

1 Kings Chapter 1 Continued

Verses 28-53 (see 1 Chron. 29:21-25).

1 Kings 1:28 "Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king."

Observing that Nathan confirmed the account that Bath-sheba had given, and that it must be a matter of fact that Adonijah had usurped the throne, gave orders to those about him, saying.

"Call me Bath-sheba": Who either went out of the room when Nathan entered it, or however removed to some distant part of it, out of the sight of David.

"And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king": Came to the side or foot of his bed, hearkening to what he had to say to her.

It appears from this, that Bath-sheba had spoken to David and then left the room. Now that Nathan has verified the fact that Adonijah is trying to make himself king, David requests Bath-sheba to come back into the room. We know from the last lesson that Adonijah was trying to become king, even before the death of his very weak father's death. We know also, that Joab and all of Adonijah's brothers, except Solomon, are in favor of Adonijah being the next king.

1 Kings 1:29 "And the king sware, and said, [As] the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress,"

"The king sware": David swore another oath to carry out his earlier commitment to make Solomon king, and he made good on it that very day.

1 Kings 1:30 "Even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day."

And so owns and confirms the truth of what Nathan had suggested to Bath-sheba, and she had asserted (1 Kings 1:13).

"Saying, assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead": This was the substance of the oath.

"Even so will I certainly do this day": Perform this oath, and set Solomon on the throne.

David is speaking this to Bath-sheba in the presence of Nathan. There will be no doubting this proclamation with Nathan as a witness. Notice that even near death, David is careful to give the LORD credit for his life and his power. David is saying that he will keep the oath he had made to Bath-sheba. He will make Solomon king now.

1 Kings 1:31 "Then Bath-sheba bowed with [her] face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever."

Thereby she expressed her great respect of David; and thankfulness for his favor to her and her son in fulfilling his promise and oath.

Again, Bath-sheba shows her reverence for her husband and king. She truly means "Let my lord king David live forever".

Verses 32-34: "David" instructed "Zadok, Nathan," and "Benaiah," his chief aides in the spiritual and civil realms, to "cause Solomon ... to ride upon" David's "own mule ... to Gihon" and there "anoint him" publicly as "king." Although mules were forbidden in the Levitical law concerning crossbreeding (Lev. 19:19), the special mule was an ancient symbol of royalty, as demonstrated in the Mari Tablets. David's sons had ridden upon a mule (2 Sam. 13:29; 18:9).

Here is an account of a divinely approved coronation in Israel as "Zadok" (the priest), and Nathan the prophet, "anointed Solomon." Solomon's ride on David's "own mule" was a public endorsement of Israel's truly appointed king.

1 Kings 1:32 "And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king."

Not Abiathar the High Priest, for he had joined Adonijah; and besides Zadok was David's favorite priest, and for him the high priesthood was designed, as it was in a little time translated to him.

"And Nathan the prophet": Who very probably went out of the room when Bath-sheba was called in: and:

"Benaiah the son of Jehoiada": the captain of his guards.

"And they came before the king": Who it is very likely sat up in his bed, and they stood around him.

David may have been weak, but he was still thinking clearly and knew exactly what must be done. Notice that Zadok the priest was mentioned first. A Hebrew king must first be recognized by the man that God had put in power as the priest. The spiritual was always first. Remember that Benaiah was David's bodyguard.

1 Kings 1:33 "The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon:"

"Mine own mule": The riding of David's royal mule showed Israel that Solomon was David's chosen successor (see 2 Sam. 13:29).

“Gihon” This spring, which was Jerusalem’s main water supply, was located about one-half mile north of En-rogel (verse 9), and hidden from it by an intervening hill. Thus, the sound of Solomon’s anointing ceremony could have been heard without being seen by Adonijah’s party.

We know that the she mule that David rode was a mule proclaiming him as king. To allow Solomon to ride this special mule would mean that David was announcing that Solomon would take his place as king. Gihon was believed to be just to the west of Jerusalem.

1 Kings 1:34 "And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon."

“Anoint him there king”: Saul and David had been anointed by Samuel, the Lord’s priest and prophet (1 Sam. 10:1; 16:13). Solomon was also to be recognized by priest and prophet. The participation of the prophet Nathan gave Solomon’s coronation evidence of the Lord’s blessing. Throughout the book of Kings, God identified His chosen kings through prophets (11:37; 15:28-29; 16:12; 2 Kings 9:3).

“Blow ye with the trumpet”: The blowing of the trumpet signaled a public assembly where the people corporately recognized Solomon’s new status as co-regent with and successor to David (verses 39 and 40).

