

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

Monday, April 18th: 1 Chronicles 22

1 Then David said, “The house of the LORD God is to be here, and also the altar of burnt offering for Israel.”

2 So David gave orders to assemble the foreigners residing in Israel, and from among them he appointed stonecutters to prepare dressed stone for building the house of God. **3** He provided a large amount of iron to make nails for the doors of the gateways and for the fittings, and more bronze than could be weighed. **4** He also provided more cedar logs than could be counted, for the Sidonians and Tyrians had brought large numbers of them to David.

5 David said, “My son Solomon is young and inexperienced, and the house to be built for the LORD should be of great magnificence and fame and splendor in the sight of all the nations. Therefore I will make preparations for it.” So David made extensive preparations before his death.

6 Then he called for his son Solomon and charged him to build a house for the LORD, the God of Israel. **7** David said to Solomon: “My son, I had it in my heart to build a house for the Name of the LORD my God.

8 But this word of the LORD came to me: ‘You have shed much blood and have fought many wars. You are not to build a house for my Name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight. **9** But you will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign. **10** He is the one who will build a house for my Name. He will be my son, and I will be his father. And I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever.’

11 “Now, my son, the LORD be with you, and may you have success and build the house of the LORD your God, as he said you would. **12** May the LORD give you discretion and understanding when he puts you in command over Israel, so that you may keep the law of the LORD your God. **13** Then you will have success if you are careful to observe the decrees and laws that the LORD gave Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged.

14 “I have taken great pains to provide for the temple of the LORD a hundred thousand talents of gold, a million talents of silver, quantities of bronze and iron too great to be weighed, and wood and stone. And you may add to them. **15** You have many workers: stonecutters, masons and carpenters, as well as those skilled in every kind of work **16** in gold and silver, bronze and iron—skilled workers beyond number. Now begin the work, and the LORD be with you.”

17 Then David ordered all the leaders of Israel to help his son Solomon. **18** He said to them, “Is not the LORD your God with you? And has he not granted you rest on every side? For he has given the inhabitants of the land into my hands, and the land is subject to the LORD and to his people. **19** Now devote your heart and soul to seeking the LORD your God. Begin to build the sanctuary of the LORD God, so that you may bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD and the sacred articles belonging to God into the temple that will be built for the Name of the LORD.”

Points of Interest

- ‘The house of the LORD God is to be here’--you may remember that ever since David built his own palace, he’s had building a house for God on his mind (Monday, April 4th, 2 Samuel 7). Ever since the wanderings in the desert in the time of Moses (about 400 years earlier), God’s ‘dwelling’ has been a tent. David wants to give God a more permanent address in Jerusalem. When they first discussed it, God’s response to David, ‘No, thanks. I like my tent just fine.’ At the time, God told David that the real priority was for God to build David a house--that is, a royal dynasty--not for David to build God one. I think David feels that that job is now complete. He has no more enemies, and there is peace on every side. All of his external enemies have been quelled or conquered, and all of the conflict within his family and within Israel has also been resolved. So, David turns once again to the idea of building God a house. I get the sense that David is still much more excited about this project than God is, but this time around God doesn’t

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

stop him. Perhaps God senses from David a positive change in attitude. It's not so much that David thinks he can help God out here, but that David is so grateful for all of the ways God has helped him. The temple is like a great, big thank you card from David to God.

- 'gave orders to assemble the foreigners'--I don't think this means that every single foreigner will be put to work on the temple. After all, much of David's family and many of his most important warriors are foreigners; it's hard to imagine a bunch of generals, queens, and princesses picking up chisels and cutting stones. The foreigners referred to here are probably the prisoners of war from David's various battles; they'll be made into a work detail for this huge public work detail David has in mind.
- 'more cedar logs than could be counted'--it might sound funny for the king to bother himself with such small things as nails and two by fours, but actually in David's time and place wood and iron were quite hard-to-get commodities. It would take a lot of time, money, and diplomacy to gather enough of them for the building David has in mind.
- 'So David made extensive preparations'--God had said quite explicitly that David would never build God a house. David is technically abiding by their agreement, but he can't help himself: he has to play a role in this temple. So, while he doesn't actually break ground on the building site, he puts everything in place for the future.
- 'because you have shed much blood'--at least in the story we read, that's not exactly what God said. The earlier story we read was from the Samuel version of David's story, and this passage is from the Chronicles version. So, maybe the Chronicler is introducing a different conversation between God and David on the same subject, or maybe Chronicles and Samuel have a different interpretation of the same conversation. There is some commonality between the two; in both versions, God is saying that David will be too busy fighting wars (with God's help) to spend time building a temple. However, there seems to be a moral edge in Chronicles that's missing in Samuel; the intimation here seems to be that David's hands are too bloody with which to build a temple. Maybe God did, in fact, say this to David at another time. Or maybe David misunderstood God's reasoning.
- 'He is the one who will build a house'--again, this isn't precisely what God said, at least in Samuel. God did indeed say that a descendant of David would build God's house, but he didn't say it would be David's immediate heir. In fact, many people, including Jesus himself, think that the 'Son of David' God had in mind was Jesus, not Solomon. In that line of thinking, God never had a temple in mind. He was essentially telling David, 'Look, I don't care so much about palaces and temples; I care about people. So, I'm going to build your family up; and then someday a son of yours will build my family up.' Nonetheless, Solomon may be a little foreshadowing of Jesus; and Solomon's temple may be like a metaphorical architectural model for the 'house' Jesus will someday build.
- 'Do not be afraid or discouraged'--David isn't an easy act to follow. And David wants Solomon not only to take over from him, but to exceed him, accomplishing something he never did. That could be daunting.
- 'ordered all the leaders of Israel to help'--this isn't something Solomon can do on his own. He'll need everyone's help to pull it off. David is calling on them to back Solomon as solidly as they did him--in fact, even more.
- 'Now devote your heart and soul to seeking the LORD your God'--I'm not sure exactly how excited God is about this temple idea. But I bet that God is entirely pleased by this

