

Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study

May 13, 2020

Tonight we are going to be starting into the book of 1 Kings. It begins with the last days of David's reign and by the end of 2 Kings – which originally 1 Kings and 2 Kings were one book – we see the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army. I always looked at the Books of Kings as a sort of history of the kings of Israel. For sure there is a lot of, 'in the year x, so and so became king and reigned x years and he did evil in the sight of the Lord, then so and so reigned x years...' However, I am beginning to realize the Books of Kings are not so much a history lesson for Israel as they are a "How did we get here?" The Lord's commands are clear yet through constant rebellion and rejection God's people go from the land of promise to captivity. It's all in the Books of Kings. Is there a lesson here for America?

1 Kings 1:1-4

¹ When King David was very old, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him.

² So his attendants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin to serve the king and take care of him. She can lie beside him so that our lord the king may keep warm." ³ Then they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful young woman and found Abishag, a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. ⁴ The woman was very beautiful; she took care of the king and waited on him, but the king had no sexual relations with her.

So we see the mighty David, slayer of Goliath, so advanced in years that he couldn't even keep himself warm. No one is exempt from the effects of sin. Still the Lord continued to use people to show his love.

1 Kings 1:7-10

⁷ Adonijah conferred with Joab son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest, and they gave him their support. ⁸ But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei and Rei and David's special guard did not join Adonijah.

⁹ Adonijah then sacrificed sheep, cattle and fattened calves at the Stone of Zohelath near En Rogel. He invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah, ¹⁰ but he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the special guard or his brother Solomon.

Adonijah, one of David's sons is already claiming succession to the throne even though David's bed is literally not even cold yet (thanks to Abishag). Notice how Adonijah strategically surrounds himself with support then targets more.

1 Kings 1:24-27

²⁴ Nathan said, "Have you, my lord the king, declared that Adonijah shall be king after you, and that he will sit on your throne?" ²⁵ Today he has gone down and sacrificed great numbers of cattle, fattened calves, and sheep. He has invited all the king's sons, the commanders of the army and Abiathar the priest. Right now they are eating and drinking with him and saying, 'Long live King Adonijah!' ²⁶ But me your servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon he did not invite. ²⁷ Is this something my lord the king has done without letting his servants know who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

Nathan was the Lord's prophet who called out David for having Uriah killed; Zadok was the high priest of Israel along with Abiathar; and Benaiah was David's most trusted mighty man. All were men of tremendous conviction. They didn't jump to conclusions, but they did question what was going on.

1 Kings 1:28-30

²⁸ Then King David said, “Call in Bathsheba.” So she came into the king’s presence and stood before him.

²⁹ The king then took an oath: “As surely as the Lord lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble, ³⁰ I will surely carry out this very day what I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel: Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place.”

David knew very well that no thought or action is hidden from the Lord, the Living God. He cherished his relationship with the Lord and he strived to live his life accordingly.

1 Kings 1:38-40

³⁸ So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon mount King David’s mule, and they escorted him to Gihon. ³⁹ Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, “Long live King Solomon!” ⁴⁰ And all the people went up after him, playing pipes and rejoicing greatly, so that the ground shook with the sound.

So there you have it. On David’s oath, Solomon was anointed king by Zadok the priest.

Interestingly, or maybe not, A famous classical composer named Handel wrote a piece in 1727 called ‘Zadok the Priest’ and it has been played at every British monarch’s coronation since.

1 Kings 2:1-4, 10-12

¹ When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son.

² “I am about to go the way of all the earth,” he said. “So be strong, act like a man, ³ and 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 ⁴ and that the Lord may keep his promise to me: ‘If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.’ ...¹⁰ Then David rested with his ancestors and was buried in the City of David. ¹¹ He had reigned forty years over Israel—seven years in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem. ¹² So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.

David knew he was not God because he knew God. His advice to his son: Be strong and obey the Lord – pretty good advice in my opinion. With that, we read of the last of David’s days as they were written in the book before there was one of them (Psalm 139:16).

1 Kings 3:1-9

¹ Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt and married his daughter. He brought her to the City of David until he finished building his palace and the temple of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem. ² The people, however, were still sacrificing at the high places, because a temple had not yet been built for the Name of the Lord. ³ Solomon showed his love for the Lord by walking according to the instructions given him by his father David, except that he offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places.

⁴ The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

⁶ Solomon answered, “You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day.

⁷ “Now, Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. ⁸ Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. ⁹ So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?”

I imagine the sacrifice and celebration at Gibeon was quite a scene, you can read more detail in 2 Chronicles 1:1-6. Gibeon was the home of the Tabernacle the Lord instructed Moses to build in the wilderness. Verse 9 speaks to Solomon’s heart. He is a servant of the Lord entrusted with governing God’s great people.

1 Kings 4:20-21

²⁰ The people of Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand on the seashore; they ate, they drank and they were happy. ²¹ And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. These countries brought tribute and were Solomon’s subjects all his life.

It is truly a blessing to be alive in a nation in a time of prosperity. Ecclesiastes 2:24-25.

1 Kings 4:29-34

²⁹ God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. ³⁰ Solomon’s wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the people of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹ He was wiser than anyone else, including Ethan the Ezrahite—wiser than Heman, Kalkol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. ³² He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. ³³ He spoke about plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also spoke about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. ³⁴ From all nations people came to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.

Solomon’s wisdom was a gift from God. How Solomon applied his wisdom was his choice. Thus far in the story of 1 Kings, Solomon’s choice was to have a heart for the Lord. As a result, He and the nation prospered. I pray that I, and those I love, continue to have a heart for the Lord. I pray that we pursue that relationship through time in the word, and we practice that relationship through fellowship and service to others. Thank you Jesus. Amen.