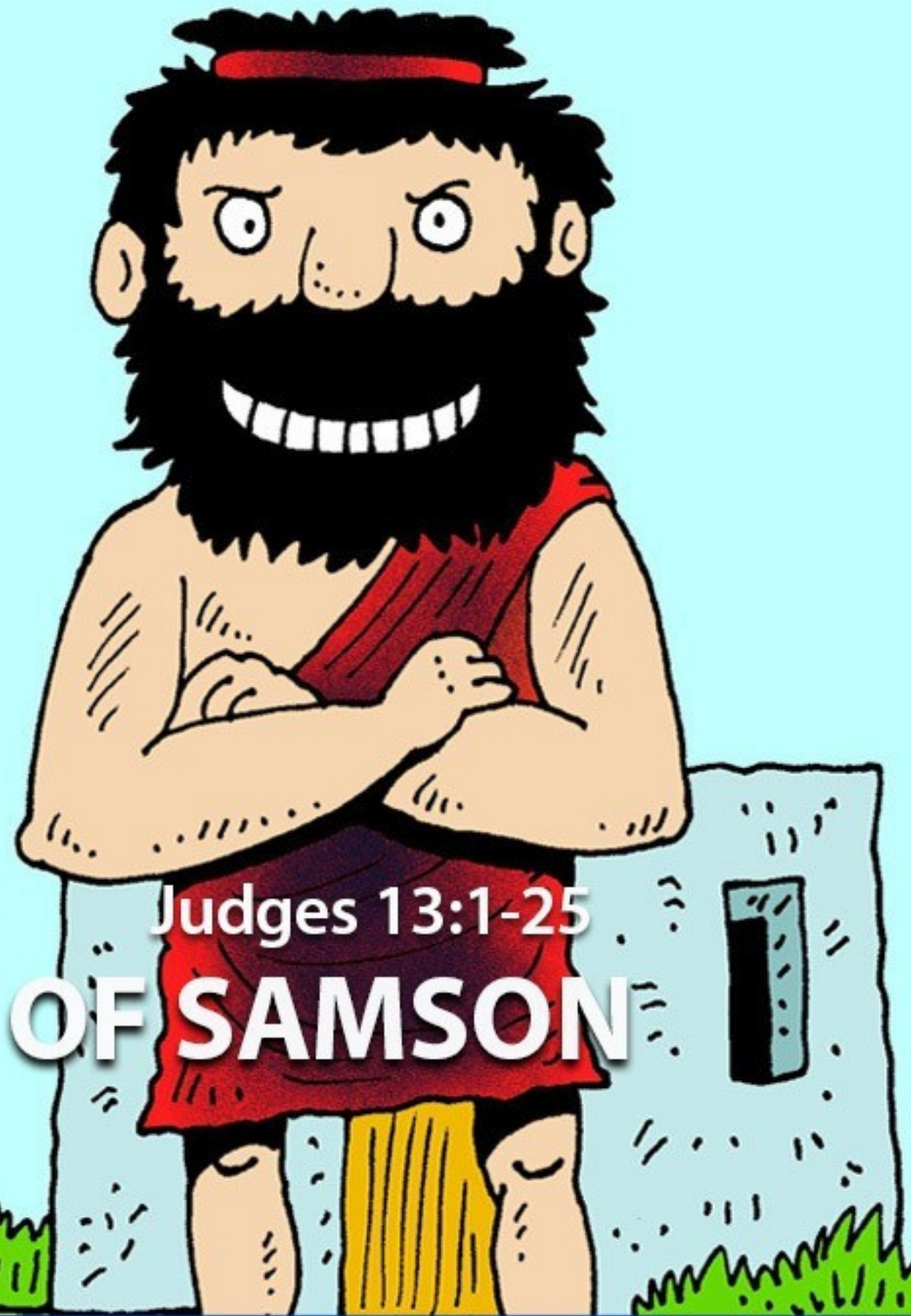
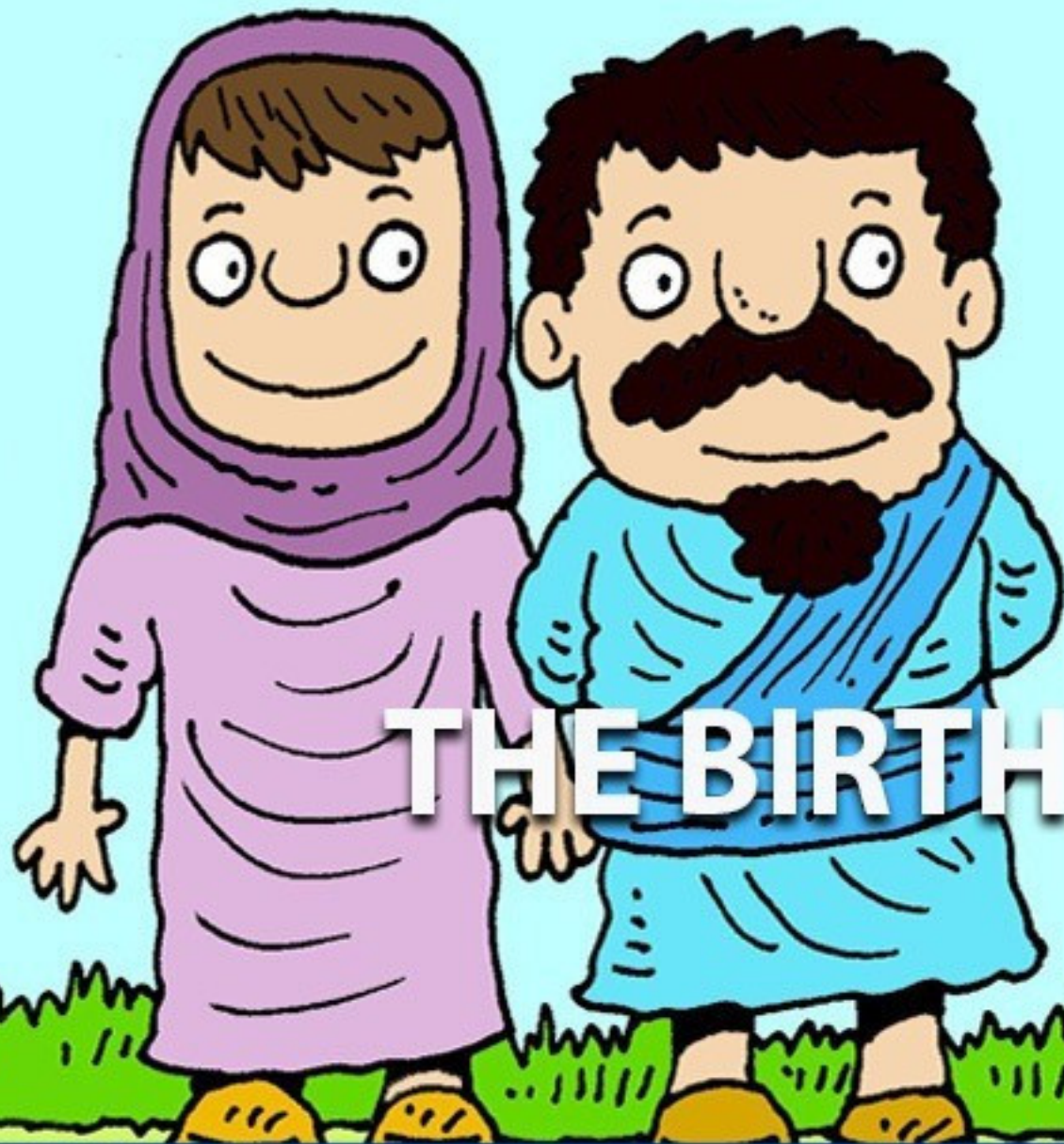


