

The Life of David

David's Son Solomon Anointed as King

1 Kings 1:11-53

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Scripture

We are coming to the conclusion in our study of “The Life of David.” In the final days of his life, David’s son Adonijah set himself up as the new king over all Israel. That prompted a crisis because God’s choice for David’s successor was not David’s son Adonijah but David’s other son Solomon. Today we learn how David resolved this crisis and had his son Solomon anointed as king over Israel.

Let’s read about David’s son Solomon anointed as king in 1Kings 1:11-53:

¹¹ Then Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, “Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king and David our lord does not know it? ¹² Now therefore come, let me give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. ¹³ Go in at once to King David, and say to him, ‘Did you not, my lord the king, swear to your servant, saying, “Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne”? Why then is Adonijah king?’ ¹⁴ Then while you are still speaking with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words.”

¹⁵ So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber (now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was attending to the king). ¹⁶ Bathsheba bowed and paid homage to the king, and the king said, “What do you desire?” ¹⁷ She said to him, “My lord, you swore to your servant by the Lord your God, saying, ‘Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.’ ¹⁸ And now, behold, Adonijah is king, although you, my lord the king, do not know it. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed oxen, 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. ²⁰ And now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. ²¹ Otherwise it will come to pass, when my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be counted offenders.”

²² While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. ²³ And they told the king, “Here is Nathan the prophet.” And when he came in before the king, he bowed before the king, with his face to the ground. ²⁴ And Nathan said, “My lord the king, have you said, ‘Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne?’ ²⁵ For he has gone down this day and has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king’s sons, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest. And behold, they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’ ²⁶ But me, your servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon he has not invited. ²⁷ Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not told your servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?”

²⁸ Then King David answered, “Call Bathsheba to me.” So she came into the king’s presence and stood before the king. ²⁹ And the king swore, saying, “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my soul out of every adversity, ³⁰ as I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel, saying, ‘Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,’ even so will I do this day.” ³¹ Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground and paid homage to the king and said, “May my lord King David live forever!”

³² King David said, “Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.” So they came before the king. ³³ And the king said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. ³⁴ And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’ ³⁵ You shall then come up after him, and

he shall come and sit on my throne, for he shall be king in my place. And I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.”³⁶ And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, “Amen! May the Lord, the God of my lord the king, say so.”³⁷ As the Lord has been with my lord the king, even so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David.”

³⁸ So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David’s mule and brought him to Gihon.³⁹ There Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!”⁴⁰ And all the people went up after him, playing on pipes, and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth was split by their noise.

⁴¹ Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished feasting. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, “What does this uproar in the city mean?”⁴² While he was still speaking, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came. And Adonijah said, “Come in, for you are a worthy man and bring good news.”⁴³ Jonathan answered Adonijah, “No, for our lord King David has made Solomon king,⁴⁴ and the king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites. And they had him ride on the king’s mule.⁴⁵ And 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.⁴⁶ Solomon sits on the royal throne.⁴⁷ Moreover, the king’s servants came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, ‘May your God make the name of Solomon more famous than yours, and make his throne greater than your throne.’ And the king bowed himself on the bed.⁴⁸ And the king also said, ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has granted someone to sit on my throne this day, my own eyes seeing it.’ ”

⁴⁹ Then all the guests of Adonijah trembled and rose,

and each went his own way. ⁵⁰ And Adonijah feared Solomon. So he arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. ⁵¹ Then it was told Solomon, “Behold, Adonijah fears King Solomon, for behold, he has laid hold of the horns of the altar, saying, ‘Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.’ ” ⁵² And Solomon said, “If he will show himself a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth, but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die.” ⁵³ So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and paid homage to King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, “Go to your house.” (1 Kings 1:11-53)

Introduction

Nick Bryant is the British Broadcasting Corporation’s New York correspondent. Five years ago, on January 28, 2016, Nick asked the question, “Does America need to change how it elects its presidents?” He reported:

The U.S. presidential race is sure getting interesting – to put it mildly. But to international observers, our current political fracas is entertaining, weird, and even freakish. A journalist at BBC News recently wrote: “For sheer entertainment value it is hard to beat the ‘Road to the White House,’ as it zigzags through the cornfields of Iowa, the snowfields of New Hampshire and so very many airfields that one becomes indistinguishable from another. Surely no other country can rival this electoral blockbuster....

