




GIDEON'S LITTLE ARMY



After Joshua died, all the people of Israel disobeyed God and left Him out of their lives. God let the neighboring Midianites burn Israel's crops and houses.

The Israelites had to live in caves.

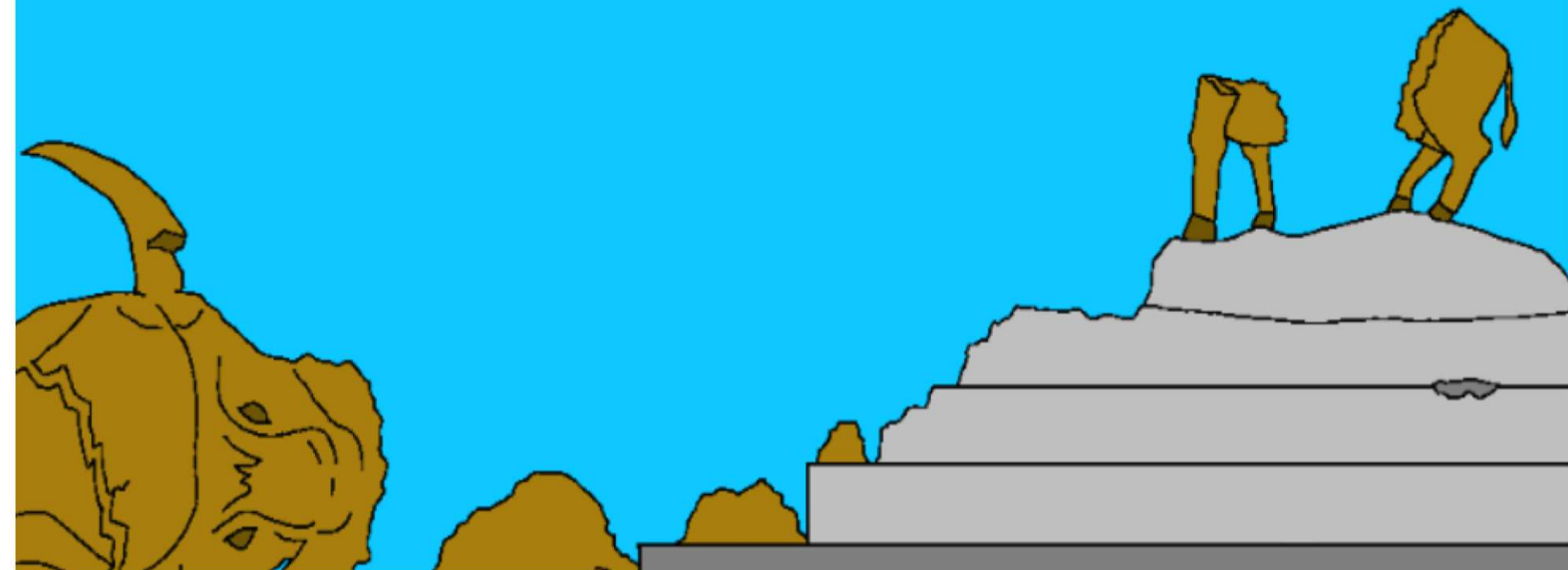
One Israelite, Gideon, must have had a secret place to grow wheat. He threshed the grain by a hidden winepress, under a large tree.



