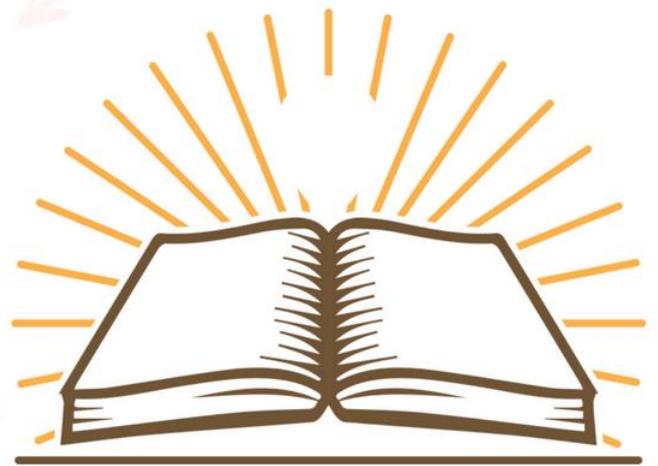


The Book of 1 Kings

Life Lessons
From
The Book of
First Kings



Part 1
5 studies in 1 Kings

Introduction

The two books, 1 & 2 Kings, in the Hebrew Old Testament were one book. It was divided by the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) translators. They summarized these books as follows: I The Reign of Solomon; II Division of the Kingdom, and Parallel History of the Two Kingdoms; III Subsequent History of Judah to the Captivity.

1 Kings opens with the Hebrew nation in its glory. 2 Kings closes with the nation in ruin. Together they cover a period of about 400 years, from 1000-600 BC.

Author

The author is not known. A Jewish tradition says it was Jeremiah. Whoever the author is, he makes frequent reference to state annals and other historical records existent in his day, such as: "The book of the acts of Solomon"; "The book of chronicles of the Kings of Judah"; and "The book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel" (1 Kings 11:41; 14:19, 29; 15:7, 23, 31; 16:5, 14, 27 etc.).

Brief Outline of 1 & 2 Kings

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. The last days of David and Solomon's Accession | 1 Kings 1:1 - 1 Kings 2:46 |
| 2. The reign of Solomon | 1 Kings 3:1 - 1 Kings 11:43 |
| 3. History of the Divided Kingdom | 1 Kings 12:1 - 2 Kings 10:36 |
| 4. History of Judah and Israel to the fall of Northern Kingdom | 2 Kings 11:1 - 2 Kings 17:41 |
| 5. History of Judah to the fall of Jerusalem | 2 Kings 18:1 - 2 Kings 25:30 |

Alternative Outline of 1 & 2 Kings

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The Golden Age | 1 Kings 1-11 |
| 2. The Torn Kingdom | 1 Kings 12-2 Kings 17 |
| 3. The Last Days | 2 Kings 18-25 |

Please Note the following:

- It is not necessary to look up all the Bible cross references listed in a particular question; your Growth Group Leader will summarize these Bible cross references for you.

2. Just a reminder that sometimes in our Growth Groups, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information **MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP.**

Study 1 - Who's got the Kingdom - Part 1?

1 Kings 1:1-27

(Sermon on 18-July-21)

Before we begin: familiarize yourself with the family tree in Appendix 1

1. Knowing what we learnt from 2 Samuel, who is eligible to be king after David?

Amnon and Absalom are both dead.

That leaves Adonijah and Solomon as possible successors.

Read 1 Kings 1:1-4

2. What condition is David in?

Old and advanced in years (v1). He couldn't keep warm (v1).

He is probably about 70 years old.

3. What do David's attendants decide to do for David?

They found a young virgin to serve David and take care of him. She lay beside David to keep him warm [apparently recognized medical treatment in the ancient world]. Her beauty might engage affections and refresh his spirits and her embraces would give him natural heat There were no sexual relations.

Read 1 Kings 1:5-6

4. What assumption does Adonijah make?

Adonijah put himself forward to be king, assuming as the oldest living son, it was a foregone conclusion that he would be king.

But God is the one in control.

As Psalm 75:6-7 says:

⁶No one from the east or the west

or from the desert can exalt themselves.

⁷It is God who judges:

He brings one down, he exalts another.

5. What do we learn about Adonijah in verse 6?

a. *His father, David, failed to restrain Adonijah's desires and passions. David didn't put any restraints on his sons' behaviour*

b. *Adonijah was very handsome which would make him attractive to others and popular.*

c. Adonijah is next born after Absalom, therefore, the natural successor to David.

Read 1 Kings 1:7-10

6. In what ways does Adonijah try to establish his position and claim for kingship?
- He gained support from Joab (commander of the army)*
 - He gained support from Abiathar (priest)*
 - Neither Joab nor Abiathar confirm with David, nor the Lord, whether it was David's plan to have Adonijah as his successor.*
 - He made a huge sacrifice of sheep and cattle and invited all his brothers and king's sons and royal officials of Judah*

7. Who is missing from Adonijah's soirée?

Solomon (David's son & Adonijah's brother), Zadok (priest), Benaiah, Nathan (prophet), Shimei, Rei nor David's special guard

8. Does Adonijah remind you of anyone? (cf. 1 Samuel 9:2; 10:23-24; 1 Samuel 16:6-7 and 2 Samuel 14:25-27)

*1 Samuel 9:2 - **Saul** - a handsome young man and a head taller than anyone else.*

*1 Samuel 10:23-24 - **Saul** - a head taller than anyone else - no one like him*

*1 Samuel 16: 16-7 - **Eliab** (son of Jesse) - do not consider his height or appearance - the Lord looks at the heart - not outward appearance*

*2 Samuel 14:25-27 - **Absalom** - not a man so highly praised for his handsome appearance - no blemish in him - his hair was only cut once per year - his hair weighed 200 shekels (5 lbs. or 2.3Kg)*

Remember: God looks at the heart not outward appearances.