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

encouragement from David. The truly great thing about David is that he has almost always thrown everything he has--heart, soul, body, slingshot, cedar planks, and iron nails--into seeking and following God. Even more than the temple, that's the legacy worth Solomon and these other leaders continuing.

Taking it Home

- For you: It took David awhile but he eventually accepted the reality that it wasn't his job to build the temple. He didn't give up on his dream, but he learned to check in with God to see what his part in it all was. What are the all the roles that you are currently trying to fulfill in your life? My guess is that there are lot. Ask God to show you specifically what role he wants you to play. Pray that he would make it clear what things are yours to do and what things are somebody else's to look after. Pray some of David's word from Psalm 16:

*5 LORD, you alone are my portion and my cup;
you make my lot secure.*

*6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
surely I have a delightful inheritance.*

*7 I will praise the LORD, who counsels me;
even at night my heart instructs me.*

8 I keep my eyes always on the LORD.

With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

- For your six: David is able to see and encourage Solomon's gifts and talents before Solomon has even had the chance to show them. Take some time today to listen to God for your six. Ask God if there is anything he wants to show you about your six's gifts, skills, and direction in life. Find a way to share those things with your six.
- For our church: David has big dreams in mind. He thinks beyond himself and his own lifetime, and instead aims at leaving a lasting legacy on God's behalf. Pray that our church would just as audaciously dream beyond ourselves and 2011, and that we would leave a godly legacy in Boston, New England and, heck, why not the entire world for centuries to come? Pray that God would use our church in remarkable ways to connect more people with God's love and goodness than can even be imagined.
- For families: Take some time to bless the members of your family today. Pray for each other, lay hands on one another, and practice just blessing each other with good things from God. If you see specific gifts or talents in your family members, call those talents out and bless your family members to use them for God's purposes. Prayers of blessing can take different formats, but are often simple. For example, "I bless you with health, I bless you with the ability to love others well, etc..."

Tuesday, April 19th: 1 Chronicles 28

1 David summoned all the officials of Israel to assemble at Jerusalem: the officers over the tribes, the commanders of the divisions in the service of the king, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, and the officials in charge of all the property and livestock belonging to the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty warriors and all the brave fighting men.

2 King David rose to his feet and said: "Listen to me, my fellow Israelites, my people. I had it in my heart to build a house as a place of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD, for the footstool of our God,

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

and I made plans to build it. **3** But God said to me, ‘You are not to build a house for my Name, because you are a warrior and have shed blood.’

4 “Yet the LORD, the God of Israel, chose me from my whole family to be king over Israel forever. He chose Judah as leader, and from the house of Judah he chose my family, and from my father’s sons he was pleased to make me king over all Israel. **5** Of all my sons—and the LORD has given me many—he has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. **6** He said to me: ‘Solomon your son is the one who will build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father. **7** I will establish his kingdom forever if he is unswerving in carrying out my commands and laws, as is being done at this time.’

8 “So now I charge you in the sight of all Israel and of the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God: Be careful to follow all the commands of the LORD your God, that you may possess this good land and pass it on as an inheritance to your descendants forever.

9 “And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every desire and every thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.

10 Consider now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary. Be strong and do the work.”

11 Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the portico of the temple, its buildings, its storerooms, its upper parts, its inner rooms and the place of atonement. **12** He gave him the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind for the courts of the temple of the LORD and all the surrounding rooms, for the treasuries of the temple of God and for the treasuries for the dedicated things. **13** He gave him instructions for the divisions of the priests and Levites, and for all the work of serving in the temple of the LORD, as well as for all the articles to be used in its service. **14** He designated the weight of gold for all the gold articles to be used in various kinds of service, and the weight of silver for all the silver articles to be used in various kinds of service: **15** the weight of gold for the gold lampstands and their lamps, with the weight for each lampstand and its lamps; and the weight of silver for each silver lampstand and its lamps, according to the use of each lampstand; **16** the weight of gold for each table for consecrated bread; the weight of silver for the silver tables; **17** the weight of pure gold for the forks, sprinkling bowls and pitchers; the weight of gold for each gold dish; the weight of silver for each silver dish; **18** and the weight of the refined gold for the altar of incense. He also gave him the plan for the chariot, that is, the cherubim of gold that spread their wings and overshadow the ark of the covenant of the LORD.

