

10047

SILVER STAR BIBLE SCHOOL 2000

DAVID, A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

THE KING OF ALL ISRAEL

Speaker: Bro. John Knowles

Study #5: Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son - Solomon becomes King

Readings: 1 Kings 1 and 2

My dear brethren and sisters.

During our studies in the life of David, we have followed the highs and the lows; but throughout all of this, there has been One who has been steadfast at all times, and that, of course, was his God in heaven. And we considered in one of our studies that very wonderful word of 'mercy', that word which embodied strength, steadfastness and love, the Hebrew word 'cheched'. And so as we come to our study today, as we actually come to the end of the life of David, we're going to see quite a bit of narrative today in 1 Kings chapter 1 and chapter 2, and tomorrow we take a little step back, and I thought as a more fitting climax, we'll consider the beautiful last words of David. But today we come to the end of his life and once again, it's incredible the amount of intrigue that is going on, absolutely incredible!

And so we say, what sort of lessons are we planning to get from this story? You've got your Joab's, your Shimei's and your Adonijah's, your Benaiah's, your Zadok's and the Nathan's and they're all involved there, and so very many of them, all seem to be just self interested. And it seems that it needed this last great series of dramas in order to show people for what they were! To show them to whom? Well, I suppose that once Joab got slain and Shimei got slain, and those sort of things happened that didn't do them much good as such, but if nothing else, b&s, the lessons come down to us today. I think it also would be very dangerous if we went through this story and started to say, 'Well, yes, there are lessons in our ecclesia and I think this brother over here fits the part of a Joab or a Shimei, and this sister here maybe doing a little bit of negotiating and wangling of things a bit like Bath-sheba seemed to be doing; in other words, it would be wrong to do that sort of thing, and yet this study is definitely a study of character. And so we've really got to look inside ourselves, don't we? there's the Father with His steadfastness, and in our opening prayer today, as we had put before us, those

characteristics of the Deity which we inferred in our third study, taken from Exodus 34, 'merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, and forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.' (Behold therefore, says Paul, the goodness of God), 'but will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and the children's children, even to the third and fourth generations of those that hate Me' (Behold therefore, says Paul, 'the severity of God'). And as we mentioned in our third study, Yes, God did forgive David his sin, but He didn't remove the consequences. And today is, and for the last time this week in our studies, we're going to be looking once again at the consequences. So whilst we are realizing that above it all is the mercy of God, that in that wonderful 'cheched' was His love; but, there was His strength and His steadfastness, and for David's own good, right until the moment he died, and even after he died, this intrigue is going on in his family. And that is what Nathan had told him, 'Yahweh has removed thy sin, but out of thine own house, there's going to arise trouble', and so we've got it here, condensed into these first two chapters of the book of Kings.

So, in 1 Kings chapter 1 and in the first four verses, we're introduced to the fact that David was now an old man. We don't know exactly how old he was, he was probably or possibly about 69 years of age. I've got some notes here that I did for a bible school with some young people on Solomon, I think it was in 1970 in New Zealand, and I haven't used them very much since, and I notice here that it says, 'he was probably about 69 at this time; he was 30 when he began to reign and he reigned 40 years and he died in his 70th year. 69 was not an exceptionally old age, I wrote along in - what did I say, 1970? (anyway, as one sort of getting a little bit closer to that age, I just wonder if I would have slightly reworded it nowadays). But that's what I wrote back in 1971 with just some notes in my margin. Regardless of that, the note does go on to say, 'that David had been exhausted prematurely with problems inside and outside the family', and also a note which says, 'some feel that from his psalms, that he also laboured under some wasting illness that sapped his energy; perhaps Psalm 41 makes some reference to that'. Be that as it may, it would appear that he was about 69, because he did die when he was 70, so we are looking really at the last weeks or months of his life.

And so we find then, in the first 4 verses, we are introduced to the fact that they used the methods of medication or medical treatment, or what they thought was appropriate in those days, and they considered that David needed to be comforted and he needed heat, and therefore they sought this young damsel, who is named as Abishag in verse 3. If that was sort of the beginning and end of the story, well, then there's probably not much point in stating that, but as we're going to see a little later, Abishag becomes another actor in the piece. She was a very passive actor, but later on we're going to see that someone wants to use her, to his advantage; and that's what we're going to see going on through here - so very few people really wanting to glorify God, really got the interests of the kingdom at heart, really got the interests of the ecclesia at heart. 'What's in it for me?' seems to be the motive of a large number of the people here. And

so we're going to be introduced to a number of these in the first few verses, and we deliberately only read the first 10 this afternoon, because we do get introduced to them very quickly.

