

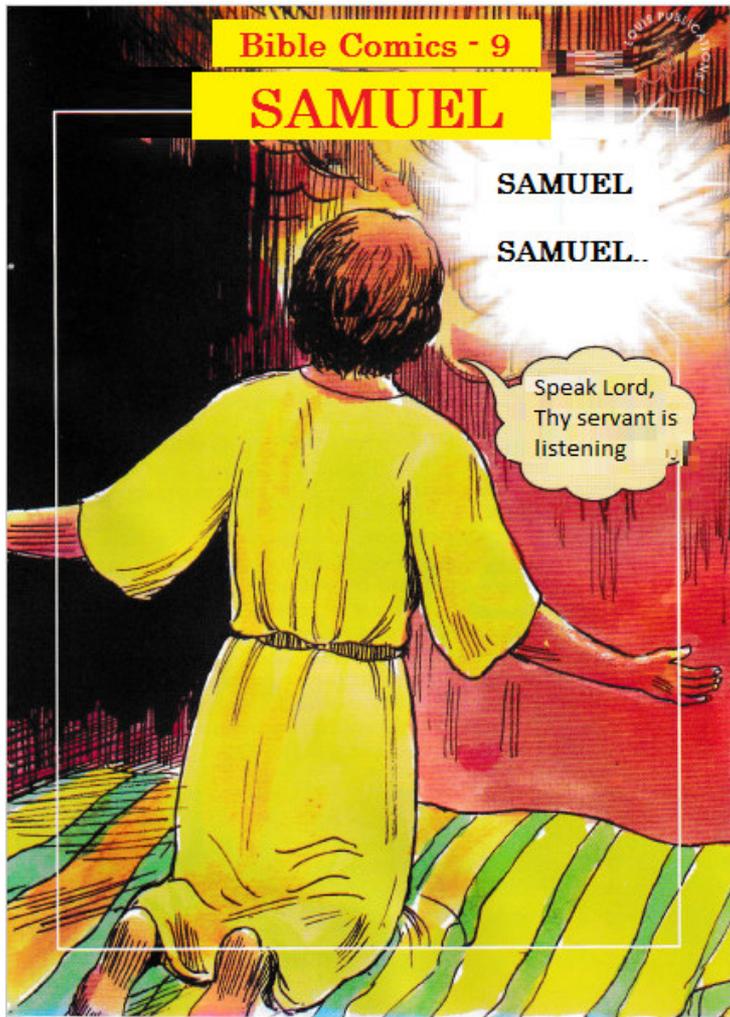
Bible Comics - 9

SAMUEL

SAMUEL

SAMUEL..

Speak Lord,
Thy servant is
listening



Bible Comics - 9

SAMUEL

Script - Dr. Michael Karimattam

Illustration - Devassy

SAMUEL

Samuel was a great prophet who lived in the 11th century B.C. He was the last and the greatest of the “Judges” who ruled Israel. In the history of Israel only Moses excels him in importance. Two Books of the Bible are in his name. The present story is based on 1 Sam 1-8.

The birth of Samuel is attributed to a special act of divine providence. His mother, Anna, had to wait for a long time in ardent prayer before she was blessed with a son. The name “Samuel” means “the name of El (God)” of “El is his name.” His life, as the name implies was totally dedicated to the service of God.

Samuel's response to God's call: "Speak Lord, Thy servant is listening" defines his whole life. Samuel was a man of God, who had to go through severe internal struggles and external conflicts. He stands at a turning point in the history of Israel.

In the life of Samuel two incidents stand out. The first is the crisis that followed the defeat of Israel at Aphek. The Ark of the Covenant was captured by the philistines. The priests were killed and the cultic centre, Shilo, was destroyed. In this crucial moment it was Samuel who instilled hope and courage in the people, making them turn to Yahweh with contrite hearts.

Samuel faced a second crisis when the people clamored for a king. The tribal set-up under the charismatic leadership of Judges became insufficient to meet the Philistine threat. Only with a standing army with the able leadership of a king, could Israel hope to defend themselves against the Philistines who were far superior to them in military power. But on the other hand, there was the traditional faith that Yahweh alone is the king of Israel. Samuel was torn between the concrete need of the moment and the age old faith of the people. Even when he anoints a king, he does not fail to insist upon God's sovereignty and the need of total obedience to His Will. Samuel's attitude towards kingship was ambiguous and this paved the way for his conflict with the monarchy.

Samuel was a great prophet. His eyes were sharpened to see the people and their history as God sees them. Though he loved his people tenderly, he was a fierce critic of them and of their king. He was an unflinching champion of Yahwistic faith, and thus the first in the series of classical prophets.

Samuel was a priest who wept with his people in their disasters. He prayed for them and offered sacrifices on their behalf. He taught them the law of God faithfully. Thus, he is the forerunner of the Messiah who is a priest, prophet and king. Samuel is a model of faith in Yahweh, of uncompromising fidelity to His call and of constant prayer.

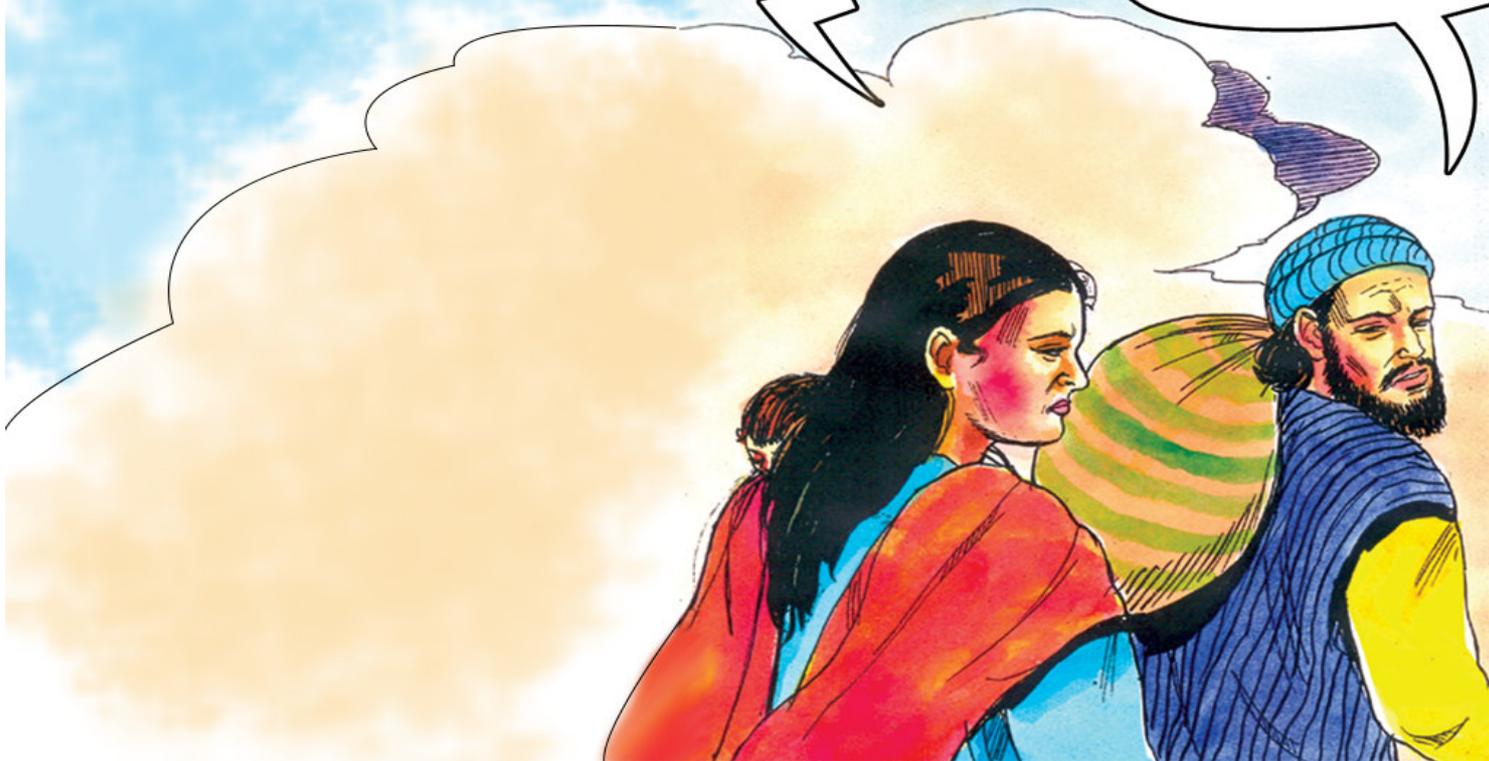
There lived a man named Elkanah in Rama, a little town in the hill country of Ephraim. He had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Hannah was his favorite but had no children. Peninnah had children, she used to insult Hannah for being childless.

Every year Elkanah with his family used to go to worship Yahweh in Shiloh.



Doesn't matter I will carry
my child. If Hannah
wants to carry children...

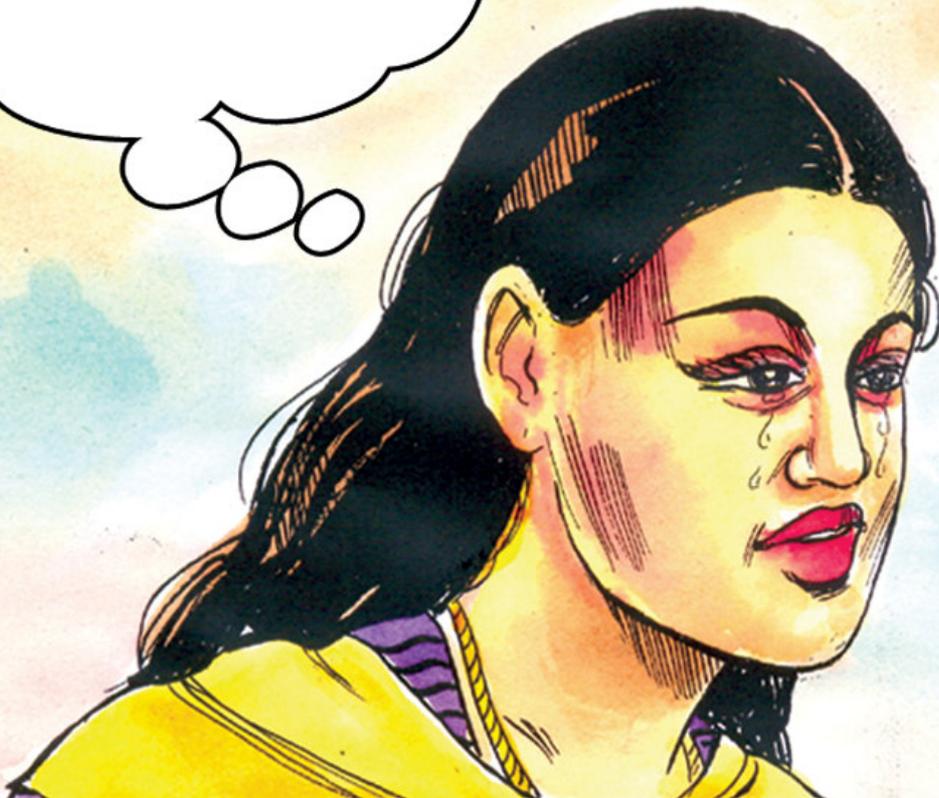
Why do you
want to hurt
her like this?



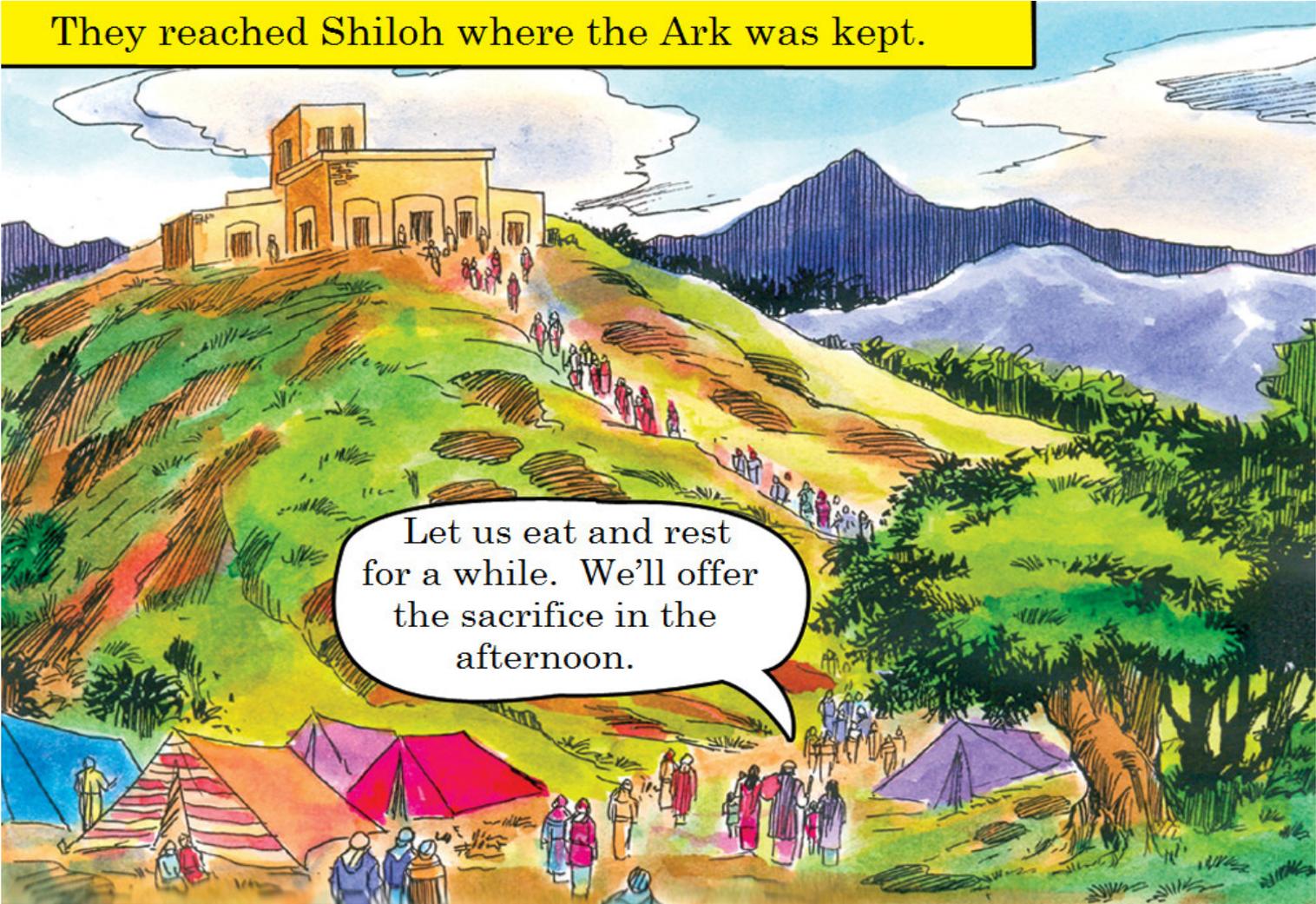
Why should she be hurt? I'm the one who is hurt. Is it my fault that she is barren?