19 “All this,” David said, “I have in writing as a result of the LORD’s hand on me, and he enabled me to understand all the details of the plan.”

20 David also said to Solomon his son, “Be strong and courageous, and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the LORD is finished. **21** The divisions of the priests and Levites are ready for all the work on the temple of God, and every willing person skilled in any craft will help you in all the work. The officials and all the people will obey your every command.”

Points of Interest

- ‘the footstool of our God’--I like this. David knows that even his grand plans don’t amount to something worthy of being a house for God. At best, it’s an ottoman.
- ‘he has chosen my son Solomon’--just like David, Solomon has many older brothers, perhaps more qualified than him. But being king in this nation isn’t about being the oldest, or looking the best, or even having the right father. Solomon will be king in the same way David became king: by God’s choice.

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

- ‘with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind’--this is a nice combination of David calling his son to follow in his footsteps and David letting Solomon be his own person. Wholehearted devotion is David’s thing, and he wants it to be Solomon’s as well. But Solomon will apply it differently from David. David is a soldier and an artist; Solomon will be a thinker.
- ‘if you forsake him, he will reject you forever’--David is reminding Solomon not to take God or the kingship for granted. Saul was chosen just as much as David or Solomon, but God wasn’t afraid to take the kingdom away from him. God promised David that the house of David would last forever, but God doesn’t necessarily need Solomon to make that happen; God can find another way to put a descendant of David on the throne.
- ‘the portico of the temple, its buildings, its storerooms, its upper parts’--David is completely consumed by this temple project. He’s thought of every detail, from the smallest room to the exact weight of gold for all the furnishings.
- ‘instructions for the divisions of the priests and Levites’--the Levites are the tribe that specializes in religious service, the priests being the Levitical family particularly responsible for conducting religious ceremonies. The temple David has in mind will vastly increase the responsibilities of the Levites. So, having thought through every detail of the building itself, David has also taken a crack at reorganizing their job duties.
- ‘as a result of the LORD’s hand on me’--the same God who inspired David’s music and empowered him to kill a giant has also made him into an architect.
- ‘the LORD God, my God, is with you’--this job is far too big for Solomon. But that doesn’t matter. It’s not too big for God, and God will be right there with Solomon all the way.

Taking it Home

- For you: What’s going on right now in your life that makes you feel afraid or discouraged? David knew that in the face of the daunting project of building the temple--not to mention running a country--Solomon needed a steady stream of encouragement. If David were living now, he’d be sending repeated text messages to Solomon reminding him again and again to be ‘strong and courageous.’ Just as David spoke the words to Solomon, picture God saying those words directly to you: “_____, be strong and courageous”. Take some more time to listen to God, asking God to remind you of any specific ways that he would like encourage you.
- For your six: Ask God to really know the hearts of your six. Pray that he would give them hearts that are opened and turned toward God. Ask God to bless all the ways, even the most covert, in which your six are actually seeking after God.
- For our church: I know the saying goes that ‘the devil is in the details,’ but this passage shows us God in the details too. With the temple, God has even the smallest of things, from the serving-ware arrangement to the lampshades, figured out and perfectly arranged. Whether you love details or hate them, in the end you know that they matter, for good or ill. Ask God to take care of all the details of our church’s big dreams and plans. Pray that for every great, big plan that God gives us he would equally take care of the millions of things that need to come together for it to actually happen. For the situations where we find ourselves stuck in the details, ask God to give us a way out. Ask God that to give our church the ability to be impossibly great at the details.

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

- For families: Everyone needs encouragement sometimes, and families can be great places to get that encouragement. What feels like a big challenge to you? How can your family encourage you? Let your family know about ways of encouraging that work well for you when you are facing a big challenge. Pray that God would make you a family that is great at seeing opportunities to encourage one other.

Wednesday, April 20th: 1 Chronicles 29

1 Then King David said to the whole assembly: “My son Solomon, the one whom God has chosen, is young and inexperienced. The task is great, because this palatial structure is not for human beings but for the LORD God. **2** With all my resources I have provided for the temple of my God—gold for the gold work, silver for the silver, bronze for the bronze, iron for the iron and wood for the wood, as well as onyx for the settings, turquoise, stones of various colors, and all kinds of fine stone and marble—all of these in large quantities. **3** Besides, in my devotion to the temple of my God I now give my personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple of my God, over and above everything I have provided for this holy temple: **4** three thousand talents of gold (gold of Ophir) and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for the overlaying of the walls of the buildings, **5** for the gold work and the silver work, and for all the work to be done by the skilled workers. Now, who among you is willing to consecrate yourself to the LORD today?”

