

# 1 Kings 1-2 – Chapter Study

## INTRO

1 & 2 Samuel along with 1 & 2 Kings were originally one.

As we'll see in a moment, 1 Kings continues the account of David's reign begun in 2 Samuel.

The break between 1 & 2 Kings *interrupts* the story of the reign of Azariah & the ministry of the prophet Elijah.

So why were these books divided at these places?

In the *Septuagint*, a Greek translation of the OT made in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, the books of Samuel & Kings were titled *Kingdoms*.

*When* they were divided into 4 books is uncertain, but because they are roughly equal in length and divide in the middle of narrative pieces, it seems they were divided by a scribe to fit into separate volumes.

## Author –

The historical content 1 & 2 Kings was probably compiled by Jeremiah from the royal court records.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he wrote a narrative of Israel's history from the reign of David to the Babylonian captivity.

## I. DAVID'S LAST YEARS 1:1-2:12

### A. David Grows Cold 1:1-4

**<sup>1</sup> Now King David was old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm.**

2 Samuel 5:4 says David was 30 when he became king & reigned for 40 years, so he's closing in on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The years have caught up with him & his age is beginning to take a toll.

A common problem of age is poor circulation. David is forever cold.

They didn't have central heating, water bottles, or electric blankets.

Ancient palaces tended to be damp & drafty, and there are several months of the year in the vicinity of Jerusalem when it's cold & wet.

An elderly person like David would be constantly chilled & would then run the risk of all kinds of respiratory ailments.

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It's painful seeing the once mighty slayer of Goliath in this weakened state.

David was a lion-tamer & bear-bane.

He's been a warrior, a poet, a musician, an inspiring visionary leader, a *builder of empire!*

But now he's shivering under the covers of his bed while attendants hover around

**<sup>2</sup> Therefore his servants said to him, "Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm." <sup>3</sup> So they sought for a lovely young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. <sup>4</sup> The young woman was**

**very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her.**

First of all, it's important to know that this was a common practice in that time.

*Because* they didn't have central heating or electric blankets, body heat was a not uncommon means of dealing with cold nights.

Kings would often have one or more young lovelies who shared their bed to keep them warm.

They became his concubines, & while their *primary purpose* was to provide warmth, they often became the object of other "under the blanket" activities.

David's advisors suggested he employ this custom.

His past with women suggested to them that he'd not resist & when they mentioned it, he didn't.

So they searched for a *hot babe* (emphasis on "hot") & found one named Abishag in the village of Shunam.

Though this might sound like something young women would *resist*, being a concubine of a king was something *most* young women saw as desirable; it meant being taken into the royal house & a life of privilege that would benefit her entire family for generations to come.

So Abishag went & served David faithfully.

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But we're told David did NOT have sexual relations with her.

That that is even mentioned indicates while it was *expected* by others, David didn't do it because he knew it was wrong.

And if he knew it was wrong to have sex with Abishag, why did he let her into his bed in the first place? Why did he go along with their plan? Why didn't he tell them to forget the whole idea?

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These verses are given for one reason – to give us an idea of David's growing feebleness.

The verve & vigor that had marked his earlier life is spent & he's become a figurehead, someone to be taken care of.

It's time to pass the reins of rule to his heir. But even his mind has become muddled.

It's this lack of physical vitality & mental acuity that allows for what follows.

### ***B. Adonijah Claims the Throne 1:5-10***

**<sup>5</sup> Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king"; and he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.**

Haggith was one of David's many wives.

Adonijah's elder brother was Absalom, who you'll remember had staged a rebellion against David that was nearly successful in taking the throne.

With Absalom out of the way, Adonijah thinks himself the likely successor to his father David & moves to secure his place as the new king.

He doesn't think David is in any position or condition to prevent his power-grab.

Thinking the best way to establish himself was through a massive public marketing campaign, he ordered some of his dad's chariots to go throughout the land

announcing him as the new king.

This would give people the *impression* the military was supporting Adonijah.

**6 (And his father had not rebuked him at any time by saying, “Why have you done so?” He was also very good-looking. His mother had borne him after Absalom.)**

Like his elder brother Absalom, Adonijah was a looker.

This played well to his immediate acceptance because people prefer their rulers to be handsome.

But the first part of v. 6 helps explain *why* Adonijah made this power-grab: He was a selfish, self-centered, egotistical spoiled brat!

It wasn't *just now* that David failed to check Adonijah – he never had since he was a young child.