Lord God, how
long do I have to
bear this shame?



They reached Shiloh where the Ark was kept.



Let us eat and rest
for a while. We'll offer
the sacrifice in the
afternoon.

Hannah, why are you crying?
Come and eat my dear.

What else can I
do except crying?
Even Yahweh has
abandoned me.

off

!



Come on Hannah. Am I not
more to you than ten sons?
Don't mind Peninnah
so much.



While they were preparing the meat,
the servant of the priest came.

??

What are you doing?
That is for the
offering.

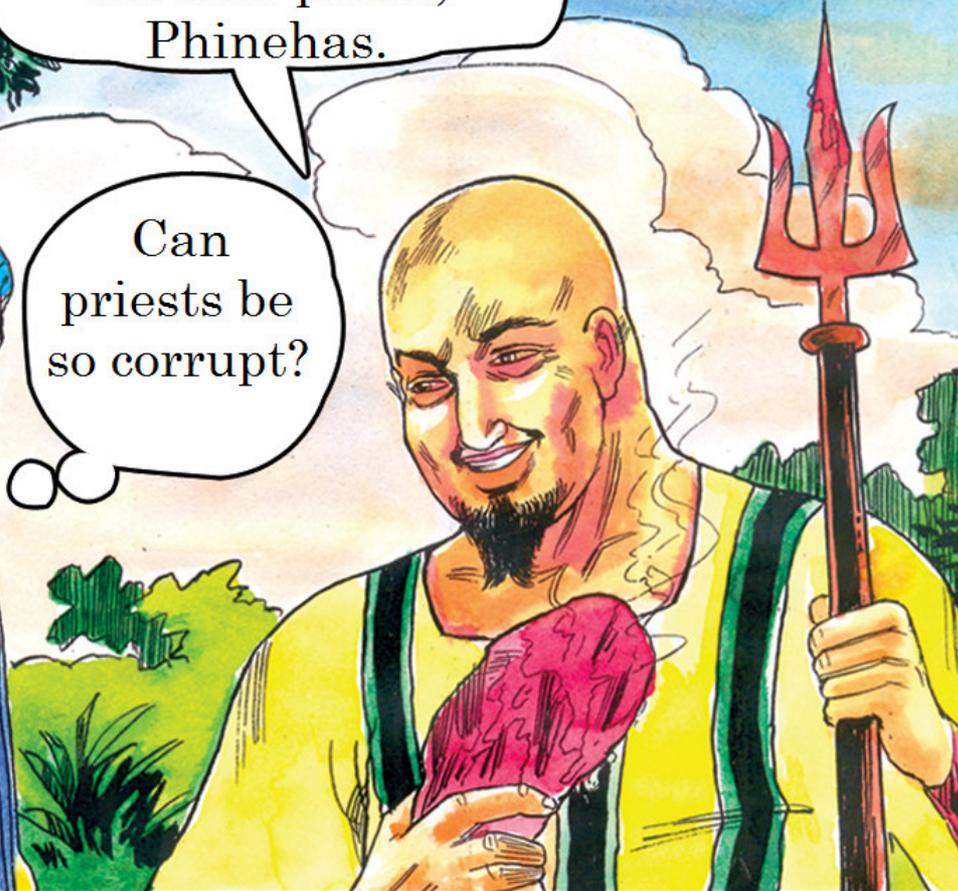
Give to the priest
first. Whatever is left,
you can offer to God.



Since when is that?

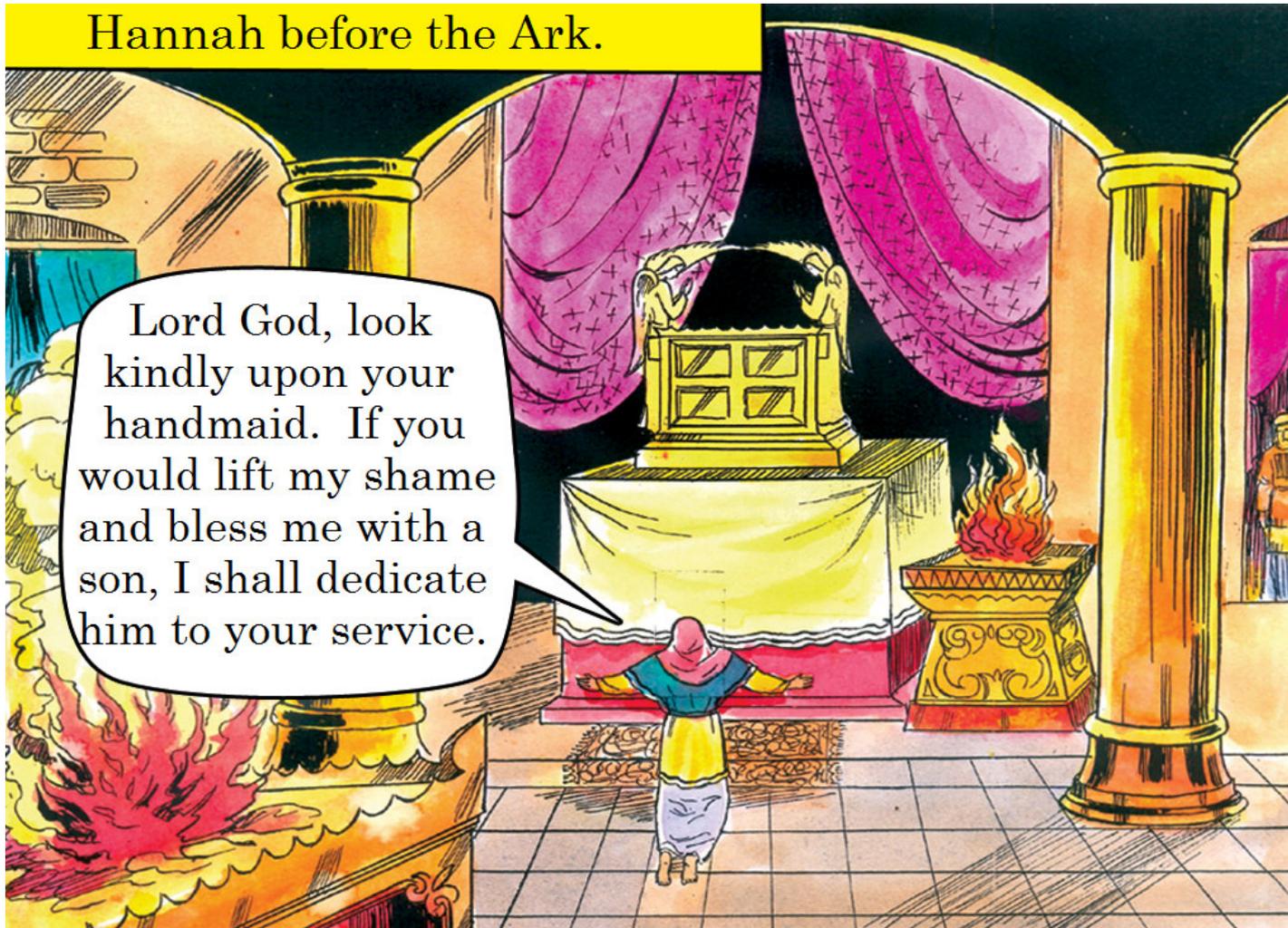
That is the order of the new priest, Phinehas.

Can priests be so corrupt?



Hannah before the Ark.

Lord God, look kindly upon your handmaid. If you would lift my shame and bless me with a son, I shall dedicate him to your service.

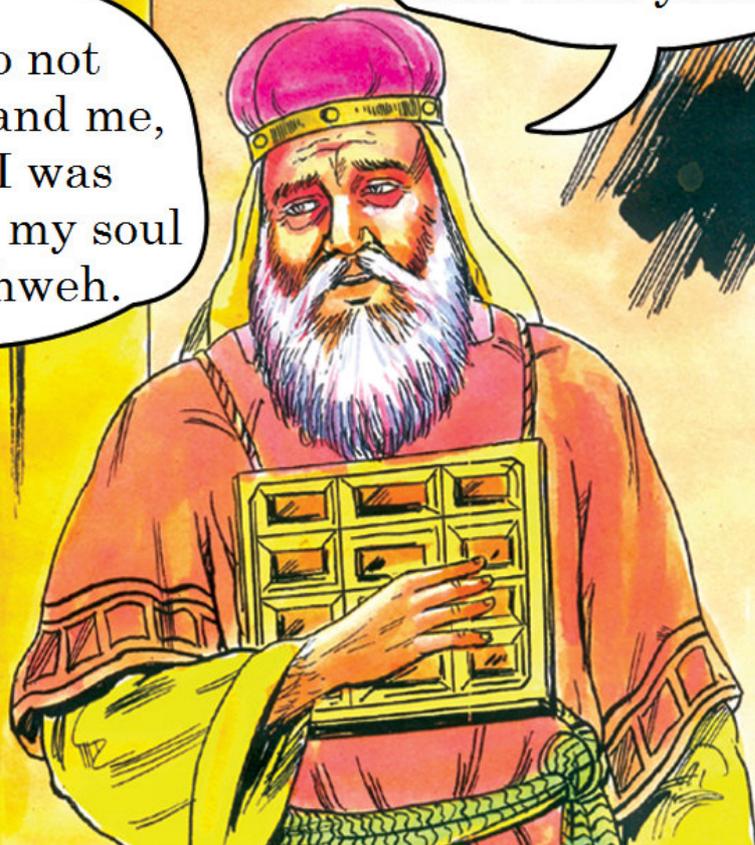


Eli, the priest spoke to Hannah.

Are you drunk so early in the morning to jibber...jabber like this?

Please do not misunderstand me, My Lord, I was pouring out my soul before Yahweh.

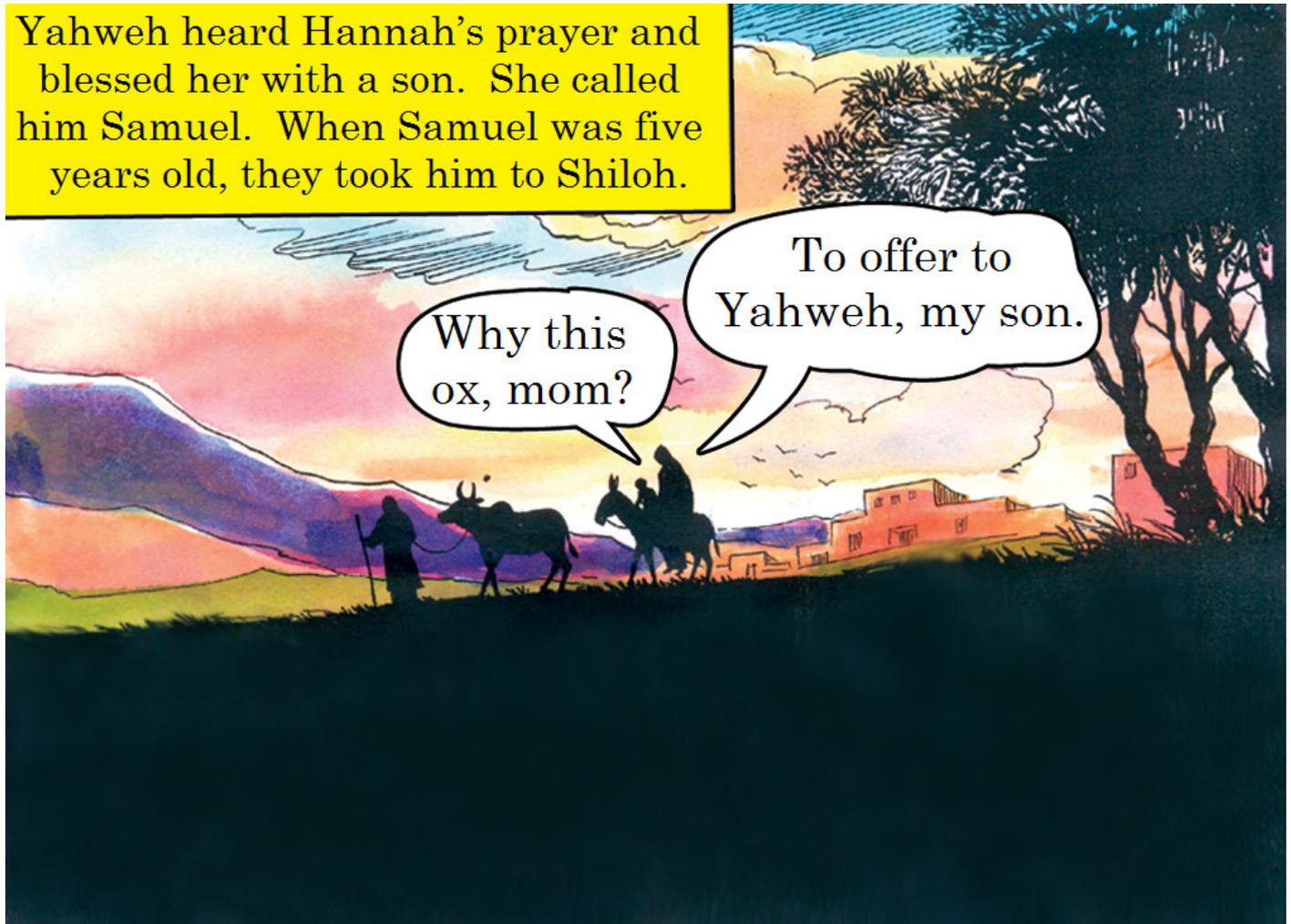
Go in peace my daughter, may God bless you.

