

Do we accept the spirit or form of the divine call?

Readings

- **1Kings 1 – 53**

1 Now King David was old, advanced in years; and they put covers on him, but he could not get warm. 2 Therefore his servants said to him, "Let a young woman, a virgin, be sought for our lord the king, and let her stand before the king, and let her care for him; and let her lie in your bosom, that our lord the king may be warm." 3 So they sought for a lovely young woman throughout all the territory of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to the king. 4 The young woman was very lovely; and she cared for the king, and served him; but the king did not know her. 5 Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, "I will be king"; and he prepared for himself chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. 6 (And his father had not rebuked him at any time by saying, "Why have you done so?" He was also very good-looking. His mother had borne him after Absalom.) 7 Then he conferred with Joab the son of Zeruah and with Abiathar the priest, and they followed and helped Adonijah. 8 But Zadok the priest, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and the mighty men who belonged to David were not with Adonijah. 9 And Adonijah sacrificed sheep and oxen and fattened cattle by the stone of Zoheleth, which is by En Rogel; he also invited all his brothers, the king's sons, and all the men of Judah, the king's servants. 10 But he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, the mighty men, or Solomon his brother. 11 So Nathan spoke to Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, "Have you not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith has become king, and David our lord does not know it? 12 Come, please, let me now give you advice, that you may save your own life and the life of your son Solomon. 13 Go immediately to King David and say to him, 'Did you not, my

lord, O king, swear to your maidservant, saying, “Assuredly your son Solomon shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne”? Why then has Adonijah become king?’

14 Then, while you are still talking there with the king, I also will come in after you and confirm your words.”

15 So Bathsheba went into the chamber to the king. (Now the king was very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was serving the king.)

16 And Bathsheba bowed and did homage to the king. Then the king said, “What is your wish?”

17 Then she said to him, “My lord, you swore by the Lord your God to your maidservant, saying, ‘Assuredly Solomon your son shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne.’”

18 So now, look! Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord the king, you do not know about it.

19 He has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the sons of the king, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the commander of the army; but Solomon your servant he has not invited.

20 And as for you, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel are on you, that you should tell them who will sit on the throne of my lord the king after him.

21 Otherwise it will happen, when my lord the king rests with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon will be counted as offenders.”

22 And just then, while she was still talking with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in.

23 So they told the king, saying, “Here is Nathan the prophet.” And when he came in before the king, he bowed down before the king with his face to the ground.

24 And Nathan said, “My lord, O king, have you said, ‘Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit on my throne’?”

25 For he has gone down today, and has sacrificed oxen and fattened cattle and sheep in abundance, and has invited all the king’s sons, and the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest; and look! They are eating and drinking before him; and they say, ‘Long live King Adonijah!’”

26 But he has not invited me—me your servant—nor Zadok the priest, nor Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, nor your servant Solomon.

27 Has this thing been done by my lord the king, and you have not told your servant who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him?”

28 Then King David answered and said, “Call Bathsheba to me.” So she came into the king’s presence and stood before the king.

29 And the king took an oath and said, “As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress,

30 just as I swore to you by the Lord God of Israel, saying,

'Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,' so I certainly will do this day." 31 Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the earth, and paid homage to the king, and said, "Let my lord King David live forever!" 32 And King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king. 33 The king also said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. 34 There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35 Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah." 36 Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the king and said, "Amen! May the Lord God of my lord the king say so too. 37 As the Lord has been with my lord the king, even so may He be with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord King David." 38 So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and took him to Gihon. 39 Then Zadok the priest took a horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. And they blew the horn, and all the people said, "Long live King Solomon!" 40 And all the people went up after him; and the people played the flutes and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth seemed to split with their sound. 41 Now Adonijah and all the guests who were with him heard it as they finished eating. And when Joab heard the sound of the horn, he said, "Why is the city in such a noisy uproar?" 42 While he was still speaking, there came Jonathan, the son of Abiathar the priest. And Adonijah said to him, "Come in, for you are a prominent man, and bring good news." 43 Then Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, "No! Our lord King David has made Solomon king. 44 The king has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites; and they have made him ride on the king's mule. 45 So Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon; and they have gone up from there rejoicing, so that the city is in an uproar. This is the noise that you have heard. 46 Also Solomon sits on the throne of the kingdom. 47 And

