# Nagid:

# A re-examination in the light of the royal ideology in the ancient near east

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## Abstract

*This article argues that* nagid *indicates divinely sanctioned leader of Israel in 1 Samuel 9:1-10:16 and 11:1-11. The use of* nagid *is intricately interplayed with that of* melek *in the context of 1 Samuel 8-12. In the Saul tradition (1 Sm 9:1-10:16; 11:1-11)* nagid *signifies the leadership of Saul as a divinely sanctioned kingship, unlike in the context of the Deuteronomistic History (DH). The royal ideology of the ancient Near East (ANE) provides an ideological background of the kingship of Saul.*

## 1.    INTRODUCTION

The role and status of a *nagid* are far from obvious (Ishda 1999:57; cf Flanagan 1981:67-68). The relation between *melek* and *nagid* is also unclear. Thus, the focus of the brief discussion is rather to perceive the striking word play in the different layers of traditions.

The discussion, first of all, requires a brief explication of the role and status of *nagid*, since it shows the complicated process of its practical use. The term frequently refers to a king in Samuel and Kings (Saul [1 Sm 9:16; 10:1], David [1 Sm 13:14; 25:30; 2 Sm 5:2; 6:21; 7:8], Solomon [1 Ki1:35], Jeroboam [1 Ki 14:7], Baasha [1 Ki 16:2], and Hezekiah [2 Ki 20:5]. Exceptions come from Ezekiel and Daniel for a king of Tyre [Ezk 28:2], the king as anointed one [Dn 9:25, 26], and a general indication of a king [Dn 11:22]), whereas in Chronicles, Job, and Proverbs it is connected with religious and general leaders such as an army chief, an official of a palace,

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and a leader of a tribe. Two categorizations can be applied to the term: a religious leader and a secular leader. For the religious role of *nagid* see 2 Chr 31:13 (Azariah in the time of Hezekiah); 2 Chr 35:8 (Jehiel in the time of Josiah); Jr 20:1 (Pashhur, the chief official in the Temple in the time in power of Zedekiah). For a secular leader as *nagid*, refer to 1 Chr 13:1 (a military leader in the time of David); 1 Chr 27:16 (a leader of the tribes of Israel for Solomon); 2 Chr 11:11 (a military leader as well as official in Rehoboam); 2 Chr 19:11 (Zebadiah, the leader of the tribe of Judah in Jehoshaphat); 2 Chr 28:7 (Azrikam, the leader of the palace of Ahaz); 2 Chr 32:21 (foreign officers); Job 31:37 (a general leader); Is 55:5 (a leader of the inhabitants). In Pr 28:16 it is associated with a general ruler in the comparison of the righteous and the wicked of verse 1 in the same chapter. Thus, scholars proposed various understandings of the term, as referring to the 'king-designate' (Ahlström 1993:431; McCarter 1980b:178-179), the 'crown prince' (Paul 2005:363; Mettinger 1976:151-184), 'commander' (Cross 1973:220-221), and king (Carlson 1964:52).

The majority of scholars prefer to interpret *nagid* as the king-designate (Edelman 1991:30-31; 1984:207; Eslinger 1985:60-61). Why then did Samuel anoint Saul as "designate" who should prove his ability as "designate" of Yahweh to the people? In other words, the choice of Yahweh would be incomplete until the choice will be proven as successful. Why then was the divinely chosen Saul to be rejected by Yahweh, once his ability had been publicly proven? Theologically there exists an inconsistency in the idea of *nagid*.

Rather, Saul was anointed as *nagid* on the request of the people. Saul was Yahweh's positive answer to the kingship. There is no reason for the anointed designate of Yahweh to be tested by the people. It is illogical to have a stage that tests the kingship by the people who urgently asked Samuel to appoint a king over them. If testing was necessary, it was not for the people but for the conviction of the prophet. If the account of 1 Samuel 11 was designed as a test for Saul's kingship, Saul proved his qualified kingship. On the other hand, if 1 Samuel 13 was a test for the benefit of the prophet, the testing was behind schedule, for Saul supervised the army as king of Israel in the battle. If Saul was king in 1 Samuel 13, he did not deserve to be criticized by Samuel (1 Sm 13:13, 14). This discussion brings up the next argument for deliberation in the light of the royal ideology in the ANE. The ancient Near Eastern context will provide the cross-cultural historical context of the kingship.

## 2.    ROYAL IDEOLOGY

A fundamental attribute of the royal ideology in the ANE was implicated in the relationship between the king and the divine. A general term for king in the Old Testament is *melek*. The term suggests a correlation with the Akkadian *maliku* (counsellor). On the other hand, *śarru*, king in Akkadian, denotes an official in Hebrew, *sar* (see Mettinger 1976:296). In the pre-monarchic period, the term appears once: Melchizedek, king of Salem, a Canaanite city. Melchizedek, king of Salem does mean he was the king of a city state. In Gn 14:8 this term *melek* strongly implies a priestly king. In Psalm 110:4 the tradition of Melchizedek refers to the Davidic king. In Judges the term also appears in "Abimelek." Unlike the previous cases, the implication of *melek* in Judges is a military warrior who could deliver the people from their enemies. The most striking term to indicate a king is *nagid* for Saul in establishing the monarchy. It was a highly provocative moment, since the people specifically asked Samuel for a *melek,* not a *nagid.* Strangely enough, Samuel anointed him as *nagid*. The two different terms pose a critical question as to the use in its own context. Furthermore, the moment when the monarchy in Israel was established it was seemingly involved with a certain confrontational socio-political conflict which had a religious stimulus.

