



THE
HANDSOME
FOOLISH
KING

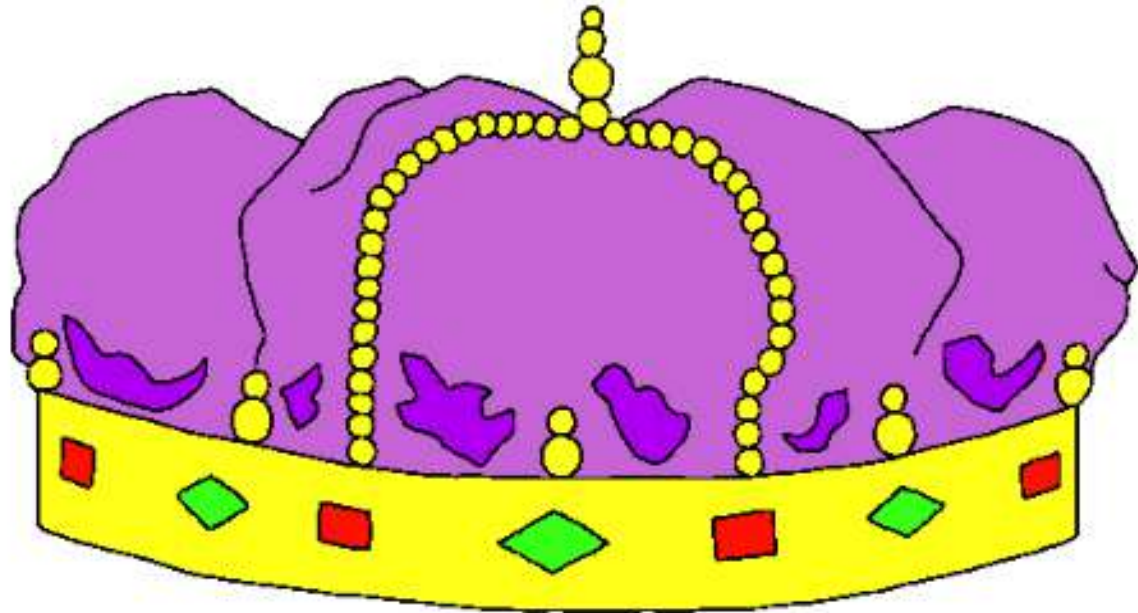
Samuel, Israel's judge and leader was old. He made his sons judges over Israel, to take his place in God's service. But Samuel's sons were wicked. They loved money and used their power to get money dishonestly.



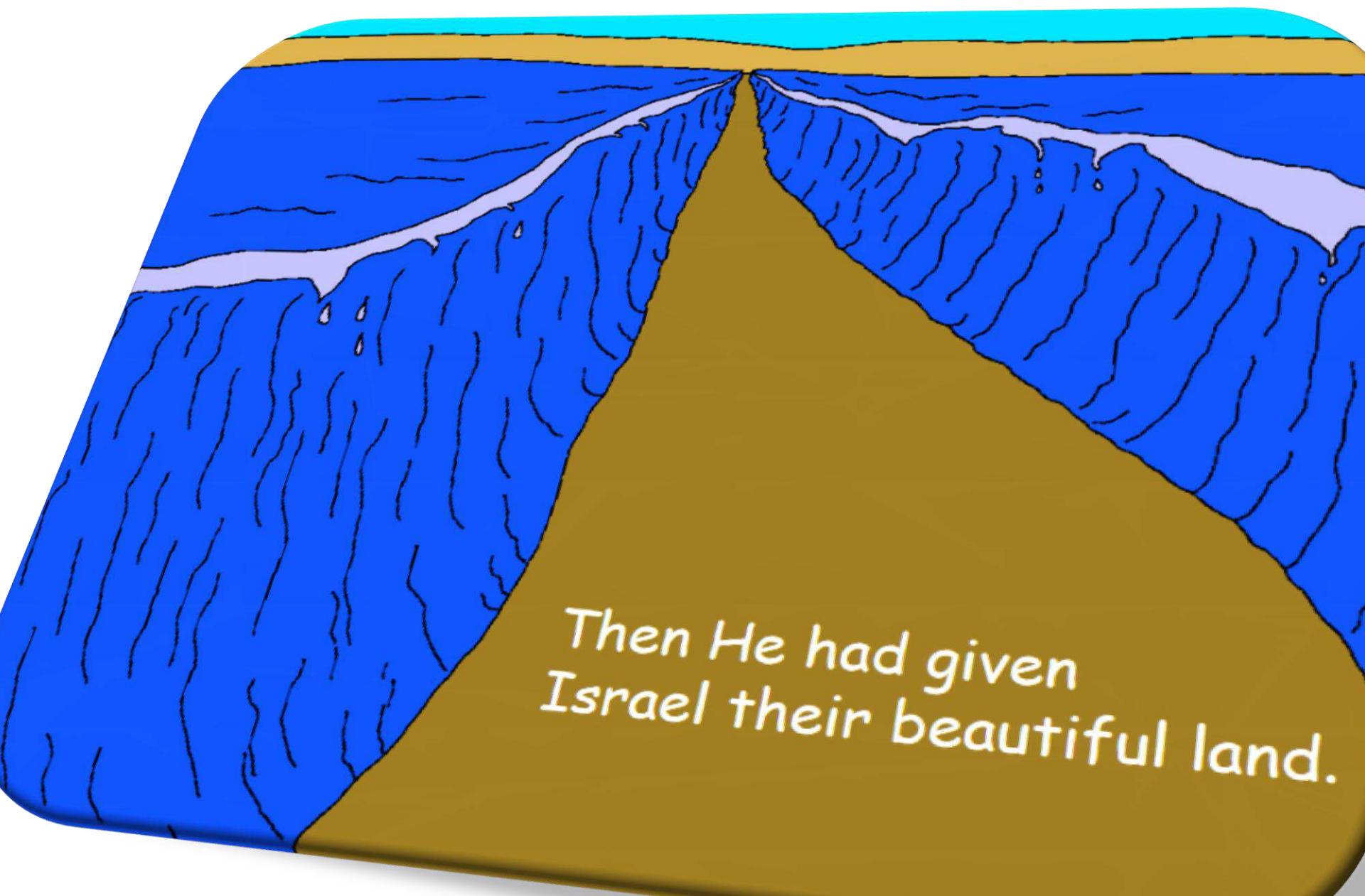
The people of Israel suffered because of the sons' wickedness. The courts were unfair. People had to pay Samuel's sons every time they wanted help.



