

When Israelites had to face various challenges, they felt that they had to organize themselves under a powerful king. They also felt that there was a need of a leader, who could unite the isolated tribes and form a great nation. They informed this idea to Samuel, who was in his old age. They insisted that they need a king. At the beginning Samuel was against this request. However, because of the persistent request, God asked Samuel to appoint a king.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, “You are old and your sons do not follow in your ways; appoint for us, then, a king to govern us, like other nations.” But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to govern us.” Samuel prayed to the LORD, and the LORD said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. Just as they have done to me, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so also they are doing to you. Now then, listen to their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them, and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.”

(1 Samuel 8:4-9)

King Saul



10.1 Picture - King Saul

The first king of Israel was Saul. He was the son of Kish of the tribe of Benjamin. He had a unique personality and was young. He went in search of the donkeys, which had strayed. Meanwhile he met Samuel by chance. The following passage elaborates the anointing of Saul as king as instructed by God:

Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him; he said, “The LORD has anointed you ruler over his people Israel. You shall reign over the people of the LORD and you will save them from the hand of their enemies all around. Now this shall be the sign to you that the LORD has anointed you ruler over his heritage:

(1 Samuel 10:1)

On hearing that Nahash, the king of Ammonites was ready to make a treaty by gouging out everyone’s right eye, Saul united all the people of Judah to wage a war against Nahash. Saul won the war.

After that he had to face great challenges from the Philistines. Because of a shrewd act of Jonathan, the son of Saul, the army of Philistines was defeated. However, Saul had to fight with Philistines throughout his reign. Later on he established a great army.

As the first king, he defeated the enemies of Israelites. He pioneered in building a powerful kingdom by uniting the Israelites. Having fought with Philistines, Saul lost his life.

King David



10.2 Picture - King David

Since Saul disobeyed God, God ordered Samuel to appoint a new king. As guided by God, Samuel went to Jesse's house in Bethlehem. Jesse belonged to the tribe of Judah. He was to select one of his sons. Looking at the eldest son, he thought he was the suitable person, but God said: "Do not look at his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

God instructed Samuel to anoint David:

Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the presence of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day onward.

(1 Samuel 16:13)

Saul's army was fighting vehemently with Philistines. David's three brothers were in the army. One day Jesse sent David to see how his brothers fare. The leader of the Philistines was Goliath, a giant. He challenged that one of the Israelites should fight with him. Only David accepted the challenge. In the name of God, he came forward to fight against this giant. He took only his staff and five smooth stones.

David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.
(1 Samuel 17:45)

Having run toward the Philistine, David put his hand in his bag, took out a stone, slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead; the stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. David grasped the sword of the Philistine, drew it out of its sheath, and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled. On that day they had a humiliating defeat.

Fall of David into sin

David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, “This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.” So David sent messengers to get her.

(2 Samuel 11:3-4)

He had an illegal affair with her. When she conceived, she told David: “I am pregnant.”

Nathan, the prophet explained his sin through a parable. He did it in a shrewd way and brought him back to the correct path. Just like Nathan, the prophet, we too must show the others the correct path and bring them back to the correct path.

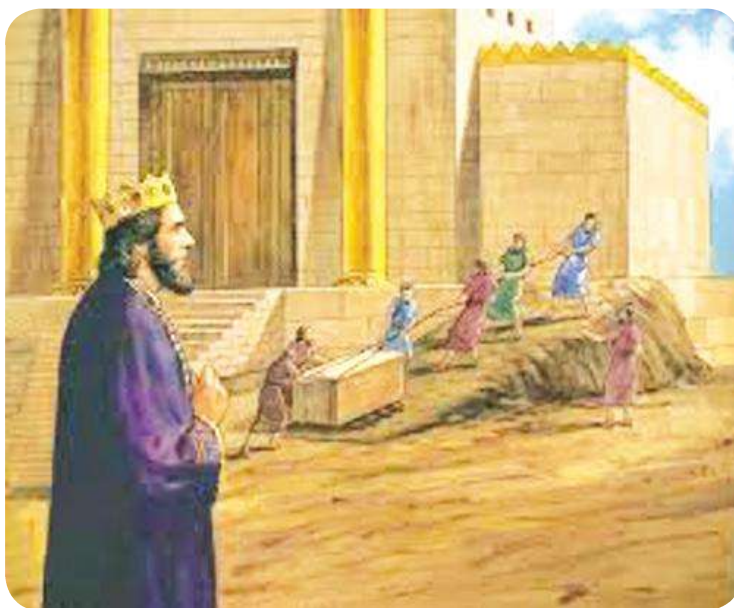
David’s Contrition

David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” Nathan said to David, “Now the LORD has put away your sin; you shall not die.

(2 Samuel 12:13)

David accepted his sin immediately, and said: “I have sinned against the LORD.” This shows that he understood his sin and had contrition for his sins. He was humble enough to ask pardon for his sin. Having a contrite heart, he composed Psalm 51. Turn to the Holy Bible and read and meditate on it. We also should be contrite for our sins and overcome them.

King Solomon



10.3 Picture - King Solomon

After David, his son, Solomon, was anointed as the king. At the beginning of his reign, he built a beautiful Temple for God in Jerusalem.

Now the word of the LORD came to Solomon, “Concerning this house that you are building, if you will walk in my statutes, obey my ordinances, and keep all my commandments by walking in them, then I will establish my promise with you, which I made to your father David. I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.” So Solomon built the house, and finished it.

(1 Kings 6:11-14)

Jerusalem Temple was magnificent. It took seven years to build. After it was over, the king consecrated it solemnly.

Kings, Saul, David and Solomon united Israel. They ruled the country as its leaders. We have been baptized and therefore we have to be exemplary leaders. When we fall into sin, we have to be contrite as King David. We must make a firm decision to overcome sin.

Activity



1. Name the first three kings of Israel.
2. Who built the Jerusalem Temple?
3. Write two examples that can be imitated from the life of King David.



For Life

★ Be exemplary leaders.