In ancient Egypt, the king was deified as the son of gods or himself god. On the other hand, the kings of ancient Mesopotamia generally were the earthly agents of the gods. In a similar manner, the deification of the kings as sons of the gods appeared in Canaan. The evidence for the deification of the kings in the ANE mainly comes from records of royal ascensions (cf Rice 2003:96-100; Hornung 1997:284), royal inscriptions (cf Wilson 1958:262), and monumental architecture (Rice 2003:72; Laato 1997:244-269; cf David 1986:23). Idealization of the king was highlighted during the ceremony of his ascension, particularly in Egypt. In other cases, the king stressed his divine origin in royal inscriptions of his glorious victories over enemies. He constructed temples for his gods to show his divine allegiance and qualification as a divinely sanctioned king. In all the cases the kings of the ANE strongly emphasized their divine origin in cultic settings, although they were sometimes heavily involved in political and economical situations. Important for the discussion are the titles or epithets of kings in the ANE. Those titles and epithets display well refined political and religious ideologies about kingship.

The royal ideology of the ANE is an essential part of the organization and the dynamics of the whole ANE social system (Whitelam 1992:40-48), since a kingdom is destined to have a king (see Kempt 1983:19). The primary focus of the royal ideology is to promulgate the kingship as the centre of the

whole society. Ostensibly the kingship would provide the apex point to combine all the social organization and dynamics. In Sumer temples were the fundamental social organizations as the "gods' households." However, once established as a strong political kingdom in Mesopotamia, the palace took over the socio-political hegemony from the temples (see Leick 2003:75-82). Thus, particularly the royal ideology provides a religious, social, and political foundation for the kingship to justify and to legitimatise the king's rule over his potential political enemies, as well as, against social threats (cf Pollock 1999:173; Whitelam 1989:121).

In the ANE, religion served as fundamental for forming the royal ideology (cf Postgate 1992:260). A religion and the kingship were indispensable in the ANE. No kingship had been sustained without the support of its religion. However, the relationship between the kingship and the religion tended to be flexible or even contestable, since each institution was dissimilar (cf Whitelam 1992:40-48; Chaney 1986). Titles and epithets of the kings evince the specific case of the religious aspects in the royal ideology. Generally in the ANE, all the kings had multiple titles or epithets that depicted an essential mode and the nature of the kingship in the ANE. Therefore, the titles and epithets will be the focus of the section.

## 2.1    Egypt

The divine nature of the gods would provide the most conspicuous concept of the king in the ancient Egypt (Rice 2003b; Smith 1997:83; Hornung 1990:283; Liverani 1990:125-38; Montet 1964:32-34; see also Baines 1998:23-24). Egyptians, above all, saw the king as a being to be worshipped. Concurrently, they also had the concept that the king represented them as priest before the gods in the cults (Morkot 2005:152; Hornung 1990:283). The idea of the deification of the king revealed that the king is either a god among gods or the priest of priests.

The dualistic idea of the king possibly denotes part of the typical worldview of the Egyptians. Rice (2003:95) noted that the two natures could not be separated in the king, since "for the one there was always the other, in king, gods, nature and the ways of men". The dualistic concept is well represented in the Middle and the New kingdom in Egypt, that the king was the only one on the earth to enforce the divine cosmological order (Smith 1997:83; Liverani 1990:125-38).

The king was appointed by the sun god to sustain *ma'at*, (order, harmony, rightness) against the threats of *isfet* ("disorder, chaos, evil") (Smith 1997:83; Assmann 1990:174-236). The Egyptians considered the traditional foreign enemies of Egypt to be the most dangerous force threatening *ma'at*

(Smith 1997:83; Ritner 1993:115). The king was thought to be the only authority to defeat the enemies and to keep their divinely order. The king represented himself as the base of order, harmony, and rightness (Atwell 2004:16-17). He was seen as a mighty warrior. The Egyptian report about the victory of Ramses III (1194-1163 BCE; see also Matthews & Benjamin 2006:151) against the Sea peoples is an example of the Near Eastern royal ideology of the complete annihilation of enemies.

> I extended all the frontiers of Egypt and overthrew those who attacked them from their lands. I slew the Denyen in their island, while the Tjeker and the Philistines were made ashes. The Sherden and the Weshesh of the Sea were made nonexistent, captured all together and brought in captivity to Egypt like the sands of the shore. I settled them in strongholds, bound in my name. Their military classes were as numerous as hundred-thousands. I assigned portions for them all with clothing and provisions from the treasuries and granaries every year.

(Wilson 1958:262)

In the report, the expressions for total destruction are recognizable, such as *made ashes*, *made nonexistent*, and *like the sands of the shore*. The expressions are surely metaphorical rather than historical in recording events of the past. Ramses III was boosted and glorified in the report as the perfect victor against his enemies. The report functioned to solidify the military leadership of Ramses III that ostensibly played an essential role in the kingship of ancient Egypt. His total victory of the enemies and the total destruction of the enemies secured his kingship; that is the main intention of the Egyptian royal ideology (Ahlström 1993:296-298). The royal victory idealised the king as the mighty warrior, who preserved the divine order by destroying the enemies.

The dualistic nature of the king already appeared in the idealizing of the king at his birth. Since the fourth Dynasty, or occasionally in the Twelfth and Eighteenth Dynasties, the divine name Re or Amun were connected to the names of the kings (Hornung 1990:284). The kings were also regarded "*neter nefer*, the perfect god" and "*neter aa*, the great god" for some periods (Montet 1964:32). The epithets signify that the kings are an "exceptional being[s]", (Montet, 1964:32) deified from birth to death. The concept of the divine birth appeared specifically during the Old Kingdom (Montet 1964:34).

