

CHAPTER 1

In this chapter we have,

- I.** David declining in his health (v. 1-4).
- II.** Adonijah aspiring to the kingdom, and treating his party, in order to it (v. 5-10).
- III.** Nathan and Bathsheba contriving to secure the succession to Solomon, and prevailing for an order from David for the purpose (v. 11-31).
- IV.** The anointing of Solomon accordingly, and the people's joy therein (v. 32-40).
- V.** The effectual stop this put to Adonijah's usurpation, and the dispersion of his party thereupon (v. 41-49).
- VI.** Solomon's dismissal of Adonijah upon his good behaviour (v. 50-53).

<100>1 KINGS 1:1-4

INTRODUCTION

David, as recorded in the foregoing chapter, had, by the great mercy of God, escaped the sword of the destroying angel. But our deliverances from or through diseases and dangers are but reprieves; if the candle be not blown out, it will burn out of itself. We have David here sinking under the infirmities of old age, and brought by them to the gates of the grave. He that *cometh up out of the pit shall fall into the snare*; and, one way or other, *we must needs die*.

1. It would have troubled one to see David so infirm. He as old, and his natural heat so wasted that no clothes could keep him warm, v. 1. David had been a valiant active man and a man of business, and very vehement had the flame always been in his breast; and yet now his blood is chilled and stagnated, he is confined to his bed, and there can get no heat. He was now seventy years old. Many, at that age, are as lively and fit for business as ever; but David was now chastised for his former sins, especially that in

the matter of Uriah, and felt from his former toils and the hardships he had gone through in his youth, which then he made nothing of, but was now the worse for. *Let not the strong man glory in his strength*, which may soon be weakened by sickness, or at last will be weakened by old age. Let young people *remember their Creator in the days of their youth*, before these evil days come. What our hand finds to do for God, and our souls, and our generation, let us do with all our might, because the night comes, the night of old age, in which no man can work; and, when our strength has gone, it will be a comfort to remember that we used it well.

2. It would have troubled one to see his physicians so weak and unskilful that they knew no other way of relieving him than by outward applications. No cordials, no spirits, but,

(1.) *They covered him with clothes*, which, where there is any inward heat, will keep it in, and so increase it; but, where it is not, they have none to communicate, no, not royal clothing. Elihu makes it a difficulty to understand *how our garments are warm upon us* (~~38577~~ Job 37:17); but, if God deny his blessing, men *clothe themselves, and there is none warm* (~~37006~~ Haggai 1:6), David here was not.

(2.) They foolishly prescribed nuptials to one that should rather have been preparing for his funeral (v. 2-4); but they knew what would gratify their own corruptions, and perhaps were too willing to gratify his, under colour of consulting his health. His prophets should have been consulted as well as his physicians in an affair of this nature. However, this might be excused then, when even good men ignorantly allowed themselves to have many wives. We now have not so learned of Christ, but are taught that one man must have but one wife (~~4095~~ Matthew 19:5), and further that *it is good for a man not to touch a woman*, ~~4301~~ 1 Corinthians 7:1. That Abishag was married to David before she lay with him, and was his secondary wife, appears from its being imputed as a great crime to Adonijah that he desired to marry her (~~4102~~ 1 Kings 2:22) after his father's death.

<1005> 1 KINGS 1:5-10

ADONIJAH'S AMBITION

David had much affliction in his children. Amnon and Absalom had both been his grief; the one his first-born, the other his third, <1002> 2 Samuel 3:2, 3. His second, whom he had by Abigail, we will suppose he had comfort in; his fourth was Adonijah (<1002> 2 Samuel 3:4); he was one of those that were born in Hebron; we have heard nothing of him till now, and here we are told that he was a comely person, and that he was next in age, and (as it proved) next in temper to Absalom, v. 6. And, further, that in his father's eyes he had been a jewel, but was now a thorn.