Lesson 11: Samson

Judges 13-16

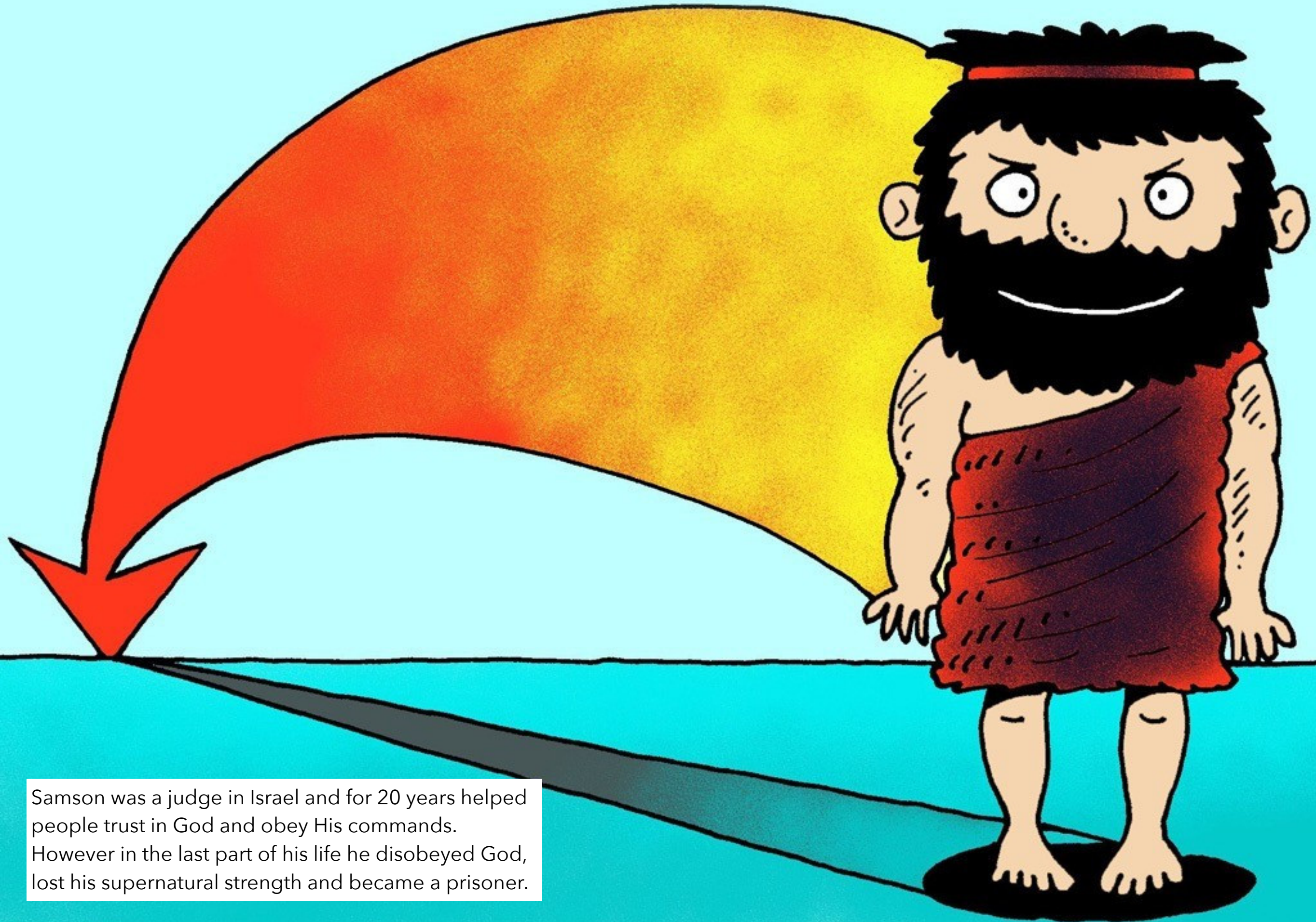
4th and 5th Grade Class

Jordan Park church of Christ

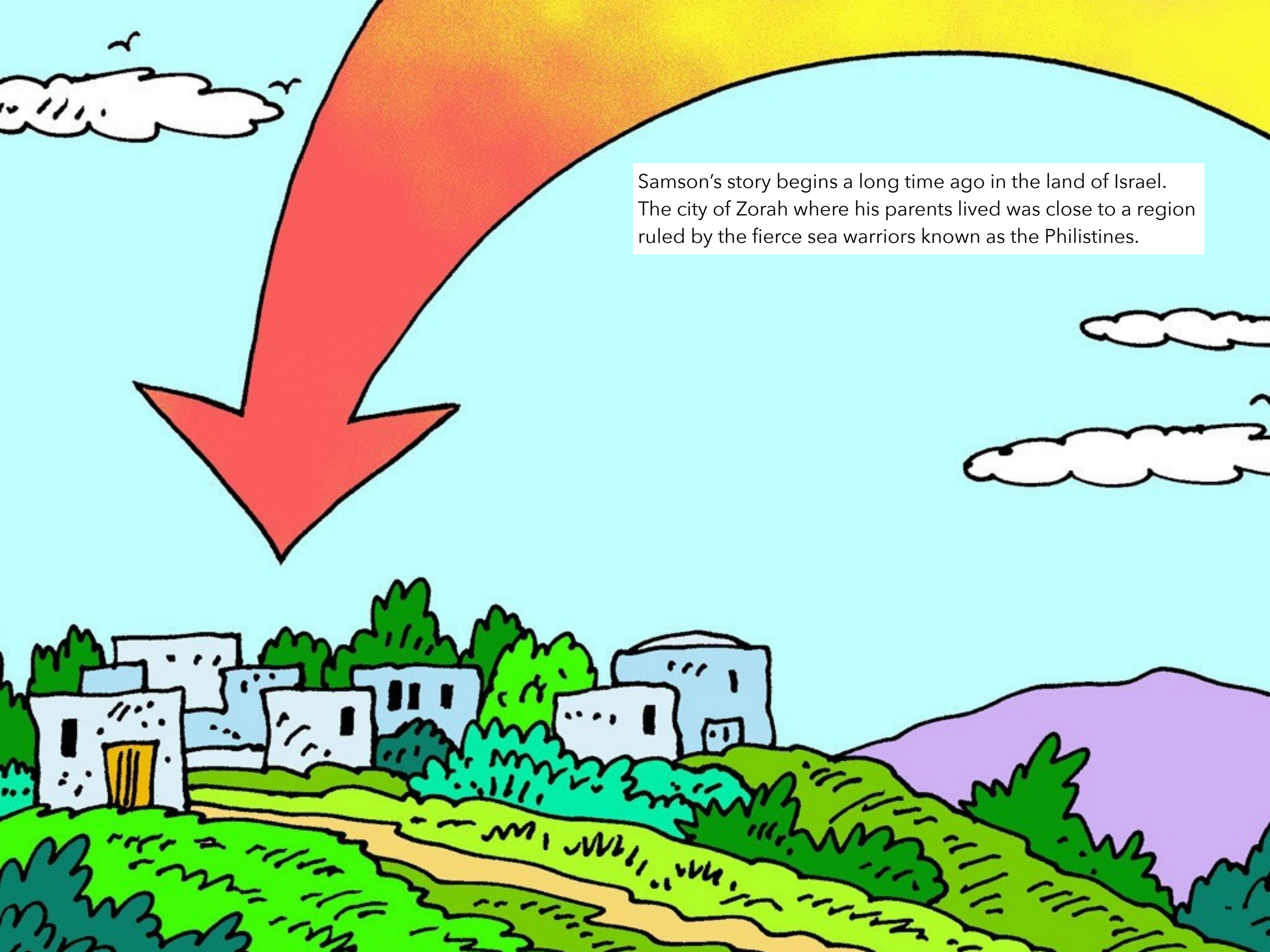


Judges 13:1-25

THE BIRTH OF SAMSON



Samson was a judge in Israel and for 20 years helped people trust in God and obey His commands. However in the last part of his life he disobeyed God, lost his supernatural strength and became a prisoner.



Samson's story begins a long time ago in the land of Israel. The city of Zorah where his parents lived was close to a region ruled by the fierce sea warriors known as the Philistines.



For 40 years the Isrealites had not obeyed God and been bullied and harassed by the Philistines as a result.



One day the Angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of a man called Manoah who was from the tribe of Dan. The Angel said 'Even though you have no children, you will soon conceive and have a son! Don't drink any wine or beer and don't eat any food that isn't kosher. Your son's hair must never be cut, for he shall be a Nazirite, a special servant of God from the time of his birth. He will begin to rescue Israel from the Philistines.'

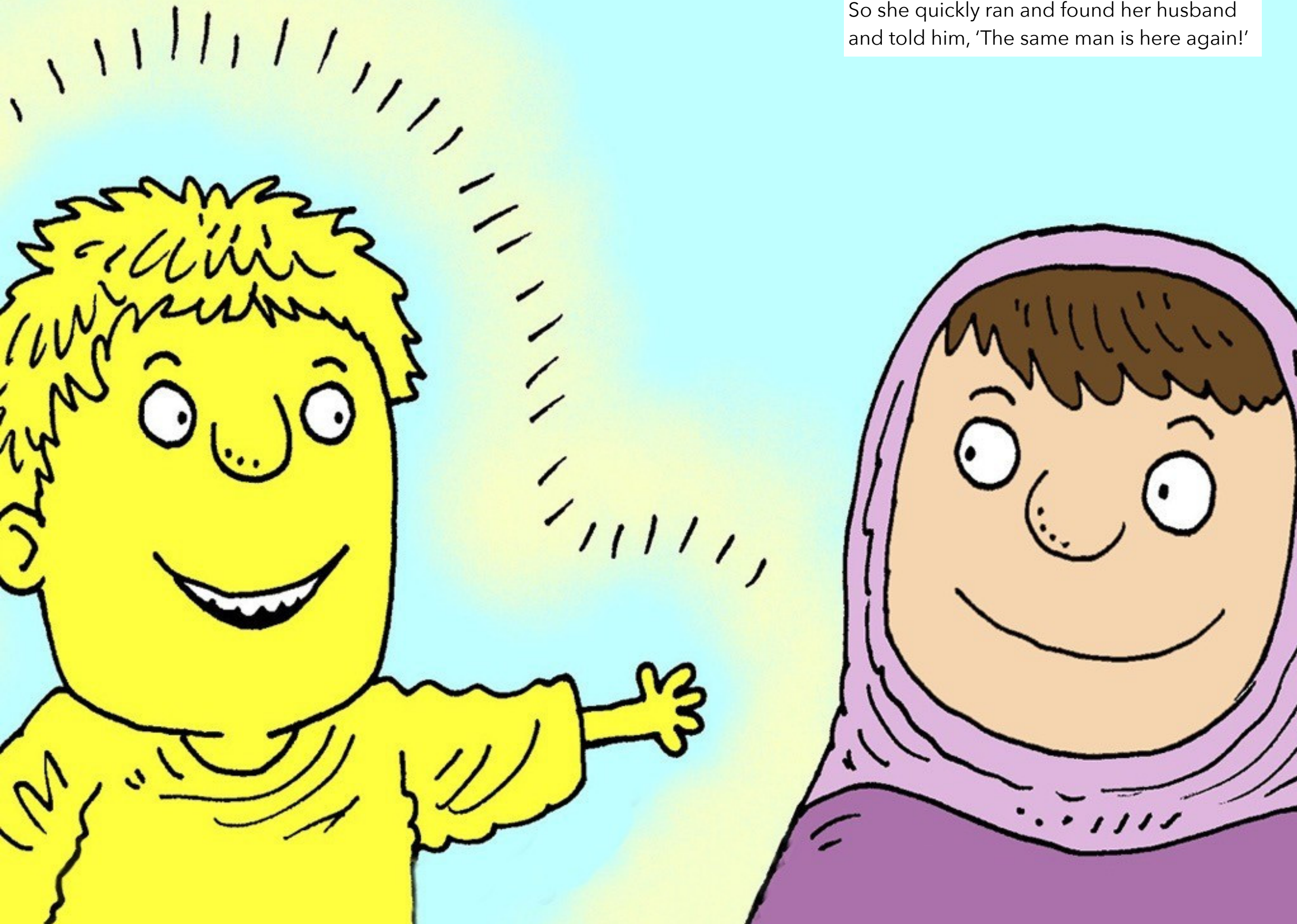


The woman ran and told her husband what the Angel had said to her. Manoah prayed, 'O Lord, please let the man from God come back to us again and give us more instructions about the child you are going to give us.'