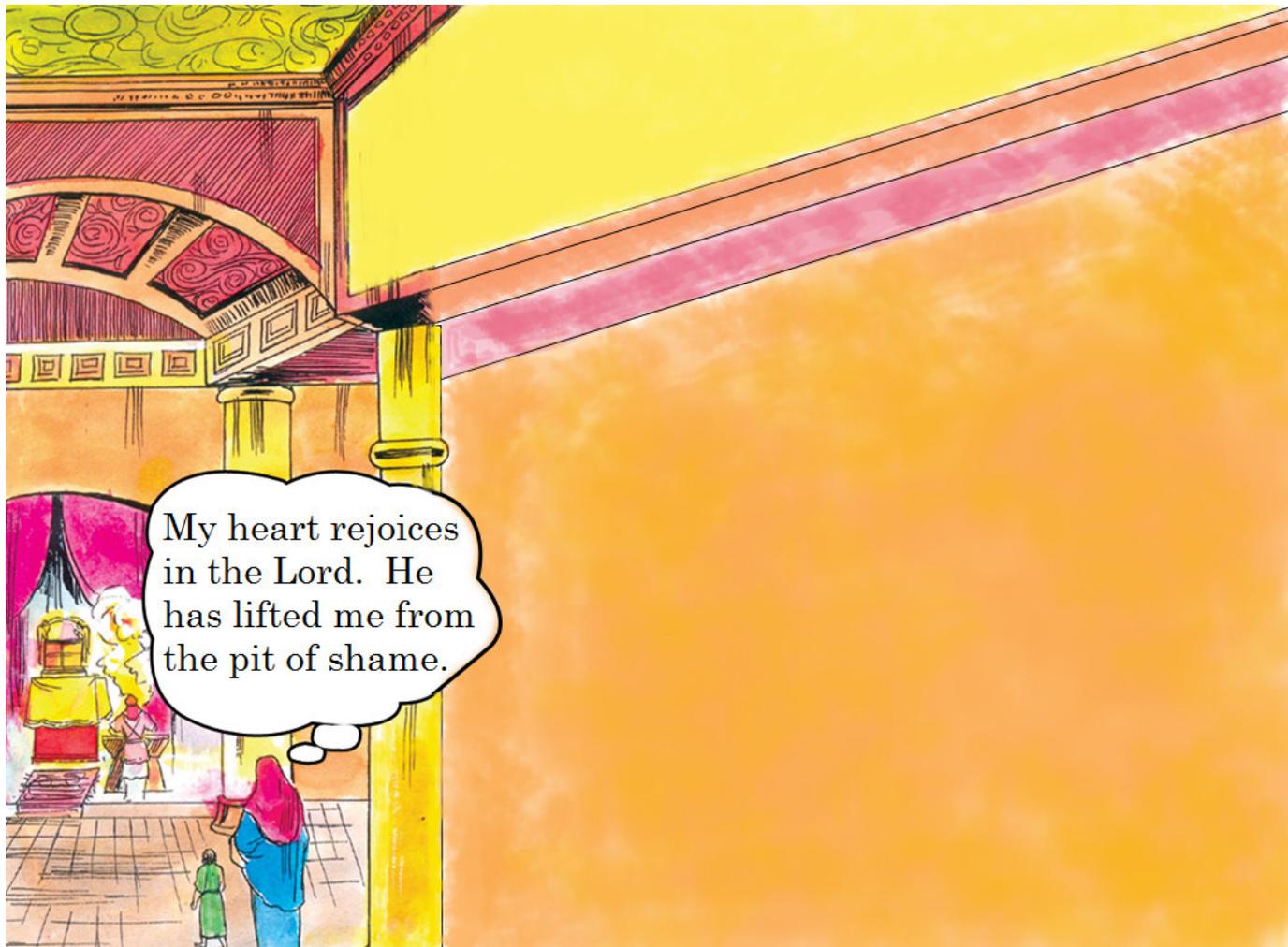


Yahweh heard Hannah's prayer and blessed her with a son. She called him Samuel. When Samuel was five years old, they took him to Shiloh.

Why this ox, mom?

To offer to Yahweh, my son.





My heart rejoices
in the Lord. He
has lifted me from
the pit of shame.



Son, you stay in
this temple and
serve the Lord.

Mommy, are
you going to
leave me here?

Don't worry my
darling. I'll
visit you often.

!

Lord, it was for this child that I prayed. I've made an oath to dedicate him to the service of Yahweh.

My daughter, your faith is deep and your sacrifice is great.





May the Lord God let His face shine upon you. May He reward you with other sons and daughters. Go in peace. Your son will be safe here.

!!

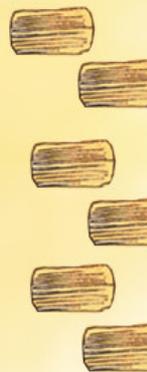
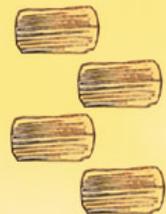
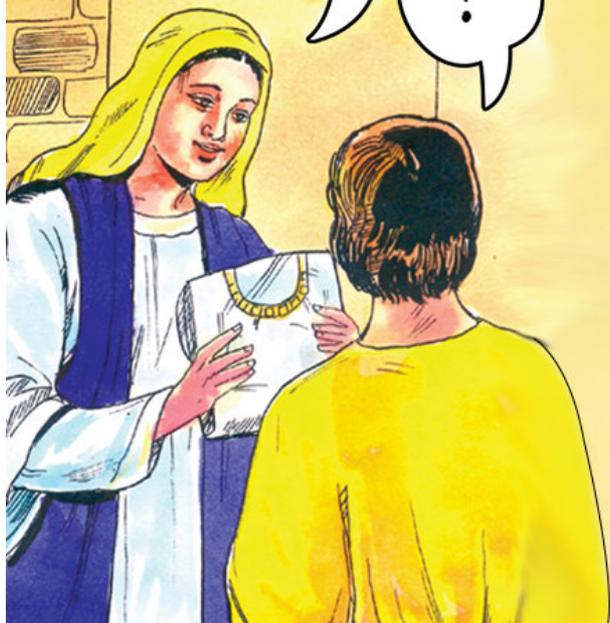
Samuel grew up at the temple with Eli.

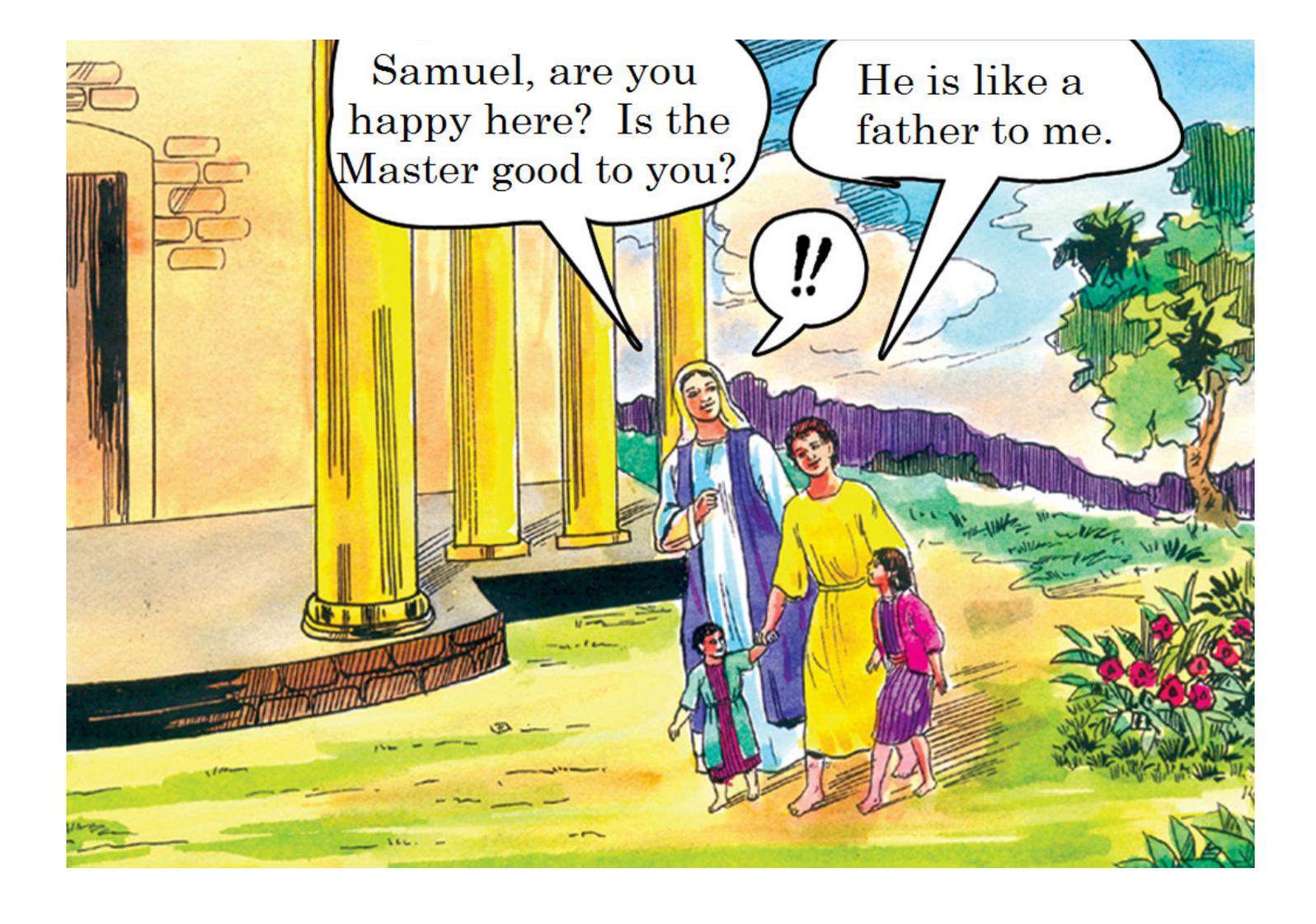
Son, that is the sanctuary lamp.
It will be your chore to keep that
alight all the time. Like this
lamp, may your faith shine
always.



After Samuel, Hannah had other children.
Every year they came to Shiloh.

Samuel, my son, I
made this for you.
Keep your life as pure
as this white tunic.





Samuel, are you happy here? Is the Master good to you?

He is like a father to me.

!!

Sons of Eli, Phinehas and Hophni also were priests. But they were corrupt and wicked. One day a man of God came to Eli.

I chose your father's house out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priests and ordered them to keep themselves holy. But you grew fat on the best part of all the offerings of my people.



Why do you honor your sons more than you honor me? Why do you allow your sons to abuse the women who come to work in the Temple?

!?



So, the days are coming
when I will punish you and
your family, your heart will
break with grief. I've
chosen another one to
serve me.

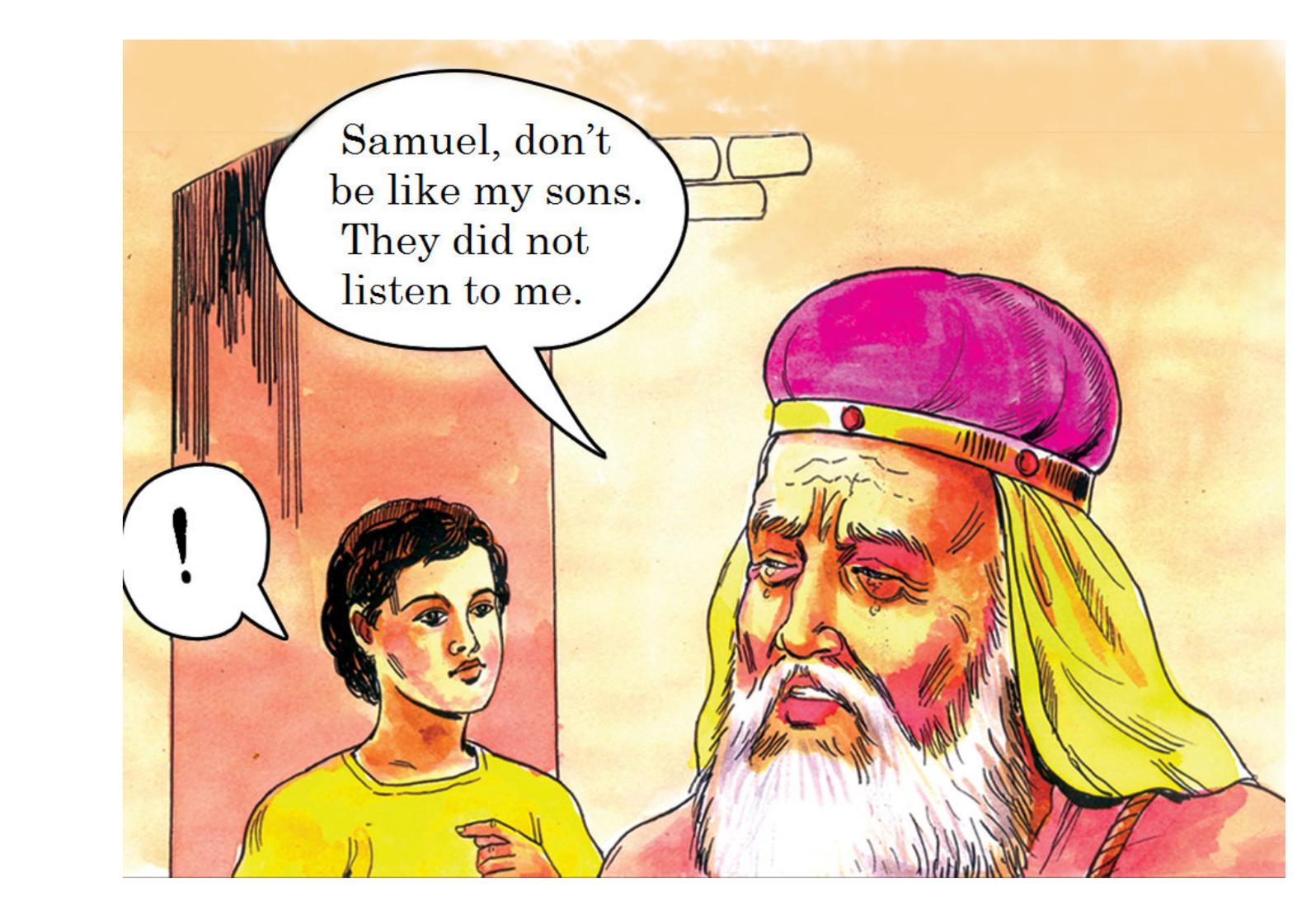


Master, who is that?

I do not know, my son, a man who spoke the Word of God.

!





Samuel, don't
be like my sons.
They did not
listen to me.

!

One night Samuel was sleeping near
the Ark, then...

Samuel,

Samuel.



Master, I heard
you calling me.
Here I am.

I did not call you.
It must have been
a dream. Say
your prayers and
go to sleep.

!



This was repeated three times. Samuel did not realize that it was the Lord who called him.