"Give us a king to judge us," the elders demanded. They did not want Samuel's wicked sons to judge them. They wanted a king just like all the nations around them.



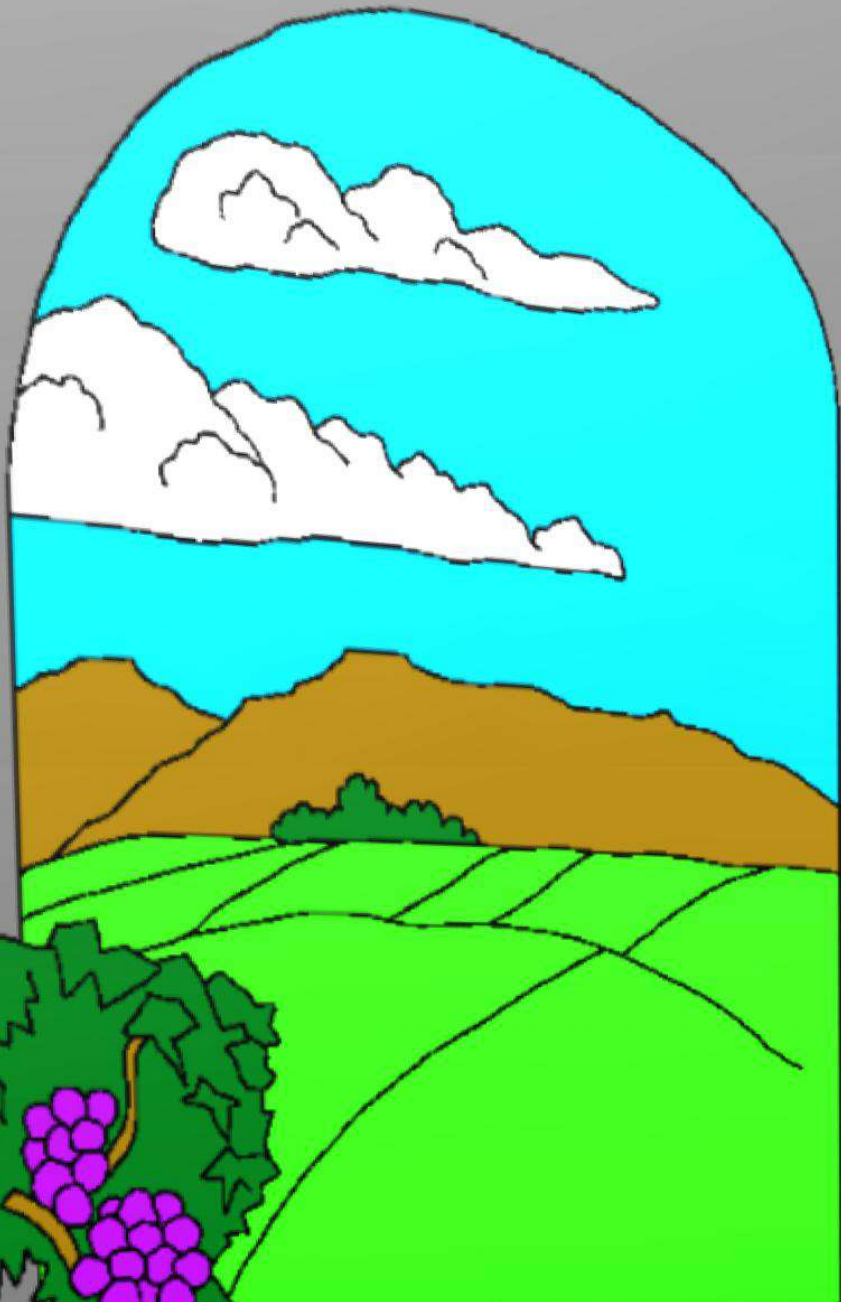
Samuel was angry. Israel already had a King! God Almighty, the Eternal One, ruled Israel. Long ago he had set them free from slavery in Egypt, opening the Red Sea for their escape.



