

Lesson 8: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah Judges 3:7-5:31

4th and 5th Grade Class

Jordan Park church of Christ

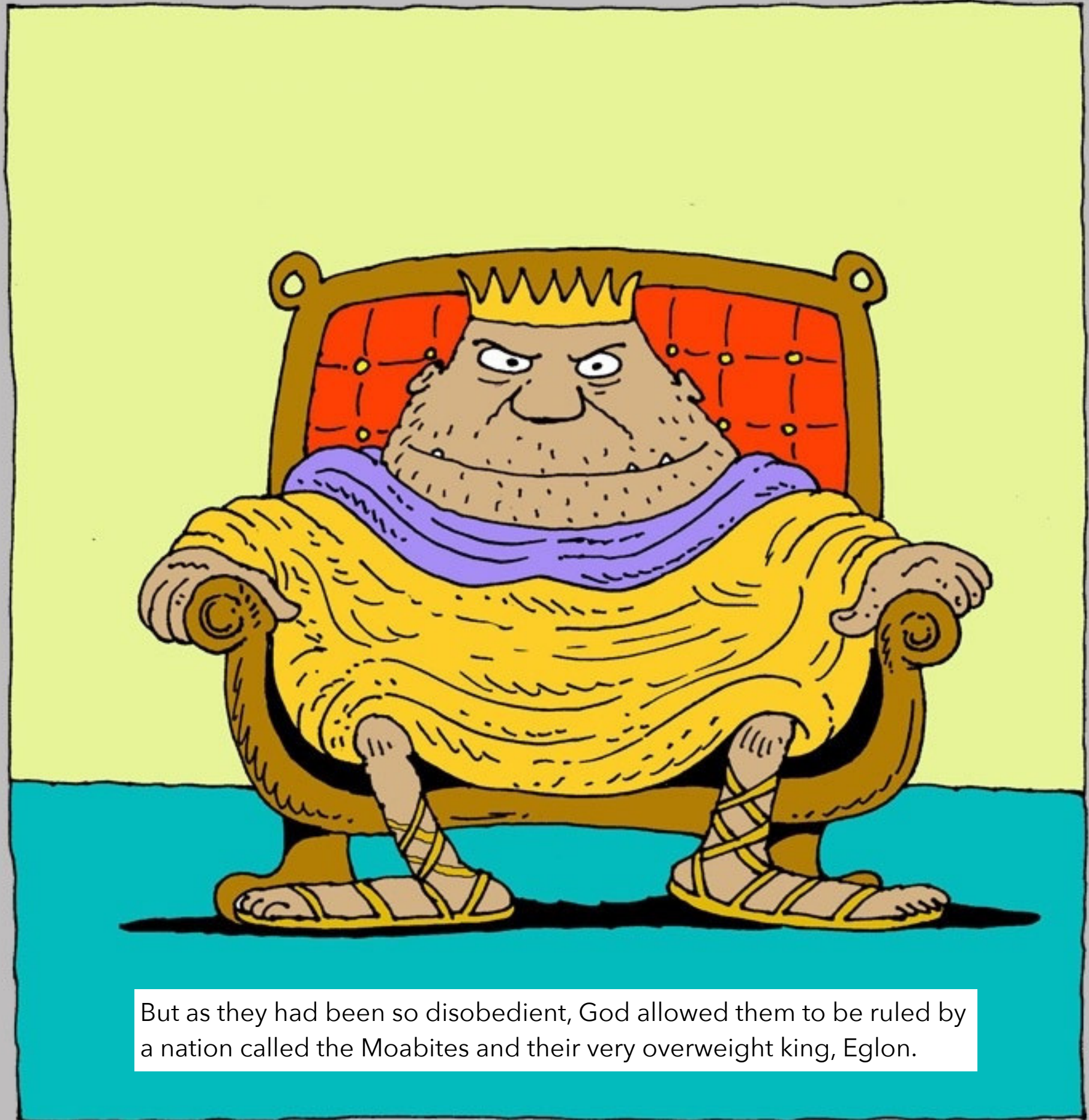


Judges 3:12-30

EHUD: THE LEFT-HANDED ASSASSIN

About 3,000 years ago the people of Israel lived in the Promised Land God had given them.





But as they had been so disobedient, God allowed them to be ruled by a nation called the Moabites and their very overweight king, Eglon.



The Moabites did not treat the Israelites well.

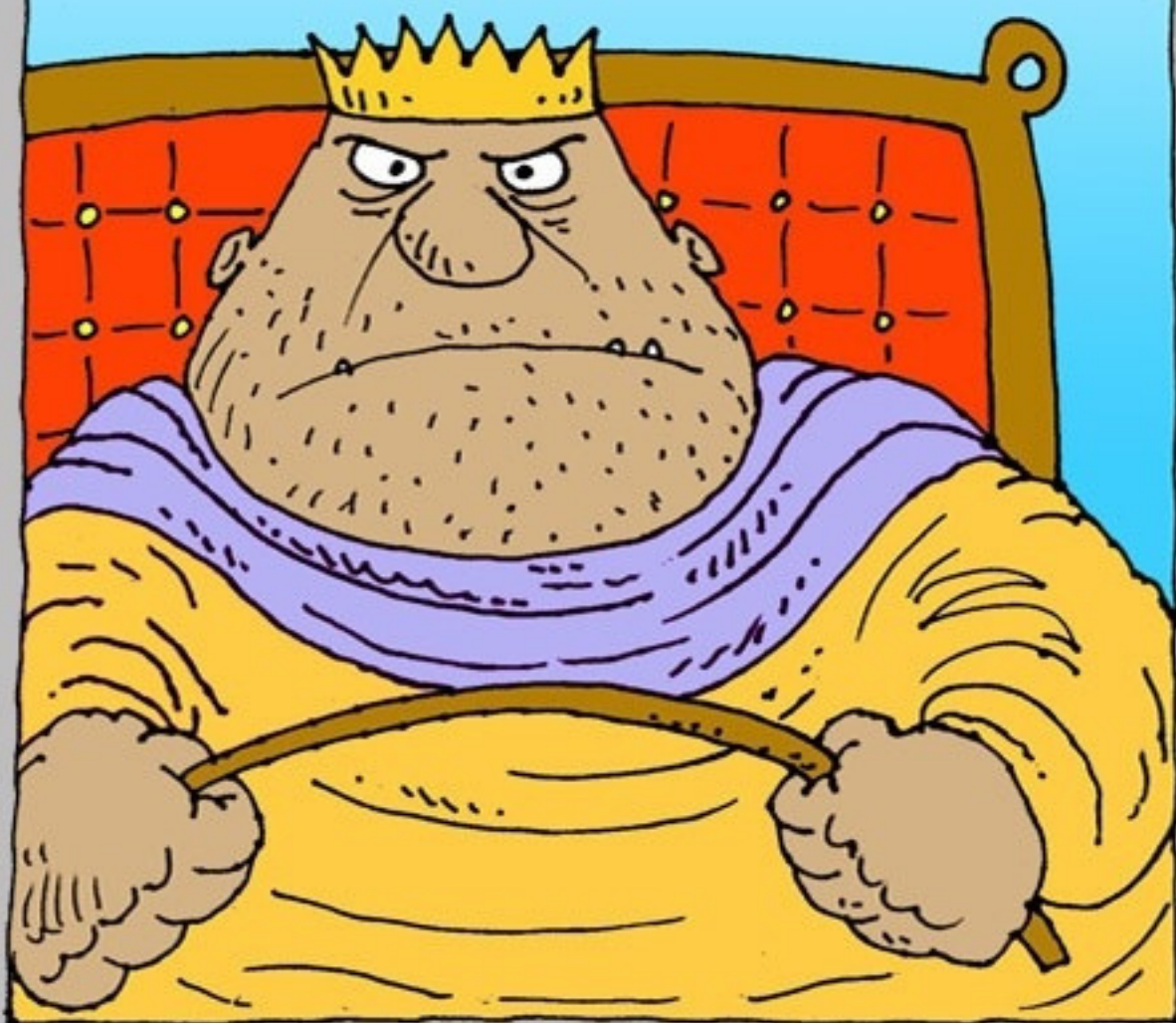


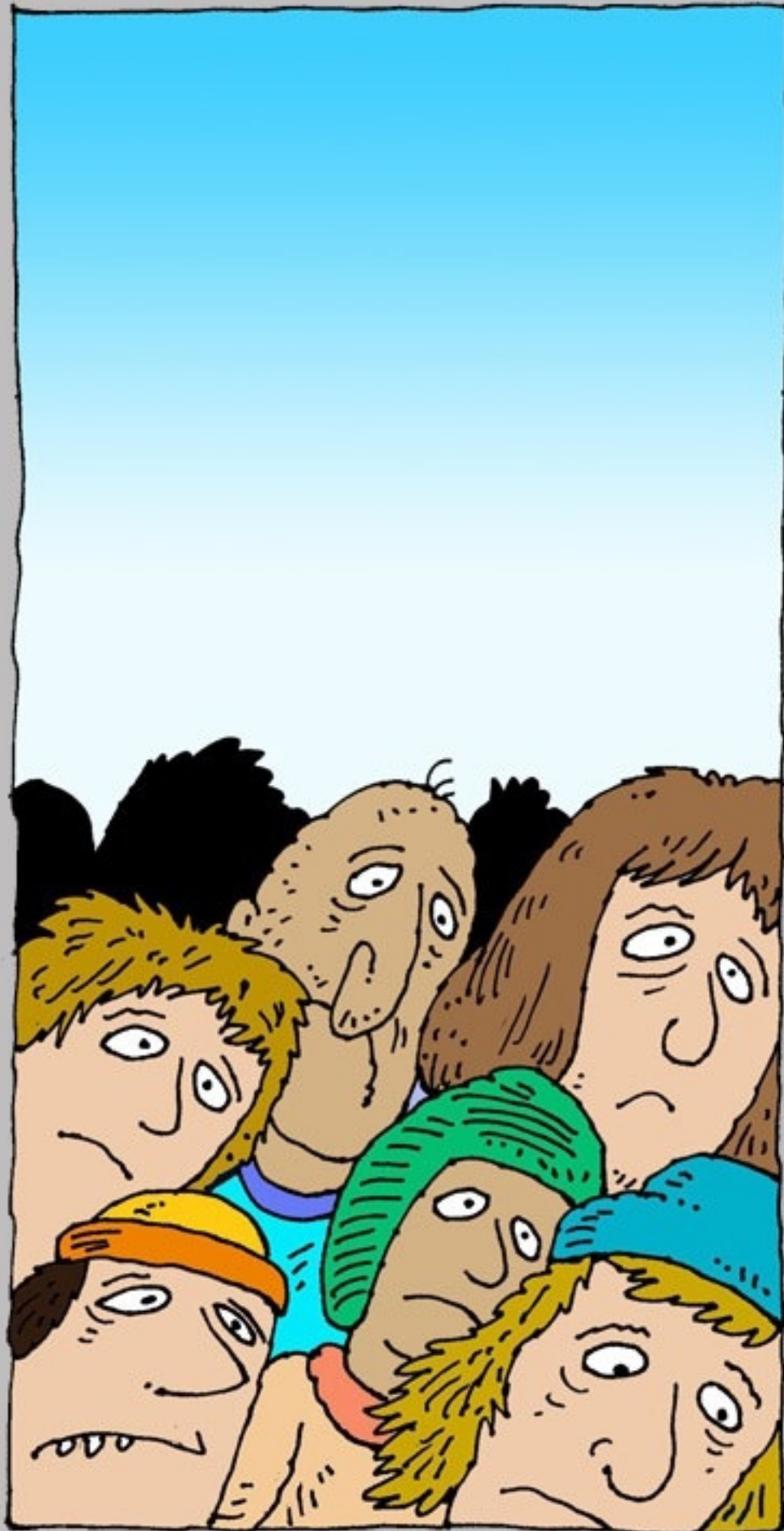
They had an army of bullies who made the Israelites hand over their crops and anything else the Moabites wanted. King Eglon also had the help of the armies of the Ammonites and the Amalekites to keep the Jews under his control.