The Lord answered his prayer, and the Angel of God appeared once again to his wife as she was sitting alone in a field.



So she quickly ran and found her husband and told him, 'The same man is here again!'



Manoah ran back with his wife and asked, 'Are you the man who talked to my wife the other day?' 'Yes,' he replied.





'Be sure that your wife follows the instructions I gave her. She must not eat grapes or raisins, or drink any wine or beer, or eat anything that isn't kosher.' 'What is your name?' Menoah asked. 'My name is a secret,' the Angel replied. Manoah took a young goat and a grain offering and offered it as a sacrifice

As the flames from the altar were leaping up toward the sky, the Angel ascended in the fire!



Manoah and his wife fell face downward. 'We will die,' Manoah cried out to his wife, 'for we have seen God!'



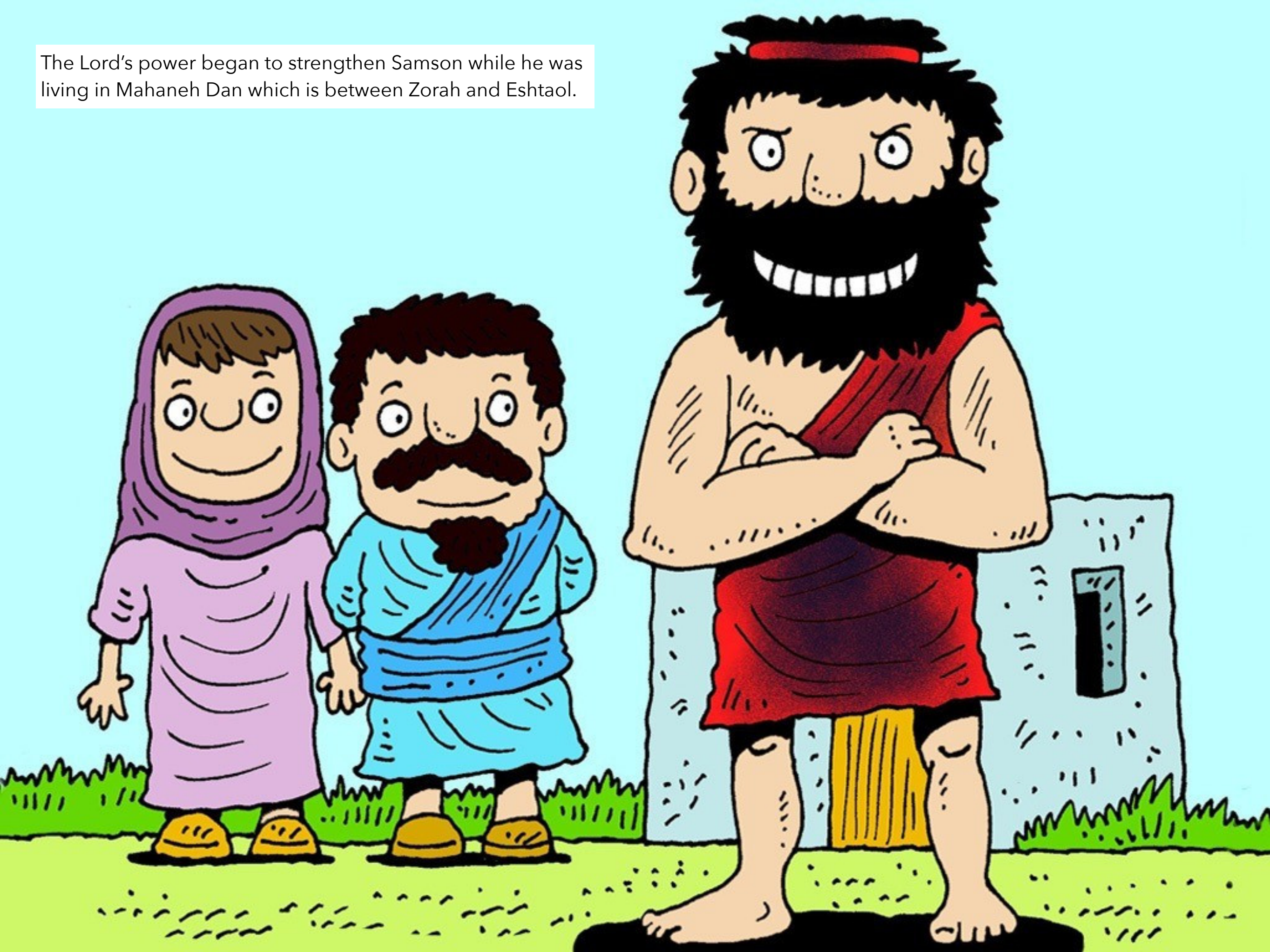
But his wife said, 'If the Lord was going to kill us, He wouldn't have accepted our sacrifice or told us these wonderful things and done these miracles.'





Just as the Angel promised she had a baby boy and they named him Samson. The Lord blessed him as he grew up. They followed God's instructions and never cut his hair.

The Lord's power began to strengthen Samson while he was living in Mahaneh Dan which is between Zorah and Eshtaol.







SAMSON AND HIS RIDDLE

Judges 14:1-20

One day Samson went down to the Philistine town of Timnah.



He noticed a young and attractive Philistine woman.



He went back home and told his father and mother, 'There is a Philistine woman down at Timnah who caught my attention. Get her for me as my bride. I want to marry her.'



His father and mother protested, 'Why do you have to go to those heathen Philistines to get a wife? Can't you find someone in our own clan, among all our people?' But Samson told his father, 'She is the one I want to marry.' His parents did not know that it was the Lord who was leading Samson to do this, for the Lord looking to overcome the Philistines who were ruling over His people.



So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother.



As he was going through the vineyards there, he heard a young lion roaring.





Suddenly the power of the Lord made Samson very strong.



He tore the lion apart with his bare hands, as if it were a young goat. But he did not tell his parents what he had done.

Then he went on and talked to the young woman, and he liked her.



A few days later Samson went back to marry her. On the way he left the road to look at the lion he had killed, and he was surprised to find a swarm of bees and some honey inside the dead body.

