

# 1 KINGS

## INTRODUCTION TO FIRST KINGS

This, and the following book, properly are but one book, divided into two parts, and went with the Jews under the common name of Kings. This, in the Syriac version, is called the Book of Kings; and in the Arabic version, the Book of Solomon, the Son of David the Prophet, because it begins with his reign upon the death of his father; and, in the Vulgate Latin version, the Third Book of Kings, the two preceding books of Samuel being sometimes called the First and Second Books of Kings, they containing the reigns of Saul and David; and in the Septuagint version both this and the following book are called Kingdoms, because they treat of the kingdom of Israel and Judah, after the division in the times of Rehoboam, son of Solomon, and of the several kings of them; as of Solomon before the division, so afterwards of the kings of Judah; Rehoboam, Abijam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Jehoash, Amaziah, Uzziah or Azariah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah; and of the kings of Israel, Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam the son of Joash, Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea; so that these books may, with great propriety, be called the books or histories of the kings in the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel: who they were written by, is not easy to say; some think they were written by piecemeal by the prophets that lived in the several reigns successively, as Nathan, Ahijah the Shilonite, Iddo, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and afterwards put together by an inspired writer. The Jews commonly say <sup>f1</sup>, that Jeremiah wrote the book of the Kings, by which they mean this, and the following book; though very probably they were written by Ezra, since the history in them is carried down to the liberty granted to Jehoiachin in Babylon; but that Ezra was the writer of all the preceding historical books, and even of the Pentateuch, cannot be admitted, which is the conceit of Spinosia <sup>f2</sup>; part of whose tract is just now republished by somebody, word for word, under a title as in the margin <sup>f3</sup>; but that Ezra was not the writer of the Pentateuch is clear, since he refers to it as written by Moses, and as

the rule of religion and worship in his times, (<sup><158D></sup>Ezra 3:2-4 6:18); and it is certain these writings were in being in the times of Josiah, Amaziah, Joash, yea, of David, and even of Joshua, (<sup><14944></sup>2 Chronicles 34:14 25:4 23:18 <sup><110B></sup>1 Kings 2:3 <sup><0634></sup>Joshua 8:34); and as for the book of Joshua, that also was written long before Ezra's time; it must be written long before the times of David, before the Jebusites were expelled from Jerusalem, since the writer of it says, that they dwelt there in his days, (<sup><0156></sup>Joshua 15:63); the book of Judges must be written before the times of Samuel and David, since the former refers to the annals of it, (<sup><092D></sup>1 Samuel 12:9,10); and the latter alludes to some passages in it, (<sup><0807></sup>Psalms 68:7,8); (see <sup><0704></sup>Judges 5:4,5); and a speech of Joab's, (<sup><0121></sup>2 Samuel 11:21), shows it to be an history then extant: to which may be added, that in it Jerusalem is called Jebus, (<sup><0790></sup>Judges 19:10,11); which it never was, after it was taken by David out of the hands of the Jebusites, (<sup><0106></sup>2 Samuel 5:6); the book of Ruth very probably was written by Samuel; had it been of a later date, or written by Ezra, the genealogy with which it concludes, would doubtless have been carried further than to David: the Book of Samuel, and particularly the song of Hannah in it, were written in all probability before the penning of the hundred thirteenth psalm, (<sup><0830></sup>Psalms 113:1-9), in which some expressions seem to be taken from it wherefore, though the two books of Kings may be allowed to be written or compiled by Ezra, the ten preceding ones cannot be assigned to him: however, there is no room to doubt of the divine authority of these two books, when the honour our Lord has done them is observed, by quoting or referring to several histories in them; as to the account of the queen of Sheba coming to hear the wisdom of Solomon; of the famine in the times of Elijah; and of that prophet being sent to the widow of Sarepta, and of the cleansing of Naaman the Syrian in the times of Elisha, (<sup><012D></sup>Matthew 12:42 <sup><0105></sup>Luke 4:25-28) from (<sup><1170></sup>1 Kings 17:1-10) (<sup><1260></sup>2 Kings 5:10-14); to which may be added, the quotations and references made by the apostles to passages in them, as by the Apostle Paul in (<sup><011D></sup>Romans 11:2-4) from (<sup><1194></sup>1 Kings 19:14,18); where this book is expressly called the Scripture; and by the Apostle James, (<sup><0167></sup>James 5:17,18); who manifestly refers to (<sup><1170></sup>1 Kings 17:1-24); and there are various things in this part of Scripture, which are confirmed by the testimonies of Heathen writers, as will be observed in the exposition of it. The use of these books is to carry on the history of the Jewish nation, to show the state of the church of God in those times, and his providential care of it amidst all the changes and vicissitudes in the state; and, above all,

to transmit to us the true genealogy of the Messiah, which serves to confirm the Evangelist Matthew's account of it.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO FIRST KINGS 1

This chapter gives an account of the infirmities of David in his old age, and the method used to relieve him under them, (~~1000~~1 Kings 1:1-4); of the preparation his son Adonijah made to usurp the throne, (~~1005~~1 Kings 1:5-10); of Bathsheba's address to the king upon it, in favour of her son Solomon, on which she was put by, Nathan the prophet, and seconded in it by him, (~~1001~~1 Kings 1:11-27); when the king with an oath confirmed the succession of Solomon in the kingdom, and ordered Nathan the prophet, and Zadok the priest, to anoint him, which was accordingly done with great ceremony, to the satisfaction of the king and his servants, (~~1003~~1 Kings 1:28-40); the news of which being brought to Adonijah and his friends, struck them with terror, and on which they dispersed, (~~1004~~1 Kings 1:41-50); and upon the promise of Adonijah, that he would behave well to Solomon, he was pardoned and dismissed, having fled and lain hold on the horns of the altar, (~~1005~~1 Kings 1:51-53).

