

The inevitable

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[0 : 00] So we are in the book of 1 Kings. So if you'd like to turn to 1 Kings chapter 1.

So it's after Samuel, after 2 Samuel as well, and then into 1 Kings chapter 1. So the intention here, of course, is to cover the entire chapter, but not in reading the entire chapter.

I'm going to read a few selected parts, and then as we go through the message, we can fill in the parts that we haven't read, or we haven't heard read in that sense.

I'm sure you've read 1 Kings yourself before. So here we go, verses 1 through 10 to begin with.

Now hear God's word. Now King David was old and advanced in years, and although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm.

Therefore his servants said to him, Let a young woman be sought for my lord, the king, and let her wait on the king and be in his service. Let her lie in your arms, that my lord, the king, may be warm.

[1 : 23] So they sought for a beautiful young woman throughout the whole territory of Israel and found Ashbag, the Shemunite, and brought her to the king. The young woman was very beautiful, and she was of service to the king and attended him.

But the king knew her not. Now Adonijah, the son of Haggith, exalted himself, saying, I will be king. And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen and 50 men to run before him.

His father had never at any time displeased him by asking, Why have you done thus and so? He was also a very handsome man, and he was born next after Absalom.

He conferred with Joab, the son of Zerah, and with Abathar, the priest, and they followed Adonijah and helped him.

But Zadok, the priest, and Benaniah, the son of Jehadiah, and Nathan, the prophet of Shamil, and Ray, and David's mighty men were not with Adonijah.

[2 : 34] Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fatted cattle by the serpent's stone, which is beside Engerolgi. And he invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah.

But he did not invite Nathan, the prophet, or Benaniah, or the mighty men, or Solomon, his brother. If you'd like to turn to 28, verse 28.

Then King David answered, Call Bathsheba to me. So she came into the king's presence and stood before the king. And the king swore to her, swore saying, As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my soul out of every adversity, as I swore to you by the Lord, the God of Israel, saying, Solomon, your son, shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place.

Even so will I do this day. Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground and paid homage to the king and said, May my Lord King David live forever.

And then finally, verse 49, down to the end. Then all the guests of Adonijah trembled and rose and each went his own way.

[3 : 58] And Adonijah feared Solomon. So he arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. Then it was told Solomon, Behold, Adonijah fears King Solomon.

For behold, he has laid hold of the horns of the altar, saying, Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will not put his servant to death with a sword. And Solomon said, If he will show himself to be a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth.

But if wickedness is found in him, he shall die. So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and paid homage to the King Solomon.

And Solomon said to him, Go to your house. Well, may God bless the reading of his word. So if you have your Bibles with you, please open them again to 1 Kings chapter 1.

And as you're doing that, as I said, this is similar to the way that we undertook Joseph in that it is a narrative in that we're looking at a person over the course of their life.

[5 : 17] But like Joseph, his life clearly pointed to the Lord Jesus Christ in so many different ways in the type of things that he went through. And the New Testament testifies to the fact that when looking at Jesus, there is one here greater than Solomon.

Now that's a real blessing, that there's one here greater than Solomon. Of course, speaking about Jesus. And so to go from Solomon to Jesus, it's not a big leap at all.

In the same way, David to Jesus isn't a big leap either. But this is where I think we need to begin. One of the things that is absolutely central to the Christian faith is that we belong to a king in a kingdom.

We are actually sat this evening in church, okay, but we're actually sat beneath a throne.

And on that throne is Jesus. And we belong to his kingdom. And this is absolutely central to the Christian faith and experience that we belong to a king and a kingdom.

[6 : 29] In fact, when we get into the New Testament, it's easy for us to see why Jesus is the long-awaited king. People refer to him as such.

But what happens, I think, in the church is that we look at Jesus as savior. We look at Jesus as Lord. We look at Jesus as helper, as comforter, and all of these wonderful truths about Jesus. And they are truths about Jesus. But sometimes we can look at all of those at the expense and forget that he is a king of a kingdom.

And that Christianity is effectively kingdom people sat before a king on his throne. And this is where we are. The king and his people.

But, you know, it's not always understood that way, is it? You know, people speak of Jesus being Lord as a title. And they're not really understanding what Jesus being Lord means. I mean, that's spelled out in the way that they live their life.