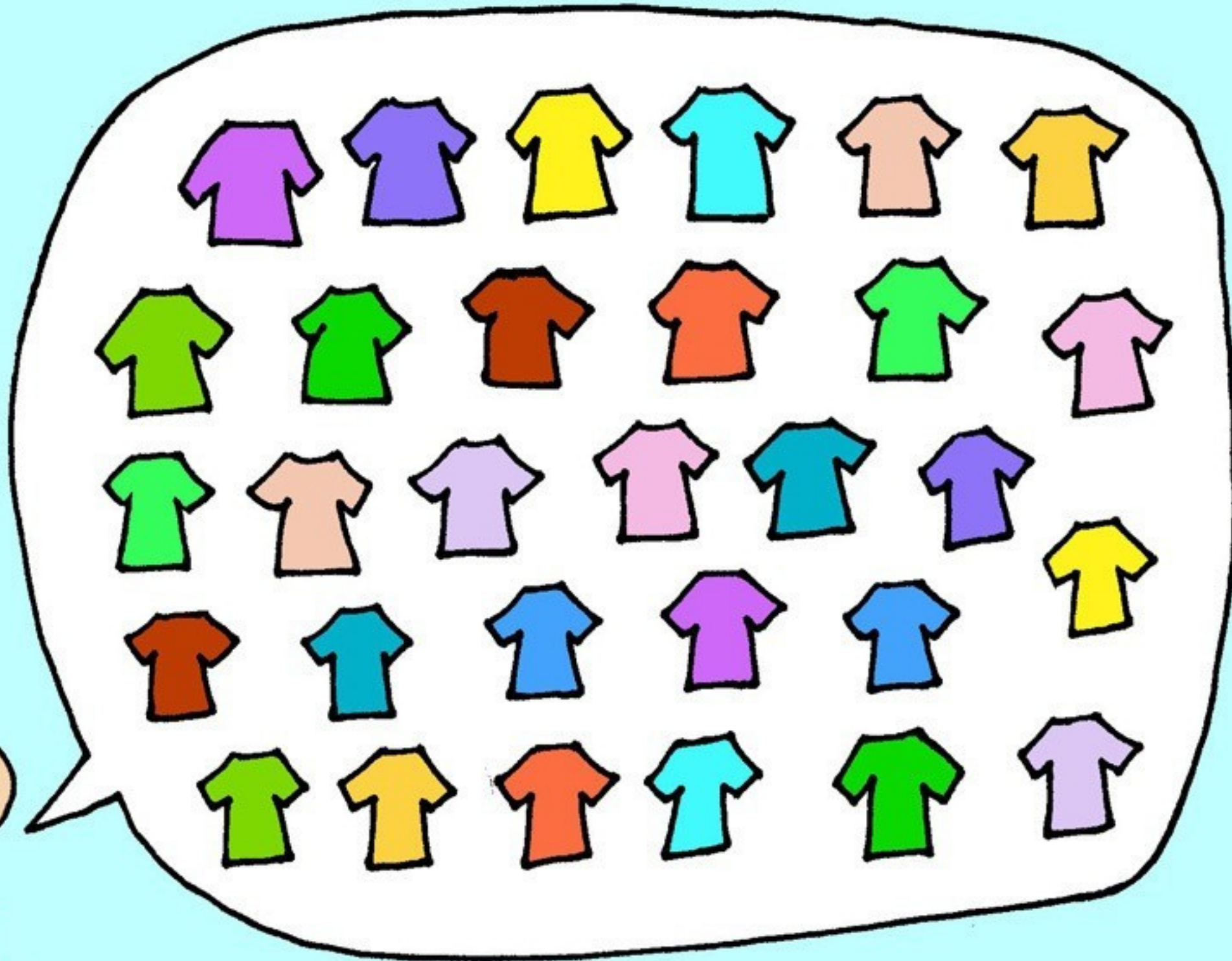


A few days later Samson went back to marry her. On the way he left the road to look at the lion he had killed, and he was surprised to find a swarm of bees and some honey inside the dead body.



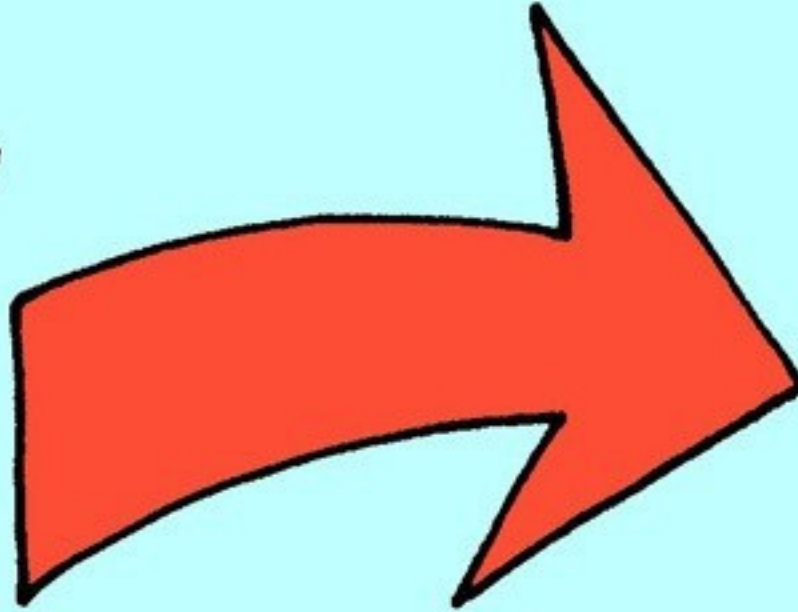


His father went to the woman's house, and Samson gave a banquet there. As was the custom, the Philistines sent thirty young men to stay with him.



Samson said to them, 'Let me tell you a riddle. I'll bet each one of you a piece of fine linen and a change of fine clothes that you can't tell me its meaning before the seven days of the wedding feast are over.'

'Tell us your riddle,' they said. 'Let's hear it.' Samson replied, 'Out of the eater came something to eat - out of the strong came something sweet.'



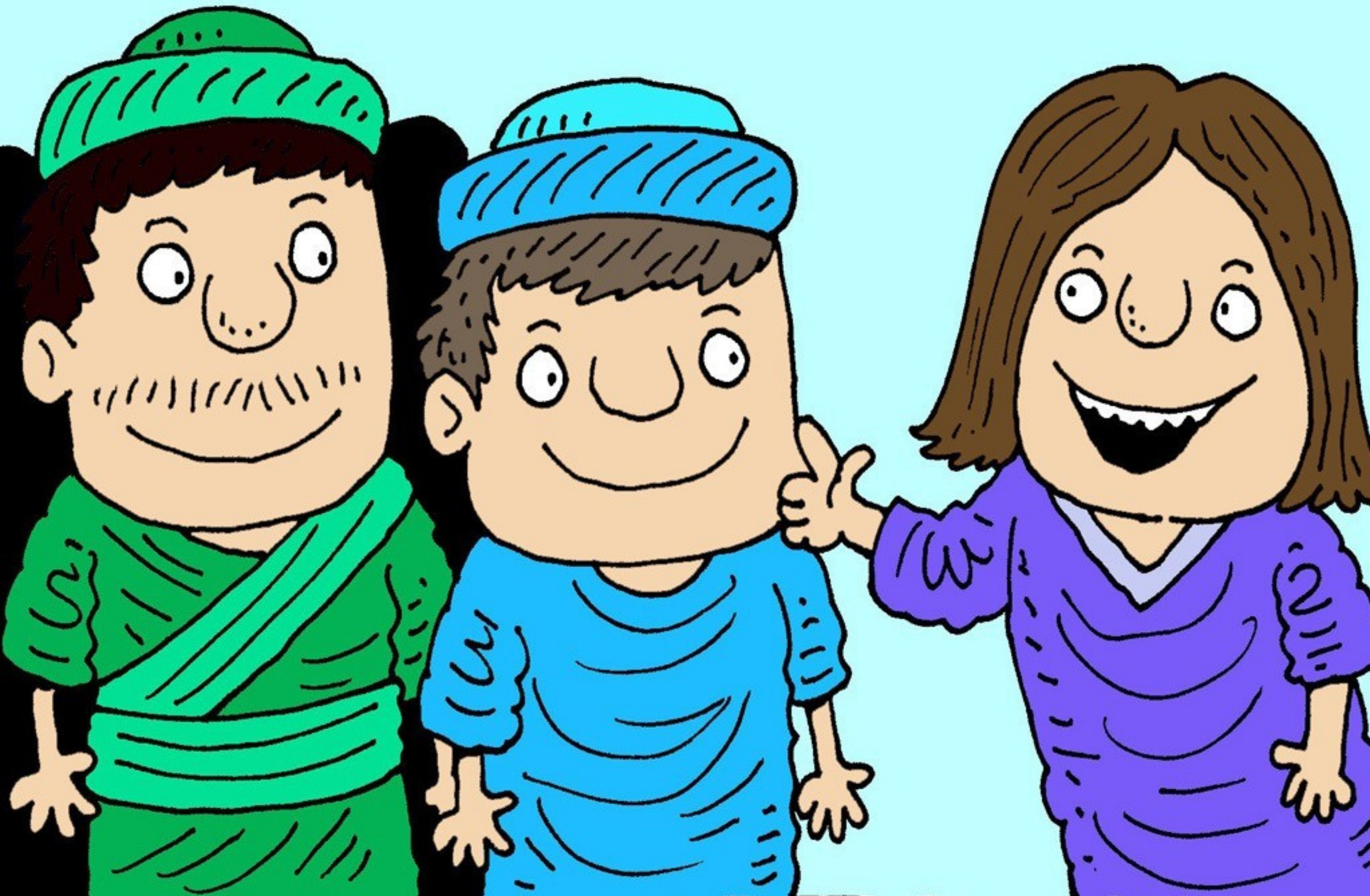
Three days later they had still not figured out what the riddle meant. On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, 'Trick your husband into telling us what the riddle means. If you don't, we'll set fire to your father's house and burn you with it. You only invited us so that you could rob us, didn't you?'



