

Norwood's Notes: Brief Summaries of Bible Stories

These "notes" are intended to provide a general overview of the basic stories of the Bible in the hope of building greater biblical knowledge and encouraging Bible reading and study. For more information, visit www.UjimaChurch.org

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20 - Highlights from 2 Samuel 20 - 1 Kings 4 & 1 Chronicles 22 – 2 Chronicles 1, "King David & King Solomon"

After Absalom's failed coup, a worthless man named "Sheba" took advantage of the tension between the men of the northern tribes of Israel and the men of Judah. He stirred Israel into rebellion against King David. The King sent his new general, Amasa, out to pursue Sheba. Amasa did not move swiftly against the king's enemy. When Joab caught up to Amasa, he pretended to greet him, but ran Amasa through the belly with his sword instead (2Sam 20). Joab besieged the city in which Sheba sought refuge. One of the wise women of the city convinced her people to kill Sheba and offer his head to Joab in order that the city might be spared. General Joab returned victoriously to King David.

Even though the Lord had told David that he was not the one who would build the Lord's temple, out of his gratitude for all that the Lord had done for him, David prepared for the building project that his son, Solomon, would someday complete. He even organized the Levites, the priests, the musicians, and the gatekeepers for the service of the Lord (1 Chron 22-26).

King David had grown old and his health began to fail. His son, Adonijah, who had been next in line after Absalom, conferred with General Joab and Abiathar the priest that he should succeed his father and be declared king. However, Zadock the priest, the prophet Nathan, and others from among David's mighty men did not follow Adonijah. Bathsheba and Nathan reminded the king of his promise that Solomon would succeed him as they reported what Adonijah was doing. David was outraged that Adonijah had presumed to declare himself king. He summoned his strength and ordered his followers to anoint Solomon as his chosen successor and to blow the trumpets for all to know that Solomon would rule after him. As Adonijah was still celebrating, word came to him that Solomon was seated upon David's throne. Upon hearing this news, fear fell upon all who were with Adonijah. As Adonijah was swiftly abandoned by his supporters, he begged King Solomon for mercy over having committed treason against him, and Solomon allowed his brother to return home (1Kings 1).

As King David drew close to death, he commanded Solomon, "*I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong, and show yourself a*

man, and keep the charge of the LORD your God, walking in his ways and keeping his statutes, his commandments, his rules, and his testimonies, as it is written in the Law of Moses, that you may prosper in all that you do and wherever you turn, that the LORD may establish his word that he spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons pay close attention to their way, to walk before me in faithfulness with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'" (1Kings 2:2-4 ESV). King David, the shepherd, musician, warrior, and writer of many psalms, died after having reigned as king 7 years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem.

After King David died, Solomon followed his father's counsel and rid himself of those who had challenged his reign, including general Joab, whom he had executed. The kingdom was firmly established under Solomon, yet he was young and inexperienced. When the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and bid him to ask for whatever he wanted, Solomon asked for wisdom, so that he would govern God's people well. This selfless request pleased the Lord. And God gave Solomon a wise and discerning mind and then also promised him both riches and honor. When Solomon awakened and realized it was a dream, he stood before the ark of the covenant and worship the Lord with offerings and held a feast for all of his servants (1Kings 3 & 2Chron 1).

Solomon's wisdom was demonstrated in how he judged an argument between two prostitutes who argued over which one of them was the mother of the child they brought before the king. Each said that the other had caused the death of her own child by accidentally falling asleep on top of him. With each of the woman claiming the living child as her own, Solomon ordered that a sword be brought and the child be divided in two, with each woman getting half. One woman was satisfied by this decision, while the other was immediately willing to surrender her claim so that the child might live. This wise test proved that the woman who was willing to give up her claim so that the baby might live was actually his mother, and Solomon ordered that the child be given to her. All the people stood in awe of the king, knowing that the wisdom of God was in him.

The people lived in great abundance as Solomon ruled over the land. Other kingdoms, from the Euphrates River to the border of Egypt, brought tribute to King Solomon and served him all the days of his life. The people lived in safety and had peace on all sides. Solomon became famous for his wisdom and great knowledge. He spoke 3000 proverbs and wrote over 1000 songs. His great learning even included knowledge of both trees and animals. People from many nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon (1Kings 4).