

Lesson 16: Trouble with the Philistines 1 Samuel 4-7

4th and 5th Grade Class

Jordan Park church of Christ

An illustration depicting a young boy on the left and an elderly man on the right. The boy has short brown hair and is wearing a light blue tunic. He is looking towards the man with a slight smile. The man has a long white beard and is wearing a white turban with a yellow band that has some illegible text on it. He is wearing a blue and white robe with a yellow and red chest plate. The background is a simple yellow and blue wall.

1 Samuel 2:1 - 4:22

GOD SPEAKS TO YOUNG SAMUEL

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Young Samuel grew up serving God at the Tabernacle.

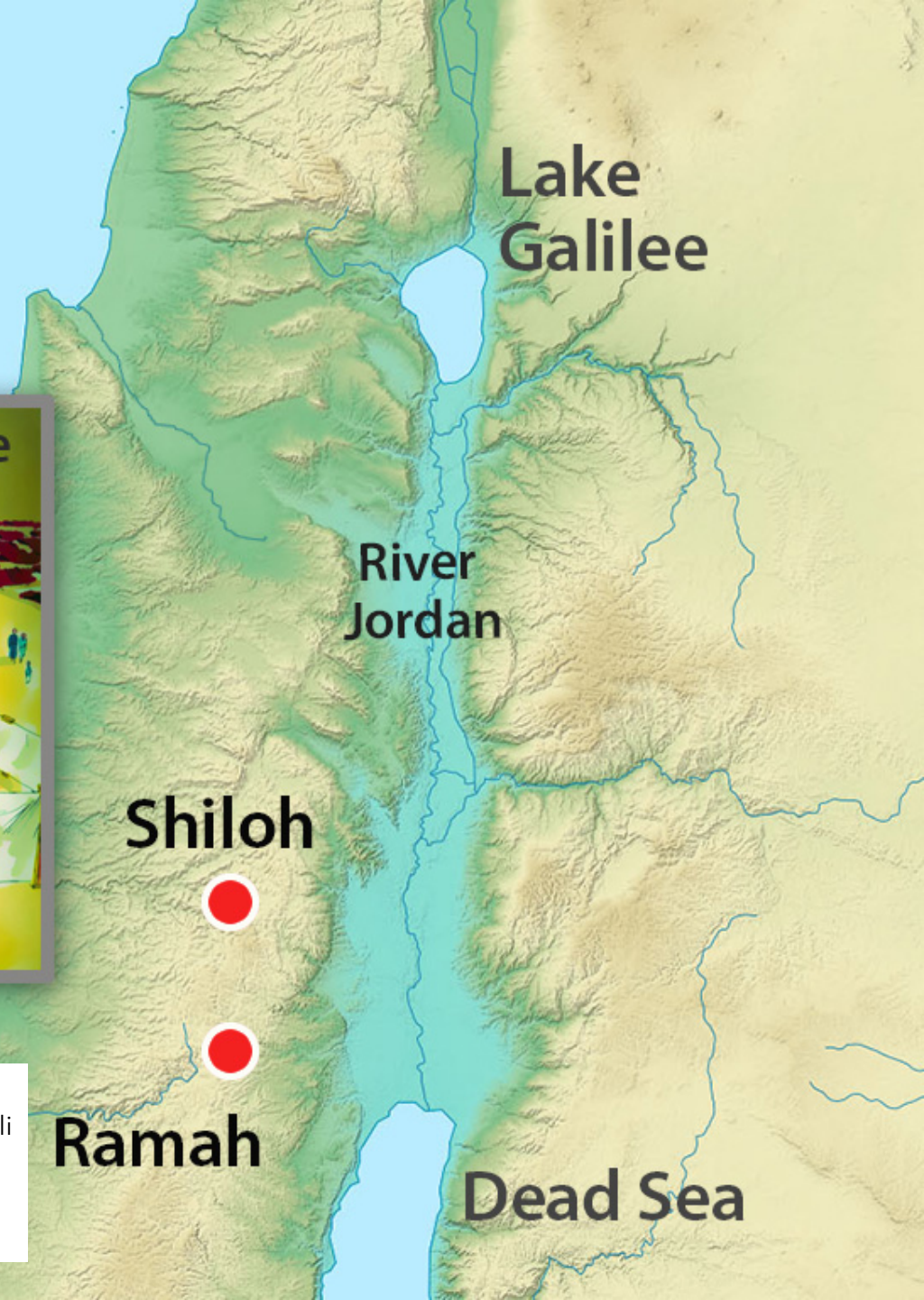


ISRAEL

IN THE TIME OF SAMUEL

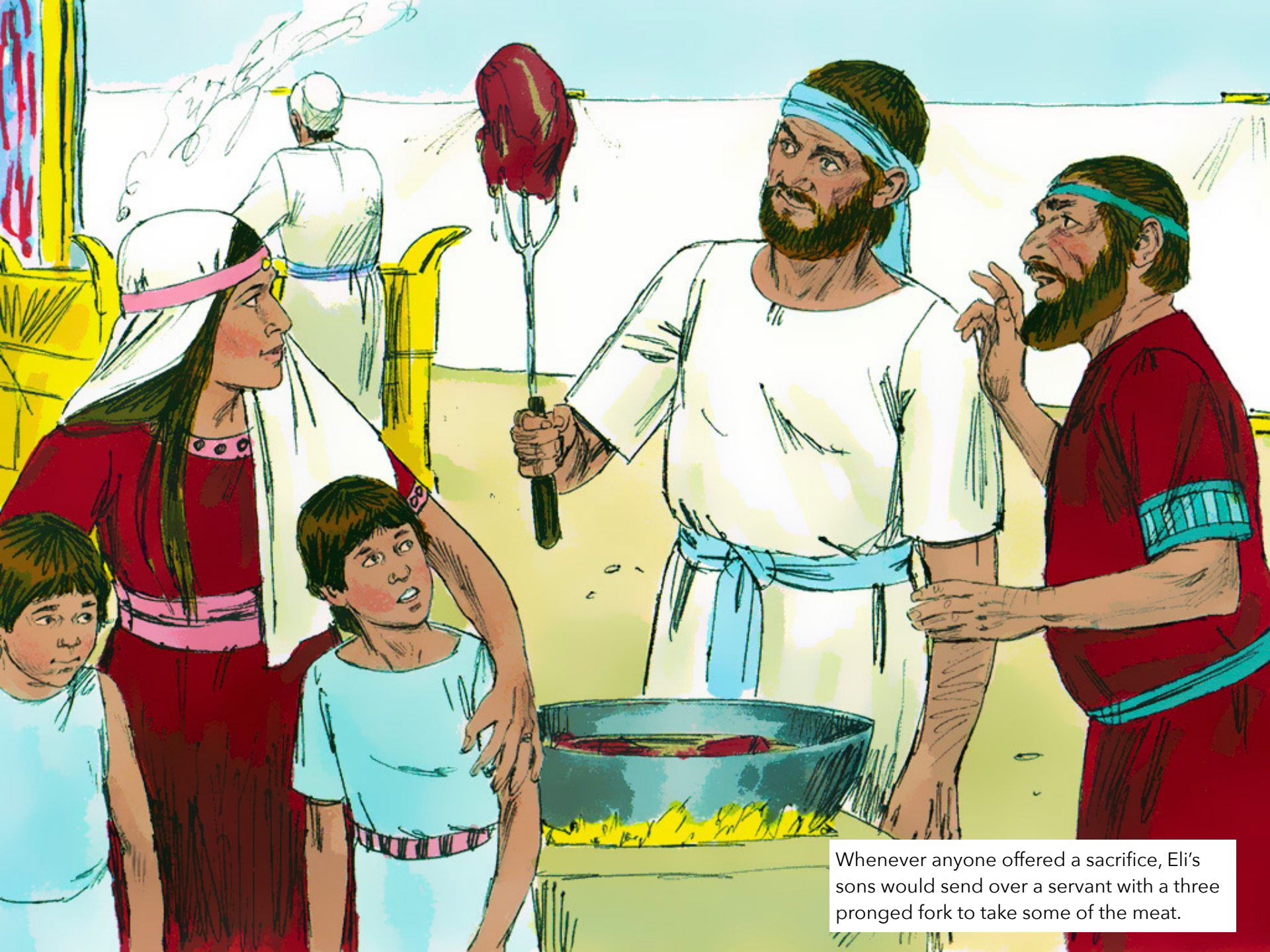


Every year his parents Elkanah and Hannah would travel from Ramah to visit him and his mother would bring him a new coat. Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife and asked God to give them other children to take the place of Samuel who had been given to the Lord. The Lord gave Hannah three sons and two daughters.

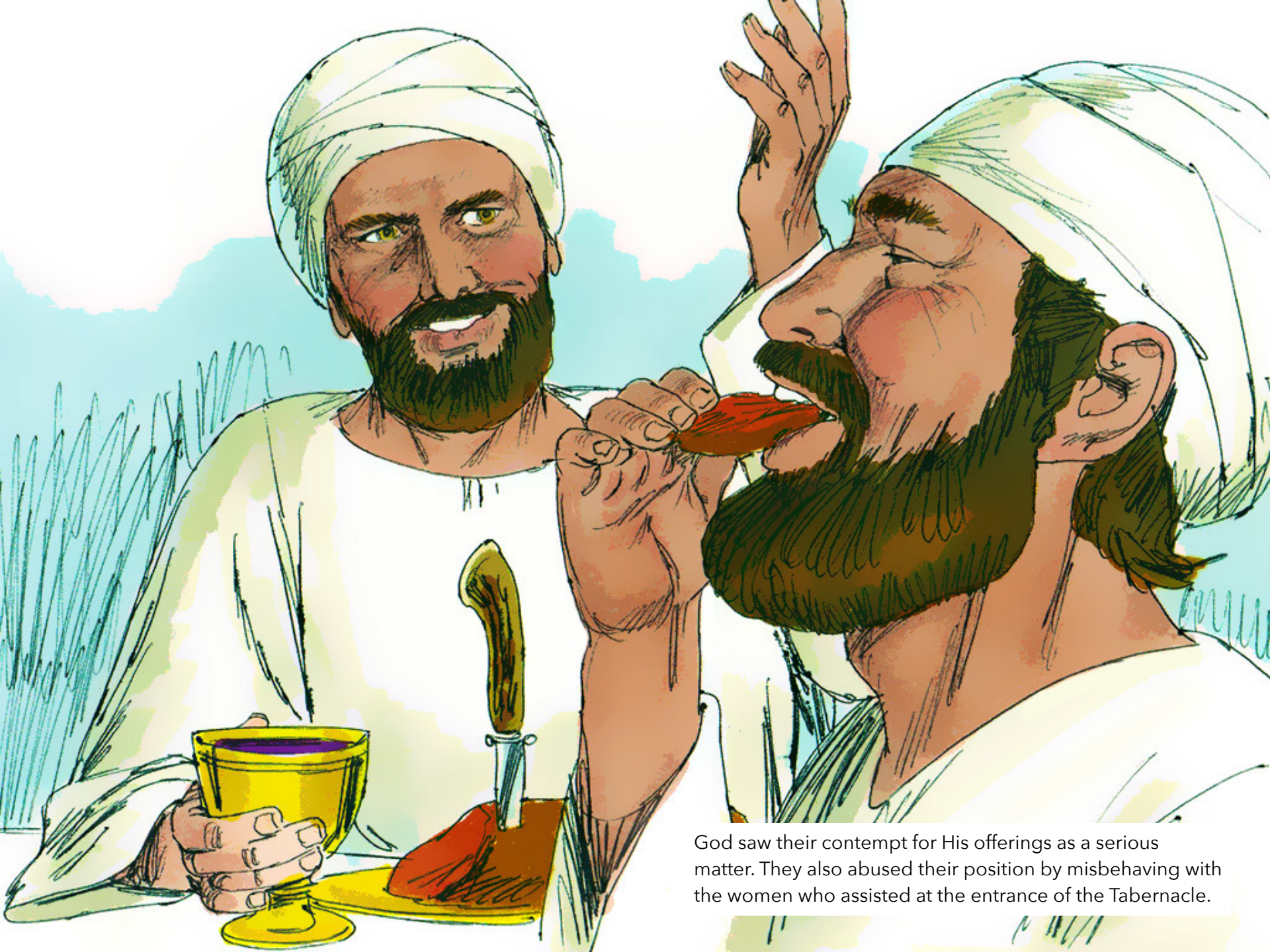




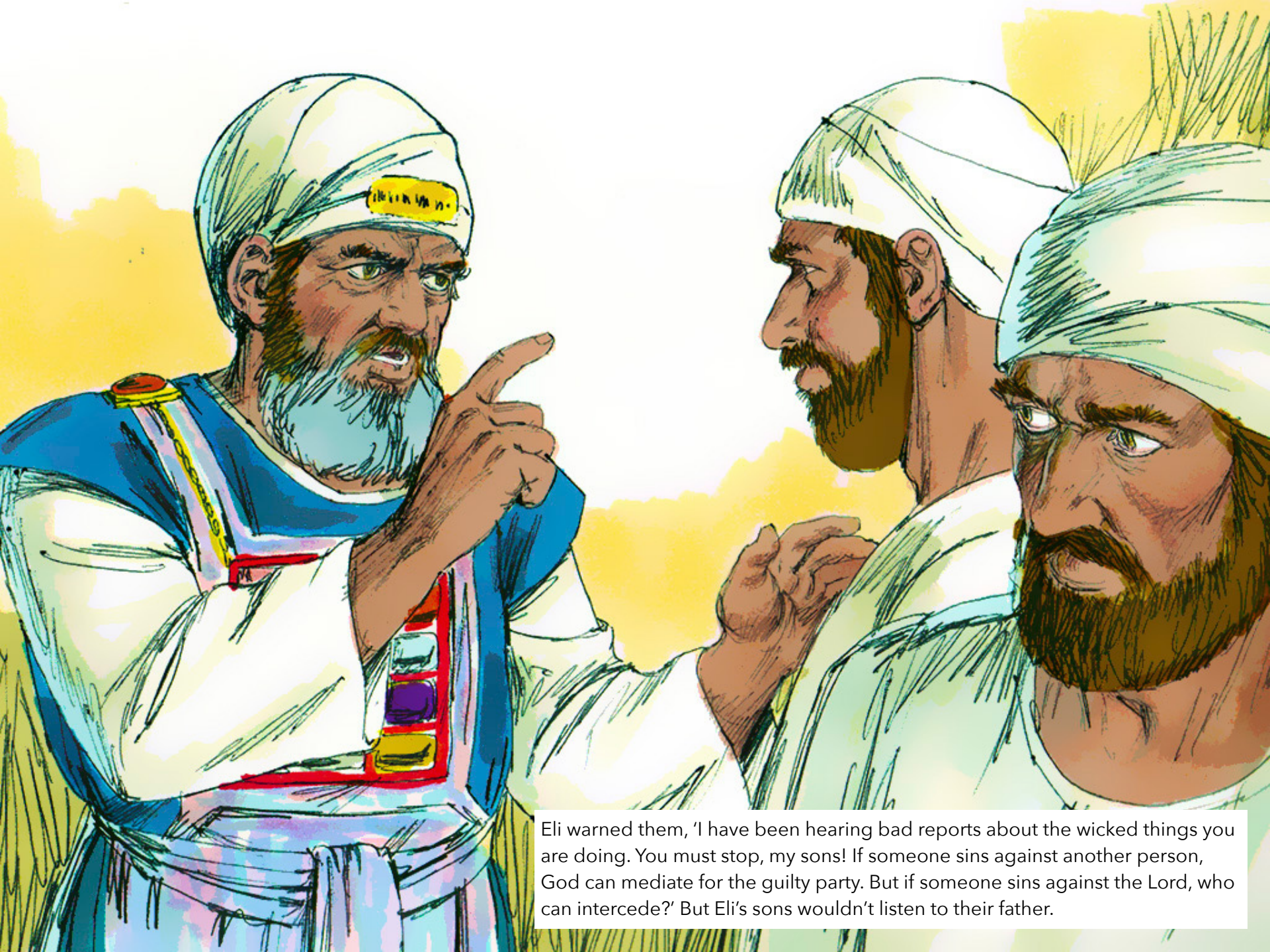
Eli was now old and growing blind. His two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests. However they had no respect for God or Eli.



