

1 Kings Chapter 1

Who Will Be King?

- Who is Abishag and what is her role?
 - Why does the text *start* with the story of Abishag?
 - The role of royal wives
 - What is the current state of David's concubines?
- Adonijah and his posse
 - Who are the possible claimants to David's throne? (2 Sam. 3:2-5)
 - Adonijah's character (1:5-6) (notice the chariots and horses)
- Nathan and Bathsheba: cooperation or conspiracy?
 - Conspiracy theories
 - No previous mention of David's promise to Bathsheba and Solomon (1:13)
 - Natural to assume oldest living son would be "next in line"
 - Emphasis on David's age and health (mental health included?) (1:1, 1:15)
 - The DoD and "Office of Religion and Global Affairs" endorsed Adonijah
 - Nathan times his arrival to look like happenstance even though it was planned in advance (1:14)
 - Later commentary from 1 Chron. 29:1
 - The problems with "reading behind" the text
 - Cooperation
 - Bathsheba and Solomon's safety (1:12, 1:21)
 - *Only* Solomon was not invited to coronation banquet? (1:10, 1:19)
 - Also *did not* invite David's mighty men or Nathan the prophet (1:10)
 - Emphasis on David *not knowing* that Adonijah had "made himself" king (1:11, 1:18)
 - Note that *not* inviting Nathan, the prophet, would be unexpected for a divinely approved king but completely expected for a usurper.
 - Emphasis on David knowing and approving of Solomon's kingship (1:48)
 - David's cogent speech in 2:1-9 disproves any claims for ailing mental health
- Solomon's counter-coronation
 - David enlisted the *real* DoD, and a representative priest and prophet (1:32)
 - Notice the kind of animal Solomon rides (1:38)
 - The *people* are with Solomon (not Adonijah) (1:39-40 vs. 1:9-10)
 - Adonijah *knows* he's been caught red handed and is in trouble (1:49ff)
 - Solomon is *extremely* merciful to Adonijah

Questions for Reflection

1. Is the content in this chapter troubling to you? If so, what specific objections do you have?
2. Are you convinced that Solomon is a protagonist in this chapter? If not, do you think Adonijah should be viewed as a tragic "good guy"?
3. Do you have any examples of someone (yourself?) being extremely merciful after an egregious offense?
4. How is God fulfilling his promises to Abraham in this chapter? What about promises to David?