

David was now an old man facing old problems. Adonijah, David's oldest surviving son, rebelled and sought to make himself king rather than Solomon, the promised heir to the throne. Adonijah was much like Absalom in looks and character, and David made the same mistake of not disciplining him appropriately. Nathan and Bathsheba humbled themselves and sensitively brought this to David's attention, reminding him of his promise and of God's calling that Solomon should succeed him. Despite his health, David faithfully fulfilled his promise to appoint Solomon as king. The joy over this was earth shattering, but it also shattered Adonijah's world. Adonijah's rebellion was quenched, yet Solomon extended mercy, allowing him to live as long as he proved himself to be a man of integrity. Thus Solomon's place as the next king was established.

Something that 1 Kings omitted, but 1 Chronicles recorded, is that God allowed David to partially fulfill his desire to see the temple established. He did this by making elaborate provisions for the temple construction, and also guided his son, Solomon, in how to succeed him. This is where we will pick up the story and look at David's final statements and his death. We will also read about Solomon establishing his kingdom by dealing with the rebels and traitors that opposed David.

DAY 1

David's Charge to Solomon

1 KINGS 2:1-9

Please read 1 Kings 2:1-9 and answer the following questions.

[1] As David's death drew near, it was time to instruct his son on how to proceed in running the kingdom. But he had a much deeper concern than just a proper governmental style.

What were some of the things David charged Solomon with (verses 2-3)?

[2] What was ultimately the concern on David's mind (verse 4)?

[3] Who were three people about whom David specifically gave Solomon directions about, and what did he want done about them (verses 5-9)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Famous last words. Some have nothing to say at the time of their death that will impact those left behind. Some, like Thomas Carlyle, who at one time had studied for the ministry but turned away from God, had no hope at the end: "I am as good as without hope, and without fear; a sad old man gazing into the final chasm."¹ Others had no opportunity to leave final words. David did, and this charge or commission² to his son is one we would do well to follow. Jesus also gave us some final words prior to His ascension to heaven.

What did Jesus direct His followers to do, and how will we be enabled to keep that commission (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8)?

[2] We too must be strong and valiant, courageously following God's Word. *The Message* well paraphrases this, "Walk in the paths he shows you: Follow the life-map absolutely, keep an eye out for the signposts, his course for life."

How do the following passages encourage us to do so, and what will be the result?

Deuteronomy 31:3, 6

Joshua 1:6–9

Psalms 1:1–3

Daily Life Point: If you knew this was the last day of your life, what would your last words be? How would your statements impact those that heard them? Every day we in a sense, make last statements, living lasting impressions on those we encounter and may never see again.

How can you endeavor to make your impressions and words to others worth remembering, or at least bring them closer to Christ? How does that tie in with keeping Christ's great commission to you as His disciple?

MEMORY PASSAGE

This week we will memorize 1 Kings 2:3. Review the passage several times throughout each day. By the end of the week, you should have it memorized.

"And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn." (1 Kings 2:3 NKJV)

DAY 2

David's Prayer
1 CHRONICLES 29:10-19

Please Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-19 and answer the following questions.

[1] In 1 Chronicles 29, David directed Solomon and the people to set themselves apart for the purpose of building the temple. In response to their loyal hearts and willingness, David offered up one of the great prayers recorded in the Bible.

In what ways did David recognize the source of all that he had experienced in his life (verses 10-12)?

[2] How did David further demonstrate his heart before the Lord (verses 13-15)?

[3] What specific requests did David ask the Lord in view of all this (verses 16-19)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] David's prayer here can serve as "a short course in theology,"³ helping us to learn how to pray more effectively. David's prayer began with praise and recognition of God, continued with thanksgiving and humble confession, and then committed to the Lord his works, closing with the requests he had.

Read also the instructions Jesus gave us along what we call "the Lord's Prayer," as recorded in Matthew 6:5-15. In what ways are these same elements mentioned, and what else did Jesus add about effective praying?

Daily Life Point: We too must have a fixed, godly intent of the heart in accomplishing the tasks we are called to. David "gave to Solomon a proper orientation to life and leadership and was himself an outstanding role model, despite his failures, of a man whose heart truly beat for God."⁴

This heart attitude will be reflected in how we pray. It is not just the right method of prayer or having great verbal skill that God wants; it is our hearts. As E. M. Bounds said in his classic book, *Power through Prayer*, the church today "needs men whom the Holy Spirit can use—men of prayer, men mighty in prayer. the Holy Spirit does not flow through methods, but through men. He does not come on machinery, but through men. He does not anoint plans, but men—men of prayer!"⁵

How would you rate your own prayer life: mechanical, making progress, or anointed? How can you personally take steps toward a more effective prayer life from the heart, like David did?

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

“And keep the _____ of the Lord your God: to _____ in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may _____ in all that you do and wherever you turn.”
(1 Kings 2:3 NKJV)

DAY 3

David's Passing **1 KINGS 2:10-12**

Please Read 1 Kings 2:10-12 and answer the following questions.