[7 : 36] And it's spelled out in the way that we all live our life, as to whether or not we truly appreciate the lordship of Jesus is the foundation to all things. But Jesus as king, again, should evoke in us the type of response that only a king can.

And yet too often we don't think of Jesus that way. So that kind of response doesn't come from us. So here's the challenge, I think, right from the very beginning.

That you must consider your Christianity, or a central truth to your Christianity, as belonging to a king in a kingdom. But I wonder how many of us actually think of it that way on a regular basis.

That we are kingdom people because we belong to a king. And so this idea of kingdoms and kings is not just an Old Testament idea, it is actually a new covenant truth.

That this is true now. So here's the background, here's the framework, here's the summary of what we have read. David is on his deathbed, cold and unable to keep himself warm.

[8 : 47] He is nothing of the former man that he was. He's not a man in his prime anymore. But David was a good king. And David had a heart after God's own heart.

And too often we think, well, yeah, well he committed sin, yeah. But he committed sin just like everyone else in the Old Testament and the New Testament committed sin.

But what is remarkable about him and what is spelled out to us about him is that he had a heart after God's own heart. But more importantly, he was God's chosen king.

David was chosen to be king by God. That this is the person I want to be the king. And of course, David from a young shepherd boy eventually became that king.

Did he always honor God? No, not always. But at least the direction of his heart was always to honor God. Even through the sin, he quickly made it back to repentance and faith and God and trust.

[9 : 46] And he was quickly there because his heart was directed towards God most of the time, we would say. He was a good king. The trouble is now is that he's in his weakness.

He's in a state of weakness. He can't even keep himself warm in bed. At one stage, you know, he used to wrestle bears and lions. You know, we often think that Samson was the strongest man in the Bible.

It's very unlikely that Samson was the strongest man in the Bible. I mean, you know, David was the one who wrestled lions and bears. You know, when you looked at Samson, people asked the question, well, what is your strength lie?

Well, I mean, if it was obvious, if he was built like me, yeah, okay, you finally got that. Some of you didn't get that because you took it seriously and I thank you for that. That was a wonderful, wonderful edifying that was.

But if it was obvious, if he was built like Charles Atlas, it was a silly question. But when Delilah says, well, what is your strength lie? It's because it wasn't obvious and it was because the power of the Lord was through him.

[10:51] But David was a man who seems to be very strong. Very strong. But here he is, unable to keep himself warm in bed. Servants who are ungodly at the best, it seemed, come up with this wonderful idea of getting a young woman, a beautiful woman, to come and lie in David's arms.

And okay, we don't need to read into it too far to understand the kind of sexual overtones that are there. How is this young, beautiful woman going to keep David warm?

Well, again, there's no need to go into it. We understand what's happening. But it says that David knew her not. The strength wasn't there. And so not only was a sin not committed, but what is being pointed out is that David is not the former man that he was, that David is not the man physically that he was.

He's weak. He's failing. He's unable. He is cold and cannot keep himself warm in bed.

And so here we have David lying on what you could say then is his deathbed, ready to go and meet the God that he served.

[12:06] And it seems that, it seems that Adonijah considers himself to be the next king. It seems that he's likely in line for the throne.

But the trouble is here is that he thinks that he can get there ahead of David's death. And this is a problem. Nathan the prophet hears that Adonijah is setting himself up as king and he goes and speaks to Bathsheba.

And they both understand what this means, that if Adonijah becomes king, then that means it's problems for Bathsheba and Solomon. She goes to David.

She tells David what's happening. She says, you know, isn't Solomon meant to be king? Isn't this the way that it's meant to happen? And she says to him, verse 11, but Adonijah set himself up as king.

Only for David to point out in verse 14 that if Adonijah had really set himself up as king, then why was she in speaking to him? Well, because the king, the true king is still alive.

[13:10] Adonijah cannot be king because David is still king. He hasn't let go of the throne. He hasn't even passed it on as yet.

So Adonijah's fake kingship seems to have convinced a few people, but not David. David may be weak, but he's not silly.

