

1 Kings 1

Written by K B Napier
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Introduction

Kings gives us a panorama of how Hebrew kings lived and died, and the effects of their rule on the people of God – some good and some bad. Matthew Henry the commentator says that the division between good and bad kings is about 50-50.

The rise of Hebrew kings, from the first, Saul, to the last, proved to be of little benefit to the people. The insertion of an human king between God and Man gave instability and loss of freedom. Today, we see the same situation in churches that uphold clerics and hierarchies. Once we place men between us and God, we diminish our blessings and experience error and sin. Even the great Solomon degenerated and entered into wickedness.

Jesus Christ demolished the clerical structure so that we could experience freedom. But, like dogs returning to their vomit, many Christians prefer to be ruled by other men (from local pastors to lofty archbishops), so they do not have to think for themselves or listen to the Holy Spirit. Even heretical charismatics, who claim freedom, actually submit to other men who pretend to be their leaders and authorities on God's thoughts and actions!

This book is a lesson to us all. Whether a few thousand years ago or now, men love sin and prefer their own rule to the rule of God. This is why the world is now rife with evil: homosexuals, Islamists, violence, ISIS, erroneous churches and 'leaders'... it all stems from sin and the desire of men to kick God's face. But, God kicks back! His will is supreme and WILL turn on the wicked. But, before that, we must obey God, repent, and live holy lives.

1 Kings is a book for us all, right now. It speaks to people who have lost sight of holiness and allow wicked men (or their own anxieties) to rule. Then, when sin overtakes us we moan about God not being with us. Take heed of God and His word. Take heed of how the mightiest of men and evil movements are just flotsam before Almighty God!

In our day, rulers are changing what is normal and holy to what is unnatural or violent. This is a direct result of the Hebrews demanding a king all those centuries ago, when they should have just worshipped God alone and let Him rule. After that fateful demand on God, the Hebrews began to realise why God warned them that having an human ruler would put them all in a bad situation. This is borne out by the very first king, Saul. Though he was followed by the 'apple' of

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God's eye, David, he was followed by an initially good king, Solomon, but he turned bad. After him almost 50% of the kings were bad. In this way God's chosen people were subjected to the wickedness of a few. Is this not what we have today?

The Book of Kings contains all the intrigue and skullduggery associated with those in high office. All in vain! If we only obeyed the Lord and had Him alone as our ruler, we would be spared these machinations of greed, hatred, and sinful desire after power we do not really have, except by force.

The two books of Kings were originally one book, giving the history of Israel and Judah from the death of David to the time Joiachin was released from his Babylonian captivity. The time covered is about 960 BC to 560 BC and tends to 'finish off' other books, such as Samuel, Judges and Joshua. (Originally Samuel 1 and 2 were known as Kings 1 and 2, and what we now call Kings 1 and 2 was Kings 3 and 4).

The actual author is not known, though some guess it might have been Ezra, Ezekiel or Jeremiah. The main thing to avoid is to call the books a 'compilation', because this implies that the Higher and Lower critics are right, making the 'compilation' no more than the work of a scribe deciding what to include and what not to include.

Like EVERY other book in scripture, 1 and 2 Kings is given by God to whoever was chosen to write them. Thus, everything therein is 100% accurate and God-given. For those unfamiliar with the Books of Samuel I suggest you read those first, before entering Kings.

Verses 1-4

1.

Now king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat.

2.

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Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat.

3.

So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

4.

And the damsel was very fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king knew her not.

David was still king, though old, infirm, and, possibly, ill. Like so many aged people he was susceptible to the cold, even in Israel. Peculiar to us today, his advisers decided to find a young maiden to keep him warm. This had nothing to do with sex, even though she was a concubine! Literally, the girl was like a hot water bottle.

The young girl would look after him day and night if he needed anything – the modern equivalent of a nurse. Why not just have one of his wives or another concubine for the task? I do not know! Why should she be beautiful? Again, no real idea, except perhaps that the courtiers felt it proper to only bring in the most lovely young woman out of respect for David, to match his royal person. She was found in the small village of Shunam, sited at the base of the hill of Moreh in the Jezreel valley, north-eastern Israel. We know the relationship was chaste, because “the king knew her not”.

