

Here is one suggested chronology of David's life. It is *rough*, and by no means definitive. Few of the commentators agree on dating, but there is substantial agreement on the sequence. Bishop Ussher, who lived c. 1650, adds roughly 50 years to the dates you see below (David would be born 1085 BC instead of 1035 BC). The discrepancy is caused by the differences between Hebrew and Assyrian dating, as well as discrepancies between the Masoretic text, Samaritan Pentateuch, and Septuagint. Ussher used the Masoretic text. Modern historians (Faulstich, Klassen, et al) tend to use the Assyrian system and the critical text. For an exhaustive treatment of all the systems, and an interesting resolution, see *The Chronology of the Old Testament* by Dr. Floyd Nathan Jones (Master Books, New Leaf Press Ed., 2005). This chronology is my own, and is offered simply as a tool to identify and organize the major events of King David's life, which are spread across several books of the OT. Some of the psalms corresponding to these events are also noted here in boldface.

Of all the lives in Scripture, David's is the only one that is exhaustively examined from the time of his childhood to his death. It is an open book like no other. Even his state of mind is revealed in the Psalms, like a diary open to our review. How would our own lives look if subjected to this type of scrutiny? I am humiliated to consider that the day is coming when all the hidden things of my life will be revealed. For that reason alone, we should be kind to the memory of David, recognizing in him many of our own failings and weaknesses, but also admiring his strengths.

1040 BC: Saul reigns from roughly 1040-1000 BC

1035 BC: David is likely born in Bethlehem between 1040 and 1030 BC.

1030 BC: Jonathan is a mighty warrior of whom his own father is jealous (1Sam 13-14). He is fiercely and loyally defended by his men against Saul's intent to kill him.

1025 BC: David is anointed by Samuel (1Sam 16) at age 10-13 - which Saul undoubtedly hears about, later choosing to keep David nearby for observation and ready dispatch.

1023 BC: David, bar-mizvah'd, serves Saul in an ad hoc musical capacity (1Sam 16:17, "provide me a man"). He returns to his father's house to tend sheep, but comes to Saul when needed - (1Sam 17:15).

1020 BC: David defeats Goliath probably at 15-17 years of age (1Sam 17)

1020 BC: Jonathan, who is much older than David, becomes one in spirit with him (1Sam 18:1).

1015 BC: Because of his reputation he was appointed armor-bearer to Saul (1Sam 16:21 - it may be mentioned in chap. 16, but the actual event is probably later - i.e. "he [later] became...").

1010 BC: Saul banishes David from his court, yet he makes him commander of a thousand (1Sam 18:13). Maybe he hopes David will die in battle. David is perhaps 25 years old.

1008 BC: His success as a warrior has made Saul offer him the hand of his daughter Michal "as a snare." (1Sam 18:21). Michal marries him, and she loves him (1Sam 18:27-28).

1007 BC: At Jonathan's warning (and Michal's), David flees from Saul to Samuel at Ramah (1Sam 19). Michal remains behind with Saul. An evil spirit caused Saul to pursue David, but he is stopped by the Spirit of God at Ramah. **Ps 59**

1006 BC: David and Jonathan covenant together at Ramah (1Sam 20)

1006 BC: David flees to Nob and is helped by Ahimelech the priest (1Sam 21). He gives David the consecrated bread, and the sword of Goliath. Doeg the Edomite is present. **Ps 56**.

1006 BC: David flees to Achish, king of the Philistine city of Gath, the first time (1Sam 21:10). He feigns madness to protect himself and his men, and he is expelled. **Ps 34.**

1005 BC: David hides at the Cave at Adullam (1Sam 22:1-5) where he is joined by 30 chiefs. Three enter the camp of the Philistines to get David an off-handed request for a drink of water (1Chr. 11:15). His father's household joins him there. **Ps 142.**

1005 BC: David takes his parents to Mizpah of Moab leaving them with the king (1Sam 22:3-4)

1005 BC: Doeg the Edomite, at Saul's command, kills Ahimelech the priest who helped David and his men. He also kills 85 priests and everyone at Nob for helping David. Abiathar, the son of the priest flees to David with the ephod (1Sam 22:6-23). **Ps 52.**

1005 BC: David liberates Keilah from the Philistines (1Sam 23:6). Saul hears of it and gathers his forces against David at Keilah. Using the ephod, David learns that the people of Keilah will betray him to Saul, and so he flees again. Jonathan visits him at Ziph and covenants with him again (23:16). Ziphites betray David, but God hides him from Saul in the Desert of Ziph. **Ps 63.**

1005 BC: Saul pursues David at en-Gedi. **Ps 54.** David cuts off a corner of his robe in the cave near the Crag of the Wild goats. When Saul leaves the cave, David pleads his cause and his intent not to harm Saul (1Sam 24). He returns to his stronghold (Masada?). **Ps 57.** This is just before Samuel dies (1Sam 25:1).