**Ver. 1.** *Now King David was old, [and] stricken in years*, etc.] Was seventy years of age; for he was thirty years of age when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years, (~~1004~~2 Samuel 5:4); this was just the age of man, (~~1900~~Psalms 90:10);

*and they covered him with clothes*; not wearing apparel, but bed clothes; he seems to have been bedridden and paralytic:

*but he got no heat*; by them; having no natural heat in him, clothes could not communicate any to him, only keep the cold from him, (see ~~3006~~Haggai 1:6); there are many persons at the age he was, that are lively, healthful, and robust, comparatively speaking at least; but David's strength was impaired, and his natural force abated by his many wars, fatigues by night and day in campaigns, and the many sorrows and afflictions he met with from his family and his friends, as well as enemies; which exhausted his natural moisture, weakened his nerves, and drank up his spirits, and brought upon him the infirmities of a decrepit old age very soon.

**Ver. 2.** *Wherefore his servants said unto him*, etc.] His physicians; so Joseph's physicians are called his servants, (<sup><451D></sup>Genesis 50:2);

*let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin*; not only a young woman, but a virgin, that has more natural heat than women that have bore children have, which is abated thereby:

*and let her stand before the king*: minister to him, serve him with whatsoever he should want to eat or drink; and so by being in his presence, and taking things at her hand, she might be the more ingratiated into his affections:

*and let her cherish him*; as the husband the wife, so she her husband, as doubtless David was; and that by giving him cordials to cheer his spirits, and everything that was convenient for him, and particularly by lying with him. Kimchi interprets the word of her being profitable to him, in which sense the word is used, (<sup><821D></sup>Job 22:2 35:3); that is, by warming him; Ben Gersom understands it of her being made mistress of his treasures, according to the sense of the word in (<sup><2325></sup>Isaiah 22:15); that she might have the command of his purse, and provide anything proper for him, without being taken notice of or obstructed; but the Targum is better,

“and let her be near him,”

lie close unto him, and even in his bosom, as in the next clause:

*and let her lie in his bosom*; which shows that it was proposed that he should marry her, at least that she should become his concubine wife, since this phrase is descriptive of a wife, (<sup><3375></sup>Micah 7:5); nor can it be thought his physicians would advise, or he agree to have a young woman admitted to his bed, without marriage; and if this had not been the case, it would not have answered the design of Adonijah in requesting her in marriage after his father's death, which was to make way to ascend the throne when opportunity should offer; nor would his request have been so much resented by Solomon as it was, (<sup><1127></sup>1 Kings 2:17-24);

*that my lord the king may get heat*: and somewhat similar to this, Galen, that great physician, prescribed in like cases <sup>f4</sup>.

**Ver. 3.** *So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel*, etc.] Not only a damsel, but a beautiful one, that she might be the more acceptable to the king; who otherwise, if deformed and ugly, would

not have endured her in his sight, or received at her hands, and much less suffered her to lie in his bosom:

*and found Abishag a Shunammite*; a native of the city Shunem, a city in the tribe of Issachar, (<sup>GEN18</sup>Joshua 19:18);

*and brought her to the king*; for his approbation of her, and to make her his concubine wife, as he did.

**Ver. 4.** *And the damsel [was] very fair*, etc.] And so very agreeable to the king to be in his presence, and wait upon him, and take things of her hand, as well as lie with him:

*and cherished the king*; enlivened his spirits by her amiable countenance, her graceful behaviour, and tender care of him, and especially by bedding with him:

*and ministered to him*; serving him with her own hands whatever he took for his sustenance:

*but the king knew her not*; as a man knows his wife; which shows that she was his wife, and that it would not have been criminal in him had he known her; but this is observed, not to point at the chastity of David, but his feebleness, and loss of desire after women, and that the damsel remained a virgin; and that was the ground of Adonijah's request, and his hope of succeeding.

**Ver. 5.** *Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself*, etc.] This was his mother's name, (<sup>2SAM4</sup>2 Samuel 3:4); his father David being old and infirm, and not like to live long, notable to oppose him; and he being the eldest son, and a comely person, was inspired with ambition to set up for king:

*saying, I will be king*; though he knew that Solomon was appointed of God, and promised by David, and expected by the people to be king, yet he was resolved to set up himself for king, and try if he could not get himself to the throne; on this he was bent and determined:

*and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him*; just as Absalom had done, when he had the same thing in view, to make him respectable among the people, (see <sup>2SAM15</sup>2 Samuel 15:1).