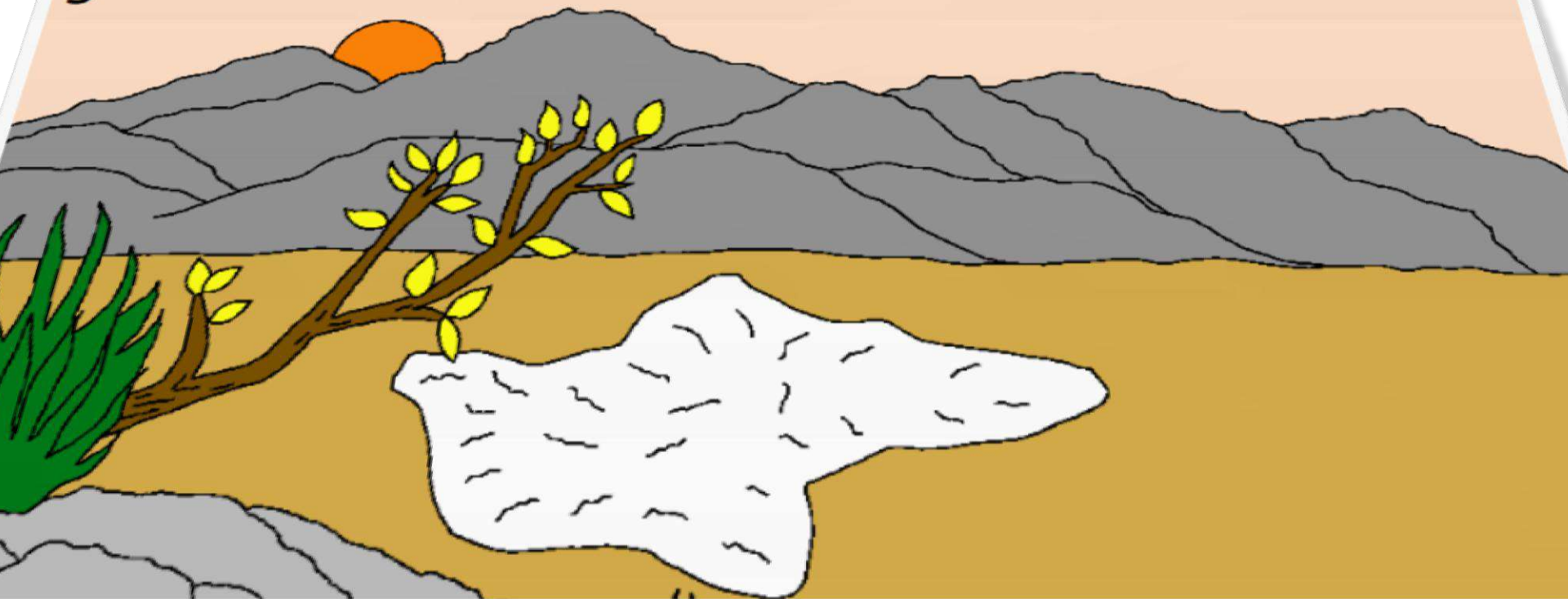
The Midianites didn't know the place - but God did! God sent an Angel with a message for Gideon.



God wanted Gideon to destroy his own father's image of a false god and build an altar to the true God. Though Gideon was afraid his countrymen would kill him, he did what God commanded.



God also wanted Gideon to lead Israel's army against the wicked Midianites. But Gideon was afraid. He asked for a special sign that God was with him. Then he laid a fleecy sheepskin on the ground.





"If there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground," Gideon prayed, "then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said."

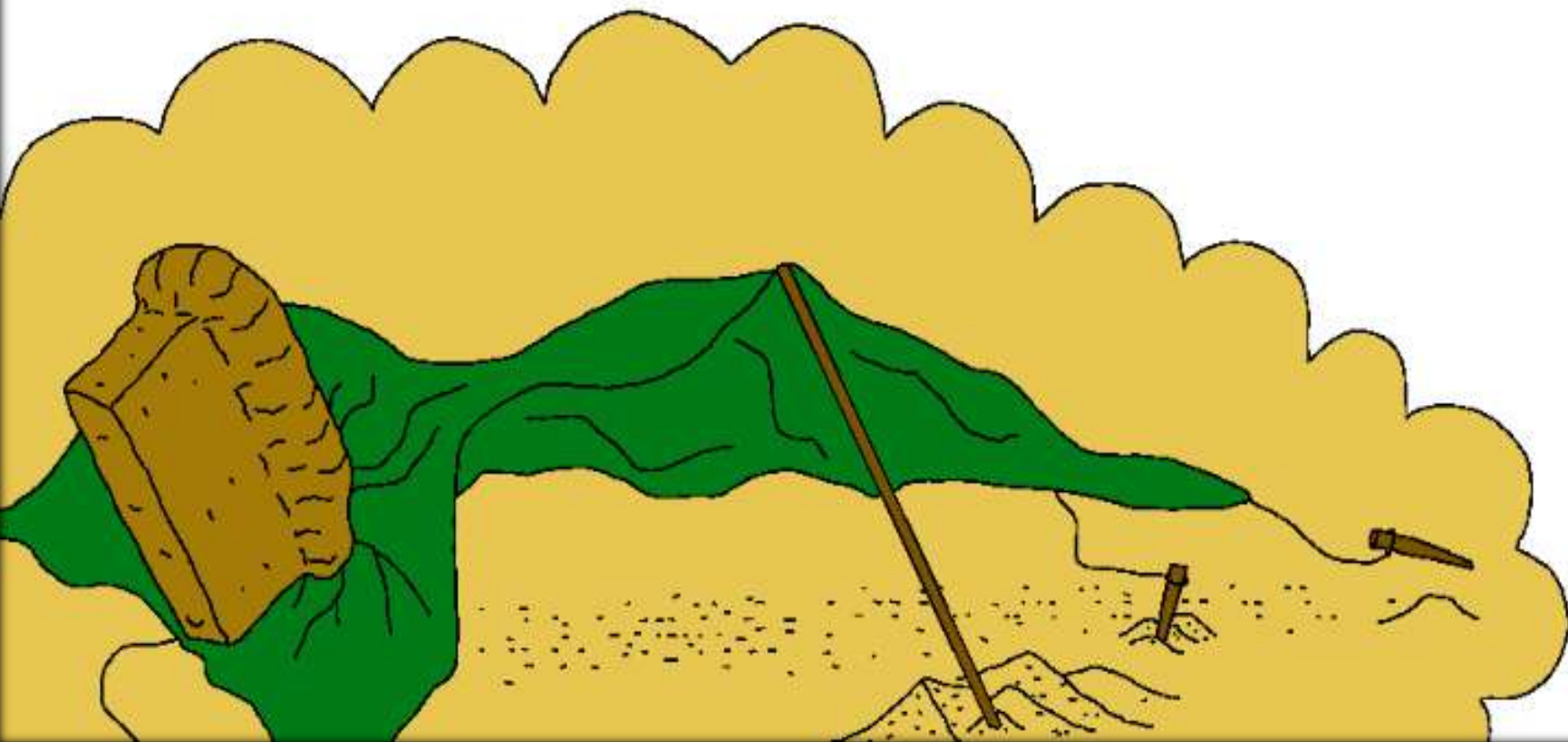
Gideon still doubted. Now he wanted God to send dew on the ground but not on the fleece. Next morning - the ground was soggy, but **THE FLEECE WAS DRY!**