[1] In what simple terms does 1 Kings 2:10-11 describe David's passing; what other facts does it relate?

Note: David reigned from approximately 1011-971 B.C.⁶

[2] how does verse 12 describe the transition of the kingdom?

Note: "Firmly established" in Hebrew reflects bringing something into incontrovertible existence,⁷ or as *The Message* puts it, "had a firm grip on the kingdom."

[3] What are some of the further things that 1 Chronicles 29:26-30 adds about the passing of David?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] An abundant life is ours in Christ; we can have life that is "full of days," not just a pointless existence with a hopeless end. We have an endless hope! Death is one appointment we will all have to keep, and one we can't cancel on except by the rapture.⁸ Death is certain.

What do Hebrews 9:27 and 1 Corinthians 15:51–54 tell us about that day, but how we might not ever actually face it?

[2] What will happen in the future that can bring us comfort, especially when we are touched by the loss of another close to us (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Revelation 21:3–5)?

Daily Life Point: Acts 13:36 says, David "served his own generation by the will of God." Indeed he did serve his own generation and beyond. As Warren Wiersbe observed, "The legacy of David enriched God's people, Israel, for centuries."⁹

It is interesting that not much is mentioned about David's funeral and burial, which Josephus related was fairly magnificent and that his body was actually buried with an immense amount of wealth, looted over subsequent years.¹⁰ Maybe God intentionally left out much of the details about his death and burial so we'd focus on David's life and how he impacted his world.

What are some ways, even small ways, that you can make a difference for God in your generation, and impact the world around you? As Charles Swindoll related, it is a tragedy if we fail to find our purpose to serve our generation!¹¹

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

"And keep the _____ of the Lord your God: to
_____ in His ways, to keep His _____, His
commandments, His judgments, and His testimonies, as it is written in the
_____ of Moses, that you may _____ in all that you
do and wherever you turn" (1 Kings 2:3 NKJV)

DAY 4

Dealing with Rebels
1 KINGS 2:13-27

Please Read 1 Kings 2:13-27 and answer the following questions.

[1] The first rebel that Solomon had to deal with was Adonijah. He wouldn't give up trying to connive and fool his way into power.

What did he deceptively ask Bathsheba to do for him (verses 13-18)?

[2] As we saw in earlier studies, to try and take a king's concubine or wife, which Abishag technically was, could be viewed as trying to take the throne.¹²

How did Solomon see through and deal with Adonijah (verses 19-25)?

[3] The next rebel Solomon had to deal with was Abiathar the priest, who had gone over to Adonijah in his rebellion. How did Solomon deal with Abiathar in contrast to Adonijah (verses 26-27)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Solomon showed both great wisdom and discernment, but also great mercy when it was appropriate to do so. "Adonijah had planned a wedding, but he ended up at a funeral."¹³ Solomon had wisdom to let Abiathar live and help to fulfill Scripture at the same time about Eli's house (related in 1 Samuel 2).

How can we get the same type of wisdom that Solomon had exhibited here for our daily decisions (Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7; James 1:5)?

[2] We don't always know God's specific will for each decision and situation, but we can turn to and trust in His Word, falling back on what we do know.

What is the other basic action needed to remain in a place where we are sensitive to His will and guidance in our lives (Romans 12:1-2)?

Daily Life Point: Fearing God and seeking Him and His Word are vital to having the wisdom and guidance we need to live and make necessary decisions. What are some ways you have planned to remain in the Word and seek Him once this season of our studies is concluded? How about plans of remaining accountable to others about your walk with the Lord? Discuss this, as a group, to encourage and give each others ideas on how to keep this going in your life.

MEMORY PASSAGE

Fill in the blanks by memory. Then review the passage several times throughout the week.

"And keep the _____ of the Lord your God: to
_____ in His ways, to keep His _____, His
commandments, His _____, and His testimonies, as it is
written in the _____ of Moses, that you may _____
in all that you do and wherever you turn" (1 Kings 2:3 NKJV)

DAY 5

Dealing With Traitors
1 KINGS 2:28-46

Please read 1 Kings 2:28-46 and answer the following questions.

[1] Next came the time to deal with the once loyal, now traitor, Joab.

What did Joab do to try to avoid his penalty, but how was it carried out (verses 28-34)?

Note: The horns of the altar provided sanctuary only for those who committed involuntary manslaughter, not deliberate murder.¹⁴

[2] After replacing Joab and Abiathar, Solomon then turned his attention to Shimei. What fair chance did Solomon give to him out of mercy (verses 36-38)?

[3] What was the downfall for Shimei (verses 39-46)?

EXPANDED QUESTIONS

[1] Solomon acted in defense and honor of the kingdom David established. He dealt harshly with these men who were traitors and rebels against God's ways and will. To let things go in our lives that can potentially cause us problems is dangerous, even if they seem like little things now. Solomon later wrote, "Catch us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, for our vines have tender grapes" (Song of Solomon 2:15). Those "little foxes" can bring large devastation if left to work their wiles.

