

SOLOMON'S ANOINTING AND REIGN

BIBLE TEXT : I Kings 1:5-53; 2:1-12

LESSON 254 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (II Chronicles 15:7).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

1 Kings 1:5-53

⁵ Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.

⁶ And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also *was a very goodly man; and his mother* bare him after Absalom.

⁷ And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they following Adonijah helped *him*.

⁸ But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which *belonged* to David, were not with Adonijah.

⁹ And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which *is* by Enrogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants:

¹⁰ But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.

¹¹ Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not?

¹² Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon.

¹³ Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign?

¹⁴ Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words.

¹⁵ And Bathsheba went in unto the king into the chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king.

¹⁶ And Bathsheba bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king said, What wouldest thou?

¹⁷ And she said unto him, My lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Rebellion

David had ruled Israel forty years, and he was now old and ill. His life had been troubled by enemies to his country, the jealousy of Saul, and by the rebellion of his own son. Even now, in his last hours, he was to have no peace.

Adonijah, another son, wanted to be king; and he would not wait until David died to make an effort to take the throne of Israel. He knew well enough that God had appointed Solomon to be the next king; but he had evidently always had his own way while he was growing up, and he thought he could have it in this, too.

Adonijah should have been warned by what had happened to his brother Absalom when he had become ambitious to dethrone his father. Absalom had been killed before the revolt had been settled; and he had never enjoyed any of the honor and glory of being king which he struggled for so desperately. One cannot deliberately set aside the commandments and will of God without suffering for it. David had been given the throne by God Himself, and God would not let rebellious Absalom take it from him. Neither was Adonijah going to prosper in his striving for fame and power.

The young and handsome prince Adonijah was confident that he could win the hearts of the people to himself. Possibly, no one had ever said No to him, and it perhaps never entered his mind that he would not get what he wanted this time. His plans were carefully laid — and why should they not bring him success?

Adonijah's Popularity

Adonijah did as Absalom had done. He rode through the streets of the city in a chariot, with 50 footmen running before him, calling attention to the young man who would soon be made king. What a handsome prince he was, clothed in royal garments, standing erect in his chariot as he guided his spirited horses expertly through the throngs of people who had gathered to shout his praises!

Adonijah had made a great feast to which he invited the other princes, the priests, and even the general in David's army. He was working for the favor of everyone who might be able to help him rise to power. But Solomon, the true crown prince, and Nathan the prophet, and Zadok the high priest, were not invited. Adonijah knew that they would be faithful to David.

There, in the midst of the eating and drinking, Adonijah was proclaimed king of Israel. The people shouted, "God save king Adonijah." That is how Adonijah treated his aged and ill father — stealing the throne from him.

Adonijah surely knew the commandment of God, "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exodus 20:12). More than that, the Levitical Law said that a rebellious son was to be stoned (**Deuteronomy 21:18** ¹⁸ If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and *that*, when they have chastened him, will not

upon my throne.

¹⁸ And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest *it* not:

¹⁹ And he hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called.

²⁰ And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

²¹ Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders.

²² And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.

²³ And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground.

²⁴ And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?

²⁵ For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah.

²⁶ But me, *even* me thy servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called.

²⁷ Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed *it* unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?

²⁸ Then king David answered and said, Call me Bathsheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king.

²⁹ And the king sware, and said, *As* the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress,

³⁰ Even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day.

³¹ Then Bathsheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.

³² And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.

³³ The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon:

hearken unto them), and that the children who cursed their parents were to be punished by death (**Leviticus 20:9** ⁹ For every one that curseth his father or his mother shall be surely put to death: he hath cursed his father or his mother; his blood *shall be upon him*). Think what punishment Adonijah was risking by dethroning his father.

The News Brought to the King

All during this time that Adonijah was having himself made king, David was sick in bed. He had not heard anything about the rebellion. Solomon and his mother, Bath-sheba, knew that if Adonijah could establish himself as king, he would destroy them. Had not David promised that it was Solomon who should be king?

Nathan advised Bath-sheba to go to David and tell him the sad story. Nathan said he would come, too, and would confirm her words so that David would see the seriousness of the situation. Bath-sheba went to the king's room, and bowed low before him. David noticed her agitation, and asked what he could do for her. She answered, "My lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth." How surprised David must have been! And how disappointed that his well-beloved son should do such a thing to him! Even godly parents will suffer for not demanding their children's obedience.

Bath-sheba went on to tell David that Adonijah had gathered the powerful and influential men around him who would help him, but he had not invited her son Solomon to the great feast. And now all Israel was watching to see what David would do. Would he be satisfied to let his pampered son remain on the throne? or would he keep the vows he had made and fulfill the will of God?

Nathan had always been very close to the king, and had brought him messages from God. He now asked: "Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed it unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

Oh, no, this was not David's doing. He called Bath-sheba and repeated the promise he had made, that Solomon would indeed be king.

Solomon Set Up

David saw that he must act at once to set up Solomon in his place. He asked that Zadok the priest, and Nathan, both honored by God and respected by the people of Israel, should place Solomon upon David's mule and lead him through the streets so that all the people could see David's choice for king. The ancient kings rode upon mules, which were not considered the lowly animal as we think of them now. The wealth of the kings was often counted by the number of mules they owned.

Solomon's glory had begun. Down the streets wound the stately procession of David's bodyguard — the Pelethites and Cherethites — and Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, with Solomon in the lead. All the men of Israel who loved God and their king, who heard the news, fell in behind in the parade.