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While David was a giant among men when it came to things like battle, composing music, poetry, faith in God, & building an empire – he was a terrible parent! I mean, really hideous!

David's home life was a mess, a disaster of cosmic proportions.

#1 - He had multiple wives.

#2 – His kids were OUT OF CONTROL!

One son raped his half sister, then her brother killed him.

He then went on to rebel against David and as I said, almost stole the kingdom.

Here we have another son who tried to steal his throne.

David was a passive & permissive father as v. 6 makes clear.

Commentators like to suggest the reason why David failed to rein in his kids was because of his own moral failure with Bathsheba & Uriah.

They say he didn't think he had the moral ground to discipline his children when he was himself so badly in need of discipline.

Or that his own need of mercy had led to his being far too merciful with his kids.

Listen Mom & Dad, don't let your own failures dilute your call to provide loving discipline in the raising of your children.

Parenting is largely an *application of law* in the raising our of children.

They must be taught to obey and the consequences that come from disobedience.

Mercy is what you give so the *relationship between you & your child can continue*.

But as far as *life-training* is concerned, discipline & correction have to be in place & consistent.

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David's failures at home & the consequences they bore shed some valuable light on a subject we hear a lot about today. →

Does the *private life* of *public officials* matter?

There are those who say “No.” What someone does in their private time & life has *no bearing* on their role as a ruler or leader.

It's of no consequence to the decisions they make regarding public policy.

Following this line of reasoning, David could say, “Leave my private life out of it.

*What* I do & with *whom* I do it is no one's business! How I chose to raise my

family is between me & God and everyone else can just bug out.”  
But wait David – how you raise your kids isn’t going to effect *just* your family.  
David’s private life produced an Absalom whose rebellion cost the lives of thousands of men.

It hatched a sinister conspiracy to murder a really good man named Uriah.  
And it lead here to this precarious moment when a usurper tried to wrestle away the throne of the Kingdom.

It’s foolish to think a ruler’s private life won’t effect his/her public work.  
You know, the Founding Fathers understood this.

And it’s why in the founding of the republic they urged voters to elect men of character rather than mere politicians with popular positions.

They understood the future holds *unknown challenges*.

You want principled people in positions of power when those challenges come so they can be negotiated wisely.

The politicians who makes wild promises he knows he can’t deliver on just so he can get into office will run at the first sign of trouble or will blame others for his inability to handle the crisis.

So the Founders urged people to elect *good people* not hollow promises.  
That’s counsel we’d be wise to heed as we look to a new presidential election.

**7 Then he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest, and they followed and helped Adonijah.**

Joab had been David’s commander of the military for many years.

In 2 Sam. 19 we read that after Absalom’s rebellion, against David’s direct & clear order, Joab executed Absalom.

David demoted Joab for this defiance & made Amasa the new commander.  
Joab the murdered Amasa & retained his position.

He knew that any day David would move to replace him again, so when Adonijah made his play for the throne, Joab decided it was best to throw in his lot with him.

Abiathar the priest had much the same motive.

As the last of Eli’s cursed line, he knew David intended to promote his rival Zadok as the high priest.

So he too backed Adonijah, hoping his ascension would secure him the priesthood.

**8 But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David were not with Adonijah.**

All of David’s loyal followers awaited David’s official announcement of who would be his heir.

They knew Adonijah’s move was premature and would not endorse him.

**9 And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En Rogel; he also invited all his brothers, the king’s sons, and all the men of Judah, the king’s servants. <sup>10</sup> But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or Solomon his brother.**

He didn’t invite Solomon for one simple reason – though David had yet to make it

official, he'd already indicated his intention of making Bathsheba's son the heir.

Adonijah picked an interesting site for his celebrations.

Zohelath means 'serpent.' He sacrificed at the stone of the serpent – a creature which will forever be branded on the minds of God's people as a symbol of evil & rebellion.

It was a fitting place for Adonijah to inaugurate his reign since what he was doing was nothing less than rebellion, no matter how he might try to spin it.

### **C. The Throne Passes to Solomon 1:11-2:12**

#### **1. The inquiry 1:11-27**

**11 So Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, and David our lord does not know it?"**

All this was done on the sly, another indication Adonijah knew what he was doing was against his father's wishes.

