

1 Kings 1-2

Good evening and thank you for joining us. Tonight we begin our study in the book of 1st Kings, so would you please turn in your Bibles there as we read of the end of king David.

For the next few months we'll be studying the kings of Israel and Judah. Three kings ruled over the whole nation – all 12 tribes – Saul, David, and Solomon... After Solomon, the nation of Israel was divided by a Civil War... Nineteen kings reigned over the northern kingdom of Israel... Twenty kings ruled the southern kingdom of Judah. The entire period of history covered about 500 years between 1 and 2 kings.

Jewish tradition says that 1 Kings, and 2nd Kings were written by the prophet Jeremiah.

In a Hebrew Bible the four books of 1&2 Samuel and 1&2 Kings are actually considered one book called "Kingdoms". They weren't divided into their present form until 1516 AD.

We will see many incredible characters in this book of 22 chapters. David, Solomon, Elijah, Ahab and Jezebel.

The title of tonight's message is The death of David
Let's pray

1 Kings opens in the waning days of David's rule, and the first 2 chapters record the transfer of power from King David to his son, Solomon. And as was typical with most of David's family interaction it ended up a bloody and painful transition.

1-4

1 Now King David was old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm. 2 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."

3 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. 4 The young woman was very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her." This was the ancient equivalent of an electric blanket or a thermal quilt. Lay an attractive looking young woman next to the elderly king to rev up his body heat.

In other words, the relationship never got sexual. Abishag kept the king warm and served as a personal nurse.

Back in 2 Samuel 3 it describes the sons of David and lists Adonijah as the fourth son. We know that two of the three sons older than Adonijah were dead (Amnon and Absalom), and we suspect that the other older son (Chileab) either also died or was unfit to rule because he is never mentioned after 2 Samuel 3

Point being that as the oldest living son of David, by many customs Adonijah would be considered the heir to the throne.

5 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. Adonijah is running the same play his older brother Absalom ran-make the appearance of you being the king without ever receiving the actual appointment.

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.) For whatever reason, David refused to discipline his kids. David could lead the nation but not his own children. And we wonder why?

Perhaps he was stymied by his own failures – or too busy with affairs of state – or fearful of pushing them away – or had an unhealthy need to be liked by his kids.

These are issues all parents have to confront if they want to be good parents. A parent’s job is to love their kids enough to rebuke them – to challenge their attitudes, as well as, their behaviors.

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

Sadly, Joab (David’s chief general) and Abiathar (the high priest of Israel) each betray David and side with his son Adonijah.

8-10

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.

9 And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of Zohemoth, 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. Again all the appearances...just like his brother Absalom had done.

10 But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or Solomon his brother.

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? Nathan the prophet knew that Solomon was God’s choice to be the next king – so he recruits the help of Solomons mother, Bathsheba, to bring this potential catastrophe to David so the true king can decide what to do.

12-21 reveals Nathan’s plans with Bathsheba.

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.”

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.”

If Adonijah does in fact take the throne, they know his first act would be to kill his potential rivals – including Bathsheba and Solomon.

22-27

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 tells David the same thing that Bathsheba does—it’s confirmed. David has another son who is leading a rebellion.

28-30

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." David will declare Solomon king even before he dies – in fact this very 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!" What a marvelous example of the complete forgiveness of God! If God held grudges – if He held our former sins against us - there's no way the offspring of David and his former adulteress, Bathsheba, would end up heir to God's favor and promises. When God forgives us we truly are completely forgiven!

In the next several verses David is going to make arrangements for a royal coronation of Solomon. Each detail is designed to grab the attention of the public and legitimize Solomon's claim to Israel's throne.

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. Why would Solomon ride David's mule and not a horse? The reason is that the mule was the animal of peace, the horse the animal of conquest.

The Gihon Spring was Jerusalem's primary water supply. It was south of the city in the Kidron Valley. It would've been a gathering ground for the people - a perfect place to witness the coronation of Solomon.

34-37

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.

37 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." This is the prayer of every parent, that their children would be more blessed than they were.

38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites (these were David's secret service) went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and took him to Gihon. 39 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!" The holy oil from the Tabernacle confirmed Solomon as not just David's choice for king, but God's choice.

40 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. A loud roar erupted from the people and reverberated throughout Jerusalem. Though Adonijah had tried his best to sell himself to the people, the public realized that Solomon was the one chosen by God to be their king.

This is the moment-David is no longer king!

41-49

41 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?” 42 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.”