They beat the Israelite army and took the city of Jericho, known as the city of palms.

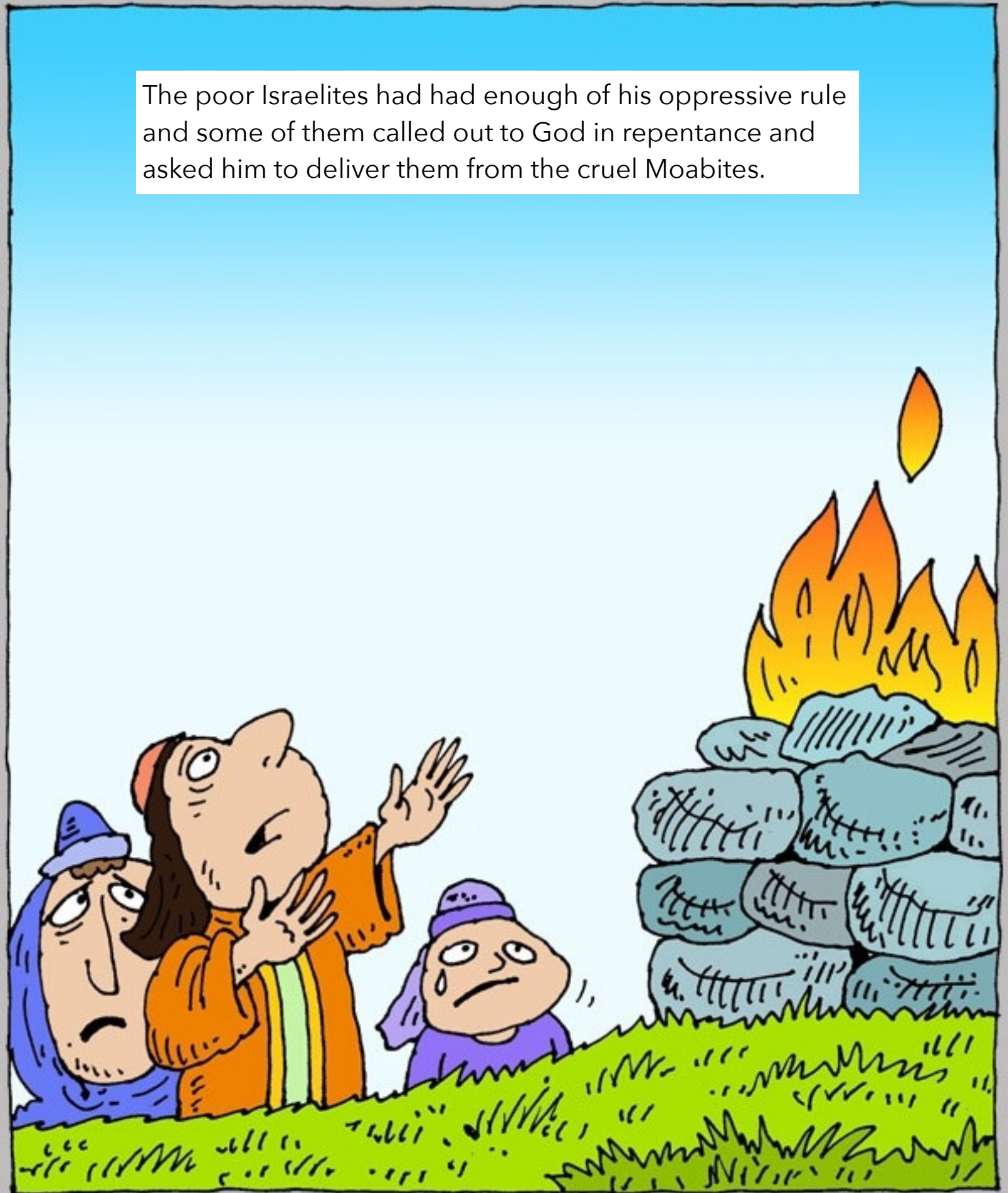


For 18 long years, King Eglon ruled with a rod of iron and made the Jews pay crushing taxes.



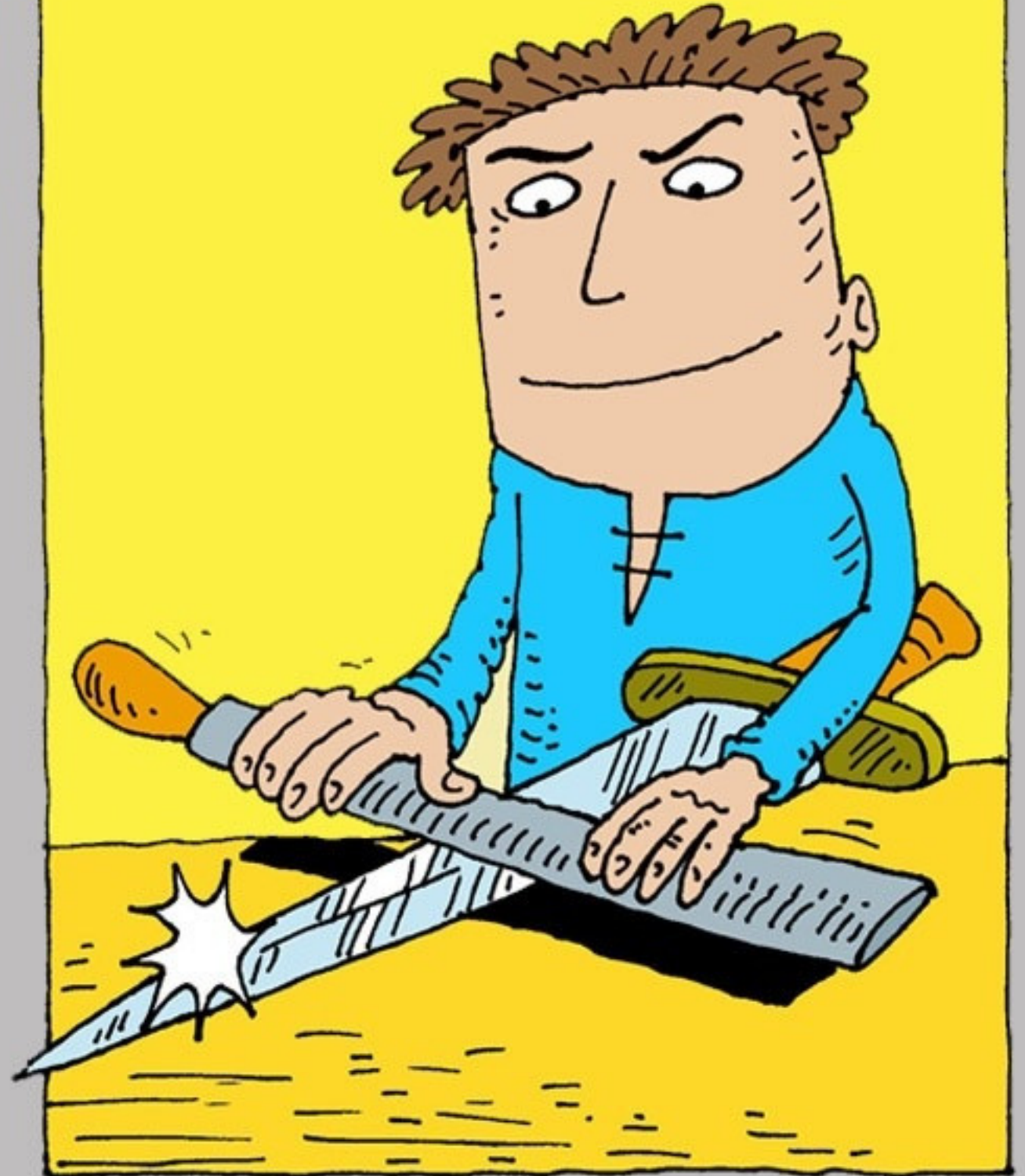


The poor Israelites had had enough of his oppressive rule and some of them called out to God in repentance and asked him to deliver them from the cruel Moabites.





God decided to raise up a man to rescue the Israelites and the man he chose was Ehud, who was left-handed. Ehud set to work making himself a metal sword.



It was a double-edged dagger eighteen inches (50cm) long and hid it in his clothing, strapped against his right thigh.



It was time for the Jews to send the very overweight King Eglon their taxes in crops, money and possessions.



Ehud joined those transporting the taxes to the Moabite King.



After delivering the money to King Eglon he started home again. But outside the city, at the quarries of Gilgal, he sent his companions on and returned alone to the king.