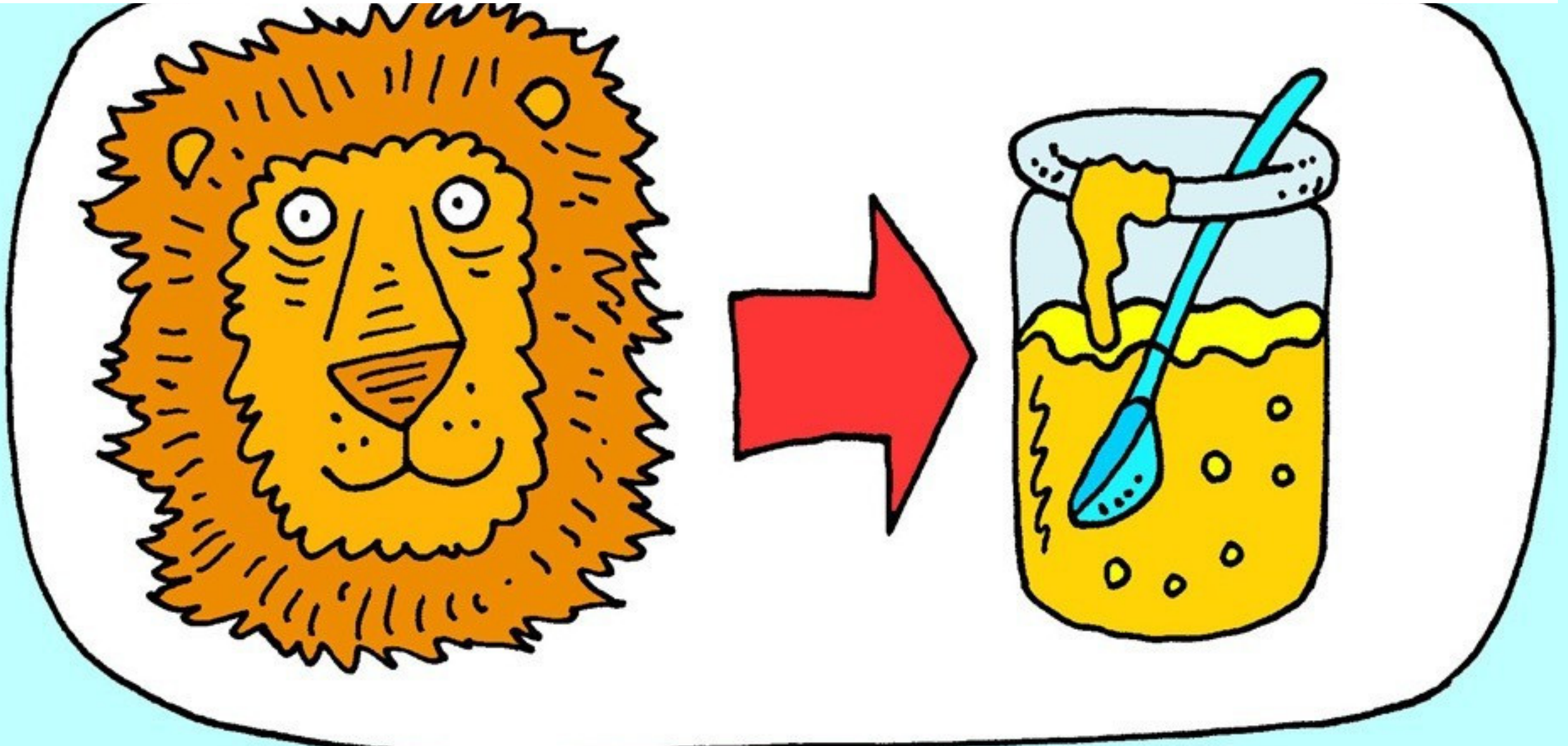


So Samson's wife went to him in tears and said, 'You don't love me! You just hate me! You told my friends a riddle and didn't tell me what it means!' He said, 'Look, I haven't even told my father and mother. Why should I tell you?' She cried about it for the whole seven days of the feast and kept nagging Samson to explain the riddle. On the seventh day Samson gave in and told her.

She immediately told the Philistines and the thirty men of the city went to Samson with the answer to his riddle.



'What could be sweeter than honey? What could be stronger than a lion?' they said gleefully. Samson was furious. 'If you hadn't been told this by my wife you would never have come up with the answer.' Now he owed them 30 outfits of fine clothes.



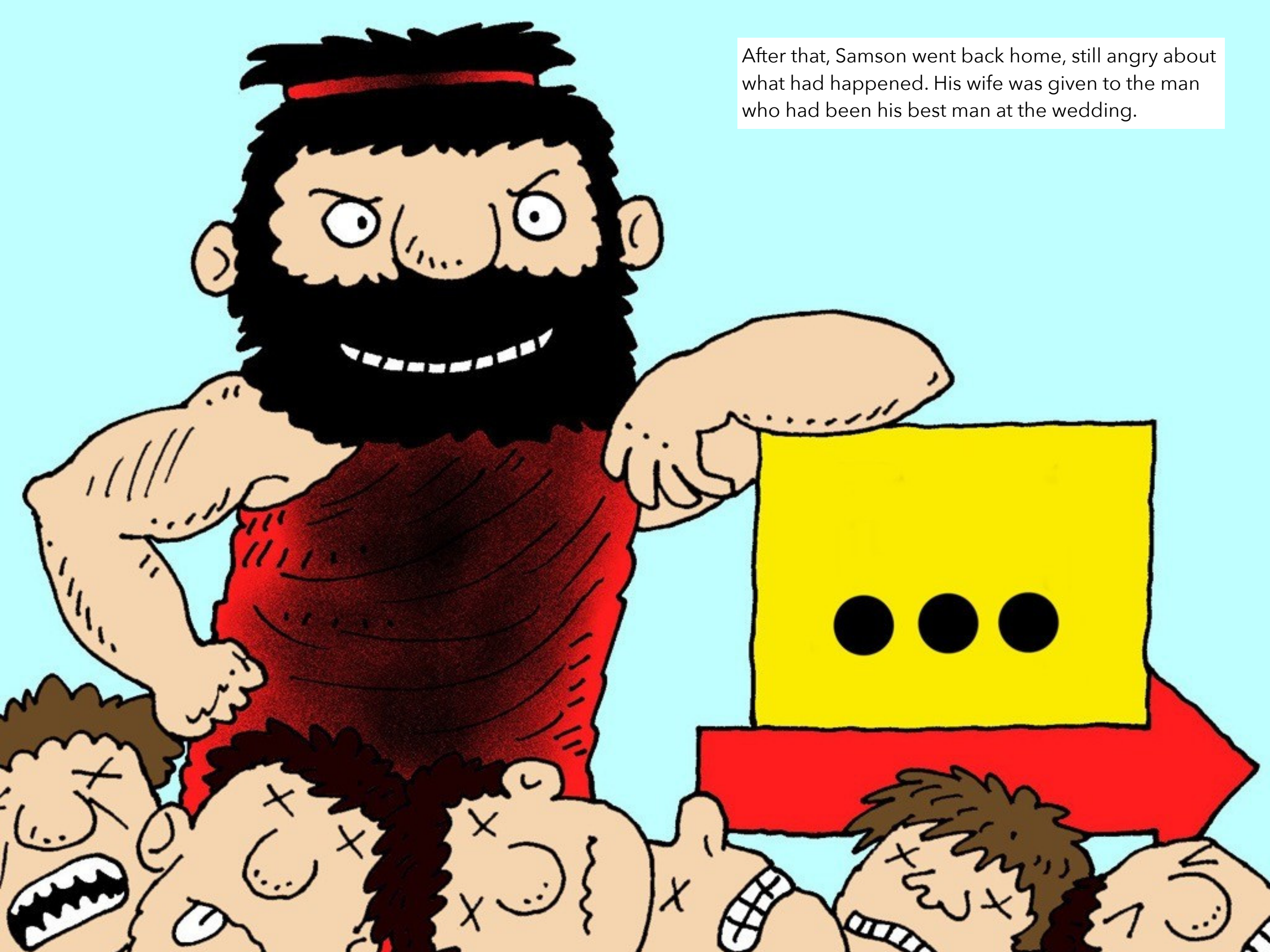
Suddenly the power of the Lord made him strong, and he went down to the Philistine city of Ashkelon, where he killed thirty men.



He stripped them of their clothes, and gave them to the men who had solved the riddle.



After that, Samson went back home, still angry about what had happened. His wife was given to the man who had been his best man at the wedding.





SAMSON'S REVENGE ON THE PHILISTINES

Judges 15:1-20



Some time later Samson went to visit his wife during the wheat harvest and took her a young goat. He told her father, 'I want to go to my wife's room.'

He told Samson, 'I really thought that you hated her, so I gave her to your best man at the wedding. But her younger sister is prettier, anyway. You can have her, instead.'





'This time I'm not going to be responsible for what I do to the Philistines!,' Samson fumed. So he went and caught three hundred foxes. Two at a time, he tied their tails together and put torches in the knots.



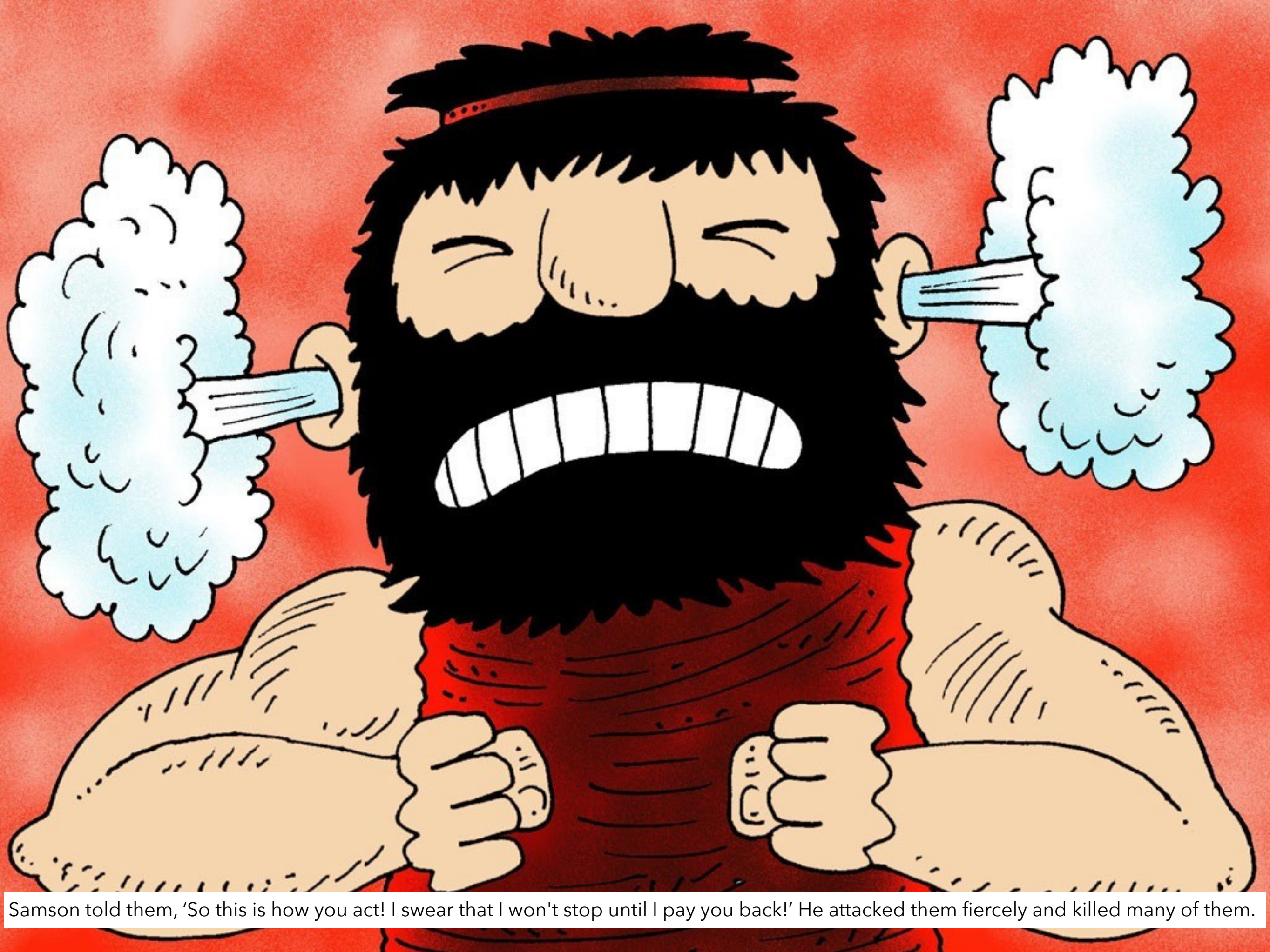
Then he set fire to the torches and turned the foxes loose in the Philistine wheat fields.



