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The Party's Over
First Kings 1:32-53
and First Chronicles 29:21-25

The party's over DIG: What ceremonies are involved in the coronation of Solomon? What significance do they have? What did Jesus mean by these very same symbols (Mt 21:1-5). Who are Benaiah, the Kerethites and the Pelethites? What is significant about the timing of Solomon's inauguration? How do the various people respond to the news of Solomon's coronation? Why did Adonijah take hold of the horns of the altar? Why does ADONAI seem to be silent in the midst of this story? What is He doing behind the scenes?

REFLECT: In what different ways does a real leader and a mere opportunist face crises differently? What opportunity do you have in your life to choose between these two options? When you see a schemer at work, do you step in and get involved? Or keep quiet and mind your own business? Are there any worries, rumors, political talk, which are causing you concern? In your family, are you the eldest child, the youngest or in any other way "favored" by your parents? How did your parents' fairness (or lack of it) affect you?

The King is dead; long live the King!

According to ancient custom, **the death** of a ruler is greeted with the words, "The king is dead; long live the king!" This may seem like a contradiction. If the king is dead, then what use is there in wishing him long life? But the point is that **the kingdom** would endure. Even though one king had died, another king lived to take his place. Because the kingship would survive, the people who hoped for the continuity of the monarchy would say, "the king is dead, long live the king," and that is why **Bathsheba** said: **May my lord King David live forever (First Kings 1:31)! ADONAI** had promised **David** eternal life and an eternal **throne**, so **the queen's** hopes for **David's** everlasting **throne** were not misplaced. **The king** still lives and so does **his** dynasty, to the everlasting joy of all **the people of God**.[40]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, How wonderful to know that **You**, our **father**, are **the King of kings** who never gets old! **You** are always watching over and reigning wisely over me! What joy it brings to know that no matter what is happening in the world, no matter how strong the enemy – **You** are wiser and more powerful! **Be still before ADONAI and wait patiently for Him . . . Do not fret over one prospering in his way, over one carrying out wicked schemes. For evildoers will be cut off, but those who wait for ADONAI – they will inherit the land. Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more. Yes, you will look at his place, but he will not be there (Psalms 37:7** and **9-10). Ha'Shem,** even when wars and problems come, **You** are in the midst of accomplishing **Your** plans. **You** remain holy and in control. **You** are aware. **You** are active. All praise to **You**! in **Yeshua's** holy Name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*

Scene five: **David** may have been dying, but **he** was not dead yet. As soon as **he** finished **his** audience with **Bathsheba** (**to see the link click Al – A Royal Conspiracy**), **he** started giving out orders. There was not a moment to lose! In trying to usurp **the throne**, **Adonijah** had already announced that **he** would be **king**. **David** knew it was now or never; if **he** didn't act immediately and decisively to put **his** rightful **son** on **the throne**, **Solomon** would never be **king** and **God's** promise would fail. So, **the king** resumed command of the situation, saying: **Call in Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet and Benaiah (First Kings 1:32a).** This was a shrewd and godly maneuver. **David** was calling together **the prophet**, **the priest**, and **the representative** of **the king**. **Adonijah** had not consulted any of those men. But **David** did, and in doing so **he** united **his kingdom** under the rule of **God**, who had appointed **them** to serve as rulers of **Isra'el**.

When they came before the king, he gave orders for **Solomon's** coronation: **Take the Kerethites and the Pelethites** (foreign mercenaries and **David's** loyal bodyguard) commanded by **Benaiah,** those loyal to **me, with you and set Solomon my son on my own** personal **mule and take him down to** the spring of **Gihon (First Kings 1:32b-33).** The fact that **Solomon** was mounted on **David's royal mule** demonstrated to **the people** that the anointing had **David's** blessing. By comparison, seeing **Solomon** riding on **King David's mule** would be like seeing the queen of England in her royal carriage, or watching Air Force One take off with the President of the United States on board.[41] Not only that, the presence of **Zadok** and **Nathan** indicated **Divine** approval, and that of **Benaiah** military approval.

The spring of **Gihon,** the site of **Solomon's** anointing, was just outside **the City** in

the Kidron Valley, on the east bank of the Ophel. It was **Jerusalem's** major source of natural flowing water and was therefore a natural gathering place of **the people**.[42] However, **En Rogel**, where **Adonijah** was feasting, was a half mile further north of **the City**; therefore, **Solomon**, could be crowned as **king** and march into the open arms of **the Israelites** ahead of **his** challenger.

