

1 Kings 1-2 - Establishing the Throne

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We begin 1 Kings tonight. I say we begin 1 Kings, but it's really going to very much feel like just a continuation of what we've been doing for the last several months in 1 and 2 Samuel, because when we ended 2 Samuel, we were coming to the very end of David's reign. But as we open up 1 Kings, we find that he is still alive, although he is very aged now, dealing with physical issues and there are and there's one last drama that he has to deal with here in his kingship. Why don't we pray and then we'll get into it here tonight.

Heavenly Father, thank You so much for being with us tonight. Thank You for Your Holy Spirit. Thank You for opening our hearts to the ministry of Your Word. Thank You for teaching us. Thank You for helping us Lord to apply the Word to our lives. And we pray that You would help us tonight to do just that, even when we see things we don't particularly like looking at. Help us to see it for what it is and speak to us Lord about things that are important. Give us eternal insights and perspectives and understandings. We ask this Lord in Jesus name, amen.

Verse 1 of 1 Kings begins by saying, *“Now King David was old and advanced in years. And although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm.”* (ESV)

David's health is now, as we said, declining to the point where he can no longer regulate his body temperature. That has to be a really rotten thing to deal with. But, keep in mind it says he was old and well advanced in years. David was just, I say just, he was 70 years old.

But for David, it wasn't so much a matter of how many years he lived, it was how much mileage he had. Because this is a man who lived his life with such passion and he almost always lived with the throttle all the way open, if you know what I mean. And life for him, I mean, began as a teenager. Downing this giant named Goliath and it just went from there. And it never slowed down.

I mean, there, yeah, there were, and we saw this in our last few chapters of 2 Samuel. There was a point where David was going out to war, even when he shouldn't. And it says that he grew tired and his life became very much endangered. And his men said to him, that's it, you're not going to go out to

battle anymore. But see that was David. He had to be told by other people, I think he had a hard time regulating those sorts of things by himself. And he just lived life that way, just wide open. And so now it's taking its toll on him and he can't get warm.

And *“Therefore his servants said to him, (we’re told in verse 2) “Let a young woman be sought for my lord the king, and let her wait on the king and be in his service. Let her lie in your arms, that my lord the king may be warm.””*

Now this was, this is what they decided to do because of his situation of not being able to regulate his body temperature anymore. And you can tell this is the idea, this is guys that are coming up with this, you know that, right? And this is what guys come up with. And they say, let's find a girl. And then somebody probably piped him and said, a really, really pretty girl. And that's what they did. And they said, let us get her and she can attend to his needs, and lie in his arms, and get warm, and or hopefully, help him to get warm.

Now says in verse 3, *“So they sought for a beautiful young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. ⁴The young woman (we’re told) was very beautiful, and she was of service to the king and attended to him, but the king knew her not.”* Now that phrase, *“knew her not,”* I'm pretty sure you're aware, is a euphemism to say that they never had any kind of physical relations.

Now, a couple of things we need to just throw out here about this. This was an accepted practice of the day when it says the servants of the king determined that they needed to get this young woman to keep him warm. There are some who believe these were actually his physicians and we know that this was something that they did when someone had this kind of a physical issue. It was not an act of questionable morality. It was not going to create a public scandal.

In fact, we have reason to believe even though David didn't need another wife, we have a reason to believe that David actually took her into his home as a concubine. And so it wasn't just an old man with a young woman and so forth in a questionable situation that he actually took her as, if you will, a wife. And we believe that because in the next chapter, we're going to find that his son, who is trying to jockey for control, will ask to have this woman later on after David's death given to him.

Not because of love but in order that he might have that ability to wrest control of the throne from his father someday because of that. Because having the king's former wife or concubine was a sign of possessing what the king possessed.

And it would, in the eyes of the people, make you more desirable to them as a potential king. It was just the way things were.

Anyway, David is dealing with these physical issues. He's really confined to his bed or at least his quarters at this time. He cannot get warm. He has a young woman constantly attending to his needs. And you have to know that when the king is no longer out and about because of his age and infirmity, that it's going to create a political vacuum. And you know that whenever there's a political vacuum, that is going to produce some sort of opportunity for people with an agenda to rise up.

