

17.39 David's Successor (1 Kings 1:1–53)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

Brackets [. . .] indicate a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud, or they show answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- Felt bed; felt altar with horns

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *horns of the altar*: horn-like projections at the four corners of the altar of burnt offering; someone taking hold of them showed by this action that he was asking for mercy—not to be punished

Scripture: (ESV)

1 Kings 1:1 Now King David was old and advanced in years. And although they covered him with clothes, he could not get warm. 2 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.” 3 So they sought for a beautiful young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. 4 The young woman was very beautiful, and she was of service to the king and attended to him, but the king knew her not.

5 Now Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, “I will be king.” And he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. 6 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. 7 He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah and with Abiathar the priest. And they followed Adonijah and helped him. 8 But Zadok the priest and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and Nathan the prophet and Shimei and Rei and David’s mighty men were not with Adonijah.

9 Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen, and fattened cattle by the Serpent’s Stone, which is beside En-rogel, and he invited all his brothers, the king’s sons, and all the royal officials of Judah, 10 but he did not invite Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the mighty men or Solomon his brother.

11 Then Nathan said to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, “Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king and David our lord does not know it? 12 Now therefore come, let me give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. 13 Go in at once to King David, and say to him, ‘Did you not, my lord the king, swear to your servant, saying, Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne? Why then is Adonijah king?’ 14 Then while you are still speaking with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words.”

15 So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber (now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was attending to the king). 16 Bathsheba bowed and paid homage to the king, and the king said, “What do you desire?” 17 She said to him, “My lord, you swore to your servant by the Lord your God, saying, ‘Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.’ 18 And now, behold, Adonijah is king, although you, my lord the king, do not know it. 19 He has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the commander of the army, but Solomon your servant he has not invited. 20 And now, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. 21 Otherwise it will come to pass, when my lord the king sleeps with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be counted offenders.”

22 While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. 23 And they told the king, “Here is Nathan the prophet.” And when he came in before the king, he bowed before the king, with his face to the

ground. 24 And Nathan said, “My lord the king, have you said, ‘Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne’? 25 For he has gone down this day and has sacrificed oxen, fattened cattle, and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king’s sons, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest. And behold, they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’ 26 But me, your servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon he has not invited. 27 Has this thing been brought about by my lord the king and you have not told your servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?”

28 Then King David answered, “Call Bathsheba to me.” So she came into the king’s presence and stood before the king. 29 And the king swore, saying, “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my soul out of every adversity, 30 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.” 31 Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground and paid homage to the king and said, “May my lord King David live forever!”

32 King David said, “Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada.” So they came before the king. 33 And the king said to them, “Take with you the servants of your lord and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and bring him down to Gihon. 34 And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet there anoint him king over Israel. Then blow the trumpet and say, ‘Long live King Solomon!’ 35 You shall then come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, for he shall be king in my place. And I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.” 36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king, “Amen! May the Lord, the God of my lord the king, say so. 37 As the Lord has been with my lord the king, even so may he be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David.”

38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David’s mule and brought him to Gihon. 39 There Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the tent and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the trumpet, and all the people said, “Long live King Solomon!” 40 And all the people went up after him, playing on pipes, and rejoicing with great joy, so that the earth was split by their noise.

41 Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished feasting. And when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, “What does this uproar in the city mean?” 42 While he was still speaking, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came. And Adonijah said, “Come in, for you are a worthy man and bring good news.” 43 Jonathan answered Adonijah, “No, for our lord King David has made Solomon king, 44 and the king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites. And they had him ride on the king’s mule. 45 And Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon, and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you have heard. 46 Solomon sits on the royal throne. 47 Moreover, the king’s servants came to congratulate our lord King David, saying, ‘May your God make the name of Solomon more famous than yours, and make his throne greater than your throne.’ And the king bowed himself on the bed. 48 And the king also said, ‘Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who has granted someone to sit on my throne this day, my own eyes seeing it.’”

49 Then all the guests of Adonijah trembled and rose, and each went his own way. 50 And Adonijah feared Solomon. So he arose and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. 51 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 the sword.’” 52 And Solomon said, “If he will show himself a worthy man, not one of his hairs shall fall to the earth, but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die.” 53 So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and paid homage to King Solomon, and Solomon said to him, “Go to your house.”

Introduction/Review:

David had sinned when he counted the people. God sent a plague, and 70,000 people died. When David built an altar and sacrificed oxen, God sent fire to burn the sacrifice. The place was Mount Moriah, where Abraham probably offered Isaac,¹ where the temple would be built and sacrifice made, and the city where

the Lamb of God, Jesus would be sacrificed.

Story:

✓David was getting older than his actual years. What do I mean by that? All those years he had spent hiding in caves and fighting on the battlefield had made David old before his time.² [1055 B.C. minus 986 B.C. = 69 years old.] Now he was cold all of the time and basically stayed in bed.

