



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

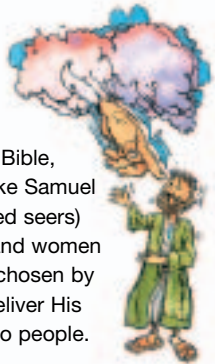
them solemnly and

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

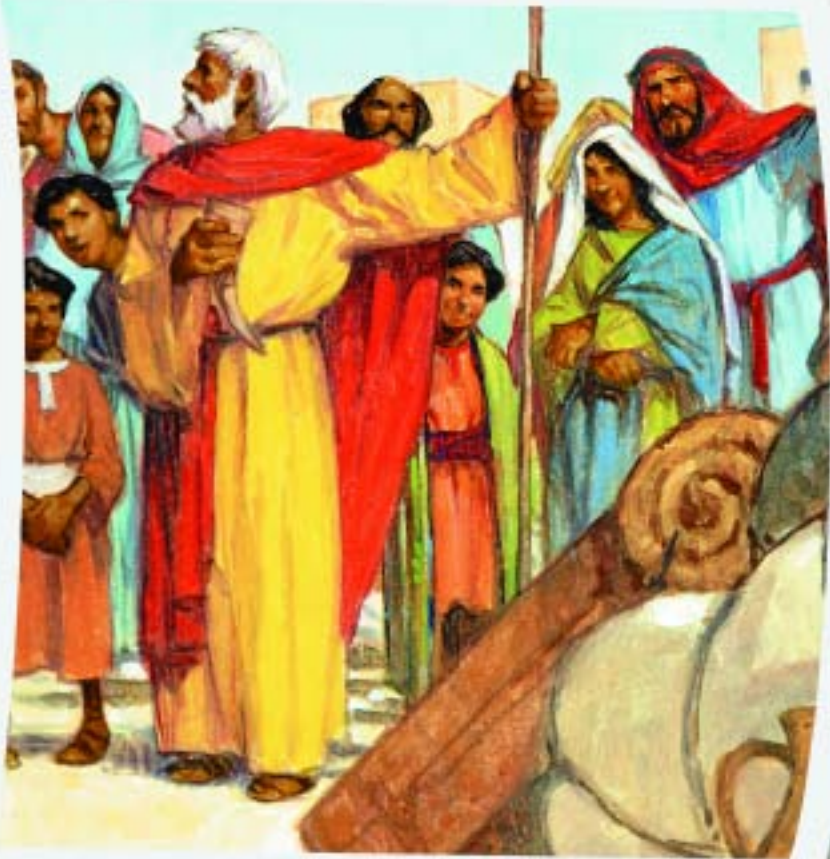


Samuel. When Samuel told God, God told Samuel to anoint² a king. God chose Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, to be Israel's first king.

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 the reaction to Saul when the people 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.



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.

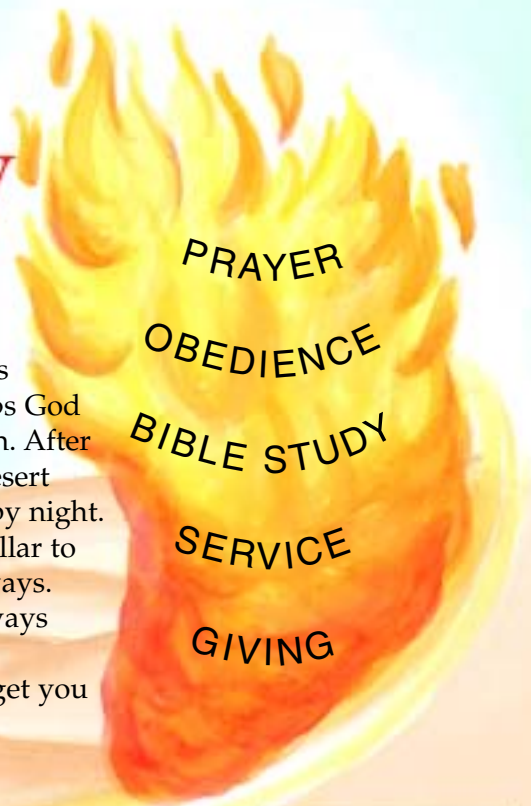
²Anointing someone with oil was a sign of being dedicated to God. In everyday life, a host would anoint guests with scented oil or perfume. The word *Messiah* means "anointed one."



Going God's Way

Do you ever wish that following God's ways could be just a little easier? Perhaps God could just *point* you in the right direction. After all, God led the Israelites through the desert with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

You might not have a cloud or fiery pillar to follow, but God will lead you in other ways. Finish the sentences with the different ways God helps you follow Him. Look at the suggestions in the "pillar of fire" to get you started.



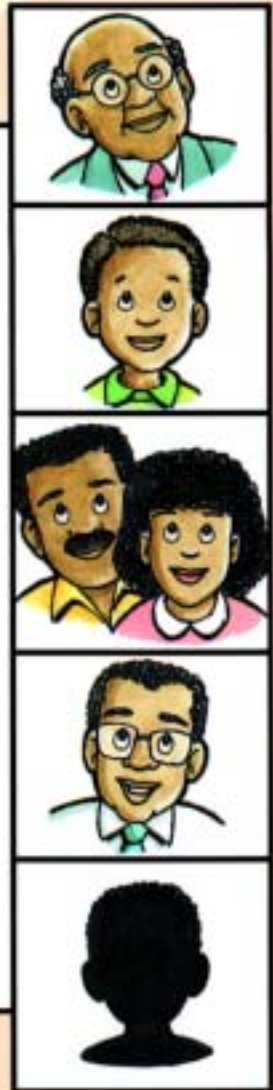
My church leader can show me God's way by helping me _____.

My Sunday school teacher can show me God's way by helping me _____.

My mom or dad can show me God's way by helping me _____.

My friend who is a Christian can show me God's way by helping me _____.

My own values can show me God's way by helping me _____.



KEY VERSE

Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths.

Psalm 25:4

Which Way?

All of Robby's friends were going to watch "Night of Terror" on TV. *Everyone except me, thought Robby. There's no way my parents will let me watch that show.*

Follow each arrow down a row and read the choices Robby could make, and the results of his decisions. In the last row, write down what might happen next, based on whether Robby followed God's way or chose to be like everyone else.