**Ver. 6.** *And his father had not displeased him at any time*, etc.] Always humoured him in everything, let him have his own way and will, and granted him what he desired, and never corrected him for his faults, or made him ashamed, as the Targum, by telling him of them, and chastising him for them; this was not to the credit of David, being guilty of the same sin with Eli; and on this Adonijah presumed much, that he would not contradict and countermand in this as he had not in other things before:

*in saying, why hast thou done so?* never so much as asked a reason of his conduct, so far was he from reproving him for it:

*and he [also] was a very goodly [man];* of a comely countenance, tall and well proportioned, as his brother Absalom, and which was another thing on which he built his hopes of succeeding in his enterprise; for in those times, as in later times, and other nations, a comely aspect and personable appearance recommended a man to the choice of the people for a supreme magistrate, (see Gill on “~~000~~1 Samuel 9:2”);

*and [his mother] bare him after Absalom;* not that the same woman bore him as did Absalom; for Absalom’s mother was Maachah, this man’s Haggith; but she bore him after Absalom’s mother had bore him, so that he was next son; and now Amnon, Chileab, or Daniel, and Absalom, being all dead, he was the eldest son living, and upon this he founded his claim to the throne, and his hope of succeeding.

**Ver. 7.** *And he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest*, etc.] About getting the kingdom into his hands: and they were very proper persons to consult with, who, if gained to his interest, might be of great service, the one being the general of the army, and so had a great interest in the soldiery, with whom he could make way for him, and defend him, and the other was the high priest, who might be thought to have a great share in the affections of the people, and whose office it was to anoint the king; and he might the rather apply to them, knowing them to be, on some accounts, discontented persons:

*and they following Adonijah, helped [him];* they took on his side; Joab knowing David’s hatred of him on account of his murder of Abner and Amasa, and especially for his slaying his son Absalom, and his insolent behaviour towards him, and perhaps he might fear, or had an aim of what he had charged Solomon with concerning him; and Abiathar, who saw plainly that the priesthood in Eli’s family was declining, and that Zadok

was the favourite priest with David, and in all probability would be with Solomon; all which might influence these two persons to join Adonijah, and who, by so doing, greatly encouraged him, and many others to flock to him, which much helped and served his cause.

**Ver. 8.** *But Zadok the priest*, etc.] Who bid fair to be the high priest on Solomon's coming to the throne as he was:

*and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada*; who was near David's person, and over his bodyguards, the Cherethites and Pelethites:

*and Nathan the prophet*; a very great intimate of David's, and his seer, whom he consulted on all occasions:

*and Shimei*; who, according to Abarbinel, was Shimei the son of Gera, who had cursed David, and was afraid of entering into the conspiracy, lest he should be involved in trouble again: though some think this may be that Shimei, one of Solomon's twelve officers, as after constituted, (<sup>1048</sup>1 Kings 4:18);

*and Rei*; whom the same writer takes to be Hushai the Archite, David's friend:

*and the mighty men which [belonged] to David*; that were about his person, his guards, the Cherethites and Pelethites:

*were not with Adonijah*; they did not join him, and indeed were not invited by him.

**Ver. 9.** *And Adonijah slew sheep and oxen and fat cattle*, etc.] To make a feast of for those that were of his party, which was numerous, and some of them persons of the first rank, and therefore a large and elegant entertainment was provided for them:

*by the stone of Zoheleth, which [is] by Enrogel*; or the fullers' fountain, as the Targum, where the fullers washed their clothes, using their feet in doing it, from whence it had its name; and which they laid upon this stone for the water to drain out of them, "Zoheleth" signifying a slow motion of waters, or on which they beat them to get out the spots; the Targum calls it the stone of a watchtower, on which they could stand and look to a great distance; or, as Jarchi and Ben Gersom suggest, it was a large smooth stone, which young men used to come to, and cast to and fro to try and



exercise their strength; it was, as Josephus<sup>f5</sup> says, in or near the king's gardens:

*and called all his brethren the king's sons:* which David by his wives and concubines had in Hebron and Jerusalem; who were all younger than he, and so had not the pretension he had, and who might be displeased at the appointment of Solomon as well as he; (see ~~<1300>~~1 Chronicles 3:4,9);

*and all the men of Judah the king's servants;* excepting those in (~~<1008>~~1 Kings 1:8-10).

**Ver. 10.** *But Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not.*] Did not invite them to this feast; not Nathan, who he might know had prophesied of Solomon's succession in the throne, and therefore it could not be thought he would be drawn over to him; nor "Benaiah and the mighty men"; David's bodyguards, over whom this officer was; and still less Solomon, his competitor and rival.

**Ver. 11.** *Wherefore Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon,* etc.] Who not only had an interest in the king, being his wife, and an easy access to him, but had a special concern in this affair, as it affected her son, to whom the succession of the kingdom was designed and promised:

*saying, hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign?* has usurped the throne, and is proclaimed king by a party, who at least have drank his health as such; has taken the title, and is about to exercise the power of a king; this Bathsheba might not have heard of, and which he expresses in this manner to quicken her to make an immediate application to the king:

*and David our Lord knoweth [it] not;* being so infirm, and in his bed, and nobody about him to inform him of it; it was done without his knowledge, and far from being with his consent and approbation.