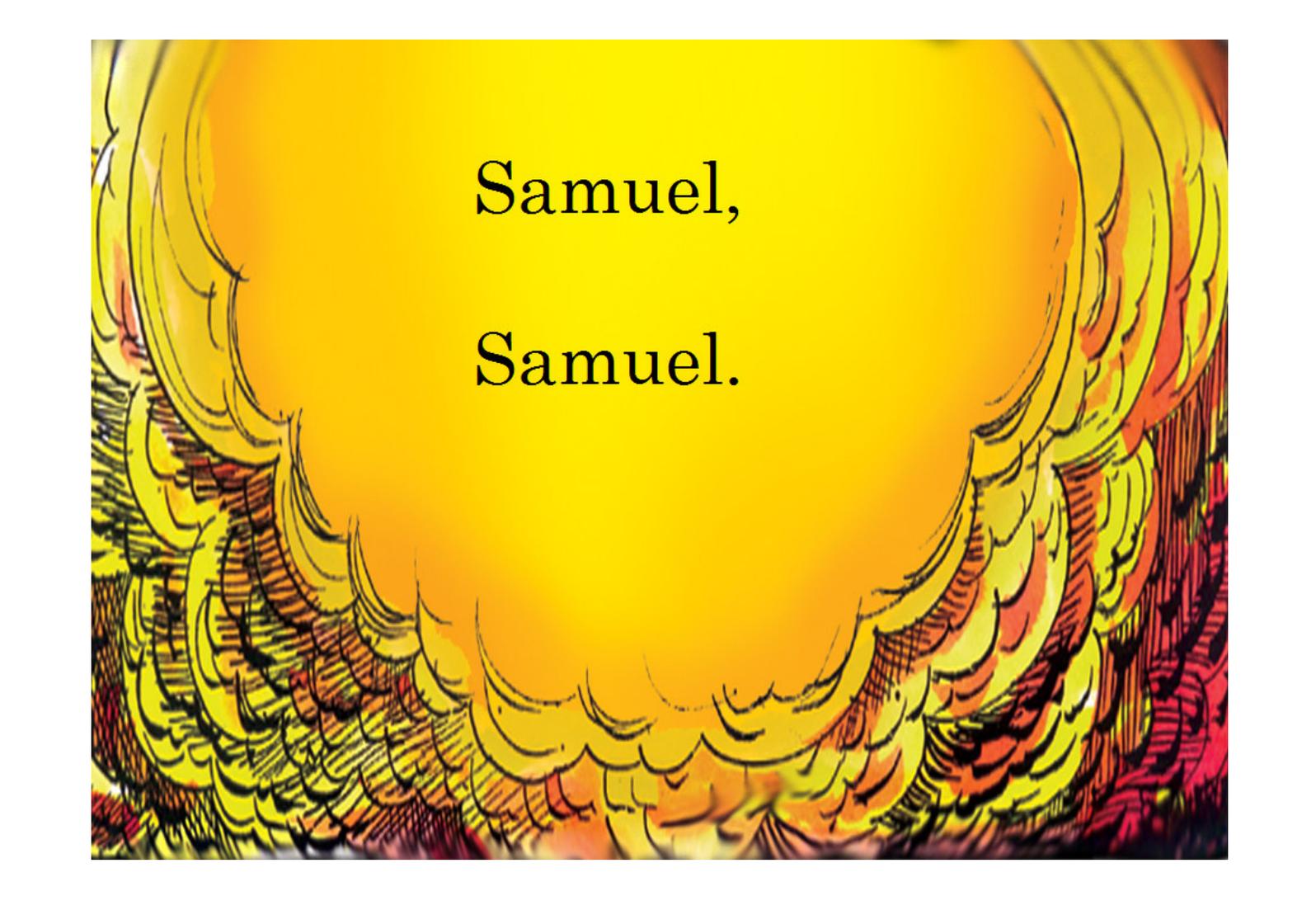
Heard you
calling my
name.

!!

Son, go back to bed.
If you are called
again say, "Speak
Lord, thy servant is
listening."

!





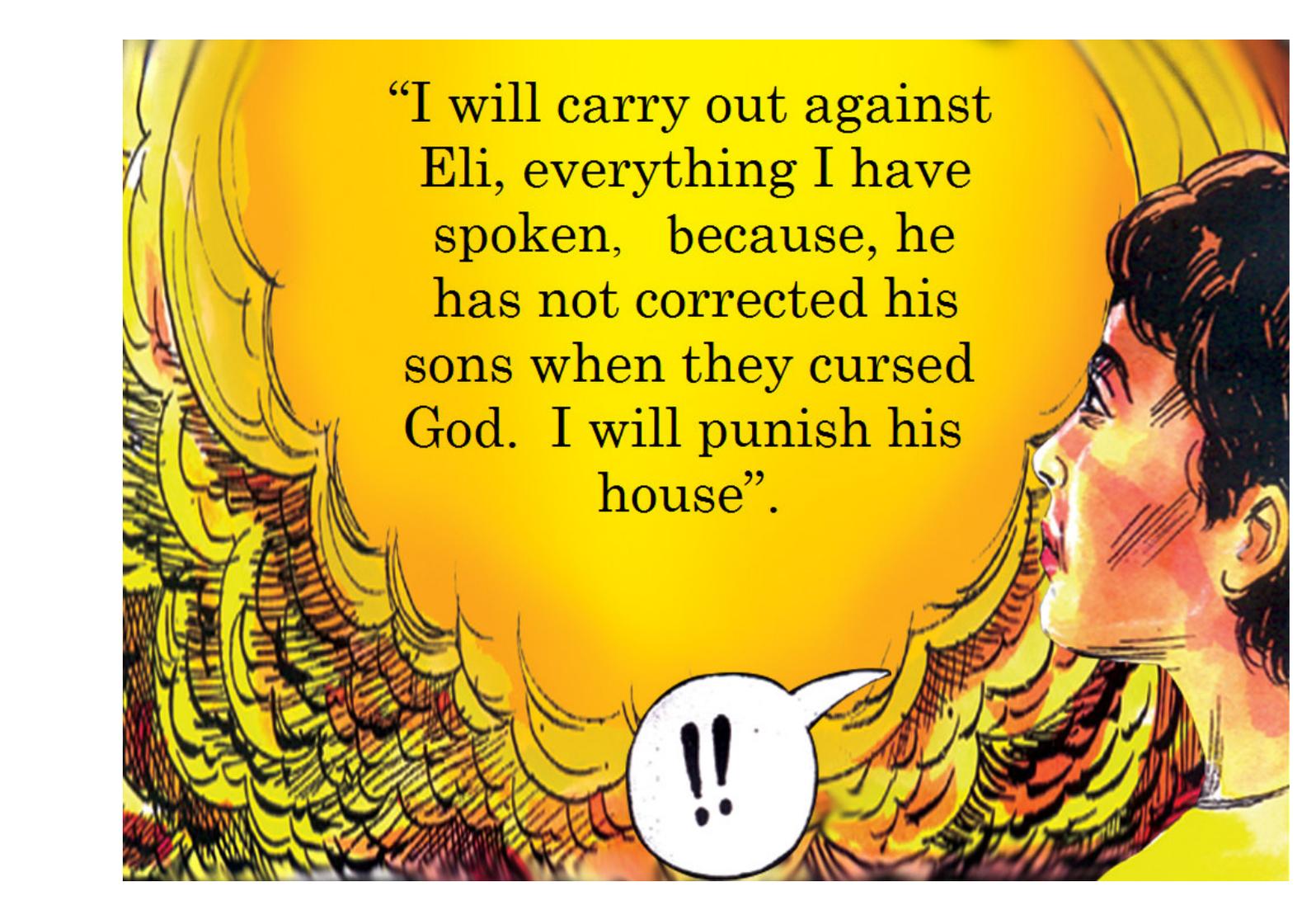
Samuel,
Samuel.

Speak Lord,
thy servant is
listening.

“I am going
to punish
Israel for
her sins”.

!





“I will carry out against Eli, everything I have spoken, because, he has not corrected his sons when they cursed God. I will punish his house”.

!!

The next morning.

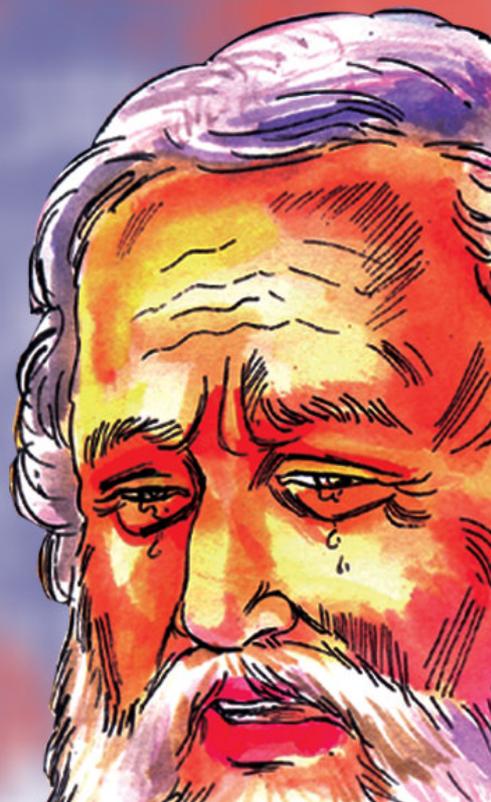
Samuel, my son what message did the Lord give you? Don't hide anything from me.

Yahweh is going to punish your house severely. Neither sacrifice nor offerings shall ever expiate the guilt.

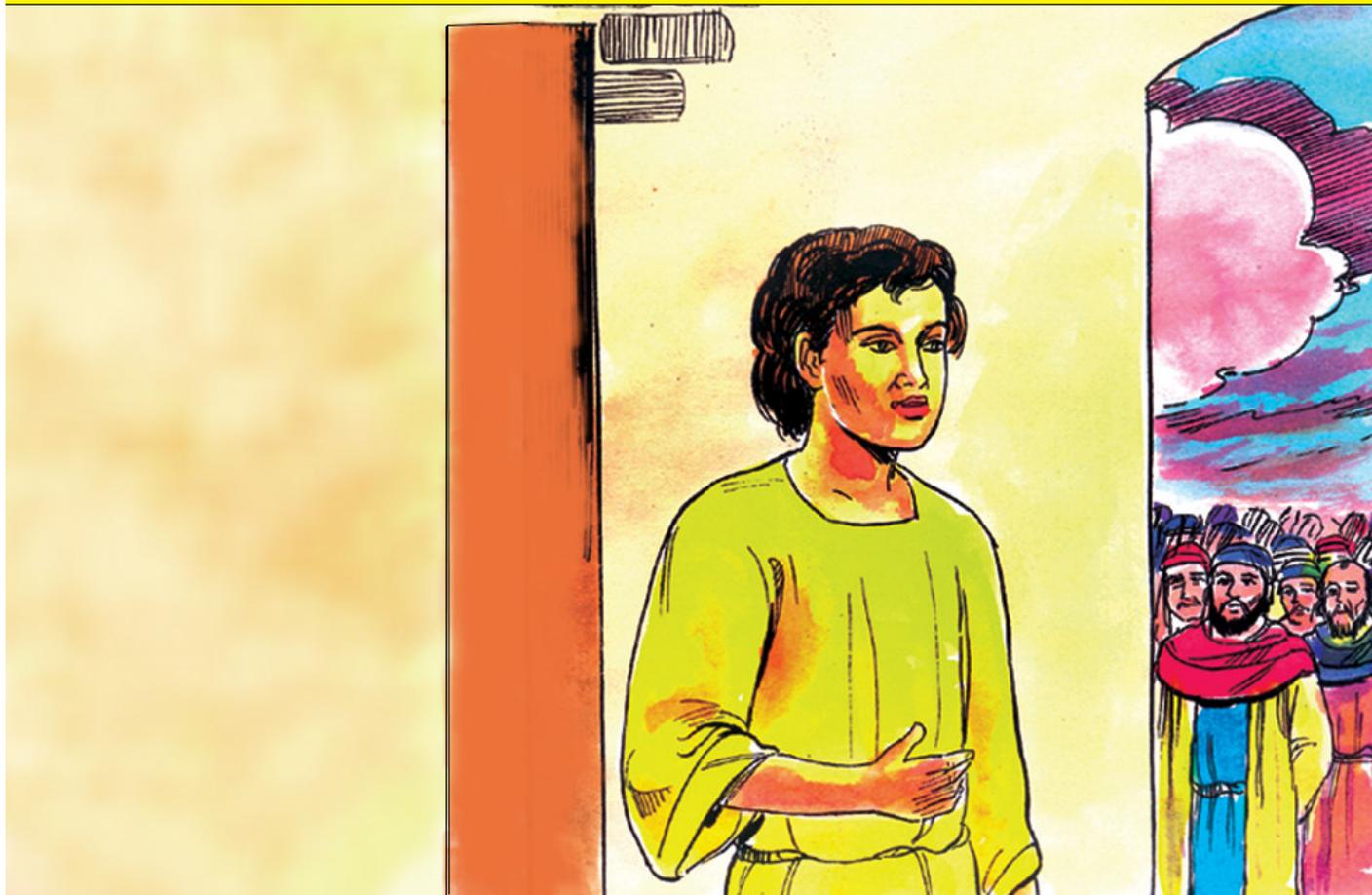
!?



This is the voice of
Yahweh. Let Him do
what He thinks good.



From then on Samuel was held in great esteem as the Prophet of Yahweh.



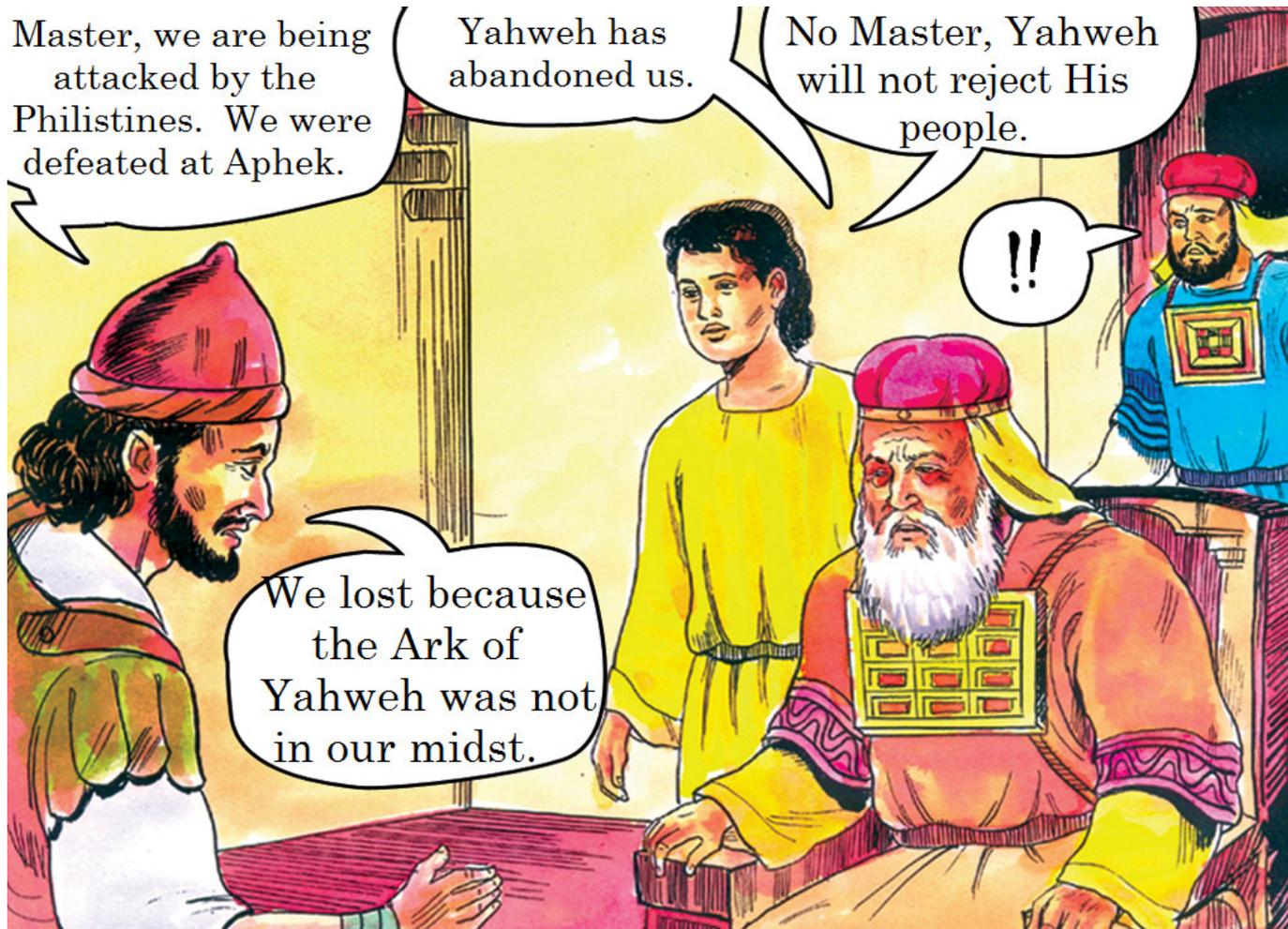
Master, we are being attacked by the Philistines. We were defeated at Aphek.

