

1 Kings 1:1-53 **Abishag brought in to provide warmth for aging King David – Adonijah seeks to be king – David made Solomon king instead**

David is old – Abishag brought to care for the king

1 Now King David was old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm.

2 Therefore his servants said to him, "Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm."

3 So they sought for a lovely young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. 4 The young woman was very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her.

Adonijah Presumes to Be King

5 Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king"; and he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. 6 (And his father had not rebuked him at any time by saying, "Why have you done so?" He was also very good-looking. His mother had borne him after Absalom.)

7 Then he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest, and they followed and helped Adonijah.

8 But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David were not with Adonijah.

9 And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of Zohelath, which is by En Rogel; he also invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants. 10 But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or Solomon his brother.

11 So Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, and David our lord does not know it? 12 Come, please, let me now give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon.

13 Go immediately to King David and say to him, 'Did you not, my lord, O king, swear to your maidservant, saying, "Assuredly your son Solomon shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne"? Why then has Adonijah become king?'

14 Then, while you are still talking there with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words."

15 So Bathsheba went into the chamber to the king. (Now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was serving the king.) 16 And Bathsheba bowed and did homage to the king. Then the king said, "What is your wish?"

17 Then she said to him, "My lord, you swore by the Lord your God to your maidservant, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.' 18 So now, look!

Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord the king, you do not know about it. ¹⁹ He has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the commander of the army; but Solomon your servant he has not invited. ²⁰ And as for you, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, that you should tell them who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. ²¹ Otherwise it will happen, when my lord the king rests with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be counted as offenders."

²² And just then, while she was still talking with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.

²³ So they told the king, saying, "Here is Nathan the prophet." And when he came in before the king, he bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. ²⁴ And Nathan said, "My lord, O king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne'?"

²⁵ For he has gone down today, and has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king's sons, and the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest; and look! They are eating and drinking before him; and they say, 'Long live King Adonijah!'

²⁶ But he has not invited me — me your servant — nor Zadok the priest, nor Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon. ²⁷ Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not told your servant who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?"

David Proclaims Solomon King (1 Chron 29:22-25)

²⁸ Then King David answered and said, "Call Bathsheba to me." So she came into the king's presence and stood before the king.

²⁹ And the king took an oath and said, "As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, ³⁰ just as I swore to you by the Lord God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day."

³¹ Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and paid homage to the king, and said, "Let my lord King David live forever!"

³² And King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king.

³³ The king also said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. ³⁴ There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'

³⁵ Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."

³⁶ Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! May the Lord God of my lord the king say so too. ³⁷ As the Lord has been with my lord the king, even so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David."

³⁸ So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and took him to Gihon.

³⁹ Then Zadok the priest took a horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. And they blew the horn, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!"

40 And all the people went up after him; and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth seemed to split with their sound.

End of the plot of Adonijah

41 Now Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said, "Why is the city in such a noisy uproar?"

42 While he was still speaking, there came Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest. And Adonijah said to him, "Come in, for you are a prominent man, and bring good news."

43 Then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. 44 The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king's mule.

45 So Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you have heard. 46 Also Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom.

47 And moreover the king's servants have gone to bless our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne.' Then the king bowed himself on the bed. 48 Also the king said thus, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has given one to sit on my throne this day, while my eyes see it!'"

49 So all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid, and arose, and each one went his way.

Solomon's response to Adonijah

50 Now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. 51 And it was told Solomon, saying, "Indeed Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; for look, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'"

52 Then Solomon said, "If he proves himself a worthy man, not one hair of him shall fall to the earth; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die." 53 So King Solomon sent them to bring him down from the altar. And he came and fell down before King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

NKJV

Facts Revealed:

David is old – Abishag brought to care for the king [1 Kings 1:1-4]

- ✧ Now King David was old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm. [1 Kings 1:1]
- ✧ Early in his reign after he had captured Jerusalem, Hiram king of Tyre had his servants build a house of cedar for David, so when David was old, he was not living in a stone building which might amplify the cold, but he was living in a house of cedar. [2 Samuel 5:11-12]
- ✧ It is quite common, in old age, for a body to experience coldness due to poor circulation, which appears to be the case of David.
- ✧ Lacking the modern technology of the twenty first century AD, the best solution for coldness was a human comforter.
- ✧ The most appropriate candidate was a young woman, and David liked women of beautiful appearance, so that became the object of the search for a warming companion for the king.

- ✧ David had plenty of wives and concubines, but they were also showing their age and needed warming themselves so were not able to render that service for the aging king.
- ✧ Therefore his servants said to him, "Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm." [1 Kings 1:2]
- ✧ So they sought for a lovely young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. The young woman was very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her. [1 Kings 1:3-4]
 - ✧ Abishag the Shunammite was from the town of Shunem as was the Shunammite woman who built a room in her house for Elisha to stay in, whose son Elisha raised from the dead. [2 Kings 4:8-12 (8-37)]
 - ✧ Shunem was the place where the Philistines encamped before the battle in which Saul was killed at Gilboa. [1 Samuel 28:4]
 - ✧ Abishag was most likely the Shulamite (Shulammite) of the Song of Solomon 6:13.
 - ✧ David did not know her so Abishag remained a virgin as she cared for the king.