And that's exactly what we find here in verse 5. It says, *“Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, “I will be king.” And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.”*

Now, this is, Adonijah is the fourth born son of David. We don't, first came Amnon, he died. He was killed by Absalom who was the second born because Amnon violated his sister, his half-sister, full sister, of his brother. So his brother killed him. That's Absalom. Absalom was of course killed by David's men when he tried to create a coup against his father's throne. So the oldest two sons of David are dead. The next son, he is named in the lineage of David, but we never hear anything about him. We have absolutely no idea what happened to him. He could have died prematurely. We just don't know. And then we come to Adonijah.

Adonijah would be in the eyes of the people, I suppose, the next person in line for the throne. It says here in verse 5 that he, noticed this, *“exalted himself...”* In other words, he said, I'm going *“to be king.”* *“And (what he did) he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him.”* This is the ancient version, I suppose, of a motorcade. And have you ever noticed that, when politicians want to look really important, they get a big, long motorcade. And then they run through the city and everybody, and they've got the little waving flags on the top of the thing and everybody goes, oh, it's someone very important.

Well, this has been going on for a long time and Adonijah decides that he is going to advance himself. What's interesting about this. Now, nobody has named him king except himself. He just said, I'm going to be king, so he comes up with these guys with *chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him”* and so forth.

What is he doing here? He's advancing the image of a leader. He's not a leader and he wouldn't have been a good leader by virtue of the fact that he was the kind of guy who advanced himself and didn't wait for the Lord. But he understands. Politicians understand this stuff. It's not so much about the context. It's not so much about what I believe or what I hold to be true or what I'm even going to do for you. It's about my image. And if I can impress you with my image, then I can get you to vote for me, or at least in Adonijah's case, stand behind him. And so he, the first thing he does is create an image that people are going to like, that looks important.

Now, we have an interesting statement in verse 6 that I think it's important for us to look at. Verse 6 says, "*His father (and that's referring to David) had never at any time displeased him (your Bible may say "restrained him" or even "rebuked him" if you have a different translation) by asking, "Why have you done thus and so?"*" Okay, so it's a statement about David.

This is about David's parenting and we've already brought this out in 2 Samuel. That David, as great of a king as he was, and David was a marvelous king, he was a pretty lousy dad. And when it came to Adonijah, it says he never once, and I like how the ESV. This is what the Hebrew means, he never once "*displeased him.*"

That's what you do to your children, don't you? When you have to restrain them, and when you have to rebuke them, and when you have to say to them, don't do that. What are you doing? You're displeasing them. And they are very displeased, aren't they? Usually. And do you know that some parents have a real hard time displeasing their children? They don't want to displease their children because there are those certain personality types that are just, I just want to keep everybody happy. I just want... And they go through life just smoothing over all the ripples, and all the problems, and all the drama. and they try to just settle down, okay, we're, okay, we're good. We're fine. And that even comes to sometimes to their parenting.

I'm not necessarily saying David was that way. I think David was probably so distracted by everything that he was attempting to do and to be as the king of Israel that he just didn't pay attention to his sons and his daughters for that matter. But we're told here that he just did not parent well at all. And then there's something else that's going for Adonijah, maybe I should say, going against him. Not only did his father never restrain him, never parented him, never disciplined him in any way, he was also a really good looking guy. It says it right there. He, just like Absalom. In fact, "*he was born next after Absalom.*" It says, "*He was... very handsome man,...*"

And so again, he's got everything going for him to draw the hearts of the people away. He's next in line for the throne, at least as it relates to how the kings of the world advanced kingdoms. He has a really bad attitude and he's the kind of a person who's never been restrained. And what does that make? What does that turn a person into? It's all about me, right? When you've never been disciplined by your parents, you grow up to just express that selfishness, and it's just like, yeah, it's all about me. And now he's also an extremely good looking guy, which, he knows he can exploit for his own purposes.

