

Who's in charge? 1 Kings 1v1-53

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[0 : 00] Isn't that a lot? And we're going to read it, but not all of it. 1 Kings, chapter 1, I think page 334. Is that right? 334, 1 Kings.

So it starts with a character we've probably all heard of, David. Amen. So let's hear God's word together. 1 Kings, chapter 1, starting at verse 1.

When King David was very old, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him. So his attendant said to him, let us look for a young virgin to serve the king and take care of him.

She can lie beside him so that our Lord the king may keep warm. Then they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful young woman and found Abishag a Shunammite and brought her to the king.

The woman was very beautiful. She took care of the king and waited on him. But the king had no sexual relations with her. Now Adonijah, whose mother was Aga, put himself forward and said, I will be king.

[1 : 32] So he got chariots and horses ready with fifty men to run ahead of him. His father had never rebuked him by asking, why do you behave as you do?

He was also very handsome and was born next after Absalom. Adonijah conferred with Joab, son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest, and they gave him their support.

But Zadok the priest, Baniah, son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei and Ray, and David's special guard, did not join Adonijah.

Adonijah then sacrificed sheep, cattle, and fattened calves at the zone of Zahalath near Rogel. He invited all his brothers, the king's son, and all the royal officials of Judah.

But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, or Benaiah, or the special guard, or his brother Solomon. Then Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, Have you not heard that Adonijah, the son of Agath, has become king, and our lord David knows nothing about it?

[2 : 49] Now then, let me advise you how you can save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. Go in to King David and say to him, My lord the king, did you not swear to me, your servant, Surely Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne?

Why then has Adonijah become king? While you are still talking to the king, I will come in and add my word to what you have said.

Now let's jump on to verse 28. Then King David said, Call in Bathsheba. So she came into the king's presence and stood before him.

The king then took an oath, As surely as the Lord lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble, I will surely carry out this very day what I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel.

Solomon your son shall be king after me, And he will sit on my throne in my place. Verse 38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Baniah son of Jehoiada, And the Kerethites and the Pelethites went down and put Solomon on King David's mule, And they escorted him to Gihon.

- [4 : 09] Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, Long live King Solomon!
- And all the people went up after him, playing pipes and rejoicing greatly, So that the ground shook with the sound. Verse 49 At this all Adonijah's guests rose in alarm and dispersed.
- But Adonijah, in fear of Solomon, went and took hold of the horns of the altar. Then Solomon was told, Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon and is clinging to the horns of the altar.
- He says, Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword. Solomon replied, If he shows himself to be worthy, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground.
- But if evil is found in him, he will die. Then King Solomon sent men and they brought him down from the altar. And Adonijah came and bowed down to King Solomon.
- [5 : 24] And Solomon said, Go to your home. Well, there's a lot of people, a lot of names, a lot of kings, and a lot happening.
- And I don't know about you, but when I started into kings, I needed God's help and I still need God's help. So we're going to pray and ask for him to help us understand his word.
- So let's pray. Amen. Father, thank you so much that it has pleased you to not only speak your word, but to have your spoken word written down and recorded, providing it in a language that we can understand.
- before us that we can read and see and listen to. And Father, we know because you've told us that your word is powerful.
- It is effective. And when your word is taught and explained, as the Holy Spirit takes that word, it drives it deep into our hearts and into our minds.
- [6 : 47] And we pray for his help now, that what we read in terms of history, we will meet the living God who changes lives, who holds to his promise and sees his kingdom prevail.
- Teach us, Lord, we ask. In your name we pray. Amen. The story of the Bible is a wonderful promise from God that he is going to establish his kingdom.
- A kingdom of peace and justice, prosperity and beauty. This kingdom that God promises would have one king.
- A king with absolute power and supreme authority. And this king would not only rule over all people and all nations, but this king was going to bring blessing to all nations.
- The blessing of forgiveness and acceptance and welcome. The king of God's kingdom is, of course, Jesus Christ.
- [8 : 15] And to be a member of that kingdom, to experience the blessings of this kingdom, we must turn in repentance and look in faith and submit to Jesus as our king.
- Jesus Christ himself described the kingdom of God like this. Jesus said, the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed which is the smallest of all the seeds in the earth.
- Tiny, tiny, tiny. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.
- Jesus uses it as a simple way like a parable to explain how unstoppable the kingdom was. It appears small but nothing and no one is going to stop it.
- It will grow and grow and grow as people turn and submit to Jesus Christ as king. But where is this kingdom?
- [9 : 32] You see, God's promise sounds great but in reality it appears to be a very different story. I don't know about you but I don't see the kingdom making any headlines in the paper.

