

JUNE 6

Whoa! You did it again. You have now read fourteen books of the Bible, plus you are nearing the end of Psalms. I'd recommend a Caramel Frappuccino with an extra shot of espresso blended in.

1 Kings 1

Vs. 1-4 This is letting us know that David was getting to the end. If this was his last year, he was 69 or 70. Since David became king at 30 and reigned 40 years, the math is easy, even for me. There will be some overlap with Solomon; because, as we will see, David had a lot of instructions to pass on to him.

David was an old 70, by anyone's standards. The weight of ruling might have done this to him, but I think it was the weight of the damage he had caused in the lives of others. If any of us had to bear the body count of those who died for his sin, the one son raping a daughter, the other son killing the other son, etc., etc., etc., it would have aged us too.

We don't hear this until later, but, obviously, Abishag became David's wife. Yet the fact that they never *knew* each other added an interesting technicality that will appear later. But she was still a king's wife, and the connection to her could make someone eligible for a right to the throne.

Vs. 5-10 I'm not sure what happened here, because it was common for a king to make his son co-regent and they would reign together for a while. That sounds like a wise thing to do and looks like discipleship to me. David apparently didn't do this and in the absence of his leadership and guidance, people looked at the tottering old guy (with his human hot water bottle) and took the leadership into their own hands. It would seem that David's decline in his late 60's was pretty severe. None of what Adonijah did in this event could have happened in a short time. It all took planning. Also it is obvious from what is said here and later, that it was known that Solomon had been chosen by David and God to be king. It seems then that God allowed, and would use, this situation to expose Solomon's enemies and remove them.

V. 6 Notice, it is the Spirit who is making this editorial judgment. You wouldn't call David a model father. It seems to me that once David had the promise that one of his sons would sit on the throne, and then after the sin with Bathsheba and Uriah, his hope for his sons was somehow intensified by fear and guilt. It seems he didn't punish Amnon, thinking that Amnon would be king. Then David allowed Absalom to go wild and still hoped Absalom would be king. And now Adonijah, his next oldest, received no guidance and the situation became very dysfunctional. I wonder if in his regret and guilt he doubted that God would fulfill the promise. His desire for his sons to follow him on the throne seems more of the flesh than of the Spirit, especially when it keeps mentioning that they were tall and handsome. Didn't he seem concerned with their spiritual qualifications?

(As a side note, later we will see the evil and spiritually confused Ahab select one of his sons to be his heir and give his other sons cities to rule in other parts of northern Israel. This is probably what David should have done.)

Vs. 7-8 But God in His sovereignty used this leadership vacuum to allow sides to become visible. Joab wasn't listed among the mighty men; he was dishonest and he was very self-serving. I don't know what is going on with Abiathar; but his family was destroyed, partly because of David's lie, not telling them what danger they would be in if they helped him. That might have influenced Abiathar, or it might just have been that these men rejected the choice of Solomon because of the circumstances around Solomon's birth. Who knows?

Notice that the mighty men, including Joab's own brother, were not part of this rebellion and they were not invited. It shows that THE THIRTY were deeply loyal to David. The fact that Solomon wasn't invited means they knew he had been chosen to be king.

Vs. 9-10 This was Adonijah's own coronation/rebellion just outside of the city. Everyone important who was not invited was in danger of death. If this event went unanswered, there would be no way to undo it.

Vs. 11-14 Nathan was apparently nudged by the Lord in the eleventh hour. It was time to act. The rebellion had revealed itself and Solomon's kingship had to be confirmed. If you want something to make you think, do a search on this prophet Nathan; and look at all the "red letter" events in David's life, in which Nathan was involved. I'd like to say something wise here, but I just saw this myself and I'm still pondering the meaning of it.

Vs. 15-27 The purpose of these announcements, first by Bathsheba and then by Nathan, was to rally David. This did to David what the attractive, human hot water bottle couldn't do. It got his blood boiling. Now and to his death, David would be energetic and go out with his sandals on.

One of the things that is playing a role here is the word of judgment that came through Nathan, that the sword would never depart from David's house. David saw that it was happening again. Soon someone would be dead, and he was right.

Vs. 28-31 We don't have any record of God or David saying that Solomon would be the next king. It did say that Solomon was loved by the Lord. Maybe as a result of that early prophetic recognition, David changed Solomon's name to Jedidiah and knew he would be king. If you look at 1 Chronicles 22, it looks like David was collecting stuff for the temple and drawing up plans; he was coaching Solomon. That might have taken time. So it is possible that before David became bedridden, he had promised the kingdom to Solomon, but then had gotten very sick. The other possibility is that 1 Chronicles 22 came after this incident, and David rallied and enjoyed better health until he died.

Vs. 32-40 Whereas Adonijah's plan took some time and counsel, this plan got David's blood moving and progressed very quickly. Solomon and many others were in danger. Talk about cutting through the red tape. They called the city together. Solomon rode to the tabernacle, and the official trumpet that designated holy days was used. After this, Solomon went to David's throne. Although this coronation was thrown together, it was and looked fully official. From 1 Chronicles 23, you get the idea that there was a second coronation later, after David put his sandals on and was back on his feet.

Vs. 41-53 The fact that this was a rebellion is shown by how everyone with Adonijah reacted when they knew that Solomon had been made king. Oops! They knew they had disobeyed and been discovered and judged. They knew that Solomon was to have been king.

V. 50 In the tabernacle was the altar where they burned the sacrifices to obtain mercy from God. Adonijah went in and grabbed the corners of the altar at one end and sent word that he wanted to receive mercy.