It is a very sad reflection on modern times, that men look upon every female as a sex object. This is found throughout the world, as a result of the sexualisation of the nations by homosexuals. (No, this is not a ranting guess: follow what happened to society after the end of the 1950s!).

Verses 5-8

1.

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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.

2.

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.

3.

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

4.

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.

Though not the first-born, a son of David, Adonijah, whose mother was one of David's wives, decided to make his political move by claiming the throne for himself. (As the fourth son, others had prior claim, such as Asbalom). He would never have dared to do so if David was well and strong! Adonijah openly told everyone that he would be the next king, and would not wait for the death of his father.

As a prelude to his rebellion, Adonijah formed a small personal army of charioteers and cavalry, with 50 out-runners/infantry who ran before him during travel. David did not say anything to him – simply because he knew nothing about it! Though taking the throne without permission, he is called a 'goodly man' – agreeable. This shows us never to 'judge a book by its cover'... many sinful things have a lovely appearance.

To help him in his intrigue, Adonijah enlisted his friends, Joab, son of David's sister and an army general, and Abiathar the priest. How quickly men and women change sides, if they think they will get something out of it.

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We are told that already some were “not with him” – Zadok the high-priest; Benaiah, a regional ruler under David, leader of the royal bodyguard, and a famed champion; Nathan the prophet (as distinct from Nathan, another of David’s sons); Shimei (of royal descent), and Rei, a loyal courtier. None of these joined Adonijah, either because they were not asked, or because they objected.

This is how power-hungry individuals move through society, joining with others who are willing to uphold them, and ignoring all who do not wish to be a part of the movement. Nothing has changed up to the present day! In this undercover action we see the beginnings of many modern intrigues and ‘take-overs’ of society.

Verses 9-14

1.

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:

2.

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

3.

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?

4.

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.

5.

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?

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6.

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

In his stronger days David was not a man to be trifled with. He was godly and powerful, loved people, but he did not allow nonsense. So, when his son, Adonijah, openly revolted to make himself king, it is an indication that he thought his aged father, probably now bed-ridden, was now a spent force. Otherwise we cannot explain his wicked activities in the face of one who was known as a great king.

Adonijah ordered the making of a fabulous feast, based on animals ritually killed at the stone of Zoheleth. It was a sacred stone – so Adonijah's pretentiousness is all the more marked. Today, many Christians claim to follow the Lord, yet they sin, hoping that their actions or thoughts will somehow *become* holy! The churches are filled with such pretenders-to-God.

The stone (meaning, 'stone of the serpent') was, later, a boundary stone close to Jerusalem, on the border between Judah and Benjamin, named En-rogel. It is from this point that water feeds into the pool of Siloam, and was previously where David's spies and Jonathan hid. The place is identified as the 'Dragon's Well of Neh', where the Kidron and Hinnom valleys met. The well is popularly interpreted as 'spring of the fuller', though it is a very unlikely one.

In his arrogance, Adonijah called together many of David's courtiers, his royal brothers, and the 'men of Judah', to the feast, to mark his self-appointed kingship. Except for Solomon, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah and the other champions ("mighty men").

Knowing of this illicit self-appointment, Nathan went to Bathsheba, mother of Solomon, as a matter of urgency; evidently she had influence with David. He asked her if she was aware that Adonijah had appointed himself king, even though David had no idea what had happened.

He advised her that she needed to do something before it was too late. Behind his words was a fear that Adonijah would kill her and Solomon. Nathan asked her to go to David, to get him to

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promise to her that Solomon should reign after his death. She was urged to ask David the question: "Why then doth Adonijah reign?" Feeble as he was, David would no doubt be shocked by this revelation.

Furthermore, Nathan said, when she had thus spoken to David, he would enter the chamber and reinforce what was said... David would surely listen to such an eminent prophet who had served him well for many years. The matter was too urgent to allow even a moment's delay, and Bathsheba recognised this. Today, Christians are being pressed on all sides and need to regard what is happening as urgent. There can be no delay.

Verses 15-21

1.

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

2.

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

3.

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 upon my throne.

4.

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

5.

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.

6.

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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.

7.

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.