Read 1 Kings 1:11-14

9. Who intervenes? What is his plan?

Nathan tells Bathsheba (David's wife) about Adonijah's plan to become king.

Nathan has a plan to save Bathsheba and son, Solomon's life.

Nathan advises Bathsheba to go into King David and ask if he did indeed promise Solomon would be the next king; and to ask why Adonijah has become king?

Whilst Bathsheba is talking to David; Nathan plans to also come in to talk to David.

Read 1 Kings 1:15-21

10. What picture does Bathsheba paint to King David?

She reminds David that David had promised her that Solomon would be the next king.

But informs him, that Adonijah has gained support from Joab and Abiathar and has been declared as the next king.

11. What convincing argument does she make?

All of Israel is waiting to see who will be king after David.

She informs David that when he dies, she and Solomon will be treated as criminals.

Read 1 Kings 1:22-27

12. What do you make of Nathan's appeal to King David?

He asked David if he has declared Adonijah as the next king; knowing full well David has done no such thing.

Nathan describes Adonijah's sacrifices and who he invited to his banquet and how his guests are saying "Long live, King Adonijah!"

Nathan also tells David that neither Nathan, himself, nor Zadok (priest), Benaiah, Solomon, have been invited.

13. What impresses you about Nathan?

His wisdom. He is supremely loyal and respectful to King David. He respects David's authority.

Application for us: When we confront people - be gracious!

14. **Ponder:** Compare Adonijah and Nathan? How do they differ?

Adonijah is self-centred, arrogant and disloyal to the King.

*Nathan is humble, self-less and loyal to the King. Nathan is for God - **He is David's conscience before God!***

15. Do Adonijah's exist in churches today? (cf. 3 John 1:9-10)

John writes about a man named, Diotrephes, who loves to be first (like Adonijah). He spreads malicious nonsense about Paul and his fellow workers. He also refuses to welcome believers and even stops others who want to welcome newcomers and puts them out of the church.

There is no room for egos in church. We are one in Christ and the church is the body of Christ, working together in unity for the good of Christ's church and to bring glory to God, not to ourselves.

16. **Ponder:** What difference can one person make, like Nathan?

One person, standing up for what is right can make a huge difference, as Nathan did. Think what God would want, pray and act.

Read Proverbs 24:9-10

17. How does this apply to 1 Kings 1:1-27?

Proverbs 24:9-10 - The schemes of folly are sin and people detest a mocker. If you falter in a time of trouble, how small is your strength.

See also Proverbs 24:11-12:

*¹¹ Rescue those being led away to death;
hold back those staggering toward slaughter¹*

*¹² If you say, "But we knew nothing about this,"
does not he who weighs the heart perceive it?*

Does not he who guards your life know it?

Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?

Read Mark 10:46-52

18. Instead of doing nothing, what did Jesus do for Bartimaeus?

Even though many people told Blind Bart to be quiet, Jesus could not stand by and do nothing to help this desperate man.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 1:1-27?

Don't stand by when evil and wrong are being done. Nathan did not stand by when Adonijah tried to assume the throne.

God's ways are not the same as human's ways (Isaiah 55:8)

We make our plans, but God has the last word (Proverbs 16:1)



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?



How does this passage **apply to your life?**

a. *Consult God before making plans*

b. *Don't stand by or turn a blind eye and let evil/wrong go unchecked*

c. Approach people peacefully and graciously - non confrontational.

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V11 - because Nathan acts

Finish in prayer: Ask God to help us be brave and stand up for what is right?

Study 2 - Who's got the Kingdom - Part 2?

1 Kings 1:28-53

(Sermon on 25-July-21)

Before we begin: Remind yourself how we left things in 1 Kings 1:1-27.

David is close to death. He has been given a young virgin, Abishag, to keep him "warm".

David's eldest surviving son, Adonijah, assumes he will be the next king after David dies; even though there is no precedent for the eldest son to receive the throne.

Adonijah declares himself king without any authority from his father, David; and without any consultation with the Lord. David had never put a rein of his sons and so they thought they could whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted.

Adonijah also gains support from Joab (David's nephew and commander of the army) and Abiathar, the priest. He even acts like a king; offers a huge sacrifice to the Lord and has a party, with many guests - but Nathan, the prophet and Solomon (Adonijah's brother) are not invited.

Nathan the prophet, knowing this plan of Adonijah is not God's plan nor endorsed by David; acts swiftly. Nathan informs David's wife, Bathsheba, (Solomon's mother) about Adonijah's plan; and then Bathsheba and Nathan, go to David to tell him of Adonijah's plan.

Read 1 Kings 1:28-30

1. What promise did David make? And how soon?

David swears an oath before the LORD (who has delivered him out of every trouble) to Bathsheba that Solomon will be king and sit on David's throne, as David had promised Bathsheba.

This will happen "this very day" (verse 29)

2. What do you make of David's "**action**" here, compared to his "**inaction**" in verses 1 and 2?

God promised David in 2 Samuel 7:16 "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever."

Even though God is sovereign and His promises are always true; in parallel to His sovereignty is human responsibility and obedience. David is obedient to God and acts to ensure His throne will be established forever.

Even with the questionable behaviour of David's servants bringing a young virgin to keep David "warm" - God can use this questionable behaviour to re-energize David. The threat of the Kingdom being wrongly taken by Adonijah, springs David into swift action.

Read 1 Kings 1:31-37

3. What arrangements are made for Solomon to become King?

Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet and Benaiah one of David's special guards are summoned to take Solomon by mule, down to Gihon (about 5km northeast of Jerusalem - contains a spring which was main source of water for Jerusalem). At Gihon, Zadok and Nathan anoint Solomon as King over Israel.

Notice: prophet, priest and king are all in cooperation as they should be!

After being anointed; the trumpets are to sound and the shout of "Long live King Solomon" is to be uttered.

Once anointed, Solomon is to sit on David's throne in his place. Solomon is co-regent until David dies.