This seemed to be a place where most of the inhabitants in that area could hear the trumpet. Zadok and Nathan would represent not only the wishes of David in this, but the wishes of the LORD. As soon as they have anointed him king, they will shout, along with the servants of David's household, "God save king Solomon".

1 Kings 1:35 "Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah."

“Israel and over Judah”: The two major geographical components of David’s and Solomon’s kingdoms. Even while still unified these two separate entities, that would later divide (12:20), were clearly identifiable.

Solomon will enter Jerusalem as the new king. He will already be anointed by Zadok and Nathan. David also, is still in power and he had declared Solomon as his successor. He will rule over all twelve tribes, not just Judah.

1 Kings 1:36 "And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: the LORD God of my lord the king say so [too]."

In the name of the rest.

"And said, Amen": They all assented to it, and expressed their satisfaction in it.

"The Lord God of my lord the king say so too": Let it appear, by the prosperity and success that shall by divine Providence attend the new king, which this is according to the will of God.

"Amen" means so be it. Benaiah, is saying, "It will be as the king has proclaimed". We must remember that, Benaiah was a spiritual man. He knew, and said this pleased the LORD.

1 Kings 1:37 "As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David."

To guide and direct him, protect and defend him, succeed and prosper him the Targum is.

"As the Word of the Lord has been the help of my lord the king, so let him be for the help of Solomon: And make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David": Which he knew would not displease David, who not only had an affectionate regard for Solomon his son, but wished heartily the prosperity of the kingdom of Israel. And the wish on all accounts was grateful to him, though to an envious and ambitious prince it might have been disagreeable.

This is an expression of his loyalty to Solomon. He had loved and respected David, and now he is willing to serve Solomon as king. It is a way of showing his continued loyalty to David. He speaks a blessing upon Solomon.

Verses 38-40: The public pronouncement made openly official what "David" had privately declared (verses 13, 17, 30). The noise of the great pomp and fanfare carried over the hill to Adonijah's party at En-rogel (verses 9, 41). "The Cherethites and the Pelethites" were foreign warriors who made up David's loyal bodyguard.

1 Kings 1:38 "So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon."

The three men that David sent for on this occasion.

"And the Cherethites and the Pelethites": Not the Sanhedrim, as Ben Gersom, but David's guards, over whom Benaiah was: these,

"Went down": From Jerusalem;

"And caused Solomon to ride upon King David's mule": as he had ordered.

"And brought him to Gihon": Or Siloam, as the Targum; hence the Jews say, they do not anoint a king but at a fountain; but this is the only instance of it.

The Cherethites and the Pelethites were spoken of earlier as the servants that went with them. They are probably, a number of people who had attended David in and around the palace. It is

interesting that all of this was not Solomon's idea. He was God's choice for king, not Solomon's choice. He had not taken it upon himself to proclaim himself king. David's priest and prophet had proclaimed Solomon king.

1 Kings 1:39 "And Zadok the priest took a horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon."

“Tabernacle”: This was the tent David set up in Jerusalem (2 Sam. 6:17; 1 Chron. 15:1), to house the Ark of the Covenant, not the tabernacle of Moses (see 3:4).

The anointing oil coming from the tabernacle shows that this is indeed, the choice of the LORD for king. The people mentioned here are, possibly, the Cherethites and the Pelethites who went with them.

1 Kings 1:40 "And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them."

They followed him from the fountain to the city, with their loud acclamations.

"And the people piped with pipes": Which were hollow instruments, and full of holes which they blew with their mouths, and upon with their fingers; Jarchi says they were and very probably were.

"And rejoiced with great joy": Which they expressed by such loud shouts.

"So that the earth rent with the sound thereof": A hyperbolic expression, showing the great numbers gathered together on this occasion, and the sonorous acclamations they made.

Verses 41-49: “Adonijah ... heard it”: The loud shouts hailing Solomon as king reached the ears of those at Adonijah’s feast at En-rogel nearby. A messenger came with the full report of the coronation of Solomon, so that the cause of Adonijah was lost and the party ended with the people leaving in fear.

1 Kings 1:41 "And Adonijah and all the guests that [were] with him heard [it] as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore [is this] noise of the city being in an uproar?"

It is one of the many life like touches of the narrative that it is the old warrior Joab who, amidst the revelry of his companions, notices the sound of the trumpet, and the acclamation following. Adonijah elects to disregard it.

It appears that all of this happened in a very short period of time. Adonijah and his followers had not even finished their feast when they heard the trumpet blowing, and the people proclaiming Solomon king. It seems that after the trumpet was blown, and the pronouncement made that

Solomon was king, many people followed along behind the procession into Jerusalem. Joab, who had been the leader of David's army, heard this noise and wondered what was happening.