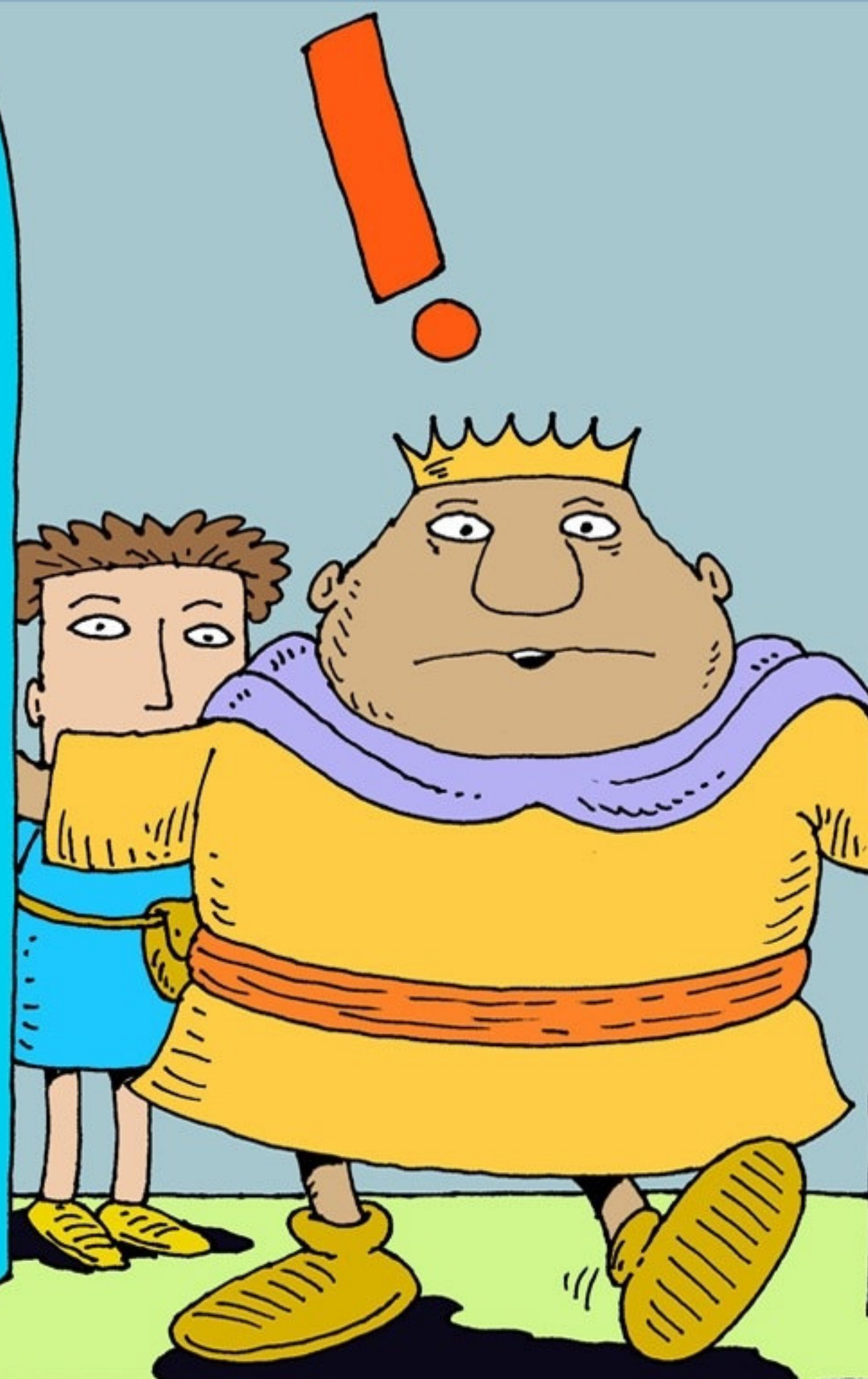
'I have a secret message for you,' he told King Eglon.



The king immediately dismissed all those who were with him so that he could have a private interview with Ehud.



King Eglon decided to take Ehud into his cool upstairs room at the palace where no-one could overhear the secret he was about to be told.





King Eglon then stood up and eagerly asked, 'So what is this secret?'



Ehud reached beneath his robe with his strong left hand, pulled out the double-bladed dagger strapped against his right thigh, and plunged it deep into the king's belly. The hilt of the dagger disappeared beneath the flesh, and the fat closed over it as the entrails oozed out.

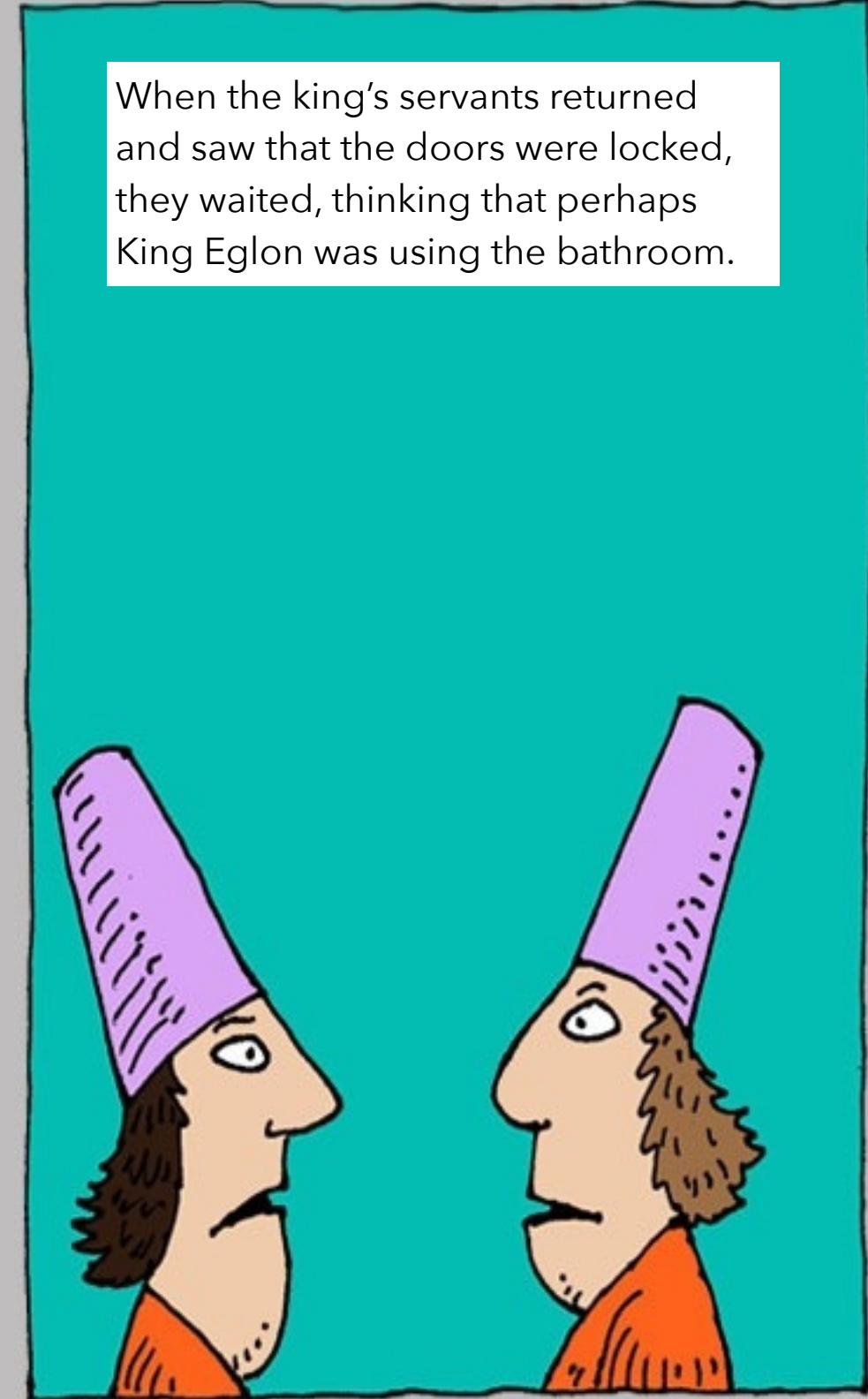
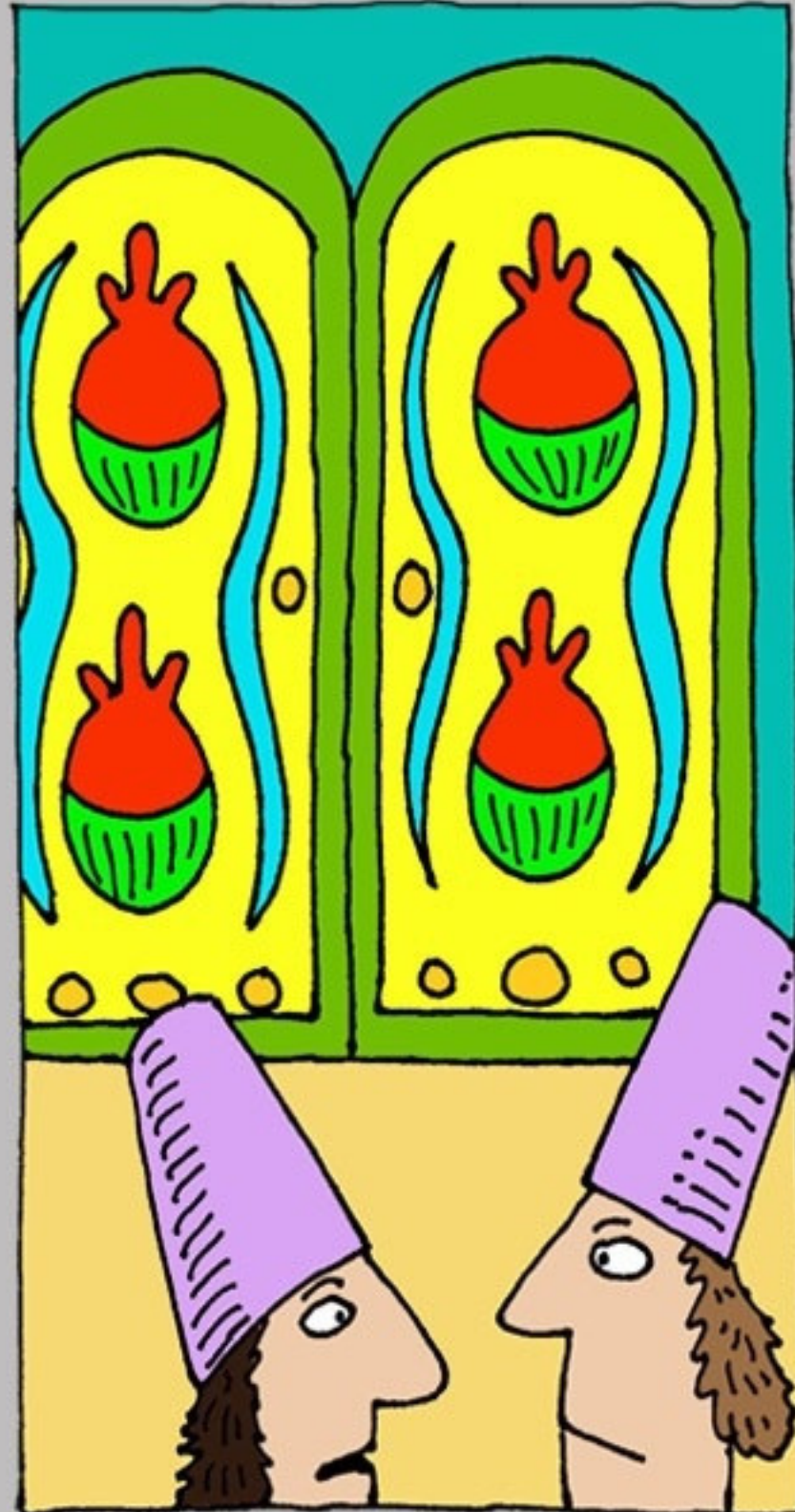


Leaving the dagger there, Ehud locked the doors behind him and escaped across an upstairs porch.