Now, of course, the principal actor in the piece at this stage, is this man, Adonijah. And we're told in verse 5 that 'Adonijah the son of Haggith, exalted himself saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and 50 men to run before him'. Well, where have we heard of this before? Well, of course, it was a repeat of another one that gets mentioned in the next verse. 'And his father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also was a very goodly man; and his mother bare him after Absalom'. So, it's a repeat of the same story, but this man doesn't seem to have the same determination of Absalom, he doesn't seem to have the same drive, but nevertheless, it appears that he was the older of the sons now left, and therefore, in that sense, he considered he had a right to the throne. But he wasn't going about it the right way, and we find in verse 7, 'he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest; and they following Adonijah helped him'. Now, as I mentioned, when I did this study the first time, it was basically directed to young people, and I've got 2 of my very old transparencies, back in the days before we had computers and we wrote them with pens, which probably wasn't a bad idea, and may not still be a bad idea. And I thought that the three points that we endeavoured to bring out of those verses might be applicable to all of us.

A little bit of alliteration, each of them starts with the letter 'P'; the second one isn't intended to be a criticism of any speakers at this school, the fact of the matter is, it can be used as a verb instead of a noun. No one seems to be laughing, so for the sake of the tape, I better mention that the second word up there is 'pride', and it's no reference to David! Now, the three points that appear from these verses are these:

PERMISSIVENESS - It says that his father never, (what does it say in verse 6 there?) 'his father had not displeased him at any time saying, why have you done so'. You know, this is incredible, a man as good as David was, didn't seem to do too well in family life; and I know we've got all the excuses for him - he was very busy, he was a king, and he was a this and a that, and we have the same excuses at times in ecclesial life. And I think it would be very wrong if we leave the impression, that because some children or some child may go wrong, it is the fault of the parent. We'd be getting back to that book of Job again, wouldn't we? Job is a great sufferer, therefore Job must have been a great sinner. And that of itself, is not necessarily true at all! However, we do have to say, David didn't seem to do very good with his children and this verse specifically says so. It's telling us very clearly that David should have said to him, 'NO, you can't have those 50 men running before your chariots and all those horses; it's wrong, you shouldn't have it!' And if we were to bring it down to today's example, and by the way, another little note (and I did prepare this talk new for this school by the way, but some of these interesting old notes are quite intriguing because I seem to recall and that's nearly 30 years ago, isn't it? that one of the issues that was around in those days,

was young men getting cars too early. And in Australia, at least in South Australia, it might change by the states, you can get a driver's license at 16 - what do you do in Canada? 16 here!) and so in brackets it says, 'probably had a car at 16 because his father 'trusted him' and you put trusted him in quotes. Ah, my son's okay, I can trust him, he's sensible and he wouldn't do anything wrong', and it was in that environment that I put that note down. Well, it may not apply today in that strict sense, but you know, when we get to the stage of saying, 'ah, my children can be trusted', it's no reflection on your children or my children, but how much do you trust yourself? How much can you trust flesh? And here was David, who should have done something about it, and he didn't! and it's clearly stated there that his father at no time said to him, why have you done this? he didn't want to upset him! And I'd like to go on record as saying that even in the last few hours I've heard the comment made in my presence, about this particular bible school and the very good effort that's made by both young and old alike, to work together, to make the school very successful; and if necessary, as our bro. Skip did ever so politely this morning, say, 'look, we don't want our young people to be congregating on the stairs and doing so-in-so'. Not afraid to say, 'don't do it' and a 'don't do it' can be a negative thing, but it can have a positive side to it as well. And I think that's one of the great things of this bible school and, doubtless, there are others that endeavour to do the same thing; but there may be some, and maybe our own ecclesias at times that say, 'how are we going to handle the young people?' And I hear this expression sometimes used, as though the young people happen to be some different form of humanity and you mustn't touch the young people, because they might get upset and they might go away. Well, I guess we've got to balance things out and I always remember the words of Jude, who in his epistle he said, 'you've got to make a difference; there are some people that you've got to drag out of the fire'. If you see somebody falling into the fire, you don't say, 'let's hold a meeting of the welfare committee or the arranging group or call the parents together and discuss the best way to stop that person from falling into the fire; you grab them and in the process it may hurt, but on the other hand there are other issues in which you can say, 'I can see the way they're going, let's go around that way and head them off, by putting something better in its place'. So we do make a difference! however, here in the case of David and his son Adonijah, David fell for that trap which any one of us could fall for, he seemed to be afraid to say 'no' to this young man, and therefore, he had this entourage, and he got his driver's license at 16, and his father shouldn't have trusted him because he did all sorts of wrong things with it.

The second point that we've got up here is PRIDE - It says he was of 'goodly appearance' like Absalom. Well, we don't know if he had long hair like his brother Absalom did, but again another little interesting note in the margin here (of course, the hair styles back in those days also was long hair, wasn't it?) and, so, a little terse note which says 'proud of his appearance, he is compared with Absalom'; so, he may have had long hair, and his father was afraid to tell him to get it cut. Well, even if that doesn't apply quite so specifically today, once again we've got the situation. And again, I say, at a bible school like this, it's wonderful to see how the young and old do mix together, and we don't have the so-called 'generation gaps' and all of those things that the world have

out there. Well, you see, David at this stage of his life, wasn't doing so good, as far as that was concerned.

