

## 1 KINGS 1

### A. Introduction

1. In our elders' meetings, we're going to be tracing the story of King Solomon, from his coronation to his burial, as recorded in 1 Kings 1-11.

As well as seeing how he points us to the 'one greater than Solomon', we're going to focus in on what we can learn as elders from his life and particularly his downfall, as we seek to lead those whom God has made us overseers over.

2. In 1 Kings 1, Solomon is crowned king over Israel, but this wasn't a straightforward process.

Let's look at the events surrounding this, and what we can learn from them.

Two things we see:

### B. Passive leadership

1. The story of Solomon begins with King David.

King David, the great king who killed lions and bears to defend his father's flock, who slayed giants and conquered kingdoms was now the shadow of the man he was.

"When King David was old and well advanced in years, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him. So his servants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin to attend the king and take care of him. She can lie beside him so that our lord the king may keep warm." Then they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful girl and found Abishag, a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. The girl was very beautiful; she took care of the king and waited on him, but the king had no intimate relations with her." (1 Kings 1:1-4)

Abishag's job as a human hot water bottle for David raises a number of questions that are never answered.

But the fact that David does not sleep with her, I think is an indication of David's weakness and his passivity towards leading the nation.

This is also seen in his failure to discipline his son and his failure in making his choice of Solomon as the next king known to the nation.

2. Into this leadership void steps another contender to the throne.

Adonijah had ambition (v5), power (v5), and position (v6).

Adonijah is described in terms like Saul and Eliab, who both looked impressive and what you'd expect a king to look like.

Adonijah actively seeks the position of King.

"Now Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, put himself forward and said, "I will be king." (1 Kings 1:5)

Adonijah was like Adam in the Garden of Eden, attempting to seize a position that was not his. Although it had not publicly been announced, it was common knowledge within the king's family and among his closest associates the Solomon was to succeed David as king.

This was why Solomon was not invited to his celebration.

"He invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah who were royal officials, but he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the special guard or his brother Solomon." (1 Kings 1:9-10)

### 3. Application.

These opening verses of 1 Kings teach us that passive leadership is disastrous.

David's failure to lead allowed for an unqualified leader to try and take control.

Unqualified leaders might be incredibly gifted, but by seeking to lead, they are rebelling against God's Word. Adonijah was not qualified because he was not the Lord's anointed.

A real danger is posed to a local church when it has elders who are passive leaders. Either there will be no leadership or those who are not qualified will try to take over.

To allow unqualified leaders to lead in a local church is to rebel against God's Word, as Jesus has made it clear who should be an elder.

Men who are passive leaders should not be elders as one indication that they are qualified is that it is clear they manage their household.

### C. Proactive Leadership

1. King David may have been passive in his leadership, but there were subjects who were loyal to him, and who cared about the future of the kingdom.

"Then Nathan asked Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Have you heard that Adonijah, the son of Haggith, has become king without our lord David's knowing it? Now then, let me advise you how you can save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. Go in to King David and say to him, 'My lord the king, did you not swear to me your servant: "Surely Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne"? Why then has Adonijah become king?" (1 Kings 1:11-13)

Nathan the prophet decided that something must be done about this situation and comes up with a plan, involving Bathsheba, to stir the king to action.

2. The plan works and King David made Solomon king.

"King David said, "Call in Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came before the king, he said to them: "Take your lord's servants with you and set Solomon my son on my own mule and take him down to Gihon. There shall Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel. Blow the trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!' Then you are to go up with him, and he is to come and sit on my throne and reign in my place. I have appointed him ruler over Israel and Judah." (1 Kings 1:32-35)

David knew what needed to happen and is proactive in giving the instructions to bring this about.

Solomon would ride on David's personal mule, a sign that Solomon will sit in David's place.

Solomon would then be anointed as King.

Solomon would be proclaimed as King to all the nation, so that it would be clear to everyone who was on the throne and reigning as king.

3. The people of Israel now had a choice to make.

Will they accept Solomon as their king?

"Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" (1 Kings 1:39)

Not just the people, but also Adonijah and those who had rebelled against God's promise.

"Then Solomon was told, "Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon and is clinging to the horns of the altar. He says, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'" Solomon replied, "If he shows himself to be a worthy man, not a hair of his

head will fall to the ground; but if evil is found in him, he will die." Then King Solomon sent men, and they brought him down from the altar. And Adonijah came and bowed down to King Solomon, and Solomon said, "Go to your home." (1 Kings 1:51-53)

So long as Adonijah submits to the rule of God's anointed king, Solomon, he will be safe.

#### 4. Application.

These opening verses of 1 Kings as well as teaching us about passive leadership, also show us what proactive leadership is like.

Proactive leadership is concerned about God's will. David is stirred into action because of the threat to God's promise.

Proactive leadership is obedient to God's will. David's acts in obedience to God's Word about the future king of Israel.

Proactive leadership is what Christ has shown. He was not passive. He came to earth, He sought lost people out, and He has dealt with our greatest need by dying on the cross. Jesus did all this in obedience to God's will.

For us to be elders who are proactive as leaders, we must be concerned that God's will is done, which we do by obeying His anointed King, Jesus.

Jesus is David's greater Son, the one greater than Solomon, who was anointed as King at His baptism, who rode into Jerusalem on a donkey, and who has now taken His place on the throne at God's right hand.

We submit to His rule, as we lead by following His Word and His example.