

# The shepherd-king



## ■ **READ:** A selection from 2 Samuel 5:1-5

*The Lord said to [David]: "It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel." So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel.*

## ■ **REFLECT:**

King and shepherd: the two seem like polar opposites. Kings sit on thrones. They wear expensive clothes and talk to important people. They are calculating and political and oversee whole nations. Shepherds, on the other hand, stand on the hillsides. They wear clothes that can get dirty, and they talk mostly to sheep. They are cautious and patient and oversee a single flock.

David, though, was both. He was a shepherd whom God chose to be king. A quick review of world leaders might suggest that actually, a shepherd would make the best kind of king. A shepherd is humble and cares more about people than about power. David carried his shepherding spirit into his reign as king.

It's an honor for David to be called both "shepherd of my people Israel" and "ruler over Israel" because he's not the only shepherd-king in Scripture. In John 10, Jesus calls himself the Good Shepherd, the one who knows all of his sheep and lays down his life for them. And he is also king, the one who is victorious over the powers of sin, death, and evil.

## ■ **PRAY:**

King Jesus, I praise you that you have the heart of a shepherd! How wonderful that you are both mighty and gentle, both self-sacrificing and victorious. Would you bring a spirit of gentleness and self-sacrifice to the political rulers in power today? Amen.