

David Anointed King Over All Isra'el

Second Samuel 5:1-5 and First Chronicles 11:1-3

DIG: What were the three reasons that the elders of Isra'el believe in David as their king? What is significant about the age of thirty? What about the number forty? What had David's life been like since he was first anointed by Samuel (see Ah - Samuel Anoints David)? And now? How would David misuse his role as shepherd?

REFLECT: Which promises of ADONAI are you still patiently waiting to see fulfilled in your lifetime? Have you ever moved to a new city to start a new life? Have you ever been abused by a tyrannical despot, posing as a shepherd? How did you react? How did you appeal for help? Was Christ your advocate? What did that experience teach you? Don't waste your sorrows. How can you help others in that same situation?

1003 BC

David began his 32.5 year reign over a United Kingdom

Abner had already prepared the way for the elders of the northern tribes of Isra'el, including Benjamin, to make David their king (Second Samuel 3:17-19). Though Abner did not live to see the ceremony, the representatives of the tribes of Isra'el appeared to have lost no time in assembling in Hebron to swear allegiance to David.²⁴⁵

All twelve tribes of Isra'el came to David at Hebron. With Ish-Bosheth gone, there was no opposition to a united monarchy. They gave **three reasons** for desiring David as their king. **First**, we are your own flesh and blood (Deuteronomy 17:15). This was a statement of loyalty, initiating and affirming a treaty relationship and anticipated a covenant-making scene (Second Samuel 5:1; First Chronicles 11:1).

Secondly, David was Isra'el's best military leader. In the days of the prophet Samuel, the elders of Isra'el had demanded a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles (1 Samuel 8:20). Initially, they thought that person would be Sha'ul, but now as they looked back they realized that while Sha'ul was king over us, you were the one who led Isra'el on their military campaigns over the Philistines and have proved yourself as a military leader (First Samuel 18:30; Second Samuel 5:2a; First Chronicles 11:2a).

Thirdly, and most impressive of all, they believed that the LORD said to David, "You will shepherd My people Isra'el" (Second Samuel 5:2b; First Chronicles 11:2b). Therefore, David became the model of the shepherd-king (Psalm 78:70; Ezekiel 34:23, 37:24), and it is not surprising that David's greater son, Jesus Christ, should be introduced frequently as **the good Shepherd** (Yochanan 10:11), the **great Shepherd** (Hebrews 13:20, and the **Chief Shepherd** (First Peter 5:4), the **One** who provides for His sheep everything that is needed for abundant life.²⁴⁶

Needless to say, a benevolent **shepherd** can change into a tyrannical despot. Forgetting that he is supposed to lead his **sheep** to green pastures, he can drive **them** mercilessly and trample **them** underfoot (**Jeremiah 23:1-2; Ezekiel 34:1-10; Zechariah 11:4-17**). It was not an accident that Nathan's parable utilized the shepherd-sheep motif to indict David (see **Dd - Nathan Rebukes David**). In the episode of Bathsheba and Uriah, David abused his role as **shepherd** at enormous cost. In the beginning David could do no wrong (**Second Samuel 3:36**). With the passage of time, however, his power became increasingly seductive and intoxicating - to the detriment of **himself**, his family, and his people.

And you will become their ruler (2 Samuel 5:2c; First Chronicles 11:2c). The title of ruler provided a convenient transition between judgeship on the one hand (see the book of **Judges**) and kingship on the other. David did not go north to Isra'el's **elders** in Mahanaim - **they** came to **him** in Hebron. **Their** need for **him** was greater than his need for **them**. When the moment arrived, it was **the king** who initiated the covenant **embodying the mutual rights and duties of the ruler and the ruled**. **To the Hebrews, with their love of freedom and a strong sense of personal rights, an absolute monarchy was unthinkable**. When all the elders of Isra'el had come to King David at Hebron, he made a covenant with them at Hebron before ADONAI, and they anointed David king over Isra'el, as the LORD had promised through Samuel (Second Samuel 5:3; First Chronicles 11:3). David's kingship was not for David's glory, but for Isra'el's welfare. Kingship was not an end in itself but a means to an end - the benefit of YHVH's people. David was *over Isra'el for Isra'el*.²⁴⁷

As Jacob's son Joseph had become prime minister of Egypt at the age of **thirty** (see the commentary on **Genesis Jv - Joseph as Prime Minister**), so Jacob's descendant David was **thirty years old** when he became king over Y'hudah (see **Cd - David Anointed King Over Y'hudah**) - the approximate age of Yeshua when he began His ministry (Luke 3:23). David's overall reign of **forty years** matches that of his predecessor Sha'ul (Acts 13:21), as well as that of his son and successor **Solomon** (First Kings 11:42).²⁴⁸

In Hebron he reigned over Y'hudah seven years and six months, from the age of thirty to thirty-seven, and in Jerusalem he reigned over Y'sra'el and Judah thirty-three years, from the age of thirty-seven to seventy (Second Samuel 5:4-5). The breakdown of the two parts of his reign shows that the writer intended the figure to be taken literally. The writer had not previously mentioned **Jerusalem**, but takes this opportunity of recording another far-reaching move on **David's** part, the capture of this strategic city (see **Cm - David Conquers Yerushalayim**), which had thus far remained independent.²⁴⁹

Finally, **David's** home was not **Hebron** with **the men of Judah**, nor did he settle in the north with **the elders of Isra'el**. **David** was something quite new. **He** must have a fresh start, not burdened by **Isra'el's** old memories. That new home was **Jerusalem**, given to **him** by **YHVH** as **his** private territory. It would be **David's** city. **He** would be unburdened, in debt to no one, and autonomous when **he** arrived there.²⁵⁰