I. His father had made a fondling of him, v. 6. He had not displeased him at any time. It is not said that he never displeased his father; it is probably that he had done so frequently, and his father was secretly troubled at his misconduct and lamented it before God. But his father had not displeased him, by crossing him in his humours, denying him any thing he had a mind to, or by calling him to an account as to what he had done and where he had been, or by keeping him to his book or his business, or reproofing him for what he saw or heard of that he did amiss; he never said to him, *Why hast thou done so?* because he saw it was uneasy to him, and he could not bear it without fretting. It was the son's fault that he was displeased at reproof and took it for affront, whereby he lost the benefit of it; and it was the father's fault that, because he saw it displeased him, he did not reprove him; and now he justly smarted for indulging him. Those who honour their sons more than God, as those do who keep them not under good discipline, thereby forfeit the honour they might expect from their sons.

II. He, in return, made a fool of his father. Because he was old, and confined to his bed, he thought no notice was to be taken of him, and therefore *exalted himself*, and said, *I will be king*, v. 5. Children that are indulged learn to be proud and ambitious, which is the ruin of a great many young people. The way to keep them humble is to keep them under. Observe Adonijah's insolence.

1. He looked upon the days of mourning for his father to be at hand, and therefore he prepared to succeed him, though he knew that by the designation both of God and David Solomon was to be the man; for public

notice had been given of it by David himself, and the succession settled, as it were by act of parliament, in pursuance of God's appointment, ^{<1320>}1 Chronicles 22:9; 23:1. This entail Adonijah attempted by force to cut off, in contempt both of God and his father. Thus is the kingdom of Christ opposed, and there are those that say, "We will not have him to reign over us."

2. He looked upon his father as superannuated and good for nothing, and therefore he entered immediately upon the possession of the throne. He cannot wait till his father's head be laid low, but it must now be said, *Adonijah reigns* (v. 18), and, *God save king Adonijah*, v. 25. His father is not fit to govern, for he is old and past ruling, nor Solomon, for he is young, and not yet able to rule; and therefore Adonijah will take the government upon him. It argues a very base and wicked mind for children to insult over their parents because of the infirmities of their age.

3. In pursuance of this ambitious project,

(1.) He got a great retinue (v. 5), *chariots and horsemen*, both for state and strength, to wait on him, and to fight for him.

(2.) He made great interest with no less than Joab, the general of the army, and Abiathar the high priest, v. 7. That he should make his court to those who by their influence in church and camp were capable of doing him great service is not strange; but we may well wonder by what arts they could be drawn to follow him and help him. They were old men, who had been faithful to David in the most difficult and troublesome of his times, men of sense and experience, who, one would think, would not easily be wheedled. They could not propose any advantage to themselves by supporting Adonijah, for they were both at the top of their preferment and stood fast in it. They could not be ignorant of the entail of the crown upon Solomon, which it was not in their power to cut off, and therefore it was their interest to oblige him. But God, in this matter, left them to themselves, perhaps to correct them for some former misconduct with a scourge of their own making. We are told (v. 8) who those were that were of such approved fidelity to David that Adonijah had not the confidence so much as to propose his project to them — Zadok, Benaiah, and Nathan. A man that has given proofs of his resolute adherence to that which is good shall not be asked to do a bad thing.

(3.) He prepared a great entertainment (v. 9) at En-rogel, not far from Jerusalem; his guests were the king's sons, and the king's servants, whom he feasted and caressed to bring them over to his party; but Solomon was not invited, either because he despised him or because he despaired of him, v. 10. Such as serve their own belly, and will be in the interest of those that will feast them what side soever they are of, are an easy prey to seducers, ~~<5168>~~Romans 16:18. Some think that Adonijah slew these sheep and oxen, even fat ones, for sacrifice, and that it was a religious feast he made, beginning his usurpation with a show of devotion, as Absalom under the colour of a vow (~~<1057>~~2 Samuel 15:7), which he might do the more plausibly when he had the high priest himself on his side. It is a pity that any occasion should ever be given to say, *In nomine Domini incipit omne malum* — *In the name of the Lord begins all evil*, and that all religious exercises should be made to patronise all religious practices.

~~<1011>~~1 KINGS 1:11-31

DAVID MAKES SOLOMON KING

We have here the effectual endeavours that were used by Nathan and Bathsheba to obtain from David a ratification of Solomon's succession, for the crushing of Adonijah's usurpation.

