

But Everyone Else Has a King!

The people of Israel were ruled by judges for many years. The prophet¹ Samuel led Israel until he was old, and then he appointed his sons to judge Israel. But Samuel's sons were dishonest judges and poor leaders.



1 Samuel 8:4-9

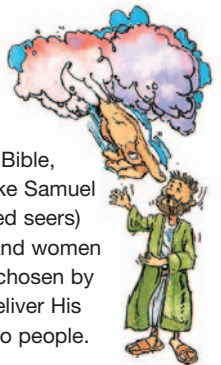
So all the elders of Israel gathered together and

came to Samuel at Ramah. They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the LORD. And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until

this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you.

Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."



¹In the Bible, prophets like Samuel (also called seers) were men and women who were chosen by God to deliver His message to people.

Why did the people want a king? Why did asking for a king displease God? What would you have done in Samuel's place?

Samuel went back to the people to tell them what God had said.

Read 1 Samuel 8:11-18. What warning did Samuel give the people about having a king? Read verse 20. Why did the Israelites want to be like the other nations?

The people refused to listen to

Whaddya think? Am I king material or what?



Samuel. When Samuel told God, God told Samuel to anoint² a king. God chose Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, to be Israel's first king.

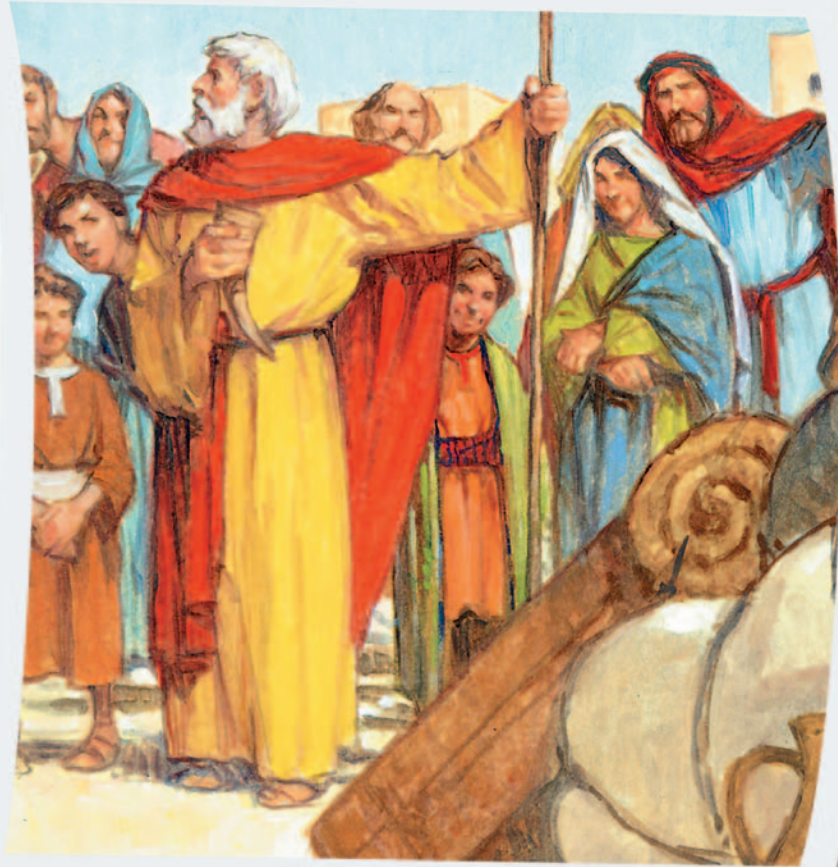
Saul was an impressive-looking man.³ Samuel anointed Saul and then again warned the people about having a king.

Read 1 Samuel 10:17-24. Why did God remind the people of the exodus from Egypt? Why do you think Saul hid? What was people's reaction to Saul when they saw him?

Samuel explained to the people the rules for the king to follow. That way both the new king and all the people would understand them. He wrote the rules down and kept the laws at the tabernacle.



²Anointing someone with oil was a sign of being dedicated to God. In everyday life, a host would anoint guests with scented oil or perfume. The word *Messiah* means "anointed one."



Think about Israel's history. In what other ways had Israel tried to be like its neighbors? Think about some times when you did things to be like everyone else. Has that led to doing things God's way? Is it always wrong to try to be like other people?



³Saul was tall and handsome, standing head and shoulders above everyone else. He was about 30 years old.

The people of Israel wanted to be like the nations around them. But the popular way was not God's way. The people got their way, but it was not God's way.