Yahweh has abandoned us.

No Master, Yahweh will not reject His people.

!!

We lost because the Ark of Yahweh was not in our midst.



Let us take the Ark to the camp.

Phinehas, you and Hophni must carry the Ark.

This is testing Yahweh. What we should do is implore His help.



Mind your own
business, kid.
We will decide
what we must
do.



Do we carry the Ark of Yahweh to the battle field because His hands are too short to save His people?

Who are you to question the priests?
You, the ungrateful wretch.

Phinehas, there is a point in what Samuel is saying.



By the time you settle
the dispute, the
Philistines will be here.

Are you going to take
the Ark of Yahweh,
without discerning
His will?

Let us hurry
with the Ark to
the camp.

?



When our men are
falling, the Ark should
be in the battle field,
not in the Temple.



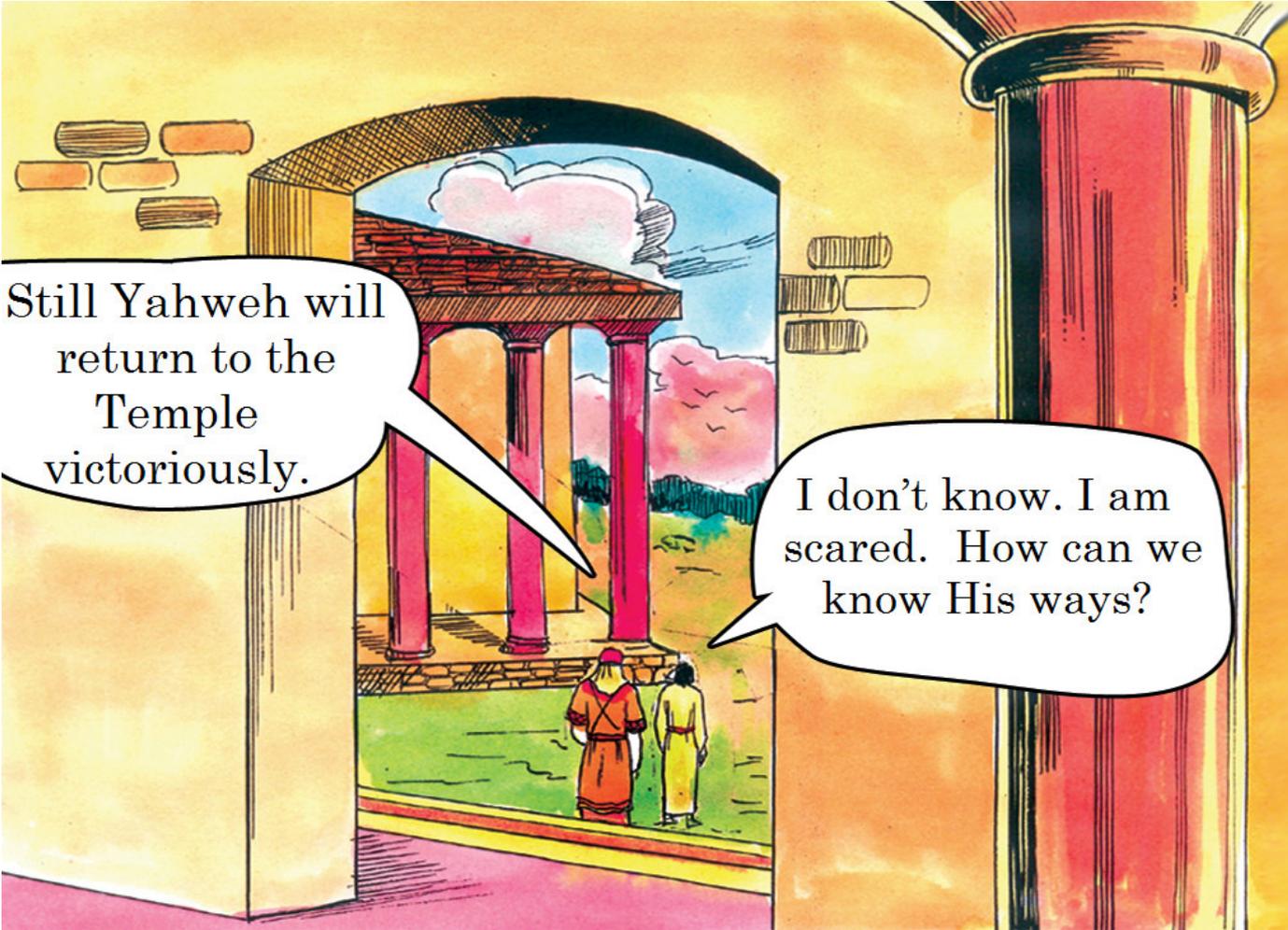
They carried the Ark to the camp.

Master, the Temple is empty. You shouldn't have let them take the Ark.

My son, they won't listen to me anymore.

!?





Still Yahweh will
return to the
Temple
victoriously.

I don't know. I am
scared. How can we
know His ways?



Listen, is it shouts of
victory that I hear?

No, it is wailing that
we hear. There
someone is coming.

!!

Master, we lost everything. The Philistines captured the Ark of Yahweh. Your two sons are dead.

??



Hearing this Eli fell back and broke his neck.

Oh! My
God!

??



Discussion among the Israelites.

The Ark is gone and with it went the Lord. Whom are we going to worship?

Let us make a statue of Baal instead of the Ark.

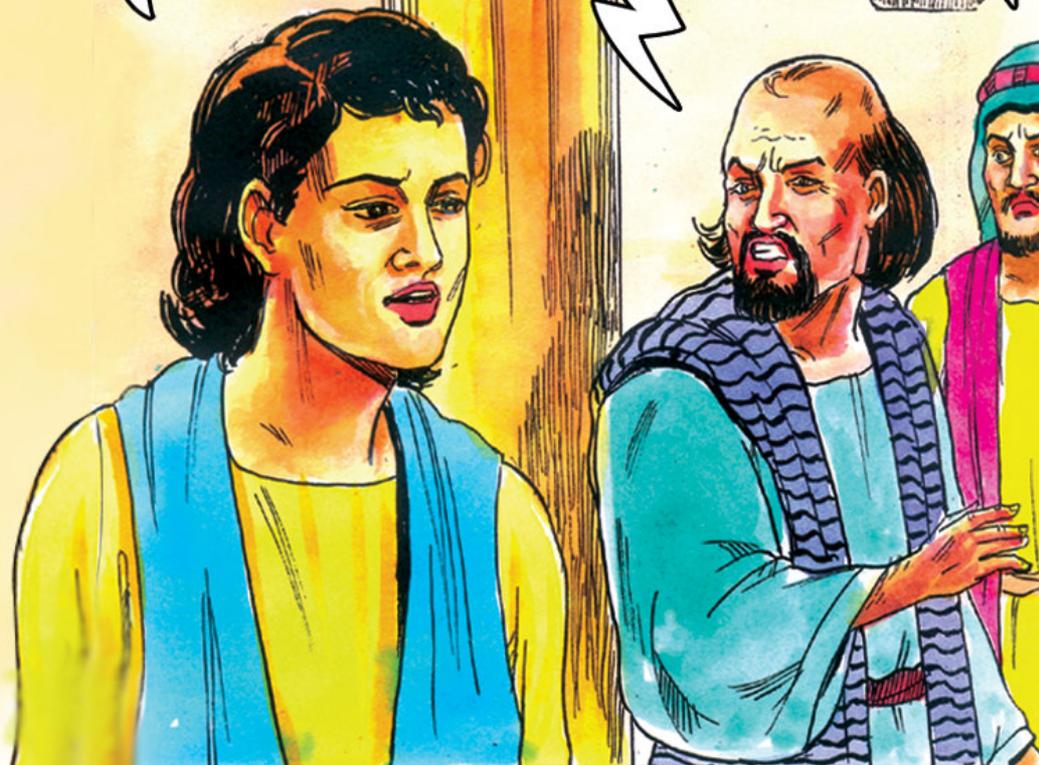
Baal must be greater than Yahweh to capture his Ark.



This is insulting
Yahweh.

Yahweh could
not protect even
his own seat.

!!





Do you expect
Yahweh to act
according to your
whim?



What did we do? Was it not to seek His help that we took the Ark to the camp?

Besides, it was the priests who carried it.

Whoever committed the crime will be punished.

!

!!



Repent and return
to Yahweh. He
will not abandon
us.

Tell us
what to do?

You kindly
lead us.

Not I but the
Lord will lead
you.



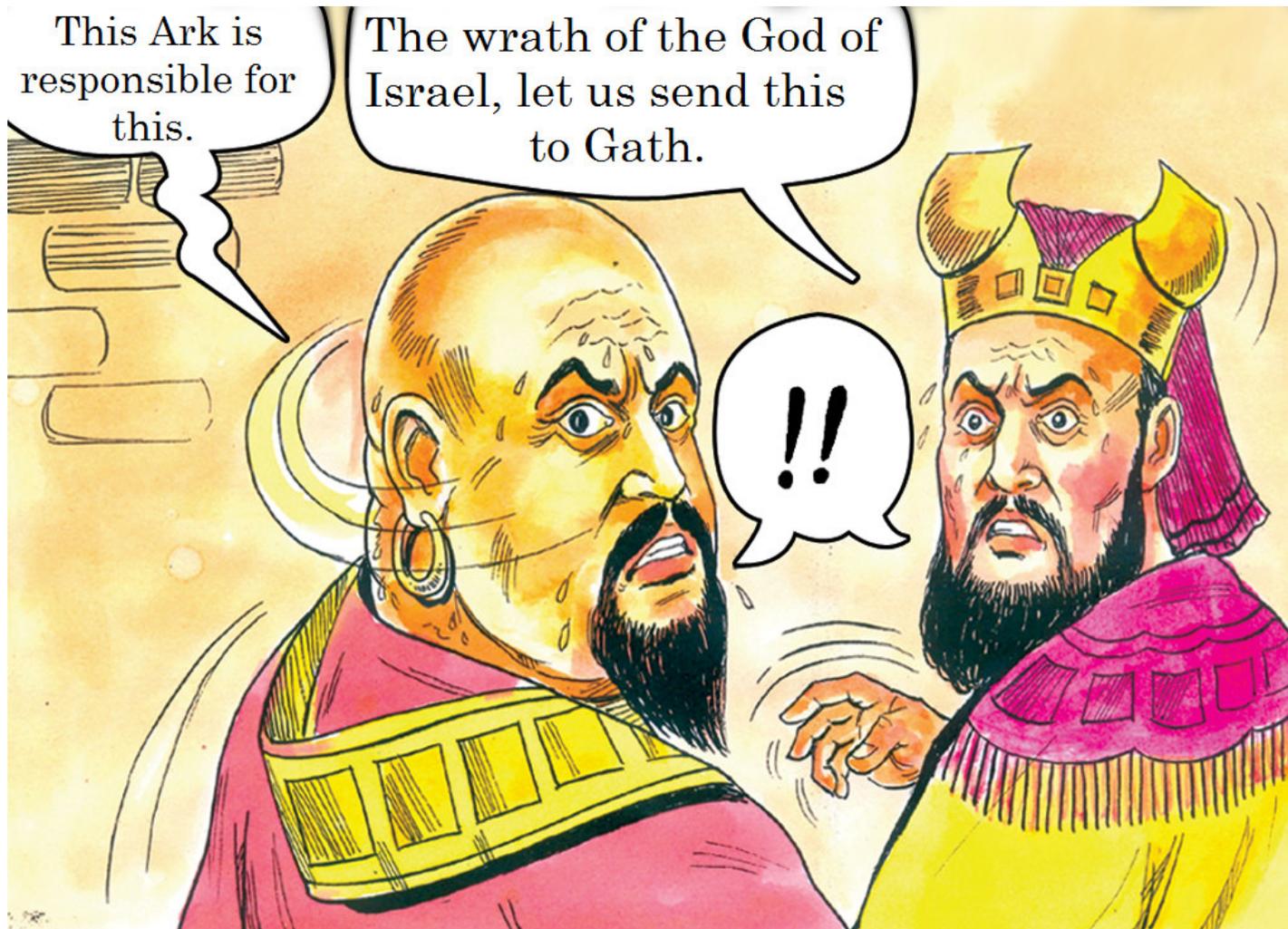
The Philistines took the Ark to Ashdod and set it down besides Dagon, their god. The next day.



This Ark is responsible for this.

The wrath of the God of Israel, let us send this to Gath.

!!



Wherever the Philistines took the Ark of Yahweh, they were struck by severe plague. They sent the Ark back to Israel.

There comes
the Ark.

Yahweh hasn't
abandoned us.

Come let's see
where it will stop.



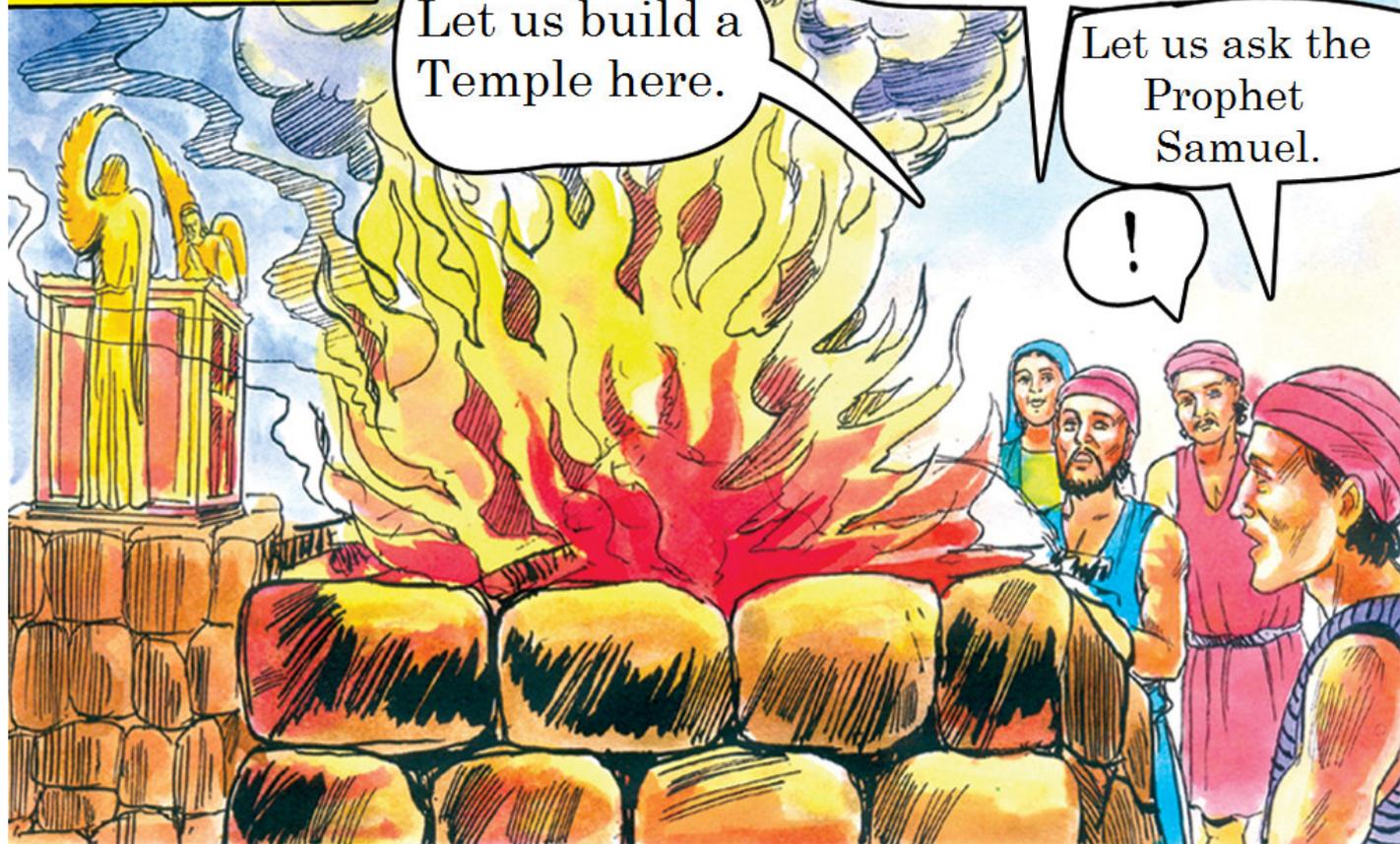
Where the Ark stopped, they built an Altar and offered the two cows.