- 1.** David himself knew not what was doing. Disobedient children think that they are well enough off if they can but keep their good old parents ignorant of their bad courses; but a *bird of the air will carry the voice*.
- 2.** Bathsheba lived retired, and knew nothing of it either, till Nathan informed her. Many get very comfortably through this world that know little how the world goes.
- 3.** Solomon, it is likely, knew of it, but was as a deaf man that heard not. Though he had years, and wisdom above his years, yet we do not find that he stirred to oppose Adonijah, but quietly composed himself and left it to God and his friends to order the matter. Hence David, in his Psalm for Solomon, observes that while men, in pursuit of the world, in vain *rise early and sit up late*, *God giveth his beloved (his Jediahs) sleep*, in giving them to be easy, and to gain their point without agitation, ~~<870E>~~Psalm 127:1, 2. How then is the design brought about?

I. Nathan the prophet alarms Bathsheba by acquainting her with the case, and puts her in a way to get an order from the king for the confirming of Solomon's title. He was concerned, because he knew God's mind, and David's and Israel's interest; it was by him that God had named Solomon *Jedidiah* (^{<0125>}2 Samuel 12:25), and therefore he could not sit still and see the throne usurped, which he knew was Solomon's right by the will of him from whom promotion cometh. When crowns were disposed of by immediate direction from heaven, no marvel that prophets were so much interested and employed in that matter; but now that common providence rules the affairs of the kingdom of men (^{<2042>}Daniel 4:32) the subordinate agency must be left to common persons, and let not prophets intermeddle in them, but keep to the affairs of the kingdom of God among men. Nathan applied to Bathsheba, as one that had the greatest concern for Solomon, and could have the freest access to David. He informed her of Adonijah's attempt (v. 11), and that it was not with David's consent or knowledge. He suggested to her that not only Solomon was in danger of losing the crown, but that he and she too were in danger of losing their lives if Adonijah prevailed. A humble spirit may be indifferent to a crown, and may be content, notwithstanding the prospect of it, to sit down short of the possession of it. But the law of self-preservation, and the sixth commandment, obliges us to use all possible endeavours to secure our own life and the life of others. Now, says Nathan, let me *give thee counsel how to save thy own life and the life of thy son*, v. 12. Such as this is the counsel that Christ's ministers give us in his name, to give all diligence, not only *that no man take our crown* (^{<6811>}Revelation 3:11), but that we *save our lives*, even the lives of our souls. He directs her (v. 13) to go to the king, to remind him of his word and oath, that Solomon should be his successor; and to ask him in the most humble manner, *Why doth Adonijah reign?* He thought David was not so cold but this would warm him. Conscience, as well as a sense of honour, would put life into him upon such an occasion as this; and he promised (v. 24) that, while she was reasoning with the king in this matter, he would come in and second her, as if he came accidentally, which perhaps the king might look upon as a special providence (and he was one that took notice of such evidences, ^{<0232>}1 Samuel 25:32, 33), or, at least, it would help to awaken him so much the more.

II. Bathsheba, according to Nathan's advice and direction, loses no time, but immediately makes her application to the king, on the same errand on

which Esther came to king Ahasuerus, to intercede for her life. She needed not wait for a call as Esther did, she knew she should be welcome at any time; but it is remarked that when she visited the king Abishag was ministering to him (v. 15), and Bathsheba took no displeasure either at him or her for it, also that she *bowed and did obeisance to the king* (v. 16), in token of her respect to him both as her prince and as her husband; such a genuine daughter was she of Sarah, who obeyed Abraham, calling him *lord*. Those that would find favour with superiors must show them reverence, and be dutiful to those whom they expect to be kind to them. Her address to the king, on this occasion, is very discreet.

