

OpenTheo

1 Kings 1 - 2



1 Kings - Steve Gregg

In this talk, Steve Gregg discusses the events narrated in 1 Kings 1-2, which portray the complex power struggles that occurred within King David's family after his death. Adonijah, David's son, felt entitled to the throne and organized a ceremony to declare himself king. However, Nathan and Bathsheba alerted David, who appointed Solomon as his successor instead. Adonijah's rebellion failed, and he was later pardoned by Solomon, who also removed Abiathar from the priesthood and ordered the execution of Joab for his past transgressions. Gregg provides insightful commentary on the significance of these events and their implications for David's legacy and the future of Israel.

Transcript

We'll turn to the opening chapter of 1 Kings. And one could get the impression that this was written as a intentional sequel to the books of Samuel because the books of Samuel end with some of the later things in David's life and chapter 1 of 1 Kings begins with the very end of David's life. And so it transitions quite nicely into the next chapter, as it were, of Israel's history with the reign of Solomon.

But it's not likely that the books of Samuel and the books of Kings were written intentionally to be sequels of each other because the books of Samuel were written presumably earlier, quite a bit earlier, maybe hundreds of years earlier than the books of Kings. The books of Kings would have been written sometime after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC, whereas the books of Samuel were probably written not very much later than David's own time, which would be hundreds of years earlier than the books of Kings. However, in writing the books of Kings, the author may well have had it in mind to write it as a sequel to Samuel, but we don't know.

It doesn't connect extremely smoothly because we never read in 2 Samuel of David's extreme old age, but he's definitely on his deathbed when we open this book of Kings. Now King David was old, advanced in years, and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm. 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.

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. And the young woman was very lovely, and she cared for the King and served him, but the King did not know her, that is, he didn't have sexual relations with her. She no doubt was of the status of a concubine of the King, since she slept in his bed.

The fact that he didn't have sex with her was simply his preference, apparently, because there would be nothing to prevent him. He had multiple concubines and multiple wives, so for him simply to add her as another sex partner would not be morally surprising or morally shocking, but he just didn't. At his age apparently he was not in any mood for that, and she was just there to keep the bed warm.

Now at his age, he was only about 70. We know that he reigned for 40 years, 7 of them in Hebron and 33 of them in Jerusalem, and that he was 30 when he became King, so this is only age 70. That's not very old.

Not today anyway it isn't, but people didn't live, they sometimes aged quicker in those days. It's true in the time much earlier than David's time people lived to be hundreds of years old, but in David's day I don't think it was common to live very much beyond 70 years old, and he was quite old at 70. Now he had been a man of great physical strength and attractiveness and so forth when he was young, and so he might not have looked like a totally decrepit old man.

It's hard to imagine this poor young girl, probably a teenager, having to cuddle up with this old man, but he's not like we might picture him as being like 90 years old or something, but he's not. I mean a man can be quite virile at 70 don't you think? Maybe he looked like Sean Connery. That's right.

There'd be a lot of young girls volunteering for that duty. Anyway, he had some kind of physical condition that made his body not generate heat anymore. No matter how many blankets were upon him, he still could not stay warm.

And so another human being was sought to be in the bed with him. Obviously a man would not do, and if you're going to pick a woman might as well be the prettiest one in the kingdom since he's the king. And so he slept next to her and she also served him.

She didn't stay in bed all the time. She was his personal servant and also would warm him when he was cold. But they didn't have a sexual relationship.

Now Adonijah, the son of Haggith, exalted himself saying, I will be king. And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen and 50 men to run before him. Now this was the oldest surviving son of David.

His oldest son had been Amnon and had been murdered by Absalom. His second oldest son was Cheliab, also known as Daniel. And it is assumed that he died young because he

never figures into any of the stories at all.

Never seen as a contender for the throne. There's not any personal information about him at all except that he was the second born son to David. Must have died young.

Then there was Absalom and he had a promising opportunity to become the king, but he pressed it too soon and he rebelled against his father and got himself killed. So that left the fourth son, Adonijah, as the oldest survivor. Now Solomon, who actually did become king instead of Adonijah, was much further down the line.

Perhaps as many as 10 children down the line from Adonijah. There were a lot of sons of David. But Adonijah was the one who was the natural successor.