Gideon started out with an army of 32,000.
God cut it down to only 300 men. God did not
want Israel to say "My own hand has saved me."
God alone was Israel's Saviour.

~~32000~~
~~10000~~
300 ✓

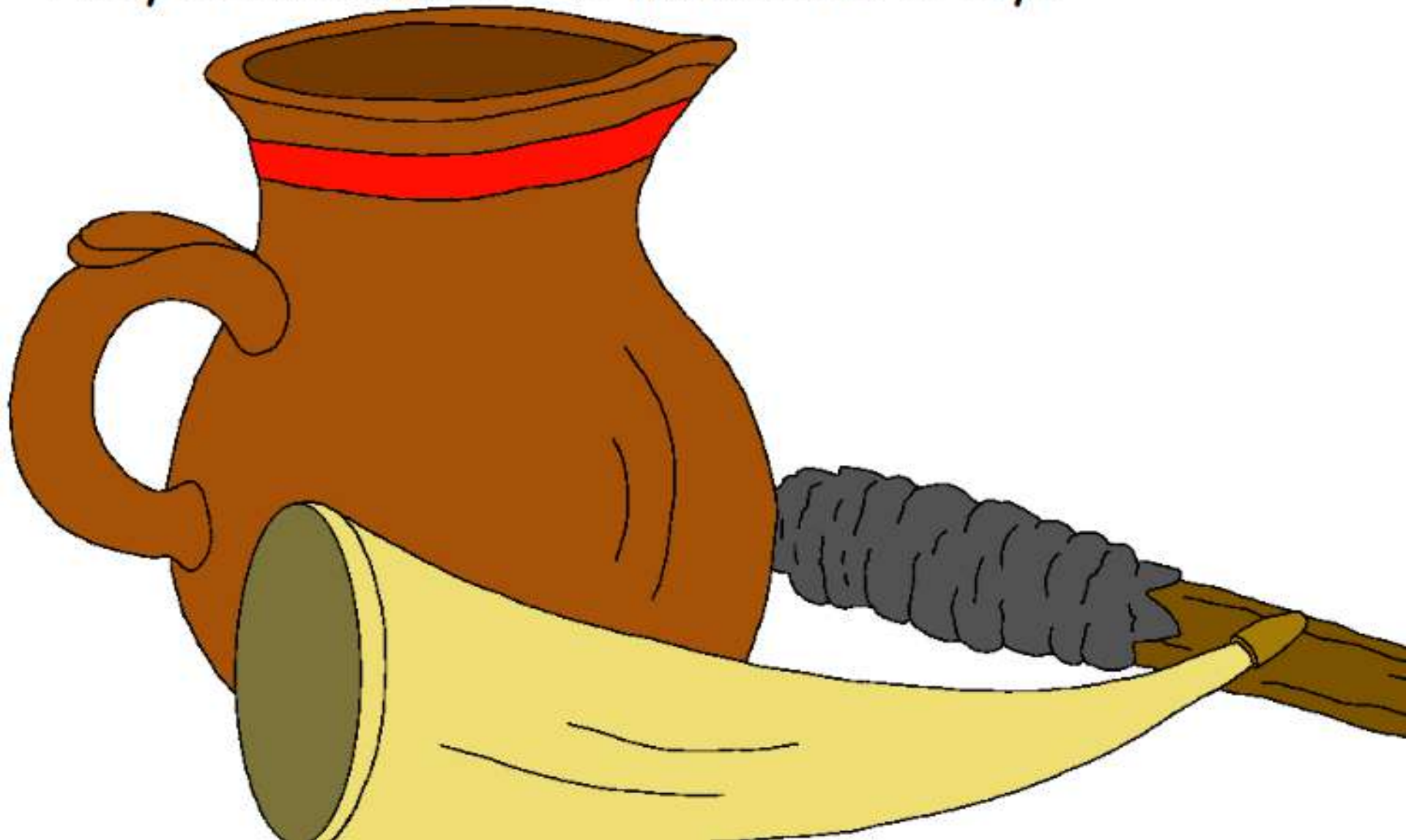
Knowing Gideon was still afraid, God let him secretly overhear one Midianite soldier tell another about a strange dream. In the dream, a loaf of bread tumbled against a Midianite tent and destroyed it.