moreover the king's servants have gone to bless our lord King David, saying, 'May God make the name of Solomon better than your name, and may He make his throne greater than your throne.' Then the king bowed himself on the bed. 48 Also the king said thus, 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who has given one to sit on my throne this day, while my eyes see it!' " 49 So all the guests who were with Adonijah were afraid, and arose, and each one went his way. 50 Now Adonijah was afraid of Solomon; so he arose, and went and took hold of the horns of the altar. 51 And it was told Solomon, saying, "Indeed Adonijah is afraid of King Solomon; for look, he has taken hold of the horns of the altar, saying, 'Let King Solomon swear to me today that he will not put his servant to death with the sword.' " 52 Then Solomon said, "If he proves himself a worthy man, not one hair of him shall fall to the earth; but if wickedness is found in him, he shall die." 53 So King Solomon sent them to bring him down from the altar. And he came and fell down before King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, "Go to your house."

- **1 Kings 2: 1 - 12**

Now the days of David drew near that he should die, and he charged Solomon his son, saying: 2 "I go the way of all the earth; be strong, therefore, and prove yourself a man. 3 And keep the charge of the Lord your God: to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His judgments, 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; 4 that the Lord may fulfil His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' He said, 'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.' 5 "Moreover you know also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed. And he shed the blood of war in peacetime, and put the blood of war on his belt that was around his waist, and on his sandals that were on his feet. 6 Therefore do according to your wisdom, and do not let his grey hair go down to the grave in peace. 7 "But show kindness to the sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be among

those who eat at your table, for so they came to me when I fled from Absalom your brother. 8 "And see, you have with you Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite from Bahurim, who cursed me with a malicious curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim. 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 with the sword.' 9 Now therefore, do not hold him guiltless, for you are a wise man and know what you ought to do to him; but bring his grey hair down to the grave with blood." 10 So David rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David. 11 The period that David reigned over Israel was forty years; seven years he reigned in Hebron, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years. 12 Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established.

In the kingdom of David there were:

- ***Joab***: one of the commanders of the army
- ***Benaiah the son of Jehoiada***: one of the commanders of the army
- ***Abiathar*** : one of the chief priests
- ***Zadok*** : one of the chief priests

All of them were with David; they knew the war plans; they participated with David in the battles; they achieved victories; they attended spiritual festivals and celebrations; and they worshipped with David.

However, towards the end of David's life and reign, we are surprised by a strange thing which is important and reveals important matters.

We find that there was a plan that both Joab, the commander of David's army, and Abiathar, the chief priest, took part in. The plan was to make Adonijah, one of David's sons, the king.

This matter or plan was completely against God's will –according to what David, the man of God, knew from the Lord.

Yet, we also notice or rather wonder:

Why were other people not invited to this event of making Adonijah king?

There was another commander of the army, like Joab, and that was: Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; yet, he was not invited.

There was also a chief priest like Abiathar, and that was: Zadok; yet he was not invited.

Even the prophet Nathan was not invited.

After that, the mother of Solomon went to the king, who was very old at that time, to remind him of the words of the Lord which he had told her. He had told her that the one who will reign after him will be her son, Solomon. She then told him that something was happening in the kingdom which he was unaware of: the commander of his army, Joab, and the chief priest, Abiathar, made Adonijah king.

When David heard this, he said the following words:

“As the Lord lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, 30 just as I swore to you by the Lord God of Israel, saying, ‘Assuredly Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he shall sit on my throne in my place,’ so I certainly will do this day” (1Kings 1: 29, 30).