“The problem is that the greatest democratic show on earth also doubles as the most outlandish. For international onlookers, it can seem freakish and bizarre: a long-running farce populated by cartoonish characters, which works as entertainment but is a poor advertisement for American democracy....Like many good dramas, it is episodic....Like every good soap opera, it can produce cliffhanger after cliffhanger....Like all good theatre, it brings

together a compelling repertory company.”¹

As I communicate with family and friends overseas, I learn that Nick Bryant is not far off the mark. An outsider’s view is often different than an insider’s view. Sometimes it is painful to get that outsider’s view but it can be helpful to hear it.

We get to read and study the struggle for succession to David’s throne with an outsider’s perspective. We read this narrative with the advantage of almost three millennia’s hindsight. We also know the outcome of the struggle, which the participants in the narrative did not know in real time.

We noted that David’s son Adonijah made a bid to succeed his father as king over Israel. However, Adonijah was not God’s choice to succeed David. David’s son Solomon was God’s choice to become the next king of God’s earthly kingdom. So, let us learn about David’s son Solomon being anointed as king over Israel.

Lesson

First Kings 1:11-53 shows us the coronation of God’s king.

Let’s use the following outline:

1. The Countering of the Conspiracy (1:11-27)
2. The Prescription for the Ceremony (1:28-37)
3. The Crowning of the King (1:38-40)
4. The Submission to the King (1:41-53)

I. The Countering of the Conspiracy (1:11-27)

First, the coronation of God’s king shows us the countering of the conspiracy.

The first ten verses of First Kings tell us about David being old and his son Adonijah setting himself up as king over Israel.

¹ See <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2016/february/presidential-race-greatest-show-on-earth.html>.

God's prophet Nathan was not invited to Adonijah's coronation. He somehow heard what was going on and so he went and asked Bathsheba about it. Verse 11 says, **"Then Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, 'Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king and David our lord does not know it?'"** Nathan knew that the lives of Solomon and Bathsheba were in danger because in ancient times kings executed all potential rivals to their thrones.

Nathan knew that God told David that Solomon was to be the next king over Israel. So Nathan told Bathsheba that she should first go and see David and ask him to confirm that their son Solomon was to succeed him. If that was true, then why was Adonijah king? Then, while she was still speaking with David, Nathan would come in and confirm her words.

That is what happened. Bathsheba went in to speak with David. While she was speaking with David, Nathan came in and confirmed that Adonijah had been crowned as king. Nathan concluded his report to David with this question, **"Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not told your servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"** (1:27).

You may recall that years earlier Nathan confronted David about his sin against Bathsheba and Uriah (cf. 2 Samuel 11:1-12:14). In that instance, Nathan used a hypothetical story to bring David to a sense of his sin. Now in this instance, Nathan used a question to stir David to take action against Adonijah.

David was God's king ruling over his kingdom. David's Greater Son Jesus is now God's king ruling over the church. There are times when people conspire against Jesus and his church. It is our task to speak truth against anyone who conspires against Jesus and his church. We live in a society that is growing in its rebellion against Jesus. We expect that. But, when churches and ministries conspire against the truth, we must stir ourselves and take action.

Last week, Bethany Christian Services, an agency that places babies for adoption, issued a statement that they would now “offer services with the love and compassion of Jesus to the many types of families who exist in the world today.”² They have abandoned their commitment to a biblical marriage as being between one man and woman in a lifelong covenant commitment.

Let us counter the conspiracy against Jesus and his church wherever we find it in our society.

II. The Prescription for the Ceremony (1:28-37)

Second, the coronation of God’s king shows us the prescription for the ceremony.

Nathan’s plan worked. King David swore a second oath to Bathsheba insisting that he would fulfill his first oath to make Solomon king. David said in verses 29-30, **“As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my soul out of every adversity, as I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel, saying, ‘Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,’ even so will I do this day.”**

David then called for his trusted leaders. He gave them instructions for the ceremony at which Solomon would be anointed as king. One interesting feature is given to us in verse 33, where David said, **“Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon.”** Riding a mule or donkey in ancient times was the symbol of royal office. That is why Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday on a donkey (*cf.* Matthew 21:1-11). Today, the equivalent would be to see the President of the United States riding in Air Force One. David was affirming Solomon’s rise to kingship.

After giving instructions regarding the anointing with oil, David said to his trusted advisors regarding Solomon in verse 35,

² See <https://worldandeverything.org/2021/03/bethany-backpedals-on-marriage/>.