**Ver. 12.** *Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel,* etc.] How to conduct in this affair, which she being a woman, and no doubt surprised and confounded at this relation, might be at a loss what to do; wherefore Nathan, being a wise man, and a faithful friend, offers to give the best advice he could, and desires her attention to it: says he,

*that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon;* which would be the usurper's first care to take away, that he might have no

rival, and none to disturb him in his government; which step has been often taken by usurpers to secure themselves, (see <sup><0008></sup>Judges 9:5).

**Ver. 13.** *Go and get thee in unto King David*, etc.] That is, go into the chamber where the king lay, at once, without any ceremony:

*and say unto him, didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?* though no mention is elsewhere made of such an oath, there undoubtedly was one, of which Nathan had knowledge, either from David or Bathsheba, or from them both, or might be present himself at the making of it; for not only Bathsheba affirms it, (<sup><1017></sup>1 Kings 1:17); but David owns it and confirms it, (<sup><1003></sup>1 Kings 1:30);

*why then doth Adonijah reign?* surely it cannot be with the king's knowledge and consent, so manifestly contrary to his promise and oath.

**Ver. 14.** *Behold, while thou yet talkest there with the king*, etc.] Before, or by the time she could deliver the above words to him, or such as she should think fit to use, to awaken the king to a concern for the interest of her and her son:

*I will also come in after thee*; directly into the king's chamber:

*and confirm thy words*; as he could very well do, if he was present as a witness of the oath he had made to her, as well as he could confirm the truth of Adonijah's usurpation; nay, could plead the will and promises of God he had formerly notified to him: or, "fill up thy words"<sup>f6</sup>, make up what might be wanting in her address to him, in her account of things, or in the arguments used by her; he means, that he would second her in her motion in favour of Solomon, and press the king to take some steps for the security of the succession to him. Nathan knew it was the will of God that Solomon should succeed in the kingdom, he had promised it by him, (see <sup><1072></sup>2 Samuel 7:12 <sup><1208></sup>1 Chronicles 21:8,9); yet, as a wise and good man, he thought it right to make use of all proper means to attain the end.

**Ver. 15.** *And Bathsheba went in unto the king into the chamber*, etc.] Where he lay, being bedridden; she took Nathan's advice, and directly went to the king's apartment:

*and the king was very old*: and decrepit, borne down with the infirmities of old age, though but seventy years of age:

*and Abishag the Shunammite ministered unto the king*; she was then waiting upon the king, and serving him with what was necessary and proper for him; and perhaps there was no other in the chamber at that time.

**Ver. 16.** *And Bathsheba bowed, and did obeisance to the king*, etc.] Not only as being her husband, but her sovereign; and this behaviour might intimate, that she had something to say to him, and more than to inquire of his health:

*and the king said, wouldst thou?* what hast thou to say to me? or to ask of me? what is thy will and pleasure, or thine errand to me?

**Ver. 17.** *And she said unto him, my lord, thou swarest by the Lord thy God unto thine handmaid*, etc.] Which was a very solemn oath, and binding, and which she puts David in mind of, knowing that so conscientious a man as he was would religiously observe it:

*[saying], assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and shall sit upon my throne*; be his successor in it, and established on it.

**Ver. 18.** *And now, behold, Adonijah reigneth*, etc.] Has set up himself as king, and is by some saluted as such; but lest it should be thought by David that she suggested by this that he was guilty of the breach of his oath, or on any account to be blamed, she adds:

*and now my lord, O king, thou knowest [it] not*; which as it acquitted him from all blame, so it made the sin of Adonijah the more heinous, that he should do this without consulting his father about it; and was not only neglect of him as a father, and an act of disrespect and disobedience to him as such, but even of high treason, to assume the throne in his father's lifetime, without his consent.

**Ver. 19.** *And he hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance*, etc.] Has made a grand entertainment, and is feasting and rejoicing; which was another instance of irreverence and disrespect to his aged father, labouring under the infirmities of old age, and on his dying bed, and he carousing, and showing all the tokens of pleasure in the view of his death, and wishing for it:

*and hath called all the sons of the king*; invited them to his entertainment, in order to gain them to his interest:

*and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host*; two persons, though of eminent rank, she knew David had no respect for, and therefore it would not be pleasing to him to hear that they were invited, had this affair been more acceptable than it was; Bathsheba, considering the shortness of the time she had to think, and the flurry she must be in, very artfully threw together the most material things that might work upon the mind of David in her favour:

*but Solomon thy servant hath he not called*; which made it a plain case that it was not a feast of a peace offering, nor a common friendly entertainment, but a feast made on account of his accession to the throne; and that he looked upon Solomon as his rival, and bore an ill will to him on that account, and had a design upon him.

**Ver. 20.** *And thou, my lord, O king*, etc.] As for thee, or what concerns thee, or is incumbent on thee, will appear from the expectations of the people:

*the eyes of all Israel [are] upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king after him*; this she said, to dissipate any fears that might possess his mind on hearing what Adonijah had done, that the people in general had assented to it, and encouraged him to it; whereas the body of the people were waiting to hear what was the will and determination of David: for they not only considered him as having a power to name a successor, as was afterwards done by Rehoboam, but as one that had the mind of God revealed to him who should be his successor, to which they should pay a regard.