David understands what's happening. But the sense of urgency here is apparent. It's felt and understood because Bathsheba knows that if Adonijah becomes king, then that spells out trouble for her and her son.

Not only will his son, her son rather, be considered a threat to Adonijah, a rival to the throne, but now they're going to be considered enemies of the state. If Adonijah actually becomes king, then Bathsheba and Solomon have something to worry about.

So David, verses 28 through to 40, makes sure that Solomon is appointed king and Solomon becomes king. And when Adonijah finds out, fear comes upon him, verse 49, but King Solomon, in the mercy that he had for Adonijah, spared his life on a condition.

[14:25] And here's the condition. That Adonijah be found a worthy man, but if wickedness be found in him, he will die. He shall die.

And Adonijah recognizes Solomon's kingship and then does, as Solomon says, goes home. So that's really the framework of this story here.

There's a few things to notice here which are really important, I think, for us to understand. Here's the first one. And that is the inevitability and difficulty as one. The inevitability and difficulty.

Solomon was always going to be king. There's no doubt about that. He was always going to be king. It was promised all the way back in 2 Samuel chapter 7 that David would have a son and that son would have a kingdom and in that kingdom, he would be the one who would build the house for the Lord.

That's why we have Solomon's temple because that's what is referred to in 2 Samuel 7. And then in 1 Chronicles chapter 22, Solomon's name is actually mentioned.

[15:30] God has already told David that the king that will follow him will be Solomon. And yet here's the problem. That while it was inevitable that Solomon was always going to be king, that inevitable reality had to be lived through difficulties.

It was inevitable, but the inevitability didn't escape the difficulties that Solomon had to go through and Bathsheba had to go through in order for it to happen. In other words, the inevitable still had to make it past Adonijah setting himself up as king.

The inevitable still had to make it through all the difficulties that he had to go through in facing Adonijah.

And this is really important for you as a Christian. And here's why. That your whole Christian life is going to be a mixture of the inevitable and the difficulty. Your whole Christian life is going to be a mixture of the inevitable and the difficulty.

Here it is. Romans says this, that we are not to consider the future like the present. That we are not to consider the future like the present.

[16 : 45] That the present sufferings that the Christian believer goes through, that the Christian believer has to endure with, cannot even be compared with the inevitable glory that you will receive.

And there's the truth coming through again for us Christians. The inevitable and the difficulty. The inevitable is this, that you will make it into glory because of God's grace and God's grace alone.

That you will make it into glory because God has called you for glory. But how do you get to that glory? Well, Romans says, through many trials, through many struggles, through many difficulties. It is the inevitable and the difficult all at one time. And this truth here that Solomon experiences is experienced by the Christian in a different way.

But nevertheless, this is what's happening. Here's another thing to consider. That it's really important that the king reflect God in the kingdom.

[17 : 45] In other words, the type of person you have, like David, must be a reflection of what God is like towards the people. And in the Old Testament, every time you had a good judge, you had good people.

Every time you had a bad judge, you had bad people. Every time you had a good king, you had good people. Every time you had a bad king, you had bad people. It's not, it's what's known as the judge's cycle and the king's cycle.

In other words, that this search for a true and good king that will live forever is never found until then he should get to Jesus who is the true and good king who lives forever.

This is what it's pointing to. And so the idea of a king that reflects God on earth is the type of thing that's being looked for here. David was a man who had a heart after God's heart.

Adonijah, I wonder. It doesn't seem likely, does it, given what he is up to. But Adonijah and Solomon both understand the importance of authority.

[18 : 48] They both understand the importance of a kingly rule. Adonijah in his attempt to be king and Solomon in the fact that he would be king.

And the type of authority that they would administer would be totally dependent on the type of man who became king. There's no doubt about that. It's true that power can corrupt a good person, that a good person can be in an office and at the beginning of their office, they're very, very good.

But then the power begins to corrupt them and suddenly they've turned and they're no longer the kind of king or leader that they used to be because the power that they've got has corrupted them. And so, the kind of spiritual maturity you need so that the power doesn't go to your head or so that the power doesn't corrupt you is paramount here.

That it's your relationship with God that will dictate everything else that God gives to you. The reason why some blessings, as I've said this so many times before, the reason why some blessings don't turn up is because of the spiritual qualities you need to be able to handle them.

