

Exegetical Notes – 1 Kings 2:1-12

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1 Kings 2:1-12

Verses 1-4

¹When 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, ³and 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 ⁴and 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.’”

- As David approached death he charged his son, Solomon, Israel’s next king, to “be strong, act like a man, and observe what the Lord your God requires.” Moses (Deuteronomy 31:1-8), Joshua (23:1-16), and Samuel (1 Samuel 12:1-25) gave similar charges at the time of their deaths. The call was to stand firm and not waiver.
- The third part of the charge, “observe what the Lord your God requires,” requires additional definition. “Walk in obedience to Him, keep His decrees and commands, His laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses.” This means that David challenged Solomon as Israel’s king to keep the whole law; moral, ceremonial, and civil. David called on Solomon to keep the whole law of God without exception in any part.
- David declared that keeping the law would bring Solomon blessing. He would prosper in all he did and the Lord would keep His promise to David that David’s line would know no end (see 2 Samuel 7:12-16). The implication is that these blessings would not be granted if Solomon failed to keep the whole law of God.

Verses 5-6

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.

- David charged Solomon to hold Joab accountable for his actions (see 2 Samuel 3:22-30 and 2 Samuel 20:6-13). Joab killed Abner and Amasa without the king’s favor in peace time. And then Joab stood with Adonijah (see 1 Kings 1:7). David pointed out that Joab was, at best, unreliable and had proven himself an untrustworthy person. He suggested strongly that Solomon should execute Joab for his disloyalty to the throne.

Verse 7

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.

- David then called on Solomon to continue to show favor to the sons of Barzillai (see 2 Samuel 17:27-29).

Verses 8-9

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.”

- David called for the execution of Shimei (see 2 Samuel 16:5-13 and 19:16-23). Exodus 22:28 calls for one who cursed the anointed king to be executed.

Verses 10-12

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.

- Having given Solomon this charge, David died.
- Solomon's rule was established. He was recognized as the King of Judah and all Israel.

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