

# The Christian Arsenal

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## 1 KINGS 1:1-2:46

Today we begin a short study in the book of **1 Kings**. Let's set just a little background before we get started.

When we studied **1 and 2 Samuel** some time ago, we saw Israel's very first king. We saw how the people of Israel demanded that God give them a king. WHY? Because they wanted to be like all the heathen nations around them.

And we saw that God gave them Saul. Saul started out with much promise, but it wasn't long before Saul disobeyed God and God chose another man to be king of Israel.

God chose David actually when David was still only a young shepherd boy tending his father's flocks.

We saw in our study of **1 and 2 Samuel** how because of jealousy Saul hunted David and sought to kill him. But we also saw how God protected David and after many years, David finally became king of Israel.

David was not a perfect king. David was not a perfect man. David made many mistakes, but David was a man who kept coming back to God in true repentance. David was a man after God's own heart. And David served 40 years as king of Israel.

The books of **1 and 2 Kings** are simply a continuation of the history of Israel's kings. And **2 Kings** ends with the deportation of the children of Israel to Babylon...something that could have been prevented had the kings of Israel done what they were supposed to do.

We don't know the author of **1 Kings**...at least we don't know the **human** author. We do know the Holy Spirit inspired this book. We know that it is as much "God-breathed" as the rest of Scripture.

We **do** know that the events of **1 and 2 Kings** span a period of around 400 years. We **do** know the coronation of Solomon took place around 970. We do know these books are thought to have been compiled while the Israelites were in exile in Babylon.

We also know that **1 Kings** will teach us much about the kings of Israel covering the reign of Solomon and the divided kingdom all the way to the time of Ahab and Jezebel.

We also know that some of the events of **1 Kings** are also told in **1 and 2 Chronicles**.

**1 and 2 Kings** are accounts of events from primarily a **historical** point of view.  
**1 and 2 Chronicles** are accounts of events from primarily a **priestly** point of view.

Now, with all that said, let's look at  
**1 Kings 1:1-4...**

Here we see David at the very end of his life. His youth is gone. His strength is gone. He is an old man. His servants knew he needed to keep warm so they decided it would be a great idea to bring a young virgin to his bed...not for any other reason but to keep the king warm...

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Now, we know these folks didn't have electric blankets or electric mattress pads or heating pads or central heat or hot water bottles.

But this simply was not a good idea and we'll see the problem this caused in just a few minutes.

**Verses 5-10 (DON'T READ)** tell us that David's son, Adonijah, had exalted himself and said, "I will be king." Adonijah, the Scripture tells us, was a very handsome man. He was the brother of Absalom, and like Absalom, he was a very spoiled and headstrong man.

He had never been disciplined or challenged by his father and so he grew up thinking he would have his own way in everything. He even believed he could be the next king.

God had told David many years before when he sinned with Bathsheba and had her husband killed that the sword would never depart from his house...that He would raise up evil against David from his own household. God loved David, but He loved him enough to hold him accountable for his sins.

**David surely loved Absalom and Adonijah...but he took the easy way out and didn't hold them accountable for their wrongdoings.**

And here we see the words of the Lord coming to pass...evil against David's own household had been raised up several times...this time by Adonijah.

Well, Adonijah had conferred with David's old friend and general, Joab, and Abiathar, the priest and they supported him. See, Adonijah knew every king needed a military leader so he got Joab. And he knew that every king needed a spiritual leader, so he got Abiathar.

**He consulted these men, but he did not consult God!**

Well, there were others who were **not** with Adonijah. Among them were Zadok, the priest, and Nathan, the prophet, as well as the mighty men who belonged to David.

Nathan went to Bathsheba and told Bathsheba what Adonijah was doing and advised her to go at once to King David and remind him that he had promised the throne to her son, Solomon.

So, she did this and while she was still speaking, Nathan came in and told King David that Adonijah had gone and sacrificed many animals and had not invited Nathan nor his half-brother, Solomon, to the feast.

(We need to remember here that part of the reason for all the trouble that David had with his children in the past and at this point in time was because of his many wives. Adonijah and Solomon were both David's sons, but they had different mothers.)

Getting back to our story...Nathan told David of all the people Adonijah had invited and that they had indeed proclaimed Adonijah king of Israel. And then Nathan asked David point blank if David had authorized this. Who was David's choice to be king after his death?

**Verses 29-31...**

**Solomon, not Adonijah,** would be Israel's next king. Solomon was the second son of David and Bathsheba. Solomon was the first of a long line of descendants of David who would reign as king.

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I believe it's important for us to be reminded of the covenant that God had made with David...the "Davidic Covenant."

Remember when we were in **2 Samuel** and David wanted so badly to build God a house? His plan was to build a beautiful temple for Almighty God and do you remember what God told David?

God told David He didn't want David to build Him a house. God said that David had shed too much blood to build God a house.

