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David Anointed King Over Y'hudah

Second Samuel 2: 1-7

David anointed king over Y'hudah DIG: How might David have felt as he returned "home" from exile? What would be hardest for him in this move? Why Hebron in Y'hudah of all places to relocate (see First Samuel 17:2, 30:26-31 and Joshua 15:13-15)? Why did the men from Jabesh Gilead rescue the bodies of Sha'ul and Y'honatan? Why did David bless them now? What characteristics of godly leadership did David demonstrate?

REFLECT: Have you ever had to wait patiently for something for a long time? If so, how did that experience affect you? About what future "moves" are you inquiring of ADONAI? What are some spiritual disciplines you can observe that will keep you focused on the Lord's will and His timing for you? So far, what is He telling you? Are you listening? Who is calling the shots? In what ways do people typically respond when faced with a major decision? In what ways do their responses reveal who or what they are? Who has been instrumental in your coming to Messiah and your growth as a believer? How could you acknowledge this person's impact on your life?

1010 BC

The death of **Sha'ul** was the signal for **David** to act. There was a political vacuum and someone was going to fill it. **He** was still hold up in **his** private refuge of **Ziklag**, but finally, it was safe to go back to the territory of **Y'hudah**. **He** needed to return if **he** was to be a factor in the new decisions of power that were sure to come.



David Anointed King at Hebron: David began his reign over all Isra'el by being king over Y'hudah. In the course of time, Samuel's anointing of David as king made it very clear to David that ADONAI had chosen him as the next king over Isra'el (to see link [click Ah - Samuel Anoints David](#)); and though David had known this for many years, he did not rush it, but waited for God's timing. Samuel had anointed David many years earlier, and YHVH was using all the time since then to prepare David to be king. Is there something in your life for which you are anxiously waiting for? Are you allowing the Lord to make you into the person He wants you be for the job/marriage He has in mind for you?

As long as Sha'ul and Y'honatan lived, David had refrained from pressing the issue. But now his people had been miserably defeated and subjected by the Philistines, and David was the only man in Isra'el who was both connected with the royal household because of his marriage to Sha'ul's daughter Michal, had the political experience, the military genius, the personal charisma, and the faith of the public to undertake the slow and difficult task of rebuilding Isra'el's political fortunes. It was clear that God had foreseen what would happen to Sha'ul and had provided for His people Isra'el by providing for a new king to be ready at the perfect time.

At the outset, David's change to power was shaped as an act of obedience. Unlike Sha'ul, he inquired of ADONAI by the use of the Urim and the Thummim (see the commentary on Exodus [Gb - The Urim and Thummim: The Means of Making Decisions](#)). He would have to ask a series of questions because the Urim and the Thummim would only respond with "yes" and "no" answers. "Shall I go up to one of the towns of Y'hudah?" he asked. The LORD replied in one word: Go (Hebrew: *alah*). David asked a second question: Where shall I go? Then he probably began naming different cities one after another and the Urim and the Thummim kept saying "No." But at some point he asked if he should go up to Hebron. Again a one-word answer, "Yes." It's size, and importance as the burial place

of the patriarchs (see the commentary on **Genesis Fv - Abraham Buried His Wife Sarah in the Cave in the field of Machpelah**), its **central position in Y'hudah (twenty miles from Yerushalayim)** and its **strong defensive position made Hebron extremely suitable as the capital of the new southern kingdom of Judah.**

So in obedience to YHVH, **David went up to Hebron with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel. Then the men of Judah came to Hebron. David also took the 600 men who were with him, each with his family, and they settled in Hebron and its surrounding towns.** David's procession was a show of power and determination. **His own clansmen, as should be expected, were the first to recognize him as king.** We are given no clue as to the negotiations that went on with the powers of **Judah**. We are only given the conclusion: **And there they anointed David, king over the tribe of Y'hudah (2 Samuel 2:1-4a).**