Verse 7 goes on, and it says, *“He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. And they followed Adonijah and helped him.”* This is interesting. He gets Joab and Abiathar the priest. Remember, Abiathar stayed with David when Absalom tried this. He was true to David, so was Joab. But in both of these men's cases, they're now going with his son. And so when you have the commander of David's army, which is Joab, and you have the priest who are standing beside David's son, you know that's going to immediately give credence to the whole thing in the eyes of the people.

And notice here though, in verse 8, it says, *“But Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and Nathan the prophet and Shimei and Rei and David's mighty men were not with Adonijah.”* There were some of David's men that stayed true to him. *“⁹ Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened cattle by the Serpent's Stone, which is beside En-rogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah,¹⁰ but he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the mighty men or Solomon his brother.”*

Adonijah knows what he's doing. He knows that he's doing something that he shouldn't do, and so he's very selective about the people that invites and so forth. And then, *“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?”* Now, that tells you right there how out of it David is. He is so confined to his, the locale of his own room and so forth. His son advanced himself as king and David didn't even know.

Nathan the prophet goes to Bathsheba and says, *“Now (verse 12) therefore come, let me give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon.”* Stop there for just a moment. Let me just, let me talk about this. And this is going to be very important so give me your attention if you would please for a moment. This is a key idea of these couple of chapters that we're going to be going through tonight and one that I want to try to bring application to as we move on.

What Nathan is saying to Bathsheba is he is warning her about a principle that often goes in a situation where someone takes the throne. And it's not a bad principle necessarily, at least as far as it goes. It depends on whether the person has a bad attitude or a bad outlook or evil intent. But the principle is this, when you take the throne, you must establish that throne. A throne must be established. And what I mean by that is enemies must be eliminated or the throne won't be secure. And again, that's not a good principle necessarily, or a bad principle. It's just a principle and Nathan understands it.

And what he is saying to Bathsheba specifically in this situation is, Adonijah has exalted himself or advanced himself as king. If you don't do something about this, he will eventually attempt to eliminate you and your son in order to strengthen and establish his throne. So you need to do something and do it now. Okay, that's what he's saying.

Now, again, the principle behind this of establishing a throne so that there aren't constant enemies coming against it is not a bad thing. It is something that must be done. We're going to see as we move on here and because you know that Solomon is going to get the throne.

You know that God is going to establish Solomon's throne. Guess how He's going to do it. He's going to eliminate the enemies. That's the way it works. The difference is this, who's doing the eliminating, right?

Nathan is telling Bathsheba, Adonijah will eliminate you because he's doing this in his own power and his own strength. In Solomon's case, there is going to be, it's going to be a completely different sort of an arrangement or situation. And we'll see that as we get into it. So he's coming to her and he's warning her about this.

And here's what he says to her to do. Look with me in verse 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.”*

Why is Nathan doing this? Why doesn't he just go into the king himself and just say, David, I know you didn't hear about this, but here's what's going on. Because he is also following another biblical principle about letting every matter be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. And so he is telling Bathsheba to come first and then he says, I will come right behind you

and I will confirm what you've just said and the king will know for certain. He wants David to be sure about what is going on.

“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.” Or, in other words, we will be considered enemies of the throne.

And *“²² While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in.”* And Bathsheba would have left at this point. *“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?”* In other words, David, did you do this without our knowledge?

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 (look at this day) this day.”

In other words, David calls Bathsheba back into the room and he says, Bathsheba, I not only swore to you that I would make Solomon your son, our

son, king of Israel, but I will swear it again in your presence. And I say to you, I will do it *this day*.” This very 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! (I love this guy, he's just, he's totally in the king's court. He says,) *May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, say so. (and) 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.” It's a hyperbole to express the fact that the rejoicing was such that it could be heard for a great distance.

“⁴¹ Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished feasting. (that would put a damper on your party) 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.’”

(and) 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.” Stop there for just a moment. That's an interesting sort of a tradition that got started, but not actually in Israel.