1 Kings 1:42 "And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou [art] a valiant man, and bringest good tidings."

"Jonathan": The son of Abiathar the priest was an experienced messenger (2 Sam. 15:36; 17:17).

1 Kings 1:43 " And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king."

Or, "nay, but" it is not so as you imagine. It is not good tidings, but bad tidings to thee I bring:

"Our lord King David hath made Solomon king": Of which he gives the following account in proof of it.

Abiathar the priest had followed Adonijah. It was his son who came and brought the news to them. Adonijah was pleased to see him, because he thought he was bringing them good news. This was quite a shock to Adonijah to hear that David himself, had declared Solomon king.

1 Kings 1:44 "And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule:"

To the fountain of Gihon.

"Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites": Over whom the latter was captain.

"And they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule": By his order and direction.

1 Kings 1:45 "And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This [is] the noise that ye have heard."

Or at Gihon; that is, Siloam, according to the Targum. Here the act of anointing is ascribed to them both (as in 1 Kings 1:34). Zadok very probably applied the oil to him, and Nathan might be some way or other assisting in it, however he was here present. He not only was approving of it, but declaring it as a prophet. And that it was according to the will of God as well as of the king.

"And they are come up from thence rejoicing": With a multitude of people along with them.

"So that the city rang again": With the blowing of trumpets, the sound of piping's, and the shouts of the people.

"This is the noise which ye have heard; which had so alarmed them.

The fact that the priest Zadok and the prophet Nathan had anointed him with oil from the tabernacle, and put him on David's mule to ride into Jerusalem, shows the LORD's approval of Solomon as king. The noise they heard was the city of Jerusalem rejoicing over their new king.

1 Kings 1:46 "And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom."

Where Solomon was placed to exercise his regal power when he returned to Jerusalem. As further confirmation of his being really and actually king.

David had already set Solomon upon his throne. "Sitteth" means continues to sit.

1 Kings 1:47 "And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed."

"To bless our lord king David": To praise and thank him for his great and good care, in leaving them in the hands of so excellent a successor, under whom they might expect peace and all prosperity. And to congratulate with him for God's great mercy to him, in giving him such a son and successor, and that his eyes had now seen the actual accomplishment of God's promise made to him concerning this thing.

"The king bowed himself upon the bed": Adoring God for this great mercy, and thereby declaring his hearty approbation and consent to this action (compare Genesis 47:31).

It appears the people are pleased with the selection David made of Solomon as king. As they come to recognize Solomon as king, they are speaking a blessing that Solomon's reign will be even greater than that of David. David was confined to his bed, but bowed in the bed to recognize Solomon as king.

1 Kings 1:48 "And also thus said the king, Blessed [be] the LORD God of Israel, which hath given [one] to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing [it]."

The expression "while my eyes see it" speaks of Solomon's peaceful succession along with David's personal satisfaction at knowing Solomon would be the next king.

David again recognizes this decision to be of the LORD. His blessings are for the LORD for choosing Solomon to succeed him on the throne. He was so pleased that the LORD let him live to see his son Solomon, become king in his stead.

Verses 49-53: The news of Solomon's kingship brought an end to "Adonijah's" plans. He sought mercy from Solomon by laying "hold on the horns of the altar," the time-honored place of refuge for those who had committed unintentional crimes (Exodus 21:12-14 with 1 Kings 2:28-34).

1 Kings 1:49 "And all the guests that [were] with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way."

Nothing is more striking than the sudden and humiliating collapse of the attempt of Adonijah, strongly supported as it was by Joab and Abiathar, in contrast with the formidable character of the rebellion of Absalom. This is another indication that the royal power had been greatly consolidated during the last peaceful years of David's reign. Perhaps, moreover, the usurpation of Adonijah, not being viewed as a rebellion against David, but only a presumption on his favor, was accordingly crushed at once by the expression of his will. It is strange that of all the conspirators, Adonijah alone seems to have feared punishment at this time. His accomplices, the other conspirators, are apparently allowed to disperse in safety, and their rebellion is ignored.

There was a mass exodus from Adonijah that day. These people no longer wanted to be associated with Adonijah. They feared for their lives. If they were supporting Adonijah and Solomon decided to kill him, he might kill them also.

1 Kings 1:50 "And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar."

"Horns of the altar" (compare 2:28). The "horns" were corner projections on the altar of burnt offering on which the priests smeared the blood of the sacrifices (Exodus 27:2; 29:12). By taking hold of the horns, Adonijah sought to place himself under the protection of God (see Exodus 21:13-14).