**12 Come, please, let me now give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. 13 Go immediately to King David and say to him, 'Did you not, my lord, O king, swear to your maidservant, saying, "Assuredly your son Solomon shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne"? Why then has Adonijah become king?' 14 Then, while you are still talking there with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words."**

Adonijah's actions were treasonous and so worthy of death.

The law required that any accusation leading to capital punishment had to be verified by 2 witnesses.

**15 So Bathsheba went into the chamber to the king. (Now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was serving the king.) 16 And Bathsheba bowed and did homage to the king. Then the king said, "What is your wish?" 17 Then she said to him, "My lord, you swore by the LORD your God to your maidservant, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.' 18 So now, look! Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord the king, you do not know about it. 19 He has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the commander of the army; but Solomon your servant he has not invited. 20 And as for you, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, that you should tell them who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. 21 Otherwise it will happen, when my lord the king rests with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be counted as offenders."**

Since Adonijah knew David had given the nod to Solomon as heir, as soon as

David was gone, there would be a political schism that would ensue that would challenge his hegemony.

It was the tradition that when a new king came to the throne, he exiled or killed anyone who presented a threat to him.

And for the most part, people accepted this because having a secure throne was incredibly important.

Bathsheba knew David loved her & their son Solomon dearly so the prospect of their being executed by Adonijah would move him to yank himself out of his stupr & lethargy and take action.

**22 And just then, while she was still talking with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in. 23 So they told the king, saying, "Here is Nathan the prophet." And when he came in before the king, he bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. 24 And Nathan said, "My lord, O king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne'? 25 For he has gone down today, and has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, and the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest; and look! They are eating and drinking before him; and they say, 'Long live King Adonijah!' 26 But he has not invited me—me your servant—nor Zadok the priest, nor Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon. 27 Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not told your servant who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"**

Nathan was one of those David had confided in some time before about who was to inherit the throne.

Nathan asks, 'Have you changed your mind and didn't tell me?'

## **2. David Affirms Solomon as heir 1:28-37**

**28 Then King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. 29 And the king took an oath and said, "As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, 30 just as I swore to you by the LORD God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day." 31 Then Bathsheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and paid homage to the king, and said, "Let my lord King David live forever!" 32 And King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king. 33 The king also said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. 34 There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35 Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah." 36 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! May the LORD**



**God of my lord the king say so too. <sup>37</sup> As the LORD has been with my lord the king, even so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David.”**

Benaiah, speaking for all of them, welcomed David’s affirmation of Solomon as the rightful heir to the throne.

They were to perform the coronation at the spring of Gihon there in the Kidron Valley on the east side of Jerusalem.

This was a public place where there was always a large number of people gathered to fill their vessels.

It wouldn’t take long for the events there to spread throughout all Jerusalem.

### **3. Solomon’s coronation 1:38-40**

**<sup>38</sup> So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites**

These were David’s personal hired bodyguard.

**went down and had Solomon ride on King David’s mule, and took him to Gihon. <sup>39</sup> Then Zadok the priest took a horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. And they blew the horn, and all the people said, “*Long live King Solomon!*” <sup>40</sup> And all the people went up after him; and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth seemed to split with their sound.**

While the people with Adonijah had been celebrating, the majority of the people sensed his claim on the throne was premature so they held back from signaling their endorsement of his reign.

They’d been guilty of backing Adonijah’s rebel brother Absalom and came to regret their disloyalty to David.

They weren’t going to make the same mistake twice.

But when they saw Solomon riding on David’s own mount, & attended by Nathan, Zadok, and Benaiah, as well as all his most loyal guards they knew they were seeing David’s choice of heir and let loose with a whoop of joy that shook the hills.

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Notice the reference to *tabernacle* in v. 39.

While it wasn’t the exact same structure Moses had built in the wilderness nearly 500 years before, the ark of the covenant was still being housed in a tent-like facility there in Jerusalem.

It remained there until Solomon completed the temple some time later.

### **4. Word reaches Adonijah 1:41-53**

**<sup>41</sup> Now Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard *it* as they finished eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said, “Why *is* the city in such a noisy uproar?” <sup>42</sup> While he was still speaking, there came Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest. And Adonijah said to him, “Come in, for you *are* a prominent man, and bring good news.” <sup>43</sup> Then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, “No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. <sup>44</sup> The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son**

of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king's mule. <sup>45</sup> So Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This *is* the noise that you have heard. <sup>46</sup> Also Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom. <sup>47</sup> And moreover the king's servants have gone to bless our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne.' Then the king bowed himself on the bed. <sup>48</sup> Also the king said thus, 'Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, who has given *one* to sit on my throne this day, while my eyes see *it!*' " <sup>49</sup> So all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid, and arose, and each one went his way.