To take hold of the horns of the altar was really more of a pagan sort of a concept. The idea was that you could declare sanctuary or ask for sanctuary among the priests of whatever temple you happen to be near, I suppose, at the time. And if someone is hunting you for your life, you could go into the temple, wherever you were, and you could lay hold of the horns of the altar. And there, the priest would protect you and offer you sanctuary against whoever was trying to kill you. But this is not something God had told the Israelites to do. It was, again, something they gathered from the surrounding cultures.

And verse 51 tells us, *“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, (and I love this because this is so wise, verse 52) “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.” In other words, just go home Adonijah because you tried to pull this thing off in your own power, and it didn't work. And you should know better.

If there's one thing that our father has shown by example, and maybe he was not a good dad, from the standpoint of his parenting. But he did teach by example. And although he was not a perfect example by any means, in this area of waiting on the Lord, David was incredible. And in this area of humility and not exalting self, David was amazing.

And we look at Adonijah and we look at this and we think, what a twerp. I mean, the guy he's using, he's thinking completely like the world thinks I'm next in line for the throne. Good looking guy that I am. I'm going to take advantage of all these things in the eyes of the people and advance myself as king. And for

a while it works, for a very short while. But it doesn't work for very long because he's advancing his own agenda. He's doing it on his own. It's in his own strength, in his own power. And again, we look at Adonijah and we go, just, it's distasteful, isn't it? We do the same thing. That spirit of Adonijah it's in us all.

Why do you think the Word says to you and I, "*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. (but) In all your ways acknowledge him, and (then) he... (will) direct your paths.*" Right? (Proverbs 3:5-6) Is Adonijah doing that here? No, absolutely not. He's not trusting Lord with all of his heart. He's advancing himself with all of his own personal, self-ambition. And we do the same thing, maybe not for the same reasons, but we can do the same thing.

It happens every time we're facing a situation and we say, I got to make this better. I have to fix this. And we often will do it when we get ourselves into trouble. And we feel that there is a responsibility on our part to fix those things which we ourselves caused. And it's a weird sort of a twisted sense of responsibility because we're told in the Word of God to trust in Him with all of our hearts and do not advance your own agenda. Do not seek to solve your own issues.

Come to the Lord, wait upon the Lord, rest in God and go with His direction. Really Adonijah, yeah. I mean, we see the self-exaltation with these, we see the selfish ambition that's going on here. But at the end of the day, it's somebody basically just saying, I'm going to do it myself. It's all about self. I'm going to take care of this. I'm going to fix this. I'm going to make this. I'm going to help this. I'm going to, whatever it's me. It's all about me and what I can do, and it doesn't work.

And what we saw over and over again in 2 Samuel, particularly, well, 1 and 2 Samuel, is that David was a man who waited on God. Anointed as king as a teenager, he waited years and years to actually take the throne. And even when he was given opportunities to advance his kingdom, he didn't take them. God gave those chances to him on a silver platter and David didn't take them.

I am impressed by David because I have seen the spirit of Adonijah in myself. And given the same opportunities that Adonijah has. Ooh, next in line, good looking guy. People like me. Got Joab to follow me. Got, Abiathar the priest to follow me. Hey, I'm a shoo in. I'm not so sure I would have held back, given the same circumstances. I don't know. Because I recognize that same spirit of self-exaltation, don't you?

I mean, if you're willing to admit it, you see that it's really there in all of us. And we have to deal with it. We have to surrender it to God. We have to confess it. We have to confess it. Lord, you know what? The spirit of Adonijah rests in me, in my heart. It's right there. And I would, I may have done the very same thing he did.

Verse 1 of chapter 2 says, “*When David's time to die drew near, he commanded Solomon his son, saying,*”² “*I am about to go the way of all the earth.*” Again, that's a euphemism for dying, but isn't that an apt sort of a way of describing death? “*...the way of all the earth.*” You know what that says? It means we all die.

It means everything dies. It means that everything, we live in a world where everything dies. It was never meant to be that way. That's probably one of the biggest questions people have about the existence of God. If God is good, if God is merciful, why in the world is there death? And I got to be honest with you.