Whenever anyone offered a sacrifice, Eli's sons would send over a servant with a three pronged fork to take some of the meat.

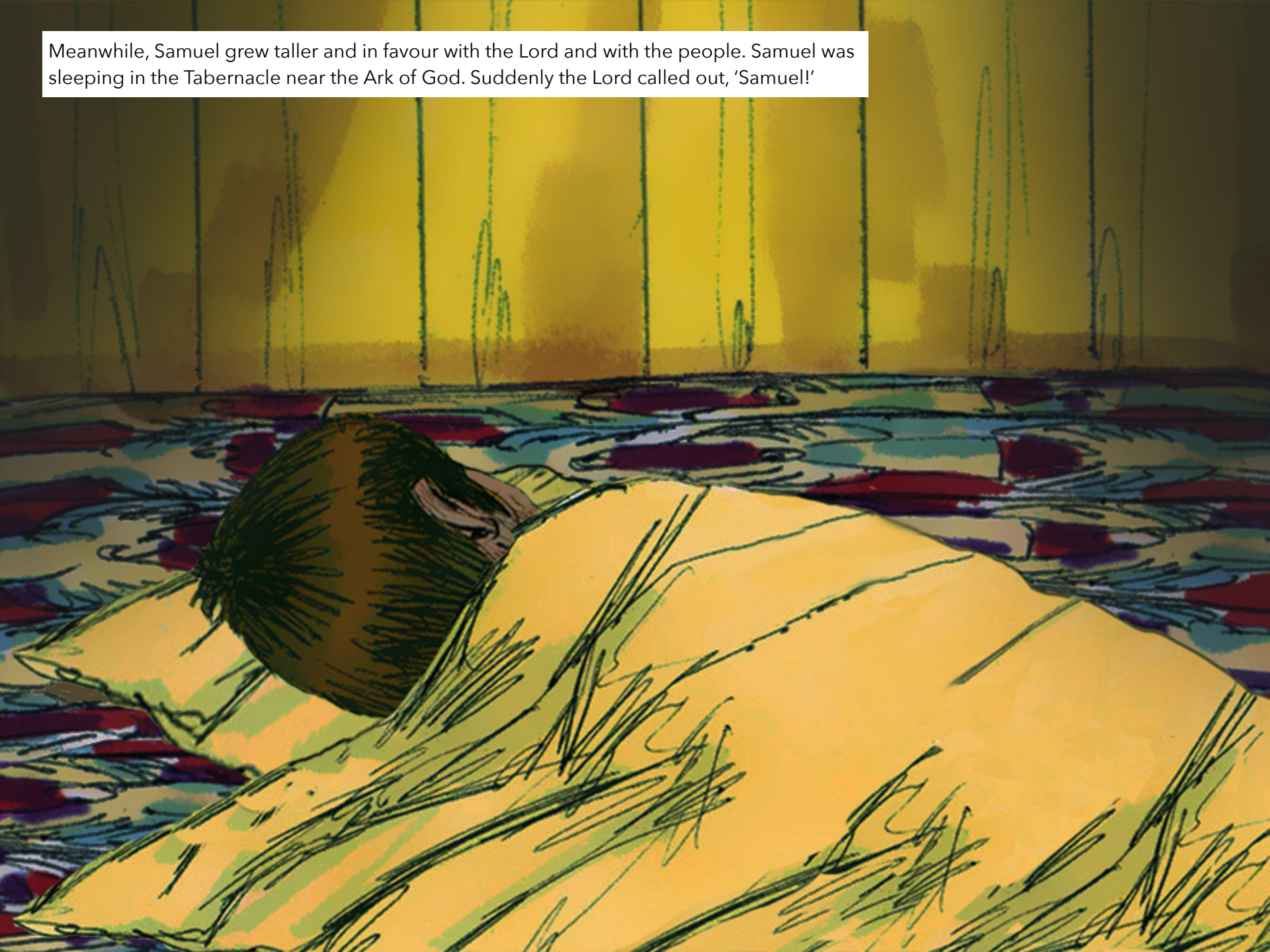


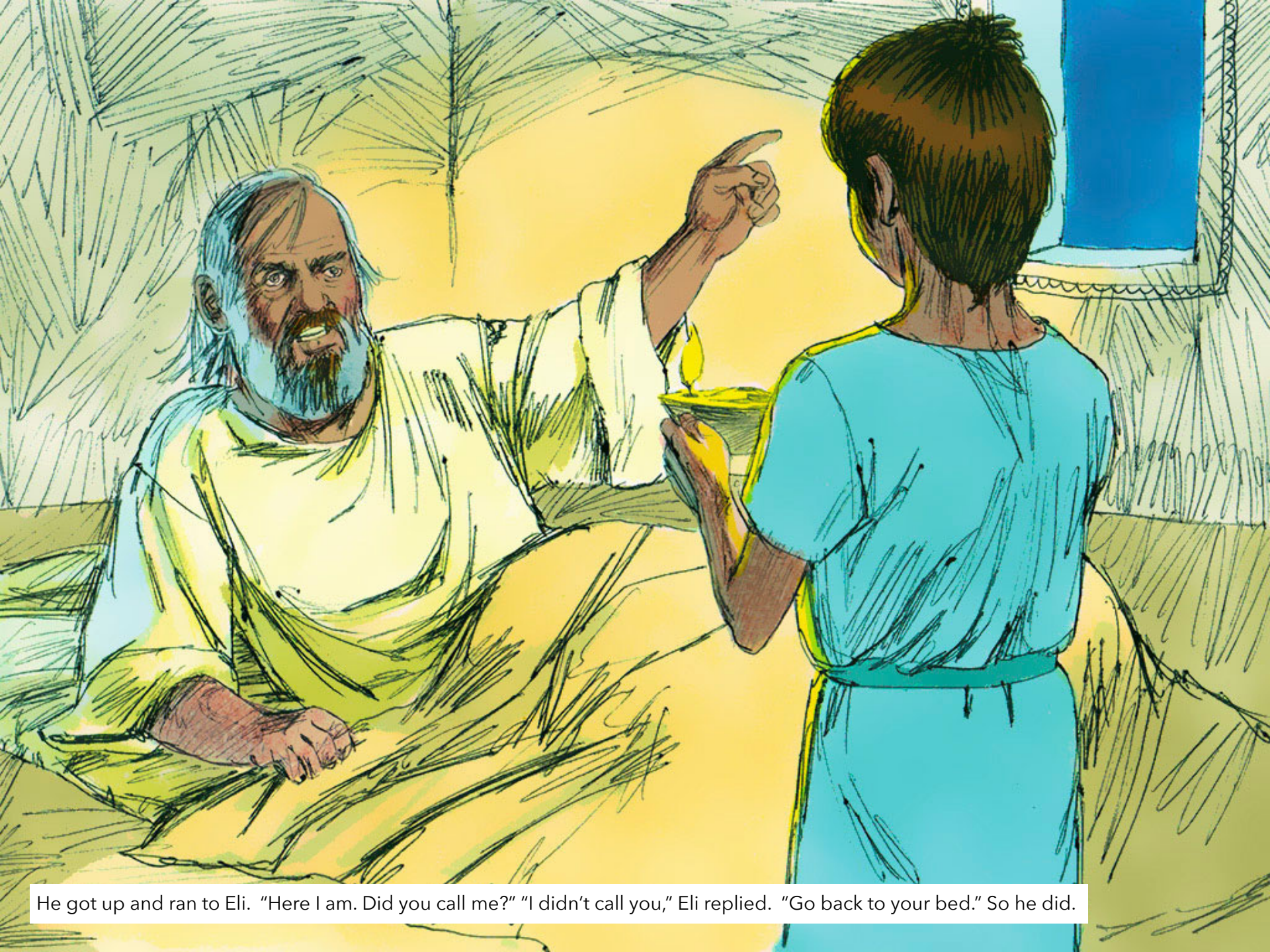
God saw their contempt for His offerings as a serious matter. They also abused their position by misbehaving with the women who assisted at the entrance of the Tabernacle.



Eli warned them, 'I have been hearing bad reports about the wicked things you are doing. You must stop, my sons! If someone sins against another person, God can mediate for the guilty party. But if someone sins against the Lord, who can intercede?' But Eli's sons wouldn't listen to their father.

Meanwhile, Samuel grew taller and in favour with the Lord and with the people. Samuel was sleeping in the Tabernacle near the Ark of God. Suddenly the Lord called out, 'Samuel!'

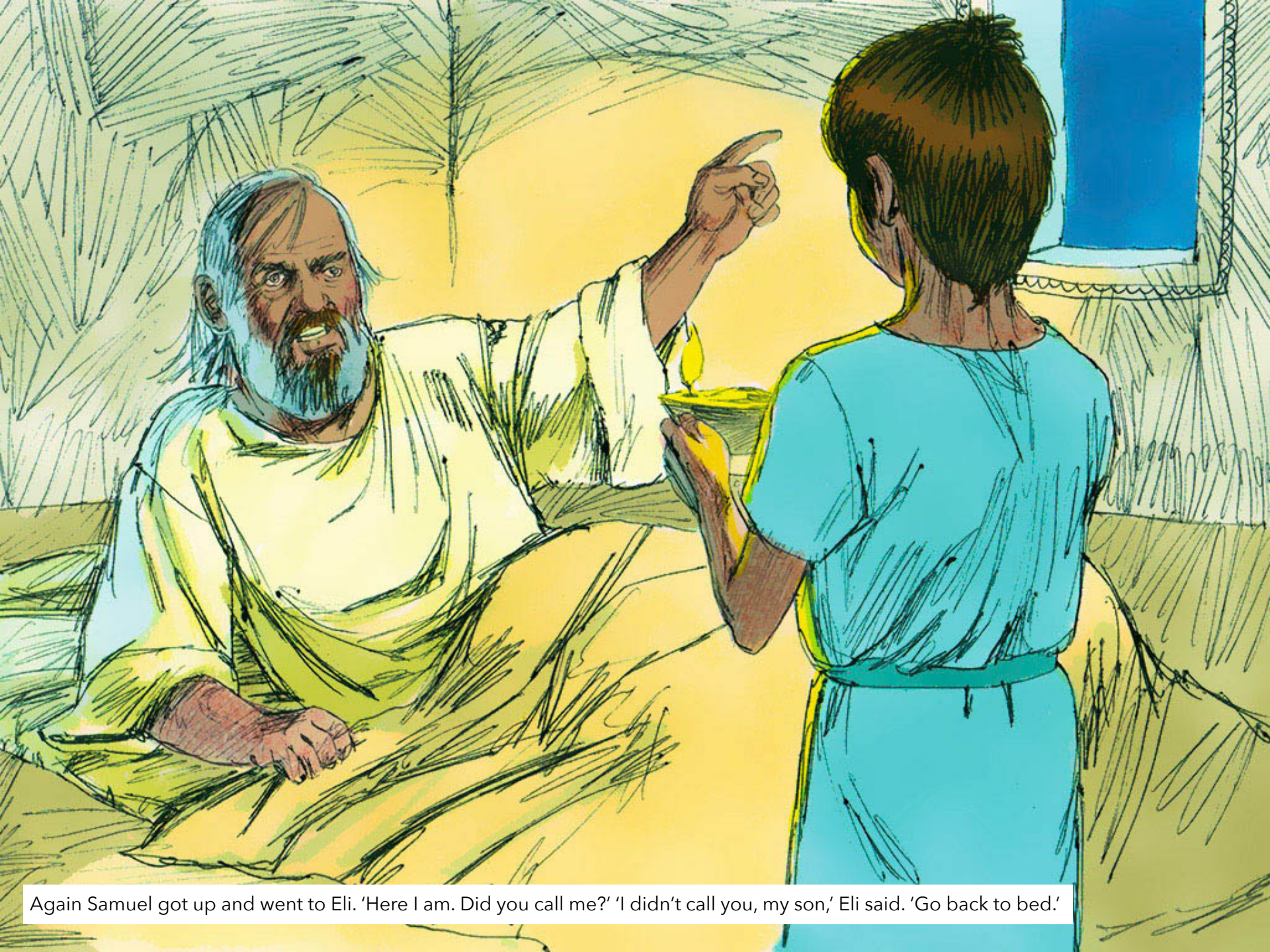




He got up and ran to Eli. "Here I am. Did you call me?" "I didn't call you," Eli replied. "Go back to your bed." So he did.

Then the Lord called out again, 'Samuel!'