Adonijah's coronation

David's oldest living son was Adonijah. [1025 B.C. minus 986 B.C. = 39 years old.] Three sons had already died: Amnon, slain by Absalom; Absalom, slain by Joab; Daniel, Abigail's son, ✓who either was incapable to rule or who had died of some other cause. ✓Perhaps Adonijah thought, "My father, King David, can hardly rule a kingdom from his bed. Obviously, I'm the oldest child. Certainly, I am to be the next king. Someone needs to rule while Dad is unable to rule. I will be king."

Now, David had never "displeased" his son Adonijah, not correcting him when he did wrong and not even asking, "Why do you behave as you do?" Adonijah was also handsome, as his half-brother Absalom had been. ✓Sometimes people follow leaders just because they are charming, even if the leaders have poor character or make poor choices.

Well, among those who followed Adonijah were some pretty impressive people: there was Joab, David's army chief; Abiathar, the chief priest; all the men of Judah; and all David's sons, except one. Adonijah also had a very impressive way of announcing his kingship: he got horses and chariots to drive in front of him and fifty men to run ahead of him. It was like a magnificent parade. What a sight! It sounds just like Absalom's previous celebration (2 Samuel 15:1). Since the high priest was with Adonijah, he sacrificed sheep, cattle, and fat calves in a valley not far from Jerusalem. Adonijah and the people ate a great feast and made the most of this momentous occasion.

But there were some people whom Adonijah did *not* invite to the celebration: Zadok, the other priest; Benaiah, the man in charge of David's bodyguards; David's mighty men; Nathan, the prophet; and Solomon, David's son by Bathsheba, ✓who was about 17 years old at this time [1003 B.C. minus 986 B.C. = 17 years]. Actually, the most important missing person was his own father, David.

When Solomon had been born, God had told David through Nathan what to name this son: Jedidiah—"loved of the Lord" (2 Samuel 17:25). ✓By this name and by other scripture passages in 1 Kings, we see that God had chosen Solomon, not Adonijah, to be the next king. ✓I wonder if Adonijah knew this, and that's why he didn't invite Solomon to his self-appointed coronation (crowning).

Nathan's idea

David didn't know about Adonijah's festivities and his claiming the crown. Remember, he was in bed. However, Nathan the prophet did learn about this event. He went to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, and asked, "Haven't you heard that Adonijah has made himself king, and David doesn't know about it? Now, let me tell you what to do so that you save your life and Solomon's life: go in to see the king and ask him, 'Didn't you promise me that Solomon would be the next king? Why, then, is Adonijah reigning?' While you are talking, I'll come in and say the same thing."

So Bathsheba went to the king and bowed to him. David asked, "What is it you want?"

"My lord," answered Bathsheba, "you promised me by the Lord your God that my son would reign after you and sit on your throne.³ Now, Adonijah is reigning as king, and you don't know it. Adonijah has sacrificed many sheep, oxen, and fat cattle and has invited Joab, Abiathar, and all the king's sons. However, he has not invited Solomon. All Israel looks to you, O King, to tell them who will sit on the throne. Otherwise, after you die, I and my son Solomon will be thought of as enemies."

While she was speaking, in came Nathan the prophet. After bowing to the ground, Nathan repeated

Bathsheba's story, adding, "The people are shouting, 'God save the king, Adonijah!'"

David's decree

"Bathsheba," said David. "As surely as God lives, who has saved me from all my trouble, Solomon, your son, shall be king after me and sit on my throne in my place."

Bathsheba, bowing low, said, "May my lord King David live forever."

David called Nathan, Zadok the priest, and Benaiah his chief body guard to him. "Put Solomon on the mule I ride. Take him down to Gihon (a spring of water in the valley supplying water to Jerusalem). There, Zadok, you and Nathan anoint him king over Israel. Blow a trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!' Then take him and have him physically sit on my throne."

✓Benaiah was excited. "Amen!" he said. "May the Lord, God of David, so do it. May God be with Solomon as He has been with you, and may his kingdom be even greater than the throne of my lord, King David!"

Solomon's coronation

David's commands were obeyed. As Solomon rode David's mule, the people went to Gihon. Zadok and Nathan anointed Solomon; they sounded the trumpet; the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" and as they walked (✓maybe jumped up and down) on their way back into Jerusalem, the people followed with great happiness and with playing of flutes.

Those who followed Solomon were so loud that it seemed as if the ground shook. For sure, Adonijah and his party, who were farther down in the valley, heard the noise of the celebration.

"What is the meaning of all the noise in the city?" asked Joab when he heard the trumpet.

While he spoke, Jonathan, Abiathar the priest's son, came to report all that had happened to Solomon by David's command, adding, "The king bowed in worship on his bed and said, 'Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has allowed me to see my son become the next king on my throne today.'"