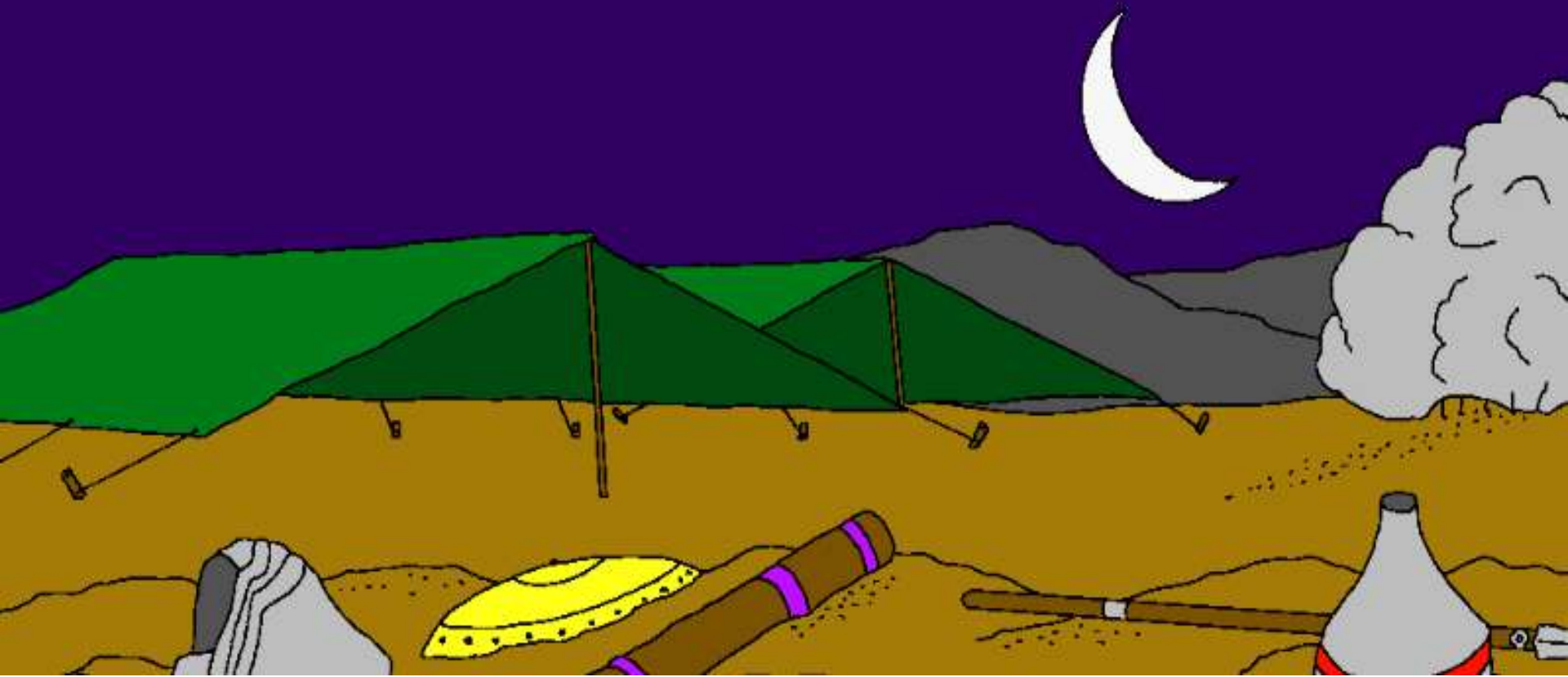
The other guard was terrified. "This is ... the sword of Gideon ...", he cried. When Gideon heard the dream and its meaning, he knew God was going to give him the victory.



Gideon planned a night attack. He gave each soldier a trumpet, and empty pitchers with torches inside. They surrounded the Midianite army.



At Gideon's signal, the soldiers blew their trumpets, smashed their pitchers and lit their torches. What noise! What confusion! The scared Midianites got up and ran away.



After this great victory, the men of Israel asked Gideon to rule over them. "I will not rule over you .. the LORD shall rule over you," Gideon replied. He knew that only God has the right to rule in people's lives.