“You shall then come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, for he shall be king in my place. And I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.”

David carried out God’s will to have Solomon succeed him as king when he gave them instructions about the ceremony.

III. The Crowning of the King (1:38-40)

Third, the coronation of God’s king shows us the crowning of the king.

David’s leaders did what he told them to do. In verse 39 we read, **“There Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, ‘Long live King Solomon!’ ”** Now that Solomon had been crowned as king by the proper leaders and with the correct process, the people had a choice to make. Would they submit to Adonijah as king? Or, would they submit to Solomon as king? We read what they did in verse 40, **“And all the people went up after him, playing on pipes, and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth was split by their noise.”**

Every person faces the same choice today. Who will be our king? Will it be Jesus? Or will it be some rival to Jesus? Such as another religion? Mohammed? Buddha? Myself?

Friends, there are only two spiritual kingdoms in this world. There is the kingdom of God and there is the kingdom of Satan. Jesus sits on the throne of the kingdom of God. Satan sits on the throne of his kingdom. Satan allows all kinds of false religions and false idols to rule over his subjects, but in the end they are all subservient to Satan.

IV. The Submission to the King (1:41-53)

Finally, the coronation of God’s king shows us submission

to the king.

Adonijah and all those with him were at En-rogel, which was less than half a mile from Gihon, where Solomon was anointed as king. The cheering after Solomon's anointing was so loud that it could be heard by Adonijah and all his guests. Then Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, and so he asked, **“What does this uproar in the city mean?”** (1:41b). Perhaps he thought that they were cheering for him. Abiathar's son Jonathan brought Adonijah the bad news, **“No, for our lord King David has made Solomon king....And 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. Solomon sits on the royal throne”** (1:43, 45-46).

Oops! This was awkward. Adonijah's guests suddenly knew that they had backed the wrong horse. They couldn't get out of En-rogel fast enough.

Adonijah also realized that his goose was cooked. His attempt to take the throne was lost. Verse 50 says, **“And Adonijah feared Solomon. So he arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar.”** Adonijah was sure that Solomon would put him to death for trying to steal their father's throne – just as Adonijah would have put Solomon to death if the situation were reversed. Adonijah hoped to put himself under God's protection and Solomon's mercy by grabbing the horns of the altar. The horns were upright projections on the four corners of the altar (Exodus 27:2). The altar was kept in the same tent that David had made for the ark (verse 39). It had long been the custom in Israel that a wrongdoer could hold on to the horns of the altar – symbols of strength – and thus place himself under God's protection.

Solomon was told what Adonijah was doing. Solomon said that if Adonijah proved himself a worthy man, that is, loyal to Solomon, he would not put Adonijah to death. Verse 53 says, **“So**

King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and paid homage to King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, 'Go to your house.' ”

Adonijah was in rebellion against David and against God's chosen successor, Solomon. However, when he realized that his rebellion had been exposed, he threw himself on the mercy of God and his anointed king. And Solomon extended mercy to him.

Conclusion

At 9:04 a.m. on September 2, 1945, aboard the battleship *USS Missouri* in Tokyo Bay, World War II officially ended. Signing on behalf of Emperor Hirohito, the Japanese foreign minister inked his signature to the document declaring Japan's complete, unconditional surrender to the Allied powers.

You know what followed. With occupation aid and tutelage, Japan emerged from the ashes of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Recovery, though slow, was steady. It has become one of the most productive, peaceful countries in the world. Placing itself at the mercy of the prevailing powers allowed Japan to renew itself. But first the Japanese military and government had to completely give up, lay down its arms, and accept surrender with no conditions.³

Friend's, the king sitting on throne of God's kingdom today is David's Greater Son Jesus. If you have never done so, surrender yourself completely to God's anointed king, Jesus Christ. You will never experience an abundant life until you do so. I urge you to do so today. Amen.

³ <https://www.preachingtoday.com/illustrations/2004/august/15470.html>.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church
is:

*To bring people to Jesus Christ
and membership in his church family,
develop them to Christlike maturity,
equip them for their ministry in the church
and life mission in the world,
in order to magnify God's name.*

Sermons by Rev. Freddy Fritz

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be found at:

1. www.tampabaypresbyterian.org/sermons.
2. www.sermoncentral.com/contributors/freddy-fritz-sermons-11181.asp.
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