But really it's the third part of it that's going to take up most of the story, because the other problem was he had the wrong friends or PEERS - And yet, the interesting thing is that these friends were in the ecclesia. Now that's always difficult isn't it? If our young people are getting friends out in the world, and we know they are bad, then generally we can address it! Hopefully we can always address it, but sometimes even within the ecclesial environment there are some we say, 'well, look, it would be better if they weren't mixing with them'. Well, how we handle that, of course, is the best way under the circumstances, but what we're going to see now is a series of characters: people who had been around for a long time, and it really seemed to need the approaching death of David, to bring out what their true motives were. And that's why I said right at the beginning, let's not start looking around and saying, 'there's a Joab, and there's an Abiathar, and there's a Benaiah, and this sort of thing, it could be anyone of us! And so our third point, and reading this out for the tape, what we've got on the screen here is:

ADONIJAH'S CONSPIRACY - 1 Kings 1:5-10

HIS THREE BASIC PROBLEMS

1. PERMISSIVENESS (his father never rebuked him);
2. PRIDE, (he was of goodly appearance like Absalom); and,
3. PEERS, (he chose the wrong friends even though they were in the ecclesia).

It's wonderful the way the bible sets things out, and sometimes it's the things they omit that are the things that are so powerful, and in this case, it's not necessarily the bible that omits it, but it's the fact that it was omitted from Adonijah's group of friends, and I think the bible is telling us that this was the real problem! What? well we'll tell you in just a moment or two, but a careful reading of the next few verses will actually help us to see that.

So, we've got the setting then at the time of David's approaching death, we've got this Adonijah doing all those 3 things up there. Now who were his friends? Well, we're told in verse 7 that 'he conferred with Joab, the son of Zeruah, and with Abiathar the priest, and they following Adonijah helped him'. And we might say, well, Joab had his problems but he was loyal to David, wasn't he? and he must have surely be doing this out of a loyalty to David. And Abiathar was one of the two priests, Zadok and Abiathar. Well, you know, he was in the right circle wasn't he? Well, that's who he invited; but who didn't he invite? Well, we're told now in verse 8 and it starts with that significant word, 'but': 'BUT Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet'; and, it does mention Shimei and Rei and the mighty men that belonged to David, but I want to concentrate on those first three because, as the story progresses, those three are taken out and they're really set along side of the other two. So, what we've got in

verse 7 is, that the friends of Adonijah were 'Joab and Abiathar'; and, the friends of Solomon as it turns out were, 'Zadok, Benaiah and Nathan'. Now, if we put this in a chart form, we'll start to see what was missing; actually can you see what was missing? (I know this transparency's missing, I know that, but I wanted to put something over it so that, well, I suppose it almost gives it away so you might as well see the rest of it anyway!) Well, having said that, I'll obscure it for the moment, I will; there's the pattern. The pattern is that:

Solomon had Zadok a priest on his side
 Solomon had Benaiah, a mighty man
 Solomon had Nathan the prophet

Adonijah had Abiathar, the priest.
 Adonijah had Joab as a mighty man
 *

-but there was no counterpart of that in the life of Adonijah; and really, that little star mark there, I suppose gave it away, but I thought that that quotation in Jeremiah chapter 18 verse 18 was significant; where it tells us 'the law shall not perish from the priest. So they both had a priest, so as far as Adonijah becoming king or Solomon becoming king, they both had the wherewithal to carry out the administrative works of the Law. The tabernacle could be set up, the temple built (if Adonijah had wanted to build a temple); they both had a priest.

The next one says 'nor counsel from the wise'. Now I might be just stretching that a little bit, but the fact of the matter is, that the mighty man, Benaiah in the case of Solomon and Joab in the case of Adonijah, was not just the leader of the army but in fact, of course, they were expected there to give direction and they were supposed to be wise people. Just perhaps giving it a little bit of a stretch, but back to the third one, Jeremiah says, 'the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the Word from the prophet'. What was missing in Adonijah's life? it was the Word! Now, I really do believe that we've almost got like a little parable there, an illustration of the fact, that that's where things went wrong! Yes, he had everything which could give all the outward show of running ecclesial life, if you like. He's got somebody there that can give leadership, but it was all a shell, the Word wasn't there. So, Nathan the prophet and Benaiah the mighty man and Zadok the priest, the record says, 'Adonijah did not invite them to this feast that he was to put on'. And so you can see, that's really where the problem lies, and I think probably that's our message, at least at this stage in this particular study.