6 Then the leaders of families, the officers of the tribes of Israel, the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds, and the officials in charge of the king’s work gave willingly. **7** They gave toward the work on the temple of God five thousand talents and ten thousand darics of gold, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze and a hundred thousand talents of iron.

8 Anyone who had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the temple of the LORD in the custody of Jehiel the Gershonite. **9** The people rejoiced at the willing response of their leaders, for they had given freely and wholeheartedly to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly.

10 David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly, saying,

“Praise be to you, LORD,
the God of our father Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.

11 Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power
and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.

Yours, LORD, is the kingdom;
you are exalted as head over all.

12 Wealth and honor come from you;
you are the ruler of all things.

In your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all.

13 Now, our God, we give you thanks,
and praise your glorious name.

14 “But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. **15** We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. **16** LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. **17** I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things have I given willingly and with honest intent. And

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you. **18** LORD, the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Israel, keep these desires and thoughts in the hearts of your people forever, and keep their hearts loyal to you. **19** And give my son Solomon the wholehearted devotion to keep your commands, statutes and decrees and to do everything to build the palatial structure for which I have provided.”

20 Then David said to the whole assembly, “Praise the LORD your God.” So they all praised the LORD, the God of their fathers; they bowed down, prostrating themselves before the LORD and the king.

Points of Interest

- ‘I now give my personal treasures’--everything David has mentioned up until now has been collected from the state’s resources. Now, David is pitching in what must be a very large portion of his own wealth.
- ‘gold of Ophir’--Ophir was particularly famous for fine gold.
- ‘They gave toward the work on the temple’--inspired by David, all the rest of the people throw themselves and their resources into the project as well. Even David can only do so much on his own.
- ‘Wealth and honor come from you’--even while David and the others are giving so generously toward the building of the temple, David wants to remember that he is not out-giving God. They owe everything they have to God.
- ‘Our days on earth are like a shadow’--our lives are so short and insubstantial that, like a shadow, they don’t even make an impression in the ground.
- ‘that you test the heart’--it’s not so much the dollar value of their donations that matters. It’s their faith, their gratitude, their love of God, and their desire to accomplish something great together.
- ‘the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Israel’--God promised Abraham--and his son Isaac and grandson Israel--hundreds of years ago that God would make them a great nation, give them the land, and make them an overflowing blessing to the rest of the world. Now, it looks like those promises are finally coming true.

Taking it Home

- For you: The Israelites are so inspired by the vision of the temple that they are willing to give anything and everything to make it happen. They seem to offer up whatever they have to God. What are things right in front of you that you can offer up to God? It could be money, a degree, a house, a skill or talent. Spend a moment asking if God wants you to give over any of those things to him for a purpose right now. Tell God you want to give that thing, and ask God to use it for his good. If you feel resistant to what God brings up, that’s okay; talk to him about that.
- For your six: As the Israelites were responsive to God, they found themselves part of a plan much bigger than themselves. Ask God to show your six the big plans he has for them, and pray that they would feel compelled toward it.
- For our church: I love that David asks God to help the Israelites ‘keep their hearts loyal’ to him. He seems to be aware that humans are prone to forget and to be sort of wishy-washy. Ask God to help keep our church loyal to pursuing God no matter what happens. Just like New England

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

will *always* want the Celtics to win and *always* want the Lakers to lose, pray that our church would have the same immediate enthusiasm and commitment to whatever God is doing—that we would always turn to what God wants and always turn away from what he doesn't want.

- For families: Spend some time talking as a family about some of the things you give toward financially. For parents, share with your kids why these things are important to you. Often, giving can be of our time and our talents, too. Share about those things as well. Spend some time praying together about whether there are things God would want you to give toward and in what ways.

Thursday, April 21st: 1 Kings 1:1-27

1 When King David was very old, he could not keep warm even when they put covers over him. **2** So his attendants said to him, "Let us look for a young virgin to serve the king and take care of him. She can lie beside him so that our lord the king may keep warm."

3 Then they searched throughout Israel for a beautiful girl and found Abishag, a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. **4** The girl was very beautiful; she took care of the king and waited on him, but the king had no sexual relations with her.

5 Now Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, put himself forward and said, "I will be king." So he got chariots and horses ready, with fifty men to run ahead of him. **6** (His father had never rebuked him by asking, "Why do you behave as you do?") He was also very handsome and was born next after Absalom.)

7 Adonijah conferred with Joab son of Zeruah and with Abiathar the priest, and they gave him their support. **8** But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei and Rei and David's special guard did not join Adonijah.

9 Adonijah then sacrificed sheep, cattle and fattened calves at the Stone of Zoheleth near En Rogel. 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 special guard or his brother Solomon.

