

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

March 5

MONDAY

Adonijah wants to marry Abishag, the young girl who was one of David's concubines, and a source of body heat for an aged and sickly David in his last days on earth. Adonijah asks Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, to mediate and ask her son's permission for him to take her as his wife.

READ: I Kings 2:13-18

Adonijah has a scheme: if he can gain control of David's concubines, then the various treaties they represent will be under his control as well. And in that way, he can get his foot in the door and eventually perhaps be king of all Israel. Why Bathsheba agrees to mediate this plan to Solomon is not clear. Perhaps the passage serves to illustrate how something very sinister can be made to sound quite ordinary. We do well to learn the lesson. An example of that is Pro-choice. How can being in favor of women being allowed to choose for themselves be bad? Don't be deceived by the rhetoric; the souls of countless unborn babies cry out as to the wickedness of their murders.

TUESDAY

Bathsheba goes before her son, King Solomon, with Adonijah's request - that he be allowed to marry the young girl, Abishag.

READ: I Kings 2:19-21

Bathsheba takes Adonijah's request to Solomon and uses some of the same expressions Adonijah did: *It's a small thing; please do not refuse me.* Is Bathsheba so foolish that she doesn't see what Adonijah is attempting to do? Or is she so clever that she exposes his plans in the very way she shares his requests with Solomon? It's hard to know which. Before she asks, Solomon promises to grant her request. But to promise to do something before hearing the request is indeed, foolish behavior. Maybe this event serves as a contrast to the wisdom God has in mind for Solomon later on. How much we can rejoice in how God is changing us! I'm not the person I used to be!

WEDNESDAY

Solomon recognizes the request of Adonijah for what it really was - a plan for him to claim the throne. (After all, he was the oldest son, and had the support of military and religious personnel.) Solomon refuses, and in fact, orders that Adonijah be put to death for his attempted treason.

READ: I Kings 2:22-25

Adonijah spoke this word against his own life, we read. His words gave him away, we might say. That is our story, as well. Our words give us away. What

we say this very day will make it clear that we are the Lord's and that our life (and speech) is hid in Him. Let us open our mouths and speak of His glory! Let's open our mouths and testify of His goodness!

THURSDAY

Seemingly reminded of Adonijah's rebellion by his own request to be given Abishag in marriage, Solomon deals with others who supported Adonijah. The first is Abiathar, the priest. Solomon removes him from the priesthood and sends him to his family's hometown.

READ: I Kings 2:26-27

Removing Abiathar from the priesthood was a political move: Solomon saw him as a potential threat. But it was also the fulfilling of prophecy: the Word of the Lord that He spoke concerning the House of Eli was that God would honor those who honor Him. In this case, that one being honored is Solomon. God is honoring him for God sees the heart and He knows that Solomon, at this point in his life, is seeking to honor the Lord. It's from our hearts today that we honor the Lord, as well.

FRIDAY

Joab hears about Adonijah's execution and Abiathar's exile, and he knows he's next. So he runs to the altar in the Tabernacle and seeks asylum there.

READ: I Kings 2:28-29

When facing death, Joab suddenly became very religious. He clung to the altar in the Tabernacle. Can you not hear him pleading for mercy in God's name? But it's not real. There is no acknowledgement of sin or confession of trust in God's provision. Religious talk is cheap. True religion is marked by a heart for God and a life that echoes the heart's cry. True religion is seen in a great variety of ways but cheap talk is not one of them.

SATURDAY

Ordered to kill Joab, Benaiah tells him to go out of the tabernacle. Joab refuses so Solomon orders him to be killed there. In doing so, Solomon explains why it is good and right that Joab be killed.

READ: I Kings 2:29-33

Solomon explains that Joab had killed Abner and Amasa without David's permission. Both were good men. The consequences of Joab's crimes would stay with Israel until the crimes had been, in some way, avenged. For us, the lesson is this: sin in our lives must be dealt with. Where needed, there must be confession, forgiveness requested, and restitution made. Sin always has consequences and sin not dealt with, even more so.