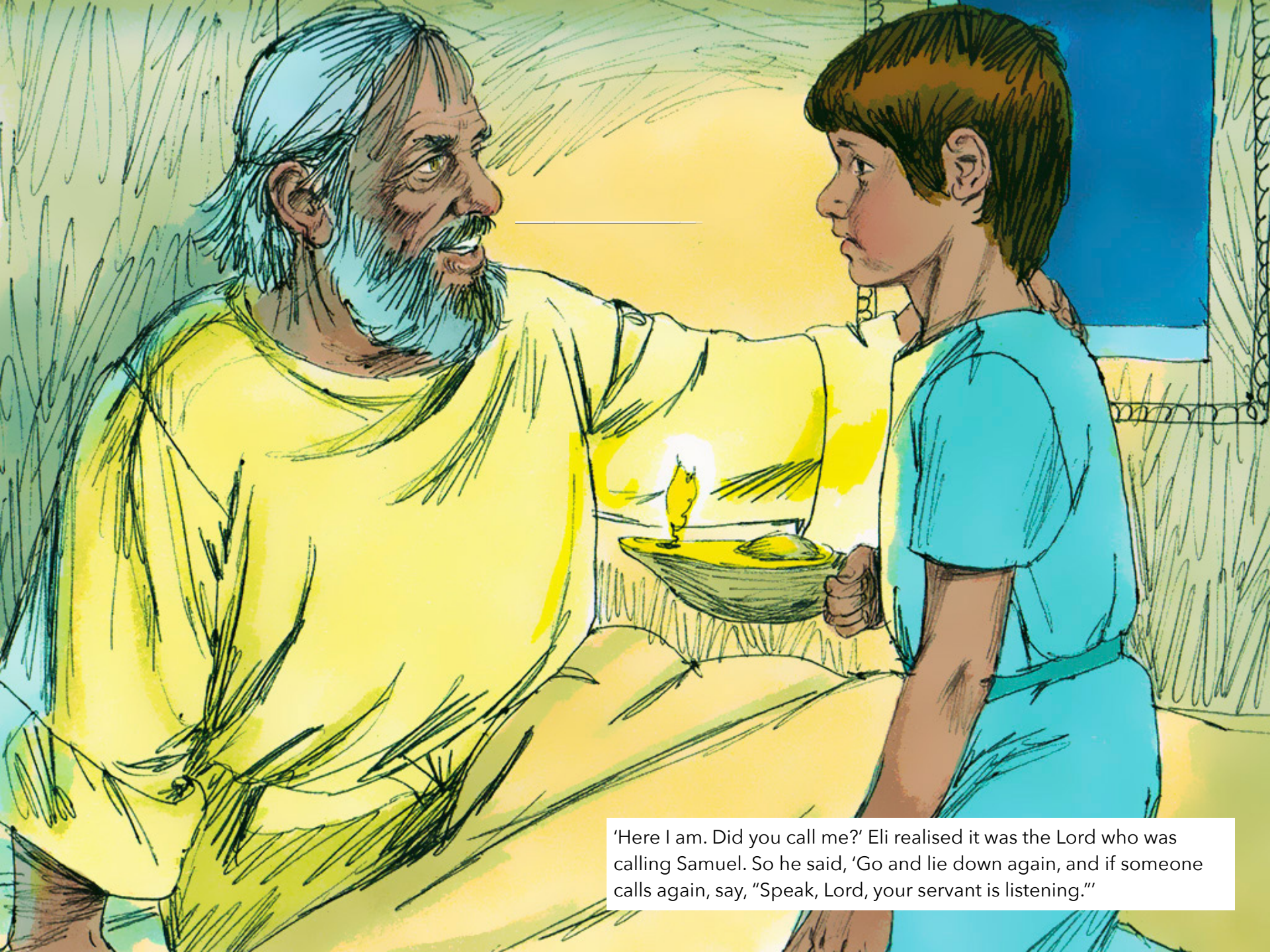




Again Samuel got up and went to Eli. 'Here I am. Did you call me?' 'I didn't call you, my son,' Eli said. 'Go back to bed.'

Samuel did not know God was calling his name as the Lord had never spoken to him before. He went back to bed. The Lord called a third time, and once more Samuel got up and went to Eli.






'Here I am. Did you call me?' Eli realised it was the Lord who was calling Samuel. So he said, 'Go and lie down again, and if someone calls again, say, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."'

The Lord came and called as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!'





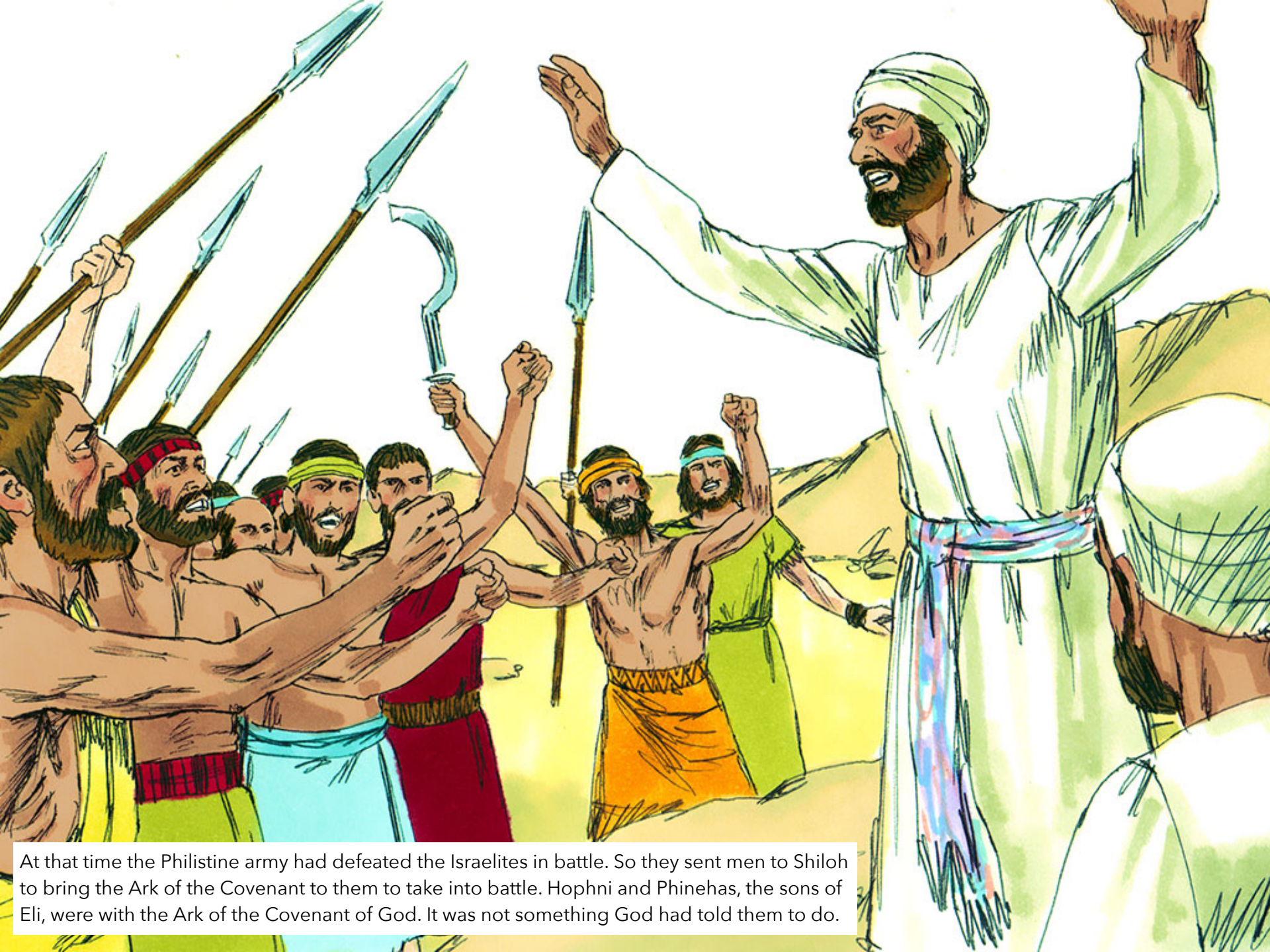
Samuel replied, 'Speak, your servant is listening.' The Lord said to Samuel, 'I am about to do a shocking thing and carry out all my threats against Eli and his family.'



'Judgment is coming upon his family forever, because his sons are blaspheming God and he hasn't disciplined them.' Samuel stayed in bed until morning, then got up and opened the doors of the Tabernacle. He was afraid to tell Eli what the Lord had said to him.



Eli called Samuel and insisted he tell him everything God had said. So Samuel told Eli everything. 'It is the Lord's will,' Eli replied. 'Let Him do what He thinks best.'



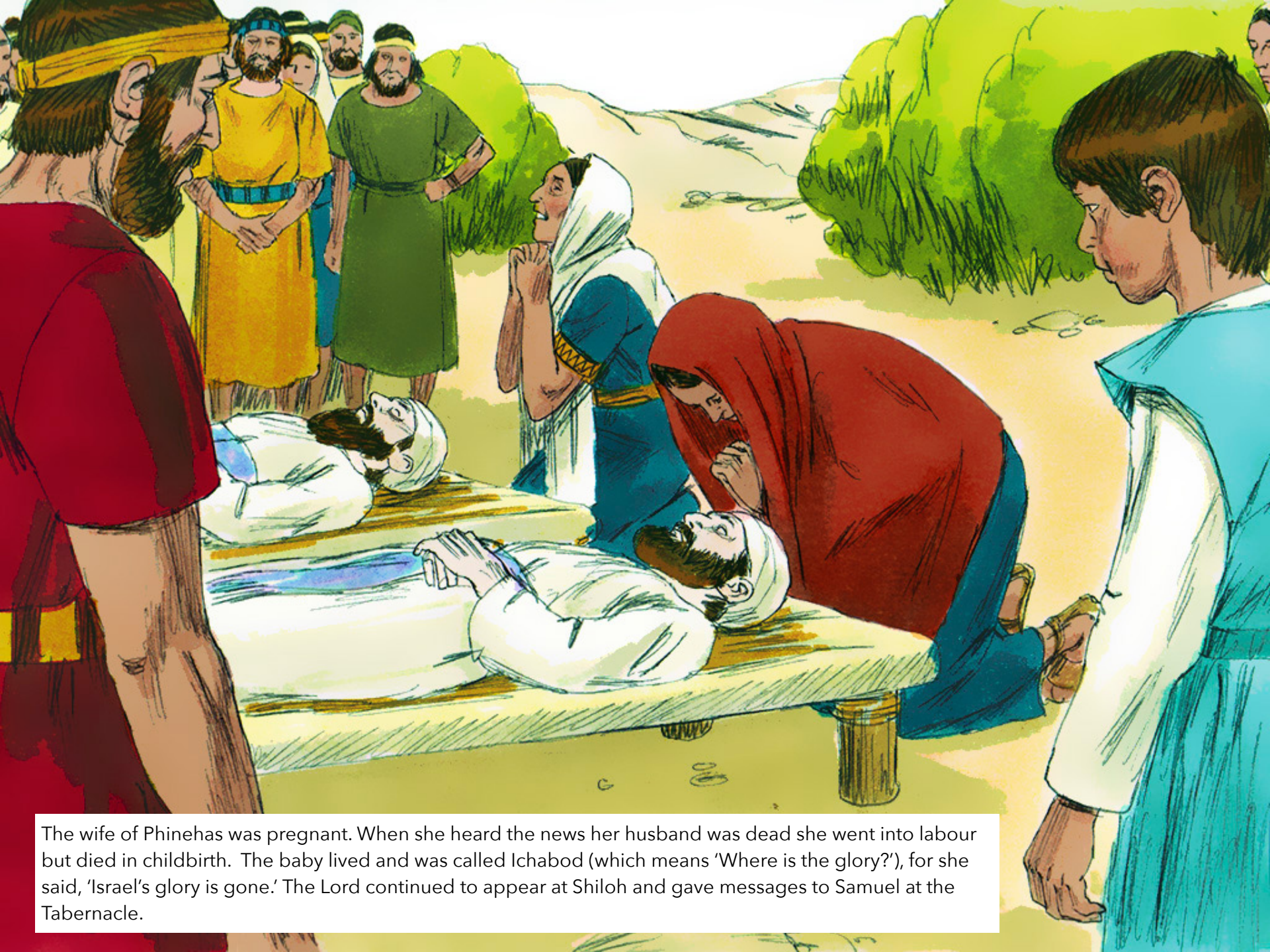
At that time the Philistine army had defeated the Israelites in battle. So they sent men to Shiloh to bring the Ark of the Covenant to them to take into battle. Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, were with the Ark of the Covenant of God. It was not something God had told them to do.

They went into battle against the Philistines again. 30,000 Israelite soldiers died that day. The survivors turned and fled to their tents. The Ark of God was captured, and Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were killed.



Eli was waiting beside the road to hear the news of the battle. A messenger told him how the battle had been lost, the Ark of the Covenant captured and Eli's sons killed. Eli fell backwards from his seat in shock, broke his neck and died.





The wife of Phinehas was pregnant. When she heard the news her husband was dead she went into labour but died in childbirth. The baby lived and was called Ichabod (which means 'Where is the glory?'), for she said, 'Israel's glory is gone.' The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh and gave messages to Samuel at the Tabernacle.