It's not the new craze on social media. In fact, it seems Jesus is considered irrelevant. He's to be rejected and ignored.

And where we do see signs of growth of the kingdom, there appears to be great opposition and persecution. It seems that God's kingdom is nothing more than a grand idea that has just fallen and failed.

Rather than a big great tree, it appears that it's still like a tiny little seed. We can barely see it.

God is in charge and he will ensure that his kingdom prevails.

[10 : 47] That's what we're looking at this morning. It might appear weak, it might appear that it's all failed, but God is in charge and he will ensure that his promised kingdom prevails.

You see, there was a time when it looked like God's kingdom was all over. The kingdom was under David and under David it was almost like paradise.

Enemies had been defeated, borders were secure, the people lived in a land of plenty, God's people living in God's place under God's rule and blessing.

But things were beginning to change. First, God's kingdom seems dangerously fragile. The kingdom was under serious threat for two reasons.

First, there was inside failure. Look at verse 1. When King David was very old, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him.

[12 : 02] Now we remember David as the great hero, don't we? The courageous shepherd who fought off bears and lions. He was the great hero who defeated Goliath.

The warrior soldier who crushed his enemies. But now look at him. The passing of time has reduced him to a frail, cold, old man.

But thankfully he has good people around him. So they get on to home help. Verse 2. His attendant said to him, let us look for a young virgin to serve the king and take care of him.

In fact, it seems that she was very practical as she doubled up as a hot water bottle for poor old David. Look at the rest of verse 2. she can lie beside him so that our lord the king may keep warm.

And in case we think there was some sexual favor in all of this, look down at verse 4. The woman was very beautiful. She took care of the king and waited on him, but the king had no sexual relations with her.

[13 : 11] Now this is not a lesson about how we should be caring for those who are advanced in years, as important as that is. This is the sad and tragic end to David's life.

David has failed as king. He's forgotten all about the kingdom. He's more interested in keeping his toes warm than appointing a new king.

Of course he had the great stories to tell the grandchildren, fighting the lions as a shepherd, knocking Goliath's head off, battling the Philistines. What stories of the past?

But he was failed to do what he was meant to do. Prioritise the kingdom and appoint a king. So it was under threat, from inside and outside.

For David's failure only led to rebellion. Look at verse 4, 5 sorry, verse 5. Now Adonijah, whose mother was Haggis, put himself forward and said, don't worry, I will be king.

[14 : 25] Now it would be a mistake to think that Adonijah is helping his poor father out. Kingship was not his to assume. His I will be king is an act of rebellion.

And in case we're wondering how he came to be like this, well it all points back to the failure of David, verse 6, fathers, listen up. His father had never rebuked him by asking, why do you behave as you do?

He was very handsome and was born next after Absalom. Adonijah was the blue-eyed boy who could do no wrong.

The kind of kid that ran riot but his father could never see it. it seems David couldn't even manage his family never mind the kingdom.

So rebellious Adonijah plotted to take over the kingdom. Verse 9, the middle of verse 9. He invited all his brothers and king's sons and all the royal officials of Judah but he was careful.

[15 : 34] He didn't invite Nathan the prophet or Benaniah or the special guard or his brother Solomon because Solomon was meant to be the king.

So it appears that the kingdom is falling apart. Inside failure as David isn't doing what he's meant to do. Outside rebellion as Adonijah picks up the charge.

The promised kingdom is dangerously fragile. Now it's not unlike the church today is it?

The church which is a visible demonstration of God's kingdom on earth is dangerously fragile. Sadly we fail far too often.

Instead of peace and justice well we find fear and abuse. Instead of repentance there's cover up. leaders have affairs members fall out with each other and we're all too busy seeking home comforts that we forget to prioritize the kingdom.

[16 : 48] But not only is the church and her people failing there's hostile rebellion against the true king Jesus Christ. Churches are being wrecked. Christians are being persecuted.