1005 BC: David is living "off the land" as he encounters Nabal and Abigail at Carmel (1Sam 25). His men kindly provide protection for Nabal's flocks expecting to be paid, but Nabal rebuffs them. David threatens to kill Nabal for his affront until Abigail diplomatically intercedes with food and praise. David has married Ahinoam of Jezreel (1Sam 25:43). When Nabal dies shortly after this incident, David marries Abigail as well. In David's absence, Saul gives Michal to Paltiel in Gallim, which is probably on the border near Jerusalem.

1004 BC: David encounters Saul and his 3000 men in his camp at Hakilah, having been betrayed by the Ziphites a second time. He spares Saul's life again (1Sam 26). Saul "repents" of his pursuit of David, but David doesn't trust him.

1004 BC: David flees to Gath a second time with 600 men and their families. Saul stops his pursuit of David (1Sam 27:4).

1003 BC: After living with Achish at Gath probably for a month or two, David asks to move to Ziklag with his men (1Sam 27:6). David "serves" the Philistines for over a year (see 1Sam 29:3). Achish defends David against his officers ((1Sam 29:1-11).

1000 BC: Samuel dies (1Sam 28:3). Saul solicits the witch of Endor to call up Samuel (1Sam 28:4-7). He prophesies Saul will die the next day. In a battle with the Philistines on Mt. Gilboa, three of Saul's sons die; Saul is wounded and falls on his sword (1Sam 31). **David's Lament** (2Sam 1:17-27). David's service is "dismissed" by the Philistines. The Amalekites raze Ziklag and take the wives of David's men (1Sam 28-2Sam 1). David and 400 men recapture the women, but 200 men cannot go. David shares the plunder equally with them, and with the elders of Judah.

1000 BC: David with the help of his allies assumes control of Judah, and is anointed its king with Hebron as his capital (2Sam 2:7). He reigns for 7 years and 6 months (2Sam 2:11). While there, he marries Maacah, daughter of the king of Geshur. He also marries Haggith, Abital, and Eglah (2Sam 3:1-5) and has sons and daughter by all but Michal (2Sam 6:23).

David's Sons:

Amnon	by Ahinoam of Jezreel
Kileab	by Abigail (Nabal's widow)
Absalom	by Maacah the Caananite
Adonijah	by Haggith
Shephatiah	by Abital
Ithream	by Eglah

998 BC: Ishbosheth, with Abner as his general, has liberated the remainder of the Western territory from the Philistines over a two-year period. He is declared king over Israel, the northern kingdom (2Sam 2:9-10). Abner slays Asahel at **Gibeon** (where the sun stopped for Joshua) which begins five and a half years of war with David (2Sam 2:12-32; 3:1). After Ishbosheth accuses Abner of infidelity with Saul's concubine, Abner threatens his life and covenants with David, who wants Michal back (3:9-13). Michal is returned to David by Ishbosheth (3:14). Joab, David's general, murders Abner at Hebron (3:22,27).

997 BC: David conquers Jerusalem (2Sam 5:6). He rebuilds it, and moves there from Hebron.

993 BC: Ishbosheth is murdered by two cut-throats. David is publicly anointed king over all of Israel, north and south (2Sam 5:17). Battle of Baal Perazim (2Sam 5:17-25; 1Chr 14:8-17; **Ps 18**). David's 33-year reign at Jerusalem begins (1Chr 3:4). His total kingship lasts 40 years (1Kgs. 2:11)).

992 BC: Ark returned to Jerusalem to a tent (2Sam 6). The tabernacle remains in Gibeon (1Chr 16). David desires to build a temple to house the ark (2Sam 7; 1Chr 17). God sends Nathan to David with the Davidic Covenant instead, promising a perpetual throne to his offspring (2Sam 7:12-29). **Ps 105, 96**.

982 BC: After 7-10 years of war, David has solidified his empire (2Sam 8). David's sons become royal advisers 2Sam 8:18 (though too young – probably 14-18 years old; it distorts their sense of self-importance). Mephibosheth is found and David honors his pledge to Jonathan (2Sam 9).

981 BC: Ammon and Syria conquered by Joab and Abishai after David's ambassadors are humiliated by the young king of Ammon (2Sam 10). **Ps 60**.

980 BC: While indulging his children, and allowing his generals to run their own war, David falls prey to the temptations of the flesh, of peace, and of plenty: he sleeps with Bathsheba (2Sam 11). Uriah is slain in April. In December, Nathan confronts David and he repents. The child dies (2Sam 11-12; **Ps 51**).