SAMUEL AND THE EBENEZER STONE

1 Samuel 6-7

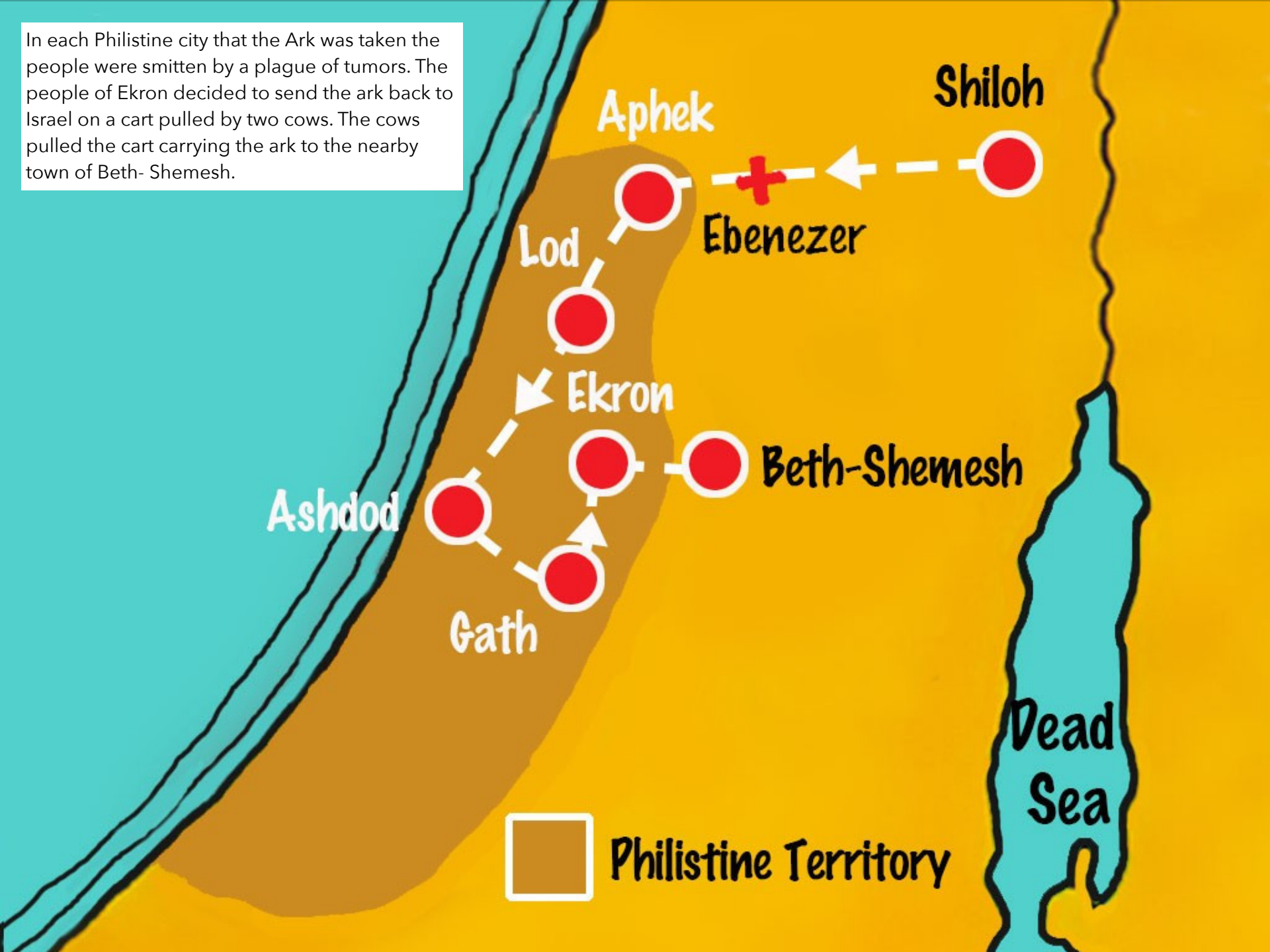


Samuel was a prophet in Israel at a time when the people had turned away from God to worship idols.

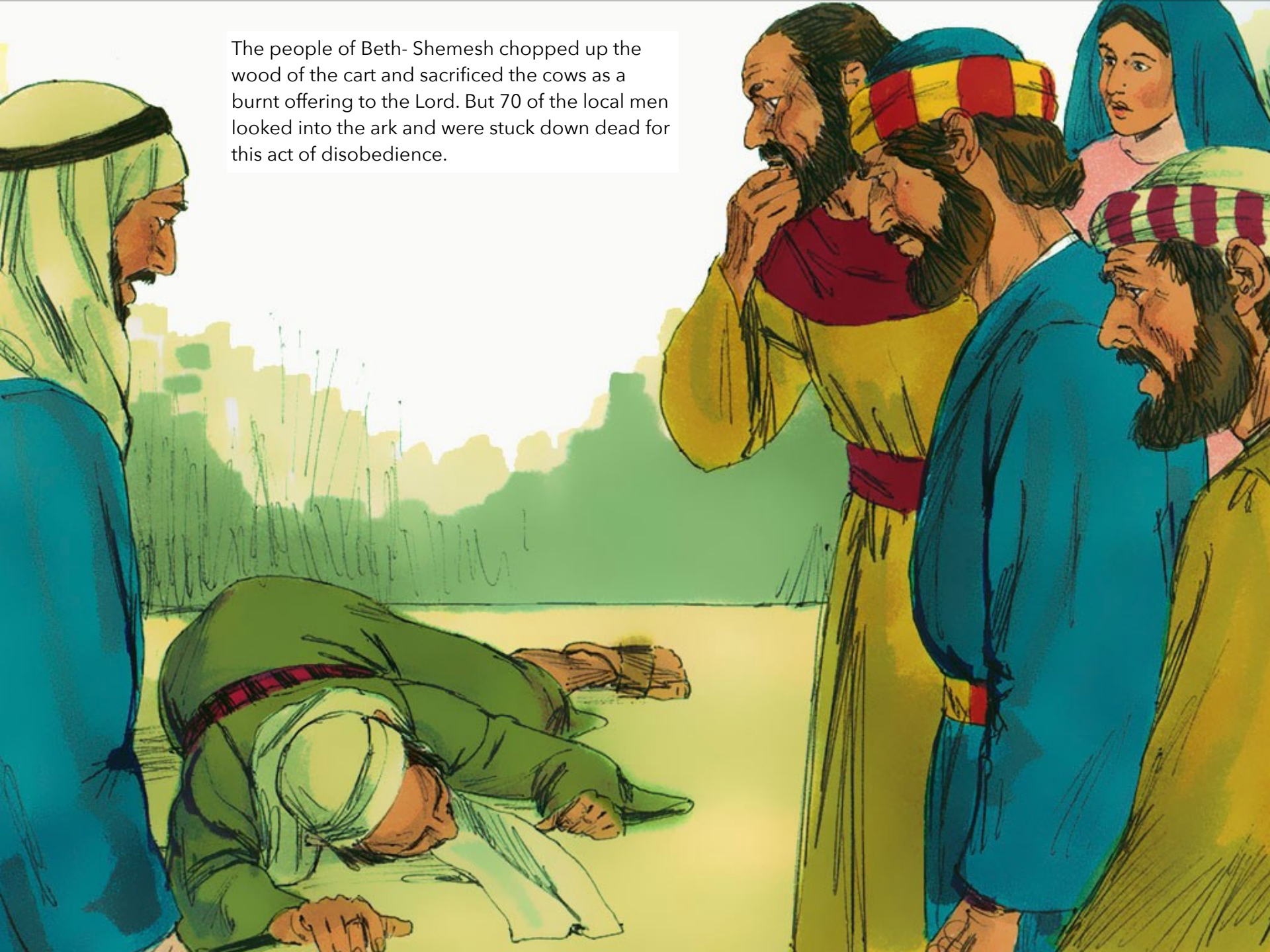
At a time when Eli was the High Priest, his wicked sons had ordered that the Ark of the Covenant be taken out of the Tabernacle in Shiloh and carried into battle against the Philistines. The Philistines won the battle and at a place called Ebenezer captured the Ark and took it back to their territory.

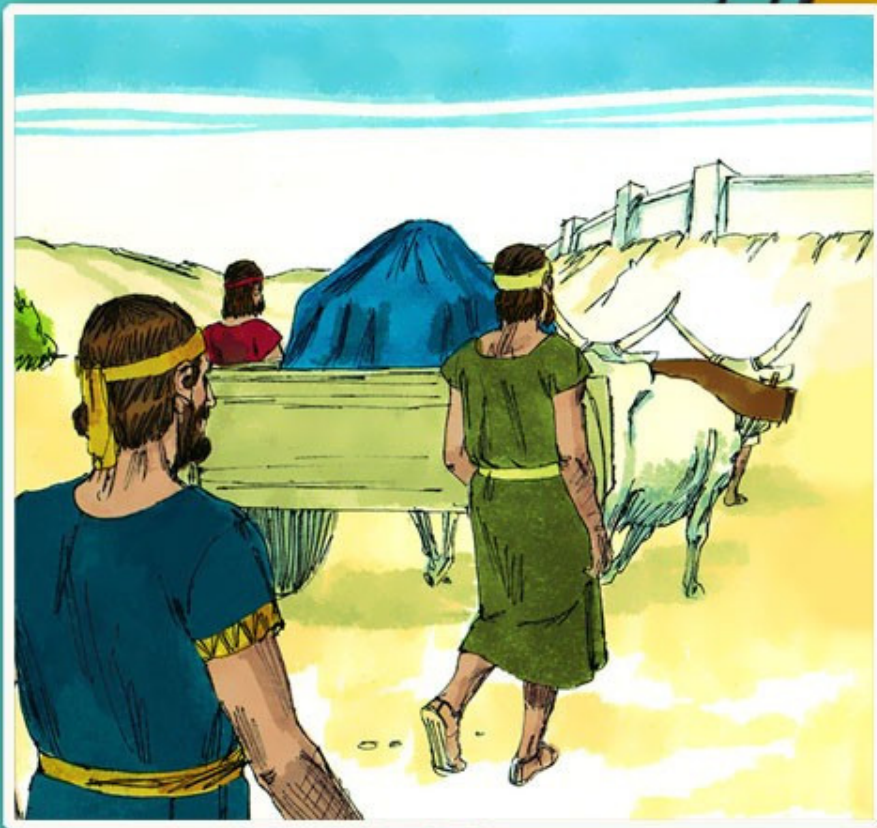


In each Philistine city that the Ark was taken the people were smitten by a plague of tumors. The people of Ekron decided to send the ark back to Israel on a cart pulled by two cows. The cows pulled the cart carrying the ark to the nearby town of Beth- Shemesh.



The people of Beth-Shemesh chopped up the wood of the cart and sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord. But 70 of the local men looked into the ark and were stuck down dead for this act of disobedience.





Shiloh



Kiriath-Jearim



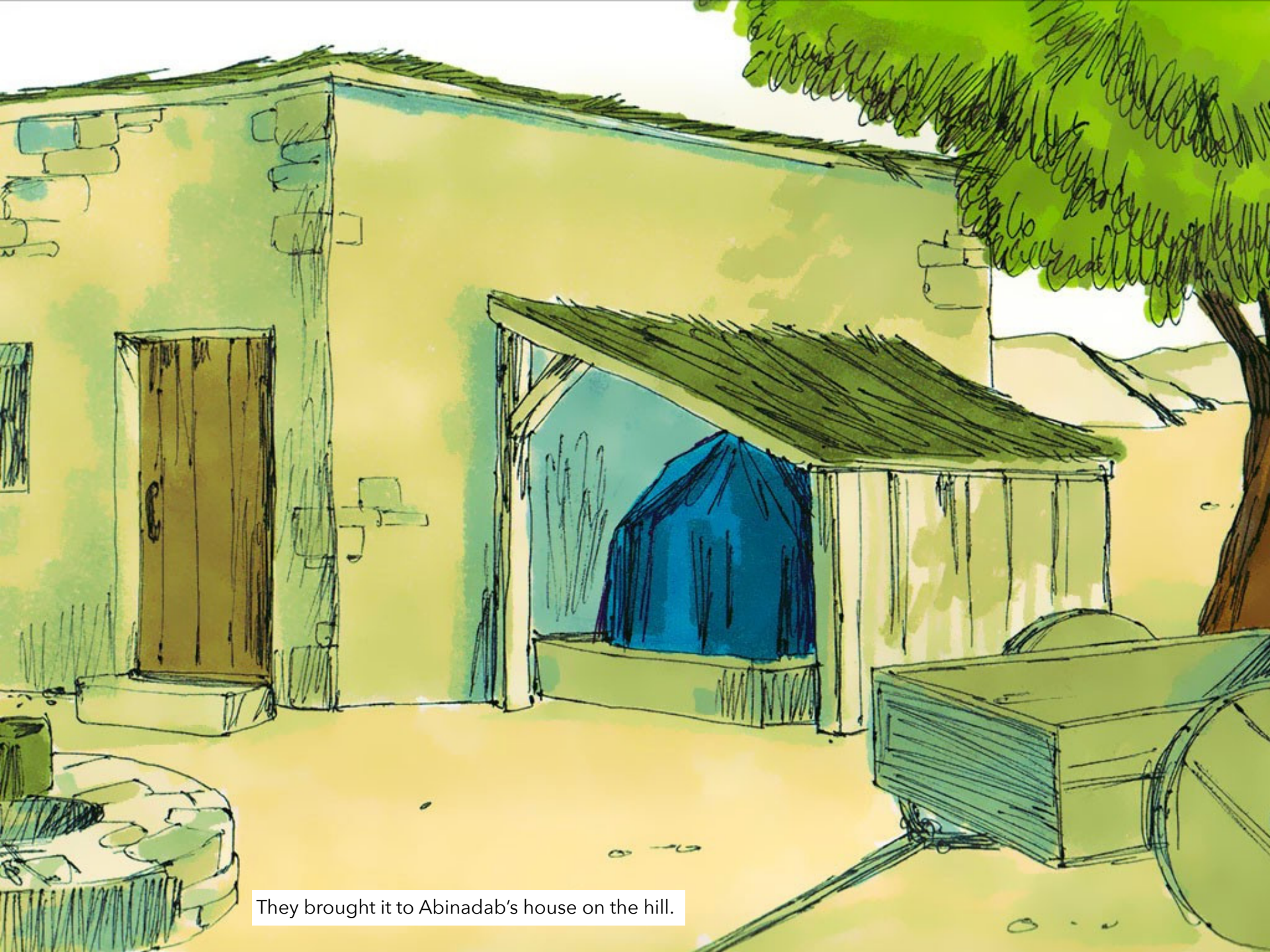
Beth-Shemesh

Dead
Sea

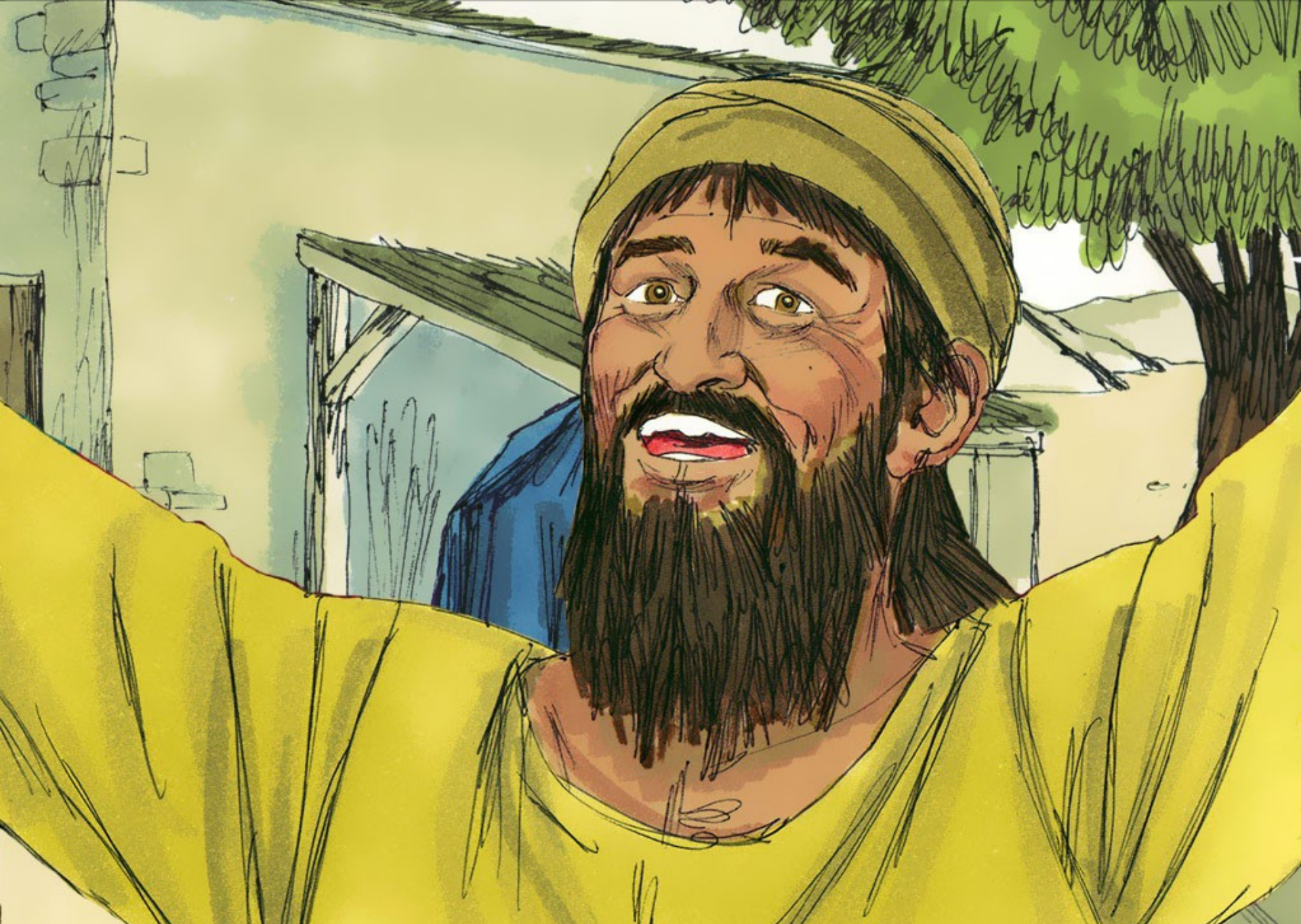


Philistine Territory

So, the people of Beth- Shemesh asked the people of nearby Kiriath- Jearim to come and take the Ark to their town.