Adonijah's predicament

What do you suppose Adonijah and all his guests did when they heard *this* news? Yes, they got out of there—fast. What about Adonijah? He was terrified since his brother had gotten the throne that he had intended for himself. He went to the altar at the temple and took hold of the horns on it, thus asking that Solomon not put him to death.

Someone told Solomon about Adonijah's plea for mercy. Solomon replied, "If Adonijah shows himself to be a man of good character, not even a hair of his head will be touched. But if he does evil, he will die."

Then Solomon sent men who brought Adonijah down from the altar. Adonijah bowed before Solomon, and Solomon said, "Go on home." That was mercy!

Even when Solomon was a baby, God had chosen him to be king. The Bible states that "before the foundation of the world," He chose those who would one day be his own saved ones (Ephesians 1:4). Do you know Christ as your Savior? If not, repent of your sin and turn to Him.

¹"The site on which Herod's Temple stood during the time of Jesus is believed to be the same holy mountain known in the Old Testament as "Mount Moriah" which was one of the hills in "The land of Moriah" where Abraham, the first Hebrew, went to build an altar and offer up his son Isaac. It is also the hill in Jerusalem on which Solomon built the Temple, on the spot once occupied by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. The Jews themselves believe that the rock, which sticks out on the top of the Temple hill, is exactly the spot where the altar of burnt offering in the Temple stood and the very site of the altar on which Abraham intended to offer up his son" ([The Site - Mount Moriah \(Herod's Temple \) \(bible-history.com\)](http://bible-history.com)).

² At the time the author posted this lesson, she was older than 69 and still didn't like to think of herself as *old*. Sixty-nine, realistically, is old. So, Teacher, feel free to alter this paragraph to suit your definition of *old*.

³ No Scripture records this conversation, but 1 Chronicles 22:5–10 suggests David chose Solomon before the events of this lesson: “Solomon my son is young and inexperienced, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent. . . . I will therefore make preparation for it.” So David provided materials in great quantity before his death. . . . 8 But the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘. . . You shall not build a house to my name, because you have shed so much blood before me on the earth. 9 Behold, a son shall be born to you who shall be a man of rest. I will give him rest from all his surrounding enemies. For his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quiet to Israel in his days. 10 He shall build a house for my name. He shall be my son, and I will be his father, and I will establish his royal throne in Israel forever.’”

Lessons from This Lesson:

- We see Jesus:

The procession going to Jerusalem with Solomon's riding on David's mule reminds us of Jesus, the King of the Jews, coming into Jerusalem, on a donkey while people waved palm branches.

As Solomon showed mercy to Adonijah, so Jesus is merciful to His own.

Activities:

- Play dough: donkey; throne; trumpet
- Snack: Bugles[®] produced by General Mills
- Play toy flutes or trumpets
- Review questions: (Game: Students may blow in a flutelike instrument or a ram's horn after answering a question correctly. Be sure to have disinfectant wipes available to wipe the instrument between students.)
 1. Which son of David thought he should be king and set up his own coronation? [Adonijah.]
 2. Name one of the men or groups who went to help crown Adonijah. [Joab, Abiathar the priest, most of the king's sons, and all the royal officials of Judah.]
 3. Name one of the men or groups whom Adonijah did *not* invite to his coronation. [Zadok the priest, Benaiah the head of David's body guards, Nathan the prophet, Solomon, and David's mighty men.]
 4. What was Nathan's plan about informing David of Adonijah's coronation? [Bathsheba would tell David first; then Nathan would come in and tell.]
 5. Whom had David promised would be the next king? [Solomon, Bathsheba's son.]
 6. What did David say should be done for Solomon? Tell two things. [(1) Have Solomon ride on David's own mule; (2) have Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; (3) blow the trumpet and say, “Long live King Solomon”; (4) have Solomon sit on David's throne.]
 7. What did Adonijah do when he learned of Solomon's coronation? [Took hold of the horns of the altar.]
 8. Solomon forgave Adonijah but said he would die if what happened? [If wickedness was found in Adonijah.]

Memory Verse[s]: I heartily recommend the song and visual at [Psalm 139 - NKJV \(thywordcreations.com\)](https://thywordcreations.com/psalm-139-nkjv).

- Psalm 139:1 O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 2 You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. 3 You comprehend my path and my lying down, And are acquainted with all my ways. 4 For there is not a word on my tongue, But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether. 5 You have hedged me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is high, I cannot attain it. 7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven,

You are there; If I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. 9 If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, 10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me. 11 If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me,” Even the night shall be light about me; 12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, But the night shines as the day; The darkness and the light are both alike to You.

13 For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. 14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You. . . .

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

Handwork:

- Make a flute out of a paper towel roll. See instructions at [Homemade Instruments for Kids- Flute \(jdaniel4smom.com\)](http://jdaniel4smom.com).

horns of the altar

