In this way he burned up not only the wheat that had been harvested but also the wheat that was still in the fields. The olive orchards were also burned.

When the Philistines learned that Samson had done this because his father-in-law, had given Samson's wife to his best man, they punished his wife and burned down her father's house.





Samson told them, 'So this is how you act! I swear that I won't stop until I pay you back!' He attacked them fiercely and killed many of them.

Then he went and stayed in the cave in the cliff at Etam.





The Philistines came and camped in Judah, and attacked the town of Lehi.

The men of Judah asked them, 'Why are you attacking us?' They answered, 'We came to take Samson prisoner and to treat him as he treated us.'

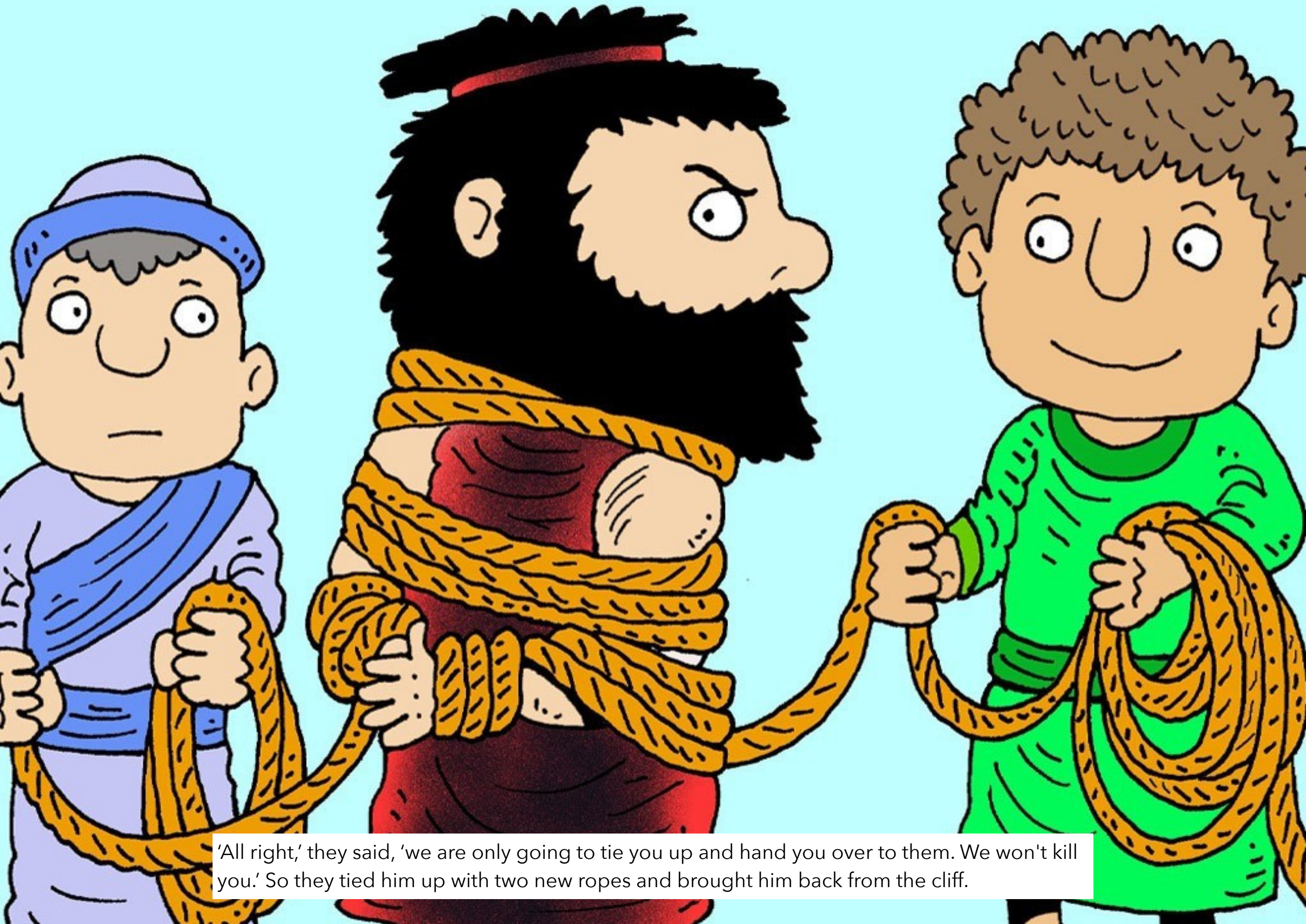


So these three thousand men of Judah went to the cave in the cliff at Etam and said to Samson, 'Don't you know that the Philistines are our rulers? What have you done to us? He answered, 'I did to them just what they did to me.'



They told him, 'We have come here to tie you up, so we can hand you over to them.'
Samson said, 'Give me your word that you won't kill me yourselves.'





'All right,' they said, 'we are only going to tie you up and hand you over to them. We won't kill you.' So they tied him up with two new ropes and brought him back from the cliff.



When he got to Lehi, the Philistines came running toward him, shouting at him. Suddenly the power of the Lord made him strong, and he broke the ropes around his arms and hands as if they were burnt thread.

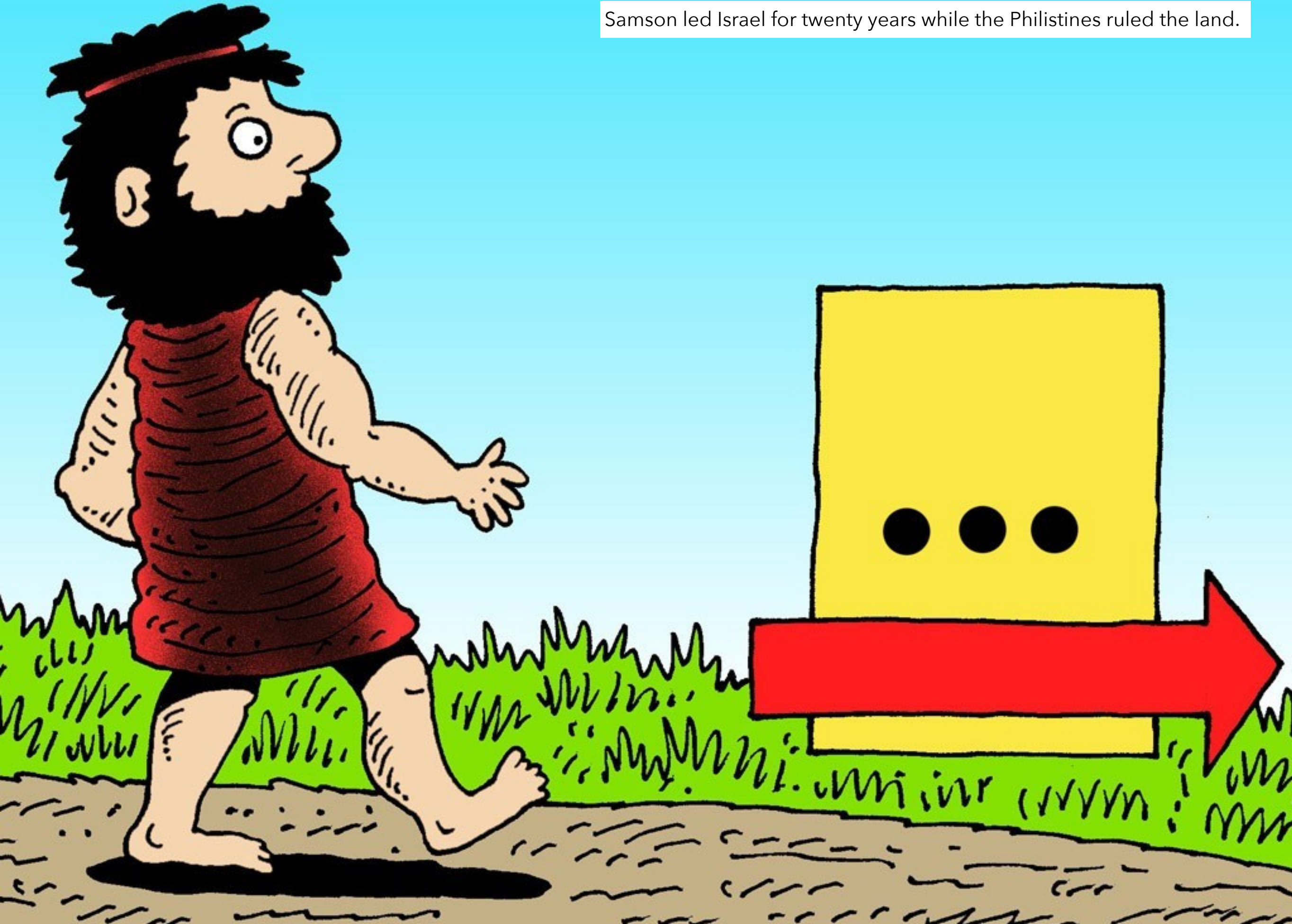


Then he found a jawbone of a donkey that had recently died. He reached down and picked it up, and killed a thousand men with it. So Samson sang, 'With the jawbone of a donkey I killed a thousand men. With the jawbone of a donkey I piled them up in piles.' The place where this happened was named Ramath Lehi which means 'Jawbone Hill'.