Now why he sought to make himself king at this point before his father's death, we don't know. Since he didn't consult his father about it and just declared himself king, that would be an act of treason. Not much different than what Absalom had done.

And it's possible that he would have been like Absalom. That if his forced self-accession to the throne had succeeded, he might have killed David. He wouldn't need to kill David, though.

David was almost dead, but he probably would have killed the other heirs. And so Solomon would have been in trouble and all the other sons would have been in trouble if this had succeeded. There'd be no reason for Adonijah to force his way to be king if he didn't have bad intentions.

Because since he was the heir in line for the throne, he had every reason to expect to be king. Unless he had heard that Solomon had already been picked by his father to be king. We don't read anywhere in the books of Samuel of David making any promise to Solomon that Solomon would be king or to Bathsheba that her son Solomon would be king.

But we do find later in, not very much later, but very soon later in this chapter that there is reference to David having made such a promise. To Bathsheba, apparently, that her son Solomon would be the next king. This also was apparently God's will because Nathan the prophet was on board with it.

Nathan the prophet was the one who actually rebuked David for his sins with Bathsheba and for marrying Bathsheba. But also when Solomon had been born, Nathan the prophet was the one who gave him the nickname Jedidiah, which means beloved of the Lord. So Nathan we find in this chapter also is favorable towards Solomon's claim to the throne.

Although Solomon is a much younger son than many others. The prophet must have had a sense from God that this was the one that God was choosing. If that had been announced, and we have no record of it having been announced, but it may have been,

then Adonijah may have felt like, well, if my father is going to install Solomon to be king, even though I'm the one in line to be king, maybe I'd better act over my father's head or behind his back and install myself as king.

If I get enough popular support, David won't be able to undo it. David was sort of a lame duck at this point. He was going to die.

He couldn't even get out of bed. He couldn't even keep himself warm. He was just fading fast.

It was clear that one of his sons was going to succeed him. And Adonijah seemingly having the most rightful claim, decided to press it early just so that it could be decided while David was still alive. And there wouldn't be then a big civil war among the different sons to see who would get the throne.

So how he pulled this off? He had some important people backing him up, including Joab. But he decided to have himself proclaimed king. And he started by getting chariots and horsemen and 50 men on foot to run before him so that he'd have a regal appearance.

And he would look like a man riding into the kingdom, you know, into power. And his father had not rebuked him at any time by saying, why have you done so? He was also a very good looking man. His mother had born him after Absalom.

Now, this little bit of family history is somewhat interesting, though it's not entirely clear how we're to understand its significance. He was good looking like Absalom was. Absalom was said to be good looking too.

And so he'd be the kind of person that would be popular and would probably make a good figurehead for the nation as a king. But he was an undisciplined man. His father had never disciplined him, had never rebuked him.

All his life growing up, he had never been challenged by his father in anything he had done, even verbally, much less disciplined physically. Now, when you think that David is a man who probably has 20 or 30 children or more, and he's running over a country, you wonder how a man like that is supposed to be involved in his children's lives. You'd think that a king with that many children is going to have nurses and servants and so forth rearing and educating his children, and he's not going to be very much involved.

However, his oldest children, the ones that were seemingly in line to succeed him, you'd think he would have paid some special attention to their upbringing to make sure that they were suited. But then in those days it may have been that rulers just assumed that their kids would get the best training possible from certain people. Servant tutors and things like that.

It's possible that what's being said about this is not so much that David had just failed to

discipline him or confront him, but David had never been involved in his life. The boy grew up without a relationship to his father is a very possible meaning of this, and therefore he wasn't attached emotionally to his father. He didn't mind taking the kingdom from his father.

You might think this is saying that David had never done the kind of thing that would displease him, but possibly a son would have liked to have his father involved, even question him. Why are you doing the things you're doing and so forth to challenge him just to have that kind of parental attention. Hard to say, but his father had never rebuked him and therefore had never really been involved in his upbringing.

And so there wasn't much of a connection there between the father and the son. Then he conferred with Joab, the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest, and they followed and helped Adonijah. Now he probably conferred with them before all this.

He probably didn't try this without knowing whether he had some support from some powerful people. Joab was a very powerful person, although David had deposed Joab from leadership in the army. Joab had found his way back in.

David had put Amasa in instead of Joab and Joab killed Amasa just like he killed Abner and became the de facto leader of the army after all. So the armies followed Joab and Joab was now ready to follow Adonijah. Now Joab had stood with David against Absalom and he had even been the one who had killed Absalom in battle.

