

Adonijah's Attempted Coup D'état (971t BC)

1 Kings 1:1–37

Abishag Provides Warmth for David

1 Now King David had become old, advanced in years, and they covered him with garments, but he was not warm.

2 His servants said to him, "Let them search for a young virgin for my lord the king, and let her stand before the king. Let her be of use for him, and let her lie in your lap that my lord the king may be warm."

3 So they sought a beautiful young woman in all the territory of Israel, and they found Abishag the Shunnamite and brought her to the king.

4 Now the young woman was very beautiful; she was of use for the king, and she served him, but the king did not have sexual relations with her.

Adonijah Lays the Groundwork for His Coup D'état

5 Now Adonijah the son of Haggith was exalting himself, saying, "I will be king," so he prepared for himself a chariot and horsemen and fifty men running before him.

6 His father did not rebuke him at any time *by* saying, "Why did you do so?" Now he was also very handsome of appearance; she had borne him after Absalom.

7 He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest, and they supported Adonijah.

8 But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty warriors were David's; they were not with Adonijah.

Adonijah Makes His Move

9 And Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened animals near the stone of Zohelath, which is beside En Rogel. He invited all of his brothers, the sons of the king, and all the men of Judah, the servants of the king.

10 But he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the mighty warriors or Solomon his brother.

Nathan the Prophet Uses Bathsheba to Inform David

11 Then Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, but our lord David does not know?"

12 So then, come, let me advise you please, that you may save your life and the life of your son, Solomon.

13 Come, go to King David and say to him, 'Have you not, my lord the king, sworn to your servant, "Surely Solomon your son shall become king after me. And he will sit on my throne"? But why is Adonijah king?'

14 While you are still there speaking with the king, I will enter after you, and I will confirm your words."

15 So Bathsheba went to the king in the private room. Now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunnamite was attending the king.

16 Bathsheba knelt and bowed down before the king, and the king asked, "What do you want?"

17 She said to him, "My lord, you swore by Yahweh your God to your servant, 'Solomon your son surely shall become king after me, and he will sit upon my throne!'

18 But now, look! Adonijah has become king! And now, my lord the king, you do not know!

19 He has sacrificed oxen and sheep and fattened animals in abundance, and he has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, Joab the commander of the army, but Solomon your servant he did not invite.

20 But as for you, my lord the king, the eyes of all of Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

21 It shall be that when my lord the king sleeps with his ancestors, I and my son Solomon will be *considered as sinners*."

22 While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came *in*.

23 They told the king, "Nathan the prophet is here." He came into the presence of the king and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

24 Nathan said, "My lord the king, have you said, 'Adonijah shall be king after me and he shall sit on my throne'?"

25 "For he went down today and sacrificed oxen, sheep, and fattened animals in abundance. He invited all the sons of the king, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest, and look, they are eating and drinking before him. They have also said, "Long live King Adonijah!

26 But me, your servant, Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Solomon your servant he did not invite.

27 If it was from my lord the king that this thing has happened, *then all is well*, but if not, you must let your servants know who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him."

David Takes Action

28 Then King David answered and said, "Summon Bathsheba for me." Then she came before the king and stood in his presence.

29 Then the king swore and said, "As Yahweh lives, who has saved my life from all trouble,

30 surely as I swore to you by Yahweh the God of Israel, saying, 'Solomon your son shall surely be king after me, and he shall sit on

my throne in my place,' surely I shall do so this *very* day."

31 Then Bathsheba knelt with her face to the ground and did obeisance to the king, and she said, "May my lord, King David, live forever."

32 Then King David said, "Summon Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada," and they came before the king.

33 The king said to them, "Take with you all the servants of your lord, and let them make Solomon my son ride on my mule, and bring him down to Gihon.

34 Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there as king over Israel. Blow on the trumpet and say, 'Long live King Solomon!'

35 Then you shall go up after him, and let him come and sit on my throne; he shall be king in my place. I have appointed him to be leader over Israel and Judah."

36 Then Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! So may Yahweh, the God of my lord the king, confirm it!

37 As Yahweh was with my lord the king, so may he be with Solomon and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David."

Solomon's First Crowning (971t BC)

1 Kings 1:38–53

Solomon is Crowned King of Israel

38 Then Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites, and the Pelethites went down, and they let Solomon ride on the mule of King David, and they brought him to Gihon.

39 Then Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent, and he anointed Solomon. They blew on the trumpet, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!"

40 All the people went up after him, and the people were playing on the flutes and rejoicing *with* great joy, and the earth shook with their noise.

Adonijah Panics When He Realizes Solomon Has Been Anointed King

41 And Adonijah and all the invited guests who were with him heard *it*. Now they were finished eating when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet and said, "Why is there such a noise in the city?"

42 While he was still speaking, suddenly Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came. Adonijah said, "Come, for you are a man of valor, and you bring good news."

43 Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "But our lord King David has made Solomon king!

44 He sent Zadok the priest with the king, and Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites, and the Pelethites; they made him ride on the king's mule.

45 Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anointed him as king at Gihon, and they have gone up from there rejoicing. The city has gone wild; this *is* the sound which you heard.

46 And also, Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom!

47 The servants of the king also came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, 'Your God has made the name of Solomon better than your name and his throne greater than your throne!' So the king worshiped on the bed.

48 What is more, the king said, 'May Yahweh the God of Israel be blessed, who has given this day one sitting on my throne, and my eyes are seeing *it!*'"

49 Then all the invited guests who *were* for Adonijah trembled and got up and went, each on his way.

50 Adonijah was afraid because of Solomon, and he got up and went and grasped the horns of the altar.

Solomon Shows Adonijah Mercy

51 Solomon was told, "Look, Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon, and he has grasped the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me first that he will surely not kill his servant with the sword!'"

52 Solomon said, "If he is a son of noble character, not a hair of his *head* will fall to the ground, but if evil is found in him, then he will die."

53 Then King Solomon sent and brought him down from upon the altar. He came and did obeisance to King Solomon. Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

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Chronological Notes

- 1) For the dates of the kings of Israel and Judah, I will be following the work of Rodger C. Young:
 - A) “When Did Solomon Die?” *JETS* 46/4 (Dec 2003) 589–603.
 - B) “When Did Jerusalem Fall?” *JETS* 47/1 (Mar 2004) 21–38.
 - C) “When Was Samaria Captured? The Need for Precision in Biblical Chronologies,” *JETS* 47/4 (Dec 2004) 577–95.
 - D) “Tables of Reign Lengths from the Hebrew Court Recorders,” *JETS* 48/2 (June 2005) 225–48.

- 2) If a chronological date ends with a “t” (e.g., 971t BC), it indicates that the calendar year is reckoned from Tishri to Tishri (from the seventh month to the seventh month). If a date ends with an “n” (e.g., 841n BC), it indicates that the calendar year is reckoned from Nisan to Nisan (from the first month to the first month).