As a result of the deification of the king, his death was seen as entering eternity. His tomb was idealised as "a house for eternity", with furniture and commodities for eternal life (David 1986:22). The pyramids are the best

examples of the belief in divinely death (Rice 2003:172-188; David 1986:22-23). The pyramids symbolized the legitimacy of the kingship and the kingdom (Rice 2003:72; cf David 1986:23). The divinized king through his death became a divine being, a god to his successor and the kingdom. Therefore the successor king and his subjects performed the funerary cult. The funerary cult turned into the most significant religious practice during the Old Kingdom (Shirai 2005:149). In turn, the royal funerary cults served to keep the social and economic stability in the kingdom (Shirai 2005:149-159; Malek 2000:105-108; Kemp 1983:85-96). They provided the cohesion among certain upper class groups (Shirai 2005:159). An example of the concept of the king's eternity comes from Sinuhe R, 6-12:

> The god was lifted up into heaven and there united with the solar disc; the divine body was assimilated into that which had created it. The court was plunged in silence and hearts were sad; the great double remained closed; the courtiers bowed their heads and the Patu lamented.

> (Montet 1964:38)

As seen in Sinuhe R, 6-12, the return of the king to heaven is innate, since he came from heaven. In the traditional and official myth only the king represents the gods and is god himself.

The public deification of the king was ritualised at his coronation ceremony. At the coronation ritual, five titles propagated the deification of the king (Hornung 1997:284). They symbolised the essential characteristics of the royal ideology. The royal titles were: Horus, Two Ladies, Golden Horus, Dual King, and Son of Re (Baines 1998:20). The meaning of the five royal titles is explained by the titles of Shoshenq I:

> Horus: Mighty Bull, Beloved of Re, whom he caused to appear in order to unite the Two Lands; Two Ladies: Who Appears with the Double Crown like Horus Son of Isis, who propitiated the gods with *ma'at* (order); Golden Horus: Powerful of Strength, who smites the Nine Bows, great of victories in all lands; Dual King, Lord of the Two Lands, possessor of strength of arm: Hedjkheperre-satepnare (= The White One of the coming into being of Re, whom Re chose); Son of Re, of his body: Shoshenq, beloved of Amun.

> (Baines 1998:20)

The nature of the king was described in the titles. As the incarnated god, he appeared to unite the Two Lands, signifying the Egyptian beliefs, the dualistic order of Universe (Rice 2003:95). The king was the only one who united "a

whole only in combination" (Hornung 1997:285). The dualistic idea possibly came from prehistoric times as seen in the incarnated Horus, the traditional god, the "falcon-shaped sky god."

Baines (1998:19) explained the titles as follows:

> Horus: the king as a specific manifestation of the principal deity of early times; Two Ladies: manifestation of, and protected by, the tutelary goddesses of the two halves of the country; Golden Horus: meaning uncertain, in late times related to Horus defeating his enemy Seth; Dual King (*nyswt byty*) the "throne name" and first cartouche name adopted at ascension, expressing the king's relation with the sun god Re; Son of Re: second cartouche name, which is the incumbent's birth name, placed after a title that expresses the king's dependence on and tutelage by the sun god; in two periods followed by the 'dynastic' name Ramesses or Ptolemy.

The titles shed a light on understanding the identity of the king and his relationship with his deity.

According to Baines (1998:24), the titles are the result of a complicated and rhetorical process of accumulation. Baines (1998:23) pointed out that "In themselves, titularies do not say much about relations between the king and his subjects, a reticence that is characteristic of core Egyptian ideology, in which humanity plays rather little part." Baines (1998:24) concluded that titles themselves cannot guarantee the identity of the Egyptian kings as gods with a special existence, and who are different from other people. Baines conceives of a rhetorical connotation of the titles, rather than historical facts.

But the titles do have religious significance to signify the special relation between the king and his god. For instance, Amenophis IV (from 1378 to 1352 BCE) later changed his name to Akhenaten (Agreeable to Aten) as the result of his religious reforms (cf Redford 1984). It kept his coronation name, Neferkheperura (The transformations of Ra are perfect) with the epithet *wa-n-ra* (unique one of Ra') but changed his title, his Horus name from 'Mighty bull, tall of feathers' to "Mighty bull beloved of the Aten", and his Two Ladies name from "He who uplifts his diadems in Southern Heliopois" to "He who uplifts the name of the Aten" (Grimal 1992:228). At the ascension of a king there were many officials and people involved in the ritual acted as a sacral drama (Rice 2003:96-100). Those titles ostensibly uncover the religious significance of the king as well as his duties and responsibilities. The king is the universal conqueror, subduer of foreign lands, the creator of laws, the bringer of peace

and prosperity, the Temple builder, and the divine being (Morkot 2005:154-155).

The royal ideology included royal knowledge. The king is the exceptional being who knows the divines, since he is a god himself as well as the priest of the gods. Knowing the gods is the privilege of the king alone. Thus, king signifies that he is the only earthly figure who had knowledge of the divines.

In analogy, the elite group in the Egyptian society would idealise the king, since they could control knowledge in general (Rice 2003:72). Morkot (2005:151, 165) suggested that the constraints of literacy and schooling are most critical factors for the elite group. The king is the head of the elite group. He had divine knowledge that caused him to know eveything. Morkot (2005:155) summarised it: "Egyptian elite society was about the control of knowledge. To know is to be able to control, and the pharaoh's divine power was based upon his knowledge of the gods, their secret names and their actions." An example comes from the *Treaties on the King as Sun-Priest*: He [the king] knows their [the gods] appearance and incarnations; He knows the place where they stand; He knows the words spoken by [*god* X]; He knows how Ra is born and his metamorphoses in the flood, etcetera (Morkot 2005:155).