But he was now going to stand with Adonijah who was doing sort of an Absalom kind of a thing. Making himself king against his father's wishes and without consulting his father while his father was still technically the king. So this is the first time we see Joab taking the wrong side of a dispute in David's family.

And also they had Abiathar and he was along with Zadok. They were two main priests. I'm not sure how that was happening, how things were functioning.

They didn't really have the tabernacle service going normally at that time. After all the ark was in Jerusalem and the tabernacle was in Gibeah or somewhere else. So it's obvious they weren't practicing the day of atonement where the high priest would go once a year into the holy of holies and sprinkle on the ark because the ark wasn't even in the same place as the tabernacle at this time.

So they were definitely innovating as far as the religious rituals. And it's possible that they weren't even observing the day of atonement so the issue of having a high priest wasn't even that important. They had two major priests, Zadok and Abiathar.

And Abiathar was the descendant of Eli but Zadok was not. And Adonijah had the main priest or one of the main priests and the general on his side. That's a pretty strong support to start out with.

And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by a stone in Zohelath which is by Enrogel. He also invited all his brothers the king's sons and all the men of Judah the king's servants but he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the mighty man or Solomon his brother. Now Solomon was particularly excluded although he invited the other sons of David.

Apparently the other sons of David believed that Adonijah had a rightful claim and they were not interested in being rivals with him. But it appears that maybe Adonijah did suspect or even know that David had favored and even maybe promised that Solomon would be the next king after him. And so he didn't invite him or Nathan whose sympathies apparently were known to be with Solomon.

Or Benaiah who was sort of the head of David's bodyguard and who sort of replaced Joab in Solomon's administration. Okay so there are three important people that were not on his side and were not invited Nathan and Benaiah and Solomon. But he had important powerful military people and religious leaders on his side and then he had 50 footmen plus chariots and horses which he might have hired.

As a prince he had plenty of money so he could hire these people but it gave the impression that he already was in a position of power and most people just follow the movement will follow the crowd and he kind of hired a crowd to look like he had the popular support to be king. So he really had a lot going for him. One thing he didn't have going for him is David's approval and that was the one thing he could have used if he wished to succeed.

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. Come please let me now give you counsel that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. Nathan knew that if Adonijah did succeed in being king that Solomon and his mother would both be put to death because he saw them as rivals apparently to a degree that he did not see the other sons of David as rivals.

Nathan said 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. Then while you're still talking there with the king I also will come in after you and confirm your words.

Now confirm what words that Adonijah has become king probably. Some scholars think that David had never really made that promise and that this is being fabricated and that Nathan's going to come and confirm her story that David had sworn that oath the assumption being that David is old his memories fading he won't remember whether he made a promise like that or not but Nathan will come and confirm what Bathsheba says oh yeah I heard you say that too. So some think that that's what's being suggested here.

However it's just as likely more likely really that Nathan would come in and confirm the part of the story about Adonijah making himself king. After all David apparently did it would seem select Solomon to be king and that is why Adonijah didn't invite him and why Nathan knew that Solomon would be killed if Adonijah succeeded. I'm sure David must have made his intentions known prior to this that Solomon was his favorite successor.

So Bathsheba went into the chamber to the king. Now the king was very old and Abishag the Shunammite was serving the king and Bathsheba bowed and did homage to the king. I wonder how that feels you know you're the old wife.

She's been an old woman by now her son's an adult and now David's her husband is being served by this young lady most beautiful lady in the kingdom that they could find and yet you know I wonder if they really had any attachment to each other that much. I mean when a woman's sharing her husband with that many women legally and officially I imagine the woman just kind of has to keep some kind of emotional distance in her heart so this is not an issue it just seems strange to have Bathsheba coming in with her request for David and there's this other young woman who he's not sleeping with but still is so close to in a way that a wife would normally seemingly be jealous. Bathsheba bowed and did homage to the king then she said excuse me the king said what is your wish then she said to him my lord you swore by Yahweh your God to your maid servant saying assuredly Solomon your son shall reign after me and he shall sit on my throne.