Bathsheba went to David, and Abishag was in the room ready to serve him. In proper manner, though she was David's wife, Bathsheba bowed before David, probably uttering a suitable word of loyalty. David asked what she wanted. Bluntly, she asked David to promise he would declare Solomon the next king.

Then, she told him of what Adonijah was doing even at that moment at the sacred stone, having made himself king, even though the living king had to appoint the next ruler himself.

She reminded David that all of Israel was waiting to see what he would do. They needed him to declare who the next legitimate king would be. David was in a position of great responsibility, and his word was supposed to be the word of God for the people. This is why he was dealt severe blows by God when he committed his grievous sin with Bathsheba and against her husband. From that moment on, his domain was damaged, and was why Adonijah was now being rebellious. The same responsibility is with all who publicly proclaim God's word today. They must speak truth, and must accept that many eyes and ears are upon him. If he fails, he can potentially cause many others to fail also.

Verses 22-27

1.

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

2.

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.

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3.

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

4.

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.

5.

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

6.

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?

As Bathsheba was speaking, Nathan walked in, bowed before David on his hands and knees, his forehead touching the floor. He then asked David if he had promised Solomon to take the throne. This thing had to be done quickly. Nathan repeated what Adonijah was already doing, feasting and trying to act the king. Of course, everyone at the feast was obeying and saying "God save king Adonijah".

Nathan assured David that he and several others were NOT invited to the feast. Nathan then asked if Adonijah was acting on the command of David, possibly keeping Nathan out of the decision. In this way Nathan wanted David to acknowledge matters in a very precise manner. His words were aimed at a denial or approval, though he guessed that David would not approve.

Today, when we oppose evil, we must use similarly precise wording, and draw from others if

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they approve or reject the sins of the day, especially within the churches. And those in the churches who reject what is good and biblical MUST be declared to be ungodly, and shunned until they repent. This is very important, to separate the holy from the wicked.

Verses 28-31

1.

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

2.

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

3.

Even as I swore 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.

4.

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.

David told Nathan to call Bathsheba back; she came and stood before him. David then gave an oath, founded on the fact that to that time God had saved him from his enemies and from grief. He then swore "by the LORD God of Israel" that Solomon was to be the next king after his death. David said "even so will I certainly do this day". From that very moment David's new law was set in stone and Solomon was appointed next king, even though about two miles away Adonijah was celebrating his unfortunate power-grab with many disloyal men.

Bathsheba bowed to David, speaking words of exit, saying "Let my lord king David live for ever". She was referring to his name and memory of course.

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The deed was now done, because holy men saw the danger and acted swiftly. Oh that Christians today acted swiftly to save themselves and nation from wicked men and their evil designs. But, they do not. They allow the usurper to usurp, and even 'enter into dialogue' with them, thus sealing their own fate as well as denying the Christ they say they follow.

Verses 32-35

1.

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.

2.

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:

3.

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.

4.

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.

As soon as Bathsheba and Nathan left, David called for the high-priest, Zadok. He also called for Nathan to return, with the chief of his bodyguard, Benaiah. They attended quickly. This shows us that though he was physically feeble, David was as sharp-minded as ever.

David ordered them to action. They were to immediately go with a band of his own servants to crown Solomon as king. The 'servants' were either priests or close servers. In other words, those who were loyal.

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The men would get Solomon to ride on David's own royal mule as a sign of his preferred status, to the place called Gihon, a spring close to Jerusalem, where Zadok and Nathan would anoint Solomon king. A trumpet would be blown as the two men announced: "God save king Solomon".

Solomon was then to ride to Jerusalem to sit on David's throne, proving his legitimate claim to be king of Israel and Judah, unlike the illegitimate claim made by Adonijah in a hillside clearing! All of this occurred whilst Adonijah was holding his feast, not far away. In our own day, believers MUST declare God to be king, and denounce all who abuse His name with sin, whether or not they accept it.

Verses 36-40

1.

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

2.

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.

3.

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.

4.

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.

5.

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.

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Benaiah said 'So be it: whatever God says we will do'. He added: 'God has been with David – let Him also now be with Solomon, and let Him make Solomon's reign even greater than the reign of David.' The great company of chosen men then proceeded behind Solomon as he rode to the spring at Gihon, not far from old Jerusalem. There, Zadok poured sacred oil blessed in the tabernacle (sited on top of mount Gibeon), onto Solomon's head, and anointed him king. A trumpet was blown and everyone acknowledged the next true king: "God save king Solomon".