The king has the prime access to the gods to acquire the divine knowledge about the gods and earthly matters with its divine origin. The king is distinguished as the priest who regularly goes to the divines.

The king in Egypt is the absolute being who could bring well-being to the people by conquering chaos, especially the enemies, by combining social circumstances for order, by bringing unity in the society, and by conveying divine knowledge to govern society perfectly.

## 2.2     Mesopotamia

The royal ideology in Mesopotamia saw the king rather as representative of the divine order on earth, especially in most of the later times. The focus of the royal ideology promulgated a divinely sanctioned kingship (Leick 2003:80; Pollock 1999:191; Van de Mieroop 1997:119-120). In idealising the kingship the temples, at certain times, functioned as the major institutions (Van de Mieroop 1997:120). The royal ideology shifted from its religious-economic purpose to a political-economic one. Political power in Mesopotamia was a complex nature (Postgate 1992:260). The aim of the royal ideology shifted from time to time. For instance, there were in Sumer diverse terms applied to rulers, such as *ensi(ak)*, *en* in Uruk, *sanga* in Umma, *Isin*, and *lugal*. Lambert (1998:56) suggested the meanings of the names of the city ruler's position as

follows: *nam-šita*, literally, "lord of the mace"; *ensi*, meaning "lord of the *si*"; *en*, meaning either "lord" or "high priest"; *lugal*, meaning literally, "big man*"*.

The ruler had the authority in his city, with its patron god, temple, and its economic properties such as land, flocks, herds, and buildings. Sumer, as a city-state, had its own temple(s) for its god. At that time the basic responsibility of the city ruler was to keep its gods' properties (Lambert 1998:55). The ruler had three fundamental roles as the agent of the gods: He was the political leader, as high priest he was the cultic leader, and as warrior he was the military leader. Although there are debates on the meaning of *en*, it is generally agreed that it denotes a high priest (Lamber 1998:55). Other titles appeared to emphasize the king's expansionistic policies, such as "the strong king" (meaning the legitimate king); "the legitimate king" (in reality, a usurper), and "the king of the four corners (of heaven and earth)*"* (Nemet-Nejat 2002:217).

Another concept of the kingship refers to wealth and protection. Sargon, the first Semitic king, brought about revolutionary concept of the kingship with the building of his capitol Akkad. The precise date of the reign of Sargon and Naram-Sin is still in debate. According to Millard (2002:104), two possible dates are generally proposed: Sargon's reign at 2340-2284 BCE and Naram-Sin at 2260-2223 BCE, but he suggested that later dates for Sargon at 2296-2240 and Naram-Sin at 2213-2176 BCE are preferable. Nevertheless, Sargon's construction of the capitol caused a social and economic upheaval in Mesopotamia, since the palace economy and standing army accompanied the building of the capitol. As a result, the change of the social system affected the relationship between the kingship and the temples, since, until then, the hegemony of religion and economy belonged to the temples. The appearance of a central governed kingship changed the basic social-economic system. The building of the capitol symbolized the beginning of the gradual take over of the hegemony from the temples, which was a complicated process (Crawford 2004:21; cf Van de Mieroop 1997:120). In particular, it is possible to perceive the idea of "might and power" from Sargon's titles *lugal* and *šarru* during the Akkadian interlude.

In Mesopotamia the term "shepherd" demonstrates the basic role of the king (Lambert 1998:57; Van de Mieroop 1997:119). It is a metaphoric description to denote the fundamental role of the king to bring wealth, based on agriculture, and protection from the enemies. The Mesopotamians believed that wealth and protection come from the gods through the divine sanction of the kingship (cf Lambert 1998:55). See for example the divinely sanctioned kingship in the following quotation:

> In former days, in far-off years when
> [The heavens] were grieved and the earth groaned at evening time,
> the gods …
> To mankind, they became appeased and granted them abundance
> …
> To guide the land and establish the peoples they appointed a king.
> [.] … To rule the black-headed, the many peoples.
>
> (The Tamarisk and the Palmtree, lines 1-5, Lambert 1960:155)

It was the conviction that the kingship proved that the gods of the specific king was the most powerful and successful god or goddess politically and economically (Pollock 1999:191).

Sometimes the kingship demonstrated the contrastive context of power. The different performances of power, according to Leick (2003:79-80), showed in the founders of new dynasties. For instance, Hammurabi, an Amorite king, was a chieftain who handled all political and social factors in the state, even trivia (see Van de Mieroop 1997:119; Gadd 1973:184-7). The authority of the king was adversely affected by unfortunate political and economical situations. On the other hand, the kingship of Nebuchadnezzar II denoted his absolute sovereignty over the kingdom. The kingship is the main factor in controlling prosperity in economics, and order in politics.

The royal family line played an important role in the royal ideology in Mesopotamia. The heredity of the noble family line can be seen in Summerian lineage of Nebuchadnezzar I (1123-1103 BCE): "Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, who supervises all cult centres, and confirms the offerings, distant scion of kingship, seed preserved from before the flood, offspring of Enmeduranki, king of Sippar …." (Lambert 1998:62; 1974:432, 435)

In the Sumerian list of kings, Nebuchadnezzar I stressed his noble ancestral line which went back to ancient times (Lambert 1998:62; 1974:432, 435; Foster 1995:197). Although the idea did not appear consistently throughout the whole era of Babylon, it was alive until the Late Babylonian dynasty (626-539 BCE). Laato (1997:244-269) pointed out five themes from Assyrian Babylonian inscriptions: Genealogy, legitimation of the king, the dedication of a building project, a prayer of the king or an expression of hope, and blessings and curses. He argued that the idea of an eternal hereditary dynasty is even presupposed in later Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions. The concept was well known in Assyria (Lambert 1998:66-69). The noble lineage was one of the essential constitutions to legitimise kingship in Mesopotamia (Nemet-Nejat 2002:218).