They brought it to Abinadab's house on the hill.



They consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the ark of the Lord. The Ark remained under the protection of Eleazar for the next twenty years.

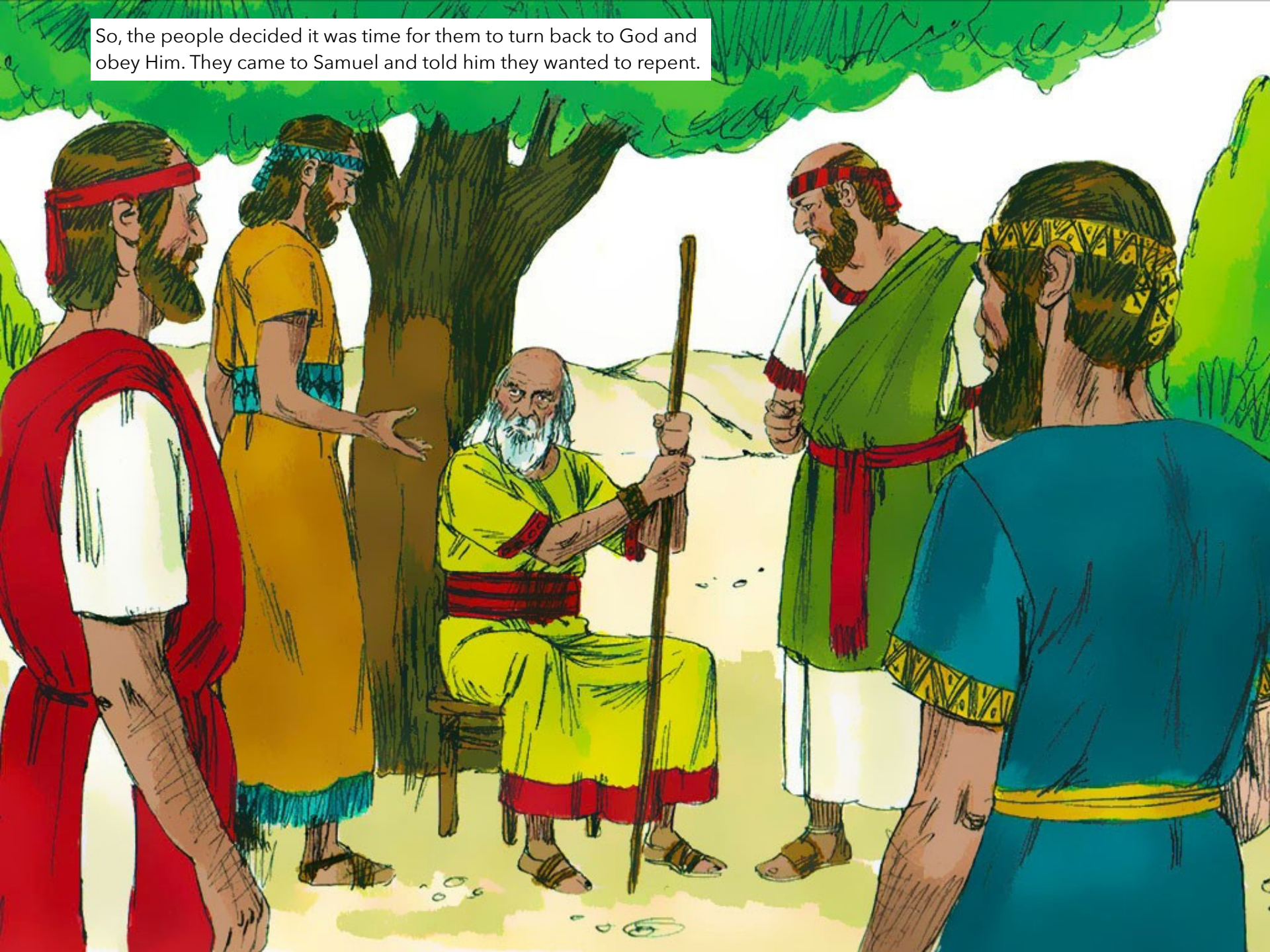


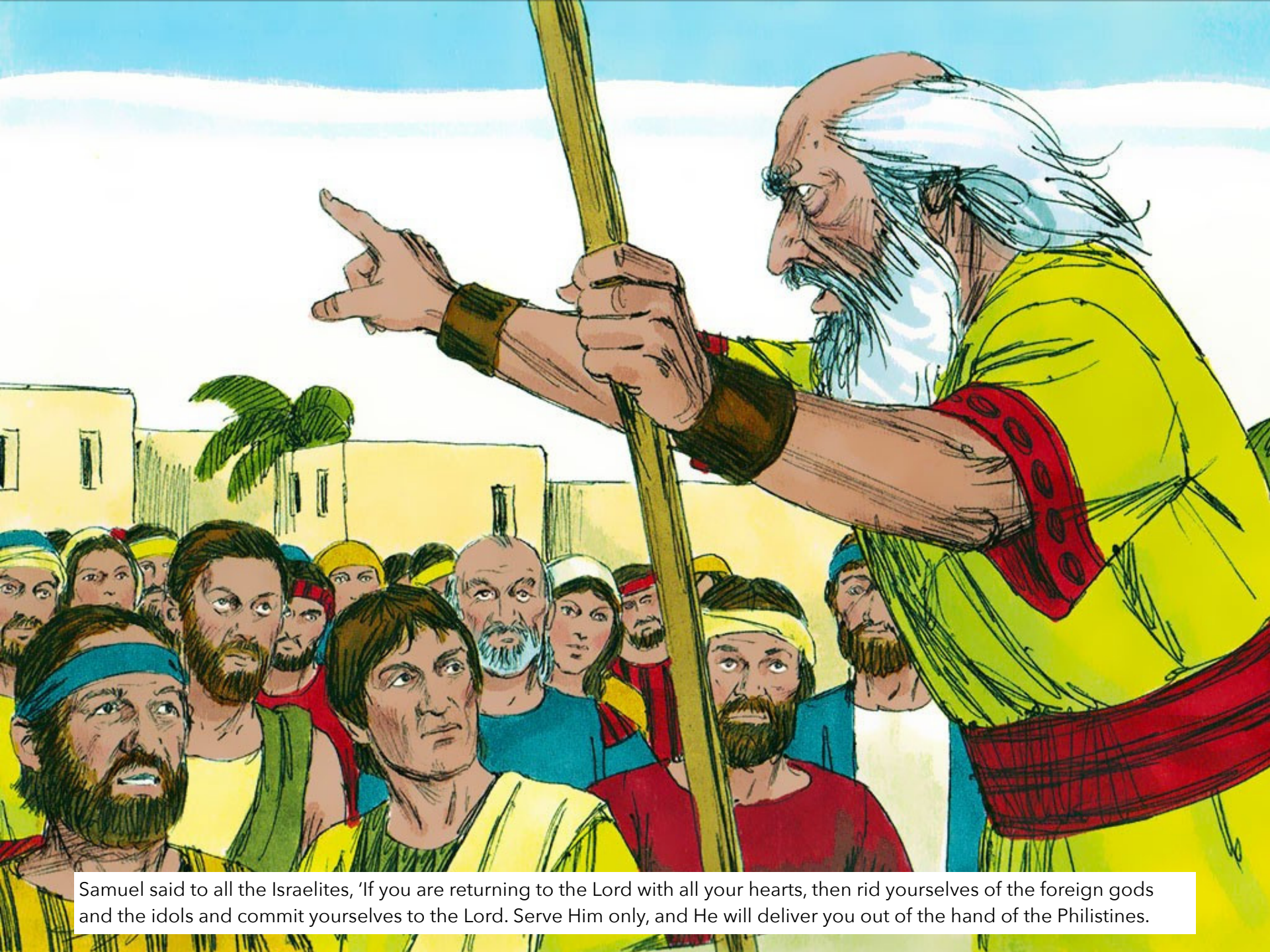
The people of Israel, despite the warnings of the prophet Samuel, continued to worship idols rather than the one true God.



As a result of their disobedience the people of Israel came under the control of raiding Philistines who stole their harvests and threatened them.

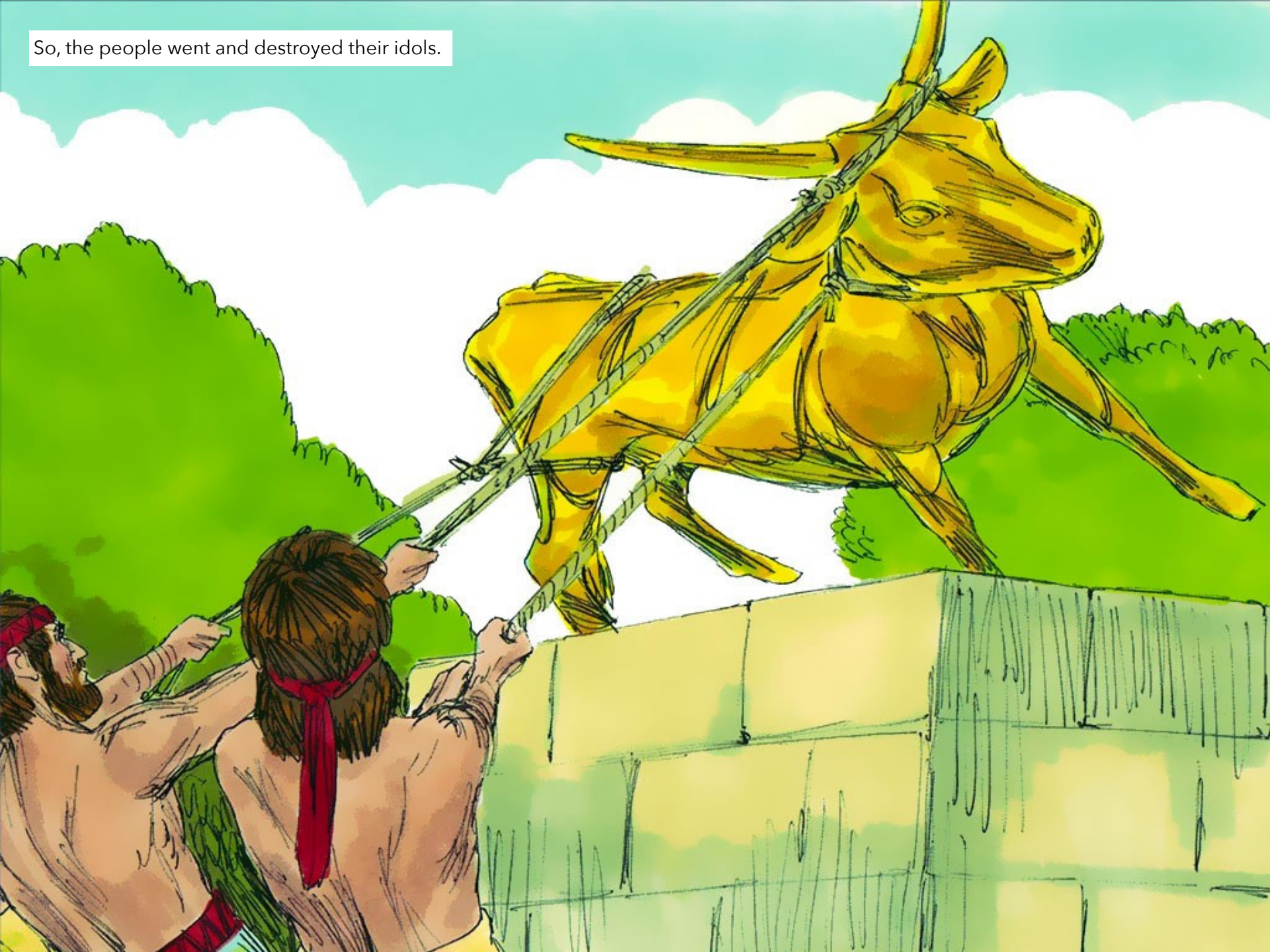
So, the people decided it was time for them to turn back to God and obey Him. They came to Samuel and told him they wanted to repent.