So, going back then to those words in 1 Kings chapter 1, let's just read those verses through again and see how the contrast does come out. In verse 7 we read, 'That Adonijah conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest, and they following Adonijah helped him. BUT Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, they were not with Adonijah, but they remained with David'. And so we read in verse 9, 'And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by Enrogel' (so if we had a picture of Jerusalem up there, it's somewhere down in the area of Gihon, close to Gihon; Enrogel means 'the spring of the

fuller' (5883+7273). You recall in Isaiah's prophecy, in the book of Emmanuel, Isaiah 7 to 12, that Isaiah took Ahaz together with his son out to the end of the conduit which was in the highway of the fuller's field; so down in that Kidron valley where there was the spring Gihon, and further down the pool of Siloam, it appears it had something to do with the fuller's field; and in fact one particular authority says, 'that the word, Zohelath means 'the stone of the conduit'-(2120), and Isaiah speaks about the conduit that was in the highway of the fuller's field. I suppose I should have left that picture of Jerusalem out, but can you remember that picture of the old city where you can look at it and see David's palace up here, well, somewhere out in that valley of Kidron (it's not a very big area) Adonijah was somewhere down there; he wasn't exactly at Gihon because we're going to see in a moment, that that's where David sent Solomon down, so it's all a matter of being within a few meters of each other that this whole scenario is going to take place in a very small area.

So he gathers them down there in the valley (picking up verse 9 again) 'Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle by the stone of Zohelath which is by Enrogel, and called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants: BUT Nathan the prophet and Benaiah and the mighty men and Solomon his brother, he called not' (he actually didn't call Nathan either, that becomes apparent in the next few verses). So that's the two transparencies for this afternoon, so if you're wanting a summary of simple lessons that come from our talks today; we've got the three P's of what went wrong with Adonijah's early life, and why it is that Solomon triumphed and that is because he had the Word, and this other one didn't! And I don't have to spend any time talking about the importance of that! Yes, we do enjoy our social activities together, our fraternal activities, our young people have a need for certain types of physical exercise, or recreational sport or what you like, but there must always be an end in view. The end must always be that somehow or other, we're going to be better for it. And whatever our recreational relaxation might be, that somehow or other, our whole environment, either personal or ecclesial, is going to be better and the focus has got to be on the Word! even if you're not talking about the Word at that time, as a result of whatever we've done, we are in a better position. I mean, going down to that picnic yesterday, I said when I came back, and I've said it every time I've been here, 'you know, it's good just to have that break and you come back sort of refreshed for the study, so in that sense therefore, we're saying we're doing something to enhance the Word. So we shouldn't say to our children, 'well, you know, you can't have recreation or you can't do this or that, you've got to be studying your bible all the time; that, of course, is unrealistic but at the same time we should have enough strength, and knowledge and wisdom, which David just didn't seem to be showing at this time, to say, 'look, you want to do that; wouldn't it be better to do this. You can achieve the same thing, you can enjoy it just as much but this will be helpful to your life in the truth. That one is likely to be unhelpful. And so I said, I wasn't going to say anything and I did, we could all work out how it is that in life the Word can be elevated, and it can even be in times of what we might call 'recreational relaxation'.

So, we'd like to say a few words about some of these characters in the piece, because this is where the story really has its focus at this time. I think while we've got their names there, we might as well speak about them now, even if we have to go ahead a little bit in the story. But let's take this man Joab. I've got in my margin here a summary of Joab and his life, and I understand that I haven't been able to get to all of the other sessions by any means, but I don't think you've dealt with many of these characters, so if there is a little bit of overlapping, I apologize for that! But look at this as a summary of Joab's life.

1. Joab together with Asahel and Abishai were nephews of David. Those 3 men, Joab, Abishai and Asahel - David was their uncle, he was their uncle on the basis that Zeruah was their mother. You know, David often speaks about them as 'you sons of Zeruah - you're too hard for me', remember the expression? I suspect that that might be in 2 Samuel 19:22, so we know the expression! So, they were the sort of individuals that exhibited the same activity and courage as David did, but they never manifested the same spiritual qualities of their uncle. So it appears that Zeruah was the sister of David, therefore, Joab, Asahel, and Abishai were, therefore, his nephews. And you sons of Zeruah - you're too hard for me', and that would have been when they said, 'we only need one shot, we won't need anymore, we'll fix him, we'll kill him, we'll get rid of him'. That's how they solved problems in the life of the history of the nation of Israel.