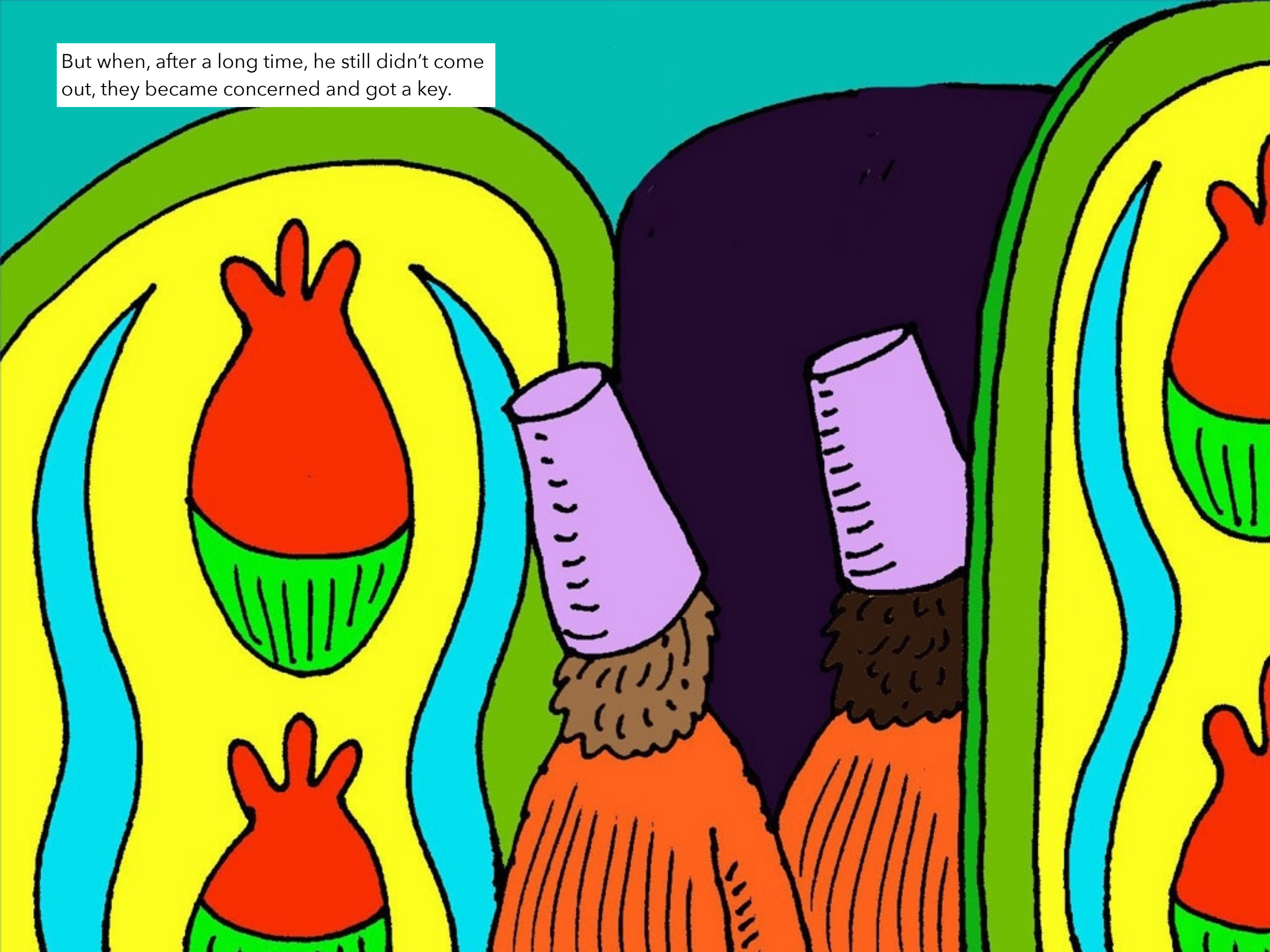
He then calmly walked out of the palace, out of the city and headed towards home.



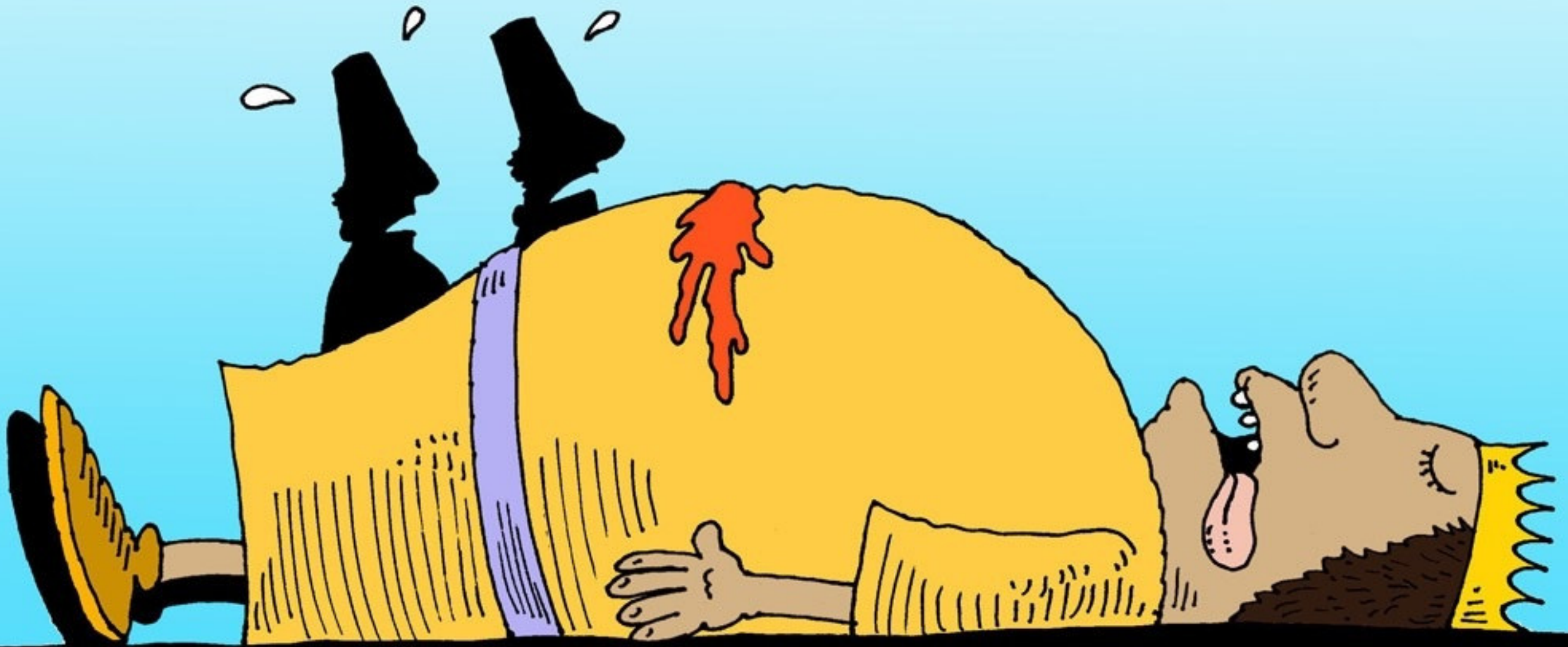


When the king's servants returned and saw that the doors were locked, they waited, thinking that perhaps King Eglon was using the bathroom.

But when, after a long time, he still didn't come out, they became concerned and got a key.



And when they opened the door, they found their master dead on the floor.



Meanwhile Ehad had escaped
past the quarries to Seirah.



When he arrived in the hill country of Ephraim, he blew a trumpet as a call to arms and mustered an army under his own command.



The Israelite army began to gather.

