

SOLOMON ESTABLISHES HIS THRONE

Introduction:

1. Solomon was blessed by God with great wisdom.
2. His first courtship and marriage – poetically described in the Song of Solomon – was a demonstration of that wisdom.
3. The early decisions of Solomon as King also displayed wisdom and a desire to serve God by obeying His commandments.

- I. The Ploy of Adonijah (1 Kings 2:12-25)
 - A. David had instructed Solomon concerning issues that needed to be confronted and rectified in the kingdom (1 Kings 2:1-11).
 - B. Before he could deal with those, he was challenged by another plot to take the kingdom by his half-brother Adonijah.
 - C. Adonijah had tried to assume the throne before David named Solomon as his successor – involving Joab and Abiathar in his scheme (1:5ff).
 - D. Solomon had shown him mercy and promised not to harm him so long as Adonijah showed himself to be a worthy man (1:50-53).
 - E. After some time had passed, Adonijah approached Bathsheba (Solomon's mother) and asked her to procure Abishag as his wife.
 1. Abishag had been a concubine of David in his old age, though they were not intimate in their relationship (1:2-4).
 2. To marry the concubine of the former king was to claim a right to his throne (cf. 2 Samuel 16:21-22).
 - a. Perhaps Adonijah hoped to provoke a conflict between himself and Solomon.
 - b. Or perhaps he wanted to be a co-regent with his brother.
 - c. Either way, his actions highlight a division that existed in Israel.
 3. Notice that Adonijah asked for this even though he admitted that Solomon was chosen by Jehovah to be King (vs. 15).
 - F. Bathsheba agreed to speak to Solomon concerning his request.
 1. It is possible that she thought there would be no problem since David had not been intimate with Abishag.
 2. However, it is more likely that Bathsheba understood fully Adonijah's plan and knew that Solomon would not be fooled by it.
 - G. When Solomon heard her request, he declared that she might as well ask him to give the kingdom to Adonijah.
 - H. Thus, Solomon took a solemn vow that Adonijah would be put to death.
 - I. He sent Benaiah to find Adonijah and to execute him.
- II. The Removal of Abiathar (1 Kings 2:26-27)
 - A. Following this turn of events, Solomon turned his attention to those who had aligned themselves with Adonijah in his attempt to take the throne.
 - B. Abiathar the priest was worthy of death, but Solomon showed him mercy due to his service to David.
 - C. Instead, he was removed from his role as High Priest and banished to his hometown of Anathoth.
 1. Anathoth was a priestly city and the future home of Jeremiah the prophet (Joshua 21:18; Jeremiah 1:1).

1 Kings 2

2. Abiathar had helped David escape from Saul and David had appointed him as High Priest alongside Zadok (cf. 1 Sam. 22:20-23; 1 Kings 4:4).
 3. He had remained loyal to David during the conflict with Absalom (2 Samuel 15:24ff).
 - D. Solomon's removal of Abiathar from the priesthood fulfilled God's promise made to Eli (cf. 1 Samuel 2:30-36).
 1. Thus, the line of High Priests no longer descended from Eli through Ithamar.
 2. Now, Zadok would be the High Priest and the lineage would return to the line of Eleazar.
- III. The Punishment of Joab (1 Kings 2:28-35)
- A. After a lifetime of selfish scheming for his own position and power, Joab finally found himself caught on the wrong side.
 - B. Joab had chosen to side with Adonijah and now found himself at the mercy of the victorious Solomon.
 - C. He knew that his game was over, so he fled to the altar at the Tabernacle in an effort to save his life.
 - D. It seems that he thought that he would not be put to death at the Tabernacle, but Solomon instructed otherwise.
 - E. Benaiah obeyed the King's orders and executed Joab.
 - F. Benaiah was then promoted to fill Joab's former position.
- IV. The Judgment of Shimei (1 Kings 2:36-46)
- A. Shimei, who had cursed King David, had been shown mercy and was now given one more chance to spare his life.
 - B. Solomon instructed him to remain in the borders of Jerusalem; for, the moment he crossed that line, his life would be forfeit.
 - C. Shimei agreed and stayed in Jerusalem for many days.
 - D. After three years, two of his servants ran away from him and he chose to pursue them outside of the city.
 - E. This was reported to Solomon who ordered the death of Shimei.
 - F. Benaiah executed Shimei, according to David's and Solomon's instructions.