[19 : 57] Because too often God's people get given blessing after blessing in the Old Testament and are unable to handle them and they end up loving the blessing more than they love the God who gave it to them.

That's spiritual immaturity when that happens. And so the type of person that becomes king is going to be entirely reflective in how that kingship is going to be administered.

In other words, your spiritual condition with God has to contain enough gravity to keep your feet firmly on the floor. And yet too often, the reason why the power corrupts is because there is no spiritual gravity.

There is no spiritual depth. There is no spiritual rootedness. And so suddenly you find yourself as Solomon will be. Solomon is known as the half-hearted king because he was not like his father.

And so while Solomon starts good, and this is what we should concentrate on here, he doesn't end that way. So it's true that the type of man that you have will be reflective in the type of kingly rule that he will administer.

[21 : 09] Nathan understands this. David's mighty men understand this. Ben and I understand this. Bathsheba understands this. And of course, Solomon himself would understand this.

Having a king who rules on earth that reflects God is central to Christianity. That Jesus is God, the king in the flesh.

And that's something that we can afford to amiss. that his kingdom will come. The fullness of his kingdom will come. We even pray for God's kingdom to come on earth. It's all heading in this direction.

Too often, we have the mindset that Christians are heading in that direction. But listen to the prayer that Jesus told you to pray. Pray for God's kingdom to come. You're not moving towards it.

It is moving towards you. Understand what Jesus is asking you to believe and appreciate and know that this kingdom is coming, that this kingdom rule is going to take over to the point where the kind of mercy and grace that's experienced now will have to end when Christ finally appears.

[22 : 20] The king must be one who does the will of God on earth. Solomon is to be that man because Adonijah is not likely to be that man at all.

And here's, I think, the reason why Adonijah sets himself up as king. I think he does it for exactly the same reason why people don't follow Jesus. I think it's clear as that.

Here's the reason. Adonijah's desire to be king could be nothing more than his desire to not come under the rule of anybody. I think that's what's going on here.

Yeah, Adonijah may have wanted to become king. Okay. But I think the real reason why people want power is so that they don't have to come under somebody else's power.

I think the reason why people want to rule is so that they don't have to come under somebody else's rule. I think the reason why authority is so attractive is because people don't want to come under somebody else's authority and they want to be the person to give the directions, not take the directions.

[23 : 28] And so Adonijah here in his desire to be king may be entirely reflective of the fact that he doesn't desire to be ruled by anyone. And I think we live in a world where we serve a risen king who sits on the throne and the opposition that the king faces, King Jesus, is that nobody wants to come under his rule.

I think that's what's happening. That's definitely what's happening here. This is how Psalm 2 puts it. Why do the nations rage and the people's plot in vain?

The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his anointed. It's against God. There's no submission to his rule.

It's actually in opposition to his rule. Adonijah is doing the same before King David and before Solomon gets there, it would seem. It's interesting, isn't it, that when Solomon rides into town, let's say, on David's mule, verse 44, that this is a sign of the coming king.

And we know that because it is reflected again in the life of Jesus who does the same thing by riding in Matthew 21. And it's interesting that as Jesus rides into Jerusalem, everybody is expecting him to turn left and go into the Roman galleon and throw out the Roman rules and get rid of all the Caesars and all of that kind of thing, you know, Pontius Pilate, get rid of them.

[25 : 07] But instead, he rides into Jerusalem and turns right and enters into the temple. In other words, his concern was always getting God's people right before God, before the rest of the world.

Well, they wave him in, singing Hosanna to the highest, and then by the end of the week, they crucified him. The king rides in in humility.

And yet, by the end of the week, people have decided already that they don't want to be under the rule of this man. They don't want to be under the rule of this king.

Their desire not to be ruled is spelled out in those words when they shouted, crucify him, crucify him. Give us Barabbas and crucify him.

Well, here's Solomon's response to all of this. And here's, again, something which reflects on Christ. When Adonijah finds out that Solomon has become king, Adonijah is expecting to be put to death.

[26 : 19] But King Solomon's character is now reflected through his kingship, reflected through what he does. He rather extends mercy to Adonijah. He doesn't actually put him to death at all.