At this point we see a remarkable matter. The king, the man of God, was at the end of his life and he had decided to make his son, Solomon, king after him, according to the will of God which he had understood and which he had told to Bathsheba. In order to accomplish this decision, we see that he chose a certain priest and a certain commander of the army to carry out this task. He did not choose Joab or Abiathar; but, he chose Zadok and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and he sent them with Nathan, the prophet, to anoint Solomon king over all Israel.

We read this in 1Kings 1: 32 – 35:

32 And King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king. 33 The king also said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. 34 There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' 35 Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah' (1Kings 1: 32 – 35).

And this actually took place on the same day.

Here, we need to reflect in order to understand and perceive some important matters:

At the time of king David, the man of God, there were all those men with David in the kingdom of Israel. They lived with him, fought with him, and worshipped with him; yet, towards the end of David's life and reign, it became clear that ***there were two different approaches:***

- There were those whose concern and preoccupation was: their status, achievements, battles and victories, a prestigious place with the king in all the celebrations. Among those were: the chief priest, Abiathar, and the commander of the army, Joab.

We read about them in the books of Samuel and Chronicles; we read how much they achieved and accomplished; yet, in the time of test and challenge, it became clear that they were totally estranged from the Spirit of God and the will of God towards His kingdom. Therefore, they took part in a plan which was totally opposite to God's plan; and that was: making Adonijah king.

This would have caused innumerable problems and it would have caused the whole kingdom to move in a direction that is opposing to God's will.

And the reason behind this was those men who should have received, known, and discerned the spirit of the man of God, David, and understood God's will and purposes during their journey with David and their companionship with him; ***yet this, unfortunately, had not happened!***

The exact opposite happened. They cared about the outer matters only; while, they were totally estranged from the matters of the heart and the spirit.

This is a lesson for us as well to discern and to examine our heart and spirit as God has entrusted us with a spiritual walk where we experienced and tasted very blessed days, the open heavens of God, true and abundant graces of God being poured on us, and illuminating revelations given to us by the Spirit of God.

- Yet, there was also another group with David; another commander of the army, Benaiah, and another priest, Zadok.

Those men did not accept to participate with the others or rather they were not even invited. Why? It is because the others perceived quite well that those men had different approaches from them; and hence, did not invite them.

Yes, indeed, those men had the same approaches of the man of God, David, whom they knew and accompanied. They had received his spirit and anointing, understood the will of God, and knew that God desires something different from what the other men were planning for.

Now, the time came for Solomon to be king, according to the will of God.

We all know this from the Scriptures because we read that when Bathsheba bore Solomon, the following words were written about him:

'So she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. Now the Lord loved him, 25 and He sent word by the hand of Nathan the prophet: So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord' (2 Samuel 12: 24, 25).

Jedidiah means 'beloved by the Lord' and 'for the Lord'.

Those men perceived the worshipping spirit of the prophet because the preoccupation of their heart was about the inner matters, the things related to the heart and spirit.

Yes, they were indeed faithful in their work with David, whether in the battles or the administrative matters of the kingdom or otherwise; yet, their heart was preoccupied with something else. They were preoccupied with their relationship with Yahweh, worshipping Him, and loving Him. They saw David, the man of God, live as such: worshipping, loving, and adoring the Lord –as we hear him say in his Psalms:

'My eyes are awake through the night watches, that I may meditate on Your word' (Psalm 119: 148).

'Seven times a day I praise You, because of Your righteous judgments' (Psalm 119: 164).

'But I give myself to prayer' (Psalm 109: 4b).

In the crucial and critical times, those men knew that they should not partake or participate in the plans of the flesh which the enemy desired; they remained watchful and vigilant. Thus, they were prepared for the plan and the will of the Lord; and hence, the kingdom was saved/rescued, and Solomon reigned over it, according to the will of God.