Let us build a Temple here.

We can't just do it like that.

Let us ask the Prophet Samuel.

!



They took the Ark to house of Abinadab. Years passed under severe oppression from the Philistines. The Israelites cried to Yahweh.

Yahweh has abandoned us. That is why the Philistines are getting so strong.

Two third of all that we make goes to them as taxes.

When are we going to get back the land that was promised to our fathers?



God is punishing you for your infidelity. Remove the idols from your homes.

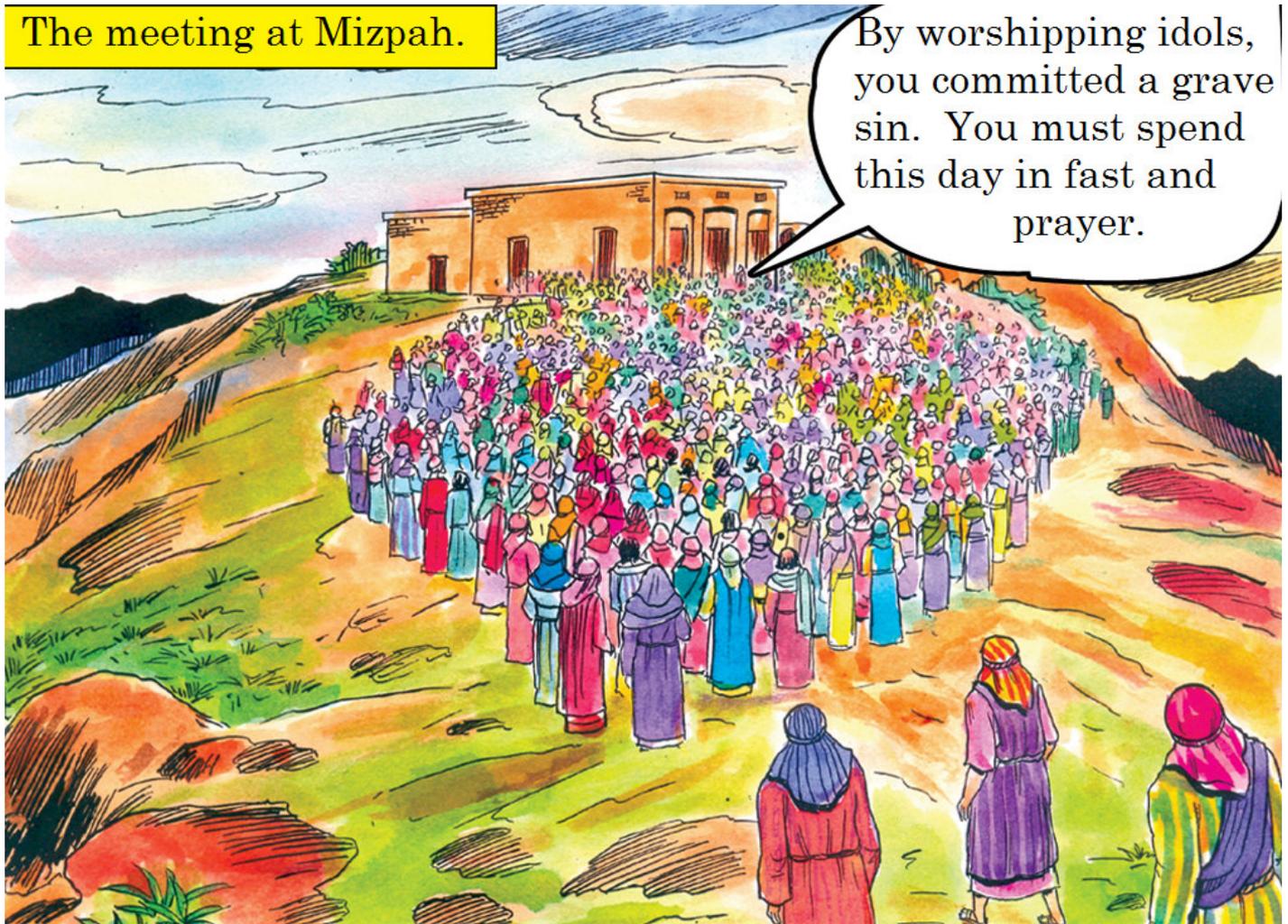


Repent and return to Yahweh.
Gather all the people at Mizpah
on the seventh day.



The meeting at Mizpah.

By worshipping idols, you committed a grave sin. You must spend this day in fast and prayer.



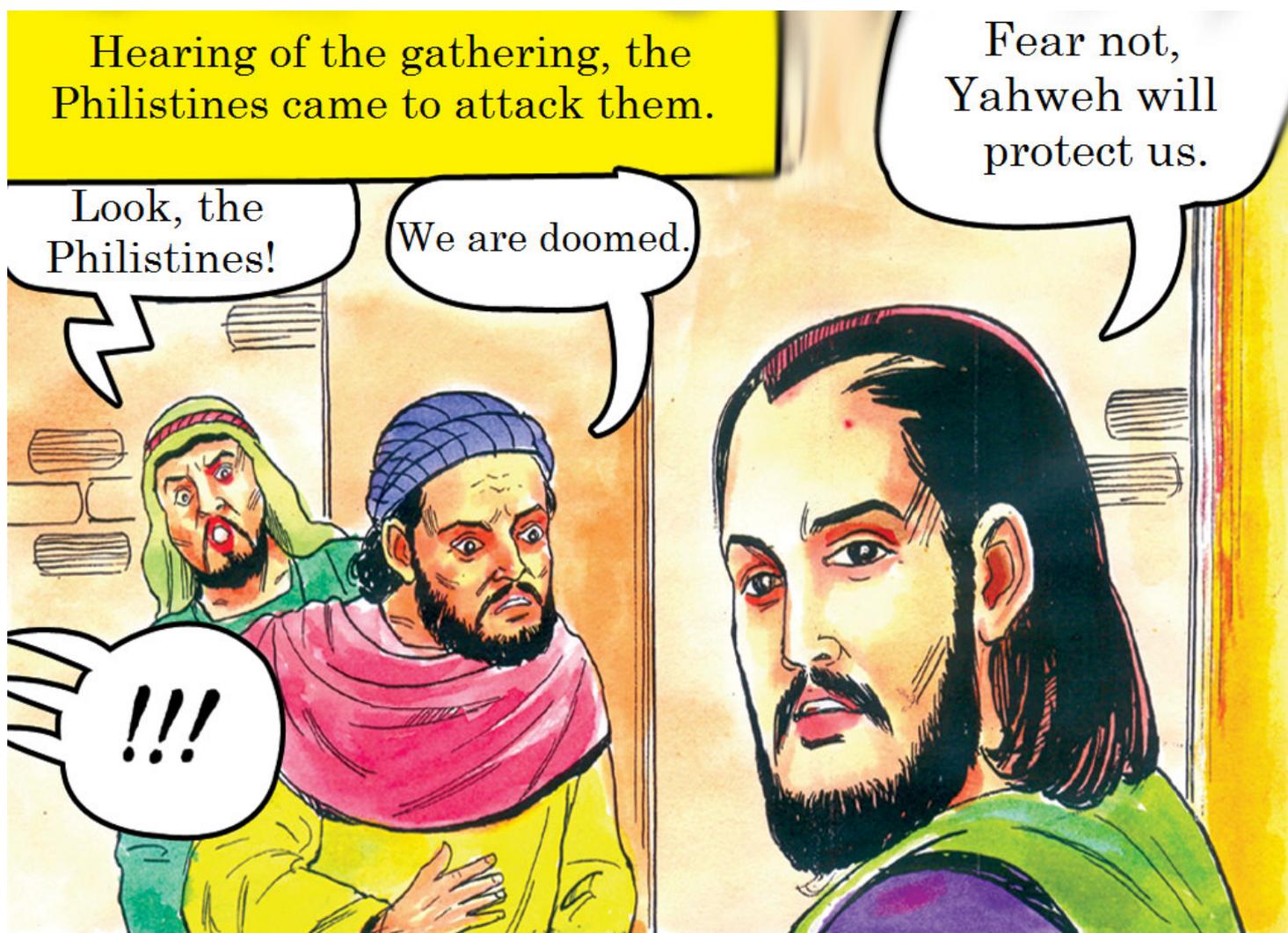
Hearing of the gathering, the Philistines came to attack them.

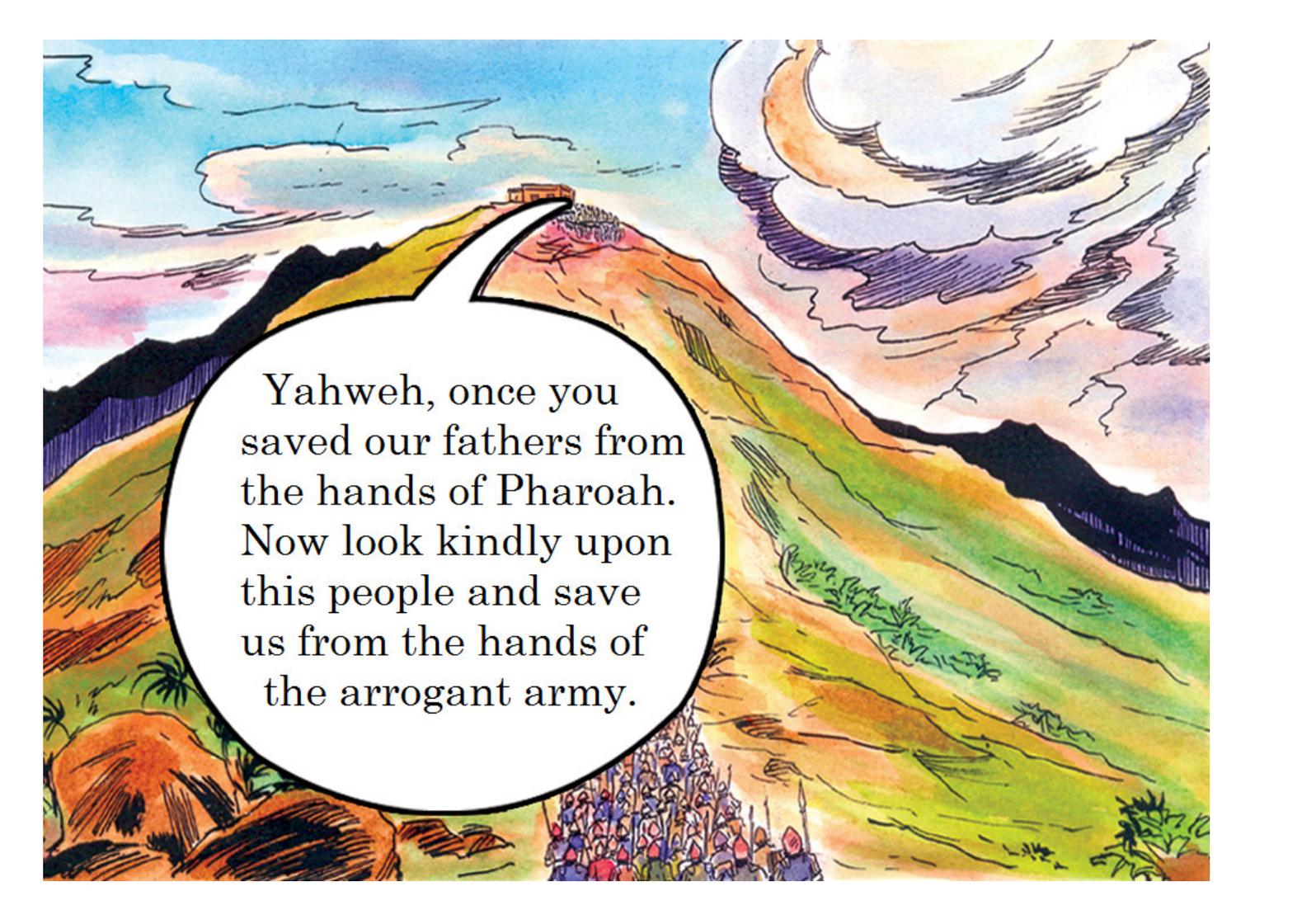
Look, the Philistines!

We are doomed.

Fear not, Yahweh will protect us.

!!!





Yahweh, once you
saved our fathers from
the hands of Pharoah.
Now look kindly upon
this people and save
us from the hands of
the arrogant army.

When Samuel prayed Yahweh routed the Philistines.



Flee, the gods
are coming
against us.

!!??

Pursue
them.



Who will defend us
from the God of
Israel?

?????



