



THE BOOK OF KINGS

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Topic: David to Solomon

David's Reign: 1010–970 BC

Father: Jesse

Verses: 1 Kings 1:10–12

Dynasty: Davidic

Synopsis: David is the second king of the United Kingdom of Israel. David was the youngest of Jesse's kids. He was anointed king by Samuel after Saul, the first king, disobeyed God and was rejected as king over Israel by God. God selected David to be king and enacted a promise toward David declaring that his family, although disjointed, will never lack a king to sit on the throne.

The Book of Kings begins at the end of David's life. We are introduced to David on his deathbed. David succumbs to the weaknesses associated with old age, and requires special assistance. This is how the book decides to introduce kingship to the reader. David is the figurehead for what a king was supposed to be:

Consider the concluding formula given to one of Judah's kings (1 Kings 15:3–5):

He walked in all the sins of his father which he had committed before him; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, like the heart of his father David. But for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to raise up his son after him and to establish Jerusalem; because David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite.

We learn a few things about David's reputation from this passage:

1. David's heart was wholly devoted to the Lord (Acts 13:22)
2. God made a promise to David (1 Kings 11:31–39)
3. David did what was right in the sight of the Lord, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite (2 Samuel 11–12; Matthew 1:6)

Discussion question: Was David perfect? Did David do anything wrong other than the episode with Bathsheba/Uriah?

Kingship Command: Deuteronomy 17:14–20

1. He must be appointed as king by God
2. Must be an Israelite
3. Must not be a foreigner
4. He must not amass horses from Egypt
5. He must not have many wives
6. He must not acquire much gold

A real world application of these prohibitions comes from David's family. David had many wives and many other children. While David is on his death bed, one of his son's, Adonijah, makes himself into a self-proclaimed king. Adonijah was born after Absalom (1 Kings 1:6). His mother is Haggith.

Commentary note: The fourth son of David by his wife Haggith in Hebron, while David was king of Judah (2 Sam 3:4; 1 Chr 3:1–2); and heir apparent to the throne at the time of Solomon's accession. Adonijah's personal ambition led to his own demise in a story that echoes that of the rebellion and death of his elder brother Absalom.¹

Adonijah gathered a handful of supporters:

- Joab the son of Zeruah— See below
- Abiathar- The priest

Those who were not with Adonijah and were not invited to his coronation.

- Zadok the priest- Both Abiathar and Zadok were priests. Zadok was loyal to David.
- Benaiah the son of Jehoiada- Jehoiada was a chief priest (1 Chronicles 27:5; 11:22). Benaiah was from a Judahite city called Kabzeel. Benaiah became the commander of the Cherethites and Pelethites, who were a mercenary group in David's bodyguard (2 Samuel 8:18; 20:23; 23:20–23; 1 Chronicles 18:17).
- Nathan the prophet
- Shimei- (not the one who threw rocks)
- Rei
- David's mighty men- 2 Samuel 23:8–39 (Uriah was part of this group before his death, vs 39).

David's Wives

1. Michal— 1 Sam 18:20
2. Abigail— 1 Sam 25:10–11
3. Ahinoam— 1 Sam 25:43
4. Maakah— 2 Samuel 3:2–5; 1 Chron 3:1–3
5. Haggith
6. Abital
7. Eglah
8. Bathsheba
9. Other wives (2 Samuel 5:13)

*Description does not mean prescription

Description: David had man wives

Prescription: God did not command polygamy, nor did he support it (see "Kingship Command")

Children of David:

2 Samuel 3:2–6 lists David's sons:

1. Amnon of Ahinoam of Jezreel

¹ D. L. Christensen, "Adonijah (Person), *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, Vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 75.

