

1 Kings 2

Written by K B Napier
Thursday, 23 July 2015 13:29

“And Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years” (2 Chronicles 9:30), the same number of years his father, David, reigned. Though best known for his wisdom, Solomon was also hard-headed, knowing that the affairs of men need both wisdom and a sword. Like David, he did not flinch from tough decisions and saw wicked men for what they were. He did not allow them to live, and administered death when it was required. Today, this is not done: wicked men live, murderers go free, and genocide is hushed-up. How God must have a face of anger when He looks upon what vain and evil rulers do with the people of the earth!

In this chapter we see Solomon’s tough side. He knows that to let a schemer live is to ask for future trouble.

Verses 1-4

1.

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

2.

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

3.

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

4.

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

David lived 1040 BC to 970 BC, and he died at age 70. His time was now very close, so he called for his son, Solomon. He gave Solomon good counsel – ‘I am about to die, as I must, and

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I call for you to be a strong man. Guard and keep the word of Jehovah 'elohiym; obey His laws and everything He says, and behave as His servant, as Moses directed. Then you will do well in everything you do and say. When you do this, Jehovah will keep His promise, that if my children do this, no king will fail.'

Notice the condition – that each descendant must live in God's word with both heart and soul. That is, with every part of their being. This is the condition we are all to live in, though modern Christians think it alright to miss out many aspects of life! And how many today fall to depression or anxiety, and even admitting such to a doctor or psychiatrist? No wonder secularists think our faith is just a false notion.

Verses 5-9

1.

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

2.

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

3.

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

4.

And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword.

5.

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

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David reminded Solomon not to forget the duplicity of Joab, his nephew and general of the army. Though charged by David to bring back his errant son, Absalom, Joab found him hanging in a tree, still alive, and thrust three spears into his heart to ensure he died. Amasa was similarly murdered, as was Abner, Saul's uncle. All this was done at a time of peace, making him a tyrannical leader, whose very belt and sandals carried the blood of murder. That is, it was his awful character.

David had not put Joab to death for his deeds, so he now told Solomon not to let Joab die in peace. On the other hand, Solomon was to show kindness to the sons of Barzillai, who gave him protection when Absalom was chasing after him. For this they ought to be trusted courtiers, eating at the 'top table'.

David once vowed to Shimei that he would not kill him, though he cursed the king. But, David did not promise he would not die! Now, David asked Solomon to bring about the man's death by the sword. In this way, David made sure that old enmities were suddenly punished, calling Solomon 'wise' for bringing it all about. In this context, 'wise' means to be excellent in the administration of his kingdom, and also to be crafty and cunning when necessary. No king should 'wear his heart on his sleeve', or divulge his every thought, for enemies abound at court. Even in the ministry it is an error to tell everything to everyone, though it might be the truth, for others can use it against you. Very sad, but true.

Verses 10-12

1.

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

2.

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

3.

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

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Very soon after his meeting with Solomon, David died and was buried in Jerusalem. He reigned for forty years – in Hebron for seven of those years, and in Jerusalem for 33 years. Already crowned next king, Solomon immediately began his reign, which proved to be vastly greater than the kingdom of his father, David. The only way this was possible, was by Solomon obeying David's counsel concerning faith and behaviour. God rewards those who obey and live righteously. Those who do not can expect a life of misery and hard times; one that causes the 'sufferer' to utter "Why me? Why is everything going wrong?".

Verses 13-18

1.

And Adonijah the son of Haggith came to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon. And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably.

2.

He said moreover, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And she said, Say on.

3.

And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for it was his from the LORD.

4.

And now I ask one petition of thee, deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on.

5.

And he said, Speak, I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife.

6.

And Bathsheba said, Well; I will speak for thee unto the king.

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One day Adonijah came to see Bathsheba. We can tell from her immediate query that she did not trust Adonijah. 'Do you come in peace?' He confirmed that he did. He said he had something to say, and Bathsheba asked him to speak.

He began with what was obviously simmering in his heart... that *he* was king, but God changed this and made Solomon king. But, he said, he asked one thing of Bathsheba: that she should ask Solomon if Abishag could be his wife. Whatever she really thought, Bathsheba said she would speak to Solomon. I do not think this was a good idea, given Adonijah's resentment. Why did she agree to it?

Verses 19-24

1.

Bathsheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand.

2.

Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee; I pray thee, say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother: for I will not say thee nay.

3.

And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife.

4.

And king Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruiah.

5.

Then king Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah

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have not spoken this word against his own life.

6.

Now therefore, as the LORD liveth, which hath established me, and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me an house, as he promised, Adonijah shall be put to death this day.

Solomon's mother went to see him, with Adonijah's request. Solomon displayed exquisite courtesy for his mother as he stood and bowed to her, before ordering a seat to be placed at his right hand for Bathsheba. How different from the way people today treat their elders!

Bathsheba said she had a small favour to ask, and requested that it would not be denied. (It is always a mistake to agree to a request without knowing what it is!). Solomon encouraged her to ask, and what she asked would not be denied... until he heard what it was! Bathsheba asked for Abishag to be married to Adonijah and Solomon's response was immediate.