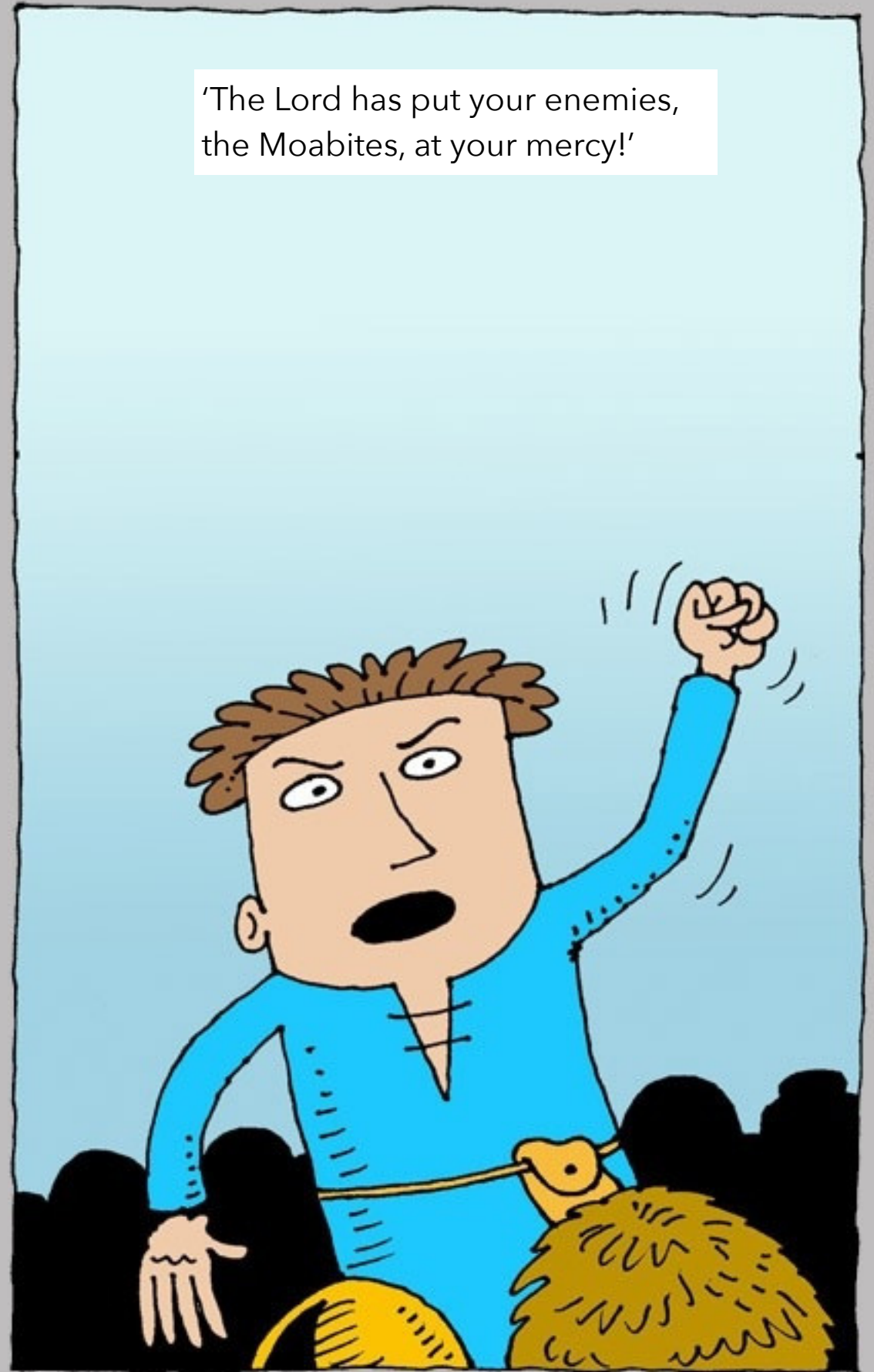


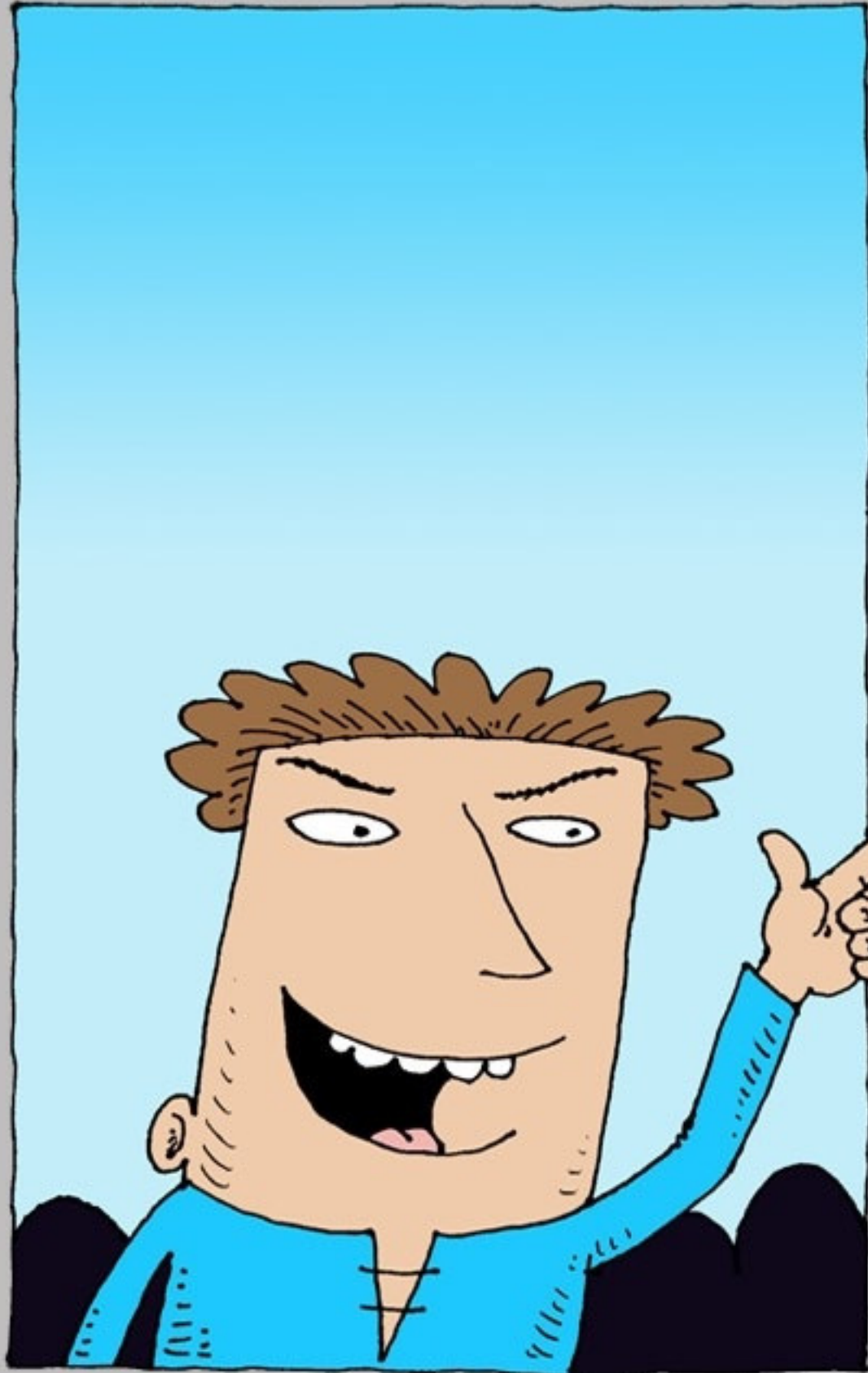
'Follow me,' he told them.





'The Lord has put your enemies,
the Moabites, at your mercy!'





Ehud led the army towards Moab.



They seized the fords of the Jordan River near Moab, preventing anyone from crossing.



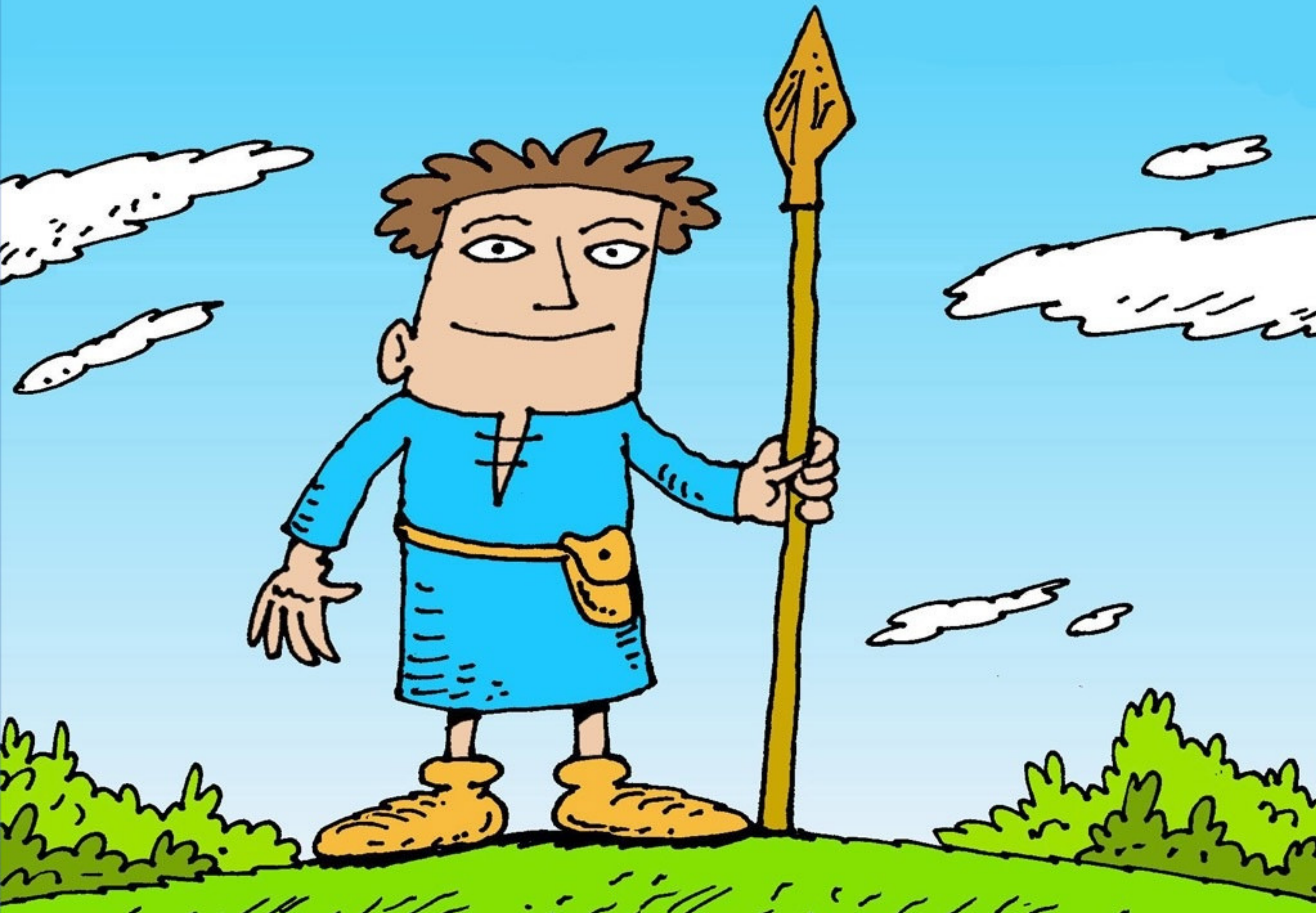
Then they attacked the Moabites and killed about ten thousand of the strongest and most skillful of their fighting men.



No-one escaped. Ehud the left-handed assassin, with God's help, had led the repentant Israelites to victory. They had their freedom and no more crippling taxes to pay.



So Moab was conquered by Israel that day, and the land was at peace for the next eighty years. The lesson God wanted to teach the Israelites was that if they wanted to keep their freedom they had to trust and obey Him.



Judges 3:31



SHAMGAR - A MIGHTY JUDGE

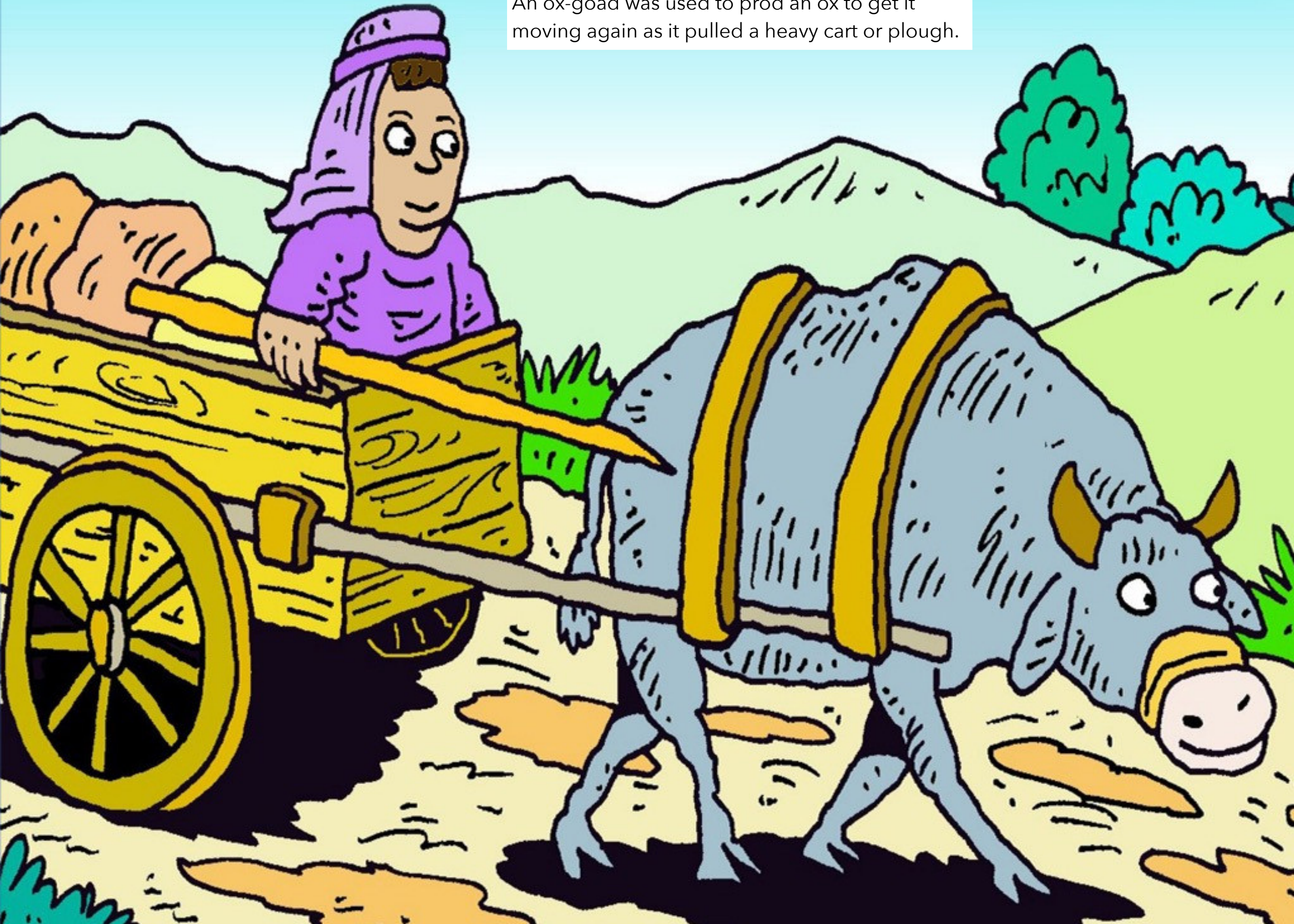
Shamgar was a champion for God. There is only one verse in the Bible about him but what it says in that one verse tells us a lot about him.



