

215–31. ■ Schäfer-Lichtenberger, C., “Mefiboschet oder Davids weiße Weste,” in *Text – Textgeschichte – Textwirkung*, FS S. Kreuzer (ed. T. Wagner et al.; AOAT 419; Münster 2014) 63–81.

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Mephibosheth (Son of Jonathan)

- I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- II. Judaism
- III. Literature
- IV. Visual Arts

I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

Mephibosheth (MT *Mēfībōšet*) is introduced as a crippled son of Jonathan in 2 Sam 4:4. In 2 Sam 9, David hands over to him “all the land of Saul, your father” (for possible implications of this expression, see “Mephibosheth”), invites him to his table and puts him under special protection – and control. In the context of Absalom’s attempt to overthrow David’s reign, Mephibosheth comes under suspicion of collaborating with the conspirators, and even claiming the throne for himself (2 Sam 16:3). Following Absalom’s death, however, Mephibosheth is reconciled with David after explaining that his disability left him vulnerable to a servant’s betrayal (2 Sam 19:25–31). In all instances, Mephibosheth’s lameness appears to have been an addition by later redactors, and it is not presupposed in 2 Sam 16:1–4 (Rudnig: 220–23). The episode with Ziba in 2 Sam 16, on the other hand, seems to demonstrate familiarity with the character of Mephibosheth already on the basic layer of the chapter, and is therefore rather to be dated later than 2 Sam 9:1–13 (Fischer: 205). According to others, however, all references to Mephibosheth were to be situated on the same literary level and were inserted into the growing Samuel scroll with the purpose of highlighting David’s loyalty (Schäfer-Lichtenberger: 80).

Bibliography: ■ Fischer, A. A., *Von Hebron nach Jerusalem* (BZAW 335; Berlin/New York 2004). ■ Rudnig, T., “Späte Bearbeitungen in der Davidüberlieferung,” in *Rereading the relecture?* (ed. U. Becker/H. Bezzel; FAT.2 66; Tübingen 2014)