11 Then Nathan asked Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, "Have you not heard that Adonijah, the son of Haggith, has become king, and our lord David knows nothing about it? **12** Now then, let me advise you how you can save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. **13** Go in to King David and say to him, 'My lord the king, did you not swear to me your servant: "Surely Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne"? Why then has Adonijah become king?' **14** While you are still there talking to the king, I will come in and add my word to what you have said."

15 So Bathsheba went to see the aged king in his room, where Abishag the Shunammite was attending him. **16** Bathsheba bowed down, prostrating herself before the king.

"What is it you want?" the king asked.

17 She said to him, "My lord, you yourself swore to me your servant by the LORD your God: 'Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne.' **18** But now Adonijah has become king, and you, my lord the king, do not know about it. **19** He has sacrificed great numbers of cattle, fattened calves, and sheep, and has invited all the king's sons, Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander of the army, but he has not invited Solomon your servant. **20** My lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, to learn from you who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him. **21** Otherwise, as soon as my lord the king is laid to rest with his ancestors, I and my son Solomon will be treated as criminals."

22 While she was still speaking with the king, Nathan the prophet arrived. **23** And the king was told, "Nathan the prophet is here." So he went before the king and bowed with his face to the ground.

24 Nathan said, "Have you, my lord the king, declared that Adonijah shall be king after you, and that he will sit on your throne? **25** Today he has gone down and sacrificed great numbers of cattle, fattened calves, and sheep. He has invited all the king's sons, the commanders of the army and Abiathar the

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

priest. Right now they are eating and drinking with him and saying, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’ **26** But me your servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and your servant Solomon he did not invite. **27** Is this something my lord the king has done without letting his servants know who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?”

Points of Interest

- ‘Let us look for a young virgin to serve the king’--I get the impression that there was some sort of scandal over Abishag. Rumors persisted even to the time of the writing of this history that David had an affair with a much younger woman at the very end of his life. The author is assuring us that Abishag was only David’s nurse; David was too weak to keep himself warm or get out of bed, for goodness’ sake. It does seem odd, though, that even as he’s denying there’s anything to the rumors, he focuses an awful lot on how young and pretty she is.
- ‘He was also very handsome’--it seems that David has no shortage of good-looking, older sons who feel it’s their right to be king. If there’s one thing we’ve learned through this story, it’s that it doesn’t work that way with God or with David. You need more than a birth certificate and a nice head of hair to be the kind of king God is looking for.
- ‘His father had never rebuked him’--unfortunately, it seems that David never learned the trick of avoiding over-indulging his older sons.
- ‘But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet’--at the very end, David’s most loyal supporters are splitting up. Many of these men have been with David all the way since the outlaw days when they were running from Saul. All of them stuck with David during Absalom’s rebellion. But now half of them are siding with Adonijah and half with Solomon. Abiathar and Joab go one way, Zadok and Benaiah the other. Each of the sons has one of David’s faithful priests and one of his best generals.
- ‘near En Rogel’--En Rogel is in Judean territory. Just like Absalom did, Adonijah is appealing to his tribal base in his claim for the crown (Walton et al).
- ‘He invited all his brothers’--Adonijah takes Absalom’s tactic and adapts it. Absalom also made his move with a party for all of the brothers, but he caused a panic when he killed one of them. Adonijah instead uses the big family banquet to entice his brothers into supporting him over Solomon. It creates the impression of all against one, instead of one against all.
- ‘Nathan asked Bathsheba, Solomon’s mother’--it’s curious that Nathan talks to Bathsheba rather than Solomon himself. I think it must mean that Solomon is too young to be fully in charge of his own affairs. His mother has to act as his agent.
- ‘our lord David knows nothing about it’--David is bedridden, and perhaps Joab is restricting the news that gets to him.
- ‘I will come in and add my word’--this conspiracy is too strong even for just one of Bathsheba or Nathan to counteract. They need to work together to convince David of the seriousness of the situation.
- ‘Is this something my lord the king has done’--I don’t think that Nathan seriously suspects David’s involvement in Adonijah’s actions. He’s trying to remind David that, bedridden as he is, he’s still the king; and he has the power to do something about what’s happening.