In an instant, in the middle of their celebrating, they realized their attempt to secure the throne had forced David into turning the throne over to Solomon. There was no chance now Adonijah's plan would succeed & they all knew it, so every last one of them bailed.

**<sup>50</sup> Now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. <sup>51</sup> And it was told Solomon, saying, "Indeed Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; for look, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.' "**

And of course the reason why Adonijah was so sure Solomon was murder him was because that's what he'd intended to do to Solomon as soon as he had the throne!

**<sup>52</sup> Then Solomon said, "If he proves himself a worthy man, not one hair of him shall fall to the earth; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die."**

Solomon showed Adonijah mercy. But in order for that mercy to continue, it would need to be seen that Adonijah had altered his behavior in light of it.

Any further attempts to cling to a position from which he could make a claim on the throne would prove he abused the mercy he'd been shown & death would soon follow.

**<sup>53</sup> So King Solomon sent them to bring him down from the altar. And he came and fell down before King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."**

Falling down before a sovereign is a sign of surrender, submission.

But as later events reveal, Adonijah bowed for only one reason, to save his life. There was no submission meant by his bowing.

It was a ruse he used to escape & fight another day.

Jesus said that not all those who say, "Lord, Lord" in reality own Him as Lord.

They merely say that to avoid judgment. But He is not fooled by ones word. He sees the heart.

## **5. David's last instructions 2:1-9**



**<sup>1</sup> Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: <sup>2</sup> “I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. <sup>3</sup> And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn; <sup>4</sup> that the LORD may fulfill His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,’ He said, ‘you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’**

David knows his time is at an end so he gives some final instructions to Solomon. I like what he says at the very beginning –

v. 2 – “Be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. And keep the charge of the LORD your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses.”

Be a man! Here’s how – *study & keep* God’s Word. *Walk* with God!”

That’s so good! There’s a goofy idea that’s gone around for many years that being a Christian isn’t very manly.

Religion is a crutch – man don’t need no crutch.

Story of Muhammad Ali – “Superman don’t need no seatbelt.” “Superman don’t need no airplane neither, now fasten your seatbelt.”

People who say Christianity is a crutch have no real idea what being a Christian is about.

And anyone who says being a follower of Jesus is unmanly totally misunderstands Who Jesus is.

The fact is, you can’t really be a man, a REAL man, as God originally intended Adam to be, apart from Christ.

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David passed on to Solomon the promise God had given that as long as his descendants followed the Lord, they would possess the throne of Israel.

**<sup>5</sup> “Moreover you know also what Joab the son of Zeruah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed. And he shed the blood of war in peacetime, and put the blood of war on his belt that was around his waist, and on his sandals that were on his feet. <sup>6</sup> Therefore do according to your wisdom, and do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace.**

Here’s part of the necessary house-cleaning that needed to be done as the throne passed to Solomon.

Joab had become more than a commander of the military; he was a murderer who’d now proven himself untrustworthy & disloyal.

He was a very dangerous guy & it was best for him to pay for his crimes by being executed.

This would send the message to all that Solomon meant to take the good from his father’s reign while correcting the mistakes that had been made &

purging the evil that had lodged there.

**7 “But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table, for so they came to me when I fled from Absalom your brother. <sup>8</sup>“And see, *you have* with you Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a malicious curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim. But he came down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by the LORD, saying, ‘I will not put you to death with the sword.’ <sup>9</sup> Now therefore, do not hold him guiltless, for you *are* a wise man and know what you ought to do to him; but bring his gray hair down to the grave with blood.”**

Shimei was a relative of Saul’s who’d cursed David as he fled Jerusalem during the rebellion of Absalom.

When David returned to Jerusalem as the victor, Shimei came out all apologetic.

David promised not to kill him but had kept him close so he could keep an eye on him.

David suspected as soon as he was gone Shimei would create trouble for Solomon, so he urged Solomon to keep & eye on him & executed him if he got out of line.

## **6. David dies 2:10-12**

**<sup>10</sup> So David rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David. <sup>11</sup> The period that David reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. <sup>12</sup> Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established.**

Indeed it was. Under Solomon Israel reached it’s all time greatest era. These were her Golden Years in terms of earthly wealth & power.