Although there are certain inconsistent trends in the kingship of Mesopotamia, its royal ideology played a major role to legitimise the kingship

as representative of the divine order in economic and political matters. Only divinely sanctioned kingship could bring wealth and protection to the kingdom and its people. The "Legend of Naram-Sin" is a good example of the devastating of the land and the army of Naram-Sin who failed to listen to unfavorable omens. Initially Naram-Sin was a successful warrior king. In the end he turned out to be a hapless monarch (Foster 1995:171). Finally, the idea of an eternal hereditary dynasty came into the divinely sanctioned kingship.

## 2.3    Canaan

An essential idea of the royal ideology in Canaan is given from Ugarit. It showed a close relationship between kingship and priesthood (Day 1998:74-75). The idea of priestly kingship is well attested in various sources (KAI 13. 1, 2; KTU 1.14). One of the best examples is the story of Keret (KTU 1.14). The focus of the story is to emphasise the special relationship between the ancestor of the ruling king and the patron god El of Ugarit during the Late Bronze Age (Wyatt 2002:177; Merrill 1968:5-17). Although the literary genre of the story is in debatable, whether it is myth, legend, epic, poem or story, the text relates to the earthly king, Keret of Khabur on the River of Khabur (Wyatt 2002:177; cf Hadley 2000:41). The translation of KTU 1.14 is as follows:

> The loss of Keret's family is described; the king goes to bed weeping. El appears to him in a vision, offering him wealth … Keret protests that it is sons that he wants, not wealth. He is told to offer sacrifice, then muster his army to march against … King Pabil of Udum, who will try to buy him off, but whose daughter Hurriy he must demand in marriage, Keret awakes from sleep, offers … sacrifices as instructed, musters a vast army, and sets off for Udum. On the way he comes to a sanctuary of Athirat, and vows that if his enterprise is successful, he will offer the goddess twice his bride's weight in silver, and three times in gold. The army travels on and arrives at Udum. The city is besieged. After a week Pabil sues for peace, offering Keret wealth. His embassy arrives. Keret rejects wealth, and demands Hurriy in marriage. The embassy returns…

> (Wyatt 2002:178)

Keret is in deep despair of losing his family. In a vision El appears as a comforter to promise wealth, and demands a sacrifice from him. Keret, however, wishes to restore his family with sons through marriage to Hurriy rather than acquire wealth. Keret fulfils the command of El and succeeded to marry Hurriy. The story suggests that El communicated directly with Keret but

wanted a sacrifice from him, a task that belongs to a priest. In the text, the relationship between kingship and priesthood is highlighted as the privilege of the king in Ugarit.

In Ugarit the concept of the king as a son of god and god himself is part of the royal ideology. In the Ugaritic king list (KTU 1.104) the divine determinative *'il* is seen before each deceased king's name. Thus, a critical question arises, why is the divine determinative used only for a deceased king? Does the determinative mean that it only indicates deceased kings? Or, is there any special meaning to the divination of ancestor kings in Ugarit? Generally two opinions are proposed: either divine denomination or a technical term to connote a dead king.

Schmidt (1994:19, 67-71) contended that the marker is simply denoting the godly custodian of the king. Likewise Lewis (1989:47-52) said that the divine determinative did not guarantee the divination of the deceased kings. It is better to understand it as an expression to honour kings upon death, just as during their life time. He argued that there is no evidence of raising the deceased kings to the divine level in the cult of El or Baal. On the other hand, Day (1998:82) alleged that the king was both a god, and the son of the god El. He contended that *'il* connoted a god. Day (1998:82) argued that the king in Ugarit was deified, not only upon his death, but also in his life time (cf Healey 1984:245-54). His evidence comes from KTU[2] 1.16.I.10-23:

> Is then Keret the son of El, the progeny of La**t**(dot under t)ipan and the Holy One? … We rejoice in your life, our father, we exulted (in) your immortality … Shall you then die, father, as men … How can it be said (that) Keret is the son of El, the progeny of La**t**ipan and the Holy One? Subsequently, Keret's daughter, Thitmanat, laments her father in largely identical words.

Yassib glorified his father, although the expression is rather rhetoric than historical. He aims to take over the kingship from his father. Yassib saw that his sick father was incapable of obliging the kingship (cf Hadley 2000:41). The idea of the deification of the living king in Ugarit should be treated with caution, although the deification of the deceased kings in Ugarit has a strong indication (Pardee 1988:168-169). Wyatt (2002:399) said that the literary context of the story of Keret is divine kingship, thus at least the determinative signifies divinised kings.

The royal ideology of Ugarit can be seen in the obligation of the kings as it appears in the story of Keret. As Yassib appealed to his father Keret, he reminded Keret of what he failed to accomplish as king, a well meaning and righteousness for the poor and the weak (Day 1998:86):

> While bandits raid you turn (your) back,
> And you entertain feuding rivals.
> You have been brought down by your failing power.
> You do not judge the cause of the importunate.
> You do not banish the extortioners of the poor,
> You do not feed the orphan before your face
> (nor) the widow behind your back.

<div align="center">(KTU$^2$1.16.VI.43-50; cf 1.16.VI.30-34)</div>

Inefficiency in providing righteousness and well-being for the people was the most compelling charge against the kingship because in the Canaanite context the king was the symbol of righteousness and well-being to the peoples.

In short, the story of Keret characterises certain aspects of the kingship of Canaan, first of all, in the idealised relationship between the king and the god in terms of a priestly king. Second, he was a son of god as well as god himself. Last, the king stood as an accomplisher of well-being and righteousness for the people.

