

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Dear Fellow Redeemed,

The question we have been meditating on for the last few weeks is:

"Who can reign on the throne of David?"

But we aren't the first people who have meditated on that question,

actually, lots of people have, and we heard of yet another one of them today: Prince Adonijah.

...

Can you imagine growing up as Adonijah?

You are the 4th oldest son of David (a prince)...3 older brothers in line before you.

For the first 2 decades of your life, there isn't much chance that you will be king,  
so you are resigned to simply be a prince your whole life.

And then, Amnon disgraced Tamar, Absalom's sister, when you are about 20 years old.

Who would have ever guessed that Absalom would have eliminated Amnon from the throne,  
and fled out of the country for his life, possibly leaving only Chilean, the 2nd born,  
between you and the throne if he was even still alive—

we don't know from Scripture, only his name is ever mentioned).

So there is hope... until... Absalom returns and is eventually welcomed back into the court.

But then he goes ahead and takes himself out of the running by leading a full-on rebellion...  
and ends up dying at Joab's hand.

And now you, the fourth born are next in line for the throne: the heir apparent, at least, by birth order.

...

Except that David had sworn to Bathsheba in the hearing of others that Solomon was to be king.

David's court knows about this: Nathan, Benaiah, Shimei and Rei, David's mighty men.

And the word gets out. Adonijah knows. Joab knows. Abiathar knows. It isn't a secret.

But Solomon, is a peaceful lad of about 25. All he does is study and look at ants and gazelles all day.

You are about 35 and a man of action.

You have seen the things that a king must deal with.

What has Solomon have over you?

And Dad? He is old and feeble. He doesn't know what's going on anymore.

He hasn't stopped you before, and once you have asserted yourself, who will stand in your way?

Dad? Na. He's a push over.

---

*As follows in Jesus' name:*

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. 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. He conferred with Joab the son of Zeruah and with Abiathar the priest. And they followed Adonijah and helped him. 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.

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

So Bathsheba went to the king in his chamber (now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was attending to the king). **Bathsheba bowed and paid homage to the king, and the**

king said, "What do you desire?" 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.' And now, behold, Adonijah is king, although you, my lord the king, do not know it. 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. **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.** 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." (ESV)

*This is Your Word, heavenly Father; sanctify us in the truth, Your Word is Truth. Amen. (John 17:17)*

---

It seems that Adonijah had taken a few notes from Absalom's diary.

He gathered himself a chariot and 50 men to run out before him,

which, interestingly enough, is something we never hear of King David doing.

He also gathered counselors and key men to help him:

Joab, his cousin but, more importantly, the general of David's army, and

Abiathar, 1 of the 2 current High Priests.

Having representatives of both the Church and the army supporting him, **he exalted himself**, and appointed himself to be king.

He threw his own coronation party!

You can be sure that it took him some time to plan all this out with Joab and Abiathar...

"How can we make this work? What will sell it just long enough to take out any contenders?"

They drew up invitation lists.

Of course, his brothers had to be there to make it look legitimate.

He invited all the royal officials of Judah.

(Of course, just as important as who you invite is also who you DO NOT invite:

not Solomon, not Benaiah, not Nathan the prophet or Zadok the other High Priest.)

They had the menu arranged: sheep, oxen and fattened cattle in abundance,

but not just that, we have Abiathar! Let's make it a sacrifice of sheep, oxen, and fattened cattle!

Then the Lord will surely be pleased and the people will feel confident he has the Lord's blessing.

And it worked: the invited guests were yelling, "**Long live King Adonijah!**" 1Ki.1:25

And now, who would dare stand up against him, and God's High Priest, and Joab's army?

Solomon, "the Prince of Peace"?

...

Except... Except that it was all fake and unauthorized. Adonijah was a fraud!

Not that he wasn't a prince, a son of the king,

but because he wasn't the appointed heir. And he knew it!

We know this because later when he speaks to Bathsheba to ask a favor, he told her,

**"You know that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel fully expected me to reign.** 1 Kings 2:15

**However, the kingdom has turned about and become my brother's, for it was his from the Lord."**

And again we know this because of whom he did NOT invite, namely:

**Solomon, Nathan the prophet or Benaiah or the mighty men**, nor did he invite King David.

This is an act of guilt, even an act defiance and rebellion.

He was going against what he knew the Lord had determined,

and what he knew King David had sworn by the Lord's name.

And yet he had the audacity to use Abiathar, the High Priest and the sacrifices

to put on heirs of divine sanction.

But when David found out what Adonijah had done,  
when Bathsheba, followed directly by Nathan the Prophet reported Adonijah's activities  
and a few of the consequences if nothing was done,  
and knowing that all the eyes of Israel were, in fact, on him, to see who would reign on his throne,  
he acted swiftly and decisively.

...

Now having heard what a fake coronation looks like,  
consider Solomon's authentic (and hastily planned and executed) coronation:  
How Solomon did not assert himself, but waited patiently for the Lord and the king –  
who had appointed him – to act.  
How David had Benaiah and all his mighty men, and the Cherethites and Pelethites,  
David's own select body guards, process Solomon to and from the coronation site.  
How David had Solomon ride on his own royal mule.  
How David had both Nathan the Prophet and Zadok the High Priest anoint Solomon as king,  
not just in front of a few invited guests, but publicly for all Jerusalem, Judah, and Israel to see.  
How David had the horn blown to publicly notify the masses  
and how David had all the people exclaim, "**Long live King Solomon!**"  
How David had Solomon brought to David's royal court and seated on David's throne,  
with the declaration: "**for he shall be king in my place.**  
**And I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.**" <sup>1 Kings 1:35</sup>

What time did David have to plan this all out?  
It took him but a few moments to give the orders.  
It took his men a few moments to prepare them,  
and while yet Adonijah's guests were still eating and drinking,  
they heard the horn blasts and the roar of the nation's celebration.

When the news came back to Adonijah and his party about what David had done,  
and that Solomon had been appointed and crowned king under David's orders,  
Adonijah's support melted away. Each slipped quietly home in different directions.

...

When Solomon was firmly established, David exclaimed, '**Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,  
who has granted someone to sit on my throne this day, my own eyes seeing it.**'" <sup>1 Kings 1:48</sup>

But David realized that King Solomon, his son, was not the One promised to sit on his throne forever.  
Solomon, though in many ways a picture of the coming Messiah, was NOT the Savior.  
He himself needed the appointed Savior to redeem him for his many sins as well.  
He needed the true "Prince of Peace" to earn **peace on earth** between God and man.  
He needed the One anointed, not with oil, but with Baptism, set apart to carry our sins and sorrows.  
He needed the One to ride into Jerusalem on a foal of a donkey to the acclamations of the crowd,  
where He would be crowned with thorns, and enthroned on the cross.  
And so both King David and King Solomon waited for great David's greater Son.

But so that we can tie up our little Advent Midweek theme, asking  
"Who, then, can reign on the throne of David?"

We turn simply to the Father's announcement to the Virgin Mary through the angel Gabriel, and learn of the One truly appointed by the Father to reign on His throne, whose hanging on the tree has restored the kingdom to His Father, and whose love never fails...

Gabriel said to Mary, **"behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus.**

**He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.**

**And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David,**

**and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever,**

**and of His kingdom there will be no end."**<sup>Luke 1:31-33</sup>

**Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.** <sup>Luke 2:14</sup>

*Soli Deo Gloria*