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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1882 ~ Solomon Anointed King.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

As a teenager, King David of Israel was a shepherd who tended his father's sheep. Later, when he was brought into King Saul's court, his gift for music resulted in him playing his harp for Saul. As king after Saul, David wrote many songs as well. Seventy-three of the songs in the Bible book of Psalms are attributed to David, with the most famous one being Psalm 23. Many people have learnt this one off by heart. "The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need."

David's songs expressed his feelings and thoughts at different times of his life. In many of his songs, such as Psalm 3, David appealed to the Lord for help, and then expressed his confidence that the Lord would answer. In others songs, he gave thanks for the Lord's goodness to him, like Psalm 9. In some of them again, such as Psalms 8 and 19, David meditated on God's greatness and the wonder of His ways. While in many other songs, such as Psalms 2, 22 and 110, David spoke prophetically of the coming Messiah.

When David became old, his officials chose a beautiful young nurse named Abishag to take care of him. David felt always cold and spent a lot of his time resting in his bed; he could no longer take an active role in governing Israel. The people of Jerusalem sensed that David wasn't going to live much longer. And his oldest living son, Adonijah, thought that this seemed to be the right time to have himself declared the new king of Israel. He was the younger brother of Absalom and a very good looking man as well.

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The books of 1st and 2nd Kings follow straight on from the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. The books of Kings record the history of Israel's kings from the beginning of Solomon's reign, in about 970 BC, to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC, when Judah was taken to Babylon in exile. Scholars think that both the books of Kings were written during the Babylonian exile to explain to the Israelites why their kingdom had fallen and God's temple in Jerusalem destroyed. The reason was that both the people and their ruling kings at the time had disobeyed God's covenant commands. As a result, the people were reaping the punishment of their disobedience.

As early as 2nd Samuel, Chapter 12, it had been known that David's son, Solomon, was God's choice for David's successor. In 1st Kings, Chapter 1, Adonijah set himself up to be proclaimed king just like his older brother Absalom. Adonijah gathered his horsemen and runners to go ahead of him and lead the way. He also secured the support of Joab, David's army commander, and Abiathar, David's priest, but he didn't gain support from David's high priest Zadok, Nathan the prophet, or the mighty men who had belonged to David. Adonijah then invited all those who supported him as king to a feast. But while they were partying, they heard that Solomon had been anointed king. Quickly, they abandoned Adonijah, as they were now afraid of being seen as those trying to seize power from Solomon and worthy of death.

What happened to Adonijah? He fled to the Temple of God for safety, but not for sacred reasons. He used his religion for only his personal gain. This is true of some people today who use wrong motives to make their livelihood from religion. When Solomon sat on the throne of Israel, Adonijah was afraid of him. From the Temple of God, Adonijah sent King Solomon a message, asking him to promise not to kill him for his actions. Solomon was a wise man and told Adonijah that if he proved himself a loyal man, he would have nothing to fear. But if Adonijah was ever found to be doing wicked things, he would be put to death. So Adonijah left the temple and he came before Solomon, bowing low to him and agreeing to his terms before returning to his home.

Yet had Adonijah given up for good his ambitions to be king? There's no doubt that Adonijah thought he was very important and that his ambition was to have power and control.

Later when Solomon's throne had been firmly established, Adonijah and his allies resurfaced, and constituted again a possible threat to Solomon's throne. Adonijah cunningly went to Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, and asked her to seek a special favour from Solomon. Adonijah wanted permission to marry Abishag, the beautiful young girl who had nursed David when he was old and lying in bed. Adonijah thought that Solomon couldn't ever refuse Bathsheba. Bathsheba didn't see anything wrong with his request, or if she did, she pretended she didn't; but Solomon certainly did.

To marry a king's wife was in effect to claim that king's throne. Abishag was counted to be part of David's household, even though he never had sexual relations with her. By asking this request, Solomon quickly realised that Adonijah was still trying to gain their father's throne and he was no longer loyal to Solomon's rulership. As a result, Solomon had Adonijah put to death that very same day.

What can we learn from these events? Firstly, God's ways are not man's ways. It's the world's way for the eldest son of a king to follow in his father's footsteps and become the next king. In olden times, however, it wasn't unusual for the successor in families to take up the role of administrator before the elderly leader had passed away. This was particularly so when the old king was no longer able to carry out most of his duties, like David was when confined to his bed.

Did Adonijah learn nothing from the disaster that his older brother Absalom had caused when he tried to become king? The first place Adonijah should have sought was his father's bedside to have a talk about David's successor. He could have ultimately saved his life by doing so.

Another aspect of Adonijah's life of note was his self-interest. Many times he'd seen his father put the interests of God's plans for the nation first. God had made David's name great, not for his own sake and self, but for the nation and the glory of God instead. Christians should do all things for the glory and honour of God and not for their own self-interest. We can have a bad mindset where we reduce our estimate of God to only being a useful Someone in our lives to make our lives more personally satisfying. The real purpose of conversion to Christianity is that it reconciles us to our Heavenly Father, and enables us to know God and live through His Holy Spirit's power for His glory. What does God's glory look like?

An important attribute of God's very being is that He is glorious – He is shining with brilliant splendor. To help us praise and reverence the Lord, it's important to know that God's glory actually helps us understand our own future! God created people so they could reign with Him as His very own sons and daughters. In 2nd Corinthians, Chapter 6, God called those people who profess to be Christians to have nothing to do with the spiritual darkness of unbelievers, so that God would receive them and be a Father to them. If we're to become members of God's own family, one of the attributes we need is the very glory of God to fill us. What are you really living for? It's crucial to realize that you are either glorifying God, or glorifying something or someone else. We're created to always make something beyond us look big.

As the oldest of David's princes, Adonijah thought that he was very important. There's been a lot of educational emphasis on the need for people to have good self-esteem, but the Bible says that the way to experience it is through a close encounter with God; not through a self-effort to make ourselves feel better. God wants us to feel terrible about our sin, so we'll come to Him to confess and forsake it. He wants us to hate it as much as He does. The way of being found in God is through the humbling, despised cross of Christ; not through self-promotion and self-importance. Those who are proud like Adonijah have no capacity for love. In Philippians Chapter 2, verses 3-4 it says: "Don't do anything from selfish ambition or from a cheap desire to boast, but be humble toward one another, always considering others better than yourselves. And look out for one another's interests, not just for your own." That's exactly what Jesus did, and how He taught His disciples to love.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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