Amidst the confusion and sin of our modern world we must not flinch or accept what is evil; we must instead pronounce God and His word to be the absolute power and glory, and reject what is put in their place.

When the ceremony was complete, and they returned to the city, all the people rejoiced and played pipes. Their praise was so loud it could be heard far away... and the sound must surely have been heard by Adonijah, though he would not have known what it was about.

Verses 41-48

1.

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?

2.

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.

3.

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

4.

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

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king's mule:

5.

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.

6.

And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.

7.

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.

8.

And also thus said the king, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it.

We are now assured that Adonijah and his guests did indeed hear the sounds, as they were completing their feast. Adonijah asked what was behind the commotion. As he asked the question, Jonathan, son of Abiathar the priest, came into his presence. Adonijah welcomed him as a "valiant man" and asked if he had good news. Jonathan, probably with trepidation, told Adonijah that David had just crowned Solomon as king. Jonathan related the details, which explained why such a great noise could be heard from Jerusalem. Even now, Solomon sat on David's throne.

Also, the king's loyal servants came to bless Solomon, asking God to make his reign even more illustrious than David's. David showed his approval by bowing his head onto his bed, signifying that God ruled, and rejoicing that he saw the next king crowned even before he died. This was all told to Adonijah.

Verses 49-53

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1.

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

2.

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

3.

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.

4.

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.

5.

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.

Adonijah's blood ran cold! Suddenly his revelry dissipated and he knew a real fear of Solomon, as did his guests, knowing that he could very well be executed for his bold attempt to take the throne. Adonijah, quaking with fear, went to mount Gibeon and into the tabernacle, where he grasped hold of the horns on the altar, and called for mercy from Solomon. 'Do not kill me!'

Solomon already showed his coming attitude by saying that he would leave him live if he proved himself to be worthy of life. But, if he proved to be a liar and unworthy, he would die. Solomon then ordered his men to bring Adonijah from the altar at Gibeon. Adonijah bowed deeply to Solomon, who simply ordered him to return to his own home in the city. And so the rebellion

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ended in a whimper and Solomon proved himself a merciful, king... whether or not it was wise is conjecture!

Today, homosexuals have taken the rule. Islamists are close behind. But, God has His plan and these wicked men will not rule for long. Rather, they will start to fear God and good men. Let them begin to fear, for a 'greater than Solomon' is close by, ready to wield justice and vengeance. It is our duty to remain loyal to the true King and to let Him dissipate the rebellion.

Additional Notes

Adonijah

He was the fourth son of David and a rival of Solomon. He led a coup against his father. He was the 'son of Haggith', one of David's wives.

Absalom

Absalom, a son of David, by his mother Ma'akah, daughter of king Talmai of Geshur. Absalom was the third son of David and another rival.

Joab

Son of Zeruah, David's sister, and a faithful general of David's army.

Abiathar

Son of Ahimelech (also known as Ahitub), a priest killed by Saul for allegedly aiding David. Abiathar was also a priest, who began faithful to David but then later joined Adonijah as an enemy.

Zadok

The high-priest, brother of Abiathar/son of Ahitub, descended from Aaron. Faithful to David, and crowned/anointed Solomon as king.

Benaiah

Ruled over the Cherithites and Perethites, under David. Son of Jehoiada, a Levite. Benaiah was

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a mighty warrior or champion of David and leader of the royal bodyguard. Being faithful to Solomon also, was raised to be commander-in-chief of the army.

Nathan

Nathan was a well-known prophet. Not to be confused with Nathan, David's son by Bathsheba.

Shimei

Son of Gera, a relative of Saul and a Benjamite.

Rei

A loyal subject of David, a courtier who remained faithful to David during Adonijah's rebellion.

Solomon

Brother of Adonijah and son of David by Bathsheba. Tenth son of David.

The Cherethites

Mercenary soldiers who were also executioners and David's bodguard.

The Pelethites

David's guardsmen, possibly descendants of Philistine mercenaries. Also acted as couriers for David.

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