Then He had given
Israel their beautiful land.

When Samuel prayed, the LORD said, "They have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. They have served other gods. Heed their voice and make them a king."





God told Samuel to warn the people that their earthly king would take their money in taxes; help himself to their best fields and vineyards; order their sons into his armies; and command their daughters to work for him.



But the people
wanted a king
anyway.

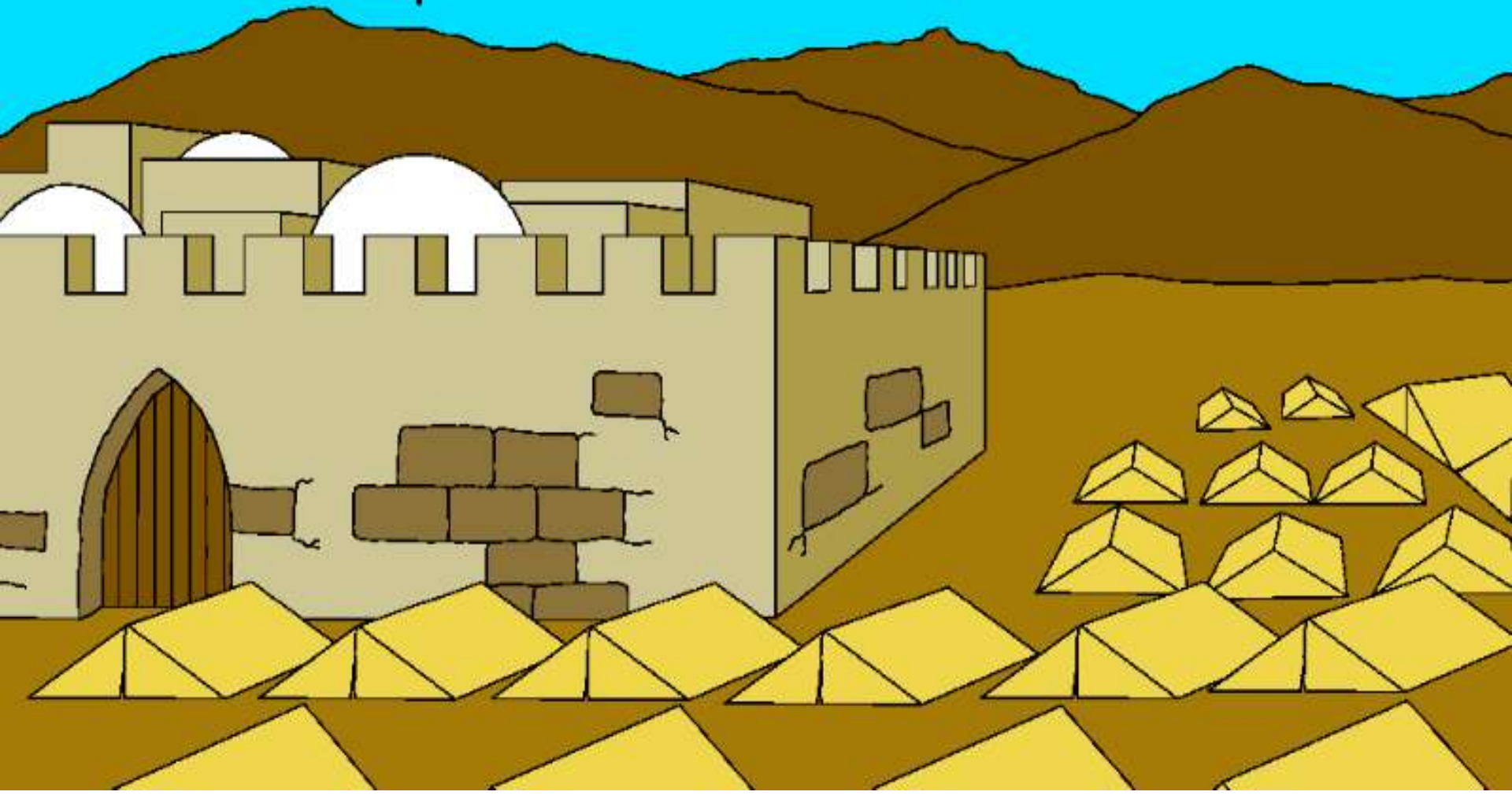
God led Samuel to a young man who was very handsome, very shy, and very TALL - a whole head taller than anyone else. His name was Saul. When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said, "This one shall reign over My people."