I'm just, it's beyond me how some Christians can believe in the idea that God set the world up, created the world, and then allowed it to evolve over millions of years just so they don't feel like they're believing something that's contrary to science. I don't understand how people can believe that. You know why? To believe in what we call theistic evolution, and that's the idea that God created the world and then allowed it to evolve. And then man evolved just like scientists say we had evolved and so forth.

And so on to believe that is to believe that death is part of the natural order of things. Right? Because scientists will tell you that animals were around a long time before man came around so that means that animals were living and dying before man ever got onto the scene, right? Death had to be around even in man for, or even whatever man evolved from for a long time until he became what he is today. In other words, theistic evolution embraces the idea that death is a natural part of God's creation. I have a major problem with that.

Number 1, it's not biblical, but number 2, it creates a situation where God is a monster because death is something that He thought was good. Because doesn't it say in the Book of Genesis that after God created everything, He said, it is good. It is good. It is good. It is good.

There's nowhere in the scripture where God looks at death and says, it is good. In fact, do you know what he does say? He says, it's an enemy. He says, it's something that's going to be destroyed. He says, it's something that's going to be

overturned. And it began when Jesus Christ rose from the dead, the first fruits He is called of those who will rise in that same way, never to die again. And that's the plan.

Boy, read through the Book of Isaiah. I don't have chapter and verse in my mind right now, but there's probably one of the most amazing passages about God's overturning of death in there. Where it talks about the fact that God is going to remove from his people the veil that covers over all mankind. And it's talking about death. He's going to wipe it away. And in that passage it says, and He will wipe every tear from their eye and death will be no more.

Well, why is He going to overturn it if it was part of his natural creation? Then when He comes to set things right, death should be part of that process if that was part of the original creation, right?

David's statement about death is interesting from the perspective that we all die and everything around us dies, but it was never meant to be that way. As many funerals as I've done over the years, and I've done a lot of them, I always bring this up. I almost, without fail at every funeral, I talk about the fact... Because everybody's thinking about death it's the elephant in the room. We're all sitting here and nobody's, it's death is right in front of us and what a wonderful opportunity it is for me to get up and be able to say this was never God's intention.

What does the Bible say about death? How was it introduced? Through sin. Did not God say to Adam and Eve, you can eat from all the trees in the garden, except that one tree that's in the center of the garden. You may not eat from that tree. That's the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For the day you eat of it, you will die. And that's when death entered the human race.

So He says, *“I'm about to go the way of all the earth. (middle of verse 2 he says) “Be strong, and show yourself a man,³ and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn,⁴ that the LORD may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, ‘If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.’*

⁵ *“Moreover, you also know what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, how he dealt with the two commanders of the armies of Israel, Abner the son of Ner, and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed, avenging in time of peace for*

blood that had been shed in war, and putting the blood of war on the belt around his waist and on the sandals on his feet. ⁶ Act therefore according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace.”

What is David telling his son to do here? In the strength of the Lord, he's telling him to establish his kingdom. The Lord is going to go before you, and the Lord is going to enable you to establish your kingdom. How do you do that? By eliminating enemies and eliminating unrighteousness. Joab was a thorn in David's side for a long time. Joab is an interesting study in humanity, I have to tell you. He was fiercely loyal to David, but he was not an obedient man, and he was not a godly man. He would make references to the Lord, but only as it met with his own convenience.

And so David is telling Solomon right here in very clear terms. He is a murderer, and he did things for his own reasons and so forth. And so he's basically telling his son. When you take the throne, you're going to need to deal with this because otherwise your throne is not going to be established because this issue of unrighteousness exists.

Verse 7, *“But deal loyally with the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among those who eat at your table, for with such loyalty they met me when I fled from Absalom your brother.”* So not only is it issues of righteousness as it relates to getting rid of problems, but it is also expressing justice and gratitude for those who have been a blessing to David. And David wants him to pass that along as well.