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

Taking it Home

- For you: When hearing the troublesome news, Bathsheba doesn't get worked up into a frenzy but instead goes straight to David to discuss what's been going on and clarify what he had said. Bathsheba's immediate go-to-David response seems like a helpful model for how we might approach God. Whatever is on your mind or in front of you today, try going to God with it—to get perspective, to talk about it, to ask him to change it, or to thank him for it. Today, try as often as you can, whatever comes your way, to go directly to God to check in with God about it.
- For your six: It's peculiar how similar Adonijah's banquet-throwing-to-assert-the-throne tactics are to his older brother Absalom's. It almost seems like it's in his blood—and maybe it just so happens it *is* in his blood. We seem to inherit both good and bad from our families. Ask God to bless your six's families and to protect your six from and put a stop to any unhelpful patterns that keep getting passed down from generation to generation. Ask God that the behaviors that come naturally to your six would point them toward God.
- For our church: David pretty diligently preparing to transfer power over to Solomon, only to have Adonijah throw a huge wrench in the plan. Ask God to help our church in both the making and executing of plans. Pray that God would give us grace, agility, and wisdom to best respond when plans suddenly change.
- For families: Do you have any elderly family members who are nearing the end of their lives? Spend some time talking about these people. We can often push these people aside as having little to offer. They might have limited capacities, do things really differently, or just be difficult to hang out with. But sometimes God might want to use these people to give you bits of wisdom you might not get anywhere else. Spend some time as a family praying for any aging family members you have. Ask God how he sees these people. Ask if God would like you to spend time with any of these people and if there are any things God would like you to ask them in this season of their lives.

Friday, April 22nd: 1 Kings 1:28-53

28 Then King David said, "Call in Bathsheba." So she came into the king's presence and stood before him.

29 The king then took an oath: "As surely as the LORD lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble,

30 I will surely carry out this very day what I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel: Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place."

31 Then Bathsheba bowed down with her face to the ground, prostrating herself before the king, and said, "May my lord King David live forever!"

32 King David said, "Call in Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet and Benaiah son of Jehoiada." When they came before the king, **33** he said to them: "Take your lord's servants with you and have Solomon my son mount my own mule and take him down to Gihon. **34** There have Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel. Blow the trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!' **35** Then you are to go up with him, and he is to come and sit on my throne and reign in my place. I have appointed him ruler over Israel and Judah."

36 Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, "Amen! May the LORD, the God of my lord the king, so declare it. **37**As the LORD was with my lord the king, so may he be with Solomon to make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord King David!"

38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites and the Pelethites

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

went down and had Solomon mount King David's mule, and they escorted him to Gihon. **39** Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the sacred tent and anointed Solomon. Then they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, "Long live King Solomon!" **40** And all the people went up after him, playing pipes and rejoicing greatly, so that the ground shook with the sound.

41 Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they were finishing their feast. On hearing the sound of the trumpet, Joab asked, "What's the meaning of all the noise in the city?"

42 Even as he was speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest arrived. Adonijah said, "Come in. A worthy man like you must be bringing good news."

43 "Not at all!" Jonathan answered. "Our lord King David has made Solomon king. **44** 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, **45** and Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon. From there they have gone up cheering, and the city resounds with it. That's the noise you hear. **46** Moreover, Solomon has taken his seat on the royal throne. **47** Also, the royal officials have come to congratulate our lord King David, saying, 'May your God make Solomon's name more famous than yours and his throne greater than yours!' And the king bowed in worship on his bed **48** and said, 'Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has allowed my eyes to see a successor on my throne today.'"

49 At this, all Adonijah's guests rose in alarm and dispersed. **50** But Adonijah, in fear of Solomon, went and took hold of the horns of the altar. **51** Then Solomon was told, "Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon and is clinging to the horns of the altar. He says, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.'"

52 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." **53** Then King Solomon sent men, and they brought him down from the altar. And Adonijah came and bowed down to King Solomon, and Solomon said, "Go to your home."

Points of Interest

- 'Call in Bathsheba'--I don't exactly understand the ins and outs of what's being described here. I was under the impression that Bathsheba was already in the room.
- "May my lord King David live forever!--it's interesting that even as they plan together for who will take over once David dies, Bathsheba offers this wish that he would live forever.
- 'have Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him'--in many ways, Adonijah has the upper hand: he is older; he has the support of the other brothers; and he has the master strategist Joab on his side. But Solomon has two practically unbeatable advantages, in Nathan and David. David gives Solomon his own limousine and the throne itself. And Nathan anoints him. Thus, it becomes immediately clear that Solomon is both David's choice and God's.
- 'Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Kerethites and the Pelethites'--when Joab took command of the army after Amasa's death, Benaiah took Joab's old job as commander of the Kerithites, Pelethites, and other special forces.
- 'so that the ground shook with the sound'--Solomon's people are blowing trumpets and pipes and doing whatever else they can to express their support as loudly as possible.
- 'all Adonijah's guests rose in alarm and dispersed'--the spectacle works. Adonijah's guests are intimidated, and they all suddenly remember that they're late for another appointment.
- 'took hold of the horns of the altar'--Adonijah figures that no one would be willing to shed blood in such a holy place.

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

- ‘Solomon replied’--up until now, everyone--David, Bathsheba, Nathan, Zadok, Benaiah--has been acting on Solomon’s behalf. This is the first time he speaks for himself. Solomon rises to the occasion, behaving like the king he will soon be.
- ‘Adonijah came and bowed down’--he’s surrendering, and recognizing Solomon as king.