Shamgar was a judge who taught people to obey God's laws. The Philistines living nearby kept threatening God's people and stealing from them. Shamgar did not have a sword to fight back - instead he relied on God's power and a long pointed stick called an ox-goad.



An ox-goad was used to prod an ox to get it moving again as it pulled a heavy cart or plough.



To the tough Philistines with their metal weapons Shamgar did not look well-equipped for battle. But he was skillful and well trained in using his ox-goad.



There were Philistines wanting to steal his crops and they may have thought this would be easy.



With God's power and his ox-goad, Shamgar was able to fight off and strike down 600 Philistines who threatened God's people.



Well, you may not have an ox-goad but you can use another type of pointed stick - a pencil or stylus - in a powerful way to write down scriptures and learn them. God's Word is very powerful in our fight to obey God and live as He wants.



A vibrant illustration of a battle scene. In the foreground, a large, ornate chariot pulled by two brown horses is the focus. The horses are adorned with red harnesses and yellow blankets. Inside the chariot, a man in a yellow tunic and silver helmet holds a sword aloft. Beside him, another man in a red tunic plays a large drum. In the background, soldiers on a hill are archers aiming bows, and other warriors are engaged in combat. The scene is filled with action and color.

**DEBORAH AND BARAK
GO INTO BATTLE** Judges 4-5



During the time of Joshua, the Israelites conquered much of the land that God had promised to them but there were still areas controlled by the Canaanites. God raised up judges to lead His people and help them live by His laws.

When the Lord raised up a judge and people obeyed God they lived in peace and if they went into battle they were victorious.





But when the judge died the people abandoned God and started worshipping other gods. When they did so their enemies defeated them and they lived in great distress (Judges 2:10-23).

After the death of a judge called Ehud, God's people turned to worshipping false gods again. As a result, God let them be conquered by King Jabin of Hazor, a Canaanite king.



The commander of King Jabin's army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-haggoyim.



Hazor

Lake Galilee

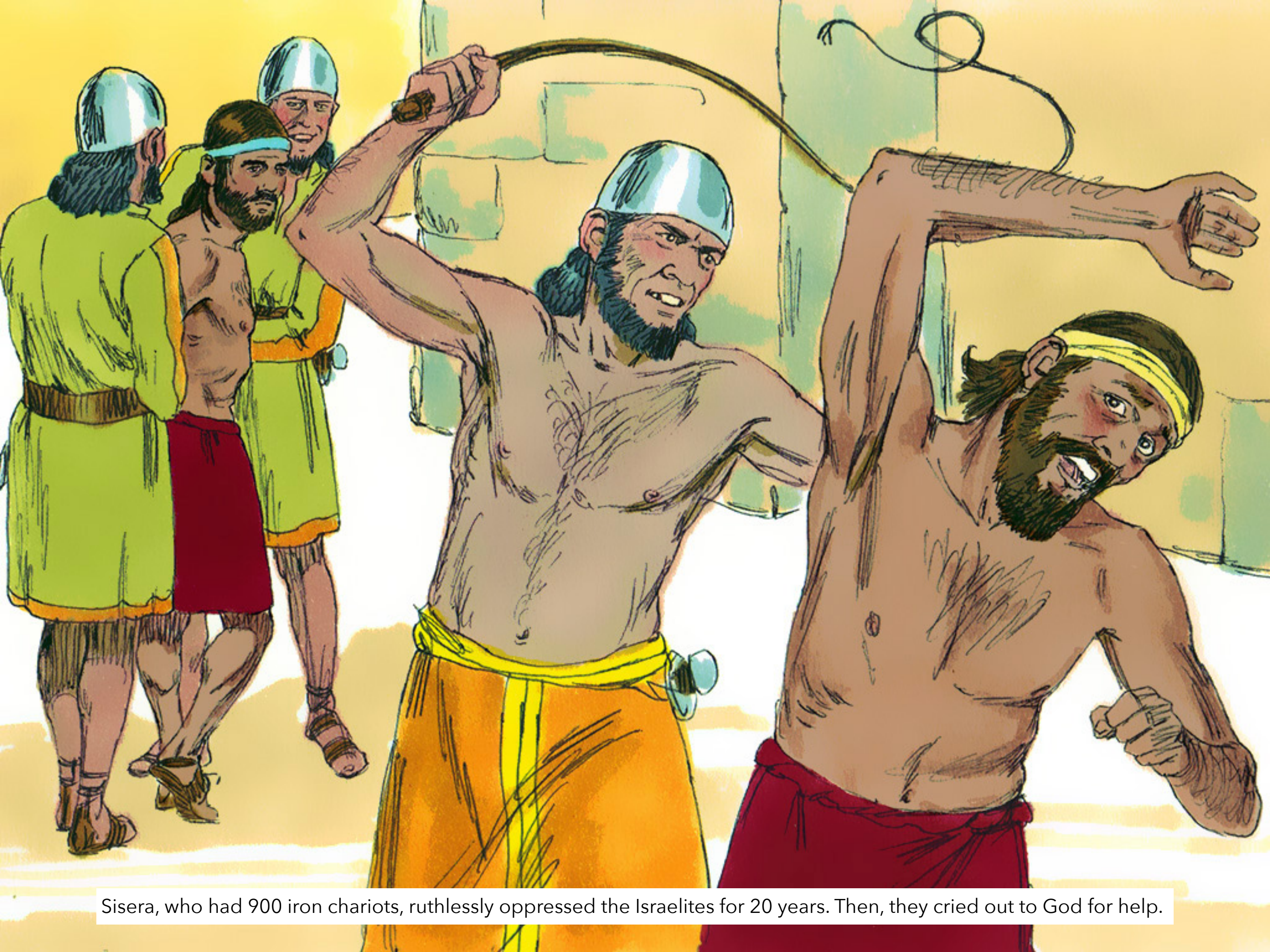
Harosheth-haggoyim

Bethel

Ramah

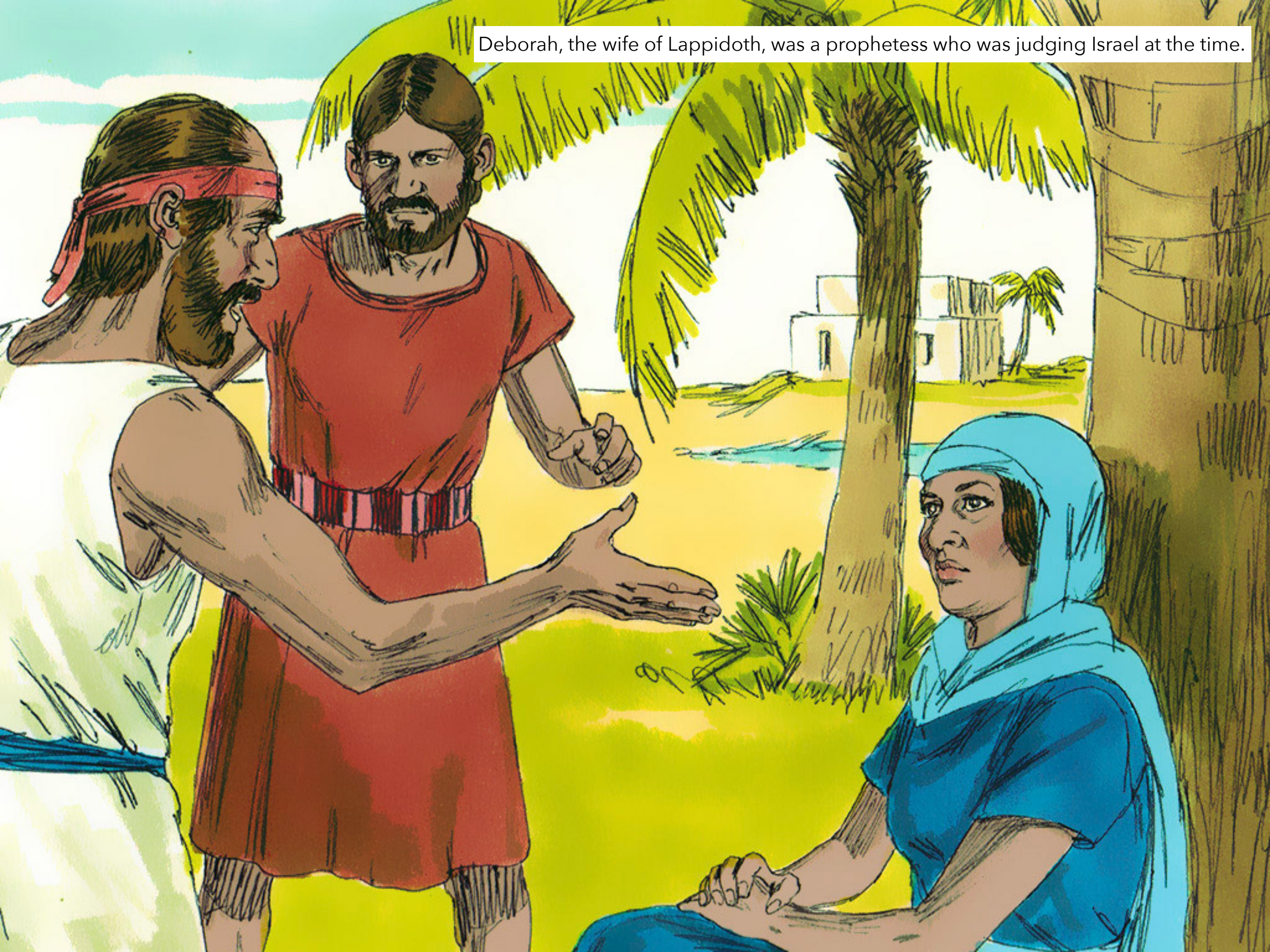
Dead Sea

ISRAEL
IN THE TIME OF
THE JUDGES



Sisera, who had 900 iron chariots, ruthlessly oppressed the Israelites for 20 years. Then, they cried out to God for help.

Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophetess who was judging Israel at the time.



ISRAEL

IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES

She would sit under the Palm of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel and the Israelites would go to her for advice and to settle their disputes by God's laws.

Harosheth-haggoyim



Hazor

**Lake
Galilee**

Bethel

Ramah

Dead Sea

ISRAEL

IN THE TIME OF
THE JUDGES

Kedesh ●

Lake
Galilee

●
Harosheth-haggoyim



One day, Deborah sent for Barak, son of Abinoam, who lived in Kedesh in the region of Naphtali. Barak travelled south to meet her.