So now look Adonijah has become king and now my lord the king do you not know about it or he said you do not know about it excuse me he has sacrificed often 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 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 otherwise it will happen when my lord the king rests with his fathers that I and my son Solomon will be counted as offenders and just then while she was still talking with the king Nathan the prophet also came in 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 and Nathan said oh my lord O king have you said Adonijah shall reign after me and he shall sit on my throne for he has gone down today and has sacrificed off oxen and fatted 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're eating and drinking before him and they say long live king Adonijah but he has not invited me even me your servant nor Zadok the priest nor Benaiah the son of Jehoiada nor your servant Solomon 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 then King David answered and said call Bathsheba to me so apparently when Nathan came in she left and now they're both brought in together so she came into the king's presence and stood before the king and the king took an oath

and said as Yahweh lives who has redeemed my life from every distress 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 then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth and did homage to the king and said let my lord King David live forever and King David said call to me Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada so they came before the king 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 there let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel and blow the horn and say long live King Solomon 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 now as I said when we're talking about Samuel for someone to be declared king there's basically there's an awful lot of symbolism you have to exploit because a claim to be king is really an invisible claim I mean it's you've got a king who's been reigning so his his position is not questionable but if he were to die and leave a vacuum almost anyone could claim to be king and if they have the most symbolic support you know the people just follow him the people don't have to but they would and so Adonijah has arranged to have Joab and important people Abiathar the priest there and trumpet blowers and a feast and chariots and things like that but Solomon has to beat that has to have things that are more impressive than that to the people because if he claims that proclaims himself king and the people still follow Adonijah then Solomon's going to be seen as a rebel against King Adonijah and he'll be put to death so it's kind of a tense thing to know which ceremony is going to be more impressive to the people who are they going to follow and so David says we'll have him ride my mule the royal mule that the king would ride and have Zadok the priest who's just as important as Abiathar the priest and Benaiah who is as important as Joab or at least a rival to him and then these people have Nathan the prophet on their side and typically kings have been anointed by prophets both Saul and David were anointed by Samuel the prophet Adonijah didn't have any prophet anointing him and because the kings of Israel were supposed to be reigning under God it's important to have God's spokesman there to give his approval of the new king so this would give Solomon the edge over Adonijah especially having David's approval and the approval of the prophet of God and those things would really give him the edge so Zadok the priest Nathan the prophet Benaiah the son of Jehoiada the Cherithites and the Pelethites now these are the Philistine mercenaries who have become David's bodyguard and that could be a sizable troop these people are all marching with Solomon and it's probably even Joab would not want to stand up against these guys with David giving commands to them the army under Joab would have to decide are we going to follow our king or our general and almost certainly Joab would be taking a risk to rebel against the king and hope for the armies that follow him to go against the king too especially when they'd have to fight the Cherithites and the Pelethites to do so so they all went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule and took him to Gihon 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 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 now apparently Adonijah had only so many people with him as he could hire to go along some of them thought they were probably just going to a feast before he announced himself king and that was probably a limited number of people but the rest of the population of Judah and Jerusalem would be watching the king like Bathsheba said every eye in Israel is on you oh king to see who you're going to appoint as soon as David starts making motions of appointing a new king everybody's going to get excited it's a new well you know how it is when there's a new king in England how much media attention that gets it's always exciting to people so this huge crowd apparently followed Solomon and it says they were making so much noise it seemed like the earth was split from the sound so 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 and while he was still speaking there came Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest this is one of the ones who had carried messages to David when Absalom was revolting against him and Adonijah said to him come in for you are a prominent man and bring good tidings not this time then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah no our Lord King David has made Solomon king the king has sent him with Zadok the priest Nathan the prophet Danai the son of Jehoiada the Cherethites and the Pelethites and they have made him right on the king's mule 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 also Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom 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 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 then all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid and arose and each one went his way so Adonijah suddenly didn't have any supporters anymore they recognized they were backing the wrong candidate and the crowds and the Cherethites and the Pelethites and everyone was on the side of Solomon and even David on his deathbed had risen to bow down and to approve of Solomon so Adonijah was kind of left pretty much alone now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon so he arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar now the horns of the altar in the tabernacle the altar the brazen altar where they offered sacrifice had horns a horn at each corner and taking hold of the horns of the altar was sort of like a way of pleading for mercy or pleading for amnesty from some crime and under the law it didn't really say that a person who took hold of the horns of the altar would be spared in fact in one place it says if a person is a murderer that he should be taken even from the horns of the altar and killed and actually Joab as it turns out a little later than this goes and he lays his hands on the horns of the altar hoping for mercy and Benaiah goes down and kills him while he's there holding on to the altar but Adonijah taking this recourse realizing that he's now a criminal he's now a traitor and one who lost his following and is very