## **II. SOLOMON’S REIGN 2:13-11:43**

### **A. Political Maneuvers 2:13-3:1**

#### **1. Adonijah’s plot 2:13-25**

**<sup>13</sup> Now Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. So she said, “Do you come peaceably?” And he said, “Peaceably.” <sup>14</sup> Moreover he said, “I have something to say to you.” And she said, “Say it.” <sup>15</sup> Then he said, “You know that the kingdom was mine, and all Israel had set their expectations on me, that I should reign.**

No it wasn’t – this is pure bluff! Adonijah was counting on Bathsheba being ignorant of the political situation.

**However, the kingdom has been turned over, and has become my brother’s; for it was his from the LORD. <sup>16</sup> Now I ask one petition of you; do not deny me.” And she said to him, “Say it.” <sup>17</sup> Then he said,**

**“Please speak to King Solomon, for he will not refuse you, that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as wife.”**

As David’s *last concubine* & pseudo-wife, Adonijah was hoping to extract some political coin from a marriage to her.

This proves he was angling for position from which to launch a new claim on the throne.

Now, apparently Bathsheba wasn’t very politically astute because she agrees to help this guy who at one time had been a mortal threat to her.

**18 So Bathsheba said, “Very well, I will speak for you to the king.” 19**

**Bathsheba therefore went to King Solomon, to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her and bowed down to her, and sat down on his throne and had a throne set for the king’s**

**mother; so she sat at his right hand. 20 Then she said, “I desire one small petition of you; do not refuse me.” And the king said to her,**

**“Ask it, my mother, for I will not refuse you.” 21 So she said, “Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as wife.”**

**22 And King Solomon answered and said to his mother, “Now why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also—for he is my older brother—for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.” 23 Then King Solomon**

**swore by the LORD, saying, “May God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah has not spoken this word against his own life! 24 Now**

**therefore, as the LORD lives, who has confirmed me and set me on the throne of David my father, and who has established a house for me, as He promised, Adonijah shall be put to death today!” 25 So King**

**Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he struck him down, and he died.**

Solomon had already warned Adonijah to be careful.

He recognized in the request for Abishag exactly what it was, an attempt to launch a new claim on the crown.

Being elder than Solomon there was one point in his favor for being king.

By marrying David’s widow that would be another point in his favor.

With a couple more he would have enough political clout to challenge Salomon.

Maybe Bathsheba didn’t see what was behind Adonijah’s request but Solomon did & it proved as long as he remained alive he’d be dangerous, so he had to be executed.

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Adonijah presents to us a good picture of the devil.

Though Jesus has delivered us from bondage to Satan & become the Lord of our lives, the devil still tries to claim a measure of rule.

Just as Adonijah had Joab & Abiathar as allies, satan has the world & the flesh.

They work together to regain control of our will.

The Holy Spirit helps us overcome them and yield to the reign of Christ.

And like Adonijah, the enemy seems to go into retreat for a time.

But eventually he comes and makes what seems like a harmless suggestion to

some Bathsheba like part of us that's become spiritually dull. He says, "Give me this little Abishag, this little thing from your past that used to be so lovely, so fun." And the Bathsheba within us says, "Huh? Okay." After all, it seems small. What's to worry? I recently heard about a pastor who had a guy come in for counseling who had a serious drug problem. He wanted to quit and so he'd brought his stash & left it with the pastor – asking him to dispose of it for him. The pastor put it in his drawer, intending to take it out, put it into his briefcase and throw it in a dumpster on his way home. But as the hours ticked down to the end of the day, he remembered back to his days as a youngster when he did that same drug. He wondered if he'd have the same reaction now that he had back then. So he took the package out, and took some. Today, he's lost his church, ministry, marriage, kids, and wanders the streets of his city eating out of the very dumpsters he should have thrown that dope in. Christian, don't give into to Adonijah's little requests for the Abishag's of your past. When Adonijah raises his head – send Benaiah to cut it off.

## **2. Abiathar removed 2:26-27**

**<sup>26</sup> And to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to Anathoth, to your own fields, for you are deserving of death; but I will not put you to death at this time, because you carried the ark of the Lord GOD before my father David, and because you were afflicted every time my father was afflicted." <sup>27</sup> So Solomon removed Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, that he might fulfill the word of the LORD which He spoke concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.**

It was Abiathar's alliance with Adonijah that warranted him death.

But Solomon showed mercy for the many years of loyalty he'd shown both God & David.

