

1 Kings 2:1-12
October 13, 2024

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: How many of you have done an estate plan such that if the Lord took you home today, your wishes would be well-known, and the beneficiaries of your assets would be clearly stated? [Yes or No]

Q: Let me take it a step further. If you could share a pre-written message to your kids or spouse or other family members to be shared upon your death, what would the content look like? What would you say to them? [Let people engage]

Transition: During the times we allow ourselves to think about our own death that we know is coming, we face the tension or the obligation to create an estate plan that allows for a smooth transition of assets to our designated beneficiaries. And some of us may decide we want to leave behind a love letter, or a word of encouragement, or a video expressing our love, care and concern for our recipients.

In today's text, we see David who is getting ready to die. And he has a set of instructions he's giving to Solomon who is now the king. David shares words of encouragement and admonitions to succeed as king to Solomon. But David adds a twist. He gives Solomon a set of instructions regarding enemies that represent **unfinished business** of David! I wonder how Solomon feels about that! Let's read the story and see what we can learn from it.

BOOK:

David's Charge to Solomon

2 When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son.

²“I am about to go the way of all the earth,” he said. “So be strong, show yourself a man,³ and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in his ways, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go,⁴ and that the LORD may keep his promise to me: ‘If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’

⁵“Now you yourself know what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me—what he did to the two commanders of Israel's armies, Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether. He killed them, shedding their blood in peacetime as if in battle, and with that blood stained the belt around his waist and the sandals on his feet.⁶ Deal with him according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to the grave (Sheol) in peace.

⁷“But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai of Gilead and let them be among those who eat at your table. They stood by me when I fled from your brother Absalom.

⁸“And remember, you have with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, who called down bitter curses on me the day I went to Mahanaim. When he came down to meet me at

the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD: ‘I will not put you to death by the sword.’⁹ But now, do not consider him innocent. You are a man of wisdom; you will know what to do to him. Bring his gray head down to the grave in blood.”

¹⁰Then David rested with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. ¹¹He had reigned forty years over Israel—seven years in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem. ¹²So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What did you most like about this passage? What resonated with you? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you least like about this passage? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you find in this passage that you didn’t understand? [Let people engage]

Q: What do we learn about Jesus in this passage? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

Whether it is the Davidic king or we as a disciple of Jesus, true stability only comes through obedience to the Lord’s commands. What is true on the personal level holds also for the people of God as a corporate body. Kingdom stability is not anchored in our experiences or profession, nor in our education or pedigree, nor in our ministerial achievement, but only in obedience to the clear word we have long possessed.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today’s Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament (1 Kings 2)*. Victor Books.

II. Solomon Executes God's Wrath (2)

A. David's last counsels (vv. 1–11).

See also 1 Chron. 22–29. David emphasized the spiritual before the political, for he wanted his son to walk in the ways of the Lord. He admonished him to study and obey the Law (see Deut. 17:14–20 and Josh. 1:8). God had made wonderful promises concerning Solomon (2 Sam. 7:8–17), but He could not fulfill them apart from Solomon's faith and obedience. David also reminded Solomon of the enemies that would oppose him and the friends that would assist him.

Merrill, E. H. (1985). *2 Samuel*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, pp. 490-491) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

3. DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON (2:1–9)

The amount of time that elapsed between the events of chapter 1 and this incident is not revealed, but in light of David's poor health and old age (1:1–4, 15, 47) his charge probably was given shortly after Solomon's anointing.

a. Solomon's relationship to God (2:1–4)

2:1–4. The first part of David's **charge** to **his son** concerned what was of primary importance.

To go the way of all the earth is a picturesque description of death. **David** was a realist; he knew he would soon **die** so he made plans which included counseling his successor. His charge is reminiscent of Moses' charge to Joshua (Deut. 31:23).