## 2.4    Royal ideology of ancient Israel in the context of the ANE

Several ideas about the kingship of the ANE shed light on the understanding of the kingship in Israel. The religious aspect of the royal ideology upholds the divine origin of the kingship. Specifically, the concept of the king as a deified god and the son of the god are attested in Egypt, Canaan and Mesopotamia. In Egypt and Canaan, the king was deified in his lifetime and after his death. In Mesopotamia, the king was the representative of the gods to fulfil the divine order. In Israel, according to Psalm 2:7, the king was regarded as the son of God "You are my son, today I have begotten you."[2] The context of the psalm implies that the king is the adopted son of God and not his naturally born son. The concept of the "son of God" by adoption departs from the Egyptian and Canaanite concept. Day (1998:82) argued that the concept of the son of God by adoption originated from the Canaanites. But he disregarded the context of the idea in the monarchy of Israel. Zenger (2005:204-205) understood that the idea of adoption in Psalm 2 is one of examples of "Egyptian (and Canaanite) models." Thus, the concept of the "son of God" by adoption is seemingly invented by the Israelites and not from the context of the ANE (Moenikes 1999:619-21). It is generally and scholarly agreed that the setting of Ps 2 is the monarchic period (Craigie 2004:64). Some placed the date of the psalm in the reign of Manasseh (Terrien 2003:87). This designation shows that

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[2] Unless specified, all the English translation comes from NRS.

Yahwism may have been established as the national religion as the concept of the son of god was designated to indicate the adopted son of God in ancient Israel. The idea of the "son of God" in the ANE is syncretistic. Although Israel used a term from Egypt and Canaan, she employed it metaphorically that it denotes the divine choice of the king (Polish 1989:11). Specifically it highlights the Davidic kingship.

As far as the responsibilities of the king are concerned, in the ANE he must guarantee the well-being of his people, their wealth and protection. He could bring divine order as implied in the titles of the Egyptian king such as "Two Ladies", "Golden Horus", and "Dual King". The Mesopotamian king also represented the gods to provide wealth and protection to the people as their shepherd. The Canaanite Keret was charged as a failed king to bring righteousness and well-being. In Israel the Davidic kings are described with the metaphor of a shepherd to propagate the legitimacy of their kingship (2 Sm 5:2; cf Ps 23). The legitimacy of the Davidic kingship is pinpointed in Psalm 72 where the king appears as one who brings righteousness (1 Ki 10:9; Jr 22:3; see also Walton 2006:283) and peace. Zenger (2005:205) contended that Ps 72 reveals "this "mixture" of Egyptian and ancient Near Eastern royal ideology and its "actualization" through the integration of Neo-Assyrian concepts of the king." It is also true that most of the concepts of kingship of Israel show similarities with regard to those of the ANE (Walton 2006:284).

In the ANE the king was the representative of the god as his priest. In Mesopotamia the king was *ensi*, the priest. In Canaan, various sources evince the idea as attested in KAI, 13.1,2. A similar idea is founded in Israel. The so-called Royal Psalms describe the earthly king and kingship (Ps 2; 18; 20; 21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; 144:1-11; see also Mettinger 1976:100). A general theme of these psalms is the king as a warrior and leader of the people. Psalm 110 implies a close relationship between kingship and priesthood (Grabbe 1995:26-27, see Emerton [1990:45-71] and Day [1998:72-90], as against Rowley [1967:485] and Gammie [1971:365-96]). Serious challenges against the priestly kingship came from the issue of the identity of Salem that was challenged as a Canaanite city, called Salem rather than the Jebusite city, Jerusalem. Further, the challenges also contended that the recipient was the Zadokite priest, not the Davidic king. Day (1988:73-74), however, strongly refuted the opinion, believing the contention can not be sustained in that the focus of the psalm is of a king rather than a priest. In Psalm 76:2 the city, Salem, indicated Jerusalem. Day believed that the royal ideology in connection with the Canaanite Melchizedek appeared after David's conquered Jerusalem. In the psalm, the Davidic king refers to Melchizedek, the priestly king of El-Elyon (Gn 14:18). The Davidic king is designated in the Temple. If

the psalm is attributed to David, he is the symbol of the ideal kingship in Israel that unites the priesthood of Yahweh with the kingship. Indications can be seen in 1 Samuel 13:9-10 (Saul); 2 Samuel 6:13, 17-18, 24:25 (David); 1 Kings 3:4, 15 (Solomon) and 1 Kings 12:33 (Jeroboam). Thus, as seen in Psalm 110, the kingship of Israel does not only function in the political sphere but also in the cultic sphere. However, there is a difference between the close relationship of the kingship and the priesthood in Israel, and that relationship in the ANE. The prime purpose of the royal ideology in the ANE was to promulgate the divine origin of the kingship as a deified king or god himself or as the only representative of the gods.

In Israel there is a different understanding of the royal ideology distinct from the ANE. McKenzie (1966:175) contended that David is idealised as "the type of king-messiah": the charismatic leader powered by the "spirit of God". The essential issue of the royal ideology about the origin of the kingship in Israel is whether a king is a charismatic leader divinely empowered to fulfil the will of God against the enemies. In the royal ideology, Israel did not understand their king as the only one who kept order by defeating their enemies. Unlike the Egyptian idea that their traditional enemies were dangerous powers that intimidated the order in Egypt, Israel saw Yahweh as the One who kept order and defeated their enemies (Ex 15; cf Maré 2006:712-722). The king was only the agent of Yahweh, empowered by his Spirit. Yahweh even used a foreign king as his tool to restore his order amongst the nations, as seen in Isaiah 45:1: "Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped to subdue nations before him and strip kings of their robes, to open doors before him – and the gates shall not be closed."