4. What is Benaiah doing in verses 36 & 37? Why is that important?

Benaiah believed it was God's will that Solomon be the new King and Benaiah offers a prayer that it is indeed God's will.

Benaiah understood the important principle: unless the Lord God says "Amen" [so be it; verily; truly] to the selection of Solomon as King; he would not stand.

5. From what you know of King Solomon's reign, is Benaiah's wish in verse 37 achieved? On a human level? On a spiritual level?

Benaiah's desire was that the Lord would be with Solomon just as He was with David; and that the Lord would make Solomon's throne even greater than David's.

On a human level: Solomon's reign was indeed greater than David's in terms of Territory; alliances and possessions; as well as building the temple.

On a spiritual level: Solomon was not a man after God's own heart, like David; and in fact, was led astray by his many foreign wives.

Read 1 Kings 1:38-40

6. Describe Solomon's anointing.

Zadok, Nathan and Benaiah took Solomon to Gihon as David instructed.

Being the main source of water; Gihon was a place where many people gathered, so a good location for anointing the king.

Solomon rode David's mule which showed that David had appointed him successor to his throne.

A horn of oil was used for the anointing. This was a specific container of oil kept in the tabernacle for special ceremonies of anointing.

The trumpet sounded and the shout of "Long live King Solomon" went up!

7. Despite Adonijah's great self-promotion campaign earlier in the chapter, what do we discover in verse 40?

The people were so excited and rejoiced so loudly, that the ground shook, as if it was an earthquake!

Even though Adonijah had undertaken a persuasive marketing campaign to become King; the people endorsed Solomon as the next king!

Read 1 Kings 1:41-49

8. What interrupts Adonijah's soirée in verse 41?

The sound of the trumpet and the noise of the people in the city celebrating King Solomon's anointing.

Joab probably knew in his heart what the trumpet and the all the noise meant.

9. What "bad" news does Adonijah hear?

Jonathan, Abiathar's son, brings the news. Adonijah thinks it must be good news. But Jonathan informs him that David has made Solomon the king.

Jonathan describes Solomon's anointing and how David (v48) has praised God for allowing him to see a successor on his throne.

10. How did the guests react in verse 49?

Talk about breaking a party up!

The guests are alarmed and all left quickly.

Suddenly it was dangerous to be someone who supported Adonijah!

Read 1 Kings 1:50-53

11. How did Adonijah react in verse 50? What's the significance of the horns of the altar?

Rightly, Adonijah was afraid of what Solomon (as the rightful king) might do to him. So Adonijah took hold of the horns of the altar.

According to the customs of the ancient world; a religious altar was a place of sanctuary against justice or vengeance. An accused person could find safety if they fled to an altar before being apprehended; that's what Adonijah does here. However, note: In Israel, this custom was not used to protect a guilty person.

As Exodus 21:12-14: ¹² "Anyone who strikes a person with a fatal blow is to be put to death. ¹³ However, if it is not done intentionally, but God lets it happen, they are to flee to a place I will designate. ¹⁴ But if anyone schemes and kills someone deliberately, that person is to be taken from my altar and put to death.

The law also allowed cities of refuge as in Numbers 35:6; but this hardly applied in Adonijah's case: "Six of the towns you give the Levites will be cities of refuge, to which a person who has killed someone may flee. In addition, give them forty-two other towns"

The horns were used to tie the sacrificial victim; by clinging to the horns {Exodus 27:2} of the altar, Adonijah was claiming protection from God.

12. What does Adonijah ask of Solomon in verse 51?

Adonijah wants Solomon to swear he will not put him to death!

13. What does Solomon's reply in verse 52 mean? Is this surprising?

Solomon gave Adonijah a measure of grace and mercy.

It was customary for a new king to execute any potential rivals.

Solomon not only let Adonijah, a potential rival, live; but he let someone like Adonijah who had tried to subvert the ordained (by God & David) course of the Kingdom.

At the same time, Solomon, made it clear that if Adonijah showed any hint of a rebellion, he would be killed instantly.

14. What do you make of Adonijah's approach to Solomon in verse 53?

He submits to the authority of Solomon as King.

He bows down (prostrates) before Solomon.

It is the correct response and Adonijah must be so grateful to have been spared his life!

15. **Ponder:** Why does Solomon let Adonijah go home? Is Adonijah genuine?

Solomon gives grace to Adonijah. Not only was his life spared but his possessions; Adonijah still has a home to go to; and will so as long as he continues to submit to

Solomon as king. We're left with the feeling; this is NOT over; there's more to come.

Is Adonijah genuine?

We know there can be such a thing as an outward external submission that is miles apart from a glad internal submission. It's easy to see this as a formal submission by Adonijah due to his circumstances. [We know them by their fruits - Matthew 7:20]

Read Philippians 2: 9-11

16. What's the connection between Philippians 2:9-11 and 1 Kings 1:50-53?

In a far greater way than David making his son, Solomon, king of Israel.

God the Father, made Jesus, the Son; King of Heaven and Earth. The Father exalted Jesus to the highest place and gave Him the name above all names.

One day (just like Adonijah bowed down to Solomon) everyone will bow down and acknowledge & confess that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah), the Lord and Saviour of the World.

Paul doesn't mean us to see this as everyone being saved! What Paul means is that one day, every person will ultimately come to realize and confess Christ's lordship - either with joyful faith (as believers) or with deep despair (as unbelievers).

What's the BIG IDEA of 1 Kings 1:28-53?

1. *God is sovereign - His purposes will always come to pass. But in parallel is human responsibility; namely the action of Nathan, the Prophet and the obedience of David to God's promise to establish His throne. God ordains the END and the MEANS to the END.*
2. *We must submit to the Kingship of Jesus and it must be genuine submission from the heart.*



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

How quickly God acts behind the scenes from Nathan's appeal to David's declaration of Solomon as King; this all happens before Adonijah's party is finished! As David said "this very day".