Adonijah was the half-brother of Solomon. They had the same father, David, but different mothers. It would have been customary for the new king to kill Adonijah. He went to the tabernacle and took hold of the horns of the altar, begging for mercy. Adonijah had placed himself under the protection of the LORD by this action.

Verses 51-53: Conventional wisdom for newly established kings was to slaughter any potential threat to the throne, but Solomon initially spared the lives of Adonijah and Shimei. Godly leaders lead by acting justly and showing mercy (Micah 6:8). Taking hold of the "horns of the altar" was a way for those who had unintentionally committed crimes to seek mercy (Exodus 21:12-14; 27:2).

1 Kings 1:51 "And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me today that he will not slay his servant with the sword."

By some of his courtiers.

"Saying, behold, Adonijah feareth King Solomon": Lest he should take away his life.

"For, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar": Which was the last resort of the guilty when they despaired of mercy otherwise.

"Saying, let King Solomon swear unto me this day that he will not slay his servant with the sword": He owns Solomon to be king, and himself his subject and servant; this no doubt he did to conciliate his favor, nor did he think his life safe, unless Solomon promised with an oath, that he would not take it away.

Someone came and told Solomon of Adonijah's desire for forgiveness. He wanted Solomon's word that he would not kill him for desiring to be king. He knew if Solomon swore to him that he would not kill him, he would be safe. He greatly feared that Solomon would kill him. It would have generally meant death to Adonijah for what he had done. He had appealed to the LORD for help, however.

1 Kings 1:52 "And Solomon said, If he will show himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die."

Will behave himself well as a good subject, and be careful not to offend for the future, or appear to be one that fears sin, as the Targum; particularly the crimes of sedition, rebellion, and treason.

"There shall not a hair of him fall to the earth": Not the least harm should be done him.

"But if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die": That is, if any crime worthy of death be committed by him, or any overt act of treason, and the like, he should surely be put to death, and find no mercy, notwithstanding the present general pardon. This was very wisely done by Solomon, to begin his reign without shedding blood even of delinquents. And especially his own brother, by granting him his life, depending on his future good behavior.

1 Kings 1:53 "So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house."

It being built upon a hill, as both that at Gibeon, and in Araunah's threshing floor was.

"And he came and bowed himself to King Solomon": In a way of reverence and subjection, acknowledging him to be king, and himself his subject.

"And Solomon said to him, go to thine house": In peace; signifying that he pardoned him, and he might go home, and enjoy his family and substance; and by this intimating that he should only regard the affairs of his family, and not trouble himself with those of the kingdom and state. Abarbanel fancies, that because Solomon said, that if he showed himself to be a worthy man, or a man of fortitude and valor That Adonijah thought that his meaning was, that he should go before him as a man of war, and minister to him. That this made him so ready to come and stand before him; in which he was mistaken. Solomon meant no such thing; nor would he take him into his court and service, but sent him home to his own house.

This was a generous offer, to forgive Adonijah. Solomon would not kill him, as long as he lived right. If he fell back into revolt against the king or started trouble in the kingdom, Solomon would have him killed. It appears; he did accept Solomon's rules and bowed to him, showing he accepted him as king.

1 Kings Chapter 1 Continued Questions

1. Who did David make his promise to?
2. Who were the witnesses?
3. What were the words of David's promise?
4. Who did David proclaim as king to follow him?
5. How did Bath-sheba react to this promise David made to her?
6. Which three men did David send for, to carry out his wishes?
7. A Hebrew king must, first, be recognized by the man that _____ had put in power to be priest.
8. Who were these three to take with them?
9. Why did David tell them to set Solomon upon his mule?
10. Who were to anoint Solomon king?
11. After they had anointed him king, what 2 things were they to do?
12. What does "Amen" mean?
13. What is the statement, in verse 37, an expression of?
14. Who went with Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah?
15. Who actually poured the anointing oil on Solomon?
16. After the trumpet blew, what did the people say?
17. What caused the great noise coming into Jerusalem?
18. Who heard this noise, and wondered what it was?
19. Who came and told them what the noise was?
20. What news did he bring?
21. What things showed the LORD's approval of Solomon as king?
22. In verse 46, what had already happened?
23. What blessings were spoken on Solomon by the people?

24. How does David show that Solomon is now king?
25. When the people with Adonijah heard this news, what did they do?
26. What did Adonijah do?
27. What relation was Adonijah to Solomon?
28. What did Adonijah desire of Solomon?
29. What promise did Solomon make to Adonijah?
30. What were the conditions of this promise?
31. What did Adonijah do, that showed he accepted Solomon as king?