

# Royal Mess-ups

## Various Passages

### Introduction

Experience is learning from your own mistakes. Wisdom is learning from the mistakes of others.

It's not hard to find poor examples of male role models in the Bible. Unfortunately, you can even look at the lives of those who should have known better and who should have been much better examples. Today we are going to look at the lives of some of the kings of Israel and see what we can learn from their low points.

### King Saul

Saul was the first king of Israel. He was the best-looking man in the country, and stood 8-10 inches above all the rest of the men. He was a great warrior and led the army to win many battles with the Philistines.

But there was something not quite right with Saul. As you read through his story, you see misstep after misstep. Today we're going to view a big one.

1 Samuel 15:1-23 – <sup>1</sup>Then Samuel said to Saul, “The LORD sent me to anoint you as king over His people, over Israel; now therefore, listen to the words of the LORD. <sup>2</sup>“Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he set himself against him on the way while he was coming up from Egypt. <sup>3</sup>Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.’” <sup>4</sup>Then Saul summoned the people and numbered them in Telaim, 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 men of Judah. <sup>5</sup>And Saul came to the city of Amalek, and set an ambush in the valley. <sup>6</sup>And Saul said to the Kenites, “Go, depart, go down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them; for you showed kindness to all the sons of Israel when they came up from Egypt.” So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites. <sup>7</sup>So Saul defeated the Amalekites, from Havilah as you go to Shur, which is east of Egypt. <sup>8</sup>And he captured Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. <sup>9</sup>But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were not willing to destroy them utterly; but everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.

<sup>10</sup>Then the word of the LORD came to Samuel, saying, <sup>11</sup>“I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not carried out My commands.” And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the LORD all night. <sup>12</sup>And Samuel rose early in the morning to meet Saul; and it was told Samuel, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself, then turned and proceeded on down to Gilgal.” <sup>13</sup>And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, “Blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD.” <sup>14</sup>But Samuel said, “What then

is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” <sup>15</sup>And Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites, for the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; but the rest we have utterly destroyed.” <sup>16</sup>Then Samuel said to Saul, “Wait, and let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night.” And he said to him, “Speak!” <sup>17</sup>And Samuel said, “Is it not true, though you were little in your own eyes, you were made the head of the tribes of Israel? And the LORD anointed you king over Israel, <sup>18</sup>and the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, ‘Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are exterminated.’” <sup>19</sup>“Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD, but rushed upon the spoil and did what was evil in the sight of the LORD?” <sup>20</sup>Then Saul said to Samuel, “I did obey the voice of the LORD, and went on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and have brought back Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. <sup>21</sup>“But the people took some of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the choicest of the things devoted to destruction, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal.” <sup>22</sup>And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. <sup>23</sup>“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king.”

There are many wrong things Saul did in this passage. What do you see? Obedience. Leadership (“they”). Didn’t admit sin.

### King David

David was the second king of Israel. He was a man of faith and trust in God. He was even more successful than Saul as a leader of the armies of Israel.

2 Samuel 11:1-5 – <sup>1</sup>Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king’s house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. <sup>3</sup>So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, “Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?” <sup>4</sup>And David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house. <sup>5</sup>And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, “I am pregnant.”

It looks like from this passage that we can get ourselves in trouble when we aren’t where we should be. What could have led David to stay behind?\_\_\_\_

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## King Solomon

Solomon was the third king of Israel, and the son of Bathsheba, though not the son conceived in the passage above. We mentioned wisdom earlier, and few would argue that there was anyone wiser in history than he. But Solomon, with all his wisdom, made a serious mistake that caused God to split the kingdom during the time of his son's reign.

1 Kings 11:1-8 – <sup>1</sup>Now King Solomon loved many foreign women along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women, <sup>2</sup>from the nations concerning which the LORD had said to the sons of Israel, “You shall not associate with them, neither shall they associate with you, for they will surely turn your heart away after their gods.” Solomon held fast to these in love. <sup>3</sup>And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away. <sup>4</sup>For it came about when Solomon was old, his wives turned his heart away after other gods; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father *had been*. <sup>5</sup>For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians and after Milcom the detestable idol of the Ammonites. <sup>6</sup>And Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and did not follow the LORD fully, as David his father *had done*. <sup>7</sup>Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable idol of Moab, on the mountain which is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the detestable idol of the sons of Ammon. <sup>8</sup>Thus also he did for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods.

What was Solomon's mistake here? \_\_\_\_\_

Was it possibly a proclivity learned from his father? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a danger for us to avoid? \_\_\_\_\_

## King Hezekiah – A different story

Hezekiah was a later king well after the kingdom had been divided. At this time, Israel was no longer a military threat to others, or even able to protect itself from the Babylonian and Assyrian kings to the east.

Sennacherib, king of Assyria had sent Rabshakeh to threaten Hezekiah if he didn't pay tribute. He had spent time spreading FUD among the Jews in Jerusalem, and was about to besiege the city if they didn't capitulate. Judah had no hope to protect themselves from the huge, terrible Assyrian army.

2 Kings 19:8-37 – <sup>8</sup>Then Rabshakeh returned and found the king of Assyria fighting against Libnah, for he had heard that the king had left Lachish. <sup>9</sup>When he heard *them* say concerning Tirhakah king of Cush, “Behold, he has come out to fight against you,” he sent messengers again to Hezekiah saying, <sup>10</sup>“Thus you shall say to Hezekiah king of Judah, ‘Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you saying, “Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.”’ <sup>11</sup>Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all the lands, destroying them completely. So will you be spared? <sup>12</sup>Did the

gods of those nations which my fathers destroyed deliver them, *even* Gozan and Haran and Rezeph and the sons of Eden who *were* in Telassar? <sup>13</sup>Where is the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, the king of the city of Sepharvaim, and of Hena and Ivvah?” <sup>14</sup>Then Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers and read it, and he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD. <sup>15</sup>And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and said, “O LORD, the God of Israel, who art enthroned *above* the cherubim, Thou art the God, Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. Thou hast made heaven and earth. <sup>16</sup>Incline Thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open Thine eyes, O LORD, and see; and listen to the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. <sup>17</sup>“Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated the nations and their lands <sup>18</sup>and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. <sup>19</sup>“And now, O LORD our God, I pray, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou alone, O LORD, art God.”

<sup>20</sup>Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah saying, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard you.’ <sup>21</sup>“This is the word that the LORD has spoken against him: ... <sup>32</sup>Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, “He shall not come to this city or shoot an arrow there; neither shall he come before it with a shield, nor throw up a mound against it. <sup>33</sup>“By the way that he came, by the same he shall return, and he shall not come to this city,” declares the LORD. <sup>34</sup>For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David's sake.”

<sup>35</sup>Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out, and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead. <sup>36</sup>So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and returned *home*, and lived at Nineveh. <sup>37</sup>And it came about as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his place.

Hezekiah overcame the insurmountable threat by going to God in prayer. We often trust in our own devices, plans, or resources. But there comes a time when we can't do it without Him.

Has there been a time, or is there something now that is completely beyond your power to fix? \_\_\_\_\_  
What should you do? \_\_\_\_\_

## Conclusion:

Somehow we can make really boneheaded decisions and do really stupid stuff. What can we do to avoid that? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the biggest danger area for you? \_\_\_\_\_

Based on God's direction in these passages, I need to \_\_\_\_\_.