Samson became very thirsty, so he called to the Lord and said, 'You gave me this great victory, am I now going to die of thirst and be captured by these heathen Philistines?' Then God opened a hollow place in the ground at Lehi, and water came out of it. Samson drank it and began to feel much better. So the spring was named Hakkore meaning 'Caller' as Samson had called to God for help.



Samson led Israel for twenty years while the Philistines ruled the land.





SAMSON AND DELILAH

Judges 16:1-15

Samson led Israel for twenty years while the Philistines ruled the land.





He was tempted by a prostitute and went to bed with her.

When the Philistines of Gaza found out that Samson was there, they surrounded the place and waited for him throughout the night at the city gate. 'We'll wait until daybreak, and then we'll kill him,' they plotted.





But Samson got out of bed at midnight.

When he found the city gate locked and he was trapped, he got up and took hold of the city gate and pulled it up—doors, posts, lock, and all.





He put them on his shoulders and carried them off out of the city...

... to the top of the hill overlooking
Hebron in Israel.





After this, Samson fell in love with a Philistine woman named Delilah, who lived in Sorek Valley.

The five Philistine kings went to her and said, 'Trick Samson into telling you why he is so strong and how we can overpower him. Tie him up, and make him helpless. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.'





So Delilah said to Samson, 'Please tell me what makes you so strong. If someone wanted to tie you up and make you helpless, how could he do it?'



Samson answered, 'If they tie me up with seven new bowstrings that are not dried out, I'll be as weak as anybody else.' So the Philistine kings brought Delilah seven new bowstrings that were not dried out, and she tied Samson up.



She had some men waiting in another room, so she shouted, 'Samson! The Philistines are coming!' But he snapped the bowstrings just as thread breaks when fire touches it. So they still did not know the secret of his strength.



Delilah told Samson, 'Look, you've been making a fool of me and not telling me the truth. Please tell me how someone could tie you up.'

He told her, 'If they tie me with new ropes that have never been used, I'll be as weak as anybody else.' So Delilah got some new ropes and tied him up.



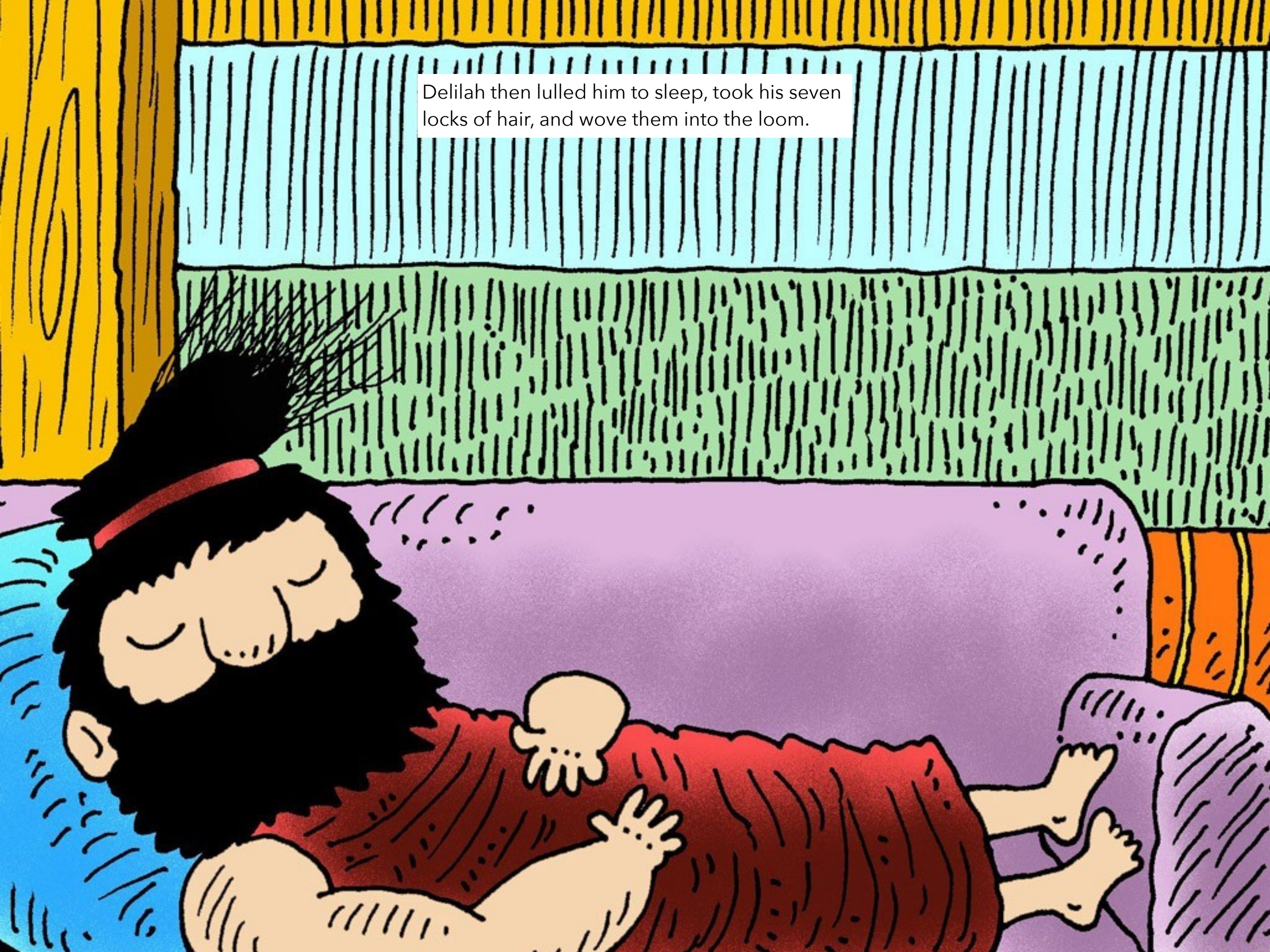


Then she shouted, 'Samson! The Philistines are coming!' The men were waiting in another room. But he snapped the ropes off his arms like thread.



Delilah said to Samson, 'You're still making a fool of me and not telling me the truth. Tell me how someone could tie you up.' He told her, 'If you weave my seven locks of hair into a loom, and make it tight with a peg, I'll be as weak as anybody else.'

Delilah then lulled him to sleep, took his seven locks of hair, and wove them into the loom.





She made it tight with a peg and shouted, 'Samson! The Philistines are coming!' But he woke up and pulled his hair loose from the loom.

So she said to him, 'How can you say you love me, when you don't mean it? You've made a fool of me three times, and you still haven't told me what makes you so strong.' She kept on asking him, day after day and he got tired of her bothering him about it.



A cartoon-style illustration of Samson, a muscular man with short brown hair, wearing a light blue loincloth. He is shown from the back, with his arms outstretched, pushing away several large, yellow, cylindrical objects that resemble giant loaves of bread. The scene is filled with motion lines and smaller pieces of bread, suggesting a chaotic and powerful event. The background is a dark grey color.

SAMSON'S FINAL ACT OF STRENGTH

Judges 16:15-31

Three times Delilah had asked Samson to tell her the secret of his strength and three times he had misled her. So she said to him, 'How can you say you love me, when you don't mean it? You've made a fool of me three times.' Samson got so sick and tired of Delilah bothering him that he finally told her the truth.



'My hair has never been cut,' Samson explained. 'I have been dedicated to God as a Nazirite from the time I was born. If my hair were cut, I would lose my strength and be as weak as anybody else.'



Delilah sent a secret message to the Philistine kings and said, 'Come back one more time. He has told me the truth.' Then brought money with them. Delilah lulled Samson to sleep in her lap and then Samson's seven locks of hair were cut off.





Then she shouted, 'Samson! The Philistines are coming!' He woke up and thought, 'I'll get loose and go free, as always.' He did not know that the Lord had left him and he had lost his strength.

The Philistines easily captured Samson and put his eyes out.





They took him to Gaza, chained him with bronze chains, and put him to work grinding at the mill in the prison.

But his hair started growing back.