And then he's going on and he's telling him, *“⁸ And there is also with you Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a grievous curse on the day when I went to Mahanaim. But when he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the Lord, saying, ‘I will not put you to death with the sword.’ ⁹ Now therefore do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man. You will know what you ought to do to him, and you shall bring his gray head down with blood to Sheol.”*

Shimei was a rebellious, loud mouthed kind of a guy. David knew it. And he came to David at a time in his life when he wanted very much to show mercy, but nothing had changed in this man's life. And David knew it and so he's telling his son to act wisely. And I think it's amazing what Solomon does here as we go on and we'll see it in a moment.

But first we deal with the death of David and it says in verse 10, *“Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David. ¹¹ And the time that*

David reigned over Israel was forty years. He reigned seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. ¹² So Solomon sat on the throne of David his father, (and look at this statement) and his kingdom was firmly established.”

I want you to take note of that again, and we're going to see it repeated at the end of the chapter. But we'll see it in light of the fact that Solomon is dealing with issues.

“¹³ Then Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon.” Now, notice who we're talking about here. Adonijah is the man who, at the beginning of the previous chapter, tried to take the throne from David by advancing himself. Now he's coming to Bathsheba, basically the mother of Solomon.

“And she said, “Do you come peacefully?” He said, “Peacefully.” (yeah, and) ¹⁴ Then he said, “I have something to say to you.” She said, “Speak.” ¹⁵ He said, “You know that the kingdom was mine, (that tells you where his heart was doesn't it? You know the kingdom was mine) and that all Israel fully expected me to reign. However, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's, for it was his from the LORD. ¹⁶ And now I have one request to make of you; do not refuse me.” She said to him, “Speak.” ¹⁷ And he said, “Please ask King Solomon—he will not refuse you—to give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife.” ¹⁸ Bathsheba said, “Very well; I will speak for you to the king.”

Remember again, Abishag the Shunammite is the young beautiful virgin who came to attend to David's needs, but who also became obviously his concubine. And I say, obviously, because otherwise a guy like Adonijah, who was a self-advancing individual, wouldn't have cared. And this is not out of love that this man is coming to Bathsheba and asking her to intercede with the king for him. In other words, interesting here too, that Adonijah is not going to his brother personally, he's asking his mom to go and do it, Solomon's mom.

But this is not for love. This is for power. This is a power move on his part and I want his concubine because it will put me in a better place to once again rest control from this family line that has taken it.

And for some reason Bathsheba said very well, I will speak to you for you to the king. And we don't know whether Bathsheba was aware of how Solomon would respond. We don't know if Bathsheba was oblivious to his intent. We don't know. It's all guesswork on our part.

But it says she ¹⁹ ...went to King Solomon to speak to him on behalf of Adonijah. And the king rose to meet her and bowed down to her. (and) Then he sat on his throne and had a seat brought for the king's mother, and she sat on his right. (and) ²⁰ Then she said, "I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me." And the king said to her, "Make your request, my mother, for I will not refuse you." ²¹ She said, "Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah your brother as his wife." ²² King Solomon answered his mother, "And why do you ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? Ask for him the kingdom also, for he is my older brother, and on his side are Abiathar the priest and Joab the son of Zeruiah."

In other words, if I give him this, his position will be further strengthened to attempt to take the kingdom. The throne is hardly warm from me sitting on it, and now he's coming and asking for the concubine of our father. And, so he's explaining the situation to her.

And ²³ Then King Solomon swore by the LORD, saying, "God do so to me and more also if this word does not cost Adonijah his life! ²⁴ Now therefore as the LORD lives, who has established me and placed 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." ²⁵ So King Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he struck him down, and he died."

You remember what happened when Solomon heard that Adonijah had run into the tabernacle and taken hold of the horns of the altar. The people came to him and they said, he's asking for his life. And Solomon said, fine, he can have his life, if he'll just behave himself. But if he proves to be a threat, he'll lose his life. If this attitude isn't truly gone from him, if this ambition, this desire isn't truly gone, I can't promise what's going to happen in that case. He'll die. And that's exactly what happens here because he's still conniving.