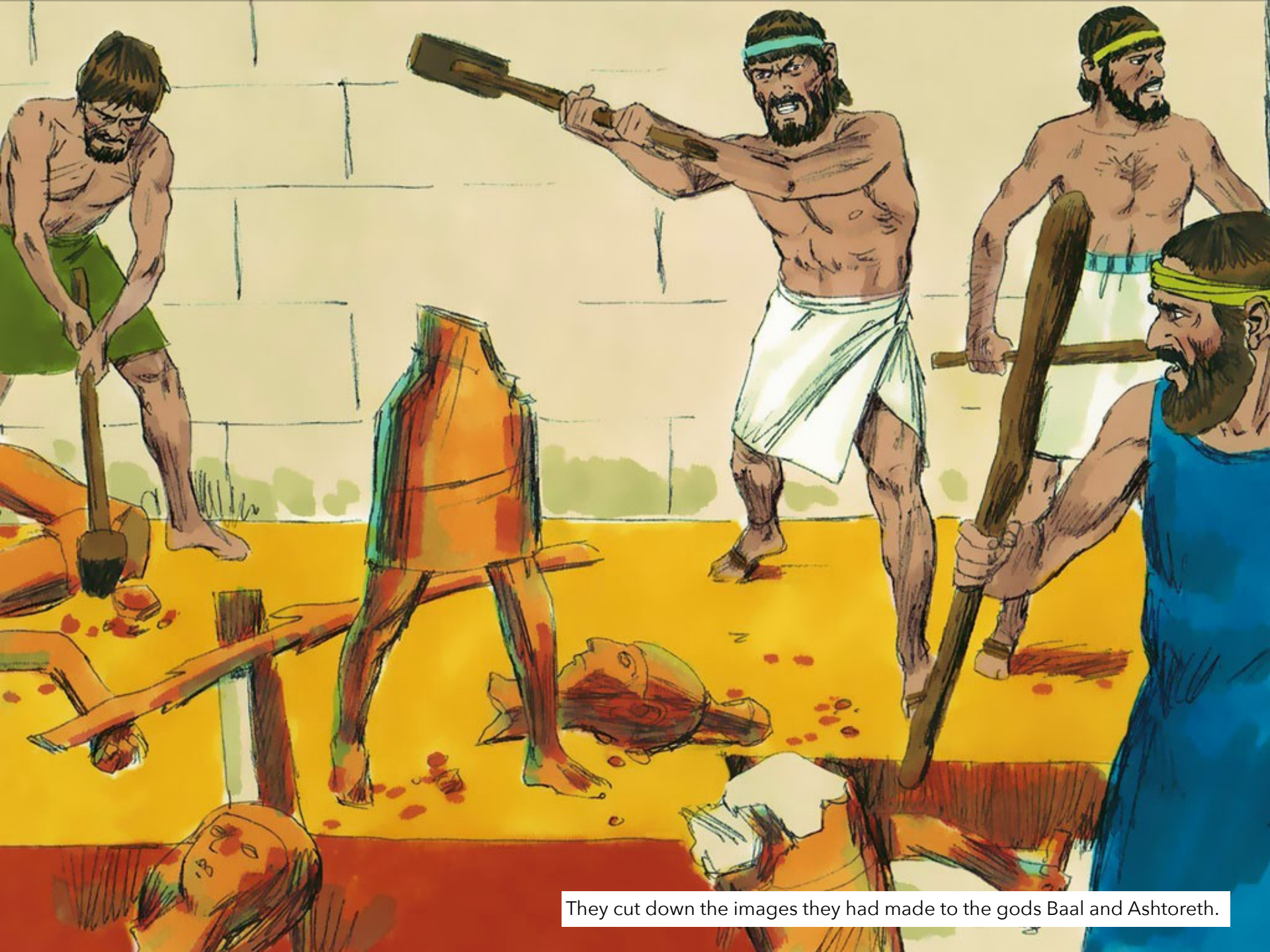




Samuel said to all the Israelites, 'If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the idols and commit yourselves to the Lord. Serve Him only, and He will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.'

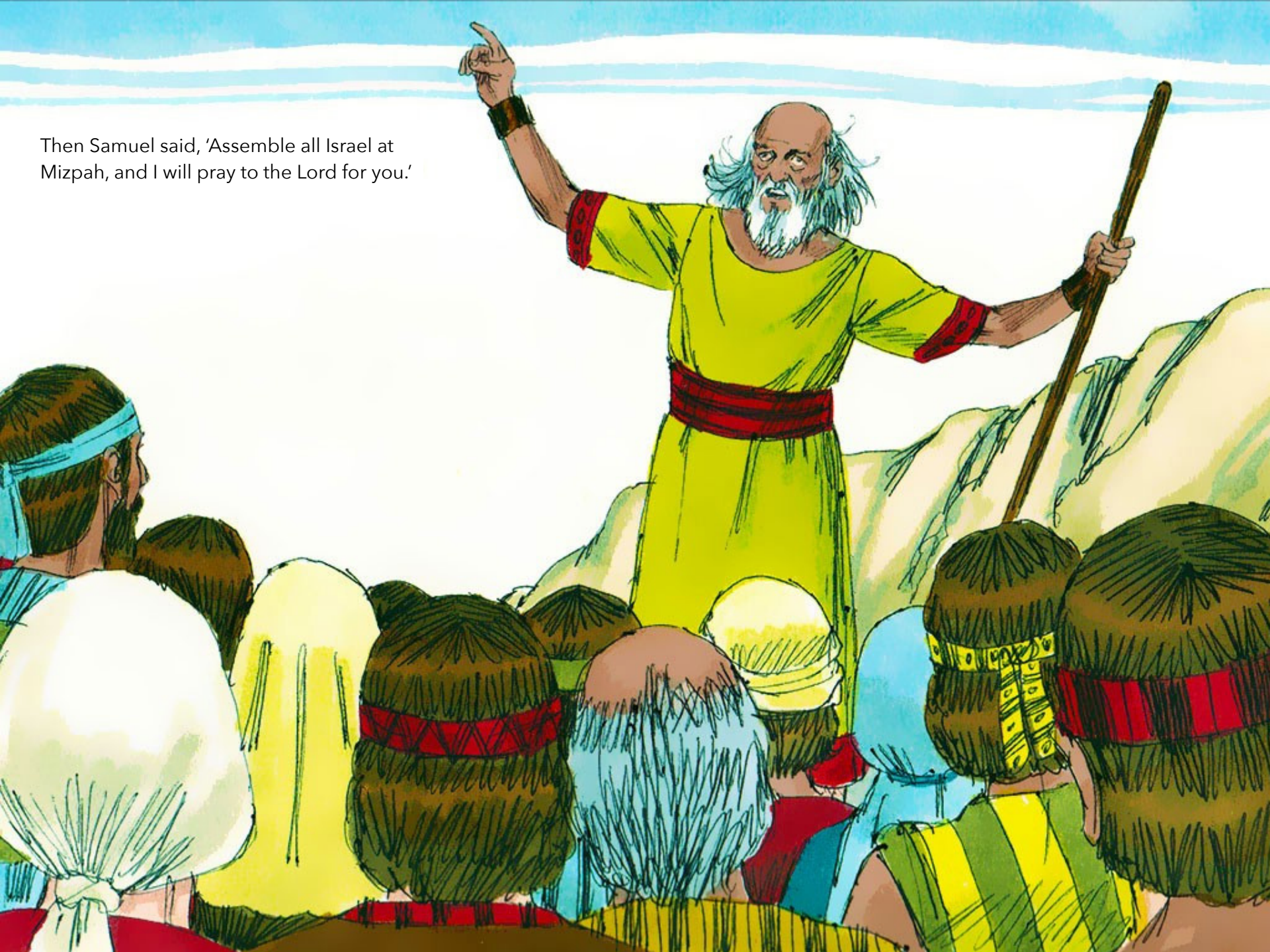
So, the people went and destroyed their idols.



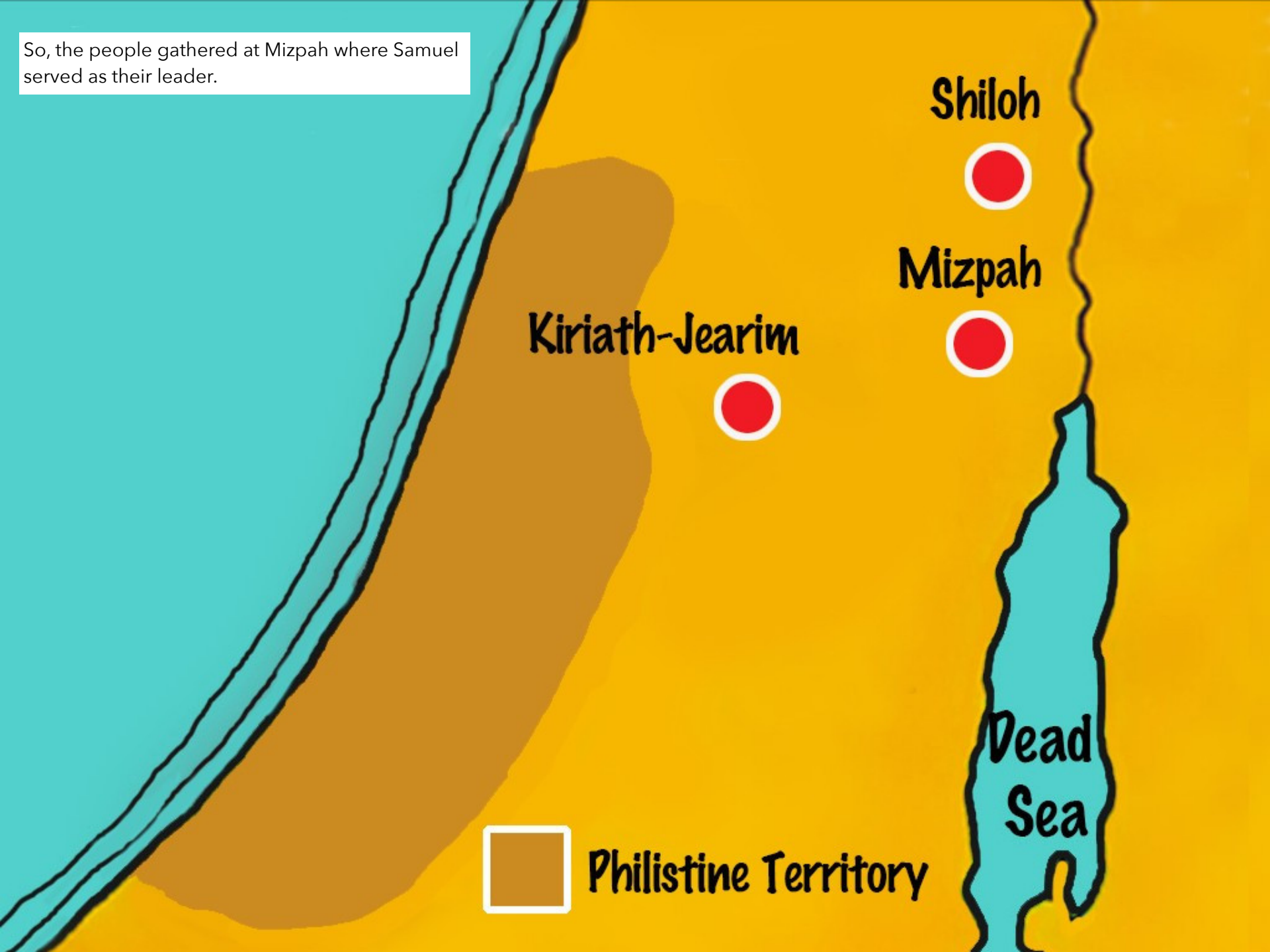


They cut down the images they had made to the gods Baal and Ashtoreth.

Then Samuel said, 'Assemble all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you.'



So, the people gathered at Mizpah where Samuel served as their leader.