- 1.** She reminded him of his promise made to her and confirmed with a solemn oath, that Solomon should succeed him, v. 17. She knew how fast this would hold such a conscientious man as David was.
- 2.** She informed him of Adonijah's attempt, which he was ignorant of (v. 18): "Adonijah reigns, in competition with thee for the present and in contradiction to thy promise for the future. The fault is not thine, for thou knowest it not; but now that thou knowest it thou wilt, in pursuance of thy promise, take care to suppress this usurpation." She told him who were Adonijah's guests, and who were in his interest, and added, but "*Solomon thy servant has he not called*, which plainly shows he looks upon him as his rival, and aims to undermine him, v. 19. It is not an oversight, but a contempt of the act of settlement, that Solomon is neglected."
- 3.** She pleads that it is very much in his power to obviate this mischief (v. 20): *The eyes of all Israel are upon thee*, not only as a *king*, for we cannot suppose it the prerogative of any prince to bequeath his subjects by will (as if they were his goods and chattels) to whom he pleases, but as a *prophet*. All Israel knew that David was not only himself *the anointed of the God of Jacob*, but that the *Spirit of the Lord spoke by him* (~~1~~2 Samuel 23:1, 2), and therefore waiting for and depending upon a divine designation, in a matter of such importance, David's word would be an oracle and a law to them; this therefore (says Bathsheba) they expect, and it will end the controversy and effectually quash all Adonijah's pretensions. *A divine sentence is in the lips of the king*. Note, Whatever power, interest or influence, men have, they ought to improve it to the utmost for the preserving and advancing of the kingdom of the Messiah, of which Solomon's kingdom was a type.

4. She suggested the imminent peril which she and her son would be in if this matter was not settled in David's life-time, v. 21. "If Adonijah prevail, as he is likely to do (having Joab the general and Abiathar the priest on his side) unless speedily suppressed, Solomon and all his friends will be looked upon as traitors and dealt with accordingly." Usurpers are most cruel. If Adonijah had got into the throne, he would not have dealt so fairly with Solomon as Solomon did with him. Those hazard everything who stand in the way of such as against right force their entrance.

III. Nathan the prophet, according to his promise, seasonably stepped in, and seconded her, while she was speaking, before the king had given his answer, lest. if he had heard Bathsheba's representation only, his answer should be dilatory and only that he would consider of it: but out of the mouth of two witnesses, two such witnesses, the word would be established, and he would immediately give positive orders. The king is told that Nathan the prophet has come, and he is sure to be always welcome to the king, especially when either he is not well or has any great affair upon his thoughts; for, in either case, a prophet will be, in a particular manner, serviceable to him. Nathan knows he must render honour to whom honour is due, and therefore pays the king the same respect now that he finds him sick in bed as he would have done if he had found him in his throne: He *bowed himself with his face to the ground*, v. 23. He deals a little more plainly with the king than Bathsheba had done. In this his character would support him, and the present languor of the king's spirits made it necessary that they should be roused.

1. He makes the same representation of Adonijah's attempt as Bathsheba had made (v. 25, 26), adding that his party had already got to such a height of assurance as to shout, *God save king Adonijah*, as if king David were already dead, taking notice also that they had not invited him to their feast (*Me thy servant has he not called*), thereby intimating that they resolved not to consult either God or David in the matter, for Nathan was *secretioribus consiliis* — *intimately acquainted with the mind of both*.

2. He makes David sensible how much he was concerned to clear himself from having a hand in it: *Hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me?* (v. 24), and again (v. 27), "*Is this thing done by my lord the king?* If it be, he is not so faithful either to God's word or to his own as we all took him to be; if it be not, it is high time that we witness against the usurpation, and declare Solomon his successor. If it be, why is not Nathan made acquainted

with it, who is not only in general, the king's confidant, but is particularly concerned in this matter, having been employed to notify to David the mind of God concerning the succession; but, if my lord the king knows nothing of the matter (as certainly he does not), what daring insolence are Adonijah and his party guilty of!" Thus he endeavoured to incense David against them, that he might act the more vigorously for the support of Solomon's interest. Note, Good men would do their duty if they were reminded of it, and put upon it, and told what occasion there is for them to appear; and those who thus are their remembrancers do them a real kindness, as Nathan here did to David.

IV. David, hereupon, made a solemn declaration of his firm adherence to his former resolution, that Solomon should be his successor. Bathsheba is called in (v. 28), and to her, as acting for and on behalf of her son, the king gives these fresh assurances.