Adonijah Presumes to Be King [1 Kings 1:5-6]

- ✧ Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king"; and he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. (And his father had not rebuked him at any time by saying, "Why have you done so?" He was also very good-looking. His mother had borne him after Absalom.) [1 Kings 1:5-6]
 - ✧ Absalom was the third son of David born in Hebron to Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur. [2 Samuel 3:3, 2 Chronicles 3:2]
 - ✧ Adonijah was the fourth son of David born in Hebron to Haggith. [2 Samuel 3:4, 2 Chronicles 3:2]
 - ✧ Adonijah followed the same pattern set by Absalom in his attempt to be king with horses (horsemen), chariots, and fifty men to run before him. [1 Kings 1:5-6, 2 Samuel 15:1]
 - ✧ Adonijah like Absalom was very good looking. [1 Kings 1:6, 2 Samuel 14:25]
 - ✧ David was a great man of God and a capable leader of men both militarily and as king, but he did not fulfill the role of a father very well, and failed to discipline his sons, leaving the door open for family problems and insurrections as evidenced by Amnon, Absalom, and now Adonijah. [2 Samuel 13:1-39, 15:1—19:10, 1 Kings 1:5-49]
 - ✧ David was a man after God's Own heart in that he always had God in mind and humbly trusted God in every situation as demonstrated by his life and psalms.
 - ✧ David's advise to Solomon was excellent in that he counseled his son to seek wisdom and base his life and wisdom on the commandments of God.
- ✧ Adonijah sought support from leading men in his father's kingdom, Joab the commander of the army [2 Samuel 8:16, 20:23, 24:2, 1 Kings 1:19], and Abiathar the priest who accompanied David throughout his time as fugitive while Saul sought to kill David and the men with him to the end of David's kingdom. [1 Kings 1:5-7, 1 Samuel 22:20-23, 2 Samuel 20:25]
 - ✧ Though Joab and Abiathar had remained loyal to David through-out his reign, They both sided with Adonijah at the last, though they had not sided with Absalom in his rebellion.
- ✧ But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David were not with Adonijah. [1 Kings 1:8]
 - ✧ David still had his government and his mighty men.
- ✧ And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En Rogel; he also invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants. But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or Solomon his brother. [1 Kings 1:9-10]

- ✧ The secrecy indicates that Adonijah was not sure of success, and he remembered the fate of Absalom in his attempt to become king.
- ✧ Nathan the prophet, contrived a cunning way of informing David of the danger presented by Adonijah. [1 Kings 1:11-27]
 - ✧ He sent Bathsheba to remind the king of his promise to her that her son Solomon would be the next king, and ask why Adonijah had set himself up as king, and the threat it presented to the life of Bathsheba and Solomon.
 - ✧ While Bathsheba was still speaking to king David, Nathan came in and confirmed her words, indicating those still loyal to David, and asking if David had secretly approved the action of Adonijah.

David Proclaims Solomon King [1 Kings 1:28-40] (1 Chron 29:22-25)

- ✧ David called for Bathsheba and confirmed his promise to her that Solomon would follow him on the throne, and he will make it happen this very day. [1 Kings 1:28]
 - ✧ David's oath:
 - "As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, so just as I swore to you by the Lord God of Israel, saying, 'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day." [1 Kings 1:29-30]
 - ✧ David demonstrated his relationship with the living Yahweh, Who has brought David through all his troubles his whole life long.
 - ✧ The promise had been a sacred oath invoking the name of Yahweh Elohey Yisrael (The Lord God of Israel).
 - ✧ Bathsheba bowed and said, "Let my lord King David live forever!" [1 Kings 1:31]
- ✧ David called for his chief officials Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the head of the Pelethites and Cherethites (David's body guard) [2 Samuel 8:18], his mighty men, and gave them instructions:
 - "Take with you the servants of your lord (David's mighty men), and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon.
 - There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'
 - Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah." [1 Kings 1:32-35]
 - ✧ With these instructions, there can be no doubt of the intent of David, that he personally appointed Solomon as the next king of Israel and Judah.
- ✧ Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! May the Lord God of my lord the king say so too. As the Lord has been with my lord the king, even so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David." [1 Kings 1:36-37]
- ✧ So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and took him to Gihon. Then Zadok the priest took a horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. And they blew the horn, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!" And all the people went up after him; and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth seemed to split with their sound. [1 Kings 1:38-40]

End of the plot of Adonijah [1 Kings 1:41-49]

- ✧ Now Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said, "Why is the city in such a noisy uproar?" While he was still speaking, there came Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest. And

Adonijah said to him, "Come in, for you are a prominent man, and bring good news." [1 Kings 1:41-42]

- ✧ Then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. [1 Kings 1:43]

The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king's mule. [1 Kings 1:44]

So Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you have heard. [1 Kings 1:45]

Also Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom. [1 Kings 1:46]

And moreover the king's servants have gone to bless our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne.' Then the king bowed himself on the bed. [1 Kings 1:47]

Also the king said thus, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has given one to sit on my throne this day, while my eyes see it!'" [1 Kings 1:48]

- ✧ So all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid, and arose, and each one went his way. [1 Kings 1:49]

Solomon's response to Adonijah

- ✧ Now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. [1 Kings 1:50]

And it was told Solomon, saying, "Indeed Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; for look, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'" [1 Kings 1:51]

- ✧ Then Solomon said, "If he proves himself a worthy man, not one hair of him shall fall to the earth; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die." [1 Kings 1:52]

So King Solomon sent them to bring him down from the altar. And he came and fell down before King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house." [1 Kings 1:53]