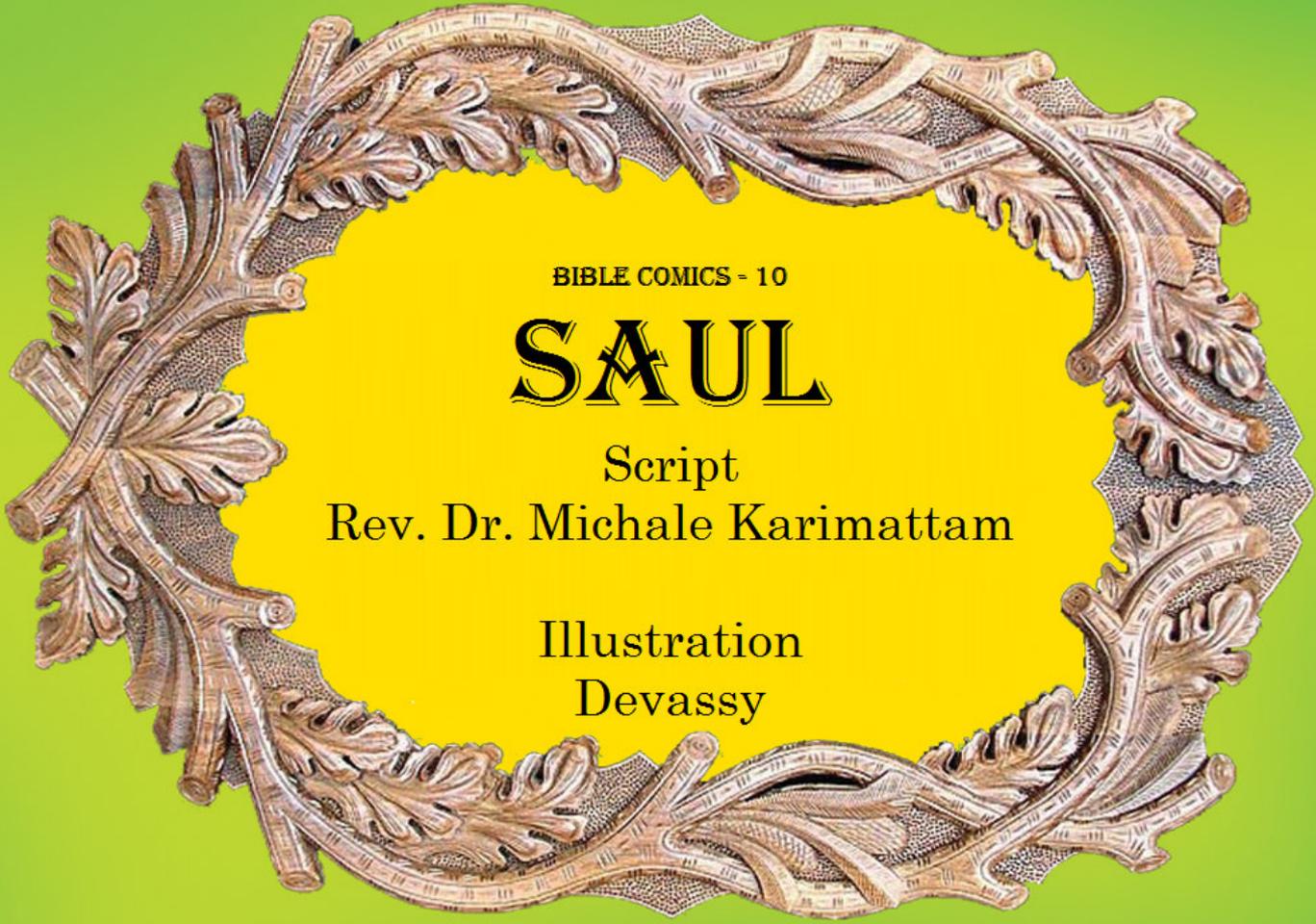


Bible Comics -10

SAUL





BIBLE COMICS - 10

SAUL

Script

Rev. Dr. Michale Karimattam

Illustration

Devassy

SAUL

Saul, son of Kish, was the first king of Israel. His reign lasted for twenty years (B.C. 1030-1010). Twenty three chapters of the Bible (1 Sam 9-31) are set aside for Saul. The present story is based on the narratives found in those chapters.

It was at a critical moment that Saul was called to assume the leadership of his people. The land that was promised to Abraham's descendants and was occupied by them under the leadership of Joshua was being taken away from them by the powerful Philistines. The very existence of Israel was

threatened. The tribal set up and the charismatic leadership of the “Judges” proved to be insufficient to check the Philistines.

Saul was made king by divine election, priestly anointing and popular acclamation. He was the man of the hour. A farmer by origin, Saul remained wedded to simple life right to the end. Scrupulously adhering to the advice of Samuel, he neither built palaces nor accumulated wealth for himself. He loved his people and risked his very life for them.

From a bunch of farmers and shepherds, he built up a powerful army. In several battles he defeated

the Philistines and captured a good part of their territory. Under his able leadership, Israel became a nation. It was Saul who laid the foundation for the future empire of David and Solomon.

Saul was a courageous man who marched into the battlefield at the head of his army. Even when most of his men deserted, with a handful of soldiers, he defeated the Philistines, inspiring courage in his followers. He died fighting the enemies and thus offered his life for his people.

All the same, he is a tragic figure, a victim of the circumstances. He stands at the turning point of

Israel's history, the period of transition from the tribal set up to the monarchic rule. His duty as a king was an exceptionally difficult one. The people who acclaimed him as a king and looked up to him for protection did not give him the necessary support. Samuel who anointed him not only withdrew his support but also plotted against him by anointing David as a rival king.

The break with Samuel crushed Saul's spirit. He was torn between the stringent demands of the Yahwistic religion represented by Samuel and the needs of the time. Unable to reconcile idealism with

concrete reality, he fell victim to depression and jealousy. In the end he could not distinguish between friends and foes. The cold blooded murder of the priests and the constant hunting after David made him very unpopular and eventually led to his downfall.

In the history of Salvation Saul has a preparatory function. In fact he prepared the way for David, the Messianic figure. Seen from this perspective, Saul resembles John the Baptist who prepared the way for the Messiah.

In the hill country of Judea, there was a little town called Gibeath. In that town lived a farmer named Kish who belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. One day some of his donkeys got lost. He sent his son, Saul, with a servant in search of the donkeys. This happened a few days after Samuel promised the Israelites that he would give them a king.





We have nothing left
to give to the Seer.

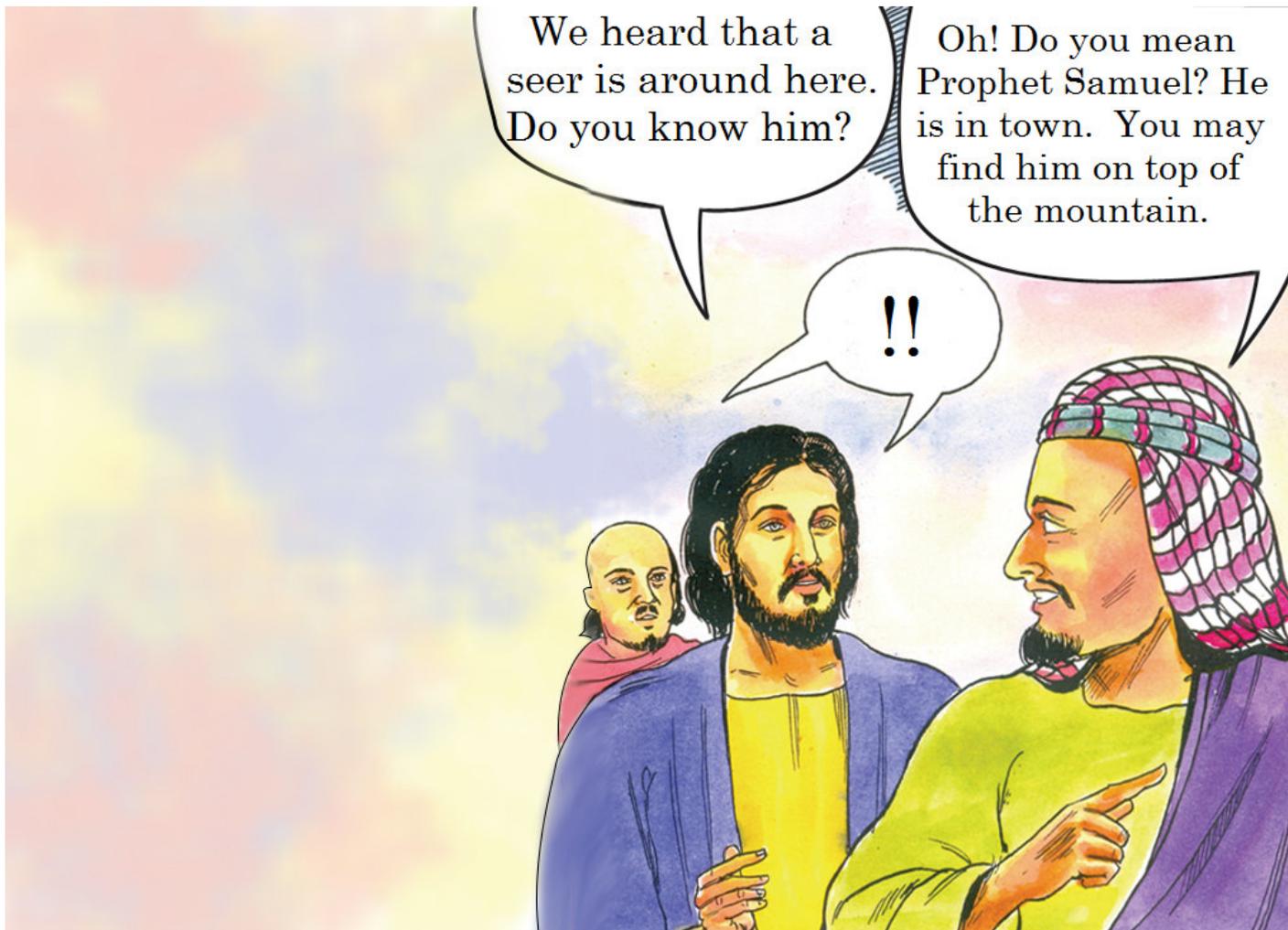
I have a quarter
of a Shekel.
That will be
enough for the
donkey.

!!

We heard that a seer is around here. Do you know him?

Oh! Do you mean Prophet Samuel? He is in town. You may find him on top of the mountain.

!!





Could you please
help us to find the
Prophet Samuel?
We are from Gibeah.

I am
Samuel.

!!

During the night before, Samuel had a vision about Saul.

Don't worry about the Donkeys any more. They have been found. You stay with me tonight. Tomorrow you can go back.



The next morning.

Saul, stay back for a moment. Let your servant go ahead.

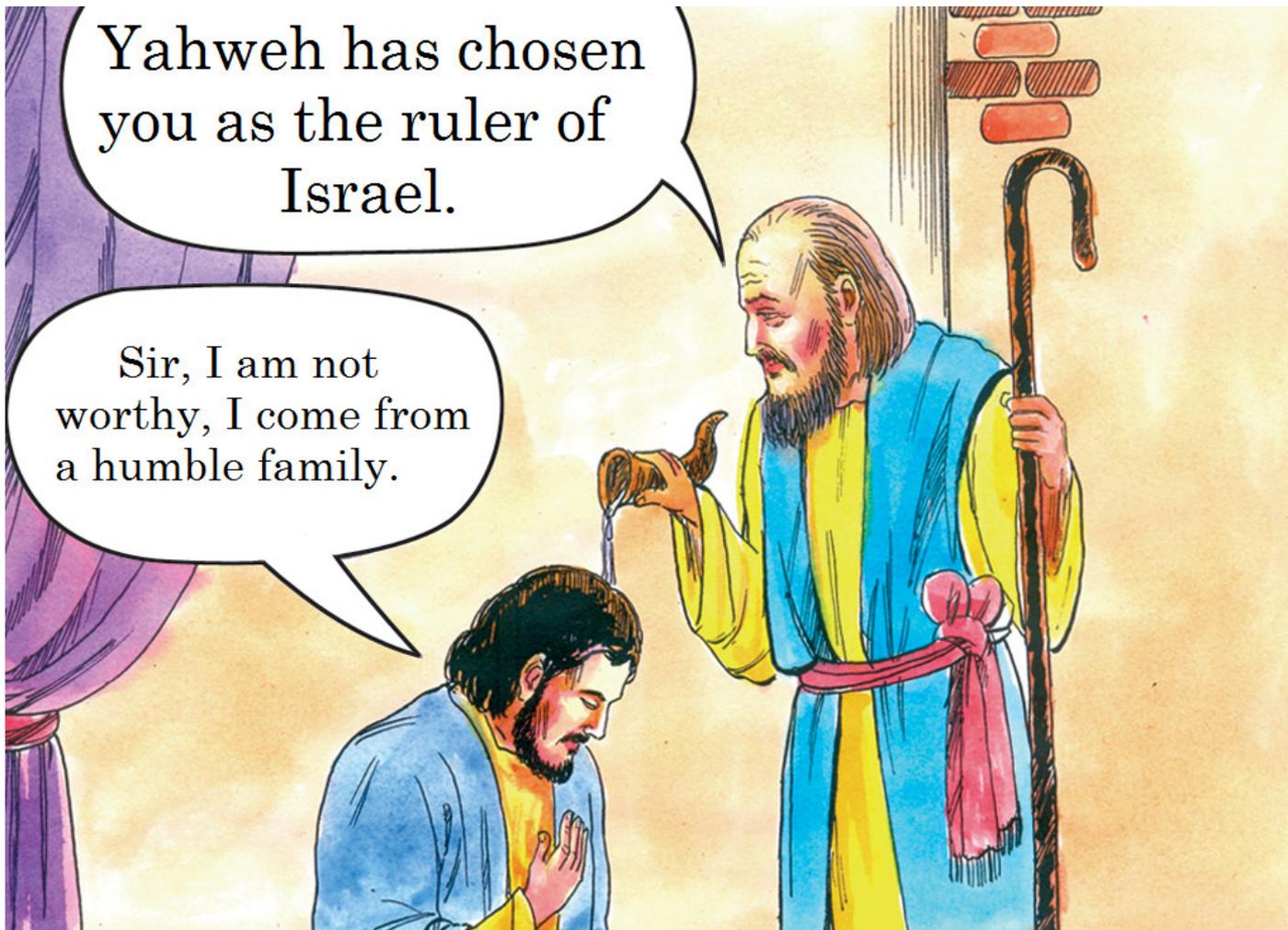
!

?!



Yahweh has chosen
you as the ruler of
Israel.

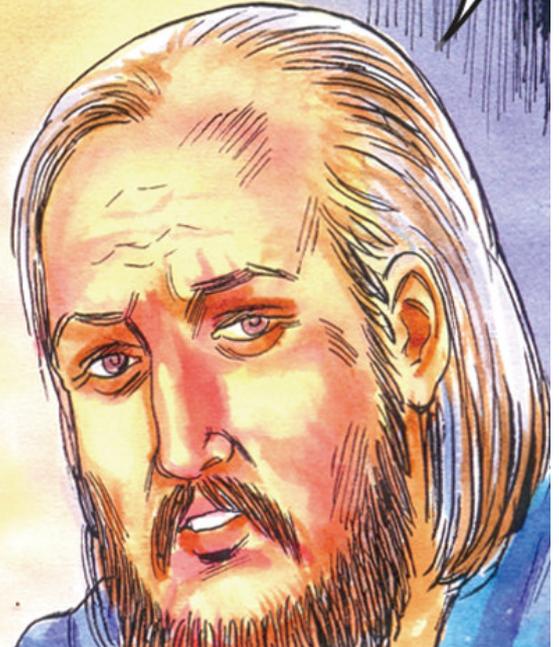
Sir, I am not
worthy, I come from
a humble family.



What does the family
matter to Yahweh? On your
way you will find three
men. One of them will be
carrying three lamps.

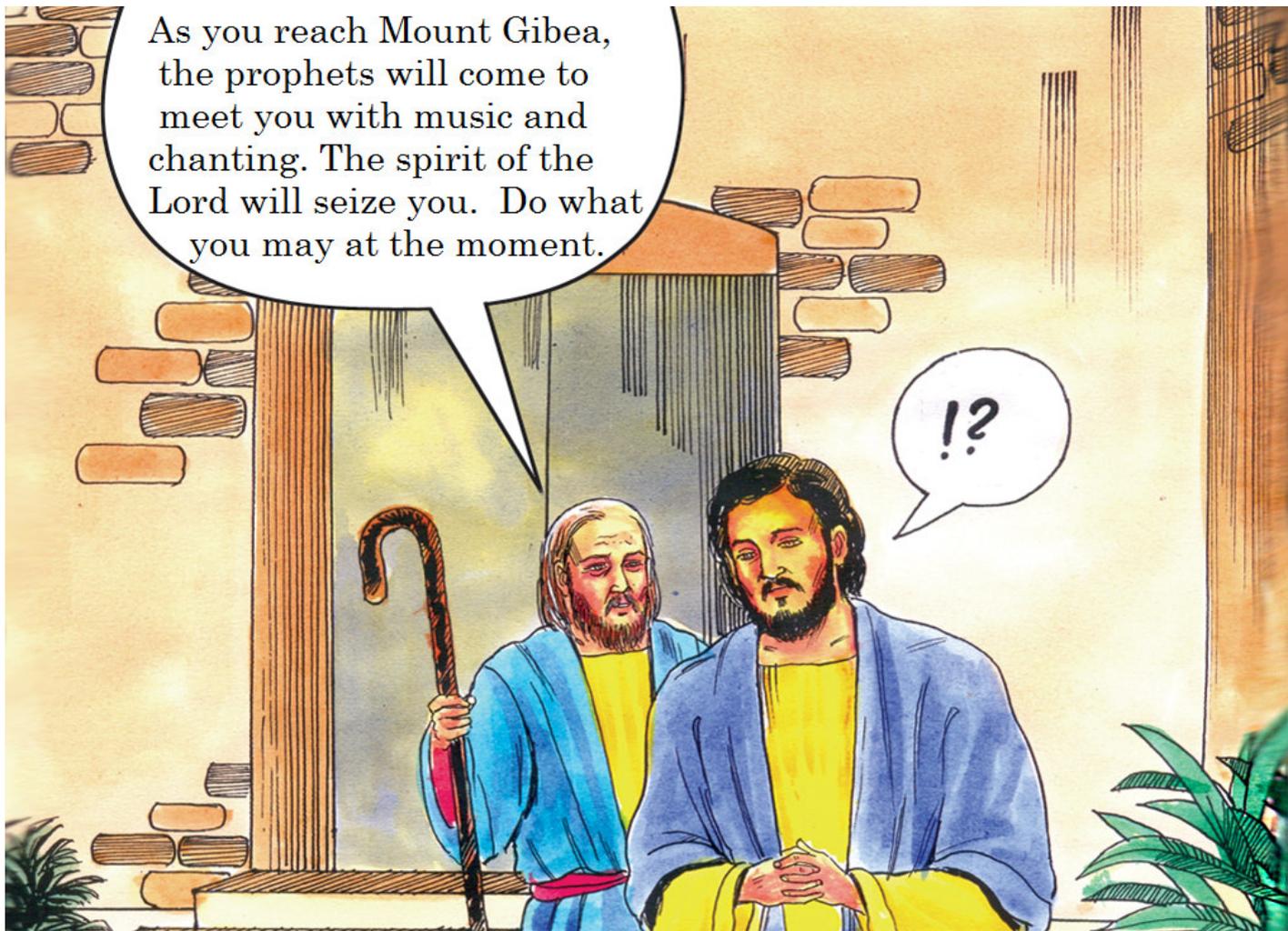


The second one will have
three loaves of bread. The
third will have a wine skin
with him. They'll give you
two loaves of bread.
Accept it.

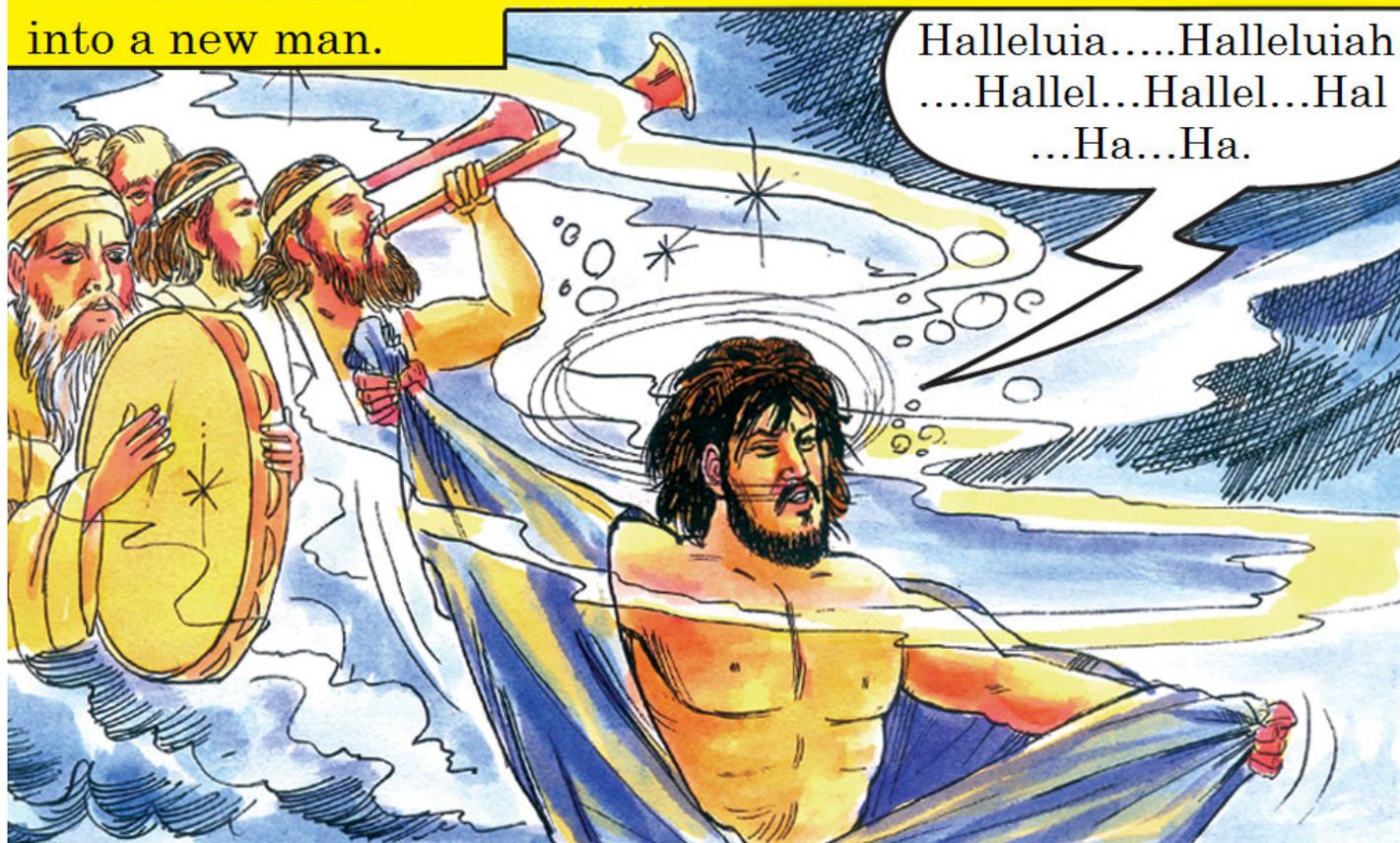


As you reach Mount Gibea,
the prophets will come to
meet you with music and
chanting. The spirit of the
Lord will seize you. Do what
you may at the moment.

!?



Everything happened as Samuel had foretold. When Saul saw the prophets, the spirit of the Lord came upon him. He was transformed into a new man.





Isn't this Saul,
son of Kish? What
happened to him?

Is Saul one of
the prophets
too?

?

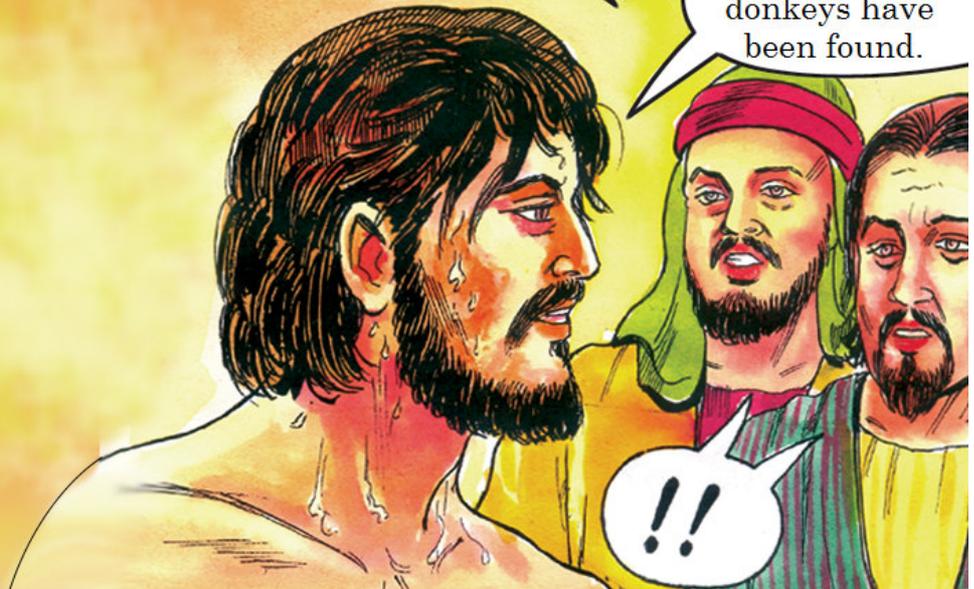
Saul's uncle who had set out in search of him came there.

Where were you all these days? We have been so worried.

There is no place we haven't searched. Finally we went to see the Prophet Samuel.

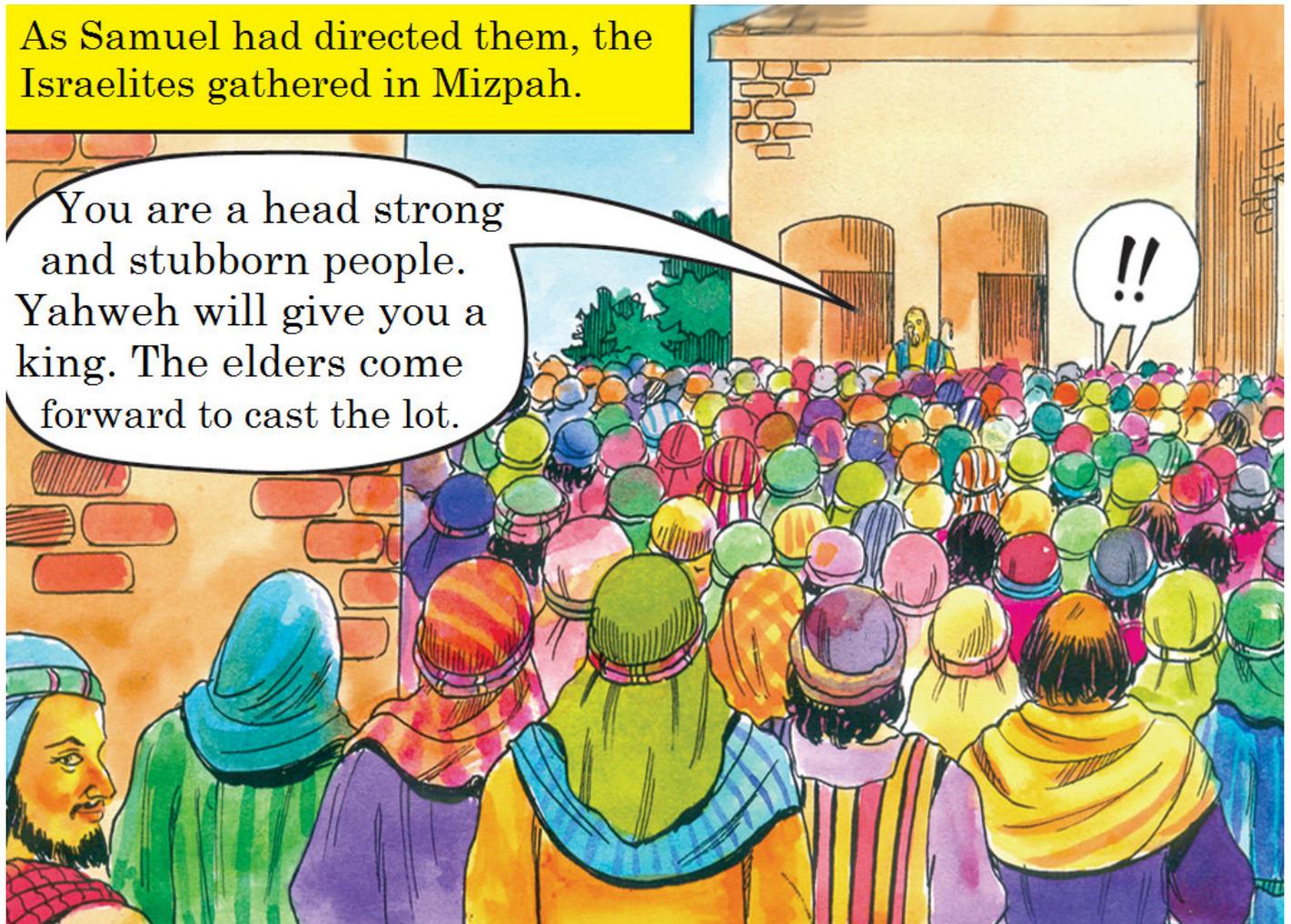
What did he say?

He said that the donkeys have been found.



As Samuel had directed them, the Israelites gathered in Mizpah.

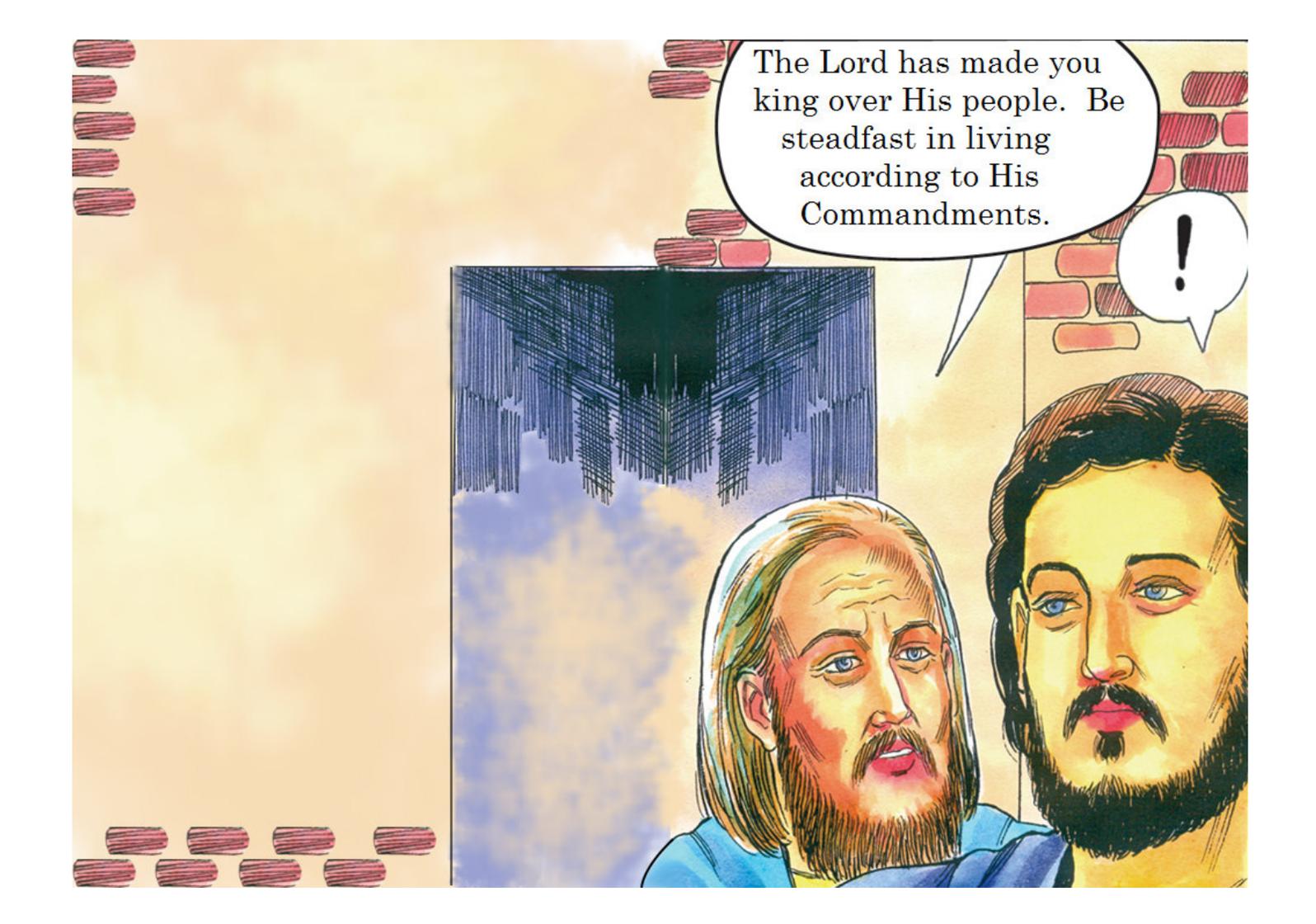
You are a head strong and stubborn people. Yahweh will give you a king. The elders come forward to cast the lot.





The lot has fallen upon
Saul, son of Kish from
the tribe of Benjamin.

!



The Lord has made you king over His people. Be steadfast in living according to His Commandments.

!

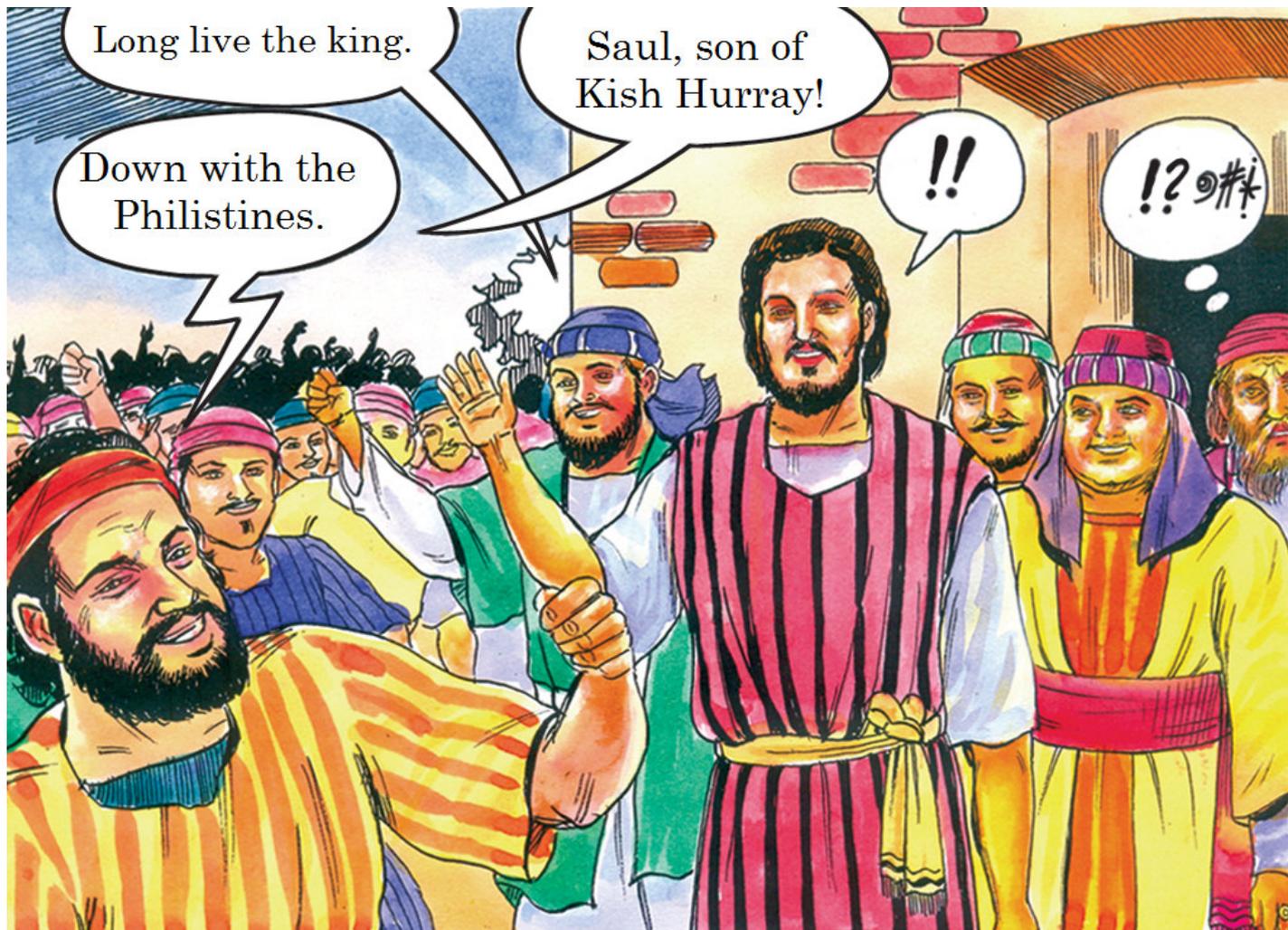
Long live the king.

Saul, son of
Kish Hurray!

Down with the
Philistines.

!!

!?! #!

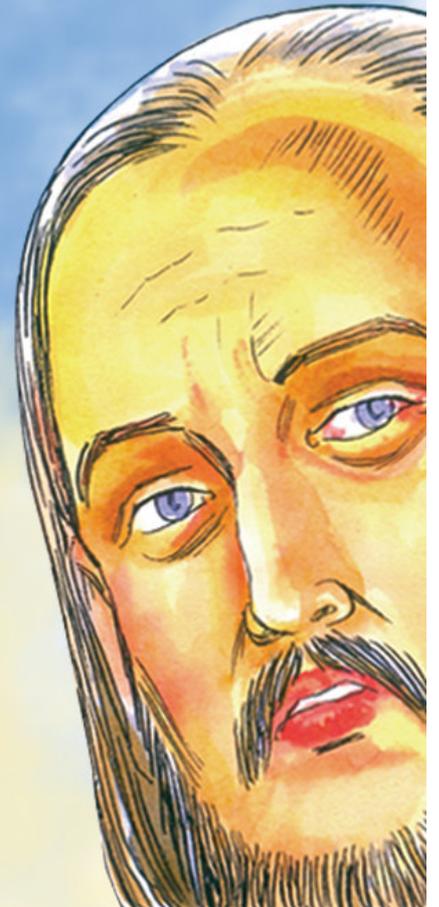


Saul, Yahweh has chosen you to protect His people from the enemy, justice and kindness should be your "Motto". Have a care for the poor.

Lord, I am at your service.



Do not accumulate
wealth. Build no
palaces. Be a Father
to your people.



Samuel bids farewell.

I have done all you have asked of me. Have I ever taken a Bribe? Have I wronged any of you?

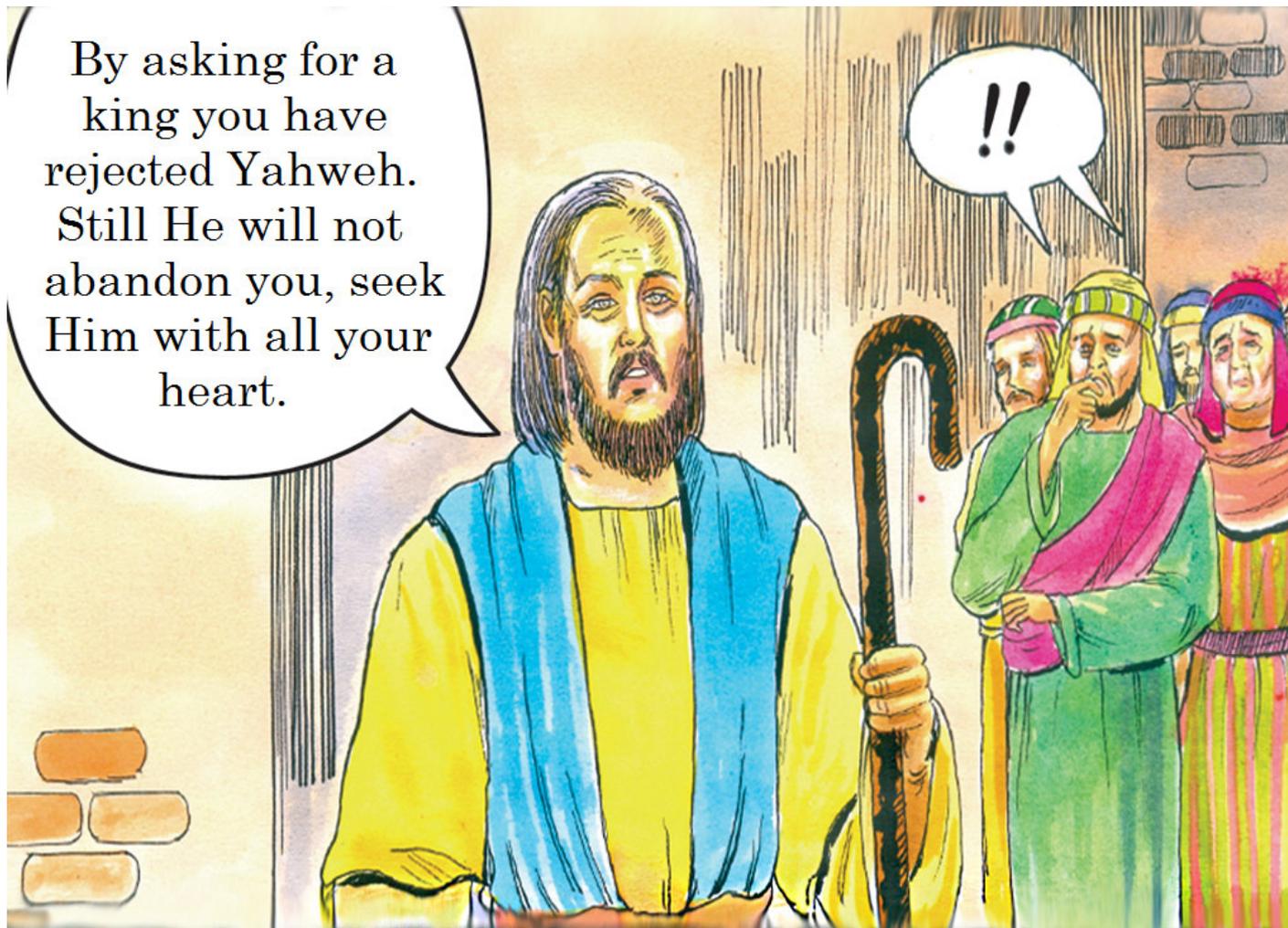
No, you have not wronged any of us.

You yourselves have borne witness to my innocence. But, you have committed a grave sin.

!!!



By asking for a king you have rejected Yahweh. Still He will not abandon you, seek Him with all your heart.



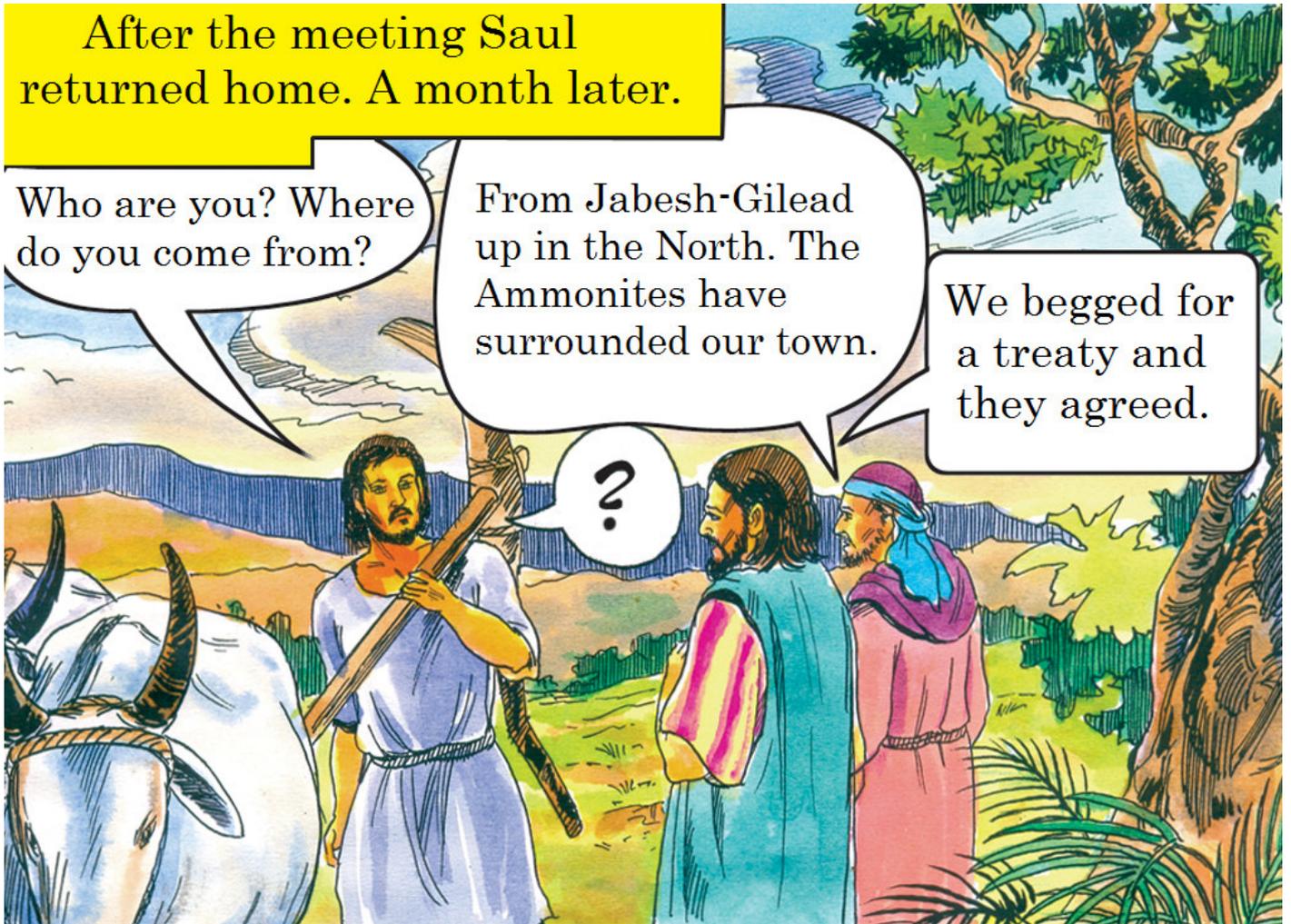
After the meeting Saul returned home. A month later.

Who are you? Where do you come from?

From Jabesh-Gilead up in the North. The Ammonites have surrounded our town.

We begged for a treaty and they agreed.

?





Then, what is the problem.

You want to hear the terms? They'll pluck out the right eye of all the inhabitants of our town.

!?



We have only seven days
to give them an answer.

Don't worry.
Yahweh will
protect you.

Saul cut oxen into pieces and sent it to all the territories of Israel.



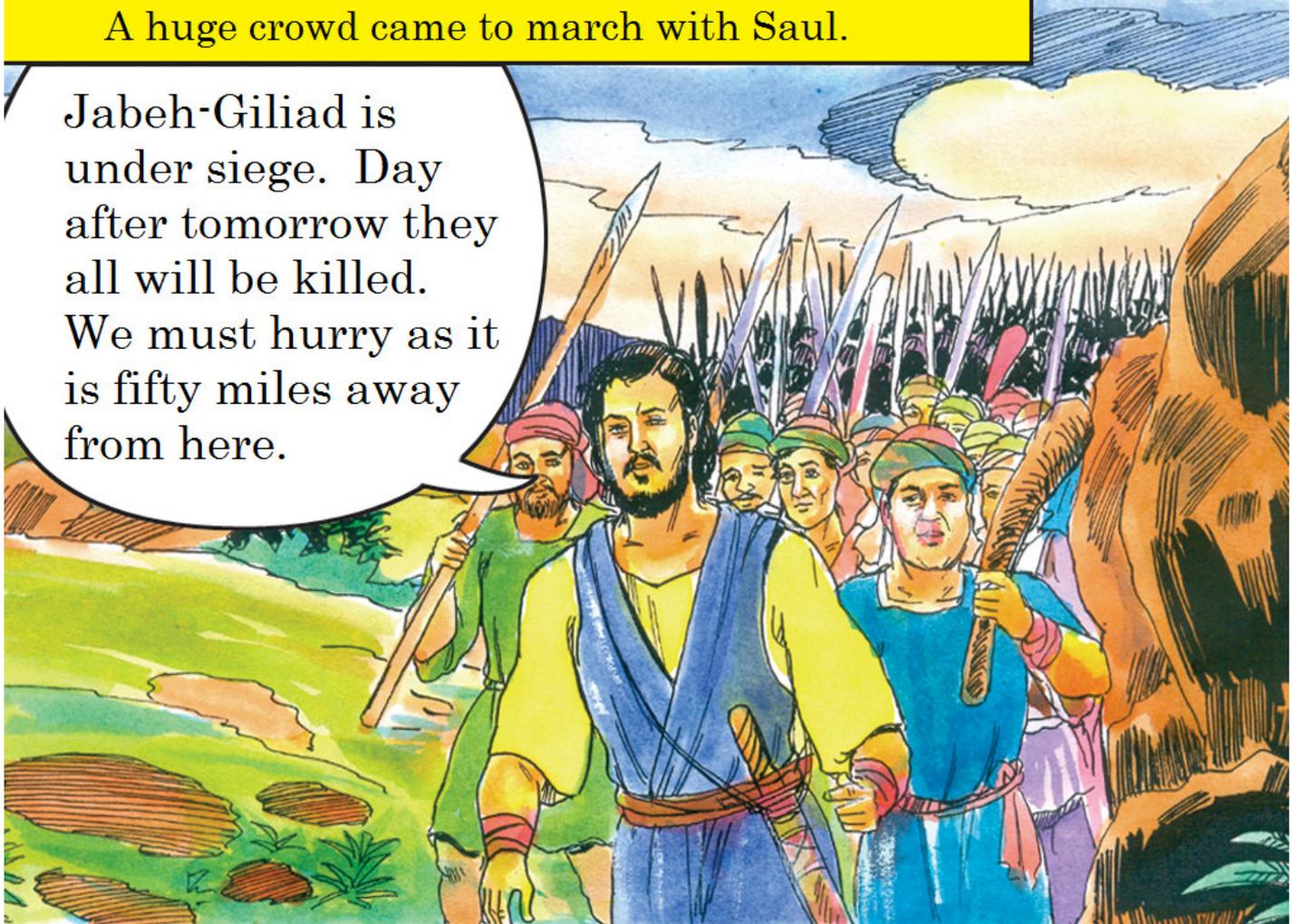
If anyone will not
march with Saul, this
shall be done with his
oxen.

???

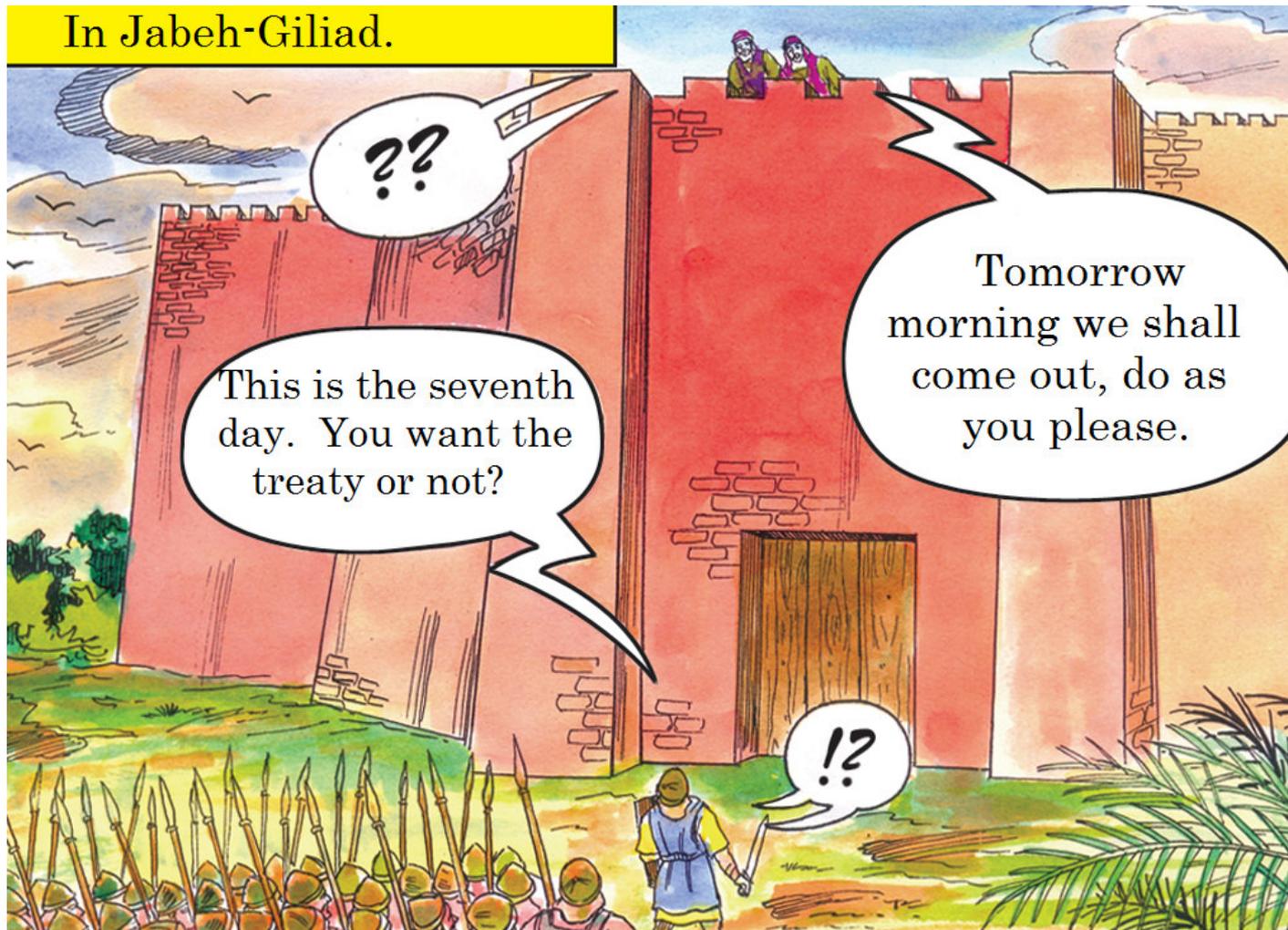


A huge crowd came to march with Saul.

Jabeh-Giliad is under siege. Day after tomorrow they all will be killed. We must hurry as it is fifty miles away from here.



In Jabel-Giliad.

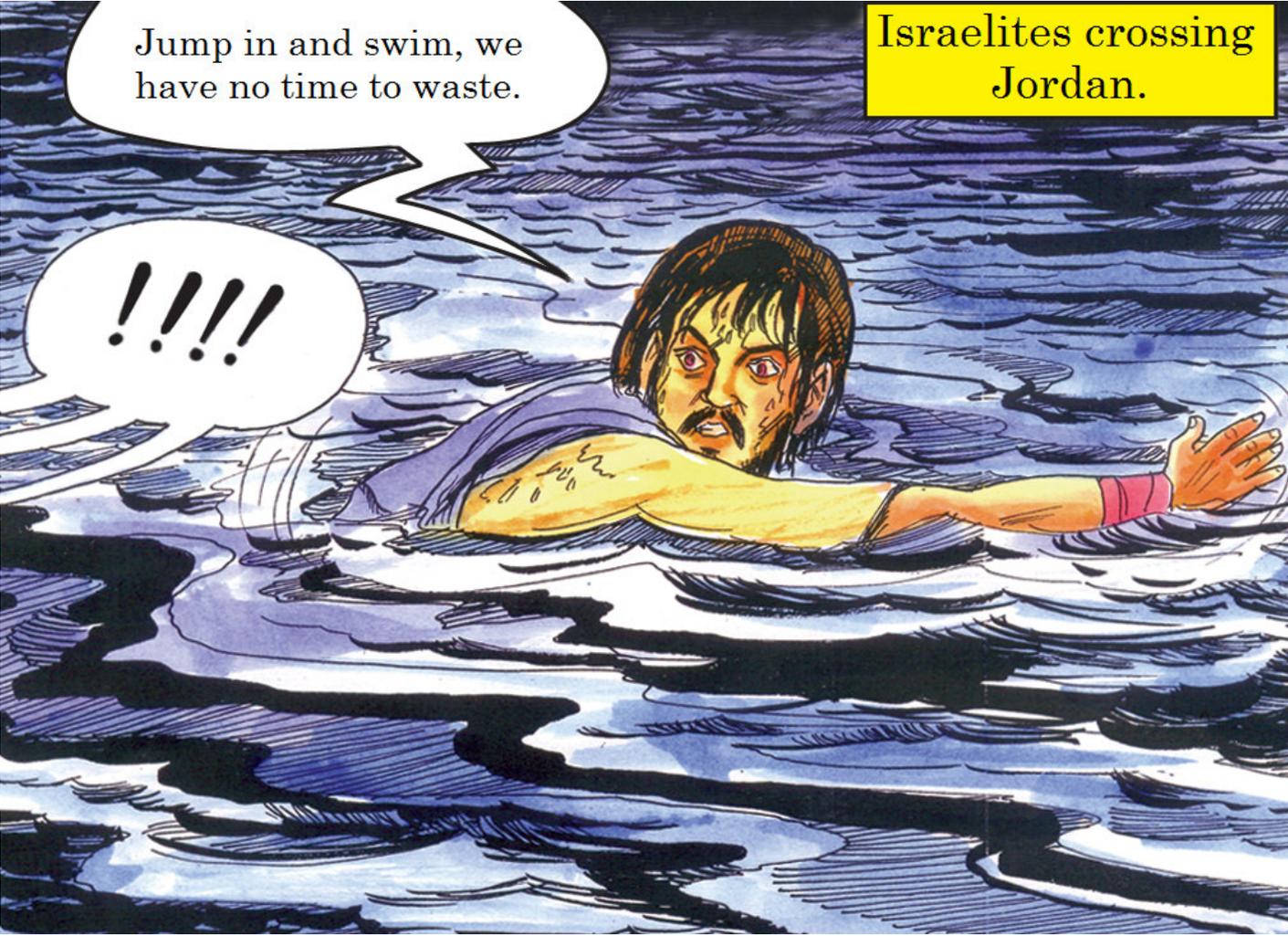


??

This is the seventh day. You want the treaty or not?

Tomorrow morning we shall come out, do as you please.

!?

A man with a mustache and dark hair is swimming in turbulent, dark blue water. He is wearing a purple tunic and a red wristband. His expression is one of urgency and determination. The water is rendered with heavy, dark blue and black strokes, creating a sense of depth and movement. Two speech bubbles are present: one at the top left with text and another to the left of the man with three exclamation marks.

Jump in and swim, we
have no time to waste.

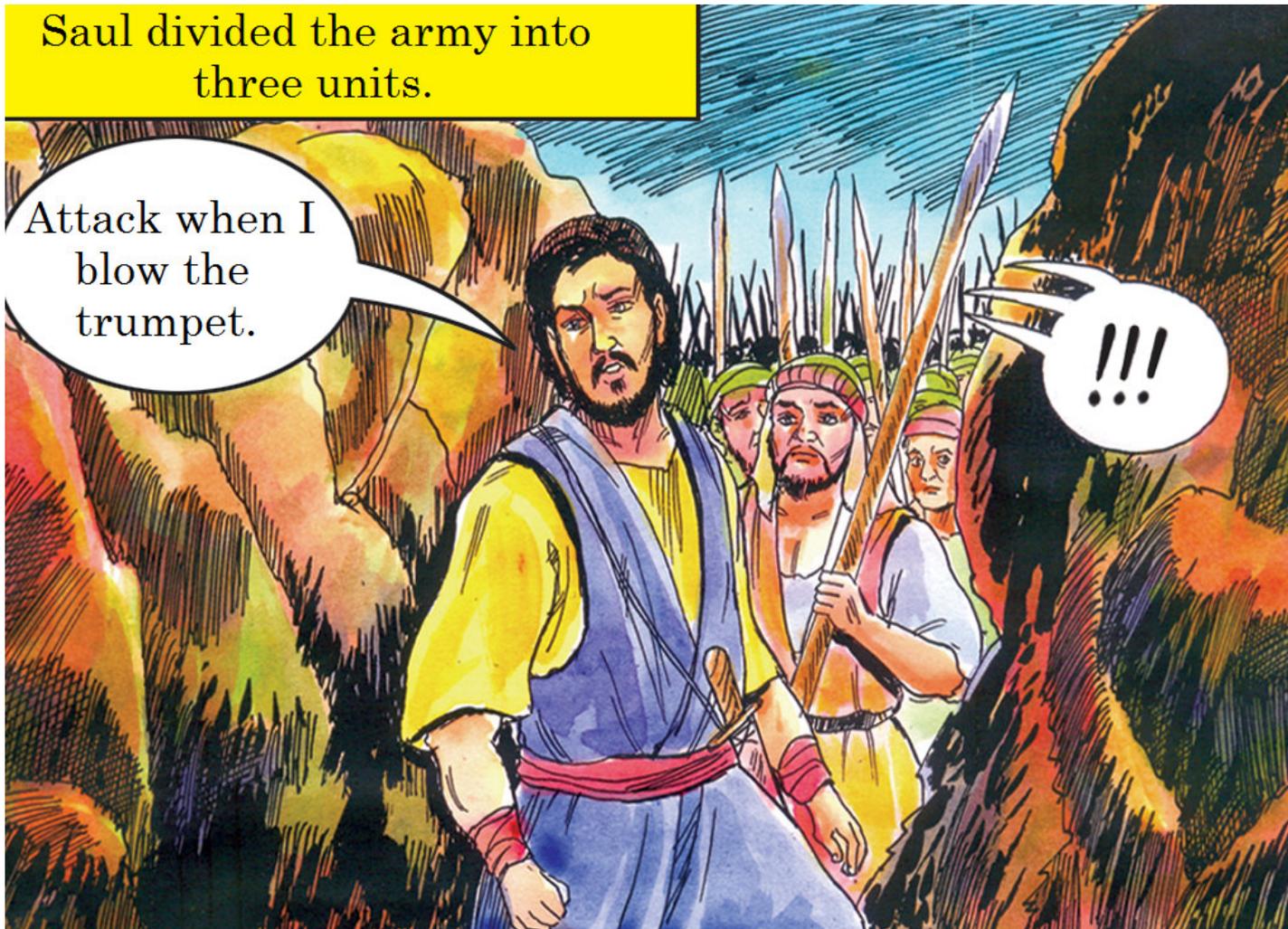
Israelites crossing
Jordan.

!!!

Saul divided the army into three units.

Attack when I
blow the
trumpet.

!!!

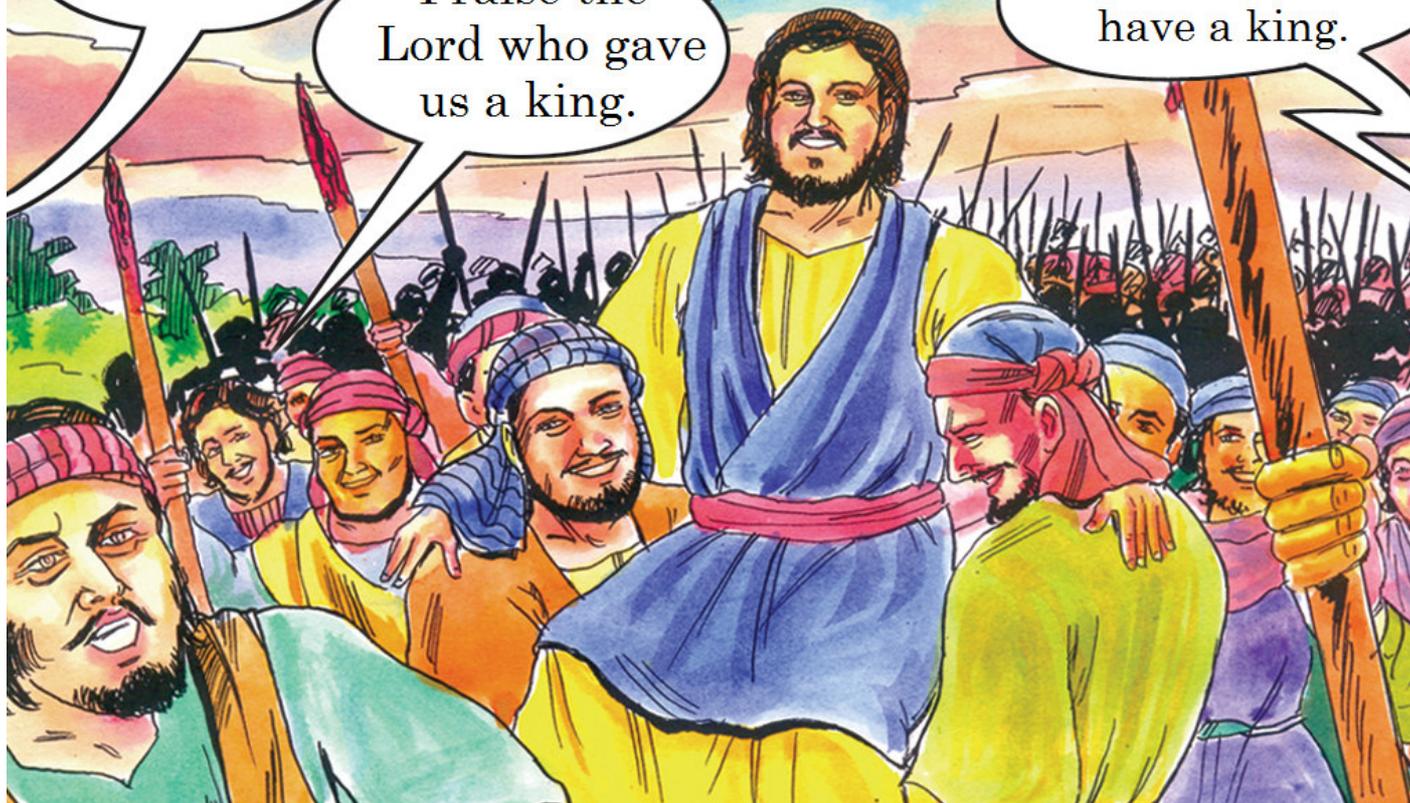


Israel won the war by noon.

Long live
King Saul.

Praise the
Lord who gave
us a king.

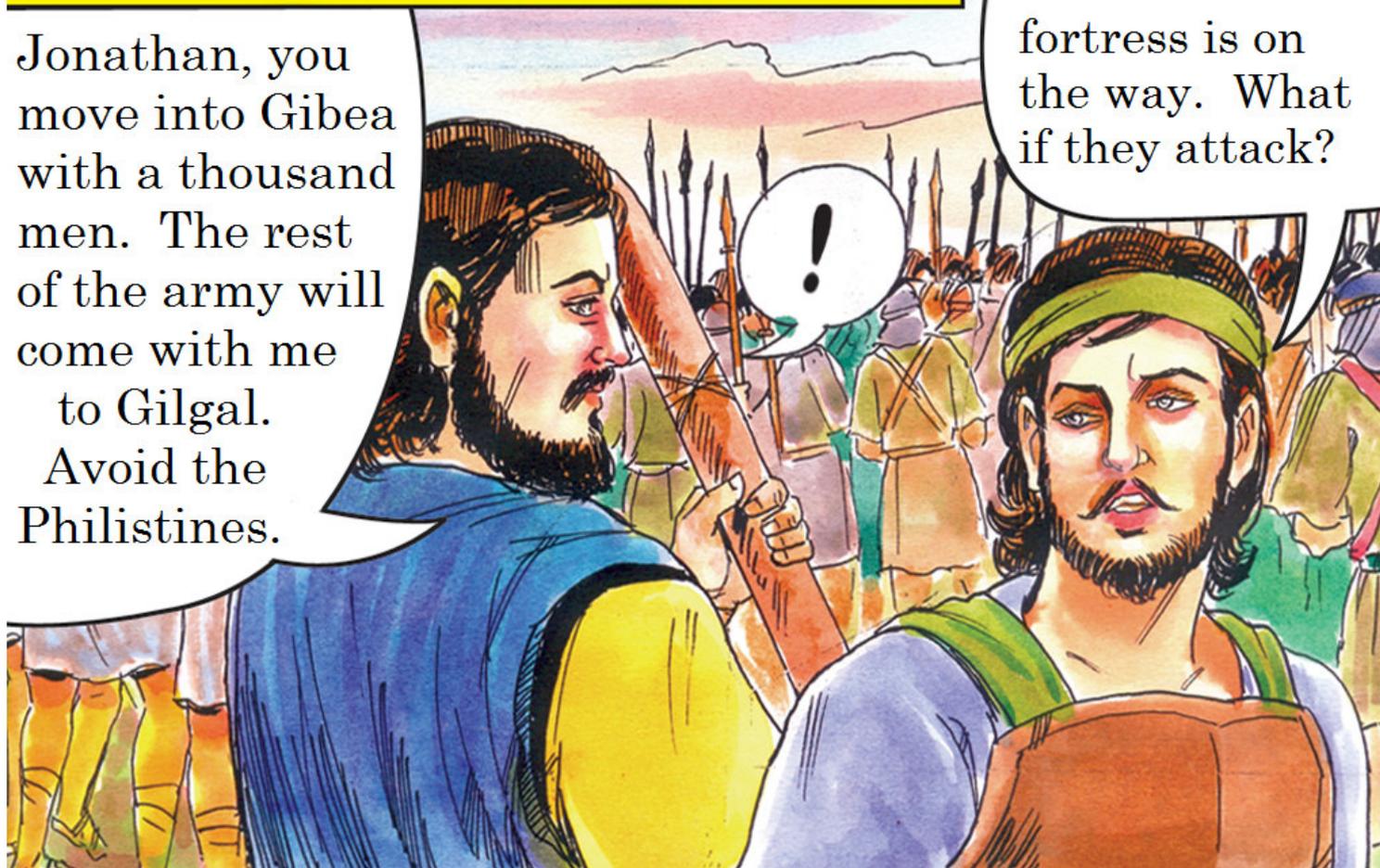
Let our enemies
know that we
have a king.



On the way back Saul told his son Jonathan.

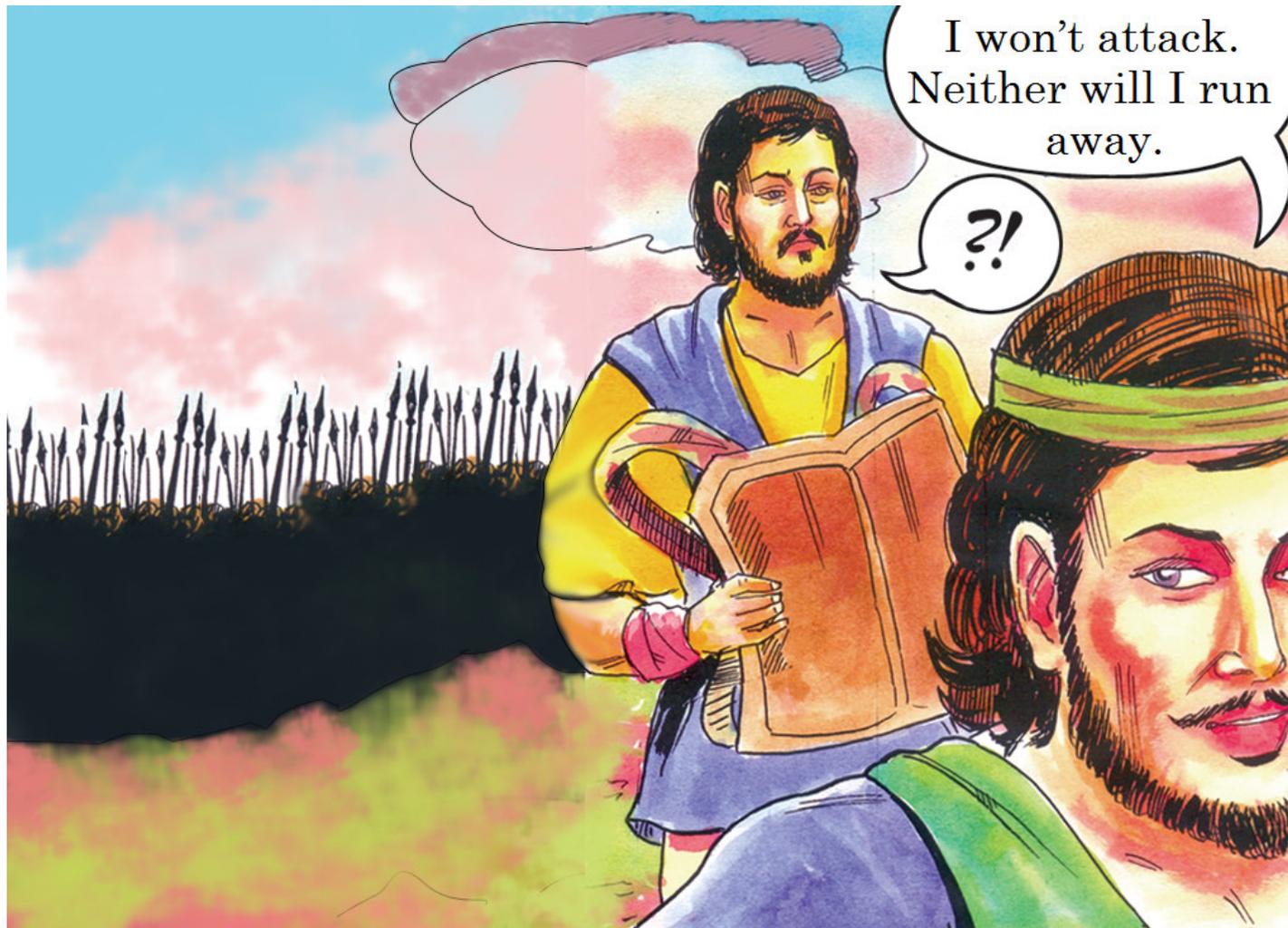
Jonathan, you move into Gibeon with a thousand men. The rest of the army will come with me to Gilgal. Avoid the Philistines.

Gibeon, the Philistine fortress is on the way. What if they attack?



Take a different route. After the sacrifice at Gilgal, I'll come back to Gibeah.





I won't attack.
Neither will I run
away.

?!

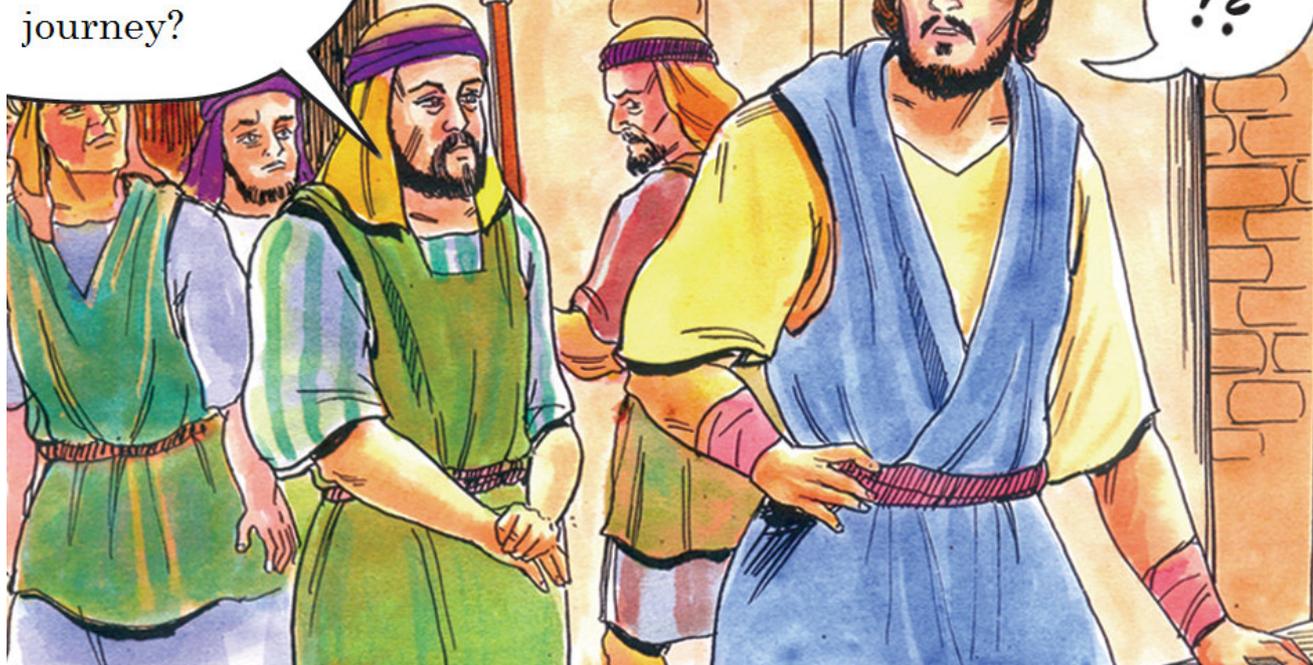
Saul in Gilgal

We have been waiting for seven days. Can't we offer the sacrifice and continue the journey?

Prophet Samuel would come and offer the sacrifice today.

By then no Israelite will be left in Gibeah.

!?





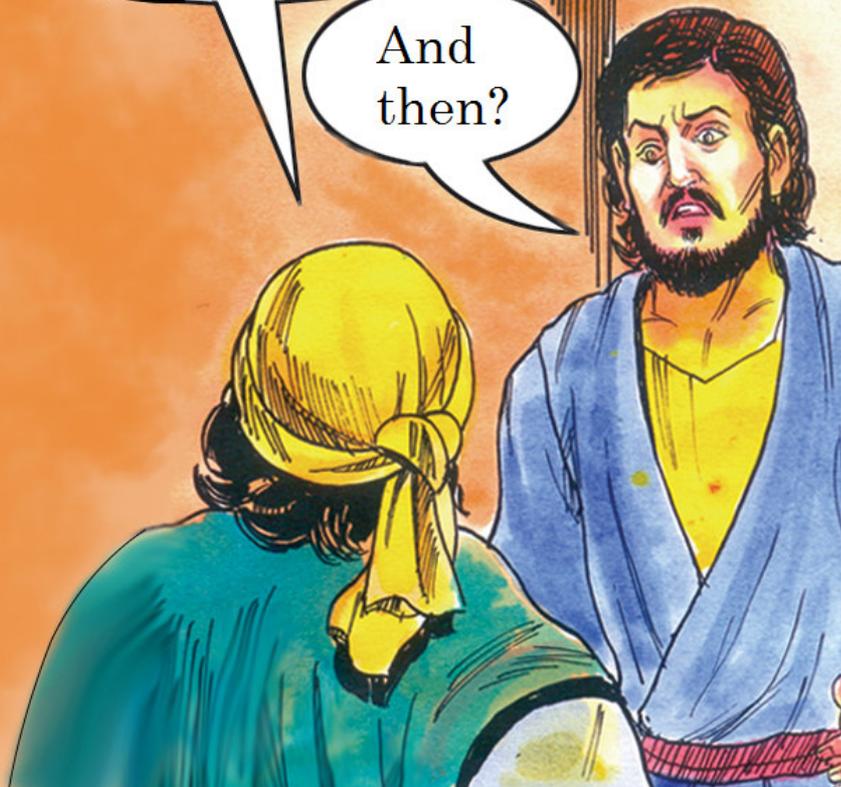
In Gebeah, what happened?

These people from Gibeah will tell you everything.

!!

Prince Jonathan
confronted the
Philistines in Gebah.

And
then?



At Gebah we won. But
all the Philistines in
Canaan have joined
forces.

Did they attack
again?
Is Jonathan
all right?



So far, he has been safe.
But they might strike
at any time.



While we simply wait here, the Philistines will massacre our children.

No point in hanging around with this guy. Let's go.

Bring the offering for the sacrifice.



As Saul was finishing the sacrifice, Samuel arrived.



Stop it. Do you want to snatch the priesthood also?

!!

!!?

What right do you have to offer the sacrifice?

I waited but you didn't come. I heard that the Philistines have joined forces against us.



Our own soldiers were in revolt.
Many walked away. Any further
delay would have been disastrous.

You and your soldiers!
Did you forget that it
is Yahweh who leads
Israel in the war.



Master, do not misunderstand me. It was to implore Yahweh's help that I offered the sacrifice.

Don't you know that obedience is better than sacrifice?

?



What disobedience are you talking about? Is it my fault that you are late?

Now, arrogance too. Yahweh has taken away your kingship.

!!





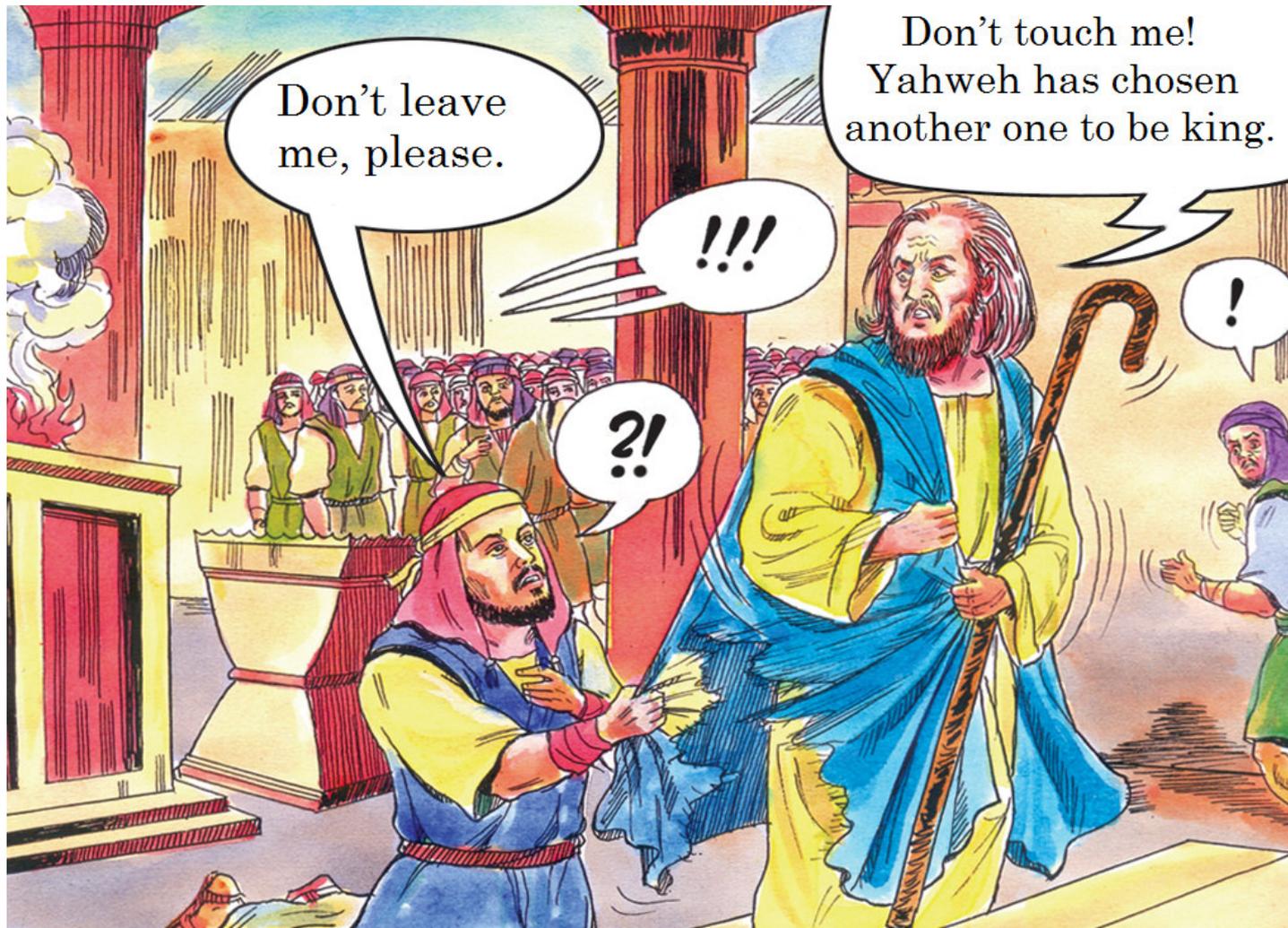
How can you punish me without proving me guilty? What wrong have I done?

You did not wait.

!!!

This man can neither save us nor lead us.

!!!



Don't leave me, please.

Don't touch me!
Yahweh has chosen another one to be king.

!!!

?!

!

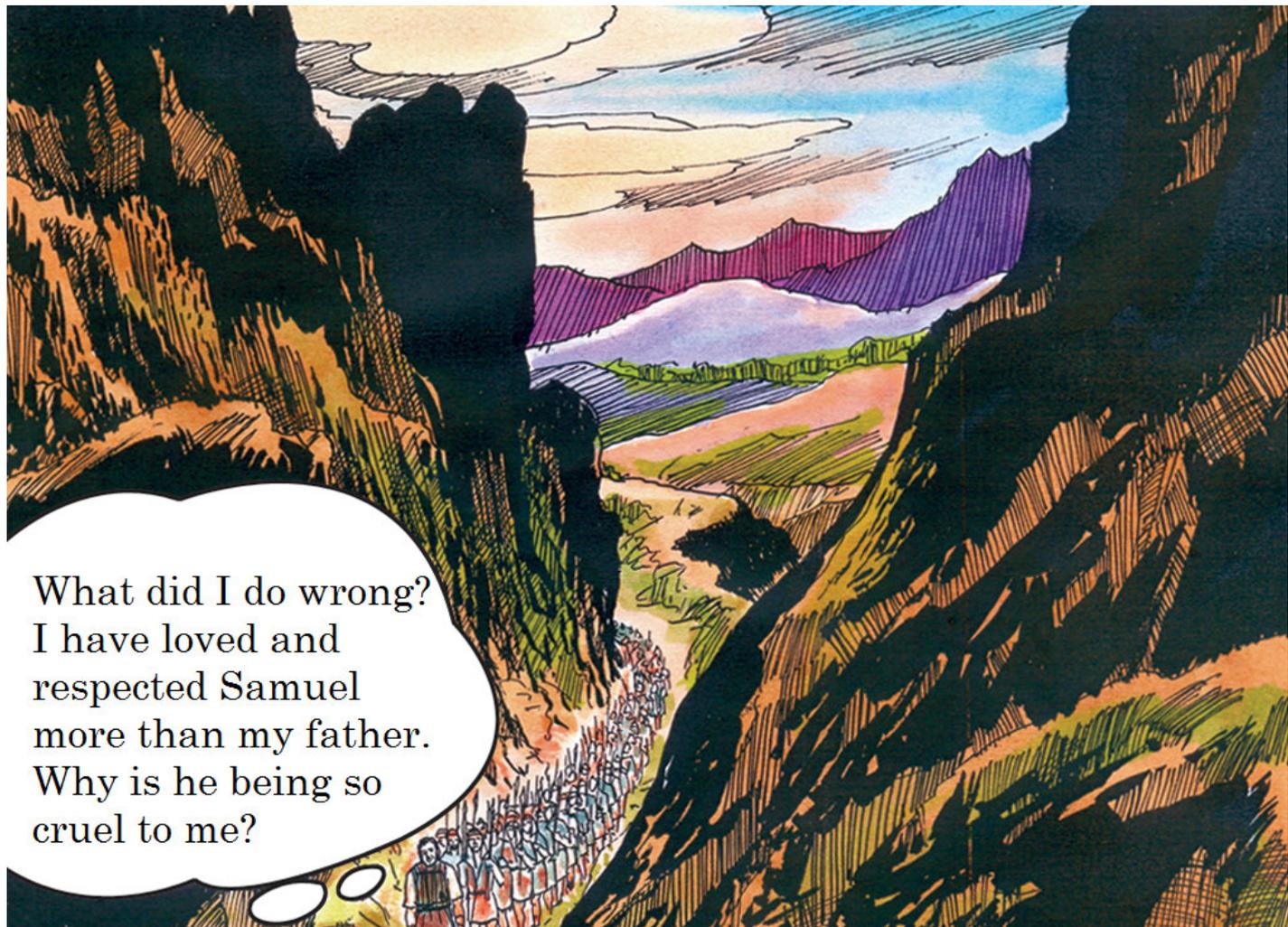
Many of the soldiers deserted Saul, only about six hundred remained with him.

!?

!!

Do not lose heart. Thinking we are so few. Remember that we are fighting to save our families.





What did I do wrong?
I have loved and
respected Samuel
more than my father.
Why is he being so
cruel to me?

How could I wait any longer when my son's life was in danger!



Am I thinking this way
because I do not trust in
Yahweh? Did I offend Him
by offering the sacrifice?

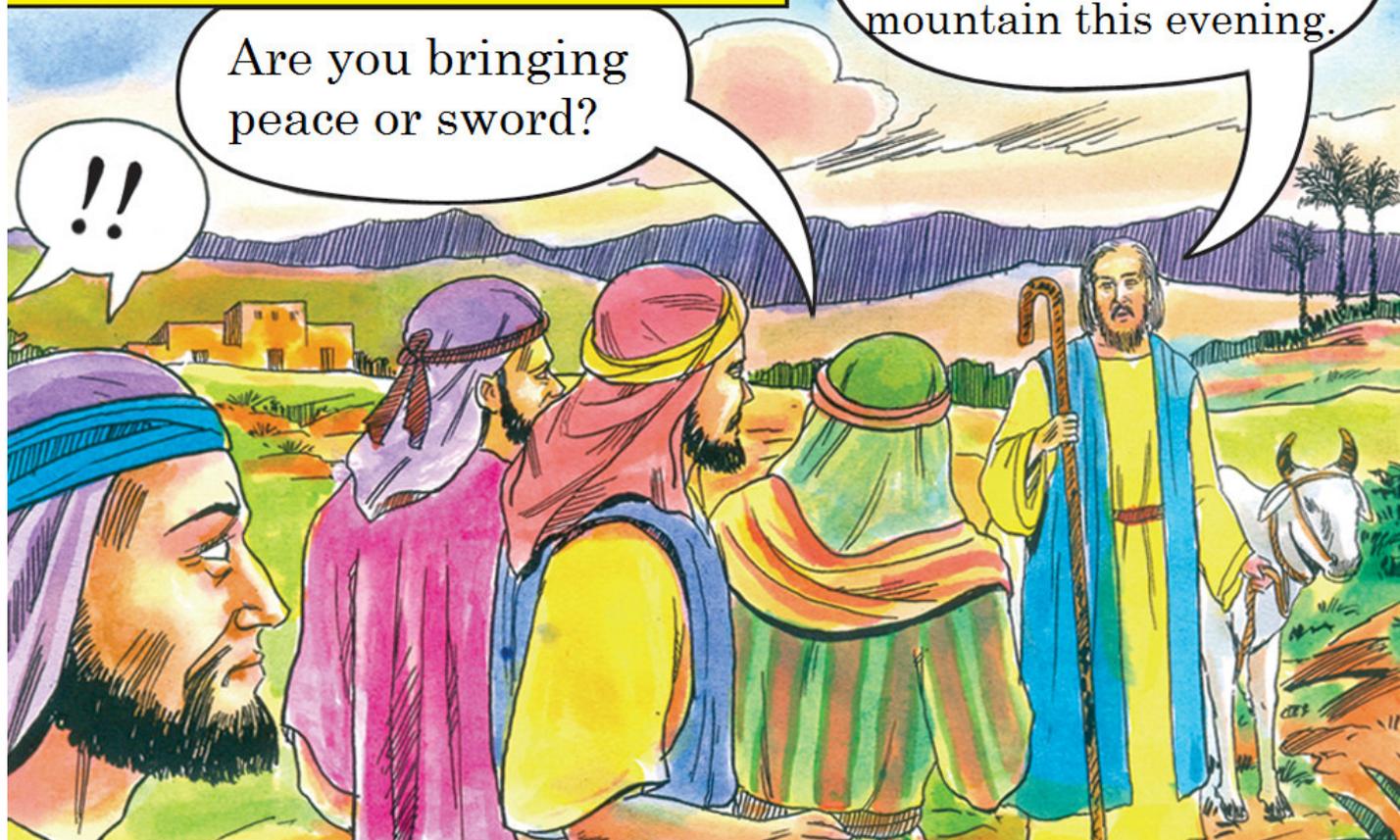


Saul defeated the Philistines in Gibeah.
At the same time Samuel, as ordered by
Yahweh reached Bethlehem.

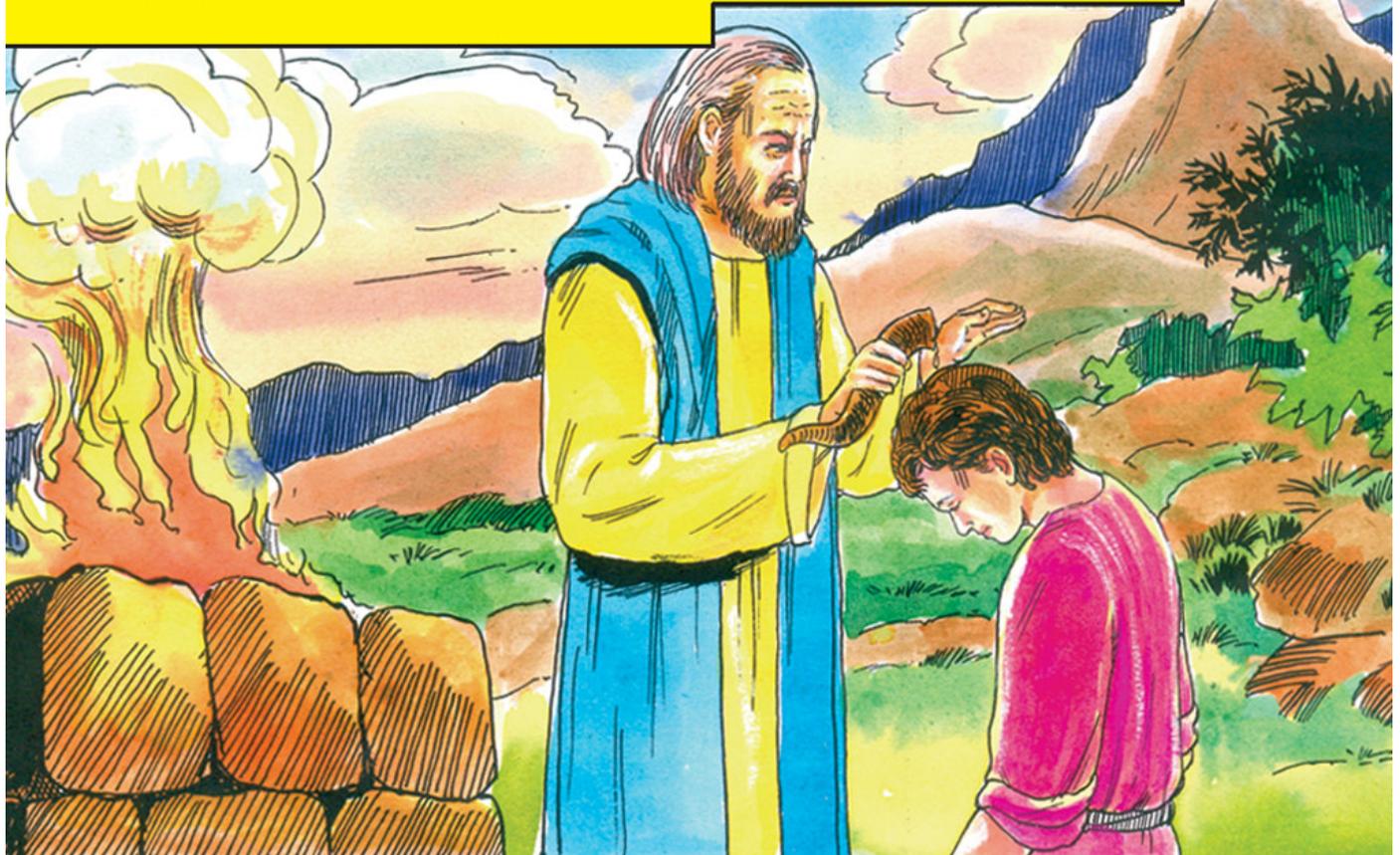
Don't be afraid. I have
come to offer sacrifice.
All must gather on the
mountain this evening.

Are you bringing
peace or sword?

!!



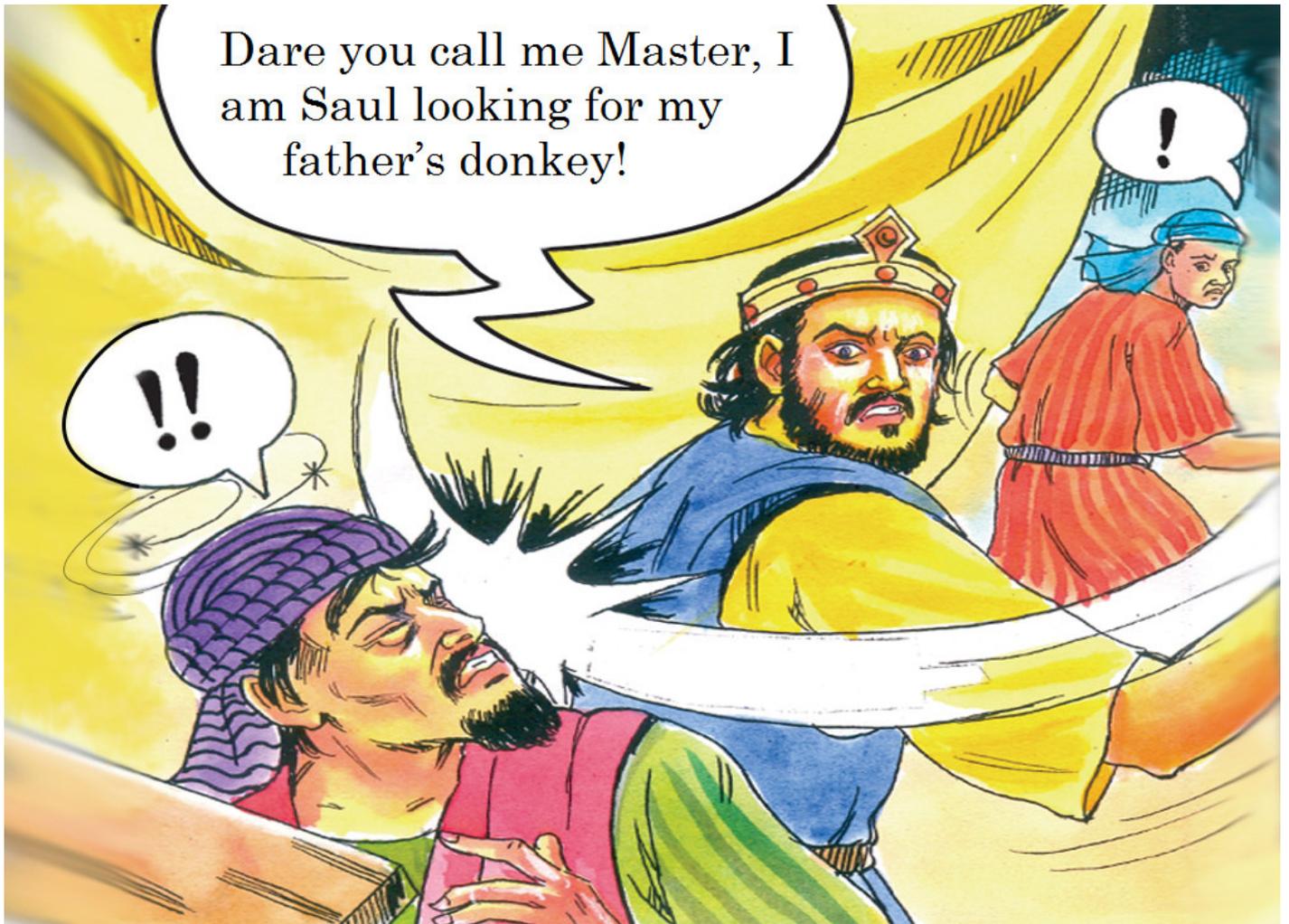
After the sacrifice the people left. Samuel anointed David, son of Jesse at his house.



There were constant war between the Philistines and Saul. Saul was always victorious. Still, he became a victim of manic depression.



Dare you call me Master, I
am Saul looking for my
father's donkey!



Ha...Ha... I am
not just a master;
I am the king of
Israel.



Where are my donkeys?
I have been looking for
them so long.



Va....W...You're
strangling me.
Who's this? I will
kill you.

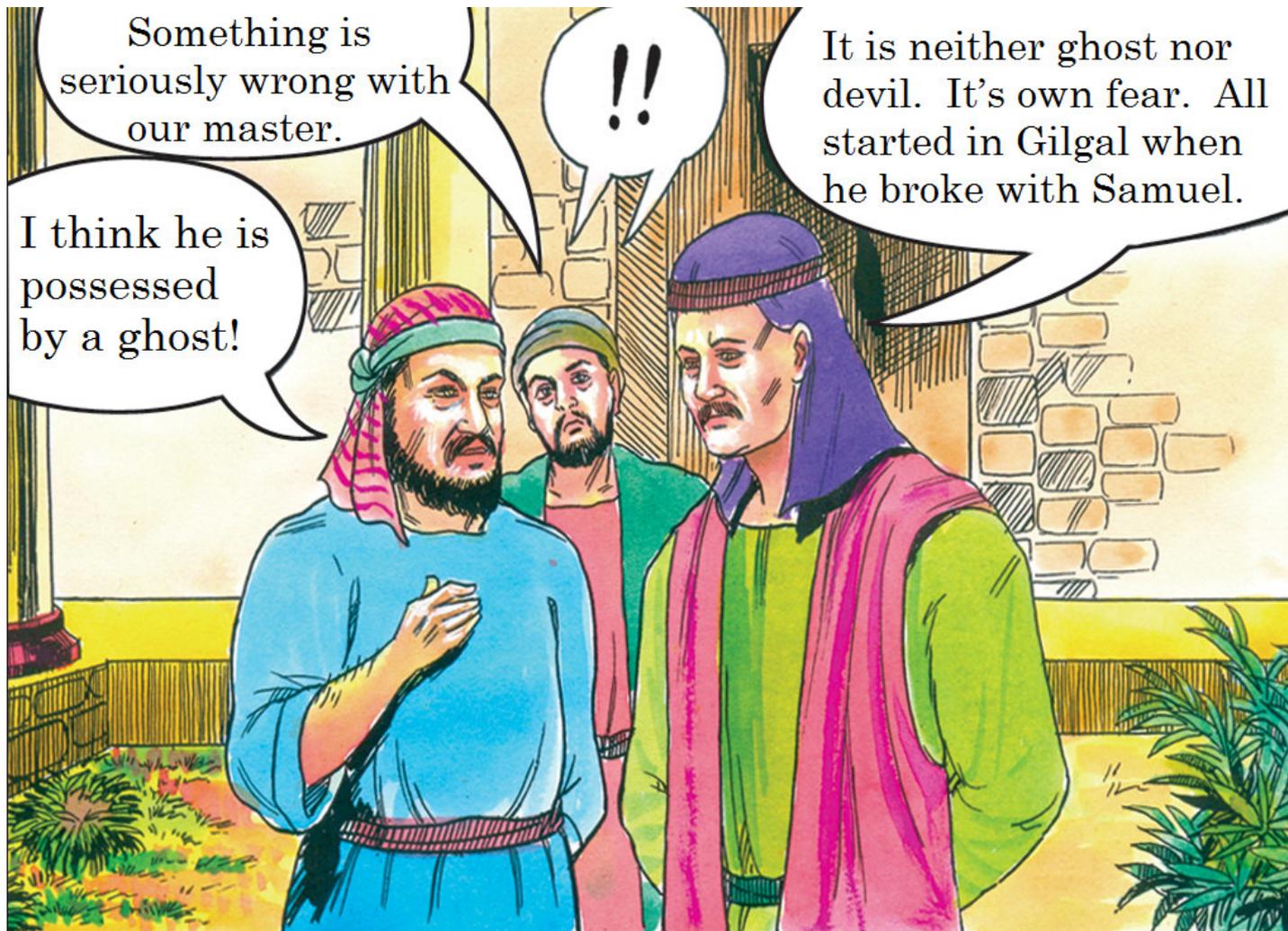


Something is seriously wrong with our master.

I think he is possessed by a ghost!

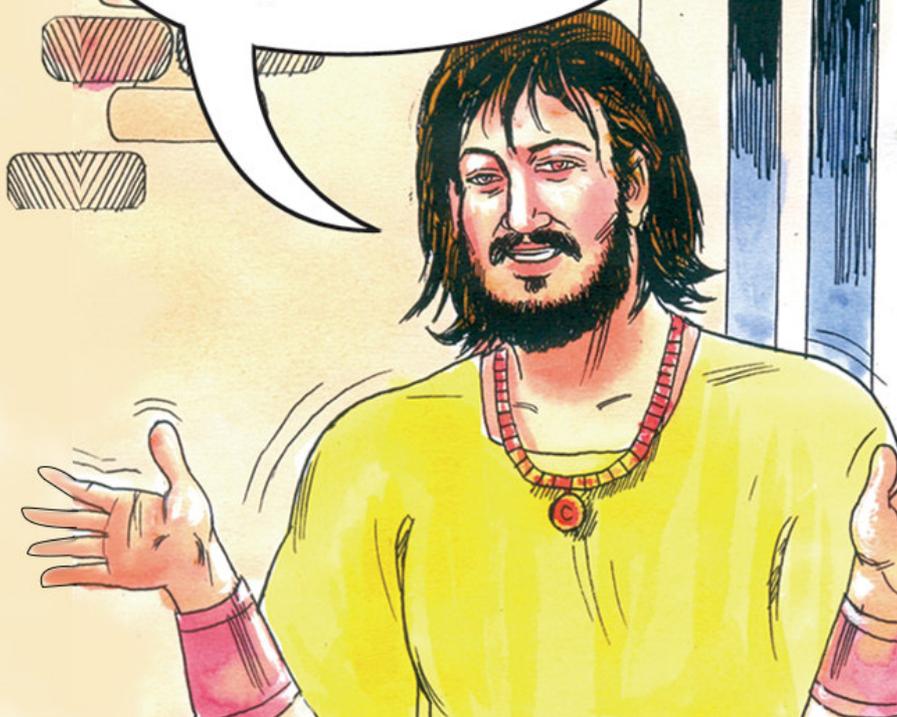
!!

It is neither ghost nor devil. It's own fear. All started in Gilgal when he broke with Samuel.



Thinking that music would give some comfort, they invited David, a great Musician.

Hello! Master Samuel,
don't leave me. I won't
hurt you. See I have no
weapons with me.



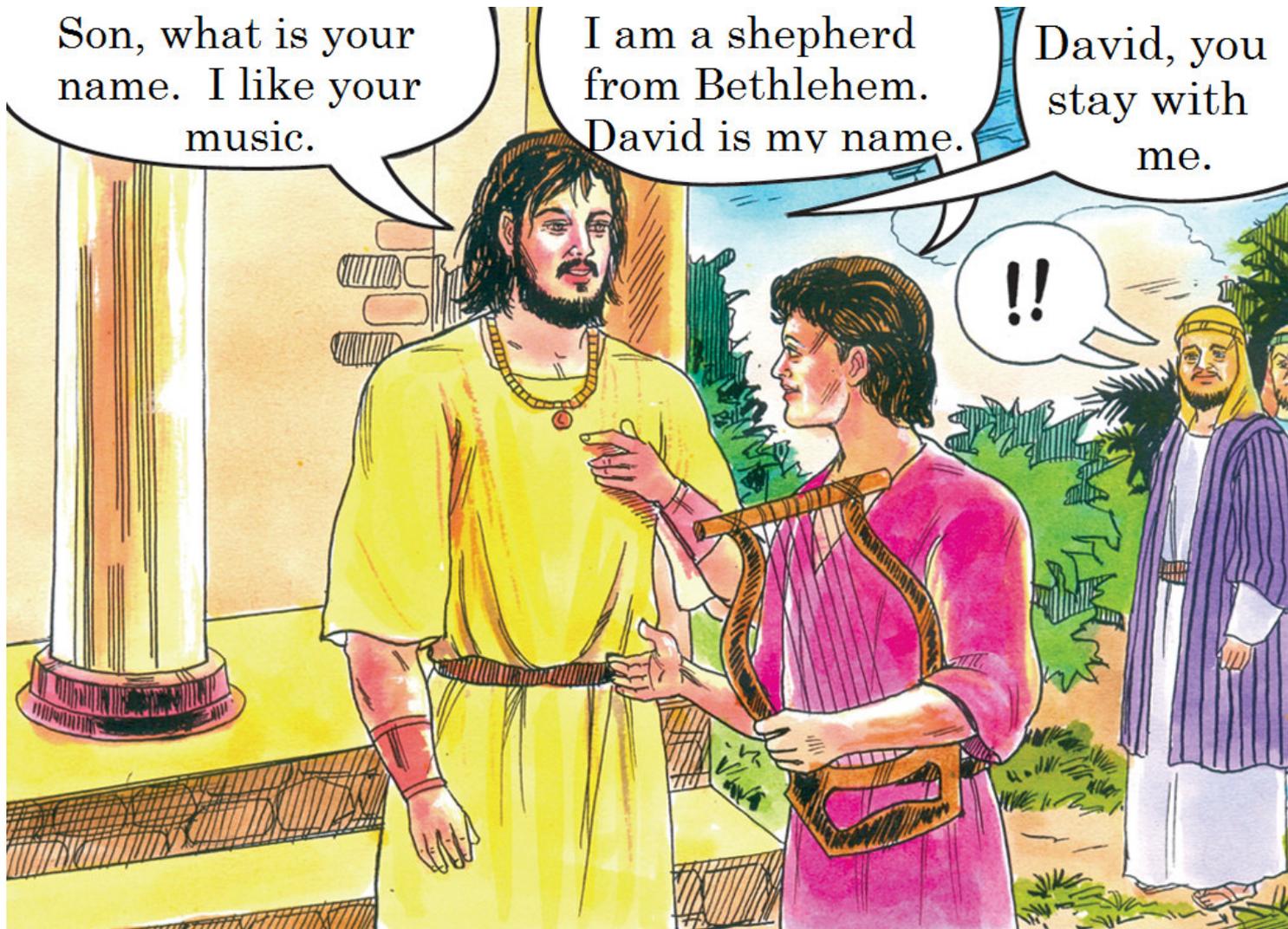
A close-up illustration of a man's face, looking slightly to the left with a thoughtful expression. He has long, dark hair and a full beard. The background is a soft, blue sky with light clouds. A thought bubble is positioned above his head, containing the text "Sweet music Sounds like Harp." The thought bubble is connected to the man's head by three small circles and a larger, irregular shape.

Sweet music
Sounds like Harp.

Son, what is your name. I like your music.

I am a shepherd from Bethlehem. David is my name.

David, you stay with me.



David was a gifted musician and a valiant fighter. Saul liked him and made him Commander. But slowly Saul became jealous of him.

Our Army has won again. When they hear the name of David, the Philistines freeze.

He must be made the commander-in-chief.

Jonathan, do you know what you are saying?

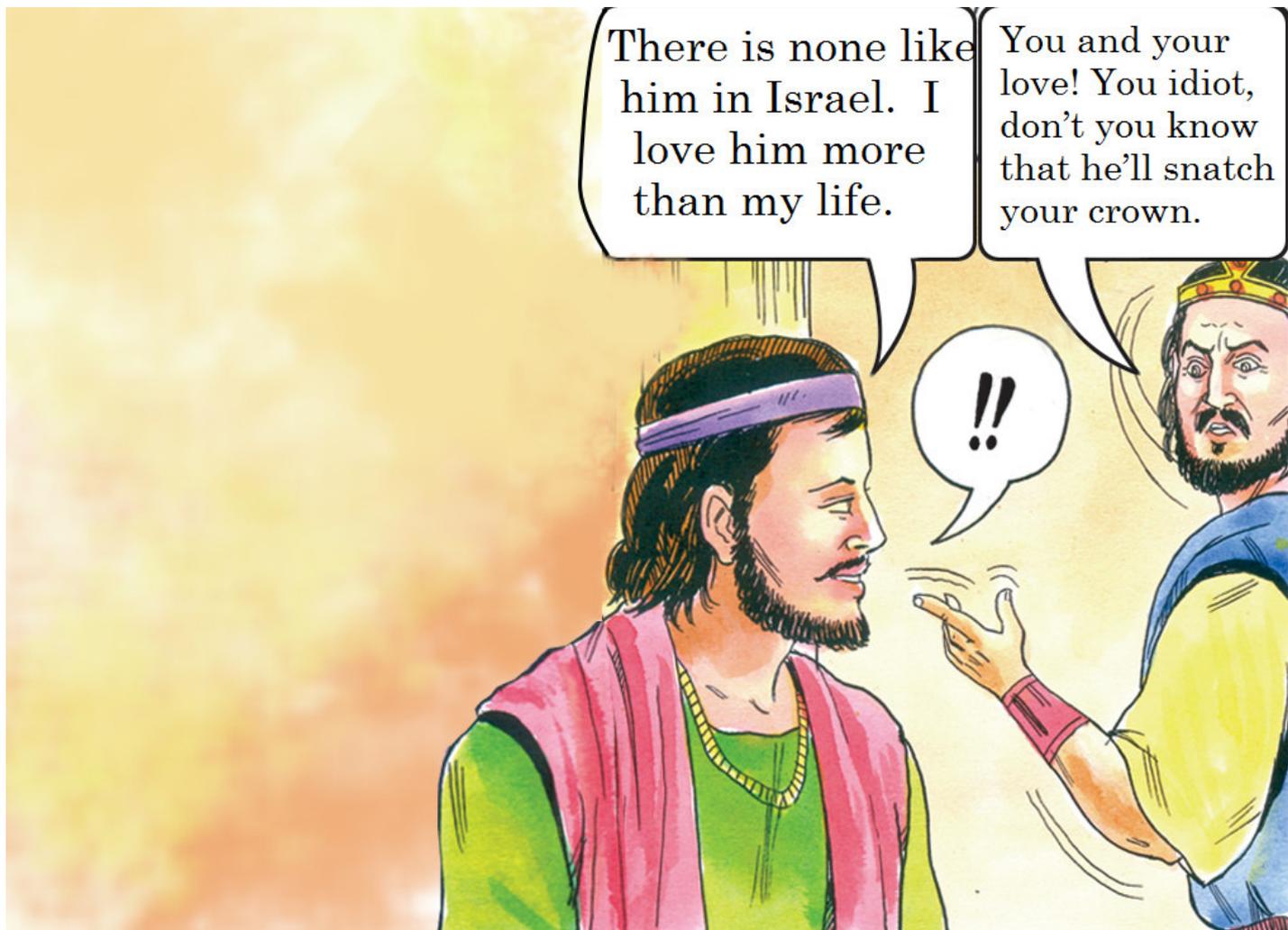
!



There is none like
him in Israel. I
love him more
than my life.

You and your
love! You idiot,
don't you know
that he'll snatch
your crown.

!!

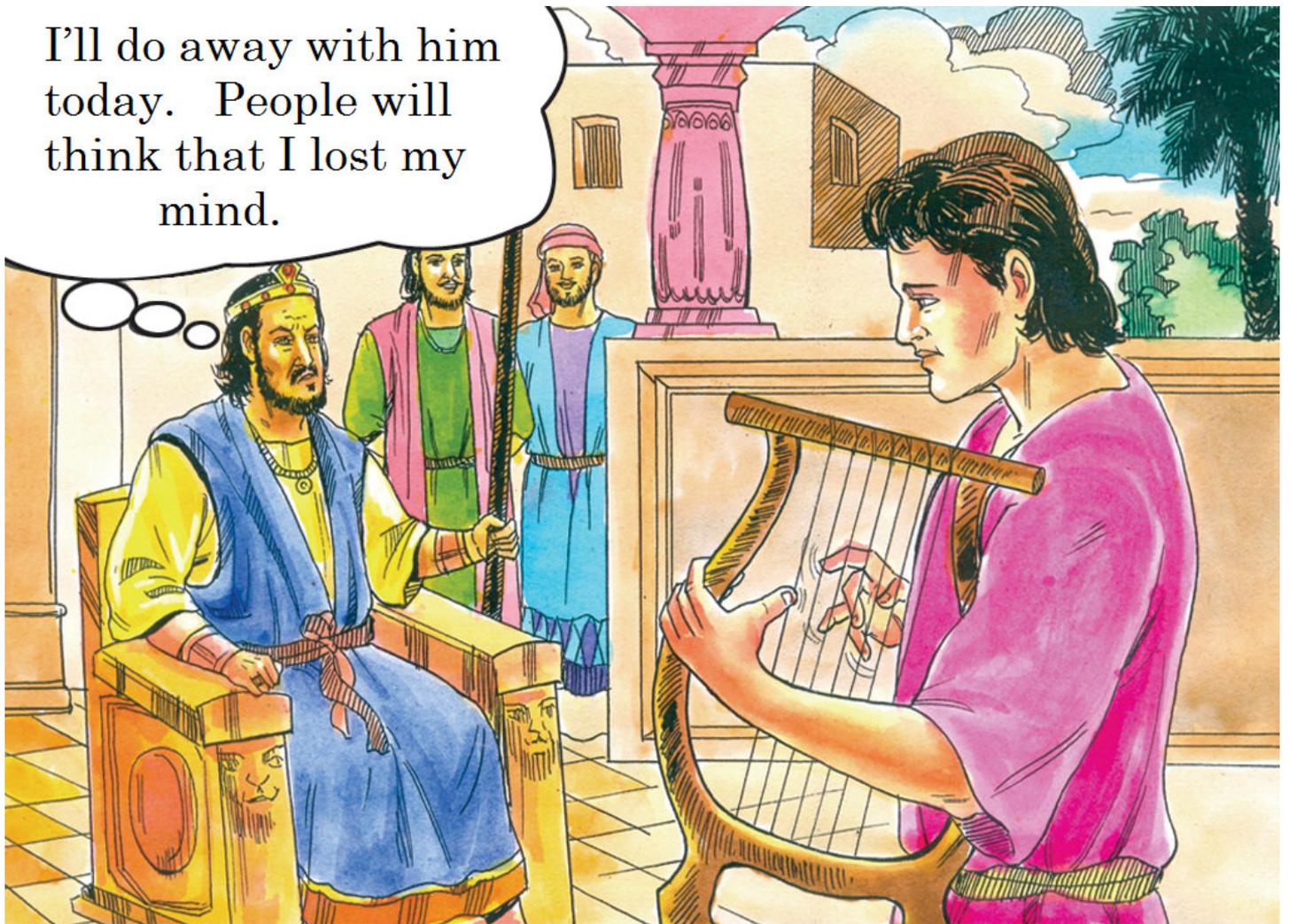


Certainly, after you
he must wear the
crown, not me.

Stop it, I'll give
him the crown he
deserves.



I'll do away with him today. People will think that I lost my mind.



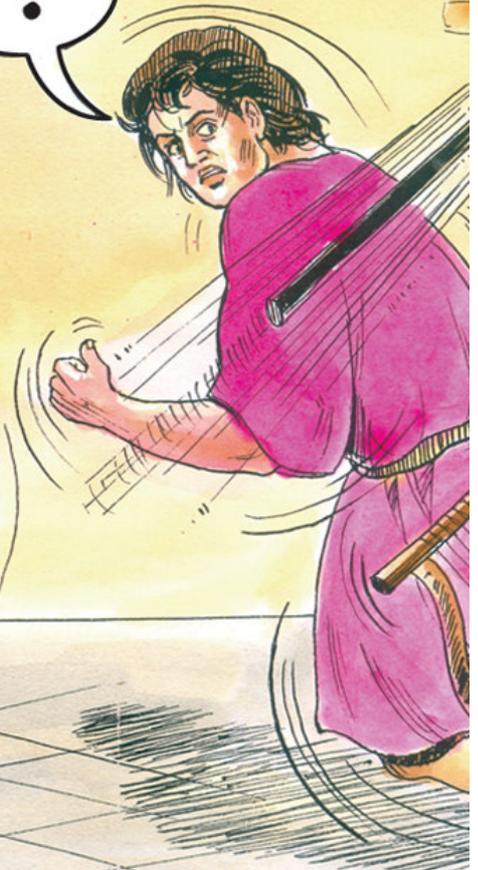
When Saul threw the spear, David moved aside.

Father, what did you do?

Someone came at me with a sword. I pinned him to the wall.

?

!?



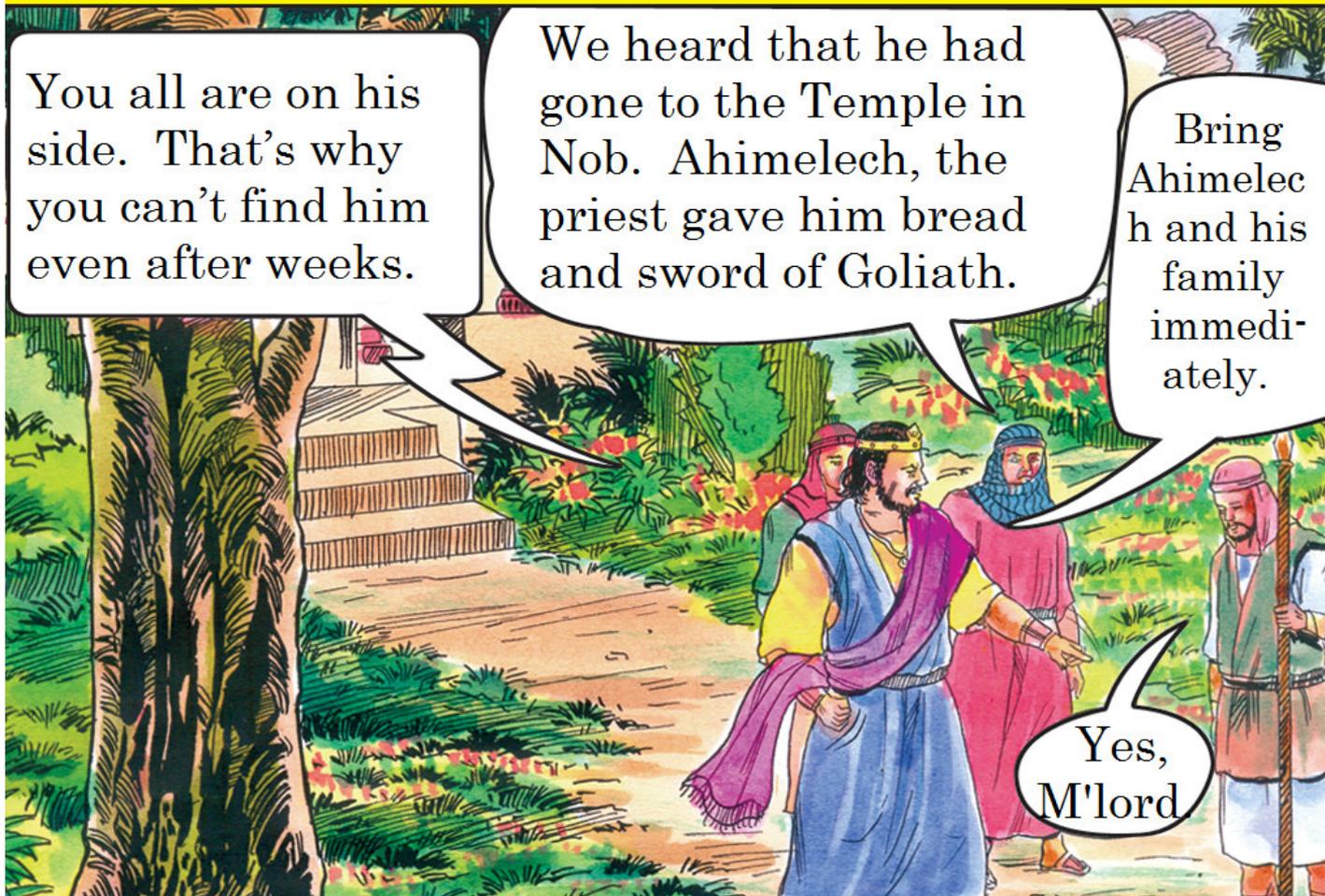
Seeing that Saul was determined to kill him, David fled.

You all are on his side. That's why you can't find him even after weeks.

We heard that he had gone to the Temple in Nob. Ahimelech, the priest gave him bread and sword of Goliath.

Bring Ahimelech and his family immediately.

Yes, M'lord



Ahimelech and family were brought before Saul.

Why have you conspired against me siding with David?

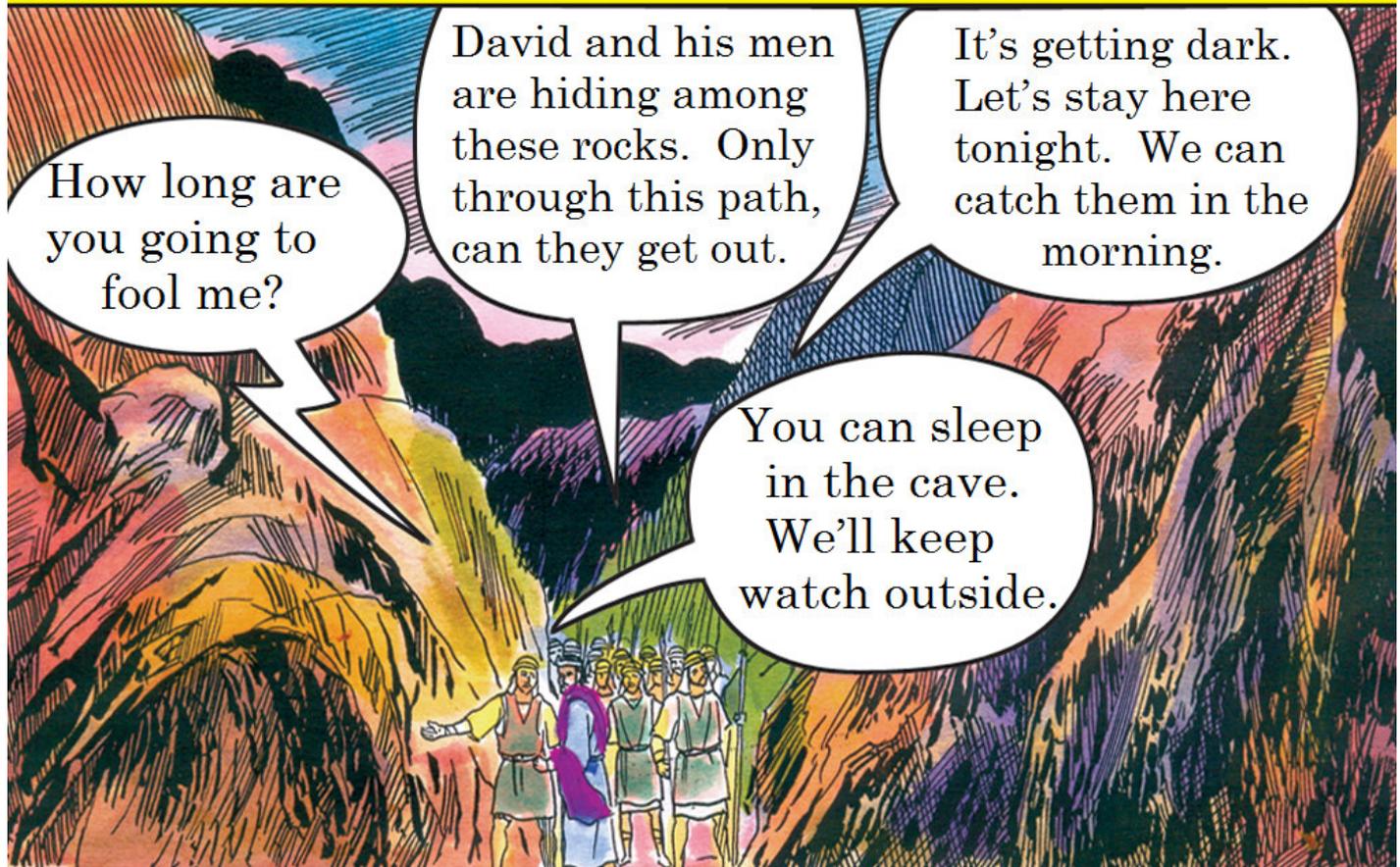
David was one of your body guards. I didn't know that he is your enemy.

Stop it. Guards, put them to death.

!!!?



Saul now became suspicious of everyone around him. Instead of waging war with the Philistines, he turned all his energy on chasing David.



When all were sleeping, David entered the cave and removed the spear and the pitcher of water that were kept near Saul.

The next morning.

My lord, why are you hunting for me? Look, I removed the spear and the pitcher. Can't you still believe that I am not your enemy?

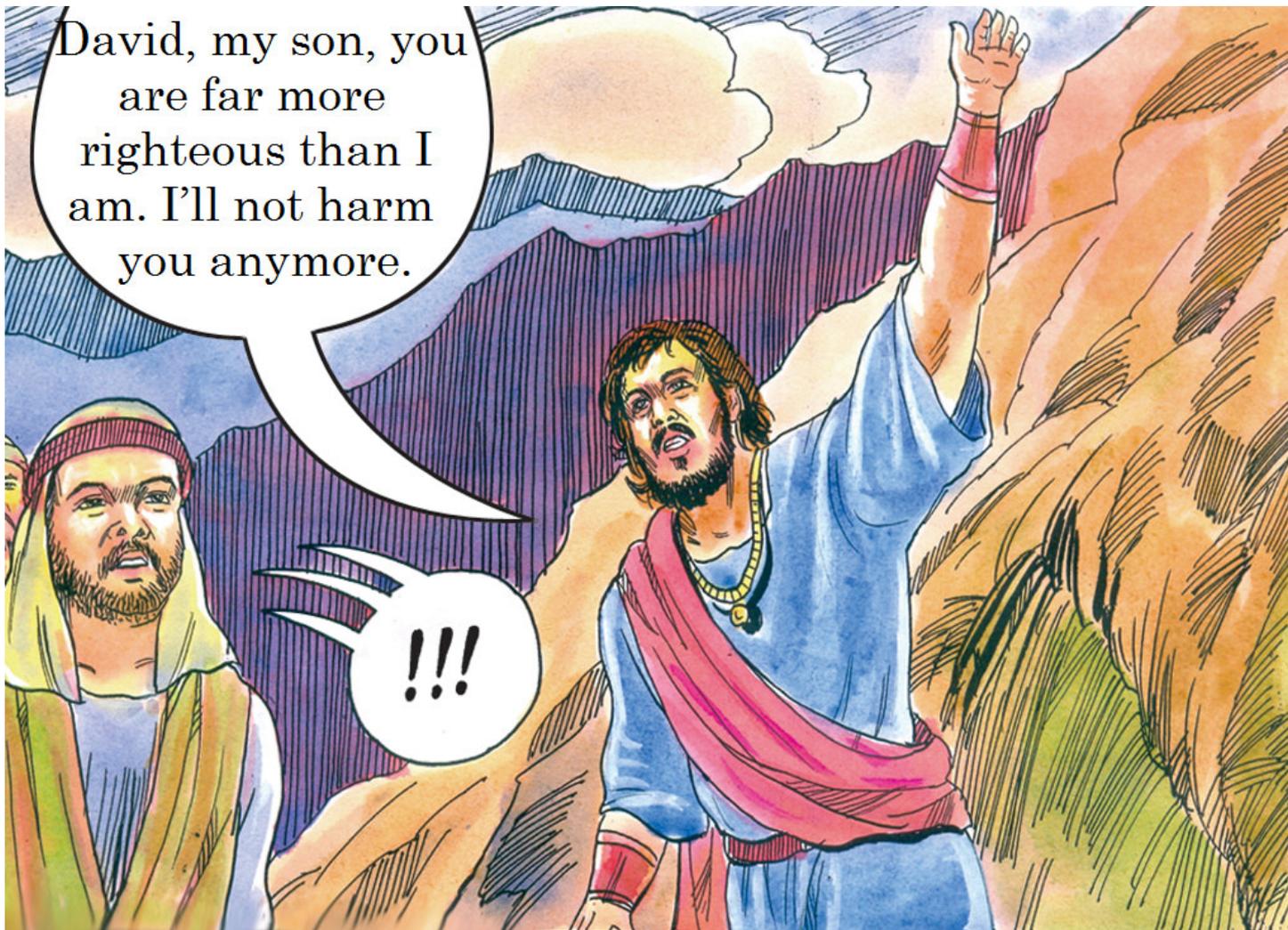
!?

!!!!



David, my son, you
are far more
righteous than I
am. I'll not harm
you anymore.

!!!



Saul and his army went back. The Philistines prepared for war again.

Master an
immense army of
the Philistines is
encamped at
Aphek.

Don't lose heart
seeing their number.
Yahweh will hand
them over to us.

No, my son.
This is our
last war.

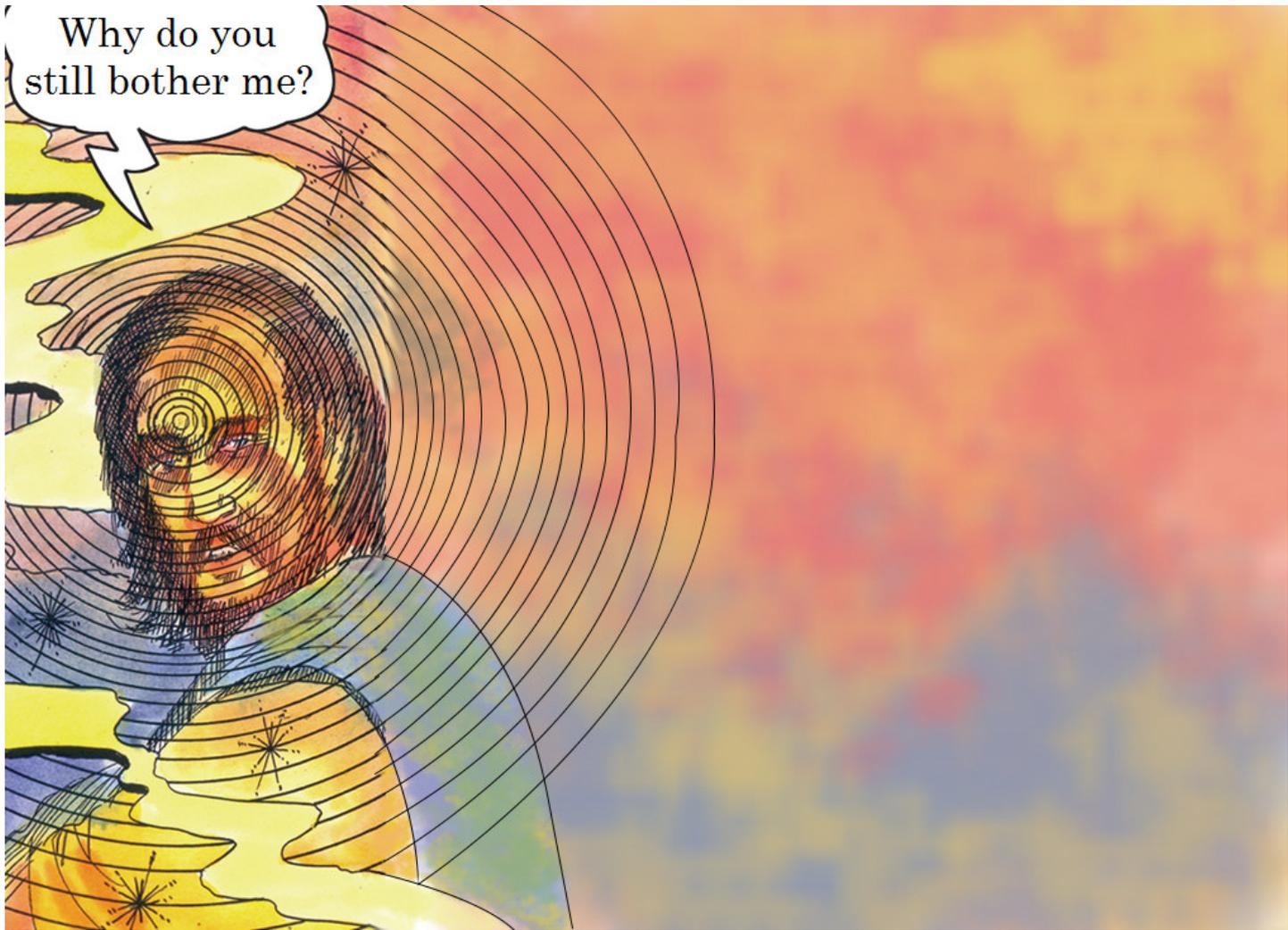


That nigt

Master
Samuel, show
me the way.



Why do you
still bother me?





Master, I am scared.
The Philistines are
going to destroy us.
What shall I do?

You will know your
fate tomorrow.
Yahweh has
abandoned you.

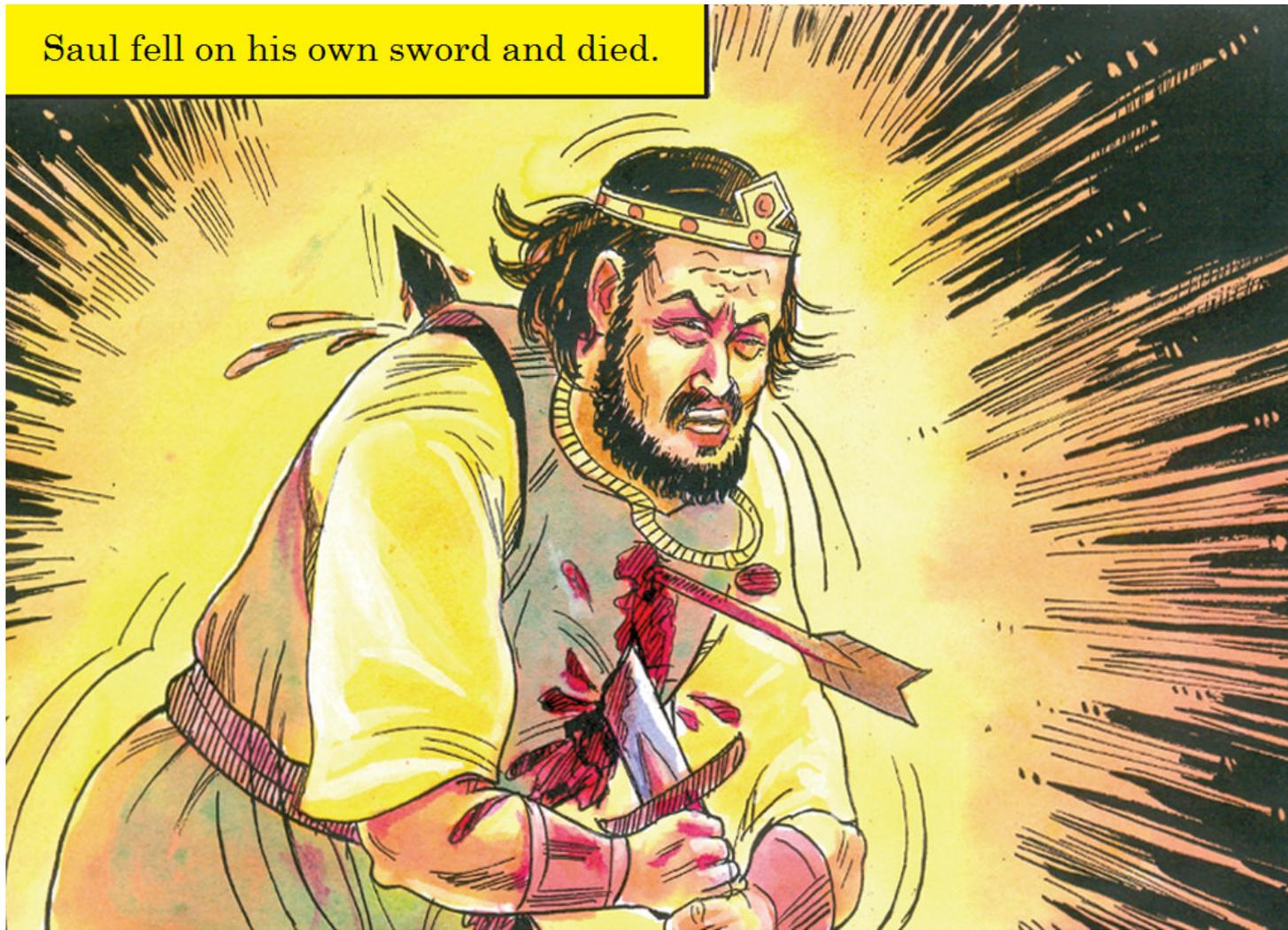
The next day Israel lost the war. Saul's three sons including Jonathan were killed. Saul was mortally wounded.



It's all over but I
won't let the
Philistines catch
me alive.



Saul fell on his own sword and died.



The death of Saul and Jonathan created a big crisis in Israel. Their very existence was threatened. Yet they rose again with incredible speed, under the leadership of a Shepherd whom the Lord appointed as king.

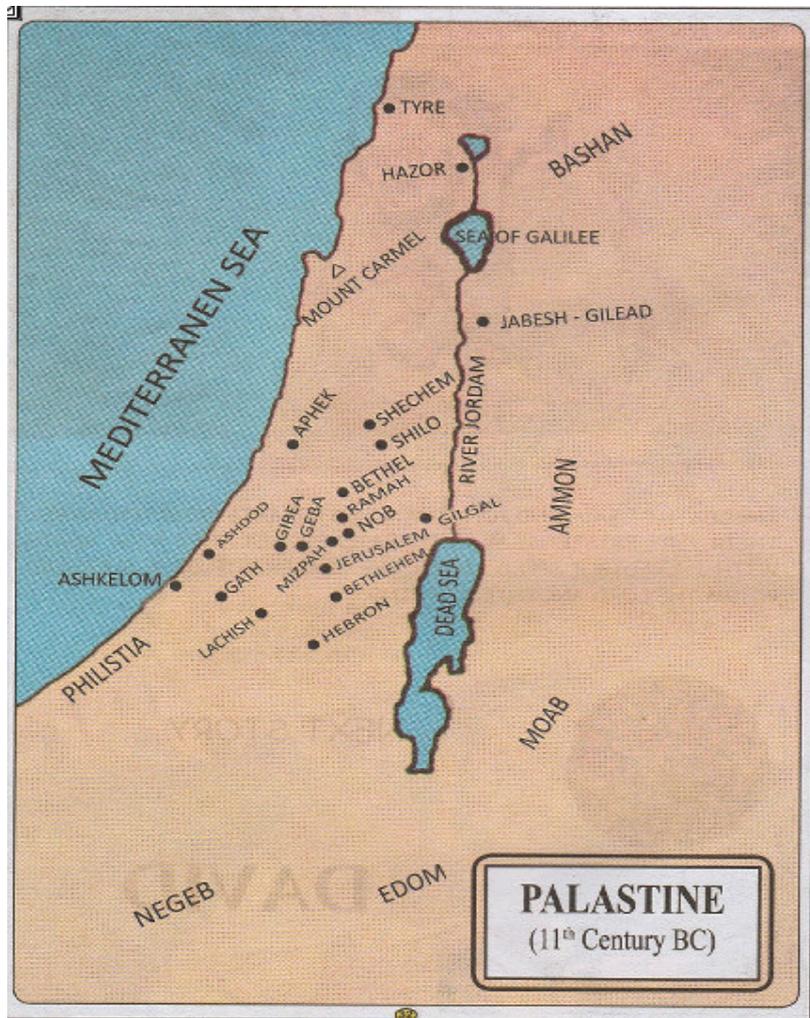
NEXT STORY:



DAVID

QUESTIONS

1. Name Saul's tribe.
2. When did Saul rule Israel?
3. Why did the Israelites demand for a king?
4. How did Saul become king?
5. Who was the major enemy of Israel?
6. What advice did Samuel give to Saul?
7. As the first king of Israel, what were the conflicts Saul had to face?
8. Saul laid the foundation for Israel to become an empire. How?
9. Explain the causes of Saul's downfall.
10. What is his place in the history of Salvation?



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