteousness but HIS..

David’s love for Mephibosheth was primarily demonstrated because of his love for Jonathan. The benefits which flow to the children of GOD come to them because of the eternal love which the Heavenly FATHER has for HIS SON. Because the elect sons of GOD are hidden in CHRIST then all of the benefits of HIS eternal SONSHIP accrue to them. *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” (Rom 8:16-17)*

Mephibosheth did “continually” eat at the King’s table because the King did “continually” provide such sustenance as Mephibosheth needed. The King determined the menu and the portion size without consulting Mephibosheth. The LORD does feed HIS people with exactly what they need. Though sometimes the menu may contain foods we would not choose if left to ourselves even as Paul testified of his “thorn in the flesh”. By eating this diet, however, he learned that the grace of GOD was sufficient in all things. *“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” (Heb 12:6)* *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Rom 8:28-29)*

The greatest pleasures that Mephibosheth received by being at the King’s table was those times when the King was pleased to sit down with him and sup with him. Is this not true for all of those who are the LORD’s little children as HE says, *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” (Rev 3:20)* Can you hear HIM? *“If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.” (Mark 4:23)*

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