

brentwood baptist

HUMAN: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE REAL

A REAL GOD

1 KINGS 1:45-48

SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

MAIN POINT

Enduring families plan for the future when they take active steps to pass on their legacy of faith.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Is there anything tangible that has been handed down through your family? What is it?

Why do you think passing on things like this is an important part of family life?

What about faith? Do you think families typically pay enough attention to how their faith will be passed down from generation to generation?

Legacies are built one moment at a time, but they're not built by accident. Instead, through careful and intentional actions, families can pass on the important parts of their family dynamic to the next generation. Though we might typically think of things like a set of dishes or some other antique being passed from generation to generation, nothing that we can pass down is more important than faith. Enduring families plan for the future when they take active steps to pass on their legacy of faith.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

The book of 1 Kings opens as King David is in the last days of his life. The great warrior and leader has grown old and sick; everyone knew he was near death. One of his sons, Adonijah, decided to make a play to inherit the throne and the kingdom. That made sense since Adonijah was David's oldest living son. But David had promised Bathsheba that their son, Solomon, would be king after he died.

READ 1 KINGS 1:5-10.

Based on these verses, what kind of man was Adonijah? Why do you say that?

What part did David play in his son becoming like this?

What does that tell you about the role a parent has in leaving a legacy of faith in their children?

If we judge him just by these verses, Adonijah seems to be opportunistic, greedy, and ego-centric. He assumed and demanded the throne of Israel, presuming upon his father with little respect. But David certainly played a role in the way his son developed. The Bible tells us that David never once exercised discipline and instead played a passive role in his son's growth of ego. If we want to leave a legacy of enduring faith as parents, we cannot assume it will just happen on its own.

Read Judges 2:10. What kinds of things contribute to a situation like the Bible describes here?

Do you see anything similar happening in the world today? How so?

How should Christian parents think about the issue of their legacy differently than non-Christians?

Everyone leaves a legacy, but not every legacy is good. If we are apathetic or unintentional, then we won't play any part in what the next generation receives from us.

Do you think your parents played an active role in passing on a legacy of faith to you? How did they do it?

How has that impacted the way you think about leaving a legacy in your own family?

If you haven't been intentional in thinking through how you want things to be in your family when you're gone, don't lose hope. As we continue in 1 Kings 1, we see that it's not too late; we can still embrace our responsibility to pass on the faith. Instead of just accepting the way things were going, Bathsheba, the prophet Nathan, and David took action to change their legacy. Through some skillful political maneuvers, they anointed Solomon while Adonijah was celebrating his own victory.

READ 1 KINGS 1:43-48.

Why do you think it meant so much to David to see his son Solomon coronated as king?

Can you relate to that as a parent? What would it mean to you to see your children carry on in the faith?

David passed on the throne as an inheritance to his son. We can pass on the values and worldview that can lead our children to take up following Jesus for themselves. Although we can't make our children become Christians, we can train them up in the way of the Lord. When we take an active role in doing so, we are doing everything we can to protect the legacy that matters so much to enduring families of the faith.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What are some ways we can build that legacy of faith in our children by helping them to think through the issues of culture in a biblical way?

What habits are you trying to instill in your children that will endure with them after you're gone?

What role does prayer play in this? How can you make prayer for and with your children a more regular part of your daily routine?

PRAYER

As you close in prayer, spend some time praying for the future of the children represented in your group. Pray for them by name, that they would inherit the legacy of faith. Pray for the parents as well, that they would play an active role in passing on their faith to their children.

COMMENTARY

1 KINGS 1:1-48

1:1. The reign of King David had begun the first age of godly greatness, prosperity, and power in the history of the Hebrews. After David's death, could this greatness continue? In God's plan it was to continue with Solomon, but would God's purposes survive the crisis of David's death?

1:2. The strongest Hebrew word for virgin (betulah) is used here. The word for the nuptial sheets that provided proof of the bride's virginity (Dt 22:15) is derived from this word.

1:4. The ancients believed in the curative value of pairing a warm human body with an ill body, and so the phrase was not intimate with her speaks primarily to the fact that the sole purpose the girl served was to provide warmth and care. However, even among conservative scholars, some believe that given the context the above phrase may also indirectly indicate that aged David was no longer able to be intimate with a woman. In the eyes of his detractors, this would be taken as proof that David lacked the strength and fitness to continue as king. Once known, this may have encouraged Adonijah's attempt to seize the throne.

1:5-10. In the struggle for Israel's future, neither side (those aligned with David and his designated heir nor those against them) openly appealed to the tribal elders or other leaders for support. Both sides believed that if they seized power in Jerusalem, the traditional leaders would accept the outcome. Adonijah gathered his supporters and tried to seize the throne. Some of David's loyal followers, such as Joab and Abiathar, joined with Adonijah. Perhaps they had given up on David, as he seems to have become rather detached and even irresponsible (e.g., 1:6).