He saw through his brother's request: 'Why does he make this request? Why doesn't he also ask for the kingdom? After all, he is my elder brother! And why not seek favours for the others who wanted to take the throne?' Solomon was clearly not pleased. He could see the real intent behind the request by Adonijah, which was to marry a concubine once given to David, and so establish some kind of link to the throne. Perhaps you think this is tenuous... but some are given finely-tuned discernment, and can see beyond what others see, sometimes in seemingly ordinary events and situations. Solomon was of this kind.

I thank God that God has bothered to give me heightened discernment; it has saved me from many sinful relationships with so-called 'Christians' and others, and still guides me when observing movements, words, and works of others. Others would disagree of course, but, my task is to do what God has given to me, so I remain resolute, in spite of the criticism of others. This is how Solomon initially lived his life, with a wisdom that others did not comprehend.

As do many others, Adonijah did not dare to approach Solomon directly, but attempted to misguide Bathsheba, thinking her relationship as mother would suffice. But, he did not reckon

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with Solomon's finely-tuned discernment! When Adonijah spoke to Bathsheba it is clear that he still harbored resentment against David and Solomon for removing his hasty kingship, and with the delusion of one who does not think in godly manner, said that many in Israel wanted him to be king.

Today, many world leaders seem satanically-deceived into believing the soothing words of a 'religion of peace'. They do not even have a smattering of discernment. This is because they have vowed to get rid of God and everything godly. Their eyes are therefore blind to truth and facts. And their failure to recognise what is truly happening leads to the death and subjugation of thousands. In the same way, governments have been seduced into accepting at face value the claims made by perverted men and women, thus bringing death by illness upon millions. A Solomon is needed in government, who would not just banish these influences, but would come to the sword, to silence their pretensions and punish their murderous ways.

Solomon, then, saw through Adonijah's scheme and decided to put an end to him straight away. It is acknowledged by those who have to deal with security and war, that to let a devious murdering enemy live is to allow him to build his strength again to repeat his attacks at a later date, possibly with greater force. This is why the ONLY option with present-day killer-sons of Allah is to totally remove them from the face of the earth. With every day they remain alive, they build in strength and they murder at will. For this all western governments are to blame. Follow Solomon's example!

Solomon actually said (verse 23) with an oath, that he himself would be subject to God's wrath if he did not deal summarily with Adonijah, whose seemingly simple request hid a deep threat to Israel and Solomon, a threat that would forfeit Adonijah's very life. In today's evil climate we need to take swift action – no appeals allowed – against all who reject and deny God's word.

The decision has already been made: 'God established me on the throne and by His Name I will put Adonijah to death today!' No reprieve, no appeal, no lengthy time-wasting judgments. How it should be, even today! If a fact has been established, then judgment can be swift, immediate. This should remind us that the death penalty still stands firm, though it is rejected by socialist societies today. And, as God warns, when we do not put the murderer to death the blood they shed is upon all our heads. Indeed, it is this fact that leads me to call for the immediate deaths of terrorists, wherever they are.

Verses 25-27

1.

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And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died.

2.

And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou art worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord GOD before David my father, and because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my father was afflicted.

3.

So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.

Solomon sent for Benaiah, head of his bodyguard and chief executioner, and Benaiah immediately went with several guards, putting Adonijah to death. Solomon did not rest. He sent for one who was complicit in Adonijah's plot, the priest Abiathar, and expelled him from Jerusalem, telling him to return to his fields in Anathoth, a Benjamite city about three miles from Jerusalem (birthplace of Jeremiah). There he would remain as a farmer, but with a warning hanging over his head if he ever became treasonous again... though worthy of death, said Solomon, he would not put him to death at this time. Solomon did this because of Abiathar's loyalty to David, and because he suffered any afflictions David suffered. But, death hung above his head as a reminder.

In this way Abiathar was cast out of the priesthood. Many years before, Saul had slaughtered Abiathar's father and 85 priests. Now, for no reason. Abiathar had committed an act of treason against David, but was allowed to live, the last of Eli's line, and in his eighties. It does not matter that one is old - if he has been unfaithful or criminal, punishment is still needed.

Today, many criminals and religious men (though once good) should be deprived of their freedom or influence if they do what is evil. Sadly, many religious men remain in office, allowed to stay by weak Christians, thus bringing judgment upon their own heads as well. Even if old, they must be judged, for the world is God's not ours, and His word prevails even when we deny it. As I look upon the growing persecution of Christians in our day I cannot but accept that we are all at fault, deserving such judgment from the Lord for our lack of faith and actions. David

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allowed evil men to remain alive, but once Solomon came along, judgment was fast and sure. As it should be. Do not just nip sin in the bud – crush it underfoot!

Verses 28-33

1.

Then tidings came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

2.

And it was told king Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD; and, behold, he is by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him.

3.

And Benaiah came to the tabernacle of the LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me.

4.

And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father.