What are some things that you read in the following passages that can help you prevent compromise from entering into and bringing disaster in your life.

Psalm 16:8

Daniel 1:8

1 Corinthians 9:24–27

Colossians 3:1–7

Hebrews 12:1–3

Daily Life Point: It is our hope that you have identified potential "little foxes" that seek to spiritually undermine your walk and effectiveness for the Lord. What areas still seem to give you the most trouble and become a frequent foe? How can your group pray for you to take seriously the call to defend the kingdom your Father has established in your life, to bring Him honor and glory as you walk victoriously in Him?

MEMORY PASSAGE

Write out this week's passage by memory. Then review the passage throughout the week.

1 Kings 2:3 NKJV

DAY 6

Pursuing God's Heart

[1] So completes our studies in the life of David, but our pursuit of God's heart will go on eternally. David gave his son a commission, using his last words to strengthen him in the Lord and the calling he was given. God has given us a commission as well: to use our opportunities to proclaim Him and positively impact others with our lives.

What important things did you personally glean this week from studying David's last prayer and words?

How will you continue to seek to put these things into practice as we close out our year's studies?

[2] At David's passing, an era ended and a new one began under Solomon. Yet David was remembered. Israel still awaits the coming Son of David to sit on His throne, as we wait for Him to return to this earth, and bring a whole new era where we are freed from sin, war, and everything that is not of God. We also read how David served his generation according to the will of God, and we can too.

What are some ways that you know God has equipped you to serve Him?

What are some practical steps you can take to use these gifts and talents for His glory?

What will others read about the impact your life has made when it is recorded in the form of an obituary?

[3] Solomon had to take strong and decisive action against the things that sought to stumble and topple the kingdom. What strong action has God called you to take to deal with the traitors and rebels known as "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 John 2:16 NKJV)? Share some examples with your group.

[4] Lastly, please record and share with your group any other significant thoughts and points of personal application that the Lord has shown you.

MEMORY PASSAGE

1 Kings 2:3 NKJV

From memory, write out this week's passage below. Then review the passage throughout the day. Be prepared to share the verse with your group.

PARTING THOUGHTS

It is possible that during David's last hours, his thoughts turned to the many psalms he wrote unto the Lord. Perhaps Psalm 16 and 23 stood out to him.¹⁵ Let's close out the year by meditating on these two wonderful psalms.

Psalm 16
A Michtam of David

Preserve me, O God, for in You I put my trust.

O my soul, you have said to the Lord,
"You are my Lord,
My goodness is nothing apart from You."
As for the saints who are on the earth,
"They are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight."
Their sorrows shall be multiplied who hasten after another god;
Their drink offerings of blood I will not offer,
Nor take up their names on my lips.

O Lord, You are the portion of my inheritance and my cup;
You maintain my lot.
The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places;
Yes, I have a good inheritance.

I will bless the Lord who has given me counsel;
My heart also instructs me in the night seasons.
I have set the Lord always before me;
Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;
My flesh also will rest in hope.
For You will not leave my soul in Sheol
Nor will You allow Your Holy one to see corruption.
You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (NKJV)

Psalm 23
A Psalm of David

The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness
For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
My cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord
Forever. (NKJV)

NOTES

- ¹Robert J. Morgan, *Nelson's Complete Book of Stories, Illustrations, and Quotes* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000), p. 183.
- ²*The Complete Word Study Old Testament*, ed. Spiros Zodhiates (Chattanooga, Tenn.: AMG Publishers, 1994), p. 2358.
- ³Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Restored* (Colorado Springs: Victor Books, 2002), p. 175.
- ⁴R. O. Patterson and Hermann J. Austel, "1, 2 Kings." in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), p. 34.
- ⁵E. M. Bounds, *Power through Prayer* (New Kensington, Pa.: Whitaker House, 1982), p. 9.
- ⁶*The MacArthur Study Bible*, ed. John MacArthur (Nashville: Word Bibles, 1997), p. 596.
- ⁷*The Complete Word Study*, p. 2325.
- ⁸Warren W. Wiersbe, *With the Word Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), p. 423.
- ⁹Wiersbe, *Be Restored*, p. 163.
- ¹⁰Flavius Josephus, *Josephus, Complete Works*, trans. William Whitson (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1981 edition), p. 171.
- ¹¹Charles R. Swindoll, *David, A Man of Passion and Destiny* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1997), p. 285.
- ¹²Patterson and Austel, "1, 2 Kings," pp. 37-38.
- ¹³Wiersbe, *With the Word*, p. 424.
- ¹⁴Patterson and Austel, "1, 2 Kings," p. 40.
- ¹⁵Ivor Powell, *David, His Life and Times* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1990), p. 363.