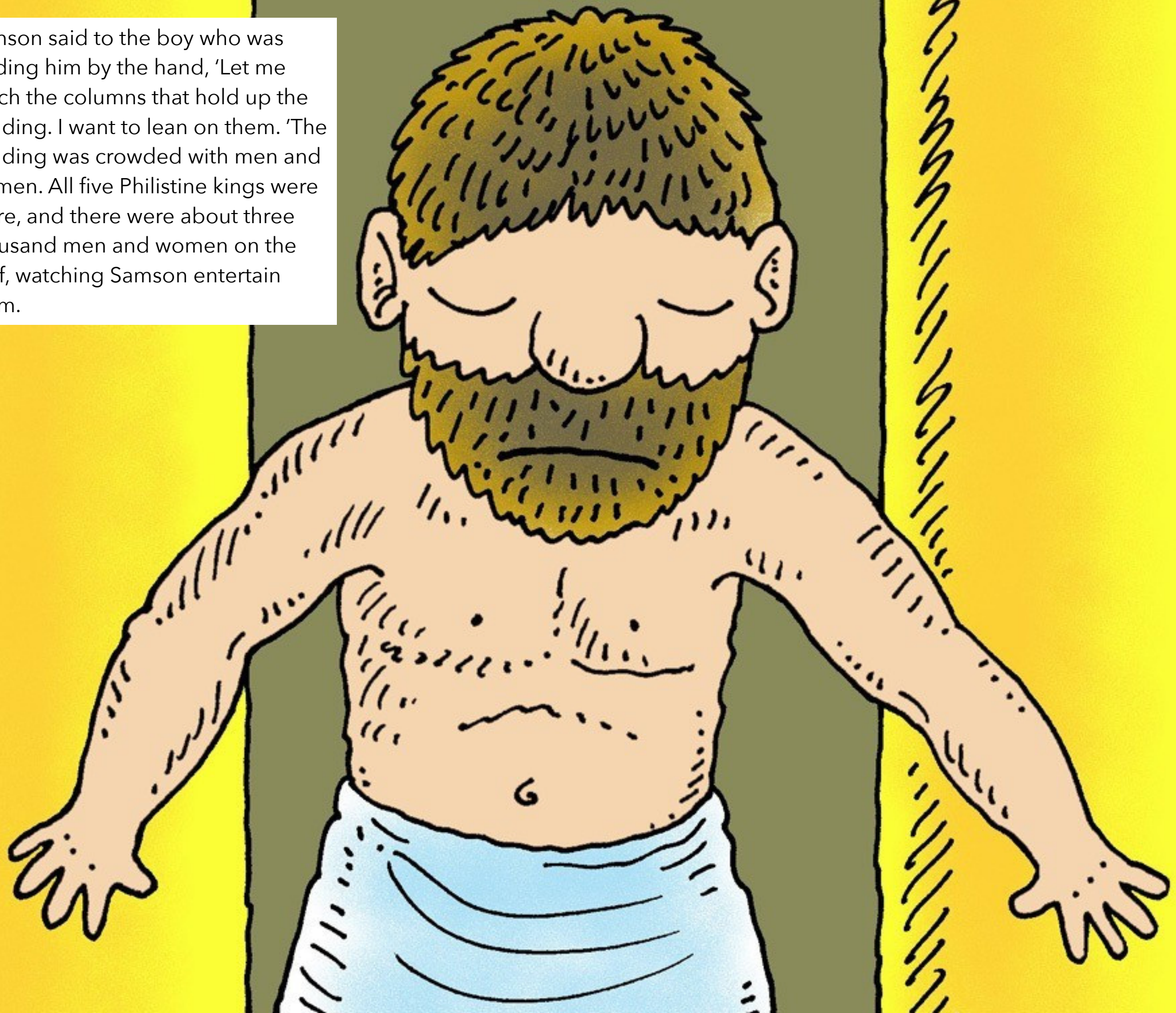
The Philistine kings met together to celebrate and offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon. They sang, 'Our god has given us victory over our enemy Samson!'



They were enjoying themselves and said, 'Call Samson to entertain us!' When the people saw Samson, they sang praise to their god: 'Dagon has given us victory over our enemy, who devastated our land and killed so many of us!'



Samson said to the boy who was leading him by the hand, 'Let me touch the columns that hold up the building. I want to lean on them.' The building was crowded with men and women. All five Philistine kings were there, and there were about three thousand men and women on the roof, watching Samson entertain them.





Then Samson prayed, 'Sovereign Lord, please remember me. Please, God, give me my strength just this one time more, so that with this one blow I can get even with the Philistines for putting out my two eyes.'



So Samson took hold of the two middle columns holding up the building. Putting one hand on each column, he pushed against them and shouted, 'Let me die with the Philistines.'



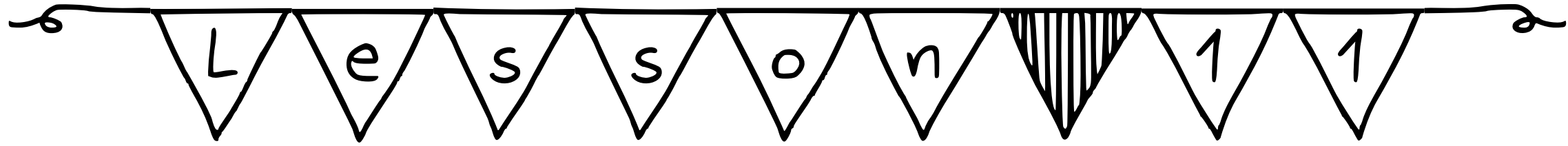
He pushed with all his might, and the building fell down on the five kings and everyone else. Samson killed more people at his death than he had killed during his life.



His brothers and the rest of his family came down to get his body. They took him back and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He had been Israel's leader for twenty years.

He will be remembered as a man who had great strength given to him by God but also as a man with great weaknesses that led him to disobey God and end up in in all kinds of trouble and suffering.





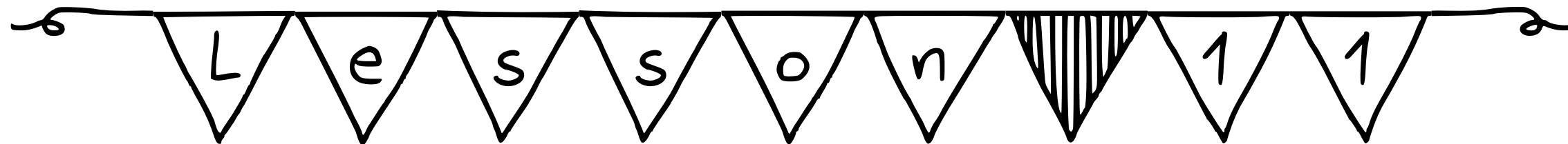
Having A Willing Heart for God

We can have willingness to be ready to serve, defend of whatever God expects of us.

Examples: Helping your mother with a chore without being asked

Having a good attitude and patience when helping a sibling
Doing nice things without "getting credit" or telling everyone about it

Can you think of others ways to have a willing heart?



Samson was born as a fulfillment of a divine prophecy.
There are many other men in the Bible who were told of
before their birth.

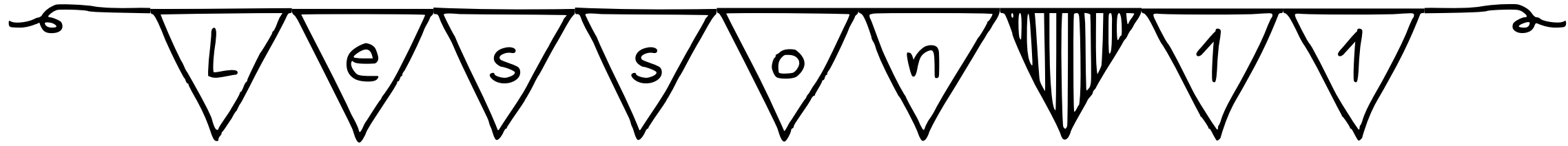
John the Baptist

Samuel

Isaac

Jesus

Can you think of any others?



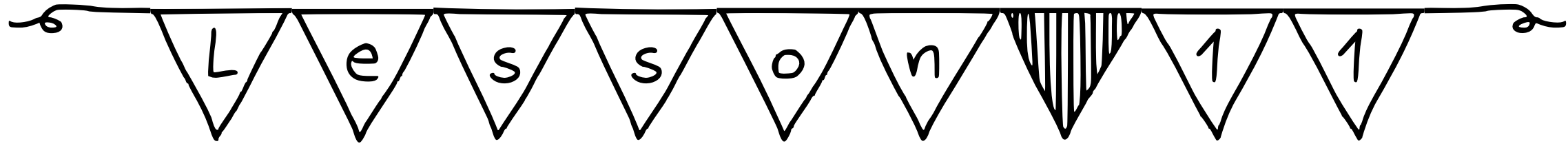
We can see how Samson's poor choices caused great problems in his life and how we can avoid many of these problems by following God's word and trusting in our parents for guidance.

What can we learn about "love and marriage" from Samson's sin? It is better to marry someone of your own faith.

There is danger in marrying an unbeliever. The woman looked good to Samson but no mention is made of her heart.

"Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised." Prov. 31:30

Samson was not as wise as he should have been. He relied more on himself than on God. But in his last days his faith was renewed in God.



3 Requirements of a Nazirite

Number 6:1-8

1. Abstain from wine
2. Never cut his hair
3. Don't go near a dead body, even a family member

“And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When either a man or a woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the Lord, he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink. He shall drink no vinegar made from wine or strong drink and shall not drink any juice of grapes or eat grapes, fresh or dried. All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, not even the seeds or the skins. “All the days of his vow of separation, no razor shall touch his head. Until the time is completed for which he separates himself to the Lord, he shall be holy. He shall let the locks of hair of his head grow long. “All the days that he separates himself to the Lord he shall not go near a dead body. Not even for his father or for his mother, for brother or sister, if they die, shall he make himself unclean, because his separation to God is on his head. All the days of his separation he is holy to the Lord.”