**Ver. 21.** *Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers*, etc.] That is, shall die, and be buried in the sepulchre of his ancestors, where he shall lie till he awakes in the morning of the resurrection:

*that I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders*; or “sinners”<sup>17</sup>; not as if she would be reckoned an adulteress, and her son as illegitimate, as some think, and so be branded and treated as such; but as being traitors, making pretensions to the throne, she on the behalf of her son, and he for himself, when he had no right to it, being the younger son, and not declared successor by his father.

**Ver. 22.** *And, lo, while she yet talked with the king*, etc.] Just as she was concluding her speech to him:

*Nathan the prophet also came in*; as he promised he would; perhaps was at the chamber door all the while Bathsheba was speaking, and when he perceived she was just finishing, he entered in without ceremony, as he had used to do, being the king's seer and counsellor, and a prophet, who had admittance to the king at any time.

**Ver. 23.** *And they told the king*, etc.] Some that attended at the door, or were in the chamber:

*saying, behold, Nathan the prophet*; or he is in the room, which the king through his infirmities might not be sensible of:

*and when he was come in before the king*; nearer to him, and as to be properly in his presence:

*he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground*; showing him the same reverence, though in bed, as if on his throne.

**Ver. 24.** *And Nathan said, my lord, O king*, etc.] He addresses him as with great veneration and respect due to his office, so as if he knew nothing of Bathsheba's application to him; and therefore begins and tells his story, as if the king had never heard anything relative to it:

*hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne?* surely it can never be, because of the notice which he himself had given him from the Lord, that one to be born should succeed him, plainly pointing to Solomon; and also because of the oath which he had sworn, to which Nathan was privy, that Solomon should reign after him; and yet if he had not given such orders, it was exceeding strange that Adonijah should presume to do what he had done.

**Ver. 25.** *For he is gone down this day*, etc.] From Jerusalem, which lay high, to the stone of Zoheleth, in Enrogel, which lay in the valley, (~~1000~~ 1 Kings 1:9);

*and hath slain oxen, and fat cattle, and sheep in abundance*; not by way of sacrifice, but for a feast, on account of his coming to the kingdom:

*and hath called all the king's sons*; invited them to the entertainment:

*and the captains of the host*; or army; not only Joab, it seems, the general of it, but the captains of thousands and hundreds under him, being desirous of engaging the militia in his favour, and which was not an impolitic step:

*and Abiathar the priest*; to consult with by Urim and Thummim, and to anoint him, and use his interest with the populace for him, who might be supposed a man of influence, being the high priest of the nation:

*and, behold, they eat and drink before him*; they were now at it, at this time, they were not only invited, but they accepted the invitation, and came; which is afore than what was before related:

*and say, God save King Adonijah*; they proclaimed and saluted him as king, and drank his health, and wished him all prosperity; and so the Targum,

“may King Adonijah prosper!”

**Ver. 26.** *But me, [even] me thy servant*, etc.] Meaning himself, Nathan the prophet, who was David’s servant, his seer, and counsellor:

*and Zadok the priest*; for whom David had a great respect:

*and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada*; who was captain of his bodyguards; here Nathan observes more than Bathsheba had, and supplies what she had omitted, and so filled up her words, as in (<sup>1014</sup>1 Kings 1:14);

*and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called*; which showed his ill intention.

**Ver. 27.** *Is this thing done by my lord the king*, etc.] With his knowledge and consent, and by his orders:

*and thou hast not showed [it] unto thy servant*; meaning himself, who had brought him a message from the Lord, signifying that Solomon should succeed him; and therefore if that had been countermanded, it seemed strange that he should not have acquainted him with it: or “to thy servants”, as the Arabic version; for the word has a plural ending, though pointed as singular; and so it may mean not only himself, but the rest of David’s faithful servants that were about him at court, as Kimchi observes:

*who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him*? if he had altered his mind, or had had any direction from the Lord to make any change, he wondered at it that he should neither acquaint him, nor any of his trusty friends, with it.

**Ver. 28.** *Then King David answered and said*, etc.] Observing that Nathan confirmed the account that Bathsheba had given, and that it must be a

matter of fact that Adonijah had usurped the throne, gave orders to those about him, saying,

*call me Bathsheba*; who either went out of the room when Nathan entered it, or however removed to some distant part of it, out of the sight of David:

*and she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king*; came to the side or foot of his bed, hearkening to what he had to say to her.

**Ver. 29.** *And the king sware*, etc.] To his former oath, he added another for greater confirmation:

*and said, [as] the Lord liveth*; which was the proper form of an oath, which ought to be taken by the living God; and as what would lay him under the greater obligation to observe it, he adds,

*that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress*; saved his life when in the most imminent danger; delivered him out of the hand of Goliath, and from the Philistines and other enemies, in his wars with them; and from Saul and his persecuting rage and fury, and from the rebellion of his son Absalom, and the insurrection of Sheba.

**Ver. 30.** *Even as I sware unto thee by the Lord God of Israel*, etc.] And so owns and confirms the truth of what Nathan had suggested to Bathsheba, and she had asserted, (<sup><10013></sup>1 Kings 1:13,17);

*saying, assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead*; this was the substance of the oath:

*even so will I certainly do this day*; perform this oath, and set Solomon on the throne.