2. Joab's first appearance was after David became king in Hebron, and he became involved in a bitter feud with Abner, and more particularly, after Abner very reluctantly as we know, slew Asahel. Abner didn't want to do it, but he did do it, and I guess he did the wrong thing, but Joab never forgave him; and Joab did not rest until he obtained revenge on Abner, and ultimately slew Abner in a most deceitful manner. And I'm sure we know the story of how he invited him out and then, as was the tradition in those days, you smote them under the fifth rib, and that was the way in which Joab got his revenge. So this is the picture that we're getting of Joab: Joab was a strong, ruthless, ambitious man of great courage. He was no coward, but perhaps this was his greatest fault, for it seems apparent that he did not even fear Yahweh, Himself. He was a man who was brave because he was serving his own interests; he probably convinced himself that he had the interests of the nation at heart, but his actions revealed him as a man who was more concerned with immediate advantages rather than those of the future. Temporal, immediate advantages dominated his mind, and drove him on to acts of ruthlessness and great courage, in which he spared neither himself or his companions. His greatest act of braver was the capture of Jerusalem, but it was prompted by his desire to become the commander-in-chief of the nation.

And so that was a little bit about the man Joab (I'm having to turn over my notes because I poured glue down the spine of my bible in recent times, and I can't read the notes right down there in the corner; so if you're wondering why I'm flipping pages and you're curious, now you know). So the next note says

3. That he was an ecclesial politician. He was one who desired victory over his opponents, but he never really understood the true cause for which he was fighting. David's assessment of Joab and his brothers, is found in 2 Samuel 3:39, (that might have been the quote that we were wanting a little earlier, also chapter 16:9,10 and chapter 19:21-23, and so as we're going to read in the story shortly, David ordered Solomon to put him to death, for he realized the trouble that he would cause Solomon.

Well, we'll let that part of the story develop in due course, because there were 3 people that David just couldn't deal with, and one of them was Joab. It would appear that the circumstantial evidence suggests that Joab was always there just reminding David of certain things, and we think probably it was reminding him of that sin with Bath-sheba. And whilst David thought he had to deal with Joab, he couldn't because just when Joab seemed to overstep the mark, Joab would then come along and do something loyal for David. And so there was that loyalty to David, but it must have been a mixed motive; it appears that he loved David, he was very loyal to David, but there was undoubtedly a self interest. And what's happening now is, that as David is going off the scene, people are starting to say, 'ah, now, which side should I be on?' not because it was the right side, but because it was the right side if you wanted to get on and you wanted to maintain your position or rise up. And so you wanted to pick who was going to be the winner, and at this stage it looked like Adonijah was going to be the winner. And I think we would be quite correct in saying that Joab then, as the world would say, played his cards in such a way that he thought he was going to be there with the winner! Well, he wasn't at all, the winner didn't become the winner at all, and neither did Joab.

The other person who is mentioned here in chapter 1 with him, is Abiathar the priest. There was the two priests, of course, as we know: there was Zadok the priest and there was Abiathar the priest. Now, as far as Abiathar is concerned, the comment we've got about Abiathar is that 'he also had been a companion of David', particularly during the period of his adversity and even during that time when he was in Hebron. He was installed together with Zadok as the high priest at Jerusalem; and he remained faithful to David at the time of Absalom's rebellion. So that these two men were now shown up for what they were really like: they were shown up in their true light. They wanted to be on the winning side, and it looked like Adonijah was going to be the winner.

So there we have Adonijah's friends, Abiathar the priest, Joab the mighty man, both had been loyal to David but it appears that their loyalty was out of self interest. We stop there and the exhortation to us is quite obvious: we do, don't we? have to daily examine ourselves and say, 'why are we in the truth? I'm very busily involved in running this bible school or as recording brother of my ecclesia, or as a Sunday School teacher in charge of the gospel work, whatever it might be. We can be very, very busily involved, but we've got to step back every now and then, and say, 'look, what's it all about? has the work become an end in itself? Is there some sort of self-aggrandizement? and we all shudder, 'oh, no I wouldn't, I'm very conscious of that!' Well, the easiest people to fool is ourselves, isn't it? And the bible shows people up in their worst form, it gives it to us in

black and white; and, we tend to see ourselves in shades of grey, don't we? because it makes it a little bit softer. But there they were and they wanted to continue the work, but they were shown up for what they were! So, not only were they Adonijah's friends, but Adonijah made it quite clear that he didn't want these others along, and so that, of course, makes it even worse.

So, let's just pick up the story then, and try and trace it through as best we can, from the detail which is given in the time that we've got available, because there's two chapters of Kings here, and they're full of a lot of intrigue, and a lot of detail. So, in verses 11 through to 27, we've got Nathan and Bath-sheba determined that they've got to do something about this matter. We've got to try and do something to stop this situation. So what we find then in verse 11 of chapter 1 of 1 Kings is this: 'Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon' (and he was probably quite right in saying this, that if those fellows got in, then there's not going to be much left for you Bath-sheba or your son Solomon). They don't just want to reign, they want to get rid of anything they see as a different influence, because they didn't deliberately invite these. I mean, if Adonijah was right in saying I am the one that's legally entitled to be the king, I'm the oldest, then why fear to bring the others along? Well, it's only when you're up to no good and you know that what you're doing is not really the right thing, that you leave out anybody who might prick your conscience, if that's what you have. So, at this point of time Nathan says, we should endeavour to do something about it.