We don't need Jesus. Shut him up. Get rid of him. like Adonijah the world cries I will be king.

I will live as I please and I will do as I want. God's kingdom seems dangerously fragile. Well despite the apparent weakness and failure of the kingdom God is in charge and he will ensure that his kingdom prevails.

Number two God's kingdom has kingdom loving people. Failure and rebellion may exist but God always has his faithful people.

He has his faithful servants. You see as people rallied around and supported Adonijah's bid for kingship not everyone did.

[18 : 05] Look at verse 8. But Zadok the priest Benaniah son of Jehoiada Nathan the prophet Shimei and Ray and David special guard they did not join Adonijah in his rebellion.

Here we have a bunch of loyal faithful servants who knew what was right and refused to give up. They loved the kingdom they loved God and they knew that something must be done.

So up steps Nathan verse 11 then Nathan asked Bathsheba Solomon's mother have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggis has become king and our lord David knows nothing about it?

Now then let me advise you how you can save your own life and the life of your son of Solomon who was to be the king of course. Nathan had to take action and fast.

Adonijah would soon be out to get rid and kill Solomon because Solomon was the true heir to the kingship. But sensing the danger that was going on around him Nathan doesn't run and hide he makes the kingdom his priority.

[19 : 22] He stood against the failure and against the rebellion. Here was a faithful servant who loved the kingdom. Now this is not the first time we've ever met Nathan is it?

We're told here he's God's prophet. That means he's God's representative. He is to speak God's word to the people. Don't we remember that Nathan had to speak to David before?

Remember how Nathan confronted and rebuked David over his affair with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband?

And through God's word Nathan showed David the way of repentance and the way back through grace. Now once more Nathan is having to intervene.

Ironically speaking the words of God to Bathsheba herself and to Solomon. He intervenes speaking to rescue the failure of David.

[20 : 34] His plan is very simple. Verse 13. Nathan says to Bathsheba go in to King David and say to him my Lord the king did you not swear to me your servant?

Surely Solomon your son shall be king after me and he will sit on my throne. And then Nathan after she's gone in and spoken to the king Nathan himself will follow it up and he will confront the king.

Down at verse 24. Nathan said have you my Lord the king declared that Adonijah shall be king after you and that he will sit on your throne?

I mean this can't be. That's not the promise. Verse 27. Is this something my Lord the king has done without letting his servants know who should sit on the throne of my Lord the king after him?

It's subtle but as we will see David gets the point. Nathan speaks the word of God into the situation confronting the failure and rebellion because God always has his faithful servants who love the kingdom and speak the word of God to the people.

[21 : 54] And isn't that what the church needs today? Faithful, loyal, kingdom loving people. Servants of God who in their sphere of influence don't run and hide but prioritize the kingdom.

People like Nathan who refuse to stay quiet but gently and humbly remind people of the promises of God and speak God's word into the situation.

salvation. You see we should never ever underestimate the power of God's rescuing and restoring word. As you if you're a parent here today as you read your Bible with your children you are building the kingdom.

kingdom. As you teach in Sunday school and to think now that they've gone through the whole of the Bible in the last three years. As the word of God is taught at the rock and in this new group rooted you are building the kingdom.

As you invest in relationships and talk of Jesus with your friends and colleagues you are building the kingdom. But the first place to start is always with ourselves with our own hearts.

[23 : 27] We are to submit to God's word to sit under it let it confront our failures and rebellions. Let us lead one another in repentance and point each other back to God's grace.

never underestimate the power of God's word when it is spoken by kingdom loving people. You see despite the weakness and failure of the kingdom God is in charge and he will ensure that his kingdom prevails.

God has his kingdom loving people people like you in your family in your school in your college where you work God has his people to bring his word to restore his fallen kingdom.

So it seems dangerously fragile but God has kingdom loving people and third God's kingdom is faithfully preserved.

You see as Nathan spoke into the situation and spoke into David's life the word did its work. David might still be old and cold but now he was on fire for the kingdom.

[24 : 56] Look at verse 29. The king then took an oath as surely as the Lord lives who has delivered me out of every trouble and I take that to be a looking back on his forgetfulness for not prioritizing the kingdom having heard what Nathan said and repented and turned back.