Solomon was encouraged to **be strong** to keep the Word of the Lord. He should **show** himself to be **a man** by being brave to stand for the right and against the wrong. He should **observe what the LORD ... requires** in the sense of obeying Yahweh. What the Lord requires is to **walk in His ways**, namely, to **keep His decrees** (ordinances), **commands ... laws, and requirements** (testimonies). These four words (decrees, commands, laws, requirements) refer to the different kinds of precepts in the Mosaic **Law**. Obedience to the propositional revelation of God would guarantee success, David said. God's blessing depended on His people's obedience to the Law **of Moses**. Solomon's personal obedience would result in God's fulfilling **His promise** that David's **descendants** would forever occupy **the throne of Israel** (2 Sam. 7:12–16).

b. Solomon's dealings with men (2:5–9)

2:5–6. David's instruction to put **Joab** to death did not manifest a vindictive spirit or a cowardly refusal to execute his commander himself. Joab had murdered **two commanders ... Abner** and **Amasa** (cf. comments on 1:7). David described the **blood** of these two innocent victims as permanently staining Joab's **belt** and **sandals**; the blood clung to him to demonstrate

his guilt. In mercy David had not executed the punishment that Joab's actions deserved, probably because Joab had shown David much loyalty and had served him well. But justice had to be done and Solomon had to do it. Joab had been living on borrowed time; soon he had to pay for his crimes.

2:7. **Barzillai of Gilead** (east of the Jordan River) had sustained David and his men **when** they were fleeing **from ... Absalom** (2 Sam. 19:31–39). David charged Solomon to sustain Barzillai's **sons** at his **table** as Barzillai and his sons had provided sustenance for David in the wilderness. David wanted Barzillai's sons to reap what their father had sown.

2:8–9. **Shimei** a **Benjamite** had not only cursed David but, more seriously, had threatened David's life (2 Sam. 16:11). Evidently David had reason to believe that Shimei would again strike at his life. Solomon extended grace to Shimei, but later the Benjamite proved faithless and, like Adonijah, sealed his own doom (1 Kings 2:36–46).

4. DAVID'S DEATH (2:10–12)

2:10. The picturesque phrase **rested with his fathers** beautifully describes David's death and suggests that his activity did not cease forever. Indeed, the bodies of all believers who die simply "rest" until they are resurrected to live with God and serve Him eternally. **The City of David** (cf. 3:1; 8:1; 9:24; 11:27; 15:8, 24; 22:50) is Jerusalem which **David** captured from the Jebusites and made his capital. In his day Jerusalem was quite small and occupied a peninsula of high ground bounded on the east, south, and west by valleys. Solomon enlarged the city to the north later and other kings expanded it even farther.

2:11–12. David **reigned 40 years over Israel** (1011–971 B.C.). For **7 years** his capital was **Hebron** until he moved to **Jerusalem** from which he ruled for 33 years. He was about 70 years old when he died (2 Sam. 5:4). David is remarkable in many respects: he was a warrior, poet, musician, military genius, administrator, and man of God. He experienced outstanding success and crushing failure. He extended the borders and influence of his nation greatly.

He was greatly loved and greatly hated during his lifetime. But perhaps his most significant characteristic was his heart for God. His son **Solomon** succeeded him and enjoyed a reign of peace.

Mathews, K. A. (1998). The Historical Books. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), Holman Concise Bible Commentary (p. 135). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Solomon's Kingdom (2:1–46). David's deathbed instructions warned Solomon that only obedience to the Lord would secure his kingdom. He advised Solomon to execute Joab for murdering Abner and Amasa (see 2 Sam. 3:22–27; 20:4–10) and to deal swiftly with Shimei for his treachery (see 2 Sam. 16:5–14). David died after his forty-year rule (1011–971 B.C.), but the kingdom was secure in the hands of his successor.

Tatum, S. L. (1972). 2 Samuel. In H. F. Paschall & H. H. Hobbs (Eds.), The Teacher's Bible Commentary (pp. 194–195). Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers.

The Death of David (1 Kings 2:1–12)

The passage—When David realized he could not live much longer, he called Solomon to make his last wishes known. He challenged the new king to be true to God, to be strong, and to be courageous. He promised that God would keep his covenant and that there would always be a king on the throne of Israel.

He asked Solomon to punish Joab for the murders of Abner and Amasa. He urged him to be gracious to those who had been loyal to David his father. He requested that Shimei be punished for his disloyalty.

David died and was buried in the City of David. Solomon's kingdom was firmly established. He set about to deal with his enemies and rivals.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). (1 Kings 2:1-12). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

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