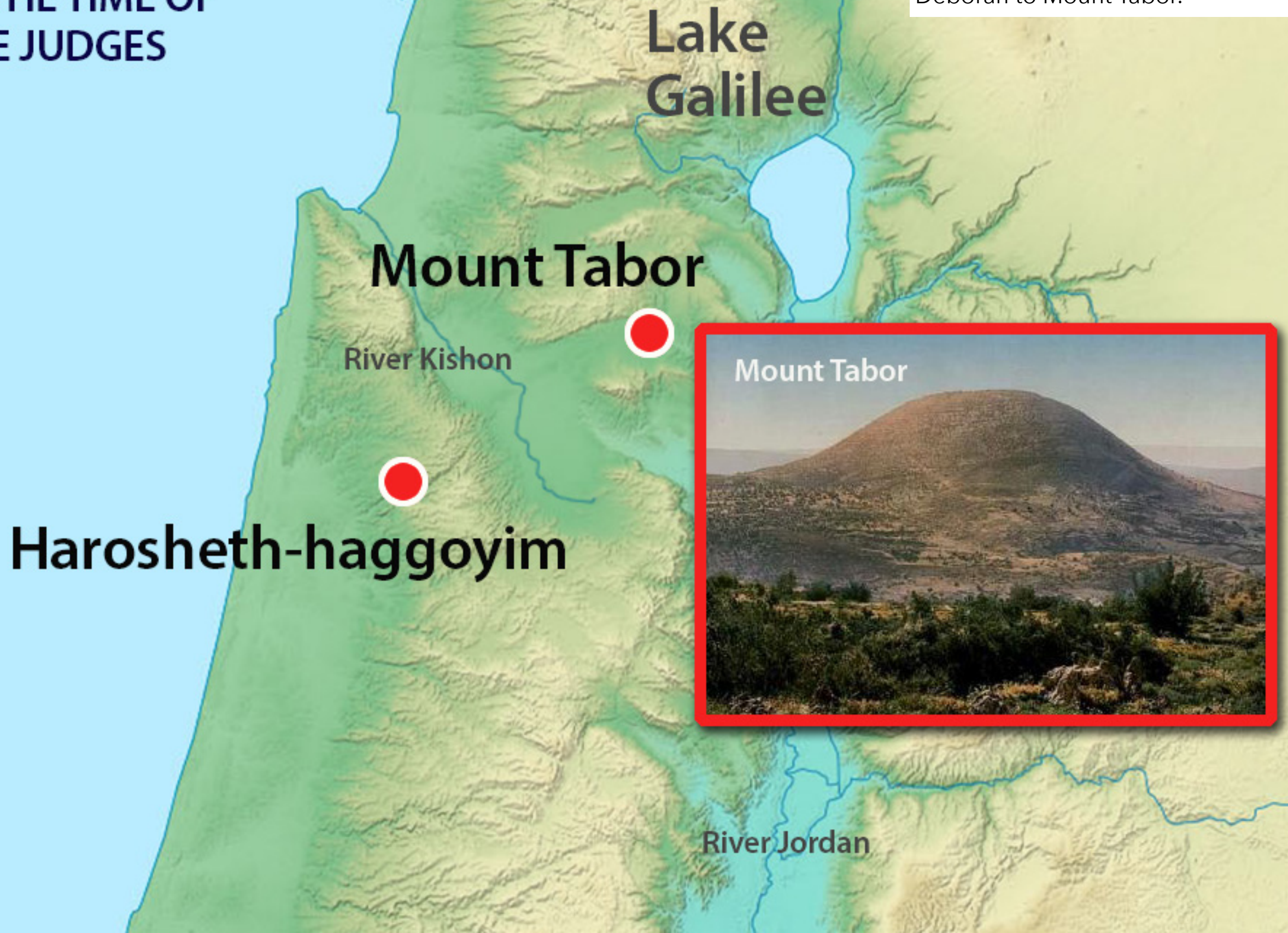
Deborah told him, 'This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, commands you to do. Gather 10,000 warriors from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun at Mount Tabor. I will call out Sisera, commander of Jabin's army, along with his chariots and warriors, to the Kishon River. There I will give you victory over him.'



Barak replied, 'I will go, but only if you go with me.' 'Very well,' Deborah replied, 'I will go with you. But you will receive no honor in this venture, for the Lord's victory over Sisera will be at the hands of a woman.'

ISRAEL IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES

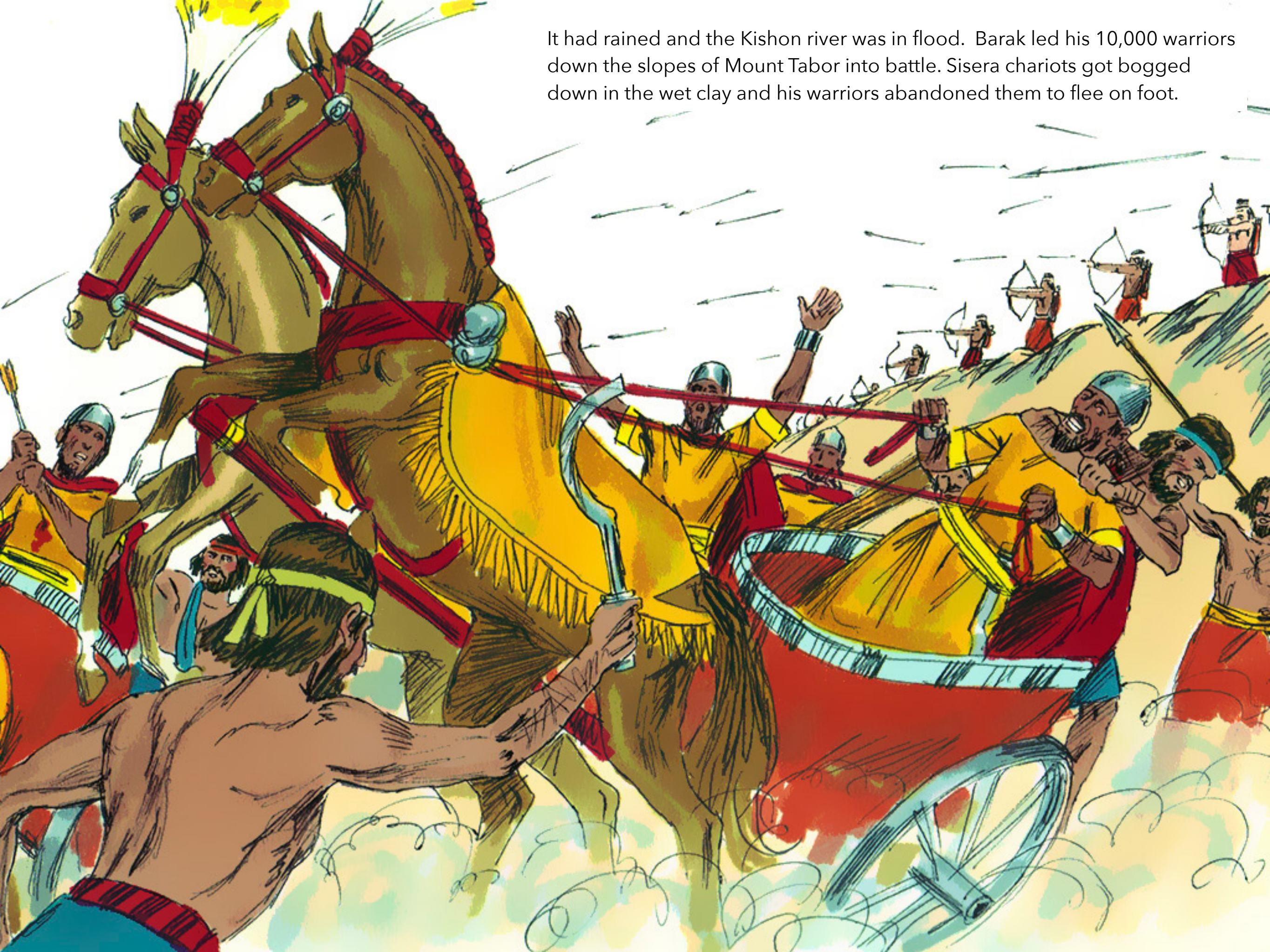
So Deborah went with him. Barak called together the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, who lived east of Lake Galilee, and 10,000 warriors went with him and Deborah to Mount Tabor.



When Sisera heard Barak had gone up to Mount Tabor, he called for all 900 of his iron chariots and all his warriors, and they marched from Harosheth-haggoyim to the Kishon River. Deborah said to Barak, 'Get ready! This is the day the Lord will give you victory over Sisera. The Lord is marching ahead of you.'



It had rained and the Kishon river was in flood. Barak led his 10,000 warriors down the slopes of Mount Tabor into battle. Sisera chariots got bogged down in the wet clay and his warriors abandoned them to flee on foot.



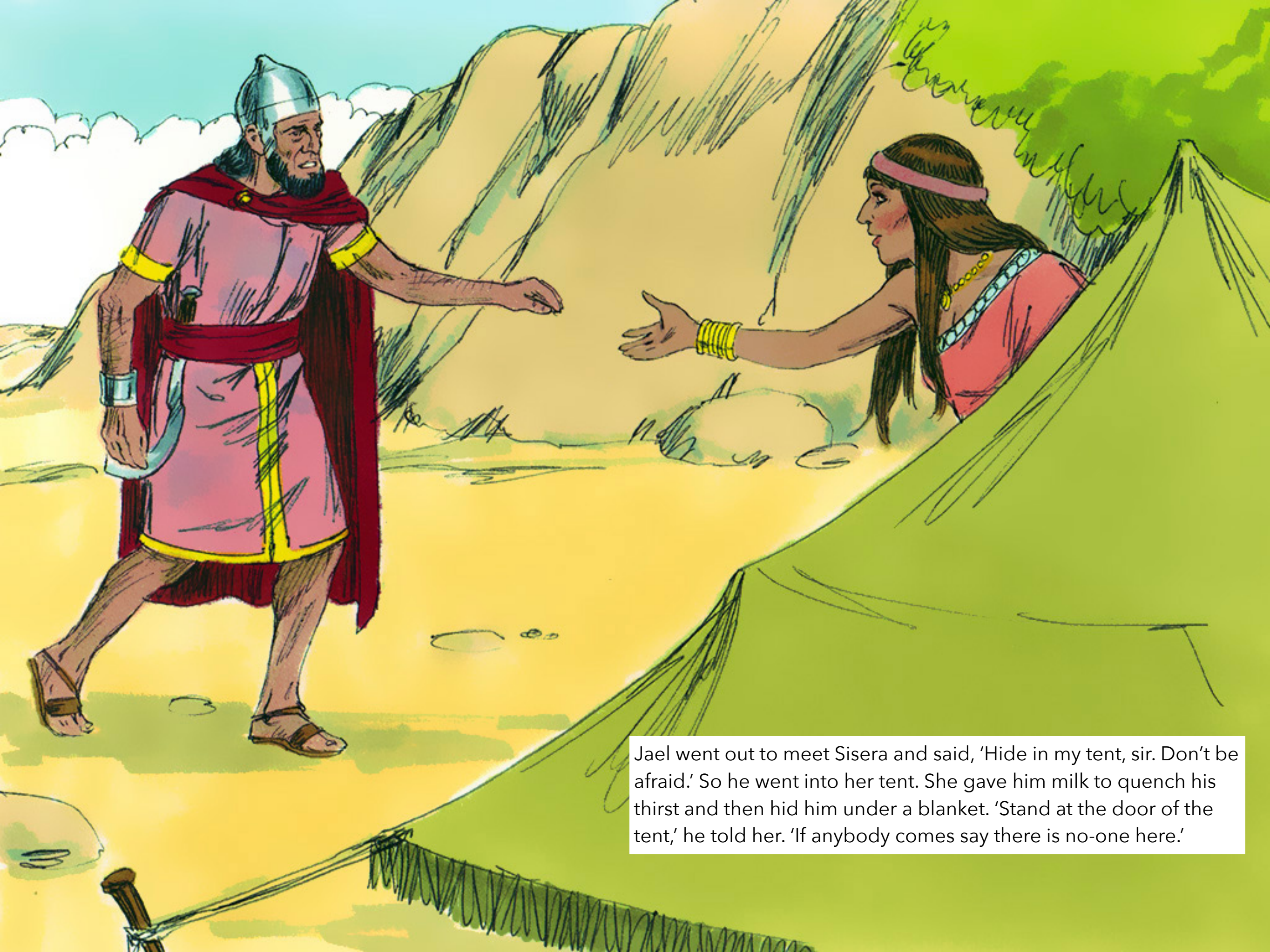
ISRAEL

IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES



Barak chased them all the way to Harosheth-haggoyim, killing all of Sisera's warriors. However Sisera fled towards Zaanannim where Heber the Kenite had pitched his tent. He was on friendly terms with King Jabin of Hazor. Heber's wife was called Jael.