➔ How does this passage **apply to your life?**

1. *What stirs us into action? Earthly things or heavenly things?*
2. *Whatever situations we face. God is sovereign and His timing is perfect. This chapter doesn't mention much of God's activity; it relies on human activity and God's prompting of people's hearts (like Nathan, Bathsheba and David). Are we obedient to God's word and trusting in His purposes?*
3. *Submit with all our heart, to the Lordship of Jesus in all things.*
4. *Pray for those whose submission may be lip-service; or not from the heart - and pray for those who haven't come around to submitting their lives to Jesus yet.*
5. *David may seem a failure at the start of this chapter; old, sick and perhaps even pathetic (having a young virgin come tend an old man); but in his weakness (and our weakness); we see God's strength*
6. *Adonijah thought he was the anointed one; He thought he had arrived; he thought he was the gift from God. When David (the anointed king) saw Solomon anointed as the next king, he praised God (v48) for allowing to see his successor on the throne. David new he wasn't the gift; the anointing continues; the promised of God for someone on the throne forever continues through Solomon and ultimately to Jesus, the forever King. We shouldn't think we are the gift! We're not the Messiah. Jesus is the Messiah.*

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V29-30

V47-48

Finish in prayer: Thanking God, the Father, for sending His Son, Jesus to rescue humankind and then exalting Him to the highest place and giving Him the name above all names.

Study 3 - David's Charge to Solomon

1 Kings 2:1-12

(Sermon on 01-Aug-21)

Read Deuteronomy 17:14-20

1. What requirements and provisions for a King are listed here?

- *The King must be chosen by God*
- *The King be a fellow Israelite; not a foreigner*
- *The King must not acquire great numbers of horses (or get more from Egypt - as this would require Israelites returning to Egypt)*
- *The King must not take many wives as they will lead his heart astray*
- *The King must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold*
- *The King must a copy of the law for himself and he is to read it all the days of his life - learn to revere the Lord and follow the law and decrees*
- *The King must be humble*
- *The King must not turn from the law to the right or the left*
- *If the King does all this - he will reign a long time over his kingdom*

Read 2 Samuel 7:8-17

1. What promises are given to David?

- *This is the Davidic Covenant*
- *God will make David's name great*
- *God will provide a place for the people of Israel*
- *The wicked will not oppress the people of Israel anymore*
- *Give them rest from their enemies*
- *God will establish a house for David*
- *God will raise up successors from his own flesh and blood*
- *One of David's successors will build a house for God*
- *David's house and kingdom will endure forever and his throne will be established forever*

Read 1 Kings 2:1-4

2. What did David charge Solomon to do?

- *Be strong and act like a man*
- *Observe what God requires:*
 - *Walk in obedience*
 - *Keep his decrees and commands*

- *Keep his laws and regulations as written in Law of Moses*
- *Obedience will mean Solomon will prosper in all he does and wherever he goes*

3. What will the outcome be if Solomon and the people of Israel follow David's charge?

If Solomon and his descendants watch how they live and walk faithfully before God with all their heart and soul, there will always be a successor on the throne of Israel

Read 1 Kings 2:5-6

4. What is David's advice about Joab? Why? (cf. 2 Samuel 3:22-32; 2 Samuel 20:8-13)

David advises Solomon to deal with Joab. He must be punished.

Joab had murdered Abner and Amasa in cold blood. These murders had been done in a time of peace, not in a time of war.

2 Samuel 3:22-32 tells us Joab killed Abner after David had let Abner go in peace. Joab killed Abner (Saul's commander of the army) because Abner had killed Joab's brother, Asahel in battle. David disapproved of Joab's action at the time, and called upon God's curse on Abner.

2 Samuel 20:8-13 tells us Joab killed Amasa in cold-blood, most likely because Absalom (David's son) and David himself had appointed Amasa commander of the army replacing Joab.

In addition, we saw in 1 Kings 1 that Joab sided with Adonijah in his attempt to take the Kingdom. This would not have escaped David's attention.

Joab is a complex character. He was fiercely loyal to David, yet sometimes strongly disobedient. He disobeyed David when he thought it was in David's best interest or when he thought David was weak. At the same time, he was cunning and ruthless in furthering his own position. Also, remember, Joab knew that David had Uriah (Bathsheba's husband) killed. David found Joab's complex character difficult to deal with.

Read 1 Kings 2:7

5. What is David's advice about the sons of Barzillai? Why? (cf. 2 Samuel 17:27-28; 19:31-39)

David tells Solomon to show kindness to the sons of Barzillai. This kindness amounted to "eating at the King's table" - equivalent to a pension!

Why?

In 2 Samuel 17, Barzillai had shown kindness to David in a time of great need, when David had to flee during Absalom's takeover bid. Barzillai had brought bedding, bowls, wheat, barley, flour and roasted grain, beans and lentils, honey and curds, sheep, and cheese for David and his people.

In 2 Samuel 19, David had asked Barzillai to return with him but Barzillai replied that he was old and didn't want to be a burden to David.

So here in 1 Kings 2, David wants to repay Barzillai by Solomon looking after Barzillai's sons.

Read 1 Kings 2:8-9

6. What is David's advice about Shimei? Why? (cf. 2 Samuel 16:5-13)

David tells Solomon to deal with Shimei.

Why?

When David fled from Absalom in 2 Samuel 16, Shimei had pelted David and his officials with stones and cursed David saying "Get out, get out, you murderer, you scoundrel! The LORD has repaid you for all the blood you shed in the household of Saul, in whose place you have reigned. The LORD has given the kingdom into the hands of your son Absalom. You have come to ruin because you are a murderer!"

Read 1 Kings 2:10-12

7. What do we find out about David's reign?

David was buried in Jerusalem.

He reigned 40 years over Israel; 7 years from Hebron and 33 years from Jerusalem.

Solomon sat on his father, David's, throne and his rule was established.