He keeps him alive. In other words, would Adonijah do the same if the roles were reversed? Well, it seems very unlikely, doesn't it? So, who is king really, really matters.

And it matters for this reason. Mercy. Solomon is a king who gives mercy to Adonijah. He is a king who extends mercy to a man who tried to set himself up as a ruler.

He extends mercy to that person. And what does that remind you of? Does it not remind you of the cross that you have all these people setting themselves up as rulers in not wanting to be ruled by Christ?

And from the cross, Jesus is saying, forgive them for they do not know what they're doing. That even from the cross, Jesus is extending mercy to those who are setting themselves up against him.

[27 : 23] And Solomon is doing exactly the same here. And this is the reminder. This is the reminder that in the same way Adonijah experiences the mercy before Solomon, every man, woman, boy, and girl in this world that rejects the rule of Christ is being shown mercy by him.

Every man, woman, boy, and girl in this world that is rejecting the rule of the Lord Jesus Christ at this present time is being shown mercy from the throne, grace from the throne.

and Jesus is looking for exactly the same thing that Solomon is looking for. That Adonijah is shown this mercy on the basis that he turns around, that no wickedness would be found in him.

And here we have Jesus sat on his throne recognizing that there are wicked people but there's a way to escape that wickedness by turning to him in faith and repentance and belief. And that's what Jesus has this period of time for.

That as he sits on the throne patiently, you have a time of mercy being extended throughout the world for wicked people of which I was one to give their lives, to turn their lives over to the king.

[28 : 46] Well, here's the exhortation. Kings are national, but not with Jesus. kings extend their role from taking over nations out of their own nation, but not so with Jesus.

Jesus has been given all authority over every nation. And Jesus being king doesn't mean that he's king of Christianity. It doesn't mean that he's king of the church, as if somehow his kingship is limited or even private.

It's neither limited or private. Rather, his kingdom rule extends throughout the entire world. It's misunderstood often because of how patient he is and how merciful he is.

And he tells his people in his kingdom to go out into the nations. Why? Because they all belong to him. There's no power play here by Jesus. All of it belongs to him.

It's all under his rule already. But here we sit with a king who sits on his throne in a world that opposes him.

[29 : 55] Here we live under the rule of Christ that is rejected in the world. Here we live under the authority which covers everybody, but which is largely ignored by a lot of people.

And so remember how God works. You have to remember how God works. He works with Solomon this way and with the Christian this way. It is the inevitable will of God being fulfilled through opposition.

The inevitable will of God through opposition. The inevitable will and the reality of the rule of God is being extended every single day.

Adonijah is allowed to go back to his house because of the inevitable will of God and the mercy of God. And men and women, boys and girls, now who are under the rule of Christ, of which the whole world is, are being extended mercy because the inevitable is always going to be the inevitable.

But it's the inevitable through difficulty that we live in a world of opposition against our king, or rather opposition against the king of the world to whom we belong.

[31 : 07] Here's the final thought, and an important one I feel, a really important one. in the beginning, David's about to die. And that seems to me like an inevitable thing.

It's also inevitable that if Adonijah is wicked and carries on with wicked ways, that he also will die. So there's inevitability there as well.

And what this means is that death itself is inevitable. However you go, cold on your bed, in the comfort of your home, or by the sword like Adonijah could have at this very point, however you go, death is inevitable.

And because it is inevitable, it is something that we have to find a way of making through. How do we escape death? If it's inevitable, how do we escape that?

Well, in the same way Solomon extends mercy from the throne to Adonijah by not putting him to death, we need to remember that the only way we get to live is because the king from his cross

extends mercy out to us, not putting us to death, but putting himself to death instead.

[32 : 32] That's the only way we get to live. The only way we get to live is because the true and good king extends his mercy out to us who at one point lived in total rebellion to him.

And so, like Adonijah living under the rule of Solomon, has to be mindful of the fact that Solomon is watching him. He has to be mindful of the fact that he has the eyes of the king on his life.

And so, our message to the world is the same message that it is to us, that we live in a world where we have the eyes of the true king on us all the time. But in that time, we are receiving mercy because of the cross.

That's the king that we belong to. Amen.