

**November 26**

**Scriptures:** Read 1 King 1

**Key Verse:** “As the Lord has been with my lord the king, even so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater...”. (1 Kings 1:37)

## **Overview**

1 Kings opens with the continuation of David’s reign that was recorded in 2 Samuel. By this time, David was seventy years old (2 Samuel 5:4). He was very sick, confined to his bed, and required the constant care of Abishag, who acted as his personal nurse (1:4). Though frail physically, he still proved to have a strong will and a strong mind. It is probable that his life of many problems and distress, especially from the rebellion and death of Absalom, had taken its toll on him.

David’s oldest living son, Adonijah, thought it was time for him to secure the throne for himself. He had the support of both Joab, David’s nephew and loyal commander of his army, and Abiathar, one of the two chief priests (the other being Zadok) who was also faithful to David. It is unlikely, then, that Adonijah’s plans for his coronation were thought of in terms of a rebellion, for there had not yet been any official precedent laid down concerning succession to the throne. It was probably considered right and just by Joab and Abiathar that David’s oldest living son would succeed his father. They were all probably aware, however, that David had promised Bathsheba that her son Solomon would be king after him, but this had likely not been proclaimed publically or officially.

During Adonijah’s coronation feast, held in the Kidron valley just below Mount Zion south of Jerusalem, the prophet Nathan shrewdly informed David of Adonijah’s plans. Had Nathan not interceded on behalf of Bathsheba and Solomon, it is possible that Adonijah would have taken the throne, and their lives would have been in danger. Nathan was the prophet who had told David about God’s words concerning the son who would build His Temple. It was also he who spoke the blessing upon Solomon when he was born (2 Samuel 7:12-13; 12:24-25). Nathan therefore must have known that Solomon was God’s choice to succeed David. Later, Adonijah himself admitted that Solomon had been chosen by God (2:15).

When David heard of Adonijah’s conspiracy, first from Bathsheba and then from Nathan, he immediately gave orders to have Solomon anointed and publicly proclaimed king. Benaiah, the commander of David’s personal bodyguard, from a priestly family, immediately expressed his approval and happiness. He must have been glad to know that the will of God was being accomplished. With words that seem prophetic, he blessed Solomon’s reign and prayed that God would make his “throne”, or kingdom, greater than his father’s. The Lord did indeed answer that sincere prayer, for it was in His will to give Solomon a more glorious reign. The most glorious reign of peace and the greater throne, however, was actualized in Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

When the people saw Solomon riding upon David’s mule and witnessed his anointing, they knew without a doubt that David had officially chosen Solomon to succeed him. Because of David’s

quick thinking and the providence of God, they were successful in putting down Adonijah's aspiration to the throne. When David heard that all went well, he bowed his head in worship to God, no doubt thanking Him for beginning to fulfill His promise about having a successor and a lasting dynasty (2 Samuel 7:12-16).

The noise of the excitement of Solomon's coronation at the Gihon spring, west of Jerusalem, was heard by Adonijah, who realized that he had been caught in his treachery. In a plea to be shown the mercy of God, he fled to the altar of the Lord for refuge and held on to its horns (Exodus 21:14; 29:12; 38:2), knowing that Solomon feared God and would respect the sanctuary provided at His altar. Solomon did grant Adonijah mercy and pardoned him on the condition that he would make no further claims upon the throne. God was now establishing the kingdom under Solomon, just as he had done for his father before him.

### **Prayer**

O Lord, as You have been with our Fathers in the faith of Jesus Christ, we humbly ask You to be with us. Lord Jesus, You promised that we will reign with You some day as "kings and priests to our God". Keep us faithful and we'll be careful to give You all the glory.