1 Kings 1:18–35

A Ministry in the Word

Scripture Reading

> *And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth; and now, my lord the king, thou knowest it not... Then king David answered and said, Call me Bathsheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king sware, and said, As the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day. And Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did reverence to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever.*

The Better Part — Not Being Invited

The three who were not invited to Adonijah's feast — Zadok, Benaiah, Nathan, and Solomon — had the better part. It is all right not to be invited to some places. There are invitations it is better to have missed. And the names that were not on Adonijah's guest list were precisely the names God had in mind for the establishment of Solomon's throne. Nathan adds them to the account in verse 26, reciting before David exactly who was excluded — the prophetic voice, the true priest, the devoted servant, and the chosen king himself.

The Eyes of All Israel — and the Eyes of Nathan

Bathsheba's word to the king in verse 20 was: *the eyes of all Israel are upon thee.* Joab's eyes were not on David. Adonijah's eyes were not on David. Abiathar's eyes were not on David. But that did not change the truth. The Spirit of Psalm

123:2 was Nathan's spirit: *as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters... so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God.* Nathan was not drawn by the spectacle of Adonijah's feast. He looked to the king. And then, in verse 27, he frames his question: *is this thing done by my lord the king?* He was part of that all Israel whose eyes were upon David, and that was the right place for his eyes to be.

Call Me Bathsheba — The First Thing David Did

Verse 28 is remarkable: *then king David answered and said, Call me Bathsheba.* That was the first thing he did. Of all the things a king might do at such a moment, that was not necessarily the most expedient. An expedient king would have done the most expedient thing. But David had made a word to Bathsheba and he needed to make it good. In connection with the kingdom it has often been noted that David's personal failures were many, but as to the discharge of the kingdom itself he pleased the Lord. And here, with the kingdom to be transferred, his first thought was to make good what he had sworn.

Then came David's oath, sworn by Jehovah who had redeemed his soul out of all distress — a deeply personal ground for such an oath. The throne itself is spoken of in several ways: here it is David's throne; in verse 46 it is the throne of the kingdom; and in 1 Chronicles 29:23 it is called the throne of Jehovah. That is the most solemn name of all. The glory cloud that lifted in Ezekiel's vision was Jehovah vacating that throne. Its return in Ezekiel 43 is the glory cloud coming back to a rebuilt temple. The passing of the kingdom to Solomon is the passing of that throne to the type of the one who will eventually occupy it in person.

Bathsheba's Way — Reverence Before Request

Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth and said, *let my lord king David live for ever.* She was interested in Solomon's kingdom being established. The way

she helped to establish it was to be in her right place, in the right attitude, and to reverence the king. There is a great deal of activity in the religious world that sets things in motion, puts people to work, raises up efforts. Bathsheba's way was the right way. She was where she ought to have been. She honored the king. And God prospered her desire.

David's Mule — The Sign of Transfer

The king's order was: *cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gihon.* The mule rather than the horse speaks of humility. Horses were associated with Egypt and the chariots of the nations. In Israel, from the Judges onward, the prominent ones rode on mules. Solomon was to ride on David's personal mule — a public signal of the transfer. Adonijah had not tried to steal that mule. And the Lord Jesus, when He rode into Jerusalem, rode not on a horse but on the foal of an ass — in accordance with Zechariah 9:9 — coming in humiliation and lowliness before the day when He will come out of heaven on the white horse of victory.

And at Gihon — a place of water, where Hezekiah would later redirect the upper spring — were to be assembled the priest, the prophet, and the anointing oil. Water: the word of God. The priest. The prophet. The oil, symbol of the Holy Spirit. All of these together for the anointing of the king. And with them the trumpet — not a select invitation list, but a public proclamation: *long live king Solomon.*

— Study ends —