8. **Ponder:** What is David trying to achieve by giving Solomon this advice?

David is trying to keep Solomon's Kingdom safe and ensure his reign is peaceful. David wants those who have been loyal and kind to him to be rewarded and wants those who have been disloyal or could be a threat to Solomon's kingdom to be dealt with.

Like any good Father, David is passing on good fatherly advice to his son, before He dies.

Read Matthew 7:24-27

9. How does this passage relate to 1 Kings 2:1-4?

Just as the King of Israel is to be wise and hear God's Word and put it into practice, we must do the same. The King must build his life and kingdom upon the foundation of God's Word and Law. In the same way, we must wisely build our lives on the Words of Jesus AND put them into practice.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 2:1-12?

Keeping the Kingdom safe.

Stability and security of the Kingdom of Israel only comes through obedience to God's commands

Stability and security of our lives (and Jesus' Church) in the Kingdom of God come through obedience to Jesus' words and putting them into practice.



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

David doesn't forget the small things. He remembers the kindness that was shown him in a time of great need.

Also, David cares about the success of the Kingdom.



How does this passage **apply to your life?**

- *In the Bible stories of David; we see David warts and all (the good, the bad and the ugly of David). We can learn from David's life. Jesus accepts us warts and all. David dies with His relationship with God, intact. That's our goal too.*
- *What legacy are we leaving to our children? Our grandchildren? What would people say about us at our funeral. Would they say, we loved and followed Jesus.*
- *Matthew 7:21-23 - only those who do the will of my father, will enter the Kingdom*
- *Matthew 7:24-25 - everyone who hears the words of Jesus and puts them into practice will be part of the kingdom*

- *Matthew 6:33 - seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you*
- *What about vengeance? (See Deut 32:35; Romans 12:17-19)*

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V3 - observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go

Finish in prayer: Thanking God for His Word and asking God to help us to walk in obedience.

Study 4 - Eliminating the Kingdom's Enemies

1 Kings 2:13-46

(Sermon on 08-Aug-21)

Read 1 Kings 2:13-25

1. What does Adonijah ask of Bathsheba?

In his own mind (v15) Adonijah thinks he was king for a fleeting moment. When in reality it was against God's wishes, against David's wishes and only supported by a couple of power-brokers like Joab and Abiathar.

Adonijah approaches Bathsheba with his request, rather than going directly to Solomon.

Adonijah asks Bathsheba to ask Solomon to give him Abishag, the Shunammite, as his wife. Adonijah asks Bathsheba to do the asking because he thinks Solomon will listen to his mother!

Now remember, Abishag, is likely to have been considered to be one of David's wives or concubine, even though they had no sexual relations.

*So, the problem with **this request** is it is tantamount to claiming the King's throne (In 2 Samuel 3 - Abner, Saul's cousin, was accused of sleeping with Saul's concubine, which is seen as a threat to Saul's throne. In 2 Samuel 12:8, Nathan declares to David that God has given him, Saul's throne, Saul's house and Saul's wives; they all come as part of ascending to the throne. In 2 Samuel 16:21 - Ahithophel advises Absalom to sleep with father, David's, concubines as a way of publicly claiming David's throne).*

Even if we take the view that Adonijah's request was genuine and not an attempt to bid for the throne again. His request was stupid. If he had an ounce of sense, he would know that his request could or would be interpreted by Solomon as subversive.

2. What does Bathsheba ask of Solomon?

I think we could read v20 - "I have one small request to make of you," she said. "Do not refuse me." - as being sarcastic. It's hardly a small request. Especially when we see how Solomon reacts.

3. What did Solomon decide to do with Adonijah? Why?

In v23 - Solomon sees Adonijah's request for Abishag as nothing short of a play for the kingdom. And he sees this play for the kingdom would please Adonijah's two main supporters, Abiathar the priest and Joab.

Solomon swears an oath to the Lord, that Adonijah would pay with his life for such a request. Remember back in 1 Kings 1:52, Solomon had promised to Adonijah "if he shows himself to be worthy, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground; but if evil is found in him, he will die". All Adonijah had to do was "pull his head in" and he would have been fine.

So, v25, Solomon gave orders to Benaiah (Leader of the King's personal guard) to strike down Adonijah dead.

Solomon saw Adonijah as too much of a threat to his kingdom to let him live.

Read 1 Kings 2:26-27?

4. What did Solomon decide to do with Abiathar? Why? (cf. 1 Samuel 2:27-36?)

Solomon is more lenient with Abiathar. Even though Abiathar had been disloyal to David and sided with Adonijah's claim to the throne. Even though there was the example in 1 Samuel 2 of what happened to Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, when they were disloyal. Solomon decides to remove Abiathar from priesthood and this is seen as fulfilling what God had said to Eli at Shiloh in 1 Samuel 2:27-36. The reason given for this leniency is the fact that Abiathar had carried the Ark of the Lord before King David and shared in David's hardship.

Solomon sees Abiathar can't be much of a threat to his kingdom if he is no longer a priest.

In v35 - Solomon replaced Abiathar with Zadok the priest.

Read 1 Kings 2:28-35

5. How does Joab react to the news of Adonijah and Abiathar?

Joab reacts as Adonijah did in chapter 1. When Joab hears the news about Adonijah being struck down, he flees to the Tent of the Lord and grabs hold of the horns of the altar. As we said in chapter 1, this was a way of claiming mercy; but only applied if a person was innocent. Clearly Joab is far from innocent.

6. What happened to Joab? Why?

Solomon ordered Benaiah to strike down Joab and bury him (v31).

Why? Because Joab, without David's knowledge or consent, had killed two men, Abner commander of Saul's & Israel's army and Amasa, commander of Judah's army; in both cases during peace time and not in battle.