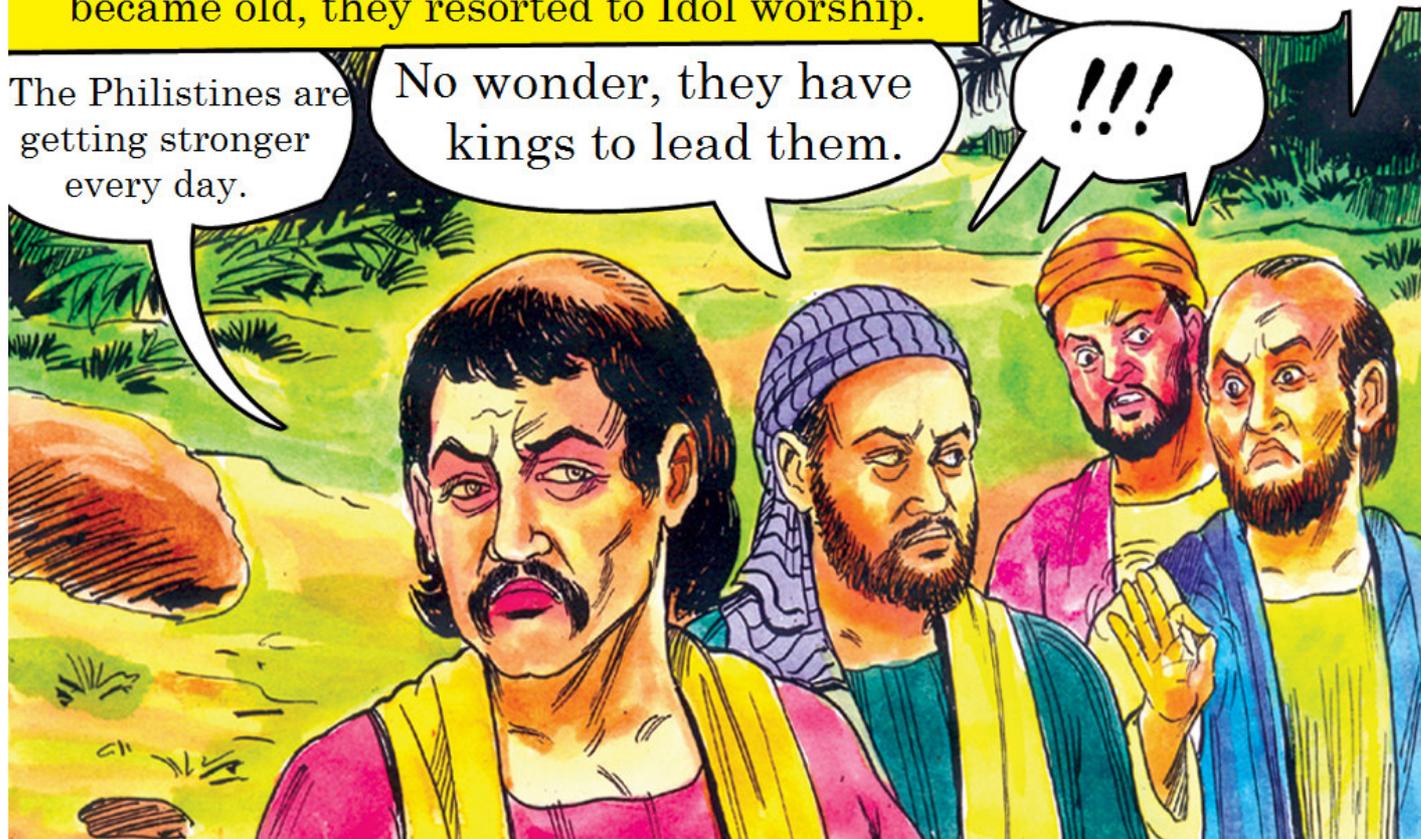
For a long time, Samuel ruled Israel. As long as the people obeyed him, there was peace and justice in the land. But when he became old, they resorted to Idol worship.

You must see their army, so strong and disciplined!

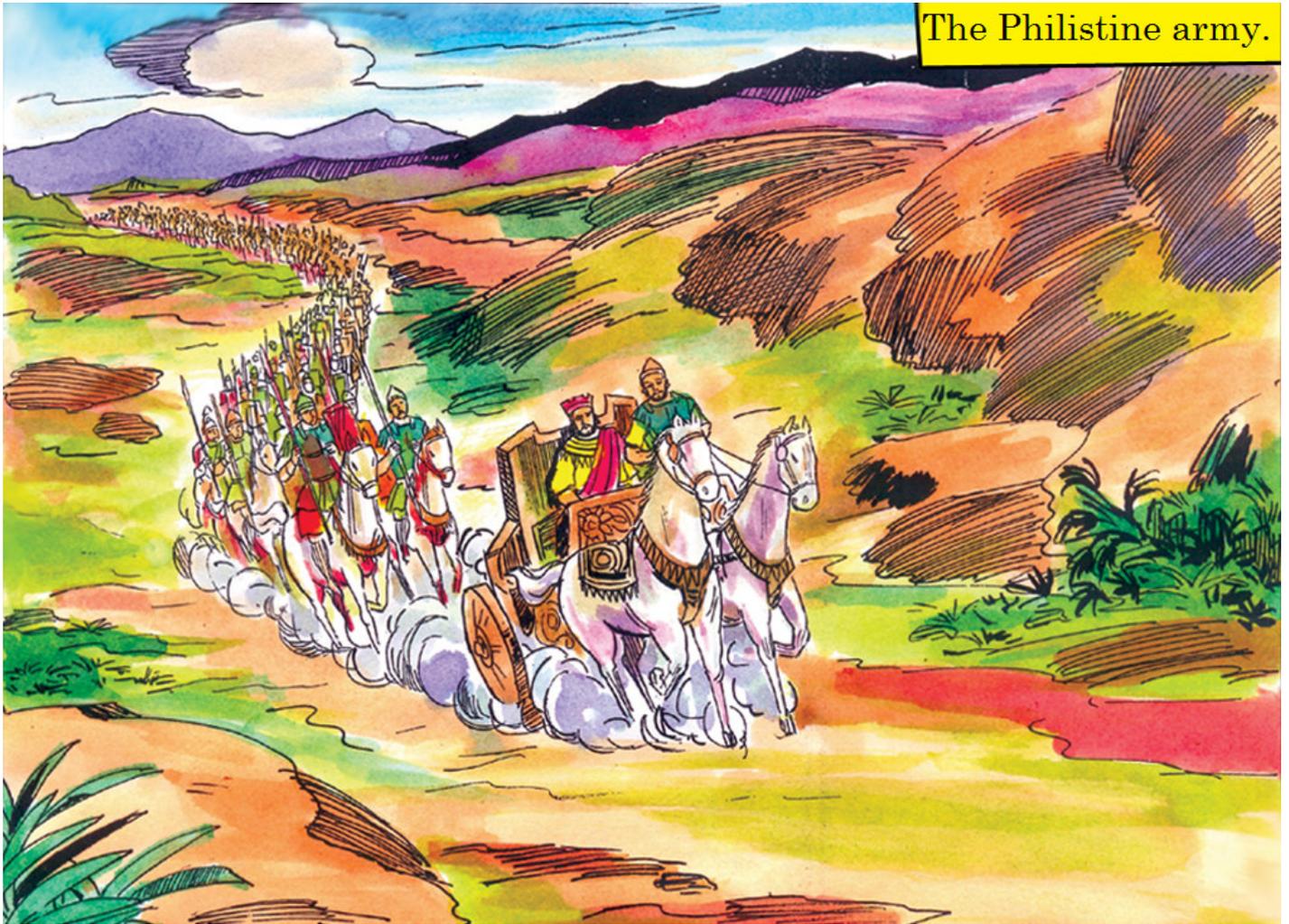
The Philistines are getting stronger every day.

No wonder, they have kings to lead them.

!!!



The Philistine army.



They have a standing army. Thousands are ready to march at any time.

Have you seen their weapons?

!!

!





If we had a king,
we too would be
strong like them.



There is only one way out.
We must have a king.

Let us ask
the Prophet
Samuel.

Where can we
find an apt
person?





Will he consent?

We must have
a king at any
rate.

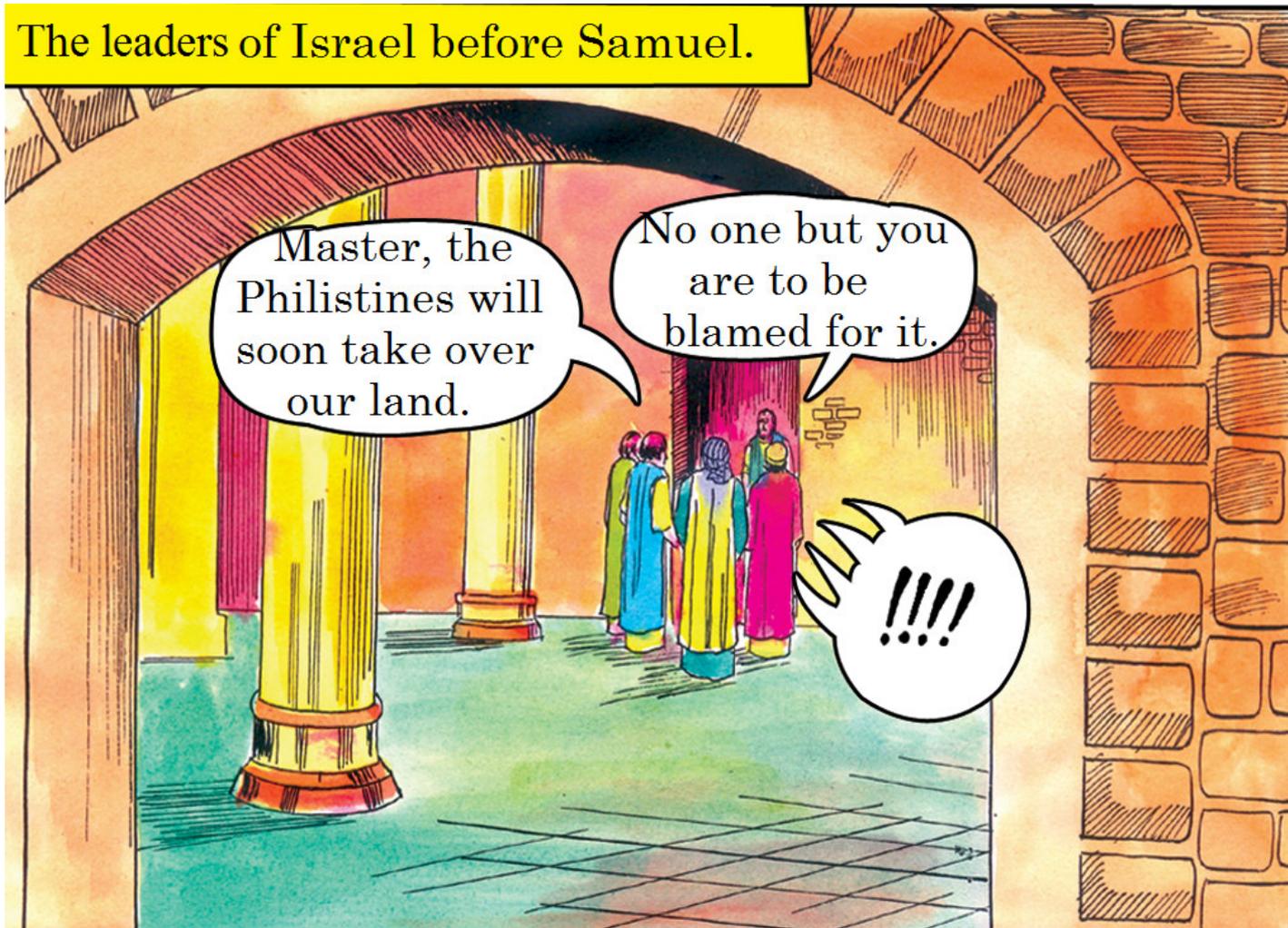
?

The leaders of Israel before Samuel.

Master, the Philistines will soon take over our land.

No one but you are to be blamed for it.

!!!



You have
abandoned
Yahweh and His
commandments.

All this talk
about Yahweh
will only lead
us to slavery.

Give us a king
to lead us.

?