The focal point of the royal ideology in Israel was not on the king but on Yahweh. The king of Israel was a chosen son of God as he knew to keep the will of God. The king of Israel only executed the divine will as he was empowered by the "spirit of Yahweh" (cf Edelman 1991:34). Therefore the king should know what the divine will is, and needs divine sanction for its execution on matters (Edelman 1991:34; see 1 Sm 28:6; 30:8; 2 Sm 5:23-24). As seen in the story of David, the critical factor that established his kingship is his knowledge of the will of God through the prophets (cf 1 Chr 29:29), Samuel (cf 1 Sm 16:13; 19:18-24), Gad (1 Sm 22:5; 2 Sm 24:11; cf 1 Chr 21:9), and Nathan (2 Sm 7:4; 12:1; cf 1 Chr 17:3). His knowledge of God's will is promulgated as the royal knowledge against the Saulide kingship, mainly in 1 Samuel 13-2 Samuel 1 (cf Lasine 2001:79-82).

Many scholars discussed the ideology in 1 Samuel 8-12 in the context of the Davidic ideology (McCarter 1980a: 489-504; cf Edelman 2000:67-84;

Frick 1994:79-92; Liverani 1992:474-77; Ishida 1977:54). One of strong contentions comes from Ishida (1977:54). He argued that initially Samuel was positive and endorsed Saul's kingship, since he hoped to reestablish his authority through the kingship. Samuel's insistence faded on account of the request of the people and the elders for a strong monarchy. The request of the people meant that the political leadership usurped the religious authority of Samuel (Ishida 1977:39). Ishida argued that a strong political motivation played a critical role in the appearance of the monarchy. The political motivation also symbolises the departure from the old religious system towards politics in Israel. Thus, the new monarchy brought a new religious system in Israel. To Samuel, according to Ishida, the request of the people and the elders signified idolatry (Ahlström 1993:371-390). A different perspective on the biblical text comes from Coote (2006:37). To him, the DH is royal literature that displays the royal sovereignty over states that intentionally propagated a certain social organization. The idea of the twelve tribes reveals the role of social organization under the state sovereignty. Coote (2006:40-47) proposed twelve characteristics of the tribes:

- tribal structures and identities are fluid;
- kinship levels ... also tend to be elastic;
- the ambiguity of kinship levels relates directly to the blurring of the boundaries of kinship functions;
- though territoriality might well be a reflex of endogamy, it is not intrinsic to kinship as a political metaphor;
- tribal organization and identity tend to be more sharply defined in the higher levels of organization;
- tribal organization took shape not only in relation to other tribes, but also, and especially, in relation to regional powers or states;
- tribal designations and relations took shape in the interface of tribe and monarchic court;
- ethnicity does not automatically relate to tribalism in the modern period and there is no reason to think it did in antiquity;
- politics explains descent sooner than descent politics;
- tribalism has no necessary connection with pastoralism or pastoral nomadism;
- evolutionary views of social development have no place in the description of social change in Palestine from the thirteenth to the fifth centuries BCE;
- to adopt an instrumentalist approach to Israelite tribalism is not to deny the social reality of tribes.

## 3.    *MELEK* AND *NAGID*

The intricate interplay in the use of *melek* and *nagid* has been noticed in the context of 1 Samuel 8-12. In 1 Samuel 8:5 the elders requested a king (מלך) and the Lord commanded Samuel to appoint a king (מלך) on their demand (1 Sm 8:22). As a result, Samuel chose Saul as king over Israel by casting the lot (1 Sm 10:20-24). The people acclaimed Saul as the king (המלך) (1 Sm 10:24). They confirmed Saul as the king who governs them (וימלכו) after defeating Nahash, the Ammonite, under his leadership (1 Sm 11:15). The role of *melek,* as seen above, is that it indicated him as the one to rule the people and to protect them.

The term *nagid* appears mainly in the prophetic tradition of Saul (1 Sm 9:1-10:16). In 1 Samuel 9:16 the Lord commanded Samuel to anoint a man from the land of Benjamin as *nagid*. In 1 Samuel 10:1 Samuel anointed Saul as *nagid*. Within the tradition, the use of *nagid* is distinguished from *melek*. The major purpose of the tradition is to provide divine legitimacy for Saul's leadership which turned into kingship (cf 1 Sm 11:15). What then is the specific role of *nagid* in terms of the kingship? (cf Ishida 1977:50. n.127). A remarkable example comes from 2 Samuel 5:1-2: "For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The LORD said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler (*nagid*) over Israel."

The biblical passage tells that all the tribes of Israel confessed the divine legitimacy of David's leadership over Israel. Their acknowledgment was emphasized by the terms shepherd and *nagid* (cf also 1 Chr 11:2). What was their intention to call David their shepherd and *nagid*, since he had already been anointed as king of Judah in 2 Samuel 2:4?

David's acknowledgment by the people of Israel (2 Sm 5:2) emphasised his superseding role over Saul. The emphasis is that, while Saul was king, David played an authentic role as king over the people. Thus, the term shepherd and *nagid* were used identical with *melek* (cf Ezk 34:2).