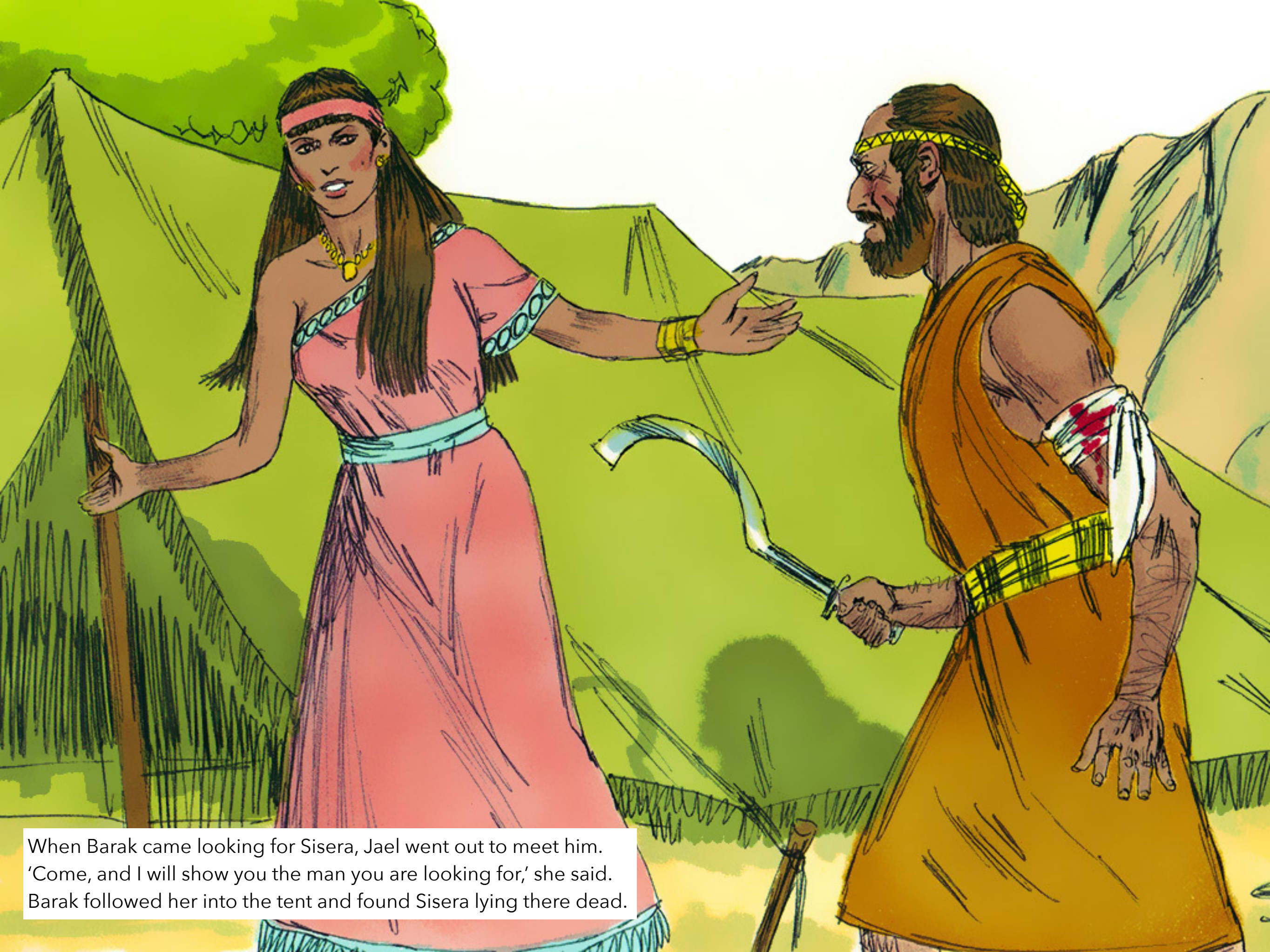
River Jordan



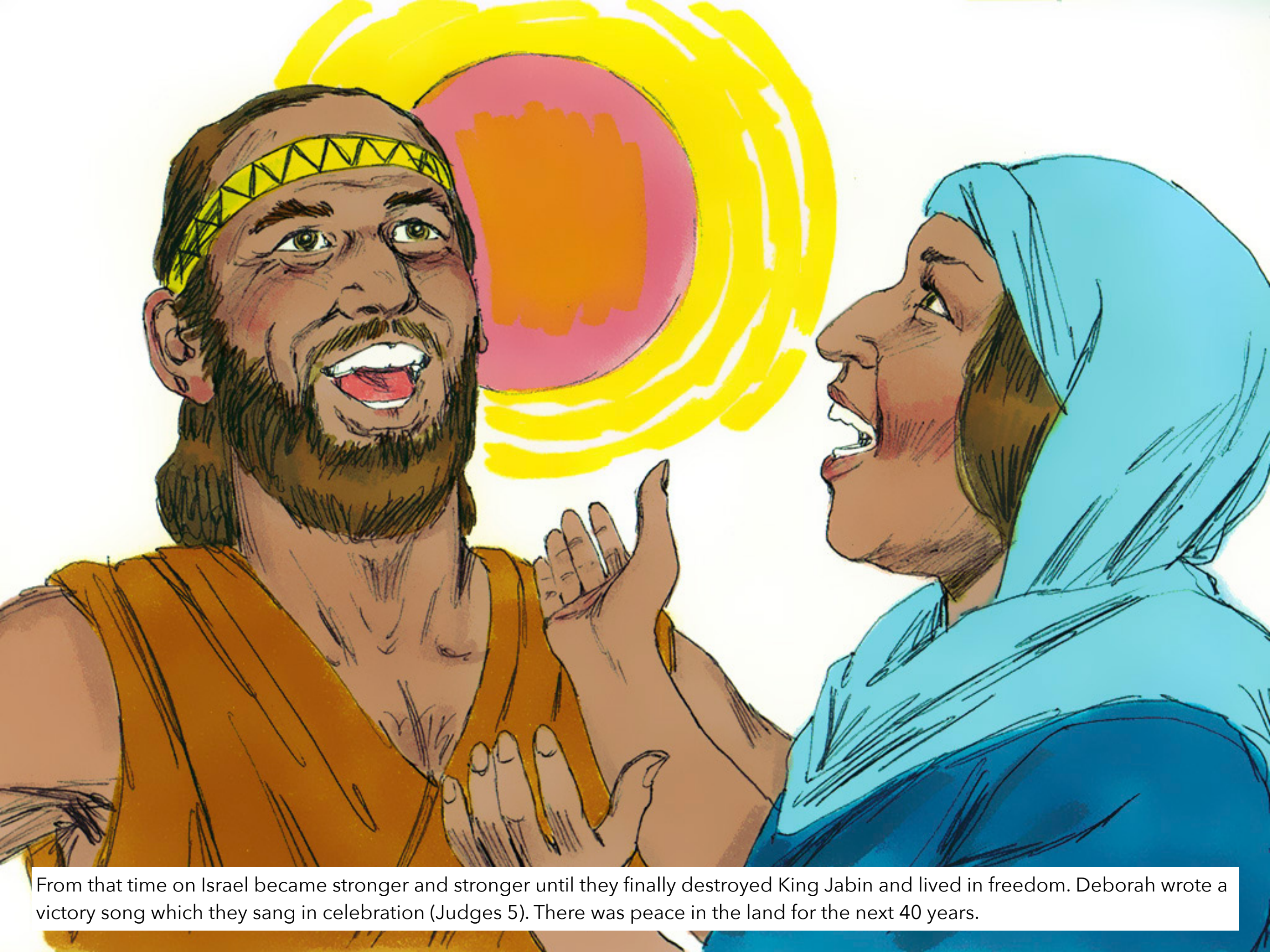
Jael went out to meet Sisera and said, 'Hide in my tent, sir. Don't be afraid.' So he went into her tent. She gave him milk to quench his thirst and then hid him under a blanket. 'Stand at the door of the tent,' he told her. 'If anybody comes say there is no-one here.'

But when Sisera fell asleep from exhaustion, Jael quietly crept up to him with a hammer and tent peg in her hand. She drove the tent peg through the side of his head (temple) and killed him.

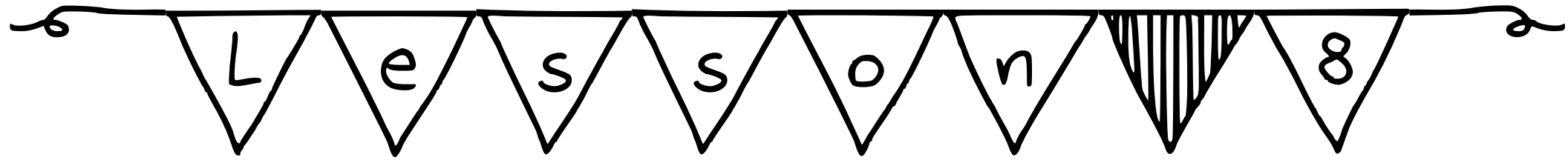




When Barak came looking for Sisera, Jael went out to meet him. 'Come, and I will show you the man you are looking for,' she said. Barak followed her into the tent and found Sisera lying there dead.



From that time on Israel became stronger and stronger until they finally destroyed King Jabin and lived in freedom. Deborah wrote a victory song which they sang in celebration (Judges 5). There was peace in the land for the next 40 years.



The Song of Deborah Judges 5:2-31

This song is a song of victory. It was probably written by Deborah. It is one of the oldest poems in the Bible. The wind is about victories, God's appearance on Mt. Sinai, warriors of the Lord and ends with a prayer that the present victories would be a pattern for future battles.