Then **Benaiah** (see the commentary on **the Life of David Ej – David's Mighty Warriors**)**,** who was ready to replace Joab as the top military man, declared: **Amen!** This word is much stronger in Hebrew than the English might imply. It is an acclamation of commitment and expresses absolute reliance on the person he is speaking about; to trust in that persons faithfulness as was the case here.[43] **Benaiah** was a man of prayer, for this is what **he** was really doing: praying for **Solomon's kingdom**. By saying: **May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, so declare it, he** was asking **God** to be with **Solomon** the way **he** had been with **David**. **As ADONAI was with my lord the king, so may He also be with Solomon to make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord King David,** meaning **David's** glory would live on in **Solomon's** glory **(First Kings 1:36-37).**

Thus, Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the military man, along with **the Kerethites and the Pelethites, Philistines,** who made up **David's** private body guard (see the commentary on **the Life of David Cy – David's Officials**), **went down and had Solomon mount King David's mule. Then they escorted him to Gihon.** There, **Zadok the priest took the horn of oil** preserved for such an occasion (see my commentary on **Exodus Fp – The Altar of Incense in the Sanctuary: Christ, Our Advocate with the Father**) **from the tent** that **David** had constructed for **the Ark of the Covenant (Second Samuel 6:17) and anointed Solomon** as **king** over **Isra'el (First Kings 1:34a** and **38-39).** This was **Solomon's** first, **private**, coronation with those mentioned above. This was an emergency measure, hastily assembled to forestall **Adonijah's** attempted coup.

The next day, however, was the **public** coronation, where **the priests made sacrifices to ADONAI and offered burnt offerings of a thousand bulls, a thousand rams, and a thousand male lambs, along with their drink offerings and other sacrifices in abundance for all Isra'el.** The extravagant number of **offerings** is a concrete expression of the grandeur of the event. **Then they ate and drank with great joy in the presence of ADONAI that day. Then they acknowledged Solomon the son of David as king a second time,**

anointing him before ADONAI as ruler and Zadok to be the high priest (Second Chronicles 29:21-22).

So like **Sha'ul** and **David, Solomon** had a double coronation. **Sha'ul** first, **private**, coronation was in **First Samuel 10:1** where **Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on Sha'ul's head and kissed him saying, "Has not ADONAI anointed you leaver over His inheritance?" His** second, **public**, coronation was in **First Samuel 11:15** where **Samuel said to all the people, "Come, let us go to Gilgal and there reaffirm the kingship." So all the people went to Gilgal and confirmed Sha'ul as king in the presence of ADONAI. There they sacrificed fellowship offerings before the LORD, and Sha'ul and all the Israelites held a great celebration.** Likewise, **David** had a double coronation. **His** first, **private**, coronation was when **Samuel anointed David at Bethlehem** when **ADONAI spoke to His prophet** saying: **The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the heart.** When **David** arrived from tending **his** sheep, **ADONAI said: Rise and anoint him. He is the one. So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed David in the presence of his brothers (First Samuel 16:7b** and **12-13a). David's** second, **public** coronation, was in **Second Samuel 5:3-5 when all the elders of Isra'el had come to David at Hebron . . . and they anointed him king over Isra'el. David was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah for** about **seven years and in Jerusalem he reigned over all Isra'el and Judah thirty-three years.**

Therefore, after acknowledging Solomon as king a second time, the shofar sounded **and all the people** of Jerusalem **shouted, "Long live King Solomon!"** The public celebration was enormous. It was the proper way for **King David** to announce **his** immediate successor and for **the people** of **Isra'el** to make **Solomon their king**. **He** did it by **his royal** authority as **God's** representative and **he** did it in broad daylight. Unlike **Adonijah**, who hosted **his** own coronation party, **Solomon** would be paraded through the city streets and crowned at the **royal** palace – not by **his** own will, but by godly **men** operating under the will of **ADONAI**.[44] So, with **Solomon** then taking the lead, **all the people went up after him, playing pipes and rejoicing greatly.** Grown men were cheering and shouting. Women were singing and dancing in the streets. Children were jumping up and down, so excited they hardly knew what to do. The sound of their celebration was **so** loud **that the ground shook with the sound;** a **sound** that would easily reach **En Rogel** a half mile away where the supporters of **Adonijah**

were partying **(First Kings 1:34b** and **40).**

Scene six: Adonijah's supporters feasted away until they were completely stuffed. But as the noise died down, **they** heard a sound that caught **them** all off guard. **All the guests heard the shouting of Solomon's** celebration at **En Rogel as they were finishing their feast. On hearing the sound of the shofar, Joab asked, "What's the meaning of all the noise in Tziyon."** Little did **they** know that the party was over in every sense of the term. **Even as he was speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest (Second Samuel 17:17-22) arrived. Adonijah thought he was bringing good news** and said: **Come in. A worthy man like you must be bringing good news. "Not at all," Jonathan answered. "Our lord King David has made Solomon king. The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites and the Pelethites, and they have put him on the king's mule, and Zadok and Nathan have anointed him king at Gihon. From there they have gone up cheering, and the City resounds with it! That's the noise that you hear. Moreover, Solomon has taken his seat on the royal throne (First Kings 1:41-46).**