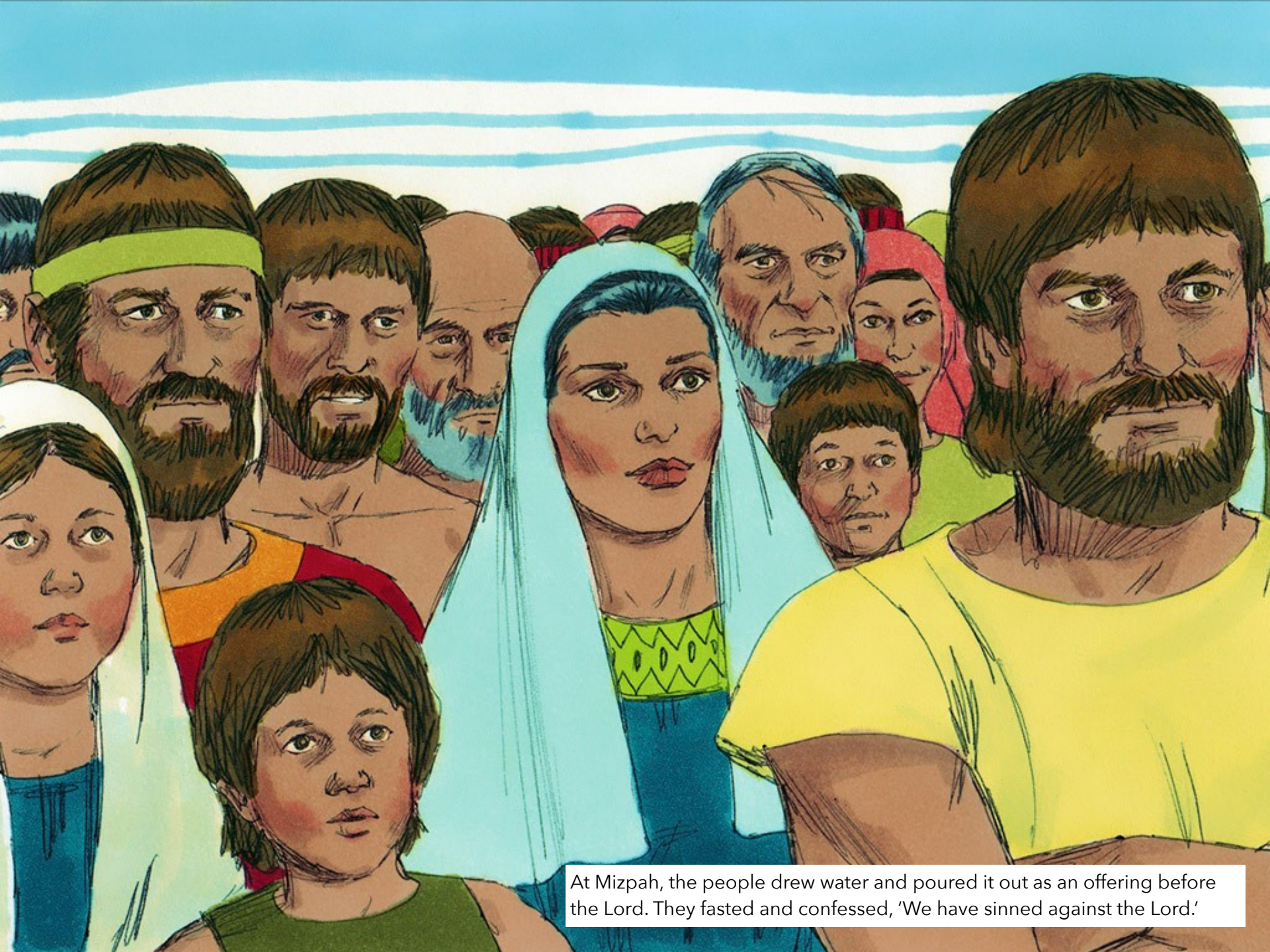
Shiloh

Mizpah

Kiriath-Jearim

Dead
Sea

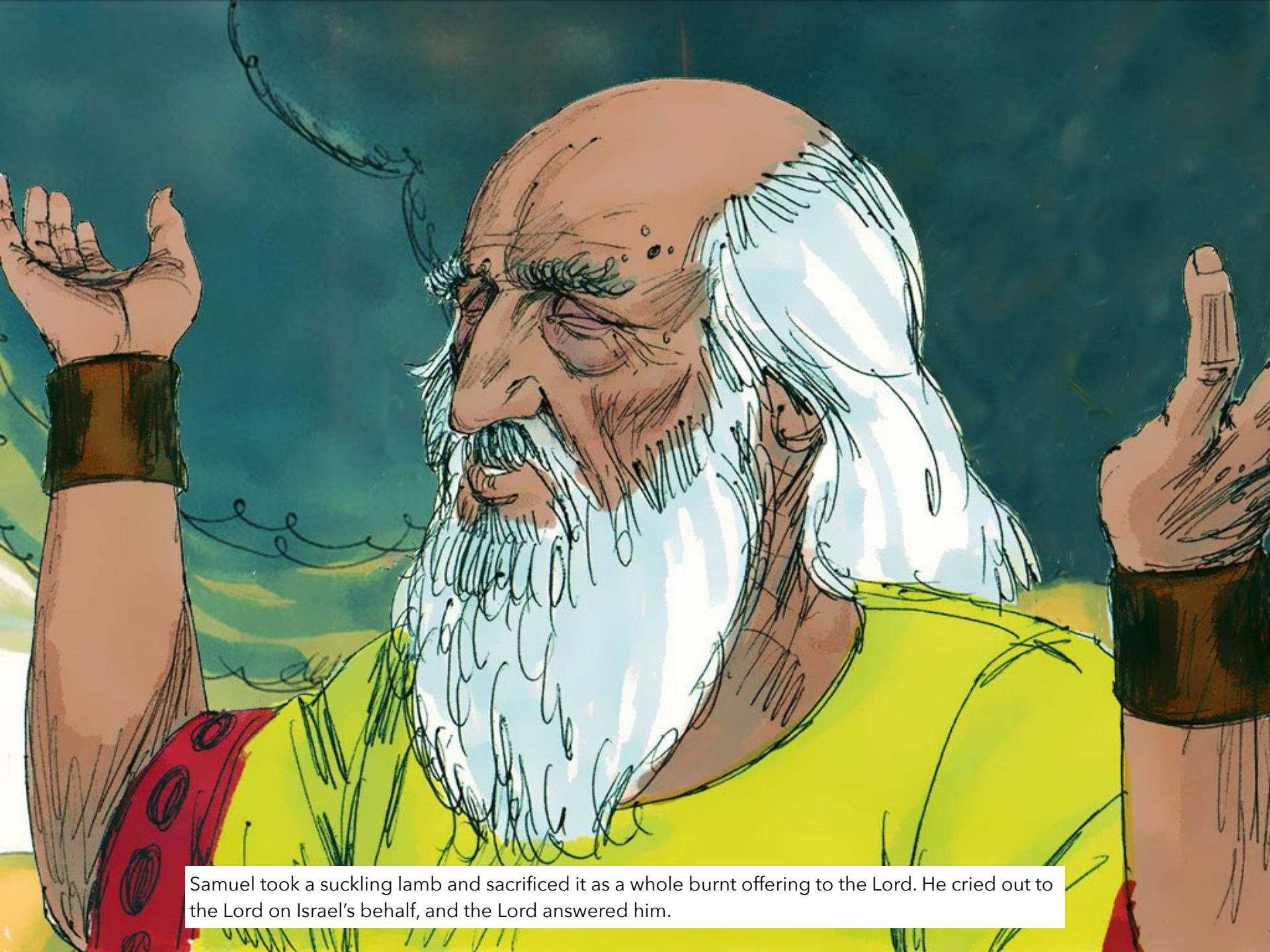
Philistine Territory



At Mizpah, the people drew water and poured it out as an offering before the Lord. They fasted and confessed, 'We have sinned against the Lord.'



When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines came up to attack them. When the Israelites heard this news, they were very scared and begged Samuel to keep praying so God would rescue them from the Philistines.



Samuel took a suckling lamb and sacrificed it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. He cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him.

That day the Lord thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into a panic.

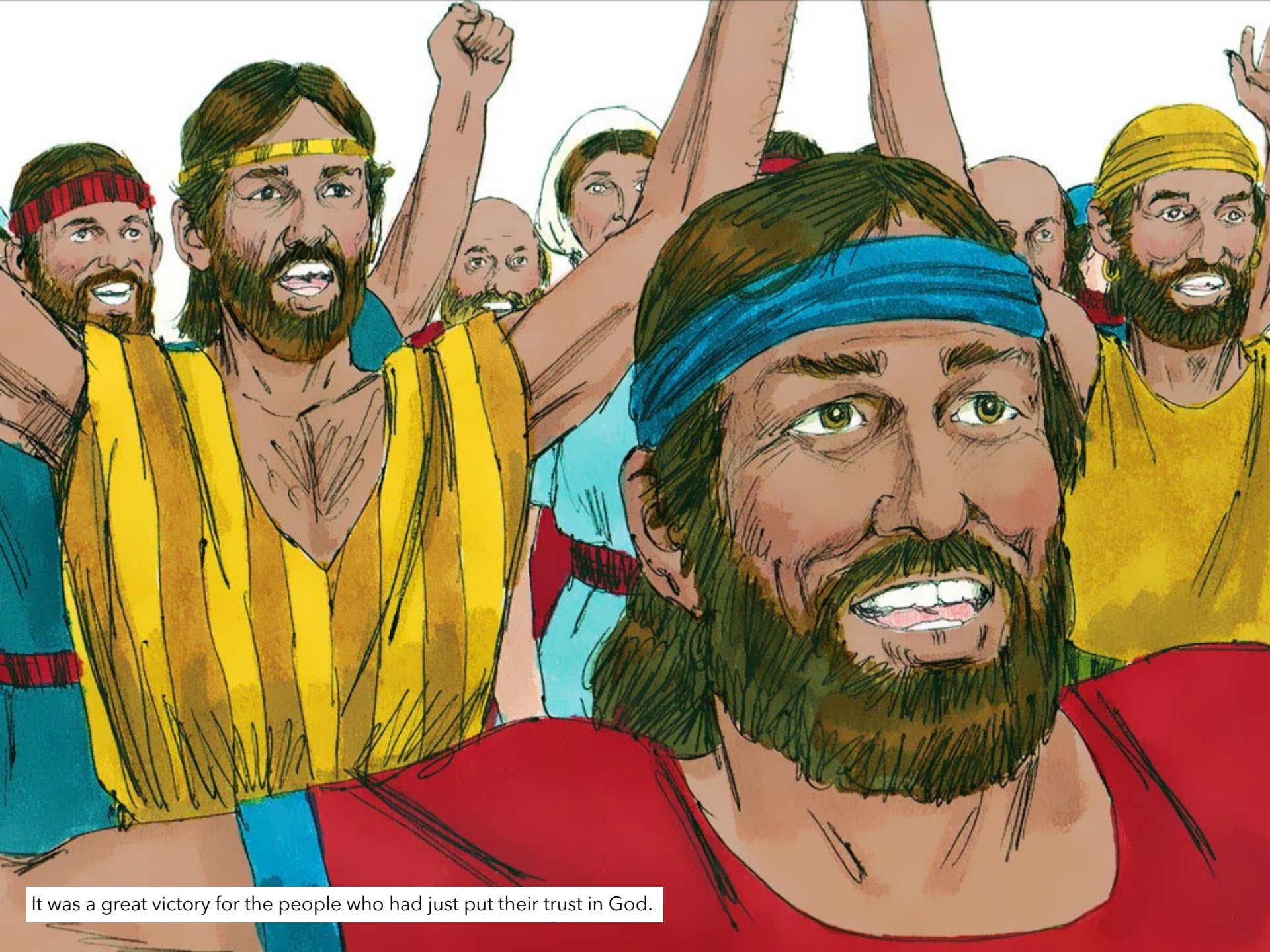


The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines.



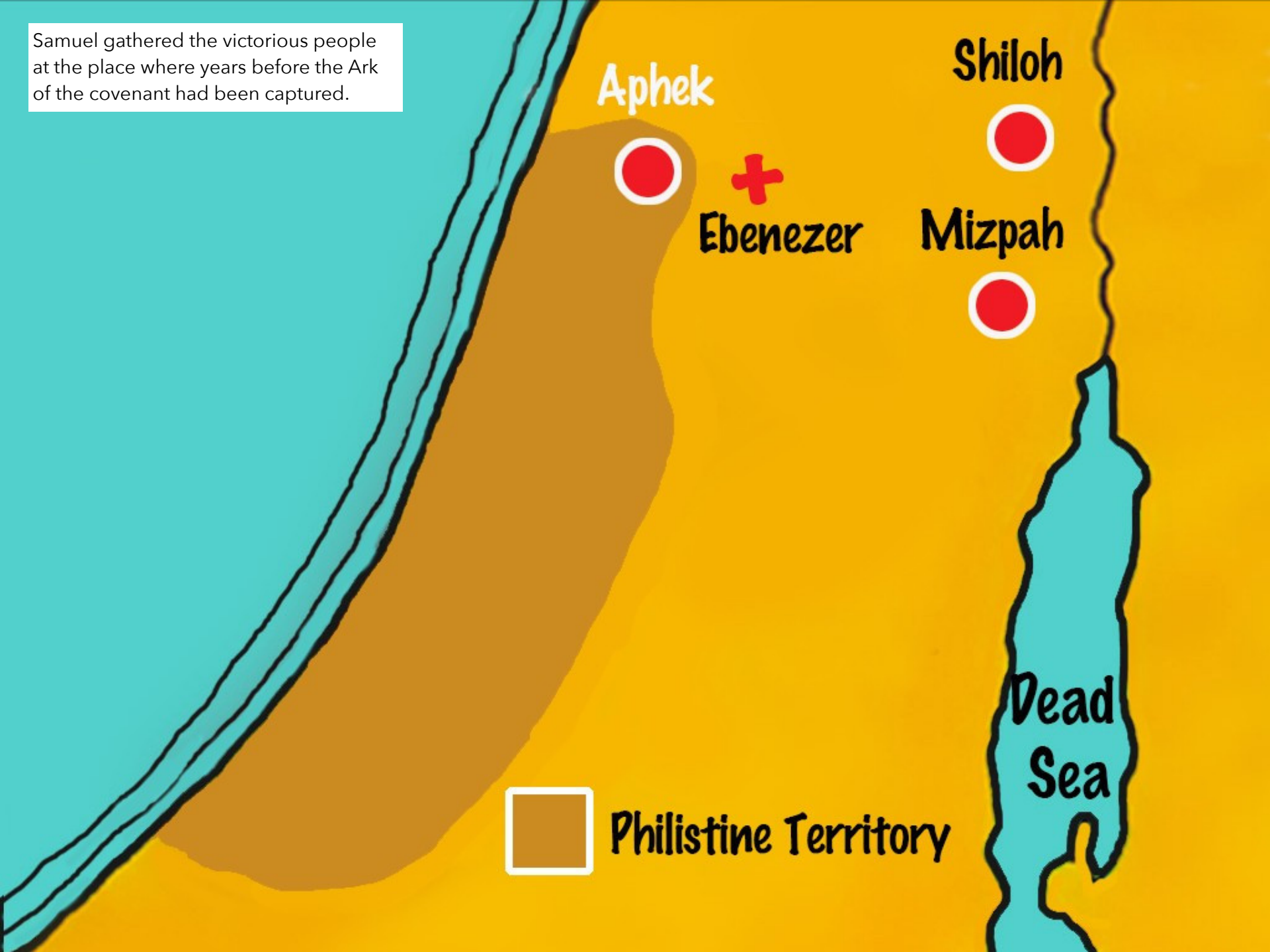


The Philistines were heavily defeated and fled back to their territory pursued by the Israelites.



It was a great victory for the people who had just put their trust in God.

Samuel gathered the victorious people at the place where years before the Ark of the covenant had been captured.