He told David that instead He would build David a house...and this house God would build David would include **a throne, a family, and a kingdom that would stand forever! (2 Samuel 7)**

Remember that Israel's first king, Saul, was from the tribe of **Benjamin**. David was from the tribe of **Judah!**

And down through the years the kings of Israel would be from David's line. God said this would be a "forever kingdom."

You might say, *"Well, there's no king over Israel now. Ariel Sharon was just reelected prime minister but Israel has no king!"*

**And if you said this, you would be right...**on the surface, at least...humanly speaking. But, one day in the little town of Bethlehem a King was born. He was from the tribe of Judah. He was from the line of David...on His mother's side and also humanly speaking on His father's side.

Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords and He rules and reigns among the hosts of the heavens and the inhabitants of the earth...

**Folks in Israel and America and Russia and England and Spain and France and Germany and Iraq and Saudi Arabia and China and all the other countries we could name may not think He is king...but He is and one day He will come back and prove it!**

Adonijah would have qualified to be king if the only requirement was to be the descendant of David...but Solomon was the son of David God had chosen.

Adonijah **planned** to be king. He started getting key people in place to **help** him be king. He started **looking** like a king. Adonijah started **doing things** that kings did. He assembled for himself chariots and horsemen with fifty men to run before him.

We mentioned Absalom a few minutes ago. If you recall from our study in **2 Samuel**, the same thing happened with him. He exalted himself and mounted a rebellion in David's kingdom and did all that he could to be king!

**But, Absalom and Adonijah left God out. They had not consulted God! God hadn't chosen Absalom or Adonijah to succeed David as king! God had chosen Solomon!**

The rest of **chapter 1** tells us that Zadok and Nathan and others got Solomon and had him ride on David's mule...and they anointed Solomon king...and they blew the trumpet and all the people cried, **"Long live King Solomon."**

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And this chapter tell us that there was great rejoicing and celebration and music...so much that Jerusalem was in an uproar.

Well, it was so loud an uproar that the noise reached Adonijah and his little band of supporters. Can you imagine their shock and surprise and horror when they were told, "Sorry, Adonijah, you're not king of Israel...your half-brother, Solomon, has taken the throne."

## **Verses 49-53...**

Solomon said nothing would happen to Adonijah if he behaved himself...but if he didn't he would die. And Solomon sent for Adonijah and told him to go on home. Would Adonijah behave himself? We'll see what happened before we leave here today.

## **2:1-9...**

Here are admonitions and instructions from a father to his son...from his deathbed.

Did you pay attention while I was reading?

First of all David admonished and exhorted Solomon to keep God's statutes **and** commandments **and** ordinances **and** testimonies **and** all that is written in the law of Moses. (David didn't leave anything out, did he?)

And God says the same thing to you and me today. He tells us to study to show ourselves approved unto God...He calls us to not be ashamed before Him...He calls us to rightly divide the Word of God!

And David told Solomon if he would do that then he would succeed in all that he did. And David told Solomon of God's promise that one of his descendants would always sit on the throne.

David also told Solomon to be kind to Barzillai because Barzillai had been kind to David.

But, David also told Solomon to do some very harsh things.

He told him to kill Joab.

He told him to kill Shimei.

Joab was a threat to Solomon. Among other things, Joab had killed two innocent men who were close to David. Also, he had supported Adonijah in trying to take the throne, hadn't he?

Going back to David's sin with Bathsheba once more...remember it was Joab who made sure David's wishes concerning Uriah were carried out. And Joab became very strong because of this. David knew Solomon wouldn't be able to handle the strong threat to his kingdom that Joab presented.

Shimei was a relative of Saul and he had mocked and cursed David when he was fleeing from Absalom.

**Does this sound harsh to you? Well, we need to remember that David lived before the age of grace. David lived in the age of the Law.**

David didn't have the opportunity and the privilege of picking up a **New Testament** and reading the **Sermon on the Mount**. David lived according to the light he had at the time.

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And David instructed Solomon to get rid of his enemies and be good to his friends! God has told you and me to get rid of our enemies as well, and we'll see that in just a few minutes...

Let's just look at several verses in **chapter 2**.

**Verse 12; verse 24; verse 45; verse 46...**

Saul is dead. David is dead.

In the course of our study of **1 Kings** we'll see kings come and we'll see them go. Here we see God has ordained that Solomon be king of Israel and it is now time for Solomon to begin to reign.

But, before his reign can begin his throne has to be established. **To establish means to be made firm, to be made sure, to be made certain, to be made to stand.**

But, before Solomon's throne could be really established, those who opposed the throne must be done away with.

And in this chapter we see Solomon dealing with Adonijah. Remember Solomon had told Adonijah that as long as he behaved himself he could live...

Well, Adonijah came to Bathsheba and asked Bathsheba to ask Solomon if he could marry Abishag. Remember that Abishag was the young virgin David's servants had brought to his bed to warm his old body.

**David was dead. Solomon was king. And Adonijah wanted Abishag.**

What was wrong with this? Well, in our culture, we wouldn't think much about it. But we have to think about things as they thought about them in that culture.