**Ver. 31.** *Then Bathsheba bowed with [her] face to the earth, and did reverence to the king*, etc.] Thereby expressing her veneration of him, and thankfulness to him for his favour to her and her son, in fulfilling his promise and oath:

*and said, let my lord King David live for ever*; which though a common form of salutation of kings, not only in Israel, but in other nations, is not to be considered as a mere compliment, but as expressing the real desires and affection of her heart to the king; signifying hereby that her solicitations on the behalf of her son did not arise from any desire of the king's death; she heartily wished him health to live long and easy; and all her request was,

that Solomon her son might succeed him, whenever it pleased God to remove him; or seeing he was now a dying man as it were, her prayer was that his soul might live for ever in happiness in the world to come; so Kimchi interprets it.

**Ver. 32.** *And King David said, call me Zadok the priest,* etc.] Not Abiathar the high priest, for he had joined Adonijah; and besides Zadok was David's favourite priest, and for him the high priesthood was designed, as it was in a little time translated to him:

*and Nathan the prophet;* who very probably went out of the room when Bathsheba was called in: and

*Benaiah the son of Jehoiada;* the captain of his guards:

*and they came before the king;* who it is very likely sat up in his bed, and they stood around him.

**Ver. 33.** *And the king said unto them, take ye the servants of your lord,* etc.] Meaning his own servants, his bodyguards, the Cherethites and Pelethites, as appears from (<sup><1013></sup>1 Kings 1:38); the Jews<sup>f8</sup> from hence gather, that a king is superior to an high priest, since David calls himself the lord of Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet:

*and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule;* for it seems on such a creature David used to ride, as did his sons; horses not being so common in Judea as they were afterwards. Some of the Jews<sup>f9</sup> say it was not lawful to ride upon a mule, and that this case of David is to be excepted; for they pretend that this was a peculiar mule; and if the instance of his son urged, they reply, an argument from what kings and their sons used to do is of no force. Now this was one way of testifying that it was his will that Solomon should reign in his stead; for no private person might ride upon the beast the king was wont to ride on; this is now one of the Jewish canons<sup>f10</sup>,

“no one may ride on the king's horse, nor sit on his throne, nor use his sceptre:”

*and bring him down to Gihon;* a fountain near Jerusalem, on the west side of it, which flowed from Mount Gihon, (<sup><1420></sup>2 Chronicles 32:30 33:14); the same with Siloah according to the Targum, of which mention is made, (<sup><1007></sup>John 9:7). The reason for this order is not easily given; whether it was



to denote the peaceableness and gentleness of Solomon's government, the waters of Shiloah moving softly, (<sup><2886></sup>Isaiah 8:6), or the spread, constancy, firmness, and perpetuity of it, as the Jews say <sup>f11</sup>, since the water of a fountain is ever running; or because there might be a concourse of people there, and so he would be anointed and proclaimed king in a public manner, and be attended to the city with great pomp and solemnity.

**Ver. 34.** *And let Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, anoint him there king over Israel*, etc.] For it might be done by either of them, as the unctions of Saul and David show:

*and blow ye the trumpet, and say, God save King Solomon*; the blowing of the trumpet was to make it public; the proclamation of him as king was to be made by the sound of it, and the acclamation of the people was to express their concurrence with it, their loyal affection to the new king, and their hearty wishes for his health, prosperity, and long life.

**Ver. 35.** *Then ye shall come up after him*, etc.] When anointed, proclaimed, and cheered, then he was to mount the mule, and ride before them as their king, at the head of them; they following after, in token of their subjection to him:

*that he may come and sit upon my throne*; at Jerusalem, in the king's palace, and there exercise his kingly power he would now be invested with:

*for he shall be king in my stead*; even during David's life, as well as after his decease:

*and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel, and over Judah*; that is, over all the twelve tribes of Israel Judah may be particularly mentioned, though included in Israel, because Adonijah had invited the men of Judah to his feast and party, (<sup><1009></sup>1 Kings 1:9); and therefore had they not been named, might think he had no power over them.

**Ver. 36.** *And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king*, etc.] In the name of the rest:

*and said, Amen*; they all assented to it, and expressed their satisfaction in it:

*the Lord God of my lord the king say so [too]*; let it appear, by the prosperity and success that shall by divine Providence attend the new king, that this is according to the will of God.

**Ver. 37.** *As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Solomon*, etc.] To guide and direct him, protect and defend him, succeed and prosper him the Targum is,

“as the Word of the Lord has been the help of my lord the king, so let him be for the help of Solomon:”

*and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David*: which he knew would not displease David, who not only had an affectionate regard for Solomon his son, but wished heartily the prosperity of the kingdom of Israel; and the wish on all accounts was grateful to him, though to an envious and ambitious prince it might have been disagreeable.

**Ver. 38.** *So Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada*, etc.] The three men that David sent for on this occasion:

*and the Cherethites and the Pelethites*; not the sanhedrim, as Ben Gersom, but David’s guards, over whom Benaiah was: these

*went down*; from Jerusalem;

*and caused Solomon to ride upon King David’s mule*; as he had ordered:

*and brought him to Gihon*; or Siloah, as the Targum; hence the Jews say <sup>f12</sup>, they do not anoint a king but at a fountain; but this is the only instance of it.