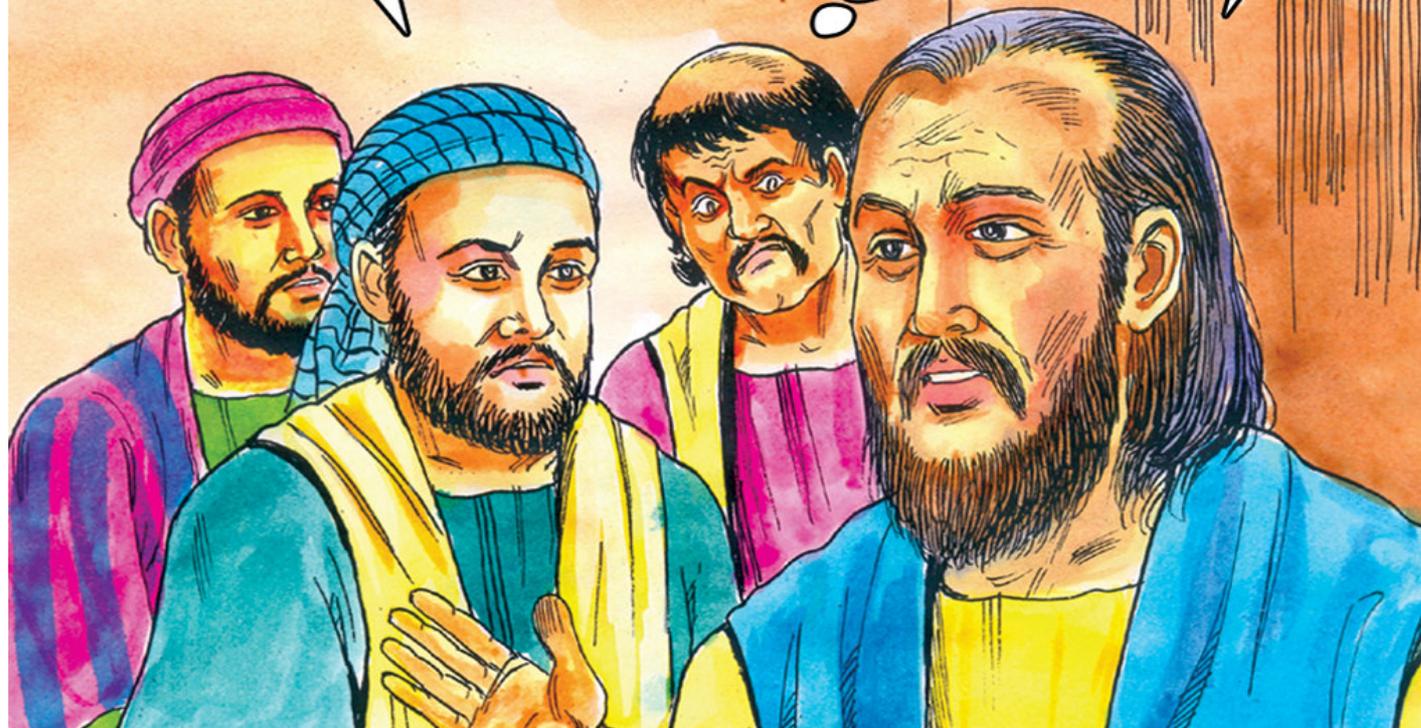


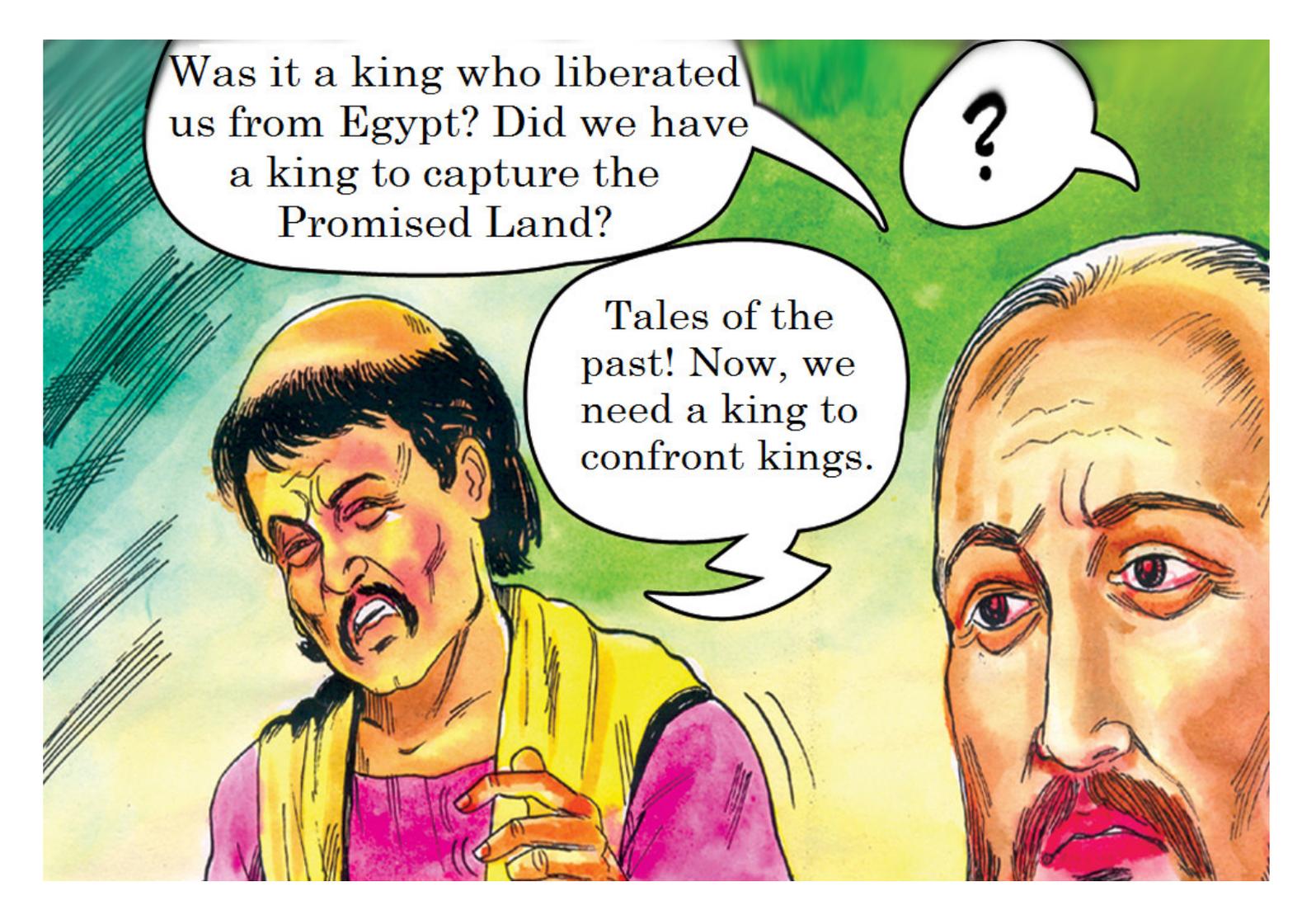
See the Philistines and Amorites! They are winning all the battles because they have kings.

If we have a king to defend us, we too will have prosperity.

! @#*

You are not like other peoples. Yahweh is your king.





Was it a king who liberated us from Egypt? Did we have a king to capture the Promised Land?

Tales of the past! Now, we need a king to confront kings.

Was it a king who routed the Philistines at Mizpah? You saw it yourself, no?

If you are not willing to anoint a king, we will be forced to resort to other ways.

!

All right. Let me discern the will of Yahweh. Come back tomorrow.

How am I going to control this
people! They won't listen
to me anymore.



I am getting old. Israel is becoming weaker everyday. May be there is some truth in what they are saying.



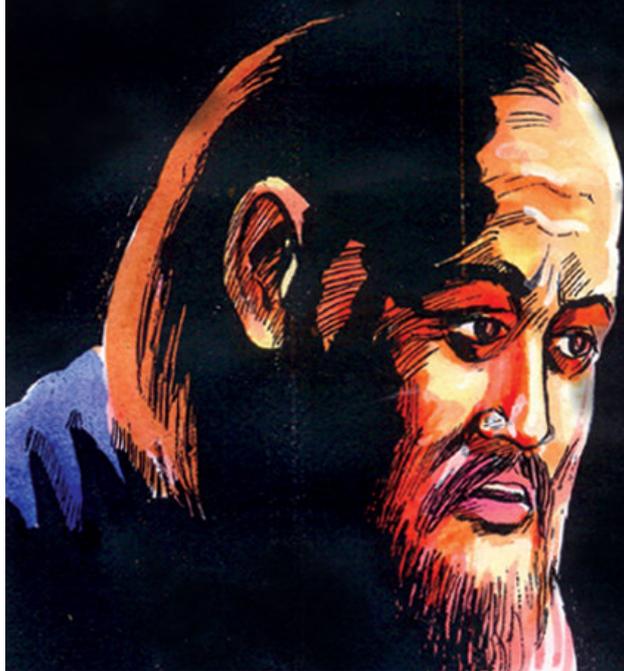
King and army! Could it be possible that Yahweh is speaking through the people? We must move with the times.



Isn't Yahweh the
king of Israel?



What am I going to do
now? Why doesn't Yahweh
show His power?



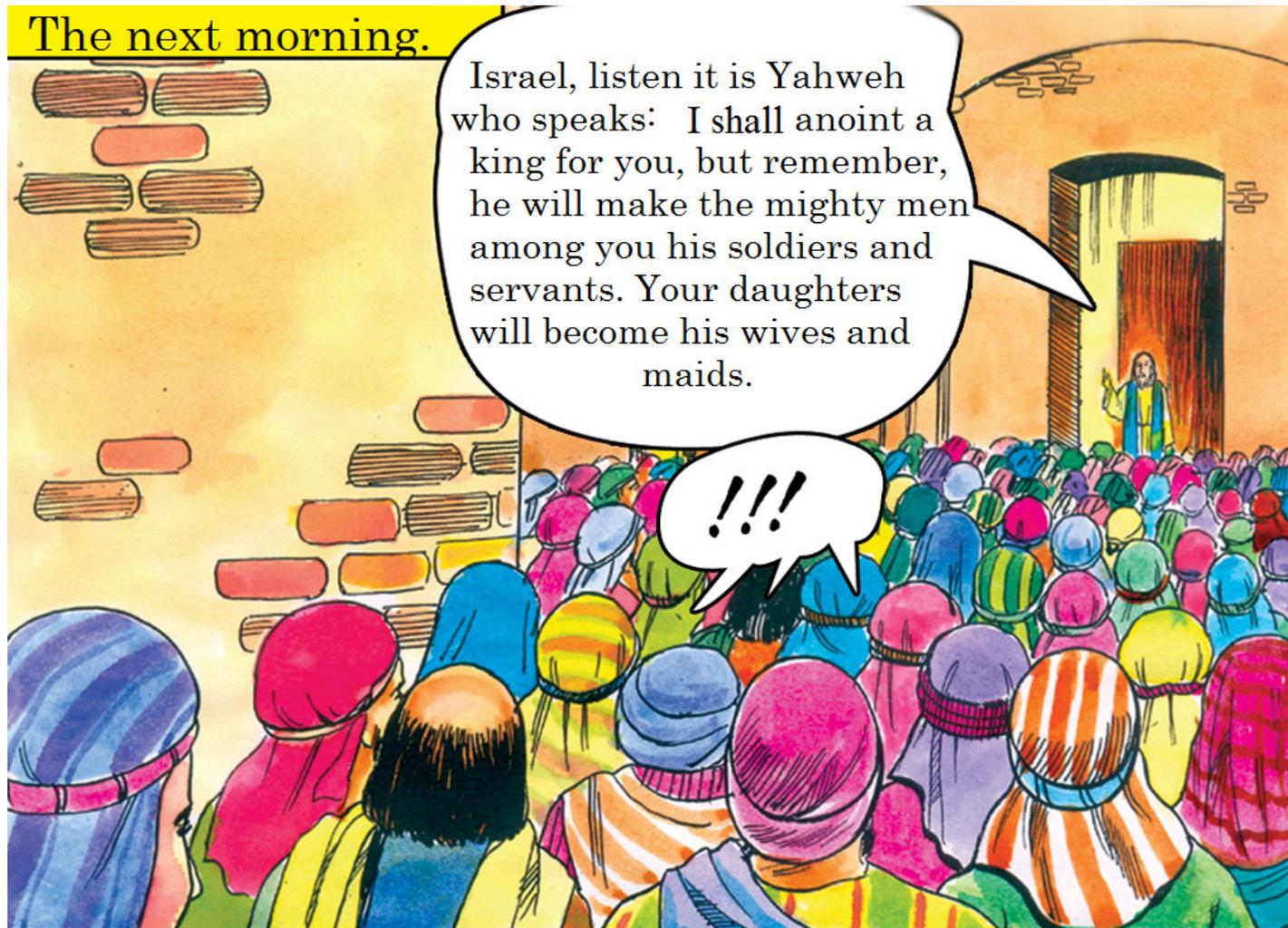
A man with a long white beard and a green robe is shown in profile, looking towards a wall of lit candles. The wall is covered in a dense grid of lines, and the candles are lit, casting a warm glow. The man's hands are raised in a gesture of prayer or supplication. In the background, there are three bright, star-like lights against a dark sky. A speech bubble is positioned in the upper right corner of the image.

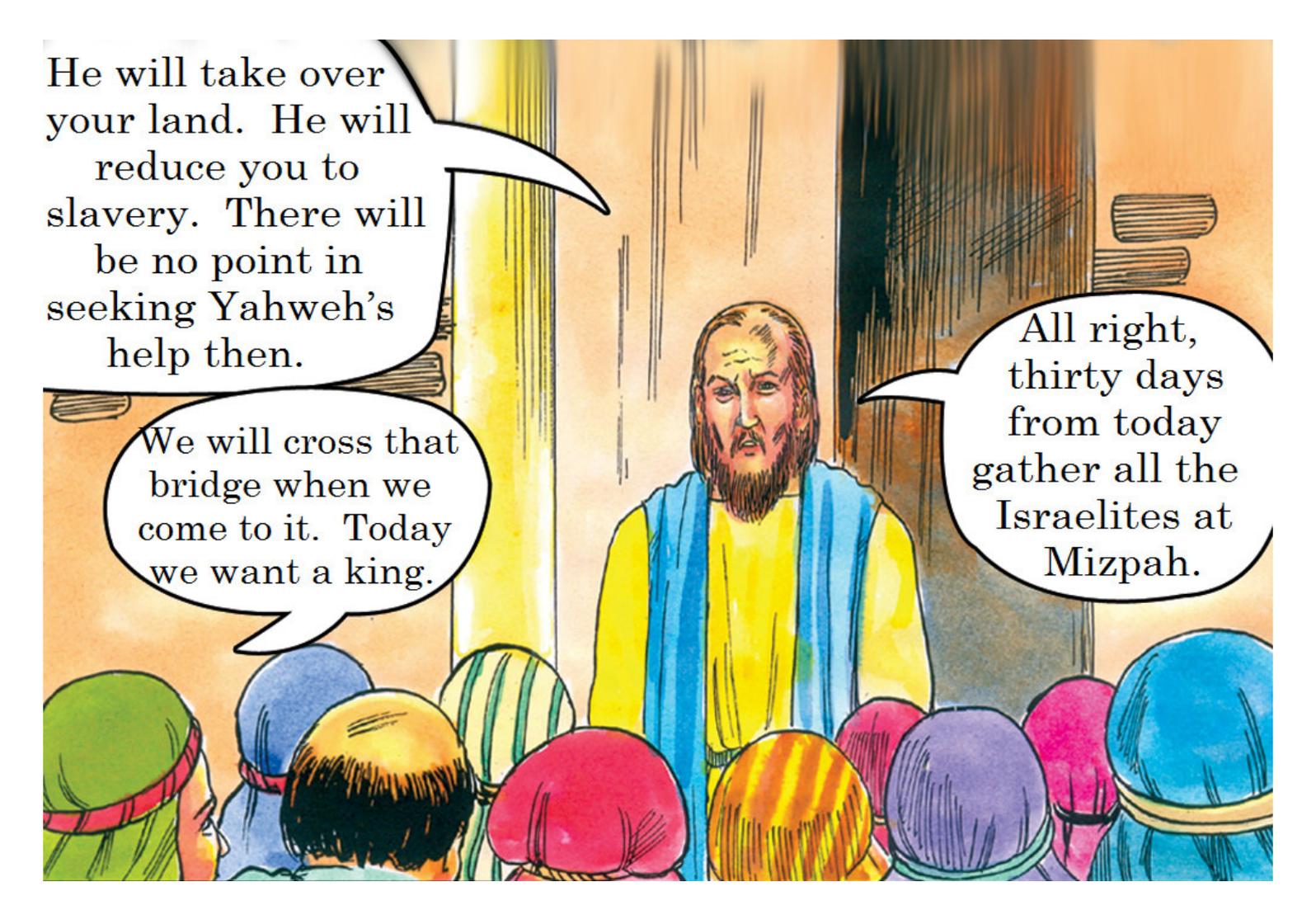
Lord, show us the way.

The next morning.

Israel, listen it is Yahweh who speaks: I shall anoint a king for you, but remember, he will make the mighty men among you his soldiers and servants. Your daughters will become his wives and maids.

!!!





He will take over
your land. He will
reduce you to
slavery. There will
be no point in
seeking Yahweh's
help then.

We will cross that
bridge when we
come to it. Today
we want a king.

All right,
thirty days
from today
gather all the
Israelites at
Mizpah.

The story of Samuel doesn't end here. He has yet to play a decisive role at a crucial moment in the history of Israel.



Next story:
The first king of Israel

Saul

Questions

1. When did Samuel live?
2. What was the promise Samuel's mother made before his birth?
3. What does the name Samuel mean?
4. What were the two crucial moments in Samuel's life?
5. What are the characteristics of classical prophecy that starts with Samuel?
6. What did Samuel do as a priest?
7. Why did Samuel oppose Monarchy?
8. Samuel was a courageous spokesman of God, explain.
9. In what sense is Samuel a forerunner of the Messiah?
10. What do you learn from the life of Samuel?

THE ENTIRE BIBLE IN COMICS

1. Cain and Abel
2. Abraham
3. Jacob
4. Joseph
5. Moses
6. Joshua
7. Samson
8. Ruth
9. Samuel
10. Saul
11. David
12. King David
13. Solomon
14. Elijah
15. Amos
16. Hosea
17. Micah

18. Isaiah
19. Jeremiah
20. Ezekiel
21. Zechariah
22. Jonah
23. Job
24. Tobit
25. Daniel
26. Susanna
27. Esther
28. Judith
29. Maccabeus
30. The Maccabees
31. A World Awaiting
32. Light of the world
33. The Herald
34. The Prophet
35. The Liberator

36. The One to come
37. The Lord of the Universe
38. Son of God
39. The Son of Man
40. In the shadow of the cross
41. The Way
42. Son of David
43. Bread of Life
44. The Redeemer
45. With us forever
46. Tongues of fire
47. Baptism in blood
48. The chosen vessel
49. Libation
50. Come, Lord Jesus
51. Woman