vulnerable he runs down to wherever the altar was at this time and took hold of the horns of the altar 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 then Solomon said yeah like Adonijah would have given Solomon that promise if he'd won 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 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 so he gave a second chance he had rebelled against Solomon but he swore he wouldn't hurt him if he proved to be an honorable man well Adonijah couldn't help himself he still wanted to be king later on as we'll see chapter 2 then the days of David drew near that he should die and he charged Solomon his son saying I go the way of all the earth be strong therefore and prove yourself a man to 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 is written in the law of Moses that you may prosper in all that you do in whatever and wherever you turn 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 that's interesting that when the promise was made to David and recorded in 2nd Samuel chapter 7 when Nathan the prophet made the promise to David that you know God would establish his throne and his seed would sit on the throne forever and so forth there is not really a mention of this particular condition what is mentioned in 2nd Samuel 7 is that if David's son on his throne commits iniquity that God will chasten him with the rods of men but he will not utterly remove his mercy from the house of David but here David apparently has some you know knowledge of some other word God spoke at that time or at another time saying that his sons need to take heed to the ways of God so that God can fulfill this promise that it is conditional upon his sons obeying more over you know also that what Joab did to me and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel to Abner the son of Ner and a man of the son of Jether whom he killed and he shed the blood of war in peacetime and he put the blood of war on his belt that was around his waist and on his sandals that were on his feet now he mentions first of all what Joab had done to David and then what he had done to these two other men what he did today was he killed Absalom against David's orders however Joab could hardly be charged with a crime in that Absalom was the rebel leading the armies against David Joab was the leader of David's armies in war with him to kill the commander of your enemies armies is actually desirable not a crime it's not a crime to kill your enemy in war especially since David had you know authorized Joab to be the leader of the armies of course he had said to do deal gently with Absalom but that was unrealistic and you know Joab did not commit you know murder in this case he did deserve to die for what he did to Abner and to Amasa but David is first of all concerned about the offense in the killing of Absalom what he did to me and what he did to those two men Joab did really deserve to die because those two men were killed they

were assassinated when they were on good terms with the king they were not at war with him so it's just cold-blooded murder therefore do according to your wisdom and do not let his gray hair go down to the grave in peace 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 you remember Barzillai the Gileadite was an old man and a rich man who helped David and those who were loyal to him when they fled across the Jordan he fed them and took care of their needs and later David offered Barzillai a place at his table but Barzillai said I'm an old man I can't hear the singing men and women I can't taste the food anymore why should I burden the king but he did offer his son or a servant someone we don't know the relationship that they bore and David took him and helped him out but Barzillai by this time is probably dead because he's old some years earlier but there's still the house or the sons of Barzillai and David still feels that the king of Jerusalem should continue to show kindness to that family verse 8 and see I have with you have with you Shimei the son of Gerah a Benjamite of Bahrum 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 him I swore to him by the Lord saying I will not put you to death with the sword 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 so David is kind of regretting that he'd shown such kindness to this creep this evil man Shimei on the day that David was you know son Absalom had died David was grieved he was depressed and he didn't have any taste for more killing and so he was pardoning people who had done him wrong right and left including Shimei apparently since that time he decided Shimei really didn't deserve a pardon but David was going to keep his word he had promised that he wouldn't kill him but he made no promises about Solomon not killing him or his succession not killing him so he says that man really deserves to die and therefore you know what to do it's kind of sad that some of the parting words of David that we read are words of vengeance David was a man whose reign was not characterized by vengeance when Saul was wronging him he did not have any vengeful feelings towards Saul he wouldn't kill him and he didn't rejoice at his death he mourned his death likewise when Absalom was trying to kill him he didn't have any vengeful feelings toward Absalom and he mourned his death David was not a man who tended to carry around grudges it would seem however there were some people that he had let slide who had done things worthy of death Joab had done things worthy of death but when Joab killed Abner David said to his servants these sons of Zeruah meaning Abishai and Joab they're too strong for me in other words David didn't feel like he could really punish them they were powerful men and he was a newly established king he wasn't sure he had the backing and so he let them get away with it however they still had these crimes on their record and so now of course Joab's an old man there's a new commander of the army Joab's too old to be commanding the army so Joab is now just vulnerable to the criminal justice system and David says okay he really needs to be punished for what he did now and likewise Shimei but make sure you do kindness to Barzillai the Gileadite verse 10 so David rested with his fathers and was