**Ver. 39.** *And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle*, etc.] Not out of the tabernacle of Moses, for that was at Gibeon; (see <sup><102></sup>1 Chronicles 21:29); and if the oil had been there, it would have been too far to have fetched it, since haste was now required; but this was taken out of the tabernacle David had built for the ark, (<sup><1017></sup>2 Samuel 6:17); where the ark was, and before which the pot of oil was; so Jarchi; but Kimchi indeed says, that though it was at this time at Gibeon, Zadok went thither, or sent thither to fetch it; and though it is said, the pot of oil was set before the ark, this was when the ark was in the tabernacle; but when they took it out from thence at the war with the Philistines, that and the pot of manna were left in the tabernacle; and they took nothing but the ark; but if they brought the pot afterwards, and put it before the ark in Jerusalem, then it may be understood of the tabernacle David pitched for it; but that he disapproves of. Here Zadok is only said to take the oil, and anoint with it; which he did

either as the deputy of the high priest, or he was made use of because the high priest was on the side of Adonijah:

*and anointed Solomon*; whether it was by pouring it on his head, as Saul was anointed, (<sup><910></sup>1 Samuel 10:1); or, as the Jews say <sup>f13</sup>, by putting it round about his head in the form of a crown, and then between his eyebrows, is not very material; and they also say <sup>f14</sup>, that it is not usual to anoint the son of a king that has been anointed; and that the reason of the anointing of Solomon was, because of the sedition of his brother Adonijah, and to confirm the kingdom to him; this anointing was an emblem of the gifts, graces, and virtues, necessary to qualify a king for the discharge of his office:

*and they blew the trumpet*; and proclaimed him king:

*and all the people said, God save King Solomon*; wished him long life and happiness, and gave him a general huzza or shouting.

**Ver. 40.** *And all the people came up after him*, etc.] Following him from the fountain to the city, with their loud acclamations:

*and the people piped with pipes*; which were hollow instruments, and full of holes which they blew with their mouths, and upon with their fingers; Jarchi says they were and very probably:

*and rejoiced with great joy*; which they expressed by such loud shouts:

*so that the earth rent with the sound thereof*; an hyperbolical expression, showing the great numbers gathered together on this occasion, and the sonorous acclamations they made.

**Ver. 41.** *And Adonijah and all the guests that [were] with him*, etc.] Or that were “called” <sup>f15</sup>; that is, invited to the entertainment he had made:

*heard [it], as they had made an end of eating*; the shouting of the people, which reached their ears just as they had finished their meal, and before they had risen from the table, where they had been a long while; for when Nathan went in to David, they were then eating and drinking, (<sup><1025></sup>1 Kings 1:25); and when he had finished his speech to David, Bathsheba was called in, and the kingdom promised to her son with an oath, three persons of the first rank were sent for, and had their orders and instructions, for the immediate execution of which they made preparation, and had Solomon down to Gihon, and there anointed him king, and brought him up to

Jerusalem again; all which were done before Adonijah and his guests rose from table:

*and when Joab heard the sound of the trumpet, he said, wherefore [is] this noise of the city being in an uproar?* the city is in a tumult by the noise that is made, what should be the meaning of it? he speaks as one surprised, and in great concern, being general of the army, whose care should be to preserve the peace of the city, and prevent mutiny and disorder.

**Ver. 42.** *And while he yet spake, behold, Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came,* etc.] Whom his father had left in the city, to observe what passed there, and give him notice of it:

*and Adonijah said unto him, come in, for thou [art] a valiant man, and bringest good tidings;* which seems to be not a very wise speech, as if there was a connection between being valiant, and bringing good news, or that the one had any influence upon the other; though perhaps it means no more than a good man, “a man of virtue”<sup>f16</sup>, as it may be rendered; one that fears sin, as the Targum, and so would report nothing but what was true, and therefore might be depended on; (see <sup><10827></sup>2 Samuel 18:27); the same phrase is rendered “a worthy man”, (<sup><1085></sup>1 Kings 1:52).

**Ver. 43.** *And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, verily,* etc.] Or, “nay, but”<sup>f17</sup> it is not so as you imagine; it is not good tidings, but bad tidings to thee I bring:

*our lord King David hath made Solomon king;* of which he gives the following account in proof of it.

**Ver. 44.** *And the king hath sent with him,* etc.] To the fountain of Gihon:

*Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites, and the Pelethites;* over whom the latter was captain:

*and they have caused him to ride upon the king's mule;* by his order and direction.

**Ver. 45.** *And Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, have anointed him king in Gihon,* etc.] Or at Gihon; that is, Siloah, according to the Targum; here the act of anointing is ascribed to them both, as in (<sup><1083></sup>1 Kings 1:34); Zadok very probably applied the oil to him, and Nathan might be some way or other assisting in it; however he was here present, not only

as approving of it, but declaring it as a prophet, that it was according to the will of God, as well as of the king:

*and they are come up from thence rejoicing*; with a multitude of people along with them:

*so that the city rang again*; with the blowing of trumpets, the sound of pipings, and the shouts of the people:

*this [is] the noise which ye have heard*; which had so alarmed them.

**Ver. 46.** *And also Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom.*] Where he was placed to exercise his regal power when returned to Jerusalem, as a further token and confirmation of his being really and actually king.