So, in verse 13 we read, 'Go and get thee in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? And behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words'. It's a bit hard to know, isn't it? are they playing a little bit of politics there as well? It's hard to know, isn't it? perhaps it was just a proper, logical way to go about it: you go in first and I'll come in and back you up, and so perhaps it would be wrong to read into it a little bit of intrigue. You know, it's the old story, does the end justify the means? Do we play little games in order that the end result might be right? Well, of course, we don't agree with that principle but anyway the scripture does say that 'you go in first and I'll come in afterwards'. And when they do come in, of course, they both present this story to David.

So, jumping down to verse 22, Bath-sheba now has made this approach and verse 22 says, 'And lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet came in also. And they told the king, saying, Behold Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? For he is gone down this day, and hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in

abundance, and hath called all the king's sons and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah. But me, even me thy servant,(and that of course is Nathan) and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not showed it unto thy servant, who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?' So you see why we did isolate those three, because as the story goes on, they are the three plus Solomon who were deliberately left out of the picture.

Well, David resolves the issue very quickly; he might be on his deathbed but his mind was very active in this regard. And so verse 28 says, 'Then king David answered and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king swore, and said, As Yahweh liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, Even as I swear unto thee by Yahweh Elohim of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day. Then Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king; and said, Let my lord king David live for ever. And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada'. So you can see how the characters are lining up (that transparency is really a summary of the whole story). Call me these three men in, because I know them! I mean, David really knew Joab for what he was, and he probably had a feeling about Abiathar as well; but he did know where he stood with Zadok, Benaiah, and Nathan. So he says, call these men in before me. Verse 33, 'The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon'. (So Gihon was also down there in that valley of the Kidron and it must have been very close to where Adonijah was holding his feast). 'And let Zadok the priest, (verse 34), and Nathan the prophet anoint him there, king over Israel, and blow ye with the trumpet and say ye, 'God save king Solomon!' then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne, for he shall be king in my stead and I've appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah'. So they said, right! that's what we'll do. Well, the theme changes very quickly and the fickleness of human nature becomes apparent immediately.

Obviously, there was great shouting and great excitement, because we read then in verse 36, 'Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, Amen; Yahweh Elohim of my lord the king say so too. As Yahweh hath been with my lord the king, even so be He with Solomon, and make his throne greater than my lord David. So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites (these were the ones that were David's particular personal body guard), went down and caused Solomon to ride upon King David's mule and brought him to Gihon. And Zadok the priest took the horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon (and here comes, of course, the great noise now!) 'they blew the trumpet and all the people said, 'God save King Solomon'. And all the people came up after him and the people piped with pipes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth

was rent with the sound of them'. Now, how does this affect the other group that are holding their feast? Who's the one that detects straight away; nah, nah, there's something wrong here?

Well, it's the old warrior Joab, isn't it? he's the one that picks up on it, he knew what that noise meant; 'he knew what noise was the noise of battle, what was the noise of rejoicing', so verse 41 says, 'that Adonijah and all the guests that were with him heard it, as they had made an end of eating, and when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar? And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah said unto him, come in for thou art a valiant man and bringest good tidings. And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, verily our lord, King David, hath made Solomon king. And the king had sent him with Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada'. (Those three that you didn't invite, they are out there now, and they've anointed Solomon king). And so the crowd just disappears, all of Adonijah's 'friends' disappeared.

And so the sequel to the story that comes out in chapter 2 (and we've got a little time to do a summary of that), shows to us now, how Solomon was going to have to deal with the remnants of this rather unruly and unacceptable crowd of people. So, the first chapter ends then with the fact that from verses 41 to 53, Adonijah now realizes the situation; we're told in verse 50 of chapter 1, 'And Adonijah feared because of Solomon and he arose and went and got hold on the horns of the altar'. So, fleeing then from this area of En-rogel, he must have gone all the way to Gibeon, because we understand at this time, of course, that the tabernacle of Moses was still up at Gibeon; so he goes up to Gibeon so that he can grab hold of the horns of the altar, thinking that this, in some way, would attain for him some kind of protection. And so verse 51 says, 'It was told Solomon saying, behold, Adonijah feareth king Solomon; for lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me today, that he will not slay his servant with the sword'. And Solomon was a great man and he said, 'Well, if he will show himself a worthy man, there shalt not a hair of him fall to the earth, but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die. So King Solomon sent and they brought him down from the altar, and he came and bowed himself to King Solomon, and Solomon said unto him, 'go to thine house'.'

