# Lesson Plan: Shelomo’s Enthronement – Melakhim Alef (I Kings) chapters 1-2

## Objectives:

1. Students will recognize that Shelomo was not appointed due to any of his own qualities, but rather due to David’s loyalty to Bathsheba. This will be important in the continuation of the book.
2. Students will explore the workings of Biblical narrative by examining the interplay of Bathsheba and Natan in inspiring David to order the appointment of Shelomo. More specifically, students will examine how Natan’s plan in 1:11-14 differs from its implementation in 1:15-31.
3. Students will examine David’s speech to Shelomo in 2:1-9 and explore how this speech emphasizes the need for popular support among specific groups for Shelomo’s reign.

# Part 1: Introduction

Teacher will remind students of the conclusion of the last lesson – there is no doubt that the monarchy will continue, the only question is who will succeed David.

Students will note that Adoniyahu is only one of the possible successors to David and that there are others. Using slide 2, ask the students to fill in the family tree of David’s wives and sons, from II Sam. 3:1-5 and from II Sam. 5:14. In discussing II Sam. 3:1-5, let students fill in all the names of the wives and sons. Students should realize that Amnon is “out of the picture” as is Absalom, and that no one really knows what happened to Kil’av (there are various midrashim). Then, introduce II Sam. 5:14 and ask if any of the names are famous. Students should recognize Shelomo and know that his mother is Bathsheba (II Sam. 12:24), and this should be added to the chart. The final chart should have an x over Amnon and Absalom, a question mark over Chileab, and the names Adoniyahu, Shefatiah, Jethre’am and Shelomo should all appear.

Part 2: In this section, students will explore the workings of Biblical narrative. Students will be responsible for reading carefully and comparing verses in a guided manner. I suggest beginning with a frontal lesson, filling in slide 3

In verses 11-14, who is the main speaker? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, To whom is he suggesting a plan? Who appears here to be the stronger party of the two actors?

Who is to speak with David first? What reason for preferring Shelomo is she to mention?
How is Natan supposed to help?

Then, with slide 3 still on the board, read vv 15-21. At the end of each verse, check if the content of the verse corresponds with the plan. Verses 15, 16, 17, and 18 all correspond to the plan. Verse 19 is an expansion of the plan, but doesn’t greatly differ from the plan. Verse 20 is a nice conclusion to the speech that was part of the plan. \*\*But verse 21 adds greatly to the speech that was part of the plan. (Slide 4) How does this verse add to what was presented in the plan? Students should realize that v. 21 makes Adoniyahu’s rule a personal offense and a threat to Bathsheba and her son.

Teacher should then read Natan’s speech in vv 24-27, with slide 3 on the board, noting how Natan fulfils the plan he designed.

For homework, or as a class assignment, ask students to read vv 28-30 and explain (Slide 5):

1. To whom does David reply – Natan or Bathsheba?
2. Based on this, to whose sense of insult does he reply- to Natan’s or to Bathsheba
3. Who ultimately convinces David to appoint Shelomo?

In reviewing these questions, the teacher should emphasize that David here appoints Shelomo out of loyalty to Bathsheba. First of all, students learn from this that Tanakh often shows such choices by contrasting speeches. But moreover, this means that Shelomo does not have unique abilities to govern the kingdom.

It is important at this point to broach a discussion with students – if Shelomo was not appointed because of his inherent personal qualities, how did he become a successful leader? This question has many possible ramifications, including the idea of developing one’s own talents during the teenage years. But the larger question of how Shelomo became a successful leader is discussed in I Kings chapter 3, which we will learn in a future lesson.

Part 5: Students should independently read and summarize the events of vv 32-53. A useful resource in teaching these verses is the map on slide 6, showing En Rogel and the Gihon spring. (From the cityofdavid.org.il website)

Part 6: Students should engage in directed reading of David’s speech in chapter 2 vv 1-10. Note that this is haftara for Parashat Vayehi, and so students should know the narrative. Again, the introductory assumptions are that

1. The existence of the kingdom is not open for discussion, unlike when David’s began to rule;
2. Shelomo does not have unique abilities to rule the kingdom.

Students should read vv 1-4 and identify “What is the goal of David’s speech?” in these verses. Students will learn the term “le-ma’an” which appears in vv 3 and 4, and will learn the meaning of the term. Effectively, the goal of the speech is to give Shelomo tools so that the dynasty can continue. (Slide 7)

Verses 5-10 then give a detailed plan of how to maneuver so as to ensure survival of the dynasty. Ask students to fill in handout 2, examining these verses and explaining why each of the people in question is to be treated in accordance with David’s requests. How does each action contribute to the survival of the dynasty?
Suggested emphases:

1. Yoav: Seen as a murderer by the people, people will not support Shelomo if he supports Yoav
2. Barzilai: Important to be seen as thanking your supporters
3. Shimei: David could not punish him because he swore not to, but still sees Shimei as a threat.

The actions David recommends all seem to be connected to garnering popular support as the first stage in consolidating Shelomo’s rule.

## Conclusion:

C. Are we told that Shelomo has any personal traits that make him a good leader? Shelomo needs to develop these.

D. What steps is Shelomo told to take to garner more popular support? (David’s commandments in chapter 2 vv 1-10.)