979 BC: Solomon is born, youngest of David's sons, and future heir to the throne. Compare 1Chr 3:5 with 2Sam 12:24 – if Solomon is Bathsheba's 4th born, then this may be 975 BC. She may have been "comforted" with previous children by David, and then Solomon was born. Perhaps the others were unnamed in 12:24, thus giving honor to Solomon over them.

979 BC: David returns to his duties, conquering Rabbah-Ammon (2Sam 12:26-31; 1Chr 20:1-3;).

978 BC: Amnon rapes his half-sister Tamar, who is Absalom's sister (2Sam 13:1-22).

976 BC: Absalom murders Amnon (2Sam 13:23-38). He is banished from the king's presence to Geshur for 3 years.

974 BC: Absalom pleads for and is returned to Jerusalem via Joab's intercession and conniving use of the woman of Tekoa (2Sam 14); but he is banished from the king's presence for 2 more years.

972 BC: Absalom begs and coerces Joab into interceding yet again that Absalom might see the king's face. He begins his 4-year plot against David. (2Sam 14:28-33; 15:1-7).

969 BC: Absalom's revolt steals the hearts of the people from David (2Sam 15-19). David weeps on the Mount of Olives ((15:30). Shimei, a relative of Saul, curses David on his way out of the city, but Hushai offers to be David's ally in the palace. **Ps 3.** Absalom lies with his father's concubines as Abner had done with Saul's (16:22). Hushai, against Ahithophel, advises Absalom not to pursue David immediately. As a result, David is able to conquer Absalom's army. Ahithophel hangs himself. While riding a mule, Absalom's hair (symbol of his pride) is caught in a tree where he hangs helplessly (18:14) until slain by Joab, against David's wishes. David mourns his son's death, "Absalom, Absalom!" (19:1).

969 BC: No sooner has one rebellion been quashed than another arises by Sheba (2Sam 20). Amasa who was appointed over the army by Absalom in place of Joab, is considered by David to be a threat in this conflict. Amasa is sent on an errand by David, but David also gives orders to Abishai to have Amasa killed. Joab kills Amasa at **Gibeon** and Sheba flees to Abel Beth Maacah. A wise woman of the city has his head delivered to Joab to preserve the city (2Sam 20:4:-22).

968 BC: A three-year famine occurs as a result of Saul's attack on the **Gibeonites** (2Sam 21:1). The attack violated a covenant made with them by Joshua (Josh 9:16).

966 BC: David makes amends with the **Gibeonites** by having seven sons of Saul executed except Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, whom he vowed to protect (2Sam 21:2-14).

965 BC: Battles with the Philistines. David is almost killed by a giant, and he is asked to stay home for his own safety. Four giants are killed in these battles (2Sam 21:15-22). They no longer terrorize Israel or mock God as they had in David's youth under Saul. **David's Eulogy** (2Sam 23:1-7).

964 BC: David takes 9 months to number the people as if to quantify his security (2Sam 24:10). Joab, curiously, is the voice of reason here, asking David not to do it. David repents of it, but God demands a price: pestilence takes 70,000 (24:15). God then instructs David to buy the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan) for an altar (24:18-25; 1Chr 21:1-17). David offers sacrifices on the threshing floor which God accepts with an angel's fiery sword. David fears approaching God in the tabernacle, because it now sits on the high place at **Gibeon** (1Chr 21:26-30). He begins the preparations to construct the temple around the altar, gathering all the materials according to the pattern God shows him (1Chr 22; 28). **Ps 30.**

963 BC: David charges Solomon and the princes with the task of construction (1Chr 22:6-19).

962 BC: David's health begins to fail him (1Kgs 1:1-4). A beautiful young woman is sought to serve him and keep him warm in his old age (Abishag). Adonijah, 4th born son of David, attempts a coup with Joab. At Nathan's insistence, Bathsheba convinces David to declare Solomon king-in-waiting (per the promise in 2Sam 11:24-25; 1Chr 22:9), and have him assume the throne (1Kgs 1:5-53; 1Chr 23:1; 26:31). David agrees (Solomon becomes pro-rex).

961 BC: David calls for a National Assembly, and passes to Solomon his pattern for the temple (1Chr 28). He exhorts the people to give willingly, in joyful worship (1Chr 29:10-20). Solomon is anointed a 2nd time, publicly, and is now co-rex (1Chr 29:1-25). In private, David instructs Solomon to walk with God, and after his death, to deal with Joab and Shimei son of Gera, the traitors (1Kgs 2:1-98).

961 BC: David dies a natural death at 70-75. Although David begins to rule at age 30 for 40 years, he may be older than 70 if we add Solomon's over-lapping time of rule. (2Sam 5:4-5; 1Kgs 2:10-11; 1Chr 29:26-30; see **Ps 90:10**). David is buried in Jerusalem (2Sam 5:4-5; 1Kgs 2:10-12; 1Chr 29:26-30), having served God's purposes in his own generation (Ac 13:22, 36).