Well, the sequel to all of this, is contained in 1 Kings chapter 2. Here's the background! During the interval between chapter 1 and chapter 2, the events recorded in 1 Chronicles (and we won't go back there, chapter 28 and 29 should be placed in there) These record the great assembly of the princes of Israel, a solemn assembly; there is the farewell of David to the people and the charge that he gives to Solomon to go ahead and build the temple. And we've got this detailed record of what would have taken place between this time. Chapter 2 opens with the words, 'Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die', and apart from that other record which we've got telling Solomon about building the temple and that sort of thing, this is the other information he gives to

Solomon to make this reign successful. He says in verse 2, 'I go the way of all the earth; be thou strong, therefore, and show thyself a man. And keep the charge of Yahweh thy God to walked in 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 thy self. That Yahweh may continue His Word which He spake concerning me, that if thy children take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth, with all their heart and their soul, take heed, said He, a man on the throne of Israel'. And now he says, (here's a bit of advice!) Moreover, you know 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 Jethah, who 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 (he was absolutely covered in blood). Do therefore, according to thy wisdom and let not his hoary head go down to the grave in peace'. David knew himself that Joab was really an embarrassment to him in his own lifetime, but he was one of those difficult people who was there to help at times, though his motives were wrong; but he said to Solomon, Joab is not going to do you any good; 'you do to him what you know is the right thing to do to him; and in effect saying, 'I couldn't do it'!

It was a bit like this next man we're going to come across in a minute. This man Shimei, when David was fleeing from the city of Jerusalem, and Shimei's standing up there and cursing, and the sons of Zeruiah said, 'just give us one shot, we'll get him!' and David said, 'no, no, don't touch him; I know he is wrong in cursing Yahweh's anointed, but you know, what he's saying about me is basically true, I am that sort of person, so I can't touch him!' So he goes on to say to Solomon what he should do with Shimei, and that comes up a little later on in verse 8; between that there's just a little positive thing in verse 7, 'Show kindness unto Brazillai the Gileadite'. But coming down to verse 8, '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 swore to him by Yahweh saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now therefore hold him not guiltless': (did you get the double negative, hold him not guiltless, in other words, he's guilty) 'for thou art a wise man and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoary head bring not thou down to the grave with blood' (I put the word 'not' in there because some translations seem to indicate that). Forgetting all the negatives and double negatives and minus times pluses and all that sort of thing, what he's saying is, Shimei is a dangerous person but really he's dangerous because he's weak. Now we know what Solomon did, don't we? in regard to these men.

Of course, there was also the case of Adonijah! So we come down then to verses 10 to 12, which of course, mention now the death of David. Ever so briefly, and although we're just going to mention it here as an incident that was recorded, and of course, he did die and it is the end of David's life, it's not quite the end of our story, is it? because the aftermath was there, and these men, Shimei, Joab and Adonijah are still about, and

in this study we're following them through; whilst in fact, the death of David should be the climax of the whole school, we're not going to make it that, God willing, we'll make his last words in that beautiful psalm, the climax. So yes, although it might seem that we should have given more emphasis, verse 10 simply says, 'So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David, and Solomon his son reigned in his stead'.

Well, he's gone, so what's Adonijah going to do? Adonijah had gone to the horns of the altar, and he'd had a reprieve; if you are shown to be a worthy man then you can live. So now, what's the very first thing that Adonijah does as soon as his father's dead? Well, he comes to Bath-sheba, (he's going to work through the mother) and he comes to her and she said, 'are you coming peaceably? Oh, yes, I'm coming peaceably! he said, you know, really the kingdom should have been mine', verse 15, 'you know that it really was mine' (so we presume that he was the older of the sons), 'and really all Israel wanted me! Now look, I've only got one little request and it's just like a little token' (I suppose it's like somebody distributing somebody's will and this one gets \$100,000 and that one gets \$1,000,000 and somebody says, I only wanted that little ornament on the shelf over there, it's nothing much, do you think I could have that?. It's perhaps not fair to call Abishag a little ornament on the shelf, but that was not meant to be); 'look, all I'm asking is can I have Abishag?' Remember Abishag back in chapter 1, she was the one that had been brought along as a means to help David's recovery or whatever; it said that 'David knew her not' there had been no relationship between them: 'look, just as sort of a token, could I have Abishag? Well, what would we have said? If it keeps him happy and out of the road, and he's satisfied with that, well I suppose! But Solomon was a wise man, he saw through it all; that's the question in verse 16 and verse 17 says, 'look, would you just go to Solomon and say, 'can I have Abishag the Shunammite to wife?' and in verse 18, Bath-sheba says she'll speak to Solomon about it. So she went to speak to Solomon and suddenly he erupts, and I suppose she got quite surprised about this.