1. He repeats his former promise and oath, owns that he had *sworn unto her by the Lord God of Israel that Solomon would reign after him*, v. 30. Though he is old, and his memory begins to fail him, yet he remembers this. Note, An oath is so sacred a thing that the obligations of it cannot be broken, and so solemn a thing that the impressions of it, one would think, cannot be forgotten.

2. He ratifies it with another, because the occasion called for it: *As the Lord liveth, that hath redeemed my soul out of all distress, even so will I certainly do this day*, without dispute, without delay. His form of swearing seems to be what he commonly used on solemn occasions, for we find it, ^{<1049>}2 Samuel 4:9. And it carries in it a grateful acknowledgment of the goodness of God to him, in bringing him safely through the many difficulties and hardships which had lain in his way, and which he now makes mention of to the glory of God (as Jacob, when he lay a dying, ^{<14816>}Genesis 48:16), thus setting to his seal, from his own experience, that that was true which the Spirit of the Lord spoke by him. ^{<1842>}Psalm 34:22, *The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants*. Dying saints ought to be witnesses for God, and speak of him as they have found. Perhaps he speaks thus, on this occasion, for the encouragement of his son and successor to trust in God in the distresses he also might meet with.

V. Bathsheba receives these assurances (v. 31),

1. With great complaisance to the king's person; she did reverence to him; while Adonijah and his party affronted him.
2. With hearty good wishes for the king's health; *Let him live*. So far was she from thinking that he lived too long that she prayed he might live for ever, if it were possible, to adorn the crown he wore and to be a blessing to his people. We should earnestly desire the prolonging of useful lives, however it may be the postponing of any advantages of our own.

~~<100>~~ 1 KINGS 1:32-40

SOLOMON DECLARED SUCCESSOR

We have here the effectual care David took both to secure Solomon's right and to preserve the public peace, by crushing Adonijah's project in the bud. Observe,

I. The express orders he gave for the proclaiming of Solomon. The persons he entrusted with this great affair were Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, men of power and interest whom David had always reposed a confidence in and found faithful to him, and whom Adonijah had passed by in his invitation, v. 10. David orders them forthwith, with all possible solemnity, to proclaim Solomon. They must take with them *the servants of their lord*, the lifeguards, and all the servants of the household. They must set Solomon on the mule the king used to ride, for he kept not such stables of horses as his son afterwards did. He appoints them whither to go (v. 33 and 5:34, 35), and what to do.

1. Zadok and Nathan, the two ecclesiastical persons, must, in God's name, anoint him king; for though he was not the first of his family, as Saul and David were, yet he was a younger son, was made king by divine appointment, and his title was contested, which made it necessary that hereby it should be settled. This unction was typical of the designation and qualification of the Messiah, or Christ, the anointed one, on whom the Spirit, that oil of gladness, was poured without measure, ~~<300>~~ Hebrews 1:9, ~~<480>~~ Psalm 89:20. And all Christians, being *heirs of the kingdom* (~~<500>~~ James 2:5), do from him *receive the anointing*, ~~<600>~~ 1 John 2:27.

2. The great officers, civil and military, are ordered to give public notice of this, and to express the public joy upon this occasion by sound of trumpet, by which the law of Moses directed the gracing of great solemnities; to this must be added the acclamations of the people: “*Let king Solomon live, let him prosper, let his kingdom be established and perpetuated, and let him long continue in the enjoyment of it;*” so it had been promised concerning him. ^{<1715>}Psalm 72:15, *He shall live.*

3. They must then bring him in state to the city of David, and he must sit upon the throne of his father, as his substitute now, or viceroy, to despatch public business during his weakness and be his successor after his death: *He shall be king in my stead.* It would be a great satisfaction to David himself, and to all parties concerned, to have this done immediately, that upon the demise of the king there might be no dispute, or agitation, in the public affairs. David was far from grudging his successor the honour of appearing such in his life-time, and yet perhaps was so taken up with his devotions on his sick-bed that, if he had not been put in mind of it by others, this great good work, which was so necessary to the public repose, would have been left undone.