Vs. 51-53 Solomon's answer and actions show that he had been groomed for the kingship and was ready to rule. Solomon also knew that this had been rebellious and would have meant his death and the death of his mother. Adonijah deserved to die, but Solomon showed him mercy.

This was one of those situations where you see neglect and a lack of leadership and wonder if it really makes sense to wait on God. But here, Solomon did the right thing by waiting, even though his life was in danger. And suddenly, one afternoon, boom, he was king. God is sovereign. If something is His will, He will throw the party together at the last minute and it will look good. That's a good thing for disciples to learn.

Acts 4

Vs. 1-4 At this time, the priests were of the party of the Sadducees. The double irritant was not only the preaching of Jesus, but the preaching of the resurrection. The Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection and that's why they were "sad, you see." They were really sad that the guy they had killed was back.

V. 4 This appears to be 5000 additional believers. That would make about 8000 men (plus women and children?) or about a third of the population of Jerusalem. Again, with the baptisms and all, this would have been a very public, visual and exciting happening in the city. So while Peter and John were hauled off to jail, the other ten apostles, and probably lots of disciples, were baptizing the new believers. This was great teamwork.

Vs. 5-12 This again is the fulfillment of what Jesus had told them about not being anxious about what to say, because it would be the Spirit of their Father speaking through them. Wow, what a message. Notice that Peter and the Spirit put the emphasis on what caused a lame man to be healed. This lame man had been a fixture at the temple, and all the priests, Sadducees, Pharisees and all the people knew him. This wasn't a discussion about opinion; it was obvious that a miracle had taken place.

V. 11 On the Wednesday before He died, Jesus had quoted these words to the chief priests, scribes and the elders of the people. Now they are hearing them from this Galilean fisherman.

V. 12 This is an immortal saying from the Spirit through Peter. This declaration of salvation in Christ alone is one worth memorizing.

Vs. 13-22 Luke makes a point in Acts to show how often the disciples are (Christianity is) pronounced innocent. This is the first public trial of the disciples, and the leaders have nothing to say. You can bet that word of this got around town. This would almost be the same as the authorities approving what they did.

Vs. 13-14 This sounds so much like Jesus that it must have seemed eerie for them. They couldn't guess that it was really the same Spirit speaking.

V. 19 It is interesting that they learned from Jesus not to give direct, defiant answers. They knew to turn the situation around to make the leaders have to make a decision. Obviously it is more important to obey God. And, obviously it was the Spirit teaching them what to say.

Vs. 22-23 Again, the Father had the Son walk by this lame man for a reason. In fact, God had everyone walk by him. They noticed him to the point of complete familiarity. Now that he was healed, the people were rejoicing and the leaders were in shock. This should give us some patience to allow God to do His work, even if we think something is unfair. We don't know what God is planning down the road.

Vs. 23-31 What a great prayer and understanding of how the Lord was using them.

Vs. 25-26 This sure gives you an appreciation of Psalm 2. And it is awe-inspiring to think of when the Lord wrote Psalm 2 through David, and when He fulfilled it. His judgments are unsearchable and His planning is inscrutable.

V. 31 I've never been in a prayer meeting where we had an earthquake. They already had the Spirit dwelling in them. This filling of the Spirit is like what we've seen with Samson. It was a special, temporary empowering to do the task before them.

Vs. 32-37 So Jerusalem had been filled with pilgrims, people who had come to the Feast of the Harvest. Now, apparently the week-long feast was over, but those who had come to Christ wanted to stay and learn more about Christ from the apostles. They couldn't learn online, and they had only brought so much money and there were no ATMs. It was primitive. This is where the great need came from.

Again, we wonder today why this isn't always happening; but if 3000 people from some primitive land, like Canada, came to your church this weekend and all trusted in Christ so that everyone in your church was somehow moved by seeing so many Canadians come to Christ, they would naturally join in to help them. Eh? And if these 3000 people couldn't go back to their land, because beavers took over or something like that, and you had to put them up, you and your church would do the same as the believers in Acts. Eh? But, it would be because of the Spirit and because of the mission. Eh? Take away the Spirit and the mission and the bearing of fruit and

this call to unity becomes contrived. No one really gets unified around fellowship dinners and worship services, but that's practically the primary focus of some churches. Eh?

V. 36 Enter Barnabas. There are lots of little things going on here. He was a Jew with a good pedigree from the tribe of Levi; but he was from Cyprus, meaning unlike the Jews in Jerusalem, he lived with and rubbed shoulders with Gentiles. Barnabas would become a great encourager of the apostles and he would "disciple" the apostle Paul. But the reason we are meeting Barnabas here is because his generosity led to a situation that would become the first instance of vying for status in the church and it would show the first example of church discipline.

Psalm 124

This was a good reminder to the people coming to worship in Jerusalem, leaving their homes and fields unguarded, that their hope of protection was in the Lord. It was a call for Israel to remember God's faithfulness to His promise.

Vs. 1-5 Israel's history from the death of Joshua to the kingdom of David was one of loss and oppression. God helped, but He helped in spite of the sin of the people. Still, He remained faithful to His promise to Abraham. If the Lord had not been on Israel's side, they would have been devoured.

Vs. 6-7 This is the point of the song. It prepared the people to bless the Lord out of a sense of deep gratitude.

V. 8 Amen, and we need to remember this too. David knew this, forgot it during the taking of the census, but lived his last days knowing that God had delivered him out of every danger.

As disciples, we can think our actions make things happen, and imagine that how we zig or zag saves us from danger. It is really all in the Lord's hands.

Proverbs 16:24

I keep trying to learn this one. And then Paul and the Spirit say in Ephesians 4:29, *Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.* So often my words are about myself.