Read 1 Kings 2:36-46

7. What deal does Solomon make with Shimei? Why?

Solomon tells Shimei to build a house in Jerusalem and stay there and no go anywhere else. We can assume that Solomon had Shimei watched. Why did Solomon do this? Because he knew Shimei had been disloyal to his father, David, and he knew Shimei was a supporter of Saul and Absalom. Shimei had the potential to repeat this disloyalty and so keeping him in one place where he can manipulate and stir up people, was a wise idea.

8. What fatal mistake does Shimei make? What happens to him?

3 years after this deal, two of Shimei's slaves ran off to Achish, king of Gath (Philistine territory) and when Shimei heard about this, he went after them and brought his slaves back from Gath.

When Solomon finds out Shimei has broken the deal, so Solomon ordered Benaiah to strike Shimei down.

9. **Ponder:** What has Solomon achieved by his actions? (cf. 1 Kings 2:46b)

Solomon has established [kept safe] his kingdom!

Read Matthew 13:36-43

10. What does this passage have to do with 1 Kings 2:13-46?

In this passage, Jesus explains the parable of the weeds (which Jesus told in verses 24-30 - the parable was to explain what the kingdom of heaven is like - the parable was about a man who sowed good seed in his field. One night, the enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat seed. In time both the wheat and weeds were growing together. The man's servants want to pull up the weeds, but the man says "no" as they might also uproot the wheat. The man says wait until the harvest to sort the wheat and weeds out; and then burn the weeds).

Jesus says the one who sowed the good seed was Jesus himself.

The field is the world.

The good seed is the people of the kingdom = the believers.

The weeds are those who belong to the devil = unbelievers.

The enemy is the devil.

The harvest is the last day of judgment.

The harvesters are God's angels - sorting the wheat (believers) from the weeds (unbelievers)

The weeds will be thrown into fire/furnace = Hell.

The wheat will be in the kingdom of heaven.

The connection with 1 Kings 2:13-46 is that just like Solomon had to weed out those who are enemies of his kingdom and would put his kingdom in danger; so too Jesus will weed out those who aren't genuine believers and are therefore enemies to his kingdom.

God will not allow evil to prevail.

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

11. What does this passage have to do with 1 Kings 2:13-46?

This passage (v8) says that God will punish those who do not know Him and do not obey the Gospel of Jesus; those people are unbelievers (weeds in the parable of Jesus). They will be punished (v9) with everlasting destruction and shut out of the presence of the Lord and from his glory. Those who believe (v10) will marvel at Jesus' glory when He comes to on that day.

Again, this passage connects to 1 Kings 2:13-46 because it shows that just like Solomon would not allow enemies of his kingdom to prevail; neither will God allow enemies of His kingdom to survive.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of 1 Kings 2:13-46?

- a. *keeping God's/Solomon's Kingdom safe*
- b. *being wise when dealing with enemies of God's Kingdom. If the Kingdom is to be safe, then the threats against it must be neutralized.*



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

Solomon seems to have the wisdom to know which characters need to be eliminated and which characters can just be stood down.



How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. *Ask God to deal with arch enemies and weeds; i.e., our sinful hearts.*
- b. *Ask God to give us wisdom when dealing with potential difficult people (weeds)*
- c. *Deal wisely with people who may be a threat to the unity of our church*
- d. *Trust God will deal with (weed out) those who may be weeds but which we haven't been able to clearly identify as such*

- e. It is important that EVERYONE submits to the monarchy of Jesus - before it's too late and Jesus returns (at an hour we don't know and like a thief in the night).

Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V46B - Solomon's wise and decisive action establishes (keeps safe) his kingdom.

Finish in prayer: Thanking God that He will weed out of His kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil (Matthew 13:41)

Study 5 – Solomon asks for wisdom

1 Kings 3:1-15

(Sermon on 15-Aug-21)

Read 1 Kings 3:1-3

1. What do we learn about Solomon's reign in verse 1?

*Solomon made an **alliance** with the Pharaoh of Egypt by marrying Pharaoh's daughter. Marrying royalty from another nation was a common political strategy in the ancient world; as it was in the likes of the British Royal family over the centuries.*

Foreign wives would become Solomon's downfall later on in his reign. It may have made political sense but not spiritual sense; as foreign wives brought beliefs in foreign gods; which would be a bad influence on Solomon spiritually. (See 1 Kings 11:4)

Solomon lived in Jerusalem with Pharaoh's daughter whilst he finished building his palace and the temple of the Lord and the walls around Jerusalem.

2. What do we learn about the current worship practices in verse 2? Why is that so?

It seems altars in high places were allowed in these times as long as sacrifices were made to the Lord and no other gods? This was allowed because the temple had not been built yet. Although it does the beg the question why the sacrifices were not carried out only at the tabernacle?

It could be that some of these high places and altars were left over from Canaanite occupation. These high places posed a threat to the pure worship of Yahweh because they represented conflicting loyalty if these places had idols erected which the Israelites could worship instead of or as well as Yahweh. The Israelites were expressly forbidden to use such places for worship in Deut 7:5 and 12:3. Although God did sanction them to erect special altars from time to time, to worship him (see Exodus 20:24; Deut 12:6-14).

From Solomon's reign onwards the tolerance of high places led to syncretistic [amalgamation of different religions] worship and apostasy [abandonment of religious beliefs]; so high places became an abomination and showed the difference between a good king and a bad king (2 Kings 17:7-18; 23:4-25).

3. What do we learn about Solomon's worship practices in verse 3?

*It seems at this stage Solomon had heeded his father, David's advice from 1 Kings 2:3-4; he loved the Lord and walked according to the instructions David gave him. However, there is an **EXCEPT** - Solomon did offer sacrifices and burned incense on the high places. The author of 1 Kings seems to be saying sacrifices on high places wasn't acceptable although they happened.*

In general, we get a sense that Solomon loved the Lord - but also put himself in difficult position - by intermarrying with other nations - and not worshipping God as laid down in Deuteronomy. What we have here is the sowing of the seed of a "mixed motives" and a "divided heart".