Taking it Home

- For you: Contrasting David’s response here to his response several years earlier when Absalom tried to take the throne is impressive; if he had a therapist I’m sure she would agree that David is progressing well. In contrast to the time with Absalom, David doesn’t react to or seem afraid of Adonijah. He has learned that he doesn’t need to feel threatened by such situations—something I can see it might take a little while to learn. What situations are you in that feel threatening? What relationship or scenario causes you to suddenly feel like you need to protect your sense of self, your well-being, or your livelihood? Ask God to give you a sense of abundance and security in those situations. Tell God that you trust God to provide for you and to look out for your best interest. Ask God to show you how you might respond next time a threatening situation occurs.
- For your six: Adonijah’s poor guests get caught in the middle of a potentially fatal family feud. I’m guessing they attended the feast because it sounded like a fun, inviting party with friends—only to find out later it was a palace coup. Who do your six spend the most time with? Where do they go to celebrate and have a good time? Ask God to give your six friends who are looking out for their best interest. Pray that your six wouldn’t end up in volatile situations like Adonijah’s guests did.
- For our church: Solomon effectively sends Adonijah to his room for a time out. His response reminds me of the World Cup when several players, but one in particular hailing from a large up-and-coming country in South America, would have these overly-dramatic outbursts on the field, at which a referee would time and again hand him a card and effectively say “Go to the sidelines and calm down.” It seems like maybe we are all prone to have some childish outbursts whether we like it or not. Pray that God would give us an incredible amount of maturity to deal with all the ups and downs that life can bring. Pray that God would keep our church clear-headed and focused on God.
- For families: Talk about any of the ways that you see each other growing in your relationship with God and in faith during this Leap of Faith season. What are some things you see as a family member that others might miss? Talk about the ways in which you see each other taking that first step toward more faith. Pray for each other that God would walk with each of you and help you take the next steps.

Saturday, April 23rd: 1 Kings 2

1 When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son.

2 “I am about to go the way of all the earth,” he said. “So be strong, act like a man, **3** and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go **4** and that the LORD may keep his promise to me: ‘If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.’”

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

5 “Now you yourself know what Joab son of Zeruiah did to me—what he did to the two commanders of Israel’s armies, Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether. He killed them, shedding their blood in peacetime as if in battle, and with that blood he stained the belt around his waist and the sandals on his feet. **6** Deal with him according to your wisdom, but do not let his gray head go down to the grave in peace.

7 “But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai of Gilead and let them be among those who eat at your table. They stood by me when I fled from your brother Absalom.

8 “And remember, you have with you Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, who called down bitter curses on me the day I went to Mahanaim. When he came down to meet me at the Jordan, I swore to him by the LORD: ‘I will not put you to death by the sword.’ **9** But now, do not consider him innocent. You are a man of wisdom; you will know what to do to him. Bring his gray head down to the grave in blood.”

10 Then David rested with his ancestors and was buried in the City of David. **11** He had reigned forty years over Israel—seven years in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem. **12** So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his rule was firmly established.

Points of Interest

- ‘the way of all the earth’--despite Bathsheba’s kind wishes in yesterday’s passage, David will not live forever. In this regard, he’s just like everyone else. He lived life on a grander scale than most, but he’s not actually larger-than-life.
- ‘do not let his gray head go down to the grave in peace’--it’s a tad disappointing that practically David’s final act is to order a string of executions. It’s chilling, like that scene in *The Godfather* when Michael Corleone has all of his father’s old enemies killed at the very same time he’s standing as godfather to his nephew. I think it has to be done, though. Even David could not quite control Shimei or, even more, Joab. There’s no way Solomon could be safely established with those two running amok. David himself probably should have taken care of them long ago. Since he didn’t, Solomon must, to start his reign with a clean slate and a free hand.
- ‘show kindness to the sons of Barzillai of Gilead’--there’s also someone David didn’t quite have the chance to reward properly during his own lifetime. At least it’s not just killings David is leaving to Solomon.
- ‘Then David rested with his ancestors’--I like that David’s death is described as ‘resting.’ David has had a long and busy life. In one way or another, he’s been on the move since he was a teenager. It’s about time he got some rest.

Taking it Home

- For you: It’s hard to know what to make of David’s death-wish list that he gives to Solomon. It would have been so much nicer to get to the end of David’s life and find pretty picture of happily-ever after, but even to the very end everything is not so neatly wrapped up. David has somehow learned to navigate the tides of life’s complications and still find God in the midst of problems not being entirely solved. How do you respond to the messiness of life? What are some problems you are facing that just don’t seem to be getting solved? Ask God for more of him in those situations. Ask God to give you a glimpse of the bigger picture and how to navigate the challenges you are facing while not losing sight of God. Ask God to use these situations to draw you closer to himself. Tell God you want more of him.