So we read in verse 20, 'that she desired one small petition of thee. I pray thee don't say no; and the king said, ask on my mother, for I will not say thee nay. And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife'. And as I said, the king erupts and he says, 'And why does 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 as well'. I think she might have got taken back a little bit, but you see, Bath-sheba hadn't seen through it! but Solomon had, and so here was Adonijah now with his last little bit of intrigue, he was still going to try again. 'Well, you see, they gave me David's wife (or whatever), I've got Abishag and isn't that sort of an acknowledgement that I'm sort of on a par with Solomon? And as far as Solomon was concerned, that was it! That was to be the end of Adonijah, and so verse 23 says, 'Then king Solomon swear by Yahweh saying, God do so to me and more also, if Adonijah had not spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore, as Yahweh liveth, which hath established me and set me on the throne of David my father, and who hath made me a house, as He hath promised; Adonijah shall be put to death this day!

And king Solomon sent by the hand of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him that he died'. So out came Benaiah, and that was the end of Adonijah!

I wonder how we would have seen all of these things? and as I said, not to try and go back to our ecclesias and say, 'how is all this happening?' But it does happen, and one day we're all going to stand before the judgment seat and we're going to be seen for what we are. Will it be the answer of a good conscience? or will it be a defiled conscience, but it was covered over with an veneer of respectability and work and apparent diligence, but we were really self seekers? I guess that's the lesson that we keep coming back to, so that's the end of Adonijah!

Abiathar! Well, we read in verses 26 and 27 that as far as Abiathar was concerned, Solomon banished him to Anathoth. There's quite a lot of an interesting story associated with that; you might recall that it goes back to the days of Eli, the dividing up of the priesthood, and in fact, it reemerges again in an interesting situation when we come to the book of Jeremiah, when we read that Jeremiah was one of the priests that lived in Anathoth. So the fact that Abiathar was banished to Anathoth didn't mean to say, of course, that everyone of his descendants would be forever kept at arm's length. So an interesting little study in its own right, which we won't pick up at the moment.

So let's pick up the next two quickly, and I think maybe, we'll just summarize them. In verses 28 to 34, there's the situation with Joab. Joab recognizes that his end has come, and we read in verse 28, 'That tidings came to Joab, for Joab had turned after Adonijah, (though he turned not after Absalom)'. Joab tried the same trick as Adonijah, and so he rushes off and he grabs hold of the horns of the altar. And Solomon says, 'don't worry where he is, just go and kill him where he is'. There's no second chance for Joab, Joab is really bad news, so Joab died there and we read that verse 30 says, 'Benaiah came to the tabernacle of Yahweh, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, No, I will die here. And Benaiah brought the word to the king, 'thus saith Joab' and the king said, 'go and do as he said, go and fall on him and bury him'. So that was the end of Joab.

There's one other individual left, he might not have figured very prominently in the whole story but it's an interesting person, Shimei. And Shimei then is referred to in verse 36 through to the end of the chapter. In short, Shimei was one of those sort of people that could be any one of us in ecclesial life. And I think although it is a negative story, it leaves us with a positive message! You know, most of us need our brethren and sisters, and most of us need to be in a good environment; very few of us are capable of living the truth by ourselves. Shimei was obviously a weak individual. Yes, he had cursed David; when David came back, he came and said to David, 'look, I'm sorry I said what I did' and David said, 'alright, you can live'. Now Solomon was a very wise man, so he says, 'I'll tell you what, Shimei, I'll give you a chance!' Verse 36, 'The king sent and called for Shimei and said, Look, you build a house here in Jerusalem, not up at Gibeon by the tabernacle of Moses or anything like that, you come here and stay here and don't

leave. Verse 37, 'For it shall be, that on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron' (why did he have to say, pass over the brook Kidron? he could have gone out another way! but, of course, that was the way that David left, he went out and over the brook Kidron and up the mountain and then it was just after that, that Shimei started shouting all these curses. So it's reminding him of what he'd done to David. He said, the moment you set foot outside of Jerusalem, you're a dead man! Stay here and you'll be alright! I don't think the message is for all of us, if you like, we could all be potentially Shimei's, there's that possible weakness there. Let's stick where the strength is, with the bible schools, with our ecclesias, with our brethren and sisters. And Shimei like all of us, his memory didn't last quite long enough, so the time came when someone came to Shimei and said, verse 39, 'At the end of 3 years, two of the servants of Shimei ran away to Achish and they told Shimei, 'behold, thy servants be in Gath', so Shimei sort of forgot what Solomon had said, and he saddled his ass and he went down to capture them. And what happened? Well verse 41 says, 'It was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again. And the king sent and called for Shimei and said to him, Didn't I make thee swear by Yahweh, and protested unto thee saying, Know for certain on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad anywhere, that thou shalt surely die? And thou said unto me, The word that I have heard is good. Why then hast thou not kept the oath of Yahweh, and the commandment that I have charged thee with? 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 Yahweh shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head. And king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David shall be established before Yahweh. 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'.

I will not leave it at that point, it's not the end of the story, but it's the end of the drama of a lot of these interesting characters, unless there are lessons in them for us. But we look forward, God willing, tomorrow to really hear what David really thought about the future, in the last words of David, and see in them the kingdom which will be ruled over by David's greater Son.