

# Wounded

As he glanced down, his eyes caught sight of the very thing that had caused him a life of pain. Thoughts of fear, unworthiness, and disgrace flooded in once again. “If I wasn’t this way, if it had never happened, my life would be different.” The more he thought on these things, the greater his flaws and inadequacies appeared. “Maybe it’s better this way; better that I stay away. After all, if I entered his presence it would mean...even so, I could never be good enough.”

The first mention of our character is found obscurely tucked in 2 Samuel 4:4. **“Jonathan, Saul’s son, had a son who was lame in his feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel; and his nurse took him up and fled. And it happened, as she made haste to flee, that he fell and became lame. His name was Mephibosheth”** (NKJV).

Let’s begin by drawing out the available background information and defining traits of Mephibosheth.

Who was Mephibosheth’s grandfather? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was his father? \_\_\_\_\_

What position was he in line to receive? \_\_\_\_\_

According to 1 Samuel 28:17, who would sit upon the throne when Saul’s reign came to an end? \_\_\_\_\_

What would this mean for all remaining heirs of King Saul? \_\_\_\_\_

What happened to Mephibosheth as his nurse made haste to flee from the kingdom?  
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With his life now in continual danger, the child, once an heir to the throne, was forced into hiding. Mephibosheth began his life fearful, literally broken, and estranged. He was alone— separated from his father. From this point on, he would be required to rely on the strength of another. As if this was not enough, Mephibosheth’s injury would serve as a painful reminder for the rest of his life.

## Crippled

The account of Mephibosheth’s fall tells us he was left lame, or crippled, in both feet. The word “crippled” implies much more than an inability to use the legs or feet. The definition states that a cripple is one who is “disabled or deficient in a specified manner; something flawed or imperfect.”<sup>1</sup> Mephibosheth’s physical state brings to light a disability we all bear...

Record Romans 3:23 in the space provided. \_\_\_\_\_  
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<sup>1</sup> Merriam-Webster, Inc: *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*. 10<sup>th</sup> ed. Springfield. Mass., U.S.A.: Merriam-Webster, 1996, c1993

“All...fall short...” We have *all* been crippled from the fall of sin. And as a result, we too have become separated from the life and relationship with God we could have known. Turn now to Genesis 3:1-24.

What does the passage tell you about the relationship mankind had with the Father before the fall? \_\_\_\_\_

Why did Adam and Eve hide themselves from the presence of the Lord? (v.10).

Why were they afraid? \_\_\_\_\_

Adam and Eve knew God to be holy, perfect, and righteous—and in their “crippled” state they felt they could not face Him. As Genesis 3:8, 10 states, they *hid* themselves and were *afraid*.

In the end, Adam and Eve’s sin created a separation in their (and our) relationship with God. Romans 5:19 says, “**For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners...**” (NKJV). They left the garden that day fearful, crippled, and estranged.

### Good Enough?

Go back and read the definition of the word “crippled”. In addition to sin, the very things that keep us from God are often the flaws and inadequacies we see in ourselves.

In what way(s) do you feel inadequate or deficient as you stand before the King of Kings? What do you think He sees? \_\_\_\_\_

Is it your inadequacies and flaws? Mephibosheth certainly thought so...

Crippled also means “to be deprived of efficiency.” Stated more clearly, Mephibosheth’s imperfection caused him to feel that he was ineffective, hopeless, useless, and worthless. As Mephibosheth looked upon himself, he saw a broken and inadequate prince, unworthy, and certainly not good enough to be of royal descent.

Do you have a wound, whether self-inflicted or caused by the hand of another, that provokes feelings in you like that of Mephibosheth? \_\_\_\_\_

As we focus on our fears, our sins, our weaknesses and our flaws, shame settles in. Read Psalm 44:15. Shame is defined as “the painful emotion caused by guilt, embarrassment, unworthiness, or disgrace.”<sup>2</sup>

As mentioned a moment ago, Mephibosheth’s wound caused him to *feel* lame and ineffectual. There is no doubt that the enemy played a part in Mephibosheth’s shame just as he does in ours. Read Psalm 55:1-8.

<sup>2</sup> Thompson, Frank Charles, ed.. The Thompson Chain Reference Study Bible: New King James Version. Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1997

There is a well-known saying that states you are only as close to God as you want to be. This paints a picture of the separation *we create* in our relationship with God. We are the ones who deem ourselves undeserving of God's goodness, grace, and mercy.

Is there a separation in your relationship that can only be healed by entering His presence?

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Read Hebrews 4:14-16 and Hebrews 10:22.

Record Psalm 147:3. \_\_\_\_\_

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In closing, Psalm 34:18 says, **“The Lord is near to those who are discouraged; he saves those who have lost all hope”** (GNB). Just as Mephibosheth was required to rely on the strength of another, so must we...