Read 1 Kings 3:4-15

4. Where does Solomon worship in verse 4 and what does he do?

Solomon worshipped at Gibeon (10Km northwest of Jerusalem); the most important high place at the time. He offered a 1000 burnt offerings.

This huge sacrifice showed Solomon's wealth and his heart to use it do glorify God.

According to 2 Chronicles 1:2-3 - all the leadership of Israel went with Solomon to Gibeon and the tabernacle was there.



5. What does God say Solomon should ask for in verse 5? (cf. Matthew 7:7)
God can't have disapproved too much in Solomon's worship and sacrifice at the high place of Gibeon; as He appeared to Solomon there in a dream [note: dream

with a **prophetic meaning or revelation** - as in Gen 26:4; 28:10-17; Judges 7:13; 1 Sam 3; 28:6; Dan 2:4; 7:1 - as well as Matt 1:20; 2:13, 22]

God said to Solomon "Ask for **whatever you want** me to give you".

(Sounds a bit like what Jesus said in Matthew 7:7: "Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you")

6. What does Solomon say God has done for him in verses 6?

Solomon says that God has shown great kindness to his father, David; and has continued that great kindness to Solomon also by allowing him to sit on the throne.

7. What does Solomon ask God for in verse 9? Why? (cf. verses 7, 8 & 9)

Solomon asks God (v9) to give him a **discerning heart to govern God's people and to distinguish between right and wrong** (literally between good and evil)

Why? Because Solomon is only young and doesn't know what to do as King (v7); and Solomon has a lot of people to govern (v8); and so, he needs to know how to govern God's people wisely (v9).

Notice Solomon didn't ask for something for himself personally; but something for the nation and God's people.

8. How does God react to Solomon's request in verse 10?

The Lord was **pleased** that Solomon asked for a discerning heart; it meant that Solomon knew what his greatest need was.

9. What does God give Solomon in verses 11 & 12? Why?

Because Solomon didn't ask for a long life or wealth, nor did he ask for the death of enemies, but asked for a discerning heart; God gave him a wise and discerning heart, so that there would never be anyone like Solomon ever again.

10. What does God give Solomon that he did not ask for in verse 13?

God gave Solomon both wealth and honour - in his lifetime there will be no other king, like Solomon.

11. What condition does God make in verse 14?

There will be a blessing for obedience; a long life for his obedience.

12. What does Solomon discover in verse 15a?

He woke realizing it was a dream.

13. How does Solomon respond to the dream in verse 15b? Why?

He worshipped God with burnt offerings and fellowship offerings and then gave a feast for all his court. Why? To give thanks to God.

*Solomon made a **public testimony** of his relationship with God.*

14. **Ponder:** Why is wisdom from God so important?

Proverbs 16:16 says wisdom is much better than gold and silver. Proverbs 4:7 tells us to seek wisdom above all things. But it must be godly wisdom not the wisdom of this world, as 1 Cor 3:19 says "for the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight".

God's wisdom is perfect - our wisdom is flawed and affected by our emotions.

Godly wisdom is obviously from God and honours God, whereas worldly wisdom is not concerned with honouring God but with pleasing oneself.

By gaining wisdom from God, it means: we will be wise in our choices; we will follow God's way and not our own way; we will please and honour God.

Godly wisdom starts with the reverent fear [awe] of God and results in a holy life.

Godly wisdom prepares us for eternity and we trade earthly values for biblical

values (1 John 2:15-16). We recognize we are citizens of another kingdom and we

make choices that reflect our allegiance to the Kingdom of Heaven (Phil 1:27;

3:30). Having godly wisdom means we strive to see life from God's perspective and act accordingly.

Read Proverbs 2:1-6

15. What does this passage say about wisdom?

Wisdom is God-given and involves His Word.

That it is wise to accept God's word and keep his commandments.

That searching for wisdom is like searching for treasure; when you find it - it will give understanding on what it means to live a life fearing God - and it will give us knowledge of God and wisdom from God.

From this, we can see that wisdom is a precious commodity from God and should be treasured in our heart.

Read James 1:1-8

16. Why do we need wisdom from God?

- *To understand that even in our trials there is joy (v1) because whatever is going on in our lives, we have our Lord Jesus as our Saviour; and we are forgiven and have eternal life. We will feel joy - when we trust God and wisely persevere through our trials. Remember too, that Jesus suffered greatly and He understands our suffering (Heb 2:18; 4:14-15)*
- *To help us navigate through the trials of many kinds (v1)*
- *To help us understand that God refines us through our trials (v2) and tests our faith, so that we gain perseverance (v2)*
- *So that we can mature in our faith and become more complete (v4) - and our strong faith, which has been tested, will be a wonderful example to others*
- *So that we don't lack anything (v4)*
- *If we don't have wisdom from God; we won't understand the purpose of trials in our lives.*

17. How should we ask for wisdom?

We should ask God for wisdom without doubting; and He will give without finding fault.

Read 1 John 5:13-15

18. What do we learn about approaching God and how He answers?

*Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, we have forgiveness and eternal life. So, we can approach God **with confidence**, knowing He has done this huge thing, in Jesus; we can ask for anything according to His will, and He hears us. And if we're confident that we're praying according to His will and He is listening, we know that what we're asking is as good as ours.*

Read Matthew 6:33 and Ephesians 3:20

19. How do these verses help as we approach God?

*Matthew 6:33 tells us by seeking God's Kingdom values and wisdom first [as per the Sermon on the Mount] - God will take care of everything else. Ephesians 3:20 tell us the **Lord is able to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine**. This means we can approach God knowing He is not only in control but He can do more than we could ever imagine; because He is God.*

Optional

20. Write a prayer asking God: to grant you wisdom; to grant wisdom to the leaders of our church; to grant wisdom to the leaders of our state and nation. If you're comfortable, share this prayer with your group.