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

- For your six: David calls Solomon into his position as king, leaving him with clear words of direction. Ask God to call your six into what he has for them. Pray God would clearly guide your six. Pray that God would be a part of whatever pressing decisions your six currently face.
- For our church: A large part of Solomon’s ability to have his throne firmly established was because he was following in the footsteps of his father and building upon what had happened before him. New England has an incredible legacy of God doing great things. Pray that our church would be a part of that and would learn from and build upon what has happened before us. Pray that we would follow in the footsteps of great people of faith and movements of God that have happened right here.
- For families: Parents, are there things now, in life, that you want to pass on to your kids? Often we wait until the end of our lives or until we are under some type of pressure to think about these things. Spend some time thinking about what you want to be passing on to your kids, both now and at the end of your life. What are some of your hopes for them? What are things you want to say to them or encourage in them now? Choose a couple of these things and talk with your kids about them. Ask your kids if there are qualities or skills they see in you that they really want to take on for themselves. Pray together that God would help you be a family that walks faithfully before God with all your heart and soul.

Sunday, April 24th: 2 Samuel 23:1-7

1 These are the last words of David:

“The inspired utterance of David son of Jesse,
the utterance of the man exalted by the Most High,
the man anointed by the God of Jacob,
the hero of Israel’s songs:

2 “The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me;
his word was on my tongue.

3 The God of Israel spoke,
the Rock of Israel said to me:

‘When one rules over people in righteousness,
when he rules in the fear of God,

4 he is like the light of morning at sunrise
on a cloudless morning,

like the brightness after rain
that brings grass from the earth.’

5 “If my house were not right with God,
surely he would not have made with me an everlasting covenant,
arranged and secured in every part;

surely he would not bring to fruition my salvation
and grant me my every desire.

6 But evil men are all to be cast aside like thorns,
which are not gathered with the hand.

7 Whoever touches thorns
uses a tool of iron or the shaft of a spear;
they are burned up where they lie.”

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

Points of Interest

- ‘when he rules in the fear of God’--David was a fearless king. He faced enemies who seemed much stronger than him, constant war, insurrection, even plague; and he never flinched. His only fear was a fear of God. It’s not so much that he was scared of God, as that he deeply respected God. And he valued his relationship with God. He knew the one thing that would allow him to survive everything else was maintaining his deep connection with God.
- ‘surely he would not bring to fruition my salvation’--I wonder if David has in mind a particular episode of trouble from which God saved him, was thinking of all of his troubles as a unit, or is looking forward to a further rescue even beyond death.
- ‘thorns, which are not gathered with the hand’--you don’t grasp on to a thorn; you drop it as soon as you feel the prick. God never dropped David. Since God held David firmly in God’s hand his entire life, David can go to the grave with a clean conscience, knowing that God loved him and was pleased with him.

Taking it Home

- For you: David takes time at the end of his life to recount what he has learned and what his relationship with God has been like. Take time today to reflect on the Leap of Faith and write down a summary of how it was for you. What have you been praying for? What were highlights of things God did? What were you disappointed about? What have you learned during this time? How have you grown? Ask God to show you what he would like you to take away from this season and carry over into the next.
- For your six: Pray today that your six would one day have a story like David’s of how they came to know, trust, and love God. Ask God to show himself to your six today. Pray that the story of Easter would be captivating, make sense, and be something that draws your six towards God.
- For our church: Thank God for what he has done in our church during the Leap of Faith. Pray that we would grow closer to God and see God more clearly than we ever have before. Pray that our church would have the same confidence in and joy of God’s presence as David articulated in some of his last days in Psalm 108:1-5:

“My heart is confident in you, O God;

no wonder I can sing your praises!

Wake up my soul!

Wake up, O harp and lyre!

I will waken the dawn with my song.

I will thank you, Lord, in front of all the people.

I will sing your praises among the nations.

For your unfailing love is higher than the heavens.

Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

Be exalted, O God above the highest heavens.

May your glory shine over all the earth.”

The Life of David—a Daily Bible Guide, week 6

- For families: What has this Leap of Faith been like for your family? What are things you have seen God do? Look back to your posters, if you made any, at what you have been praying for, at what God has done and what you think he might be calling your family to do as a project. What do you notice as you look back at these things? Can you see ways that individuals in your family have grown in their relationship with God in this time? Can you see ways you have grown? Are there things you want to make sure you take as you move into the next season of your life? Find a way to write this down or make this concrete in some way. Spend some time sharing and wrapping up this time together. Listen together to God and see what God has to say about this time for you as a family.

Dear Readers,

I'm afraid that's all we have for this season's version of the Daily Bible Guide. Thank you so much for reading along with me once again. I appreciate all of the kind comments, provocative questions, interesting observations, and various musings you've sent my way; they're part of what makes this one of my favorite things I do.

I'd especially like to thank the friends part of 'Brian Housman and friends.' My thanks go to Angel Jackson and Alexis Kruza for conceiving of the 'For your family' section and for turning it into a reality.

And, above all, I'm exceedingly grateful to Stephanie Acker for working side by side with me not just on this one, but on the past three guides; they would not have been the same without your creativity, hard work, and partnership.

I hope to see you all again on the next Daily Bible Guide.

Yours,

Brian