In acknowledging the role of shepherd and *nagid* in terms of *melek*, it is legitimate to see the representation of David the shepherd as a rhetorical device as well (1 Sm 16:11; 17:34). In fact, David was anointed by Samuel while he was still a shepherd (1 Sm 16:11-13). What the people needed from David as shepherd-king was protection and well-being. By having no king Israel is deserted, without a shepherd to protect and take care of them. Van Hecke (2005:200-217) contended from comparative studies of Egyptian and Mesopotamian literature that the metaphor of shepherd is mainly to emphasise the responsibility of a king to protect and take care of his people

as well as to take care of a Temple. The implication of the metaphor to legitimate the supremacy over his people is less convincing. Conclusively, he said that "If personal or socio-political crises occurred, the pastoral metaphor was questioned and reversed, resulting in novel and, at times, iconoclastic metaphorical expressions" (Van Hecke 2005:217). Israel formally requested the protection of David. When the people of Israel endorsed David as their shepherd (cf Ezk 34:23) and *nagid*, all the elders of Israel made a covenant with David, anointing him as king of Israel.

The metaphor of the people as the flock, pastured by a shepherd and ruled by a *nagid,* is similarly used for the relationship between Israel and Yahweh (Ps 80:1; Mi 7:14; Ezk 34:12). For instance, in Psalm 23:1 the psalmist confessed his sufficiency because of Yahweh's pasturing of him. "The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want."

The striking point of his confession referred to his commitment to the house of Yahweh in Psalm 23:6. The psalmist overtly connected the metaphor of the shepherd with the Temple of Jerusalem.

The prophets of Israel clarified that pasturing was a commission of Yahweh to the kings of Israel (cf Ezk 34:2; Zch 11:16-17). Particularly, in Ezekiel 34:8 the shepherd is depicted as the representative of Yahweh, since Israel is the sheep of Yahweh:

> As I live, says the Lord GOD, because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild animals, since there was no shepherd; and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep.

The understanding that shepherd signified the agent of Yahweh can be seen in Isaiah 44:28. Yahweh called Cyrus, king of Persia, to be his shepherd: "Yahweh who says of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and he shall carry out all my purpose; and who says of Jerusalem, it shall be rebuilt, and of the Temple, Your foundation shall be laid."

The passage indicated the close connection between the shepherd and his religious duty. Cyrus, as king of Persia, was appointed as the shepherd of Yahweh to rebuild His Temple in Jerusalem. The designation of the shepherd of Yahweh points to his royal role rather than to his royal title (Goldingay 2005:259).

As discussed above, it can be surmised that the term shepherd referred to religious commitment, with Yahweh pasturing the people of Israel. In this context, the role of *nagid* could be understood as the one who is anointed to protect and to take care of the people of Yahweh. His commission

as a leader emphasized his role as the representative of Yahweh to the people.

## 4.     CONCLUSION

This discussion clarified the use of *nagid* in the establishment of the kingship of Israel was also associated with religion as a common ideological factor together with the royal ideology as understood in the ANE (cf Ahlström 1993:430). In a similar manner, Flanagan (1981:66) also contended that the period of Saul and David was a chiefdom characterized by religious roles: "As we would expect in chiefdoms, the religious functions mentioned in the biblical narratives also indicate that Saul's and David's reigns were theocracies. Both individuals were anointed by Samuel; both performed cultic rites; both used priests and prophets. In short, religion was used by both [Saul, David] to legitimate their authority and to help maintain social control." In social scientific terms, the initial stage of Saul's leadership was closer to the chieftaincy (cf Miller & Hayes 2006:135-136; Hackett 1998:200-201; Matthews & Moyer 1997:97), since Israel consisted of loosely connected self governed tribes. The social transformation from a tribal league to a monarchy cannot be understood in terms of the single exterior factor, namely the Philistines. The kingship originated from a complex of various social and political circumstances (Meyers 1998:225; Frick 1986:18-19). The dynamic behind the multiple social factors was religion, as confirmed by the royal ideology of the ANE with its emphasis on divine sanction for kings.

In analogy *nagid* is synonymous to *melek*. However, the original connotation of *nagid* was different from *melek* (see Ishida 1999:58, n 9). Murray (1998) provocatively contended the different political orientations of *nagid* and *melek*. Murray (1998:247-280) particularly examined the case of David as *melek* (king) and *nagid* (leader). He contended that David pursued to be *melek,* not *nagid* that Yahweh originally intended for him to be. Murray (1998:304-305) suggested that *melek* was a politically centred term, whereas *nagid* was a religious centred one.

It was used to idealise the leadership as divinely sanctioned, particularly in the tradition of Saul (1 Sm 9:1-10:16; cf 1 Sm 11:1-11). As in royal titles of the ANE, it is probable to conjecture that *nagid* idealised the leadership of a king in its royal ideology. Analogously the term implicated that *nagid* in Israel was the political representative of Yahweh, supported by a prophetic group (1 Sm 10:1, 5-7). Thus, the term designated the combination of the political and religious ideologies in kingship. However, conjecturally once the term had won the recognition of divine sanction for the leadership of Saul as well as of David, its connotation began to give way to *melek* during

the reign of Solomon, particularly after the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Temple itself provided the divine sanction of the Davidic monarch as protector and keeper of the people. It is noticeable that most of the uses of *nagid* as a political and a religious leader come from Chronicles whose author/editor supported the reform of Josiah (2 Chr 34:1-33). The observation opens a probable conjecture that the term, *nagid,* in terms of royal ideology in the ANE, was forsaken unnecessary after the centralisation of the Temple in the reform of Josiah (2 Ki 23). Later it began to indicate any religious and political leader who served a king. Social-politically the meaning of *nagid* was closer to that of a chieftain (Miller & Hayes 2006:135-136; Liverani 2005:88-89; Flanagan 1981:65-67), but religio-politically it was strongly connected with the king who was divinely sanctioned (Ahlström 1993:430), particularly by the spirit of Yahweh. In summary, in the light of the ancient Near East, an intention of the term *nagid* was to emphasise a religious legitimacy of the kingship, particularly in the building of the kingship while *melek* was a general term for a king in the Deuteronomistic History.

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