Bathsheba and Nathan, supported by some of David's remaining brave warriors and David's loyal Cherethites and the Pelethites, reacted quickly and put an end to the attempted coup. Prudent human planning helped to gain David's active support. Nathan's warning to Bathsheba to act to save her and Solomon's lives (v. 12) showed the likelihood for violence of this struggle.

While there were moral positives and weaknesses to both sides, the decisive issue was which side God supported—despite its weaknesses. God's purposes and the future fortunes of the Hebrews were bound to the new ways, to the centralized government, and to the Davidic dynasty.

1:5. Kept exalting indicates that Adonijah had already been proclaiming his future kingship and establishing his entourage for seizing the throne. Coup attempts are not birthed overnight. David had already promised Bathsheba that her son Solomon would be king and had publicly announced to the assembled nation that Solomon was his heir (1Ch 28:5). Nevertheless, Adonijah seems to have made his moves with his father's silent acquiescence so that his will for the succession became unclear. In this context, the first to act might gain the throne.

Chariots and cavalry should probably be rendered "chariots" and "charioteers" since horse-mounted warriors (cavalry) are not documented for this early period. Early in the history of chariot warfare, the terms for chariot warriors were the same as the terms later used for cavalry warriors. By the time of Ahab (16:28ff), Assyrian records recognized the existence of mounted warriors in the region. During Solomon's rule the military would become a chariot army, probably made up of foreign mercenaries since developing a local chariot force was a long, expensive process.

1:8. David's warriors (lit "great men") likely refers to (1) the remnants and/or successors of David's warriors (2Sam 23:8-39); or (2) David's loyal palace guard, the Cherethites and Pelethites.

1:9. Adonijah's great feast amounted to an impromptu coronation, with many of the expected features: a revered setting, a military leader, a priest, pomp, and loyal followers.

1:11-12. With Adonijah's coup already in motion, someone with sufficient standing to be accepted by the people had to initiate a counter movement for Solomon or the throne would be lost. Nathan, the prophet, assumed this role. He warned Bathsheba that the penalty for inaction could be death for herself and Solomon, and probably others of David's loyalists as well. The losers in such power struggles were typically executed.

1:15-21. Bathsheba raised three issues to arouse David to action. First, by God's will David had promised the throne to Solomon. Second, Adonijah had proclaimed himself king without David's public support or knowledge. Third, she pointed out that she and Solomon would be regarded as criminals if David did not act.

1:24-25. Nathan then came and reinforced the points Bathsheba had made to the king.

1:26-28. Nathan tactfully hinted at the danger to himself, Bathsheba, and David's loyal officials by revealing that David's inner circle had not been invited to the unofficial coronation. This cast them as outsiders, a dangerous place to be during a regime change.

Bathsheba had to be called in despite the fact that she was already in the king's bedroom with David when Nathan entered (v. 22). Readers may think the text is inconsistent here because it seems to forget that Bathsheba was already present. But we must remember that Hebrew narrative is often very spare, leaving out details that can be implied from context. In this case readers should conclude that sometime after verse 22 Bathsheba had temporarily left the king's room, appropriately giving Nathan private audience with his king.

1:32. David responded with the orders that legitimized Solomon's succession. Benaiah seemed to be the leader of the Cherethites and the Pelethites. In the absence of any tribal levies, they were the dominant military force in the city.

1:33. The mule was the traditional mount of honor for that time. In an earlier age, the donkey had played that role, a custom still remembered as late as Zech 9:9. To ride the king's mule was to claim the throne. The Gihon spring was an ancient, revered, and necessary source of water for Jerusalem. Later it was the source of water for King Hezekiah's tunnel. Choosing it for the site of Solomon's coronation indicated that it carried special significance and authority for the people of Jerusalem just as Adonijah's selection of En-rogel recognized the significance of that site (v. 9).

1:34. The proper religious personnel were to anoint Solomon. This was done by the king's command and in the presence of the king's private army. These facts were sufficient for the people of Jerusalem to choose Solomon over Adonijah.

1:38. The Cherethites and the Pelethites were, formerly, Philistine mercenaries, personally loyal to David, and by this time, presumably converted to faith in Yahweh. They formed David's personal bodyguard and were effective infantry. The probable reason why David's infantry could defeat Aramean chariots (2 Sam 8:3-4), a rare skill for infantry, was the presence of these skilled Philistines.

1:40. The people who followed with rejoicing were probably the classes that benefited from several of the new ways that were emerging in the kingdom. Both for good and for ill, Solomon's rule would enhance these new ways.

1:41. The conflicting coronations were occurring within 500 yards of each other, the distance between Gihon and En-rogel. Imagine the uneasiness when Adonijah's group heard the noise of Solomon's coronation.

1:44-46. All ceremonies for enthroning Solomon had been accomplished. Only major force could have reversed these actions. Adonijah's followers were not ready to battle for Jerusalem, especially since David had spoken and was still alive.

1:47-48. These two speeches were not merely friendly sentiments. First, they represented David's will. Then, repeated and recorded, they confirmed the new king in the same way that the public oath of office legitimizes an office holder in our time.