

# Deuteronomy 17:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.

## Analysis

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Future kingship: 'Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother.' This permits but regulates monarchy—future anticipation (v.14-20). The king must be God's choice, not popular election alone. He must be Israelite ('thy brethren'), not foreigner. This prevents foreign dynastic control and ensures covenant commitment. The extensive restrictions (v.16-20) show kingship is servant leadership under divine authority, not autonomous rule. Israel's demand for a king 'like all the nations' (1 Samuel 8:5) violated the spirit of these restrictions, though Saul and David were covenant brothers.

## Historical Context

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Moses's prescient law anticipates monarchy instituted under Samuel (1 Samuel 8-12). The restrictions aim to prevent royal abuses common to ancient Near Eastern despots: military buildup (v.16), harem politics (v.17), wealth accumulation (v.17). Israel's kings often violated these: Solomon's horses from Egypt, extensive wives, accumulated wealth (1 Kings 10:14-11:8). The ideal king—studying and obeying Torah (v.18-20)—prefigures Christ, the ultimate Davidic king who perfectly

fulfilled God's law and rules in righteousness. Earthly kingship points toward heavenly King.

## **Related Passages**

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## **Study Questions**

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1. How does requiring the king to be 'chosen by the LORD' check popular sovereignty and majority rule?
2. What do restrictions on royal power teach about leadership as service under divine authority, not autonomous rule?
3. How does the Deuteronomic king (Torah student, humble servant) contrast with ancient Near Eastern despots and modern authoritarian leaders?

## Interlinear Text

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תָּשׁ יִם	תָּשׁ יִם	עַל יָב	מֶלֶךְ	אֲשֶׁר
Thou shalt in any wise	Thou shalt in any wise	H5921	him king	H834
H7760	H7760		H4428	
יִבְחַר	יְהִי ה	בּוֹ אֱלֹהֵי יָב	מִקֵּץ רַב	
shall choose	over thee whom the LORD	thy God	one from among	
H977	H3068	H430	H7130	
אֲחִי יָב	תָּשׁ יִם	עַל יָב	מֶלֶךְ	לֹא
over thee which is not thy brother	Thou shalt in any wise	H5921	him king	H3808
H251	H7760		H4428	
תּוֹכֵךְ ל	לֹא ת	אִישׁ עַל יָב	נִכְרִי	אֲשֶׁר
over thee thou mayest	not set	H5921	H376	H834
H3201	H5414		a stranger	H3808
			H5237	
אֲחִי יָב	הוא:			
over thee which is not thy brother	H1931			
H251				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 30:21** (References Lord): And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me: for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the LORD.

**1 Chronicles 22:10** (Kingdom): He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever.

**1 Chronicles 12:23** (Kingdom): And these are the numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron, to turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD.

**1 Samuel 10:24** (Kingdom): And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king.

**Psalms 2:2** (Kingdom): The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,

**Psalms 2:6** (Kingdom): Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

**Jeremiah 2:25** (Parallel theme): Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: but thou saidst, There is no hope: no; for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.

**2 Samuel 5:2** (Kingdom): Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.