This was a historic occurrence. No, we have not yet heard of **David's** many military victories (see **Cx - David's Victories**); it would be a long time before we are amazed by **Solomon's** lavish splendor (**First Kings 4 and 10**), and even later before we enjoy the just rule of **the Stump of Jesse** (see the commentary on **Isaiah Dc - A Shoot Will Come Up from the Stump of Jesse**). But here, for the first time in the history of the world, **ADONAI's** chosen **king** ruled on the earth at **Hebron**. It was only one tribe. It was a small beginning, but the kingdom of **God** had been tucked away in the hills of **Judah**. **His Kingdom is like a seed** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Eu - The Parable of the Seed Growing By Itself**).²¹²

At this point the prophet **Samuel** had already anointed **David** to become **king** over all **Isra'el**. But it was a three-step process. And here we have the second step, to be **king over Judah**. From the Philistine viewpoint, King Achish viewed **David** as merely a vassal of Gath, otherwise the Philistines, who had just won a great victory, wouldn't have allowed it.²¹³ But the third step would come when the northern tribes agreed to have **David** rule over them as their **king** after the death of Ish-Bosheth (see **Cm - David Anointed King Over All Isra'el**).

David Blesses the Men of Jabesh Gilead: The northern tribes of **Isra'el** were a difficult and persistent problem for **David**, especially **Sha'ul's** tribe of **Benjamin**. **Sha'ul** was dead, but the **Sha'ul** movement was by no means dead. The tribes of the north did not automatically rush to a new loyalty in the south.²¹⁴ **Jabesh-Gilead** was a special city for **Sha'ul**, and **Sha'ul** was special to **the people** there because **he** had courageously rescued **them** from **the Ammonites** long ago (**First Samuel 11:1-11**). **The people of Jabesh-**

Gilead didn't forget. **Their town** was located across the Jordan in the tribe of Gad, and **the men** who recovered the bodies of **Sha'ul** and **Y'honatan** had to travel northwest and cross the Jordan River perhaps 25 miles. It was a dangerous and courageous endeavor. **When David was told that it was the men from Jabesh Gilead who had buried Sha'ul** (see [Bw - Sha'ul Takes His Own Life: The Rescue of the Bodies](#)), **he sent messengers to them.**

David said: The LORD bless you for showing this kindness (Hebrew: *chesed*) **to Sha'ul your master by giving him a proper burial** (see the commentary on [Ruth Af - The Concept of Chesed](#)). **David** was grateful and well aware of the considerable risk **they** took to do so. **May ADONAI now show you kindness and faithfulness, and I also will show you this goodness** (Hebrew: *tobah*, a rough synonym for *chesed*) **to you because you have done this. But his message may have been prompted as much by diplomatic motives as well as gratitude. He virtually claimed to be Sha'ul's legitimate successor, their best source of security, and appealed for their loyalty. Now then, be strong and brave, and hold the land of Gilead against the Philistines until I can come to your aid. For Sha'ul your master is dead, and the people of Y'hudah have anointed me king over them (Second Samuel 2:4b-7). Sha'ul was thirty years old when he became king over Isra'el, and David was thirty years old when he became king over Y'hudah.**

Unfortunately, **the people of Jabesh Gilead** didn't choose to submit to **David**, but instead followed **Abner** and **Sha'ul's** weak son, **Ish-Bosheth**. **They** took the easy way out. A right response, however, to **Messiah's** - or **David's** - appeal can be costly. Most of us reading this today can detach ourselves from **Jabesh Gilead**. We think, that's so long ago and so far away. On the contrary, we must count ourselves citizens of **Jabesh Gilead**. That's where we all live, for the text clearly shows that **Jabesh Gilead** is sandwiched right between **David** and **Abner**, between the true Kingdom in its **seed** form, and the counterfeit kingdom that expects allegiance (see [Cg - War Between the Houses of David and Sha'ul](#)).²¹⁵

There's only two kinds of spiritual food. There's angel's food and devil's food, and if you aren't eating one, you're eating the other. To be a believer in the true Kingdom of **God**, it takes courage, and courage only comes from **grace**. **For it is by grace you have been saved through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).**