And now Solomon is going to deal with other issues. ²⁶ And to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to Anathoth, to your estate, for you deserve death. But I will not at this time put you to death, because you carried the ark of the LORD God before David my father, and because you shared in all my father's affliction." ²⁷ So Solomon expelled Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, (and you might think, well, how does he have the right to do that? But check out what else it says in verse 27) thus fulfilling the word of the LORD that he had spoken concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.

Do you remember? Do you remember what happened way back in 1 Samuel? When Eli was priest and his sons were so despicable and Eli did not restrain his

sons. And God spoke through a prophet. In fact, ultimately spoke through Samuel and another prophet saying to Eli, God is going to judge you because you've allowed your sons to become contemptible before the Lord and you haven't restrained them in any way. Remember what they were doing all kinds of really creepy stuff.

And so God said to Eli, there's coming a day when you will be removed from the priesthood and none of your family will ever sit, be priest again. And in fact, all of your family line will die early. And so this is a final fulfillment. There's been years before this is ultimately fulfilled, but now by Solomon telling Abiathar, you will never sit on the throne or not on the throne, but on the priesthood, you will never serve in the priesthood ever again, the prophecy concerning the house of Eli is fulfilled.

And ²⁸ *When the news came to Joab—for Joab had supported Adonijah although he had not supported Absalom—Joab fled to the tent of the LORD and (he too, just like Adonijah) caught hold of the horns of the altar. ²⁹ And when it was told King Solomon, “Joab has fled to the tent of the LORD, and behold, he is beside the altar,” Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, “Go, strike him down.” ³⁰ So Benaiah came to the tent of the LORD and said to him, “The king commands, ‘Come out.’” But he said, “No, I will die here.” Then Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, “Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.” ³¹ The king replied to him, “Do as he has said, strike him down and bury him, and thus take away from me and from my father's house the guilt for the blood that Joab shed without cause. ³² The LORD will bring back his bloody deeds on his own head, because, without the knowledge of my father David, he attacked and killed with the sword two men more righteous and better than himself, Abner the son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah. ³³ So shall their blood come back on the head of Joab and on the head of his descendants forever. But for David and for his descendants and for his house and for his throne there shall be peace from the LORD forevermore.” ³⁴ Then Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up and struck him down and put him to death. And he was buried in his own house in the wilderness.”*

Do you see we're cleaning house? But what we're doing? We're establishing a throne, the Lord's throne. This is the one that the Lord has given. And ³⁶ *Then the king sent and summoned Shimei and said to him, “Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and dwell there, and do not go out from there to any place whatever. ³⁷ For on the day you go out and cross the brook Kidron, know for certain that you shall die. Your blood shall be on your own head.” ³⁸ And Shimei said to the*

king, *“What you say is good; as my lord the king has said, so will your servant do.” So Shimei lived in Jerusalem many days.*”

What's happening? Solomon has been told about Shimei, but he's testing Shimei because he knows the character of this man. He says to him, he says, fine, you cursed my father and you deserve to die, but I'm going to leave that in your hands. You make a, build a house, live in it, do not leave this city. For the day you do, you will die. And Solomon through wisdom is testing this man to see if he really cares at all about obedience in any way, shape, or form.

In verse 39 it says, *“But it happened at the end of three years that two of Shimei's servants ran away to Achish, son of Maacah, king of Gath. And when it was told Shimei, “Behold, your servants are in Gath,”⁴⁰ Shimei arose and saddled a donkey and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants. Shimei went and brought his servants from Gath.⁴¹ And when Solomon was told that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and returned,⁴² the king sent and summoned Shimei and said to him, “Did I not make you swear by the LORD and solemnly warn you, saying, ‘Know for certain that on the day you go out and go to any place whatever, you shall die’? And you said to me, ‘What you say is good; I will obey.’⁴³ Why then have you not kept your oath to the LORD and the commandment with which I commanded you?”⁴⁴ The king also said to Shimei, “You know in your own heart all the harm that you did to David my father. So the LORD will bring back your harm on your own head.⁴⁵ But King Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD forever.”⁴⁶ Then the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and struck him down, and he died.”*

Look at this last statement. This is very important. *“So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.”* And that is, again, how the chapter ends, because that is what is going on in the chapter. But that is going on in a way for you and I to understand this concept, that in order to establish a throne, enemies must be eliminated.