II. The great satisfaction which Benaiah, in the name of the rest, professed in these orders. The king said, “Solomon shall reign for me, and reign after me.” “Amen” (says Benaiah heartily); “as the king says, so say we; we are entirely satisfied in the nomination, and concur in the choice, we give our vote for Solomon, *nemine contradicente — unanimo*sly, and since we can bring nothing to pass, much less establish it, without the concurrence of a propitious providence, *The Lord God of my lord the king say so too!*” v. 36. This is the language of his faith in that promise of God on which Solomon's government was founded. If we say as God says in his word, we may hope that he will say as we say by his providence. To this he adds a prayer for Solomon (v. 37), that God would be with him as he had been with David, and make his throne greater. He knew David was not one of those that envy their children's greatness, and that therefore he would not be disquieted at this prayer, nor take it as an affront, but would heartily say *Amen* to it. The wisest and best man in the world desires his children may be wiser and better than he, for he himself desires to be wiser and better than he is; and wisdom and goodness are true greatness.

III. The immediate execution of these orders, v. 38-40. No time was lost, but Solomon was brought in state to the place appointed, and there Zadok

(who, though he was not as yet high priest, was, we may suppose, the suffragan, the Jews called him the *sagan*, or second priest) anointed him by the direction of Nathan the prophet and David the king, v. 39. In the tabernacle, where the ark was now lodged, was kept among other sacred things, the holy oil for many religious services thence Zadok took a *horn of oil*, which denotes both power and plenty, and therewith anointed Solomon. We do not find that Abiathar pretended to anoint Adonijah: he was made king by a feast, not by an unction. Whom God calls, he will qualify, which was signified by the anointing; usurpers had it not. *Christ* signifies *anointed*, and he is the king whom God hath *set upon his holy hill of Sion*, according to decree, ^{<3926>}Psalm 2:6, 7. Christians also are *made to our God* (and *by him*) *kings*, and they have an *unction from the Holy One*, ^{<421>}1 John 2:20. The people, hereupon, express their great joy and satisfaction in the elevation of Solomon, surround him with their Hosannas — *God save king Solomon*, and attend him with their music and shouts of joy, v. 40. Hereby they declared their concurrence in the choice, and that he was not forced upon them, but cheerfully accepted by them. The power of a prince can be little satisfaction to himself, unless he knows it to be a satisfaction to his people. Every Israelite indeed rejoices in the exaltation of the Son of David.

^{<1044>}1 KINGS 1:41-53

SOLOMON PROCLAIMED

We have here,

I. The tidings of Solomon's inauguration brought to Adonijah and his party, in the midst of their jollity: *They had made an end of eating*, and, it should seem, it was a great while before they made an end, for all the affair of Solomon's anointing was ordered and finished while they were at dinner, glutting themselves. Thus those who *serve not our Lord Christ*, but oppose him, are commonly such as *serve their own belly* (^{<5168>}Romans 16:18) and *made a god of it*, ^{<1189>}Philippians 3:19. Their long feast intimates likewise that they were very secure and confident of their interest, else they would not have lost so much time. The old world and Sodom were *eating and drinking*, secure and sensual, when their destruction came, ^{<2735>}Luke 17:26, etc. When *they made an end of eating*, and were preparing themselves to

proclaim their king, and bring him in triumph into the city, they *heard the sound of the trumpet* (v. 41), and a *dreadful sound it was in their ears*, ~~~~Job 15:21. Joab was an old man, and was alarmed at it, apprehending the city to be in an uproar; but Adonijah was very confident that the messenger, being a *worthy man, brought good tidings*, v. 42. Usurpers flatter themselves with the hopes of success, and those are commonly least timorous whose condition is most dangerous. But how can those who do evil deeds expect to have good tidings? No, the worthiest man will bring them the worst news, as the priest's son did here to Adonijah, v. 43. “*Verily, the best tidings I have to bring you is that Solomon is made king, so that your pretensions are all quashed.*” He relates to them very particularly,

1. With what great solemnity *Solomon was made king* (v. 44, 45), and that he was now *sitting on the throne of the kingdom*, v. 46. Adonijah thought to have stepped into the throne before him, but Solomon was too quick for him.