2. Chileab of Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel
3. Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmi king of Geshure
4. Adonijah the son of Haggith
5. Shephatiah the son of Abital
6. Ithream of Eglah (David's wife)

David's Children (1 Chronicles 3:1–9)

- 1 Now these were the sons of David who were born to him in Hebron: the firstborn *was* Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; the second *was* Daniel, by Abigail the Carmelitess;
- 2 the third *was* Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmi king of Geshur; the fourth *was* Adonijah the son of Haggith;
 - 3 the fifth *was* Shephatiah, by Abital; the sixth *was* Ithream, by his wife Eglah.
 - 4 Six were born to him in Hebron, and there he reigned seven years and six months. And in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years.
 - 5 These were born to him in Jerusalem: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan and Solomon, four, by Bath-shua the daughter of Ammiel;
 - 6 and Ithar, Elishama, Eliphelet,
 - 7 Nogah, Nepheg and Japhia,
 - 8 Elishama, Eliada and Eliphelet, nine.
 - 9 All *these were* the sons of David, besides the sons of the concubines; and Tamar *was* their sister.

David's Plans to Solomon

Before David dies, he tells Solomon to do a few things to his estate.

- #1: Joab the son of Zeruiah
 - The problem: "Avenge in time of peace for blood that had been shed in war, and putting the blood of war on the belt around his waist on the sandals on his feet" (1 Kings 2:5).
 - Abner the son of Ner— The commander of David's army. Use to be chief commander of David's might men. He went rogue and killed Abner out of revenge. Abner, who helped appoint Saul's son Ish-bosheth as king, also killed Joab's brother. Joab sought revenge. David was displeased with Joab's behavior.
 - Amasa the son of Jether— Absalom put Amasa over the army instead of Joab. Amasa was the son of an Ishmaelite, Ithra, who had married Abigail the daughter of Nahash, sister of Zeruiah, Joab's mother (i.e., Joab's cousin, 1 Chronicles 2:16–17).
 - Advice: Act therefore according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to Sheol in peace.
- #2 Sons of Barzillai the Gileadite
 - Advice: "Deal loyally. . . and let them be among those who eat at your table, for with such loyalty they met me when I fled from Absalom your brother" (1 Kings 1:7).
- #3 Shimei the son of Gera (see commentary note below)

- Advice: “Do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man. You will know what you ought to do to him, and you shall bring his gray head down with blood to Sheol” (1 Kings 2:9).

Commentary note: The other Shimei who stands out in the Bible is Shimei son of Gera, who was a part of King Saul’s clan. When King David was forced to flee from his son [Absalom](#), who coveted his father’s throne, Shimei met the king along the way: “As King David approached Bahurim, a man from the same clan as Saul’s family came out from there. His name was Shimei son of Gera, and he cursed as he came out. He pelted David and all the king’s officials with stones, though all the troops and the special guard were on David’s right and left” ([2 Samuel 16:5–6](#)). Shimei blamed David for King Saul’s death during a battle with the [Philistines](#). Saul had, in fact, fallen on his own sword to escape capture by the enemy (see [1 Chronicles 10:1–4](#)); however, Shimei accused David of murder and announced that this was the reason Absalom was taking over the kingdom.

David’s men wanted to kill Shimei then and there, but David, in his despair, believed the Lord had sent Shimei to curse him ([2 Samuel 16:11–12](#)), and he refused to allow his men to kill Shimei. David and his party resumed their journey, and Shimei continued to follow, cursing and throwing stones and dirt at them (verse 13).

Eventually, Absalom’s rebellion was put down, Absalom was killed, and King David was restored to his throne. Shimei knew that he was now on shaky ground, so he gathered with him over a thousand Benjamites and went to meet David ([2 Samuel 19:16–17](#)). Falling on his face, Shimei apologized for his past behavior and begged the king not to hold it against him (verses 18–20). Again King David’s men asked to kill Shimei, but again David refused and gave Shimei his oath that he would not kill him.

It seems that Shimei was a thoroughly despicable man, however, and that he persisted in his opposition to David. On his deathbed, David charged Solomon with the task of executing Shimei: “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” ([1 Kings 2:9](#)). The only reason Shimei was still alive was that David was honoring his oath. Solomon showed Shimei mercy, giving him one final chance: as long as Shimei remained in Jerusalem, he would live (verses 36–37). Shimei agreed to the pact, but three years later he left the city. When King Solomon found out, he called for Shimei and told him, “You know in your heart all the wrong you did to my father David. Now the Lord will repay you for your wrongdoing” (verse 44). Shimei was then executed (verse 46).