When the procession reached Gihon, Zadok took the horn of anointing oil and poured the oil upon Solomon, proclaiming him king. There was the blowing of a trumpet, announcing the new king: "God save king Solomon."

The crowd continued to grow. Everywhere people heard

³⁴ And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Solomon.

³⁵ Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.

³⁶ And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, and said, Amen: the LORD God of my lord the king say so *too*.

³⁷ As the LORD hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David.

³⁸ So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon.

³⁹ And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save king Solomon.

⁴⁰ And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

⁴¹ And Adonijah and all the guests that *were* with him heard *it* as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore *is this* noise of the city being in an uproar?

⁴² And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, Come in; for thou *art* a valiant man, and bringest good tidings.

⁴³ And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king.

⁴⁴ And the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule:

⁴⁵ And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang again. This *is* the noise that ye have heard.

⁴⁶ And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.

⁴⁷ And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king David, saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy throne. And the king bowed himself upon the bed.

⁴⁸ And also thus said the king, Blessed *be* the LORD God of Israel, which hath given *one* to

the good news of the coronation, and they came rejoicing. The very earth shook with their shouts of joy.

God's Will Done

Once more the will of God had been done. Solomon had been anointed king as God had commanded. David's faithfulness to the Lord had resulted in the fulfillment of God's will in favor of Solomon.

Prayers were prayed that Solomon's reign would be even greater than that of his father. And so it was to be, in that it would be a time of peace and great prosperity.

It had been David's duty to conquer the nations around Jerusalem so that Israel could inhabit all the Promised Land. For that reason there had always been war through the forty years of David's reign. Now that task was completed, and Solomon could rule in peace and enjoy the blessings of that great domain.

The news of Solomon's coronation was carried to David in his sickroom. How happy David was that all had been settled peaceably, and no one had had to die on this day of good tidings!

Adonijah's Fear

Adonijah and all the people with him had heard that Solomon had been crowned king, and they feared for their lives. They knew they were guilty of rebellion; and that if Solomon wanted to, he could have Adonijah executed.

Adonijah ran to the altar to pray that he might not die. He was like many sinners who are sorry that their sins have caused them trouble, but they do not repent. They want to escape punishment, so they pray; but they do not keep the promises they make to God.

Adonijah deserved punishment for disobeying God and dishonoring his father, but God was merciful. Solomon sent word to him that no harm would come to him if he would be subject to the new king. Adonijah came to see Solomon and bowed low before him, and pledged his allegiance. Solomon forgave him and sent him home.

David's Last Words

The kingdom of Israel was now established in the hands of Solomon, and David felt he could die in peace. The will of God was being done, and David was content. What satisfaction it brings to a child of God to know that his ways are pleasing in the sight of God!

Solomon would feel very much alone when his father was gone, and he would have to prove himself to be a man. David told Solomon how to be strong: "Keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself."

We can take the same lesson to ourselves. If we keep all the commandments of God, we shall also be strong in the Lord. We want His Spirit on our work so that souls will be won for the Kingdom of God. No one is as prosperous as the one who trusts God. He may not have wealth and fame in this world, but he has eternal life, which is greater than anything we might gain here. Floods or drought might destroy one's crops, fire might burn his home, thieves might steal his money; but the one who is trusting in God has treasures in Heaven that no one can take from him. Our greatest treasures will be the sheaves we bring to lay at our

sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it.

⁴⁹ And all the guests that *were* with Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man his way.

⁵⁰ And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

⁵¹ And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

⁵² And Solomon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die.

⁵³ So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.

1 Kings 2:1-12

¹ Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die; and he charged Solomon his son, saying,

² I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man;

³ And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:

⁴ That the LORD may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

⁵ Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, *and* what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that *was* about his loins, and in his shoes that *were* on his feet.

⁶ Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.

⁷ But shew kindness unto the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled because of Absalom thy brother.

⁸ And, behold, *thou hast* with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came

Savior's feet.

David reminded Solomon of a promise God had given him: "If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel" (1 Kings 2:4). What a wonderful promise! and it could be fulfilled in Solomon if he obeyed the voice of the Lord.

Rewarded for Works

David also spoke of other things that Solomon would have to do as king. The sons of Barzillai were to be treated with kindness because they had been good to David during the rebellion of Absalom. They were going to be rewarded for their help to the king. The misdeeds of others were to be remembered, too, and punished.

Let us remember that every deed we do will be brought into judgment, and will be rewarded — whether good or bad. The righteous will enter into eternal life, while the evildoers will suffer torment forever and ever.

The glorious reign of King Solomon had begun, and was to continue for almost forty years.

QUESTIONS

- 1 What was the ambition of Adonijah?
- 2 Why was it wrong?
- 3 Whom did Adonijah call to his feast? Who were left out?
- 4 What happened at the feast?
- 5 What did David do when he heard about it?
- 6 Why did David make sure that Solomon should be the next king?
- 7 What did Adonijah do when he heard that Solomon had been made king?
- 8 What had been David's duties as king?
- 9 What kind of reign would Solomon's be?
- 10 How could Solomon become strong and prove himself a man?

down to meet me at Jordan, and I swear to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

⁹ Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou *art* a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.

¹⁰ So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David.

¹¹ And the days that David reigned over Israel *were* forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

¹² Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly.