

From the Rabbi's Desk
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Insights into the Bible
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King David's Will to His Son Solomon
I Kings 2:1-12



1. King David's days drew near to die, and he instructed his son Solomon, saying:
2. I go the way of all the earth; be strong and become a man:
3. Safeguard the charge of the Lord, your God, to walk in His ways, to observe His decrees, commandments, ordinances, and testimonies, as written in the Torah of Moses, so that you will succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn:
4. So that the Lord will uphold His word that He spoke regarding me, saying, "If your children will safeguard their way, to walk before Me sincerely, with all their heart and with all their soul," saying, "no man of you will be cut off from upon the throne of Israel.":
5. Furthermore, you know what Joab son of Zeruah did to me, what he did to two leaders of the armies of Israel, to Abner son of Ner¹ and to Amasa son of Jether² whom he killed, thereby shedding blood of war in peacetime, placing the blood of war on the girdle that is on his loins and on his shoes that are on his feet:
6. You shall act according to your wisdom and not let his white hair go down to the grave in peace:

¹ II Samuel 3:17-39

² II Samuel 20:8-13. See also II Samuel 14

7. To the children of Barzilai the Gileadite act with kindness³, and they shall be among those who eat at your table, for so they befriended me during my flight from Absalom, your brother⁴:

8. Behold! -- with you is Shimei son of Gera, the Benjaminite from Bachurim; he cursed me with a powerful curse on the day I went to Machanaim;⁵ but he came down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore to him by the Lord, saying, "I will not put you to death by the sword."⁶:

9. But now, you are not to hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man, and you will know what you are to do to him, and are to bring down his white hair to the grave in blood:

10. David lay with his forefathers, and he was buried in the City of David:

11. The days that David reigned over Israel were forty years; in Hebron he reigned for seven years and in Jerusalem he reigned for thirty-three years:

12. Solomon sat on the throne of David, his father, and his kingship was firmly established:

Questions for Analysis



How can you define "to be a man" in the context of the story?

Extra Bonus

King David, in his will, instructed Solomon to kill two people and to honor one. How can you explain David's will?

³ II Samuel 17:27-29

⁴ II Samuel 19:32-41

⁵ II Samuel 16:5-14

⁶ II Samuel 19: 16-24