Graciously Heavenly Father, as the Heavens are higher than the earth so your ways are higher than our ways and your thoughts higher than our thoughts (Isa 55:8-9). Even if you were foolish, which you're not, your foolishness is wiser than human wisdom and your weakness stronger than human strength (1 Cor 1:25). So, Father, we come before you, the source of all wisdom (Psalm 19:7; Proverbs 2:6), the one with great power and infinite understanding (Psalm 147:5).

We ask for your wisdom and guidance for the leaders of our church, as they shepherd their flocks. Father grant them spiritual insight, humble servant-like hearts; and pastoral sensitivity towards their flock. Help them to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. Through your Spirit, help them to be faithful to your Holy Word and be Christ-centred in all they do.

We also ask for wisdom and guidance for the leaders of our state and federal governments as they lead our nation. Father God, help all our leaders not to lean on their own understanding but to trust you, Lord, with all are their heart, soul, mind and strength. Father, help them submit to you, so that you will direct and make their paths straight. Help them not to be wise in their own eyes, help them to fear you and shun evil (Proverbs 3:5-7).

In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **1 Kings 3:1-15**?

The importance of having wisdom (a discerning heart) from God



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

In v13 - God gives Solomon what he didn't ask for. This is the sense of what Eph 3:20 is saying - He gives immeasurably more than we ask or imagine!

- ➔ How does this passage **apply to your life**?
- a. *Confess our lack of wisdom and neglect in asking God for His wisdom*
 - b. *Confess that all too often we lean on our own understanding and rely on the world's wisdom, rather than going to God's word for His wisdom*
 - c. *When we do ask God for wisdom:*
 - i. *Remember His past generosity and blessings [His kindness]*

- ii. *Remember the past faithfulness of God*
 - iii. *Show humility - Solomon sees he is only child-like in his wisdom and experience*
 - iv. *Remember why we are asking - a need - which might not be an entirely selfish need - but as in Solomon's case - he asks for wisdom - so that it will help God's people.*
 - v. *Remember the goal of having God's wisdom is to please God, not ourselves*
- d. *The wisdom we gain from God - should be passed on to others - as David did with Solomon (1 Kings 2:1-4 - and as Moses did to Joshua (Deut 34:9) - and we should make a public testimony of our relationship with God as Solomon did.*

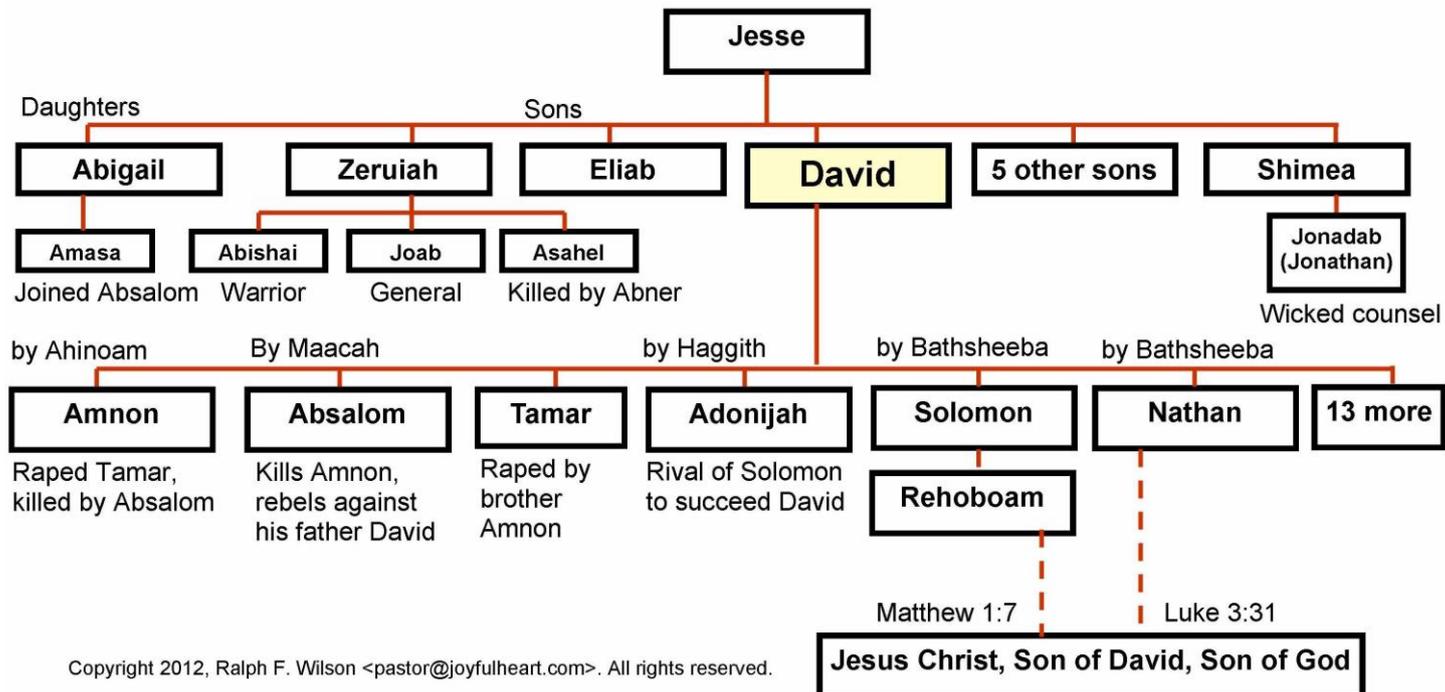
Share the verse that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V9

Finish in prayer: Asking God to grant us wisdom and discernment in our Christian walk.

Appendix 1

The House of David



Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke
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Resources:

The MacArthur Study Bible

New Bible Commentary (Carson, France, Moyter & Wenham)

1 and 2 Kings (Donald J. Wiseman - Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries)

1 Kings - The Wisdom and the Folly (Dale Ralph Davis)

Halley's Bible Handbook - New Revised Edition (Henry H. Halley)

Notes/Prayer Points