buried in the city of David the period that David reigned over Israel was 40 years seven years he reigned in Hebron and in Jerusalem he reigned 33 years then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David and his kingdom was firmly established and so by the early stages of chapter 2 David is now out of the picture and Solomon's reign has begun it's possible that Solomon was co-regent with his father for some period of time David may not have died right away the story is told as the next thing you know the next thing after we hear of Solomon becoming king we read of David dying but we don't know if any time elapsed or if that all happened in the same year but the impression is that Solomon got installed just in time just before David died now Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon and she said do you come peaceably and he said peaceably moreover he said I have something to say to you and she said say it 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 brothers for it was his from the Lord so Adonijah recognized that the Lord had given it Solomon probably David's decision earlier to put Solomon in his place may have been informed by Nathan the prophet Nathan may have informed him it's the Lord's will for Solomon to be the next king and that may have been why David picked him instead of any of his other sons and Adonijah recognizes that it was the Lord's will for Solomon to reign although Adonijah had tried to thwart that now I ask one petition of you and do not deny me and she said to him say it then he said please speak to King Solomon for he will not refuse you that he may give me Abishag the Shunammite as a wife now this was a political step of course because Abishag had been a concubine of David and for one of David's sons to have one of David's concubines would mean essentially he's the successor and Bathsheba didn't pick up on this or else she just decided to maybe she did and she just left it to Solomon so Bathsheba said very well I will speak for you to the king 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 he sat down on his throne and had a throne set for the king's mother so she sat at his right hand 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 so she said let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as a wife 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 the joy of the son of Zerah then the 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 now therefore as the Lord lives who has established me and set me on the throne of David my father and who has made me a house as he promised Adonijah shall be put to death today so King Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah and the son of Jehoiada and he struck him down and he died so Adonijah as a contender for the throne is out of the way and it's obvious that Solomon saw through Adonijah's plot better than Bathsheba did I'm not sure why Bathsheba wouldn't have thought of this I mean she certainly knew how politics works she was a queen mother but anyway this just got past her some people think that one of the things

that influenced Solomon to react this way to Adonijah was that Solomon himself was in love with Abishag she is said to be a Shunammite you might remember in the Song of Solomon the woman that Solomon loved was called a Shulammite and some people think it's just a variation on the same word there have been scholars commentators who have suggested Abishag the Shunammite might be the Shulammite woman in Song of Solomon if so we do know she was the most beautiful woman they could find when David was old she was a young beautiful woman in the kingdom and certainly Solomon thinks of his Shulammite that way in Song of Solomon of course everyone thinks of their own beloved that way so I mean it's certainly how could you say who's the most beautiful person in the kingdom it's a matter of taste of course but there is a possibility it's not something that could be established with certainty but that Solomon himself was in love with Abishag and so he was particularly annoyed that his older brother was trying to get at her but more importantly as he stated he saw it as a political move to get the kingdom from him and almost certainly he was right so he had his brother killed he had told him that if he behaved that he'd live if he showed himself to be a bad man that he'd die obviously as soon as David's dead we have Adonijah trying to muscle his way into power again verse 26 and to Abiathar the priest the king said go to Anathoth to your own fields for you are worthy 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 Abiathar had accompanied David initially when Absalom took over and Abiathar had remained loyal to David when a lot of people were turning against David so he says I owe you for that but you did do something worthy of death you sided with the treason of Adonijah and that would be punishable by death but I'm not going to kill you right now because I remember my father's debt to you so Solomon removed Abiathar from being priest to the Lord that he might fulfill the word of the Lord which he had spoken concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh do you remember that word of the Lord? it was in 1 Samuel 2 when Eli was the judge and the priest and his sons were corrupt and a prophet came and spoke to Eli in 2 Samuel verse 30 therefore the Lord God of Israel says I said indeed that your house and the house of your father would walk before me forever but now the Lord says far be it from me for those who honor me I will honor and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed behold the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father's house so that there will not be an old man in your house and you will see an enemy in my habitation despite all the good which God does for Israel and there shall not be an old man in your house forever but any of your men whom I do not cut off from my altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart and all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age now this shall be a sign to you that will come upon your two sons in one day they shall die both of them then I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind I will build him a sure house and he shall walk before my anointed forever now that faithful priest to replace the house of Eli would be Zadok and Abiathar who is now deposed from priesthood is the last surviving member of Eli's household who has ever served as priest so now Zadok is the