The God who has delivered him out of every trouble verse 30 he says I will surely carry out this very day what I swore to you by the Lord the God of Israel Solomon your son shall be king after me and he will sit on my throne in my place.

You see David is no longer concerned about home comforts about his cold toes he's now seeking first the kingdom of God he does what he should have been doing all along arrangements are quickly made instructions are given verse 34 there shall Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel blow the trumpet and shout long live king Solomon then you are to go up with him and he is to come and sit on my throne and reign in my place I have appointed him ruler over Israel and Judah what a difference the word of God makes it shakes a frail old man out of his selfish folly and has him using his last words and energy all for the building up of

God's kingdom the kingdom that looked weak and fallen is now faithfully preserved the king is installed Solomon heir to the kingship is installed as king the danger has been averted and we can all now breathe a sigh of relief but let's not miss the expectation of what is to come look at verse 36 Benaniah son of Jehoiada answered the king amen may the lord the god of my lord the king so declare it and then he adds something else he says as the lord was with my lord the king so may he be with Solomon to make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord king

David you see we will short change ourselves if we stop with Solomon yes the kingdom would become great under Solomon as we will see but we will also discover that Solomon was actually an even greater failure than his father the kingdom well it would only become truly great when god installed his true and faithful king Jesus Christ the true king who did not fail the king who remained faithful the king who came to serve and prioritize the kingdom the king who would not hide and bow to pressure and run away but one who would bow before his god in the garden and say not my will but your will be done your kingdom the one who would come and give of his life to rescue us from all our failure and all our rebellion so that we might enter into his kingdom and enjoy his favour for all eternity you see despite the apparent weakness and failure of the kingdom god is in charge and he will ensure that his promised kingdom prevails he will have his king installed over his kingdom the kingdom is faithfully preserved and so number four god's kingdom will gloriously prevail Solomon is installed as king but there is still that rebellious Adonijah it's rather comedic what's going on look at verse 41 the last time we met Adonijah he had made the great proclamation didn't he he says I will be king now look at verse 41 Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it heard what well they they heard the trumpets blasting in the distance as they were finishing their feast so we can imagine the scene the party is well underway another glass of champagne is poured a toast to Adonijah the great king and then the trumpets they hear what's going on what are those trumpets all about look at the rest of verse 41 on hearing the sound of the trumpet Joab asked what's the meaning of all the noise in the city even as he was speaking Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest arrived Adonijah said come in a worthy man like you must be bringing good news the city they must be celebrating my kingship not at all Jonathan answered our lord king David has made Solomon king you see rebels they may be but God's king is still on the throne the enemies of the king may have been defeated the snooze of Solomon's kingship is enough to send them running and scattering verse 49 at this all Adonijah's guests arose in alarm and dispersed once they're

[31 : 46] having this party now they're running for fear of their lives adonijah was a threat to solomon now he's in fear of solomon verse 50 but adonijah in fear of solomon went and took hold of the horns of the altar it's funny isn't it how boasting rebels turn all religious in a crisis the king they hated is now their means of mercy verse 51 then solomon was told adonijah is afraid of king solomon and he's clinging to the horns of the altar he says let king solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword but i mean that's what should happen to all those who boastfully declare i will be king well they need to be put to death but yet god has a habit doesn't he of showing mercy to those who seek to destroy the kingdom verse 52 solomon replied if he shows himself to be worthy not a hair of his head will fall to the ground but if evil is found in him he will die then king solomon sent men and they brought him down from the altar and adonijah came and bowed down to king solomon and solomon said go to your home from plotting to kill the king he now bows in worship to the king of course adonijah is still very active today isn't he he lurks in our hearts as we make our grand statements i will be king he's active and busy opposing god's church and persecuting his people and as we look out it appears that god's king kingdom is weak and dangerously fragile but surely this reminds us that god's king will always be on the throne nothing will deter god's plan and so today jesus christ is still on the throne the world may boast and party but one day we will hear the trumpets again and at the sound of the trumpets the world will stop in their tracks and the risen lord jesus the king of kings and the lord of lords will come again in awesome power and in magnificent glory and at the name of jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue acknowledge that jesus christ is lord to the glory of god the father the kingdom appears weak and fragile it looks like such a tiny seed we sometimes struggle to see what god is doing but let us be encouraged god is in charge and he will ensure that his promised kingdom prevails let's pray together