**Ver. 47.** *And moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord the king*, etc.] To give him thanks for the wise and good provision he had made before his death for the welfare of the kingdom, by making Solomon his son king in his stead, and to congratulate him upon it; which showed that they highly approved of it, and were ready to swear allegiance to Solomon, and therefore Adonijah had nothing to hope for from them:

*saying, God make the name of Solomon better than thy name*; that is, may he be more famous, and his name be more celebrated in the world than his was, or be more respectable and valued among his people Israel:

*and make his throne greater than thy throne*; (see <sup><10157></sup>1 Kings 1:37);

*and the king bowed himself upon the bed*; signifying not only his approbation of what was done, but also of their prayers and wishes; as well as he bowed himself to give thanks to God that he had lived to see this work done, as follows.

**Ver. 48.** *And also thus said the king*, etc.] Being in a proper posture for an address to God:

*blessed [be] the Lord God of Israel, which hath given [one] to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes seeing [it]*; he ascribes this whole affair to God, and his kind providence, though all things were done according to his own orders; and gives thanks to him, who had directed him to take such steps as these were, and that the business was finished without any obstruction, and to the great joy and satisfaction of the people; and that there was such a prospect of Solomon's having a happy and peaceable reign.

**Ver. 49.** *And all the guests that [were] with Adonijah [were] afraid,* etc.] Though many of them were military men, the general of the army, and the captains thereof, (<sup><10019></sup>1 Kings 1:19,25); yet they were struck with a panic, their courage failed them, they had no spirit left in them, their hearts became as weak as water; had they exerted themselves according to their character, betaken themselves to arms, and put themselves at the head of their troops in favour of Adonijah, it would have given Solomon and his friends a great deal of trouble; no doubt this panic was of God:

*and rose up, and went every man his way;* or to his house, as the Arabic version; on hearing what Jonathan reported, they immediately rose up from table in great haste, and made the best of their way to their houses, that it might not be known that they had been with Adonijah.

**Ver. 50.** *And Adonijah feared because of Solomon,* etc.] Lest he should seize him as an usurper and traitor, and put him to death:

*and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar;* either that which was at Gibeon, where the tabernacle now was; (see <sup><11014></sup>1 Kings 3:4); so Jarchi; or rather that which was nearest, the altar that David had built in the threshingfloor of Araunah, (<sup><10225></sup>2 Samuel 24:25); the altar was a sort of asylum, or refuge, for such who had committed any crime worthy of death; not by divine appointment, but by custom, it being supposed that none would presume to defile with blood that which was sacred to the Lord; or shed the blood of men where the blood of beasts was poured; or use severity and strict justice, but mercy, where sacrifices were offered to atone for sin, and mercy was shown on account of them; these were notions, and this a custom, which obtained very early, and even among the Jews; (see <sup><10214></sup>Exodus 21:14); as well as among Gentiles; with whom it was usual, as to flee to the statues of their emperors, and to the temples of their deities, so likewise to their altars; this was customary among the Molossians, Samothracians, Crotoniatae, and Messenians; and particularly the altar of Jupiter Servator was an asylum, or place of refuge, to the Ithacians<sup>f18</sup>. Cornelius Nepos<sup>f19</sup> has given us an instance of one that fled to a temple of Neptune, and sat upon the altar for his security, as here Adonijah laid hold on the horns of this, that none might force him from it.

**Ver. 51.** *And it was told Solomon,* etc.] By some of his courtiers:

*saying, behold, Adonijah feareth King Solomon;* lest he should take away his life:

*for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar*; which was the last resort of the guilty when they despaired of mercy otherwise:

*saying, let King Solomon swear unto me this day that he will not slay his servant with the sword*; he owns Solomon to be king, and himself his subject and servant; this no doubt he did to conciliate his favour, nor did he think his life safe, unless Solomon promised with an oath, that he would not take it away.

**Ver. 52.** *And Solomon said, if he will show himself a worthy man*, etc.] Will behave himself well as a good subject, and be careful not to offend for the future, or appear to be one that fears sin, as the Targum; particularly the crimes of sedition, rebellion, and treason:

*there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth*; not the least harm should be done him:

*but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die*; that is, if any crime worthy of death be committed by him, or any overt act of treason, and the like, he should surely be put to death, and find no mercy, notwithstanding the present general pardon. This was very wisely done by Solomon, to begin his reign without shedding blood even of delinquents; and especially of his brother, and his elder brother too; and by granting his life for the future on his good behaviour.

**Ver. 53.** *So King Solomon sent, and they brought down Adonijah from the altar*, etc.] It being built upon an hill, as both that at Gibeon, and in Araunah's threshing floor, were:

*and he came and bowed himself to King Solomon*; in a way of reverence and subjection, acknowledging him to be king, and himself his subject:

*and Solomon said to him, go to thine house*; in peace; signifying that he pardoned him, and he might go home, and enjoy his family and substance; and by this intimating that he should only regard the affairs of his family, and not trouble himself with those of the kingdom and state, Abarbinel fancies, that because Solomon said, that if he showed himself to be a worthy man, or a man of fortitude and valour, that Adonijah thought that his meaning was, that he should go before him as a man of war, and minister to him; which made him so ready to come and stand before him; in which he was mistaken, Solomon meant no such thing; nor would he take him into his court and service, but sent him home to his own house.