At the same time**, the royal officials came to congratulate King David,** saying: **May your God make Solomon's name more famous than yours and his throne greater than yours! And King David bowed in worship on his bed,** accepting **the praise** of **Solomon**, **and** said: **Praise be to ADONAI, the God of Isra'el, who has allowed my eyes to see a successor on my throne today (First Kings 1:47-48). David** had always called **Solomon his beloved son**; now

he was the first to proclaim **him** as **king**. Because this had transpired in **David's bedroom,** either **Nathan or Zadok** (or both) must have quoted **David's** words to **the people.** But however he learned of the news **Jonathan** made it clear from **his** eyewitness report that at that very moment, **Solomon** was **the king of Isra'el.**

At this, all Adonijah's guests rose in alarm and disappeared like rats off a ship going down**.** The party was over. Nobody wanted to be seen with **Adonijah**. Earlier it had been acknowledged that if **Adonijah** had won, **Solomon** and **his mother** would be marked for **death**. Now the shoe was on the other foot. **So Adonijah, in fear of Solomon,** ran to the courtyard of **the Tabernacle and took hold of the horns of the bronze altar** where sacrifices were made for sin **(First Kings 1:49-50).** This method of seeking sanctuary for criminals deserving of **death** was a time-honored custom. In **Isra'el** the grasping of **the horns of the altar** didn't provide sanctuary for every criminal – only those guilty of the unintentional slaying of another. **The horns** were the projections at the corners of **the bronze altar** on which the blood of sacrifice was smeared. To **grasp the horns** was to claim the protection of **God** until the case was judged.[45] The symbolism of taking hold of **the horns** of the bronze **altar** seems to have meant that since **YHVH** had been gracious to man, as seen in accepting man's offerings to atone for his sins, so one man should be gracious to another man who had offended him.[46] It appears that **Adonijah** believed that the corners of **the** bronze **altar** was a holy place and would provide **him** with some protection from **Solomon's** vengeance.

But when **Solomon was told, "Adonijah is afraid of you and is clinging to the horns of the altar,** saying: **Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death by the sword." Solomon** replied: **If he shows himself to be worthy, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground; but if evil is found in him, he will die. Then King Solomon sent men, and they brought him down from the altar. And Adonijah came and bowed down to Solomon and the king said, "Go to your home" (1 Kgs 1:52-53).** How the mighty had fallen! **The man** who had tried to elevate **himself** was brought low. **The man** who wanted to be **king** had to bow before **his** younger brother. **The man** who tried to give orders was told to **go home**. From that point forward **Adonijah** was on probation. A bargain seemed to be struck, a promise of good behavior in exchange for clemency. But **Adonijah** didn't live up to **his** end of the bargain and **his** dark heart would soon be discovered.

So, Solomon sat on the throne of ADONAI as king in place of his father

David. These words express the climax of **Solomon's** rise to power (see **Aj – Solomon's Rise to Power**). **He prospered and all Isra'el obeyed him. All the officers and mighty men, as well as all of King David's sons, pledged their submission to King Solomon. ADONAI highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Isra'el and bestowed on him royal splendor such as no king over Isra'el ever had before (First Chronicles 29:23-25).** The remarks on **Solomon's** accession and reign are necessary to the complete conclusion of a history of **David's** reign, for they show how **David's** wishes for **his son, Solomon**, whom **YHVH** chose to be **his** successor, were fulfilled.

For now, we are left to put ourselves in the story and consider our own relationship to **God's** anointed and eternal **King Yesnua Messiah**. The Bible says that **Yeshua** is superior to **Solomon (Matthew 12:42)**. As much as we admire **Solomon** for giving **Adonijah** another chance, we should praise **Yeshua** for giving us more grace. **Solomon** said **Adonijah's** life would be spared if **he** proved **himself** worthy, which was certainly fair enough. But **Yeshua** says that **He** will accept us even when we are *unworthy*, as we all are (see the commentary on **Romans Bj – The Restoration of Justification**). **Solomon** said that if **Adonijah** sinned **he** would **die**. But **Yeshua**, seeing that we had sinned, climbed up onto the bronze altar of sacrifice and **died** in our place. Now, there's a **King** for you – a ruler who offers **His** life for your salvation!

Our **King** still lives. Eventually **David** died, and so did **Solomon**. But **Yeshua** rose from the **dead** to give everlasting life to **David**, to **Solomon**, and to all **His royal** sons and daughters. There will never be an interruption, an interregnum, or another **royal** succession in **the Kingdom** of **God**, because **Yeshua Messiah** is the immortal **King** of all ages: **To to the King – eternal, imperishable and invisible, the only God there is – let there be honor and glory for ever and ever! Amen (First Timothy 1:17).**

Now everyone who belongs to **the kingdom** of **David** by choosing for **Messiah** can say, "**The King** is dead; long live **the King**!" Long live **the King** who welcomes the unworthy! Long live **the King** who died for sinners! Long live **the King** who rose from the grave! Long live **the King** who is coming again! **ADONAI** has given us this promise: **Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over His Kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of ADONAI-Tzva'ot will accomplish this (Isaiah 9:7).** Long live **the King**, and all the loyal **subjects of His royal Kingdom, who** are saved by grace

alone, through faith alone, **in Messiah** alone![47]