Aphek

Shiloh

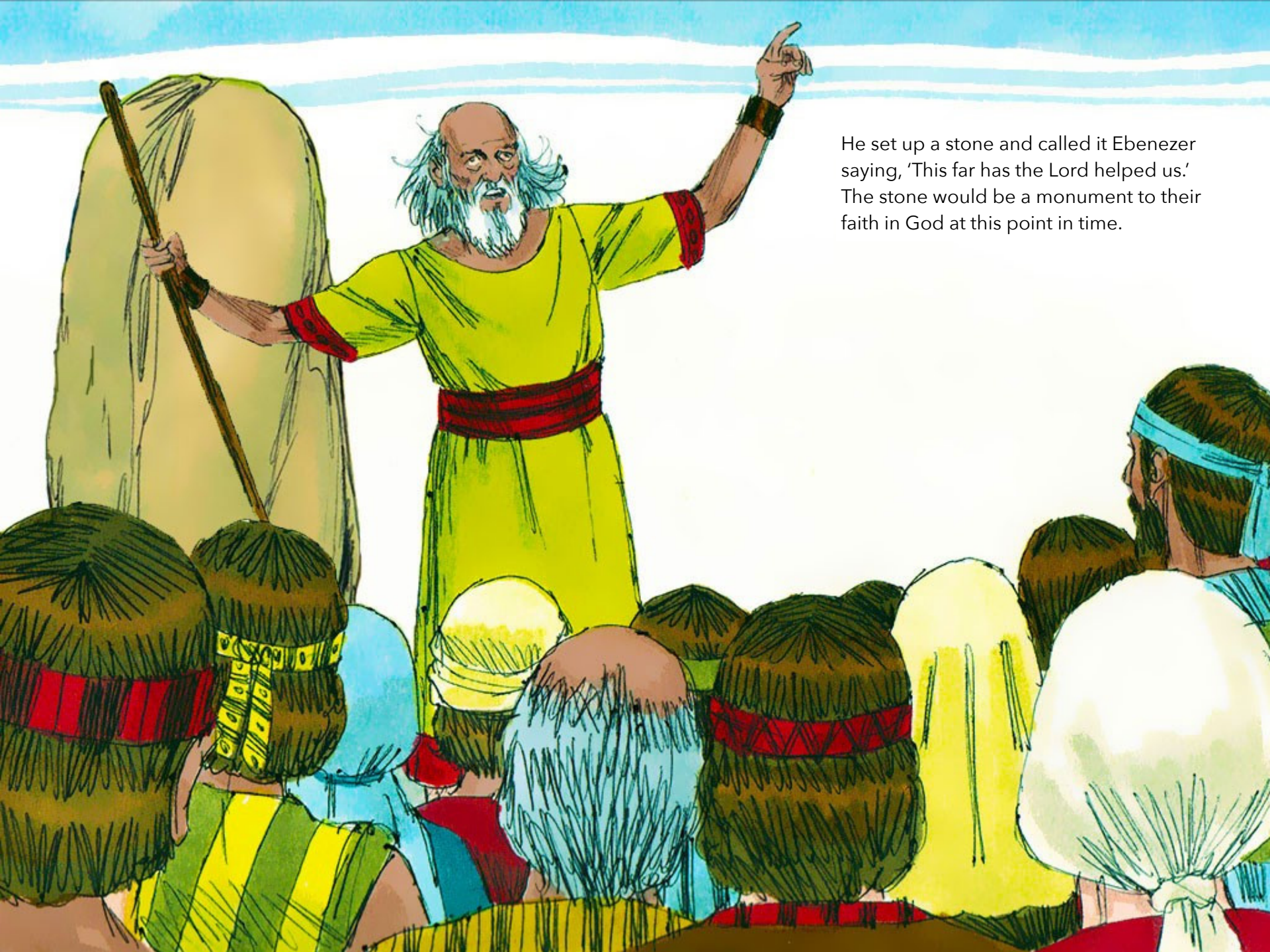
Ebenezer

Mizpah

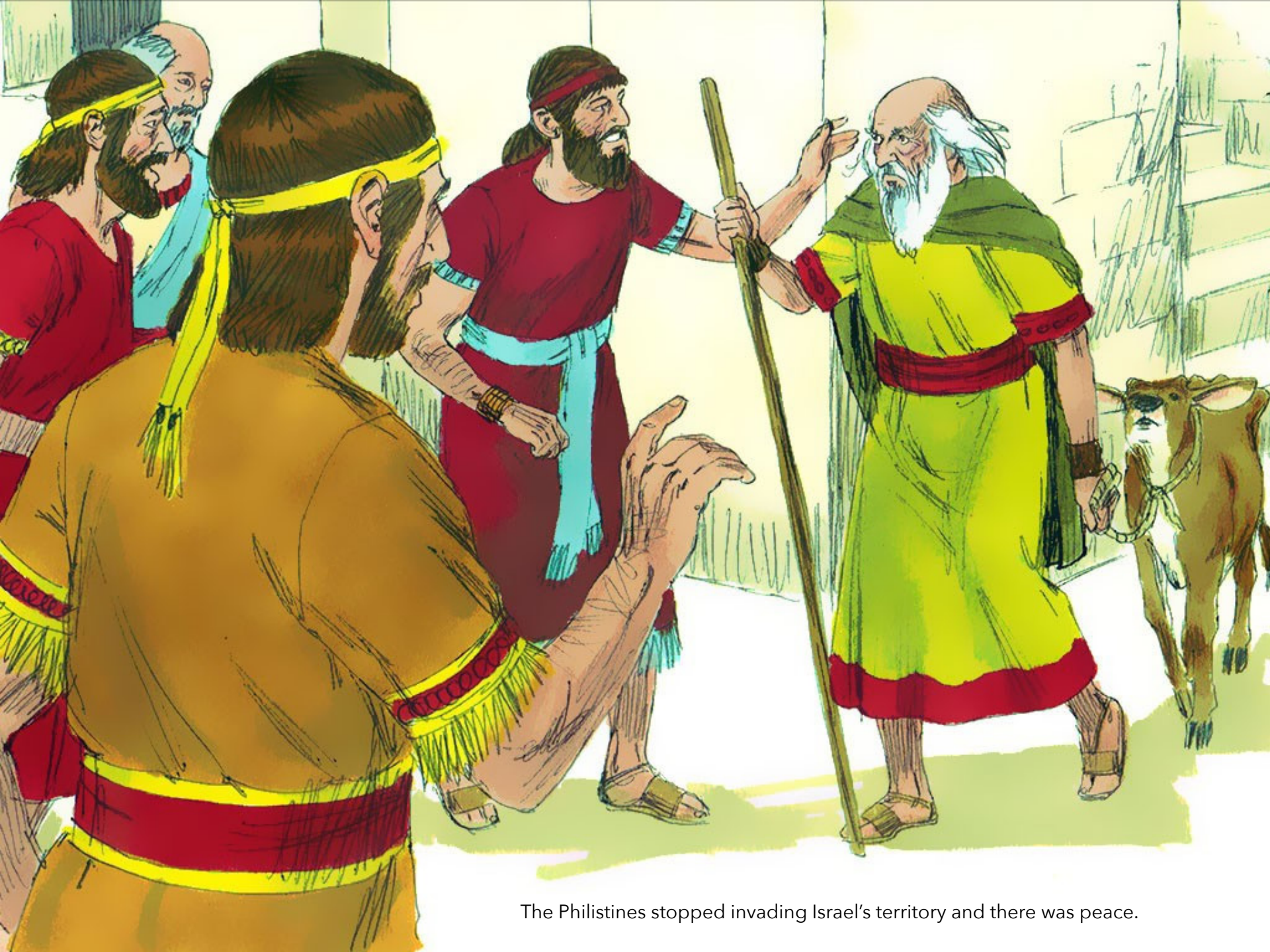
Dead
Sea



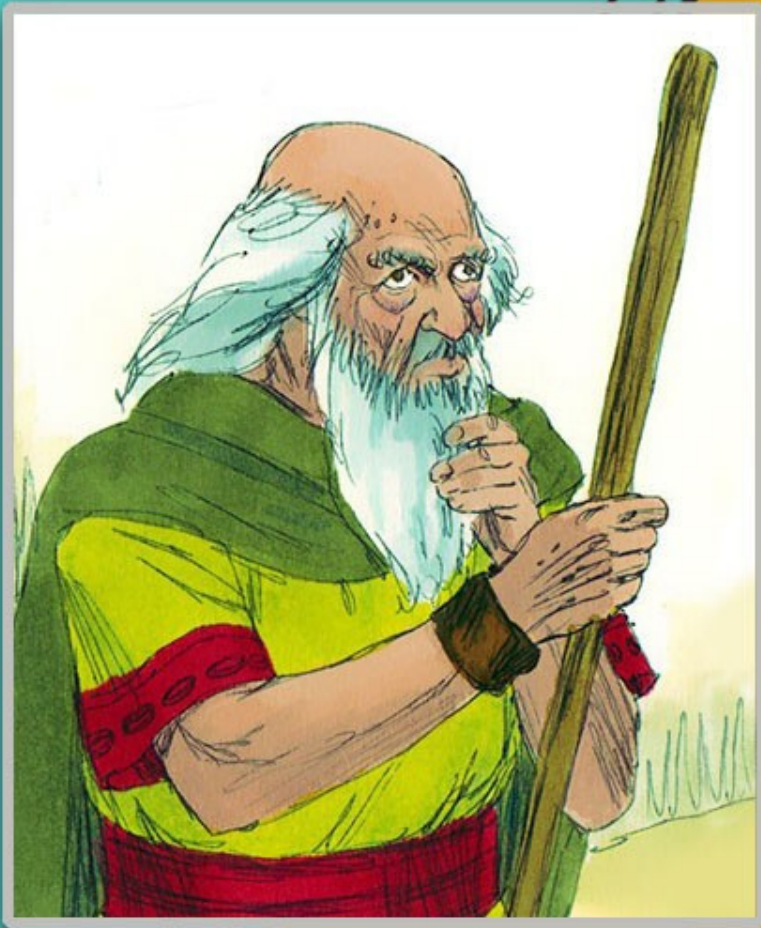
Philistine Territory



He set up a stone and called it Ebenezer saying, 'This far has the Lord helped us.' The stone would be a monument to their faith in God at this point in time.



The Philistines stopped invading Israel's territory and there was peace.



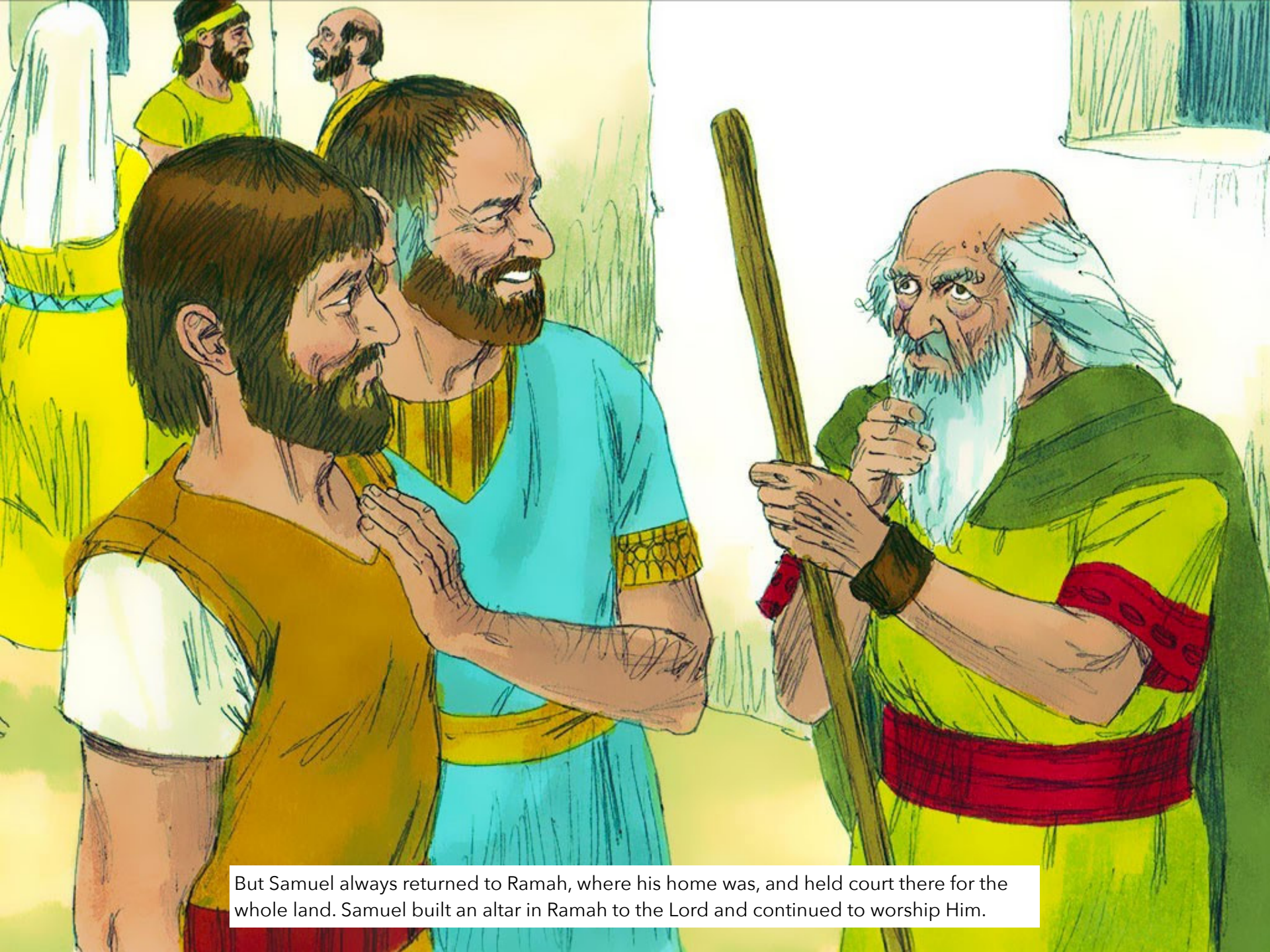
- Gilgal ●
- Bethel ●
- Mizpah ●
- Ramah ●

Dead
Sea

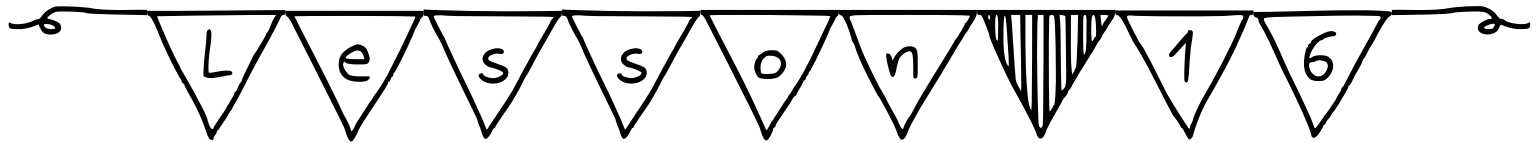


Philistine Territory

Samuel continued as Israel's leader all the days of his life. From year to year he went on a circuit from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpah, judging Israel by God's laws in these places.



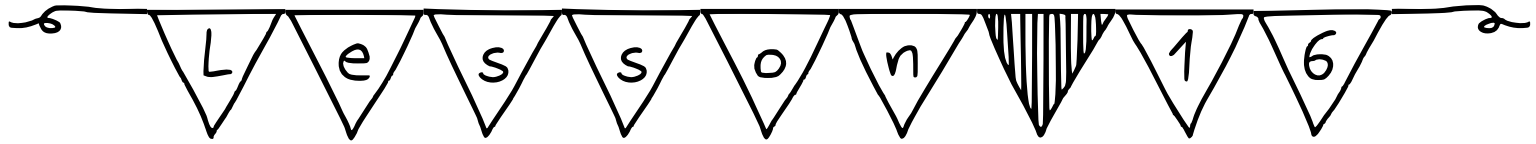
But Samuel always returned to Ramah, where his home was, and held court there for the whole land. Samuel built an altar in Ramah to the Lord and continued to worship Him.



Again Israel's unwillingness to obey God leads to their defeat.

Why didn't they realize their false god was powerless? Would you serve a god who had no power or would you search for the one true God?

In this lesson, God's power is demonstrated.



The Israelites will see what happens when they fail to repent or when they fail to pray for guidance in making the right decision. They are relying on the ark instead of on God. God kept his promise regarding Eli's house.

We bring most of our troubles on ourselves but God will forgive us if we truly repent.

Shiloh was never mentioned as the home of the tabernacle.