

1 KINGS 2

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.

In 1 Kings 1 we saw how vital it is that our leadership is proactive and not passive, as we looked at the events surrounding Solomon being crowned King over Israel.

2. 1 Kings 2 consists of two parts:

The first, verses 1 to 11, is enclosed by references to King David's death.

The second, verses 12 to 46, is enclosed by references to King Solomon's rule being firmly established.

The big focus of this chapter is how Solomon's rule is established after King David's death.

3. In verses 1 to 11, King David gives some final instructions to Solomon prior to his death.

He tells Solomon how to establish his rule over Israel.

There were two things that Solomon needed to do.

Firstly, he needed to obey God's law.

"I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, show yourself a man, and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in his ways, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go, and that the LORD may keep his promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.'" (1 Kings 2:2-4)

This description of God's law in seven phrases, seems to connect it to the creation narrative, and by doing so, indicates that if Solomon follows God's law, he will like a new Adam, establishing a new creation in Israel.

Secondly, he needed to eliminate God's enemies.

The command to deal with God's enemies, again takes us back to creation and Adam's failure to deal with the threat to creation.

Solomon by executing the enemies of God will like a new Adam, establishing a new creation where those in his kingdom can enjoy security, peace and joy.

4. In verses 12 to 46, Solomon follows the final instructions King David's gave prior to his death.

Solomon eliminates God's enemies:

He executes Adonijah (v13-25).

He banishes Abiathar (v26-27).

He puts Joab to death (v28-35).

He struck down Shimei (v36-46).

And the result is that his rule is established.

"The kingdom was now firmly established in Solomon's hands." (1 Kings 2:46)

5. As we see how Solomon established his kingdom, we are given a picture of how the 'one greater than Solomon' established His kingdom.

Jesus established His kingdom by obeying God's law.

"For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me."
(John 6:38)

Jesus established His kingdom by eliminating God's enemies – by dying on the cross and taking the punishment we deserve for our sins, Jesus has defeated sin, Satan, and death.

Jesus is the new and greater Adam who establishes a new creation where those in His kingdom (those who submit to His rule) can enjoy security, peace and joy both now and for all eternity.

6. As elders, the way we are to lead, is by serving King Jesus, which we do as we serve those He has entrusted to our care.

How do we do this?

By submitting to His commands.

By seeking to eliminate the evil that seeks to get a foothold in the church (i.e. by practicing church discipline).

When we do this, those He has entrusted to our care will be built up in the faith and will flourish.

7. But in this chapter we see two things that might stop us from serving King Jesus.

B. Power

1. Adonijah had already received mercy from Solomon for actively seeking the position of King, which was not his.

"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." (1 Kings 1:52)

If Adonijah wanted to live, all he had to do was submit to Solomon as King. But he refused to do this.

2. Adonijah's lust for power meant that he would not give up the throne.

"Now Adonijah, the son of Haggith, went to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. Bathsheba asked him, "Do you come peacefully?" He answered, "Yes, peacefully." Then he added, "I have something to say to you." "You may say it," she replied. "As you know," he said, "the kingdom was mine. All Israel looked to me as their king. But things changed, and the kingdom has gone to my brother; for it has come to him from the LORD. Now I have one request to make of you. Do not refuse me." "You may make it," she said. So he continued, "Please ask King Solomon – he will not refuse you – to give me Abishag the Shunammite as my wife." (1 Kings 2:13-17)

By asking for Abishag, he was making a claim for the throne again.

Adonijah knew who was supposed to be king, but he refused to submit to Solomon, and proved himself an enemy of God's kingdom, so Solomon had him put to death.

3. Application.

Lust for power stops us from serving King Jesus by serving those He has entrusted to our care.

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5:2-3)

We need to look to Jesus, the one who chose not to be served or to seek power, but to serve and gave His life as a ransom for many.

C. Money

1. Shimei also had received mercy from Solomon.

“Then the king sent for Shimei and said to him, “Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and live there, but do not go anywhere else. The day you leave and cross the Kidron Valley, you can be sure you will die; your blood will be on your own head.” (1 Kings 2:36-37)

If Shimei wanted to live, all he had to do was submit to Solomon as King. But he refused to do this.

2. Shimei’s lust for money meant that he would not give his property.

“Three years later, two of Shimei’s slaves ran off to Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath, and Shimei was told, “Your slaves are in Gath.” At this, he saddled his donkey and went to Achish at Gath in search of his slaves. So Shimei went away and brought the slaves back from Gath.” (1 Kings 2:39-40)

By refusing to stay in Jerusalem, he broke his promise to the king.

Shimei knew what he was supposed to do, but he refused to submit to Solomon, and proved himself an enemy of God’s kingdom, so Solomon had him put to death.

3. Application.

Lust for money stops us from serving King Jesus by serving those He has entrusted to our care.

“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5:2-3)

We need to look to Jesus, the one who chose to live in poverty to show that He served God not money.