Abishag belonged to David's harem. She was one of his concubines. When a king died, his harem passed down to his successor. So, now she belonged to Solomon and Solomon viewed this request by Adonijah on the same level as if he had asked for the kingdom.

So, Solomon had Adonijah killed. Then Solomon had Abiathar, the priest, removed from the priesthood.

To understand why Solomon didn't have the priest killed, we need to be reminded that in the past Abiathar had done some good things for David.

Remember when David and his men had received bread from the tabernacle and in a fit of revenge, Saul had killed all those priests? **Well, one escaped...and this man was Abiathar.**

However, **verse 27** tells us that Solomon dismissed Abiathar from the priesthood because of the word spoken to Eli years earlier. In **1 Samuel**, we learned that the sons of Eli were very wicked and God had promised Eli that their sons would someday be banished from the priesthood. And for that reason, Abiathar was dismissed from serving God as priest.

Then Solomon had Joab killed and then Solomon had Shimei killed.

We don't enjoy this much, do we?

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Solomon's acts seem violent and vindictive. But, we must remember this was before the Cross and it was in a different culture. Ultimately, we must remember that each of these men who were removed or executed had been a part of a rival faction and still posed a threat to the new king.

The writer of **1 Kings** notes why this section is important as he concludes...  
**Verse 46...** His opposition has been done away with and his position has been established and next week we'll see Solomon getting down to the business of running the country.

In the time that we have left, let's see if we can apply some of the things we've seen in today's Scripture to our lives today.

Today we've seen what happens in the lives of men who have strong ambition...both good and bad.

Strong ambition that is focused on putting the Lord first and following Him at all costs is commendable. David had such an ambition throughout his life.

Strong ambition that is self-centered and ignores the Lord and His purposes is wrong and can even be fatal.

Joab, Abiathar, Shimei, and Adonijah are examples of such ambition. They didn't focus on the Lord.

You and I need to evaluate ourselves from time to time. God wants everything in our lives to be yielded to His purposes.

Another thing I want to mention is this.

None of us will ever sit upon the throne of a nation and be crowned king.

None of us will ever have to kill anybody to establish our position. Now, we may think about it from time to time...but we'll never be called upon to execute someone just to establish our position!

But, I believe there is an application in all this for you and me today.

Paul says in **Philippians 3:7-8: (READ)**

*"...whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ..."*

What were the things Paul was talking about here that he counted as loss? Well, in the verses just before these (**3:4b-6 - READ**) Paul tells us...

*"If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless."*

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Paul is saying that when he looked at his new position in the Lord Jesus Christ that was being established, he was also forced to look at his position before he came to know Christ...and he said that when he looked at all that he was before Christ...the good, the bad and the ugly...he counted it all as rubbish...as loss...as dung.

## **3:9-14...(READ)**

Every saved person knows Jesus. Every saved person knows about Jesus. I'm not talking about our position as God's children. That position has already been secured!

But Paul wanted and we should want to know Jesus by experience! **That's the position in which we must long and strive to be established.**

And the way we are established there is by counting those things in the past as loss...as dung...as rubbish.

What things? The things before Christ! **Our past failure! Our past pride! Our past defeats! Our past victories! Our past positions! Our past reputation! Our past doubts!**

Those are our Adonijahs and our Abiathars and our Joabs and our Shimeis. Those are our oppositions and our irritations! Those are the things that would rob us of a deeper knowledge of Jesus and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering.

Paul said, **"I die daily."** He also said that we have been crucified with Christ and we no longer live, but Christ lives in us and the life which I now live in the flesh must be lived by faith in the Son of God!

Like Solomon, we have a position. Solomon began his reign wanting to be and do all that was necessary for his kingdom to be established. And we should live so that our position in Christ can be firmly established.

And like Paul, we haven't gotten there yet...and probably never will in this lifetime...but that shouldn't keep us from desiring this and striving for it! Satan will whisper in your ear, "It's no use...you'll never get away from the things you did and the person you were in the past..." Don't listen to him!

Desire with all your heart to be all that Christ wants you to be. Desire to leave the past behind and to press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

And I sincerely pray that as we go through this great old history book of the kings of Israel, that we'll see truths to apply to our everyday lives that will enable us to do just that! Knowing history is great...knowing "His story" is better!

We can't kill those things that oppose us. But we can count them as nothing! We can allow the past to be the past and we can seek

- **by knowing this Book**
- **by knowing the power of Christ's resurrection**
- **by knowing the fellowship of His suffering**

to be firmly established in the position we've been called to! **What's that position? Well, it's more of a walk...a walk that is to be worthy of the gospel by which we've been called!**

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**Either a person builds his life on loss or he builds his life on Christ!** There is no in between! All of this world's dreams and hopes and promises, all of world's fame and fortune, all of this world's stuff is dung. It was true in Paul's life and it's certainly true in yours and mine!

**May God help us to continue to press for that prize because we want to walk in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of the Lord Jesus!**