Those are the ones whom the Lord is always seeking and searching for in order to entrust them with His will, especially during difficult times.

"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him." (2Chornicles 16:9)

From the story, it becomes clear to us who had acquired and received the spirit of David and who had acquired his ideas and plans only.

We so much need to remember the commandment of David to his son, Solomon:

'As for you, my son Solomon, know the God of your father, and serve Him with a loyal heart and with a willing mind; for the Lord searches all hearts and understands all the intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will cast you off forever' (1 Chronicles 28: 9).

There is another lesson which we learn from the next chapter (1Kings 2: 1 – 5):

- **Verse 4**

'that the Lord may fulfil His word which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons take heed to their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul,' He said, 'you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel' (1 Kings 2: 4).
[This means that the descendants of David reign over Israel].

Here, there is another important reflection:

The sentence starts with *'so that'*, indicating that what follows is based on certain conditions. It means: so that God would fulfil His word, His will, this requires men who have the following features:

- Took heed to their ways
- Walked before the Lord in truth
- With all their heart and all their soul

This is very important because we can either delay and hinder God's matters and His Kingdom or we can be a tool to complete and accomplish His will. This applies to all levels and different matters.

For example: we know that there is a ***fullness of time*** for everything: fullness of time for the salvation of every person and fullness of time for the fulfilment of God's will.

In Galatians 4: 4, we read: *'But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law'*.

The Spirit of God worked with great and amazing patience throughout the generations and times so that the whole scene would become prepared for the incarnation of the Son. He waited for the Virgin who said: *'Let it be to me according to your word'* (Luke 1: 38). He waited for the Baptist *'to make ready a people prepared for the Lord'* (Luke 1: 17). Then, God sent His Son.

And now, do we perceive this matter?

Are we preparing the scene of our generation so that the Lord may do His expected work before His Second coming?

Are the parents preparing the scene for their children so that the children may enter into the fullness of the time of their visitation so that the Grace of God may work in them, according to the will of God?

We have the example of David before us. He prepared the scene for his son, Solomon, who was called by God to build the temple, as we read in 1Chronicals 28: 11, 12, 19, 20:

Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the vestibule, its houses, its treasuries, its upper chambers, its inner chambers, and the place of the mercy seat; 12 and the plans for all that he had by the Spirit, of the courts of the house of the Lord, of all the chambers all around, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries for the dedicated things... "All this," said David, "the Lord made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me, all the works of these plans." 20 And David said to his son Solomon, "Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord God—my God—will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord' (1Chronicals 28: 11, 12, 19, 20).

Not only do the parents need to fast, pray, and bow before the Lord –though these are important matters; but, they also need to be a living example for their children;

they need to have an altar of prayer established in their home; the commandments of the bible should be lived and should be alive and effective day after day.

Let us go back to the passage in 1 Kings 2: 1 – 5; and let us read verse 5:

'Moreover you know also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two commanders of the armies of Israel, to Abner the son of Ner and Amasa the son of Jether, whom he killed. And he shed the blood of war in peacetime, and put the blood of war on his belt that was around his waist, and on his sandals that were on his feet' (1 Kings 2: 5).

In this verse, notice the words 'belt/girdle' and 'sandals'.

The '*belt*' refers to the viscera or compassion; and the '*sandals*' refer to 'the feet'.

The significance here is that we should avoid having blood in our viscera (belt); that is, avoid having a spirit of vengeance and hatred.

We should also avoid having feet (sandals) that have blood; that is, avoid having feet that tread upon and crush others.

This will prepare us to be men of God whom He entrusts.

Let us remember the words of Song of Songs about the bride where it is written:

'How beautiful are your feet in sandals, O prince's daughter' (Song of Songs 7: 1).

'Your waist is a heap of wheat set about with lilies' (Song of Songs 7: 2).

God wants us to be His bride who has these features; a bride who has spiritual beauty and harmony of heart with Him; so that, He may be glorified in us!

Amen

