

# The Next King

## 1 Kings 1 & 2

### Key Bible Texts

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### Key Bible Verse(s)

“I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; 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.”  
(1 Kings 2:2-3)

## Background to the Study

The first two chapters of 1 Kings give an account of the closing years of David’s reign, concluding the account recorded in 2 Samuel. They cover the transition from his reign to the reign of his son, Solomon. The main events of this Book are the death of David, Solomon’s reign and death, the division of the kingdom, and Elijah’s ministry. Adonijah, David’s fourth son, seemed the likely successor, as he was the oldest surviving son after Amnon, Daniel, and Absalom had died or been killed. Adonijah, about thirty-five years old, had grown accustomed to getting his way due to his father’s lack of discipline. He gathered supporters, including those loyal to David during Absalom’s rebellion, and set out to make himself king. Though Adonijah, Abiathar, and Joab may have known that Solomon was to succeed David, they ignored this and conspired to crown Adonijah instead.

When Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan informed David of Adonijah’s actions, David quickly arranged for Solomon to be anointed king at Gihon, near Adonijah’s celebration. The event was marked by the use of the king’s mule, a trumpet, and holy anointing oil—all signs of Solomon’s legitimacy. Upon hearing the announcement, Adonijah’s followers dispersed, and he fled to the altar for safety. Solomon allowed him to return home on the condition of good behaviour.

1 Kings 2 recounts David’s final advice to Solomon and Solomon’s early reign. David emphasized the importance of following God’s commandments and securing the kingdom by continuing God’s heritage. He named individuals—Joab, Barzillai, and Shimei—whom Solomon should deal with according to their actions during David’s reign. Joab, for shedding innocent blood and supporting Adonijah, needed to be punished. Barzillai, for his loyalty during Absalom’s rebellion, should be treated kindly. Shimei, who had cursed David, could still pose a threat. Solomon’s first acts as king included executing those who defied him: Adonijah, who sought to claim the throne by asking for

Abishag; and Shimei, who broke his promise to Solomon. It was important for Solomon to begin his reign with strength and righteousness. By following God's ways and making important first steps, he secured the kingdom.

## TESTIMONIES FROM OUR DAY

*Actions have consequences. That is a lesson we try to instill in our children early. Not long ago, a first-grade girl was sitting in church with one of her friends. Paying little attention to what was going on in the service, the little girl and her friend were talking and giggling. Her mother tried to quiet her, but a few moments after her whispered correction, the talking and giggling resumed. Finally, the girl's mother took her out of the service to discipline her. She told her daughter that because her behaviour had been inappropriate, she would not be allowed to sit with any of her friends during church for one month. The girl very sweetly said, "Oh, Mom, I am so sorry. I will not do it again, ever!" The mother accepted that apology, but let her daughter know that the apology did not change the discipline. Actions have consequences! We can see that concept in today's text. Adonijah took a bold step and declared himself king.*

*The consequence of that action was that he feared for his life. Nathan took a bold step and devised a plan to prompt David to make Solomon king. The result – Adonijah's conspiracy was defeated. In 1 Kings 1:52, Solomon let Adonijah know that the consequences of his future actions would be life or death. Our actions today will have consequences. We may not make life or death decisions or turn the direction of a kingdom, but we will have conversations, go places, and participate in activities. What we say could encourage someone to seek God, or what we do could influence another person to drift in his or her relationship with the Lord. Even seemingly insignificant actions can have lasting consequences. Let us pray that God will help what we do to have results that will glorify Him!*

## A Closer Look

### Question 1

Who declared Adonijah king? (1 Kings 1:5) In essence, Nathan asked David, "Have you appointed Adonijah king without telling me?" Why do you think Nathan felt free to ask such a question of the king? (1 Kings 1:24)

### Question 2

Note some lessons you have learned because of consequences to your actions.

### Question 3

What was David's parting advice to Solomon? 1 Kings 2:2-4

### Question 4

What do you think the outcome would have been if Adonijah had supported his brother Solomon, and had not asked for David's concubine? 1 Kings 2:22

### Question 5

Why was Solomon so swift to remove his adversaries at the beginning of his reign, and how did it benefit him? 1 Kings 2:13-46

### Question 6

Perhaps you are facing a situation in life where you need more spiritual strength. Think of some godly people you could look to for encouragement, and note what you can learn from their examples.

## Take Home

Each day holds a new set of actions and consequences. What sort of results will your life produce this week?

Although Solomon had to make some hard decisions, he had the strength and help of God to carry the burden. When we are in a situation that requires spiritual fortitude, we can know that God is right there waiting to show His strength through us.