43 Then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, “No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. 44 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. 45 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. 46 Also Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom. 47 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. 48 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!’ ”

49 So all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid, and arose, and each one went his way. That’s one way to clear out a dinner party. A few minutes earlier they were about to pop the champagne – now it’s dangerous to be seen by his side.

50 Now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. **SHOW PIC** Throughout the ancient world this was where an accused man would seek mercy. He would grab the horns of an altar to escape justice or vengeance. **CLOSE PIC**

51-53

51 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.’ ”

52 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.” 53 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.” Solomon shows amazing grace. Adonijah was the leader of the coup against him. Yet Solomon gives his brother a second chance to prove his loyalty to himself.

Chapter 2

1 Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: 2 “I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. Few things are more troublesome than males refusing to act like men.

Listen to how David tells Solomon to prove his manhood... verse 3

3 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; Here’s the true test of manhood – are you brave enough to obey and follow God? It takes a real man to go against the flow of this world – and put God first! Our world is filled with lots of males, but not alot of men.

4 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.' This was an amazing promise. No matter how big and powerful the Assyrians or the Babylonians became, as long as David's sons were obedient and followed God with their heart and with all their soul, God would establish their kingdom.

We have a similar promise from God. **Matthew 6:33: "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."**

God promises that if we put Him first, He will take care of the rest.
5-6

5 "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. 6 Therefore do according to your wisdom, and do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace. David warns Solomon about General Joab. Clearly Joab had his own agenda – and was ruthless in obtaining his goals. David encourages Solomon to do what he never had the guts to do – deal with Joab.

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. Barzillai was the elderly man who fed David while in exile from Absalom.

8 “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.’ 9 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.” David had promised to spare Shimei. Solomon had made no such promises.

10 So David rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David. 11 The period that David reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. 12 Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established. Now this is not the last we’ll read of David, for when we get to 1 Chronicles, sometime next year, we’ll pick up some of the exploits of David again.

Solomon the new king begins his reign by cleaning house...13-17

13 Now Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. So she said, “Do you come peaceably?” And he said, “Peaceably.” 14 Moreover he said, “I have something to say to you.”

And she said, “Say it.”

15 Then he said, “You know that the kingdom was mine, and all Israel had set their expectations on me, that I should reign.

However, the kingdom has been turned over, and has become my brother's; for it was his from the LORD. 16 Now I ask one petition of you; do not deny me."

And she said to him, "Say it."

17 Then he said, "Please speak to King Solomon, for he will not refuse you, that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as wife." Absalom, the brother of Adonijah, asserted his rebellious claim on David's throne by taking David's concubines unto himself. Adonijah wants to declare or build a claim to Solomon's throne by taking David's widowed concubine as his wife.

18-22

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." Solomon understood the situation perfectly. He knew that this was Adonijah's attempt to build a claim to the throne of Israel.

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^[fn] 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 has his brother Adonijah executed because he made a wicked, treasonous request.

26 And to Abiathar the priest the king said, (who had supported Adonijah)

“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.” 27

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. Likely without realizing it at the time, Solomon fulfilled a 100 year old prophecy. 1 Samuel 2 and 3 tells us Eli’s sons sinned, and Eli refused to restrain them. As a result, God promised to remove the house of Eli from the office of High Priest.

Abiathar was a descendent of Eli – and here Solomon takes the priesthood away from the house of Eli. God fulfilled His judgment on Eli.

28 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. Joab knows that Solomon is cleaning house. And he knows he’s next.

29-30

29 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.” 30 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.” Notice, there is never any repentance on the part of Joab. He never admits he overstepped his bounds, or acted selfishly. Solomon was willing to show mercy where there was repentance, but Joab’s stubbornness seals his death sentence.

It was Spurgeon who pointed out that when faced with death, Joab laid hold of the altar – though he had never visited it before. But now he rushes to the altar hoping to find some reprieve.

Joab is like the person today who’s too busy for God, or salvation, or the church, but when faced with death they rush to the altar, but never repent.

31-35

31 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. 32 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. 33 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.”

34 So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck and killed him; and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. 35 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. General Joab is now dead. Now the scene shifts to Shimei...

36 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. 37 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.” These are the rules of Shimei’s parole-it’s house arrest. It’s clear-don’t cross the boundary or else.

We’ll finish the chapter 38-46

38 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.

39 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!” 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.

Shimei violates his house arrest when he leaves Jerusalem to chase down two runaway slaves. When he returns he discovers the king meant what he said. Shimei is executed.

And here's a thought... Jesus called Himself, "a greater than Solomon". If Solomon meant what he said how much more is Jesus a man of His Word. Guys, when the king says it... we can count on it! He's faithful to His word.