Do you know, do you remember in chapter 1, that's what Nathan warned Bathsheba about. If you don't do something about Adonijah, who has usurped the throne from David without his knowledge, Adonijah will come to a place where he will embark on this principle of establishing his throne. And the way you do that is by eliminating the enemies. See, it's not a bad principle because you see God doing it here through Solomon. Solomon is the rightful person on the throne of Israel at this time. But to establish the throne, enemies must be eliminated.

Listen, as believers in Jesus Christ, every single person in this room has a throne in their heart. And on that throne should be Jesus Himself. Now, Interestingly enough, He will allow us to put other things on that throne, or He will even allow other threats to that throne rise up in our lives from time to time. But He tells you and I, we must deal with them because that throne in our lives must be established.

The difference between one Christian and another many times, is not what they know or what they don't know. It's what they're willing to do as it relates to the enemies of the throne of God. Because what we see in this chapter, chapter 2, is we see a rather what appears to be ruthless response, but it is a response of righteousness against this sin and this these things that have gone on in David's kingdom that just weren't dealt with.

Now Solomon is finally dealing with these things in righteousness. And it's hard to even read some of these things because these people are being put to death or they're being sent away in the case of Abiathar. He sent away, he's no longer going to be priest ever again, right? Because he violated the Word of God.

Jesus told us that we need to be just as ruthless as it relates to the enemies that rise up and challenge his reign in our lives. Let me end by putting a passage, one passage of scripture that you are well aware of on the screen for you. And it says,

Matthew 5:29-30 (ESV)

If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

*If your right eye causes you to sin, (and this is hyperbole, He's not telling you to mutilate your flesh, but *If your right eye causes you to sin*) tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.*

And once again, I remind you that this is hyperbole. This is a symbolic sort of a statement. And the people that Jesus spoke to would have clearly understood that. That He's not telling you. And we know that it isn't your eye or your hand that causes you to sin. We know that sin begins in the heart, right? You can cut

out your eye and you can cut off your hand and still be just as liable to sin as before. We understand what's being said here. But what we may not understand is that He says it is your right eye and your right hand. What is that all about? The right eye and the right hand are always in Scripture the thing of power and the thing of importance. You see it over and over again in the scripture.

The firstborn son of an individual is called the son of my right hand. A right handed person and even as a warrior, interestingly enough, when in ancient times, when they went to war, they would stand behind their shield, but they would peek around the shield. The one thing they would expose was their right eye, interestingly enough. To take away your right eye is to take away your ability to defend yourself and see what's coming at you and so forth. So it's a very compromising situation.

And Jesus is talking about eliminating the best. Even if it's what you might have considered to be the best, get rid of it. Why? Because these are enemies and threats to the establishment of the throne of Jesus Christ in your life. And this principle applies. Enemies must be eliminated. And those enemies come in many shapes and forms and sizes and passions and desires. Thoughts, you name it. Dreams.

When we are convicted by the Holy Spirit of the areas in our life that are actually attempting to usurp that place on the throne. We need to deal with it. We need to deal decisively with it and even what it might appear cruel toward those things. But we, but that's why Jesus said that we must seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. (Matthew 6:33) Seek that first, His righteousness to come against anything that is unrighteousness in our life and to eliminate it.

And I am not standing up here today suggesting to you that is an easy thing. And I think that's one of the reasons why Jesus used this hyperbole of, gouging out your eye and cutting off your hand. That sounds like an incredibly difficult thing to do. I mean, I don't think I could even bring myself to do it physically. But, it can be just as painful to take something in our life and eliminate it when it has become so dear and intertwined in our hearts. And we've all dealt with it.

We've all had things in our lives that we've loved passionately, but we know that we know, they threatened the establishment of the rulership and the reign of Jesus Christ on the throne of our hearts. The Holy Spirit continues to tap us on the shoulder and says, my child, I love you with an unending love. Now I'm asking you again, what are you going to do about this thing? And our response is our response.