2. With what general satisfaction Solomon was made king, so that that which was done was not likely to be undone again.

(1.) The people were pleased, witness their joyful acclamations, v. 45.

(2.) The courtiers were pleased: *The kings servants* attended him with an address of congratulation upon this occasion, v. 47. We have here the heads of their address: They *blessed king David*, applauded his prudent care for the public welfare, acknowledged their happiness under his government, and prayed heartily for his recovery. They also prayed for Solomon, that God would make his name better than his father's, which it might well be when he had his father's foundation to build upon. A child, on a giant's shoulders, is higher than the giant himself.

(3.) The king himself was pleased: He *bowed himself upon the bed*, not only to signify his acceptance of his servants' address, but to offer up his own address to God (v. 48): “*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who, as Israel's God, for Israel's good, has brought this matter to such a happy issue, my eyes even seeing it.*” Note, It is a great satisfaction to good men, when they are going out of the world, to see the affairs of their families in a good posture, their children rising up in their stead to serve God and their generation, and especially to see peace upon Israel and the establishment of it.

II. The effectual crush which this gave to Adonijah's attempt. It spoiled the sport of his party, dispersed the company, and obliged every man to shift for his own safety. *The triumphing of the wicked is short.* They were building a castle in the air, which, having no foundation, would soon fall and crush them. They were afraid of being taken in the fact, while they were together hatching their treason, and therefore each one made the best of his way.

III. The terror Adonijah himself was in, and the course he took to secure himself. he was now as much depressed as he had been elevated, v. 42, 50. He had despised Solomon as not worthy to be his guest (v. 10), but now he dreads him as his judge: He *feared because of Solomon.* Thus those who oppose Christ and his kingdom will shortly be made to tremble before him, and call in vain to rocks and mountains to shelter them from his wrath. He *took hold on the horns of the altar*, which was always looked upon as a sanctuary, or place of refuge (⁽¹²¹⁴⁾Exodus 21:14), intimating hereby that he durst not stand a trial, but threw himself upon the mercy of his prince, in suing for which he relied upon no other plea than the mercy of God, which was manifested in the institution and acceptance of the sacrifices that were offered on that altar and the remission of sin thereupon. Perhaps Adonijah had formerly slighted the service of the altar, yet now he courts the protection of it. Many who in the day of their security neglect the great salvation, under the arrests of the terrors of the Lord would gladly be beholden to Christ and his merit, and, when it is too late, will *catch hold of the horns of the altar.*

IV. His humble address to Solomon for mercy. By those who brought Solomon tidings where he was, he sent a request for his life (v. 51): *Let king Solomon swear to me that he will not slay his servant.* He owns Solomon for his prince, and himself his servant, dares not justify himself, but *makes supplication to his judge.* It was a great change with him. He that in the morning was grasping at a crown is before night begging for his life. Then Adonijah reigned, now Adonijah trembles, and cannot think himself safe unless Solomon promise, with an oath, not to put him to death.

V. The orders Solomon gave concerning him. He discharges him upon his good behaviour, v. 52, 53. He considered that Adonijah was his brother, and that it was the first offence. Perhaps, being so soon made sensible of his error and then not persisting in his rebellion, he might prove not only a

peaceable, but a serviceable subject, and therefore, if he will conduct himself well for the future, what is past shall be pardoned: but if he be fond disaffected, turbulent, and aspiring, this offence shall be remembered against him, he shall be called up upon his former conviction (as our law speaks), and execution shall be awarded against him. Thus the Son of David receives those to mercy that have been rebellious: if they will return to their allegiance, and be faithful to their Sovereign, their former crimes shall not be mentioned against them; but, if still they continue in the interests of the world and the flesh, this will be their ruin. Adonijah is sent for, and told upon what terms he stands, which he signifies his grateful submission to, and then is told to go to his house and live retired there. Solomon not only gave him his life, but his estate, thus *establishing his throne by mercy*.