5.

And the LORD shall return his blood upon his own head, who fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them with the sword, my father David not knowing thereof, to wit, Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah.

6.

Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David, and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne, shall there be peace for ever from the LORD.

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When Joab heard the news, he experienced real panic and rushed to the tabernacle on top of mount Gibeon, thinking that his plea would be treated just like that of Adonijah previously. But, his pretension and abuse of the rules of mercy brought him even closer to his own death.

When Solomon heard about Joab hanging on to the horns of the altar, he again sent for his champion, Benaiah, to go to the tabernacle and kill him; he went with a small contingent of guards, all as experienced in killing as Joab, because Joab was no easy man to deal with. Benaiah entered the tabernacle, called for Joab to let go of the altar, and to come down, by order of the king.

Joab knew what was coming and refused the order, saying he would rather die where he was. Benaiah went back to Solomon to tell him what had been said... bearing in mind that this was the Lord's house. No doubt, this was Joab's way of claiming asylum, but it did not work. Solomon commanded Benaiah to kill Joab on the spot even if he continued to hold on to the horns.

Solomon explained himself to Benaiah, even though as king he did not need to. He told Benaiah that Joab's death was a result of his own murders of good men in the past (as requested by David just before he died). For these he had to die judicially, and be buried straight away in an ignominious grave.

In this way, said Solomon, the innocent blood Joab shed would be poured onto his own head; and Solomon briefly told Benaiah who the innocent people were. Solomon then cursed the line of Joab, and blessed the line of David. Today's Christians need to understand all this and apply the principles to our modern times.

Verses 34-38

1.

So Benaiah the son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him: and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness.

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2.

And the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over the host: and Zadok the priest did the king put in the room of Abiathar.

3.

And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Build thee an house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither.

4.

For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, thou shalt know for certain that thou shalt surely die: thy blood shall be upon thine own head.

5.

And Shimei said unto the king, The saying is good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days.

Benaiah then went back to the tabernacle (five miles away) and cut Joab down. The body was immediately taken to Joab's house in the desert and buried without ceremony. Joab was the general of Israel's army; now Benaiah was given his role and title, and Zadok was put in the place of Abiathar.

Solomon then had to deal with another of David's enemies, Shimei, who was related to Saul. His punishment was lighter: Solomon commanded him to build a house for himself in Jerusalem, where he must live from that time forward, never leaving Jerusalem for any reason. If he ever left the city and passed over the Kidron river (the outer boundary of Jerusalem), he would be put to death, and it would be his own fault. Shimei accepted Solomon's demand, and built a house in the city, living there for three years without incident.

Verses 39-41

1.

And it came to pass at the end of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto

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Achish son of Maachah king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants be in Gath.

2.

And Shimei arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish to seek his servants: and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath.

3.

And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again.

Then came Shimei's downfall. Two of his servants ran away to join Achish, who was the son of the king of Gath, Maachah. Achish was now the king of the Philistines.

Both Achish and his father had names that described their characters – Achish means “I will blacken or terrify” (it can also mean ‘only a man’). His father's name meant ‘oppression’. Bear in mind that the Philistines were still enemies of Israel.

Shimei was told where his servants were and he travelled to Gath on an ass to get them back, returning to Jerusalem. Solomon came to hear about this, and so Shimei was about to meet his end. Today, little weight is put on loyalty and obedience, and I can imagine some readers sympathising with Shimei. Sadly, the same people would also treat God's commands lightly, making all kinds of excuses as to why a sinner should not die. And so our modern churches themselves die, for want of obedience.

Verses 42-46

1.

And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said unto him, Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for a certain, on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, that thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The word that I have heard is good.

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2.

Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the LORD, and the commandment that I have charged thee with?

3.

The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head;

4.

And king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before the LORD for ever.

5.

So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; which went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

Shimei was commanded to meet with Solomon, who reminded him of his solemn oath before God never to leave Jerusalem, and if he did he would lose his life. Solomon added that Shimei knew what kind of sinfulness he had in his heart. 'Why then,' asked Solomon, 'did you break your oath before God and my own orders?' How many times have you broken a promise to God, or sinned willingly?

Solomon reminded Shimei of the wicked deeds he did to David, before telling him that his wickedness would now be put on his head. In judging Shimei, Solomon said, blessings would shower upon the house of Solomon, and David's throne would rule for ever. In this we find a prophecy of the reign of Jesus Christ.

Benaiah was again called upon, this time to put Shimei to death. In this way the very early part of Solomon's reign was established, with all his and his father's enemies put to death. If some find this shocking, they should remember that enemies are enemies, and there is no worse

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enemy than an enemy of God. Such an enemy is already dead in the eyes of the Lord.

Too many modern Christians are afraid to obey and to administer justice. So murderers are set free while countless others die without cause, and many pastors and Bible teachers who are not called are allowed space to preach and teach. That is why modern Christians deserve the treatment we now get. We must never forget that both God's justice AND His judgments usually come through the hand of believers. We must not shun or shirk this responsibility.

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