## **3. Joab executed 2:28-37**

**<sup>28</sup> Then news came to Joab, for Joab had defected to Adonijah, though he had not defected to Absalom. So Joab fled to the tabernacle of the LORD, and took hold of the horns of the altar. <sup>29</sup> And King Solomon was told, "Joab has fled to the tabernacle of the LORD; there *he is*, by the altar." Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, "Go, strike him down." <sup>30</sup> So Benaiah went to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said to him, "Thus says the king, 'Come out!'" And he said, "No, but I will die here." And Benaiah brought back word to the king, saying, "Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me." <sup>31</sup> Then the king said to him, "Do as he has said, and strike him down and bury him, that you may take away from me and**

from the house of my father the innocent blood which Joab shed. <sup>32</sup> So the LORD will return his blood on his head, because he struck down two men more righteous and better than he, and killed them with the sword— Abner the son of Ner, the commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, the commander of the army of Judah—though my father David did not know *it*. <sup>33</sup> Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab and upon the head of his descendants forever. But upon David and his descendants, upon his house and his throne, there shall be peace forever from the LORD.”

Joab knew Solomon had instructions from David about what to do with him so he fled to the tabernacle for refuge.

Benaiah was reluctant to strike him in that holy place but Solomon told him to do it in judgment for the bloody, murderous life he'd lived.

Joab's execution would let everyone know that he had NOT acted on David's behalf in the execution of Abner & Amasa.

Both of those murders were purely self-serving on Joab's part.

**<sup>34</sup> So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck and killed him; and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. <sup>35</sup> The king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his place over the army, and the king put Zadok the priest in the place of Abiathar. <sup>36</sup> Then the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him, “Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and dwell there, and do not go out from there anywhere. <sup>37</sup> For it shall be, on the day you go out and cross the Brook Kidron, know for certain you shall surely die; your blood shall be on your own head.”**

Solomon was reluctant to execute Shimei without a clearer picture of exactly where his heart was.

David believed Shimei would be a danger to the throne but didn't have any hard evidence. Only his suspicion. So Solomon set this test.

Shimei was to remain in Jerusalem. If he ever traveled east of the Kidron, it would signal a disloyalty to Solomon that was dangerous to the throne.

Now, let me ask – if someone with the power to do what he said, said, “Don't cross this line or you die.”

And you didn't NEED to cross that line, would you be really careful to *not* cross it? Sure!

#### **4. Shimei executed 2:38-46**

**<sup>38</sup> And Shimei said to the king, “The saying is good. As my lord the king has said, so your servant will do.” So Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days. <sup>39</sup> Now it happened at the end of three years, that two slaves of Shimei ran away to Achish the son of Maachah, king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, “Look, your slaves are in Gath!”**

Though Gath lies to the west of Jerusalem, the road there crossed the Kidron south of Jerusalem.

So - what *ought* Shimei have done? Informed Solomon and asked for help. He

didn't.

**40 So Shimei arose, saddled his donkey, and went to Achish at Gath to seek his slaves. And Shimei went and brought his slaves from Gath.**

**41 And Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and had come back. 42 Then the king sent and called for Shimei, and said to him, "Did I not make you swear by the LORD, and warn you, saying, 'Know for certain that on the day you go out and travel anywhere, you shall surely die'? And you said to me, 'The word I have heard is good.' 43 Why then have you not kept the oath of the LORD and the commandment that I gave you?" 44 The king said moreover to Shimei, "You know, as your heart acknowledges, all the wickedness that you did to my father David; therefore the LORD will return your wickedness on your own head. 45 But King Solomon *shall be* blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever." 46 So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he went out and struck him down, and he died. Thus the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.**

This seems really harsh, as though Solomon was just looking for an excuse to off Shimei.

And you know, that may indeed be the case.

He couldn't execute him on the suspicions of his father, but this was a specific clear violation of the king's command Shimei himself had agreed to.

The point is this – Shimei had lost a sense of gratitude for the mercy both David & Solomon had shown him.

So much so he'd stopped thinking about his duty to the king altogether.

All he had to do when his slaves ran off was to ask Solomon for help – but it never occurred to him.

Why get permission or ask for help when you can take care of it yourself? And because Shimei had stopped thinking about his duty to Solomon, we forgot about that line that marked the difference between life & death.

This is why Jesus calls us to celebrate communion – so that we'd never forget Him or lose a grip on the gratitude we ought to have for His forgiveness.