faithful priest who is put into his place and we are told here in chapter 2 of 1 Kings verse 27 that the removal of Abiathar was the fulfillment of that prediction that the Lord had given Eli Shiloh verse 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 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 so Benaiah went to the tabernacle of the Lord and said to him thus says the king come out and Joab said no but I will die here and Benaiah brought back word to the king saying thus said Joab and thus he answered me and 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 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 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 on his throne there shall be peace forever from the Lord so Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck and killed him and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his place over the army and he put Zadok the priest in place of Abiathar so these men who had been faithful to Solomon at the time of his inauguration replaced in the offices of those who had gone with Adonijah and were now deposed and now there is only one more bad guy to be concerned about and that is Shimei and so in this chapter we find that Solomon carries out the commission that David gave him in all these cases the killing of Joab was really necessary it's sad because he was a hero but he was a murderer also and in the law it said that a curse would be on the land if it was defiled with innocent blood and that if a murderer killed innocent blood that the land had to be atoned for by the death of the murderer and that nothing could atone for innocent blood except the death of the killer and so until Joab was actually executed the blessing of God couldn't be fully upon Israel and so that's why Solomon said the blood of these innocent men who were killed is on Joab and his family not on David and his family because David didn't know about it. Of course David I think probably felt like I said the first time Joab killed when he killed Adner David didn't feel strong enough to resist or to punish Joab. When he killed Absalom or not Absalom but Amassad that was later in David's life and David himself was guilty of shedding innocent blood.

He'd been forgiven for his murder of Uriah the Hittite but he probably felt he didn't have the moral what should we say didn't have the moral integrity or the moral authority to execute Joab for shedding innocent blood when David himself had done the same thing and been forgiven so David had been a man of blood he had blood on his hands that's why God wouldn't let him build the temple but Solomon was clean and therefore he could execute the criminal and so that's why he had to kill Joab. Then the king sent and

called for Shimei and said him build yourself a house in Jerusalem and go dwell there and do not go out from there anywhere for it shall be on the day that you go out and cross the brook Kidron which is just a border of Jerusalem know for certain that you shall surely die your blood shall be on your own head 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 now it happened at the end of three years and this is just looking ahead because of course we're going to be looking at things prior to this coming up still but just looking ahead to what happened to Shimei ultimately at the end of three years two slaves of Shimei ran away to Achish the son of Meachah king of Gath and they told Shimei saying look your slaves are in Gath so Shimei rose saddled his donkey and went to Achish at Gath to seek his slaves and Shimei went and brought his slaves back from Gath probably these slaves thought if they can just get past the Kidron brook they're safe because he couldn't pursue them because he'd die but three years had passed and it's clear he just didn't honor Solomon's authority and I mean it seems like a man who knew if I cross that river I'm going to die would remember to not cross that brook there and yet he just ignored Solomon's order and went and got his two slaves and the commandment that I gave you all of the hereditary enemies and bad guys that had arisen in the time of David were now gone and Solomon is free to reign without any rival or opposition Shimei probably the reason that Solomon told Shimei to stay in Jerusalem and not leave is because Shimei was clearly a traitor, clearly a rebel clearly he was loyal to the house of Saul not the house of David Shimei you remember had been throwing dust and rocks at David when he was fleeing from Absalom saying this has come upon you because of the evil you did to the house of Saul which was of course not true Shimei was a Benjamite as Saul's house was and therefore if he would leave Jerusalem it's possible that he would go and conspire with other Benjamites to try to re-establish the throne of Saul and therefore to make sure he wouldn't get into that kind of trouble he was told to just stay in Jerusalem but he just didn't care he apparently did not respect Solomon's authority and when you don't respect the authority of the king you're a danger to the kingdom and so he had to be taken out he brought it on himself and so we stop there and we have a very interesting story next about Solomon's request for wisdom but we'll take that up another time