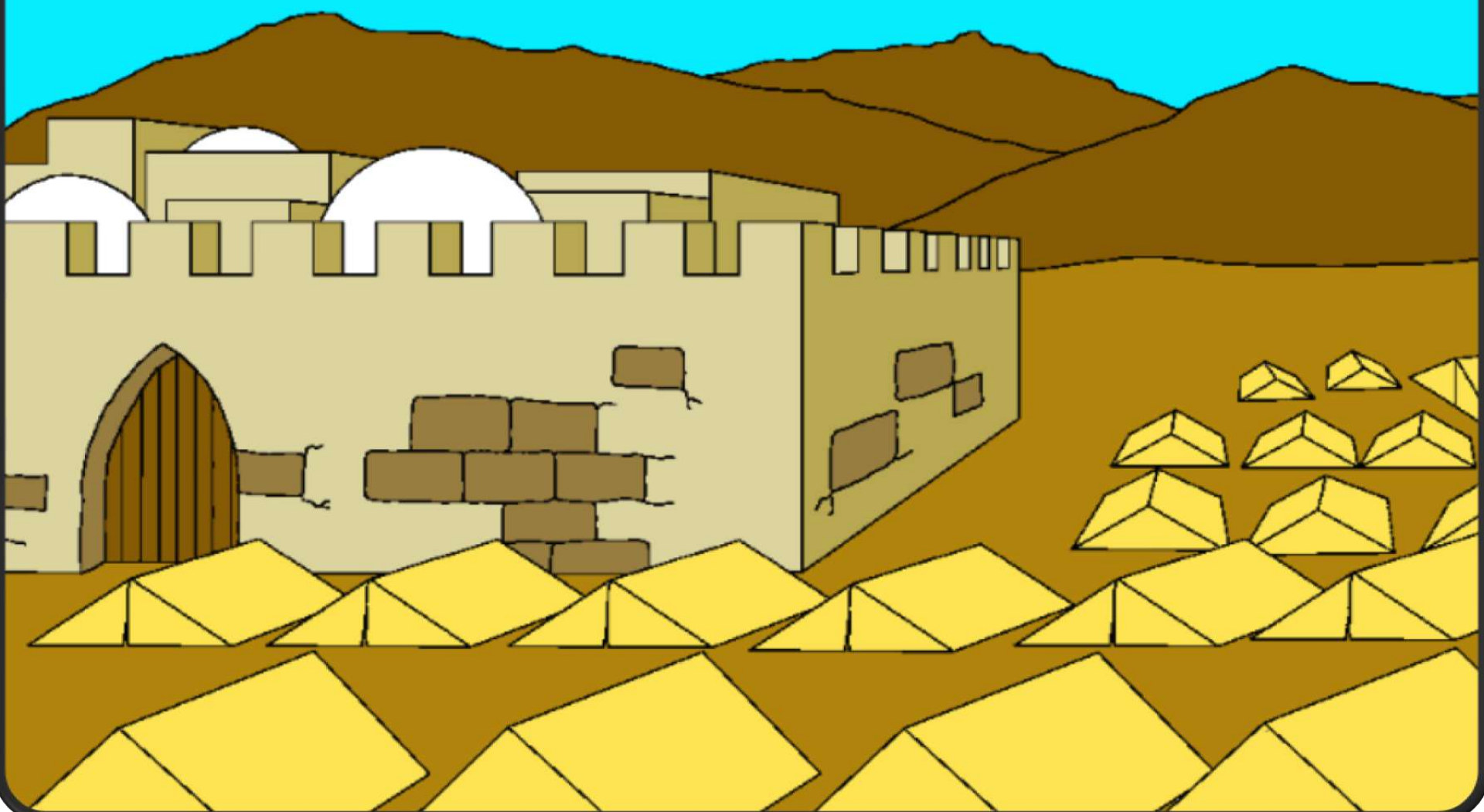


Obediently, Samuel anointed Saul as king of Israel. When he presented Saul to the people of Israel, they cried, "Long live the King!"

Soon King Saul was tested. The Ammonites, who hated Israel, surrounded an Israelite city and threatened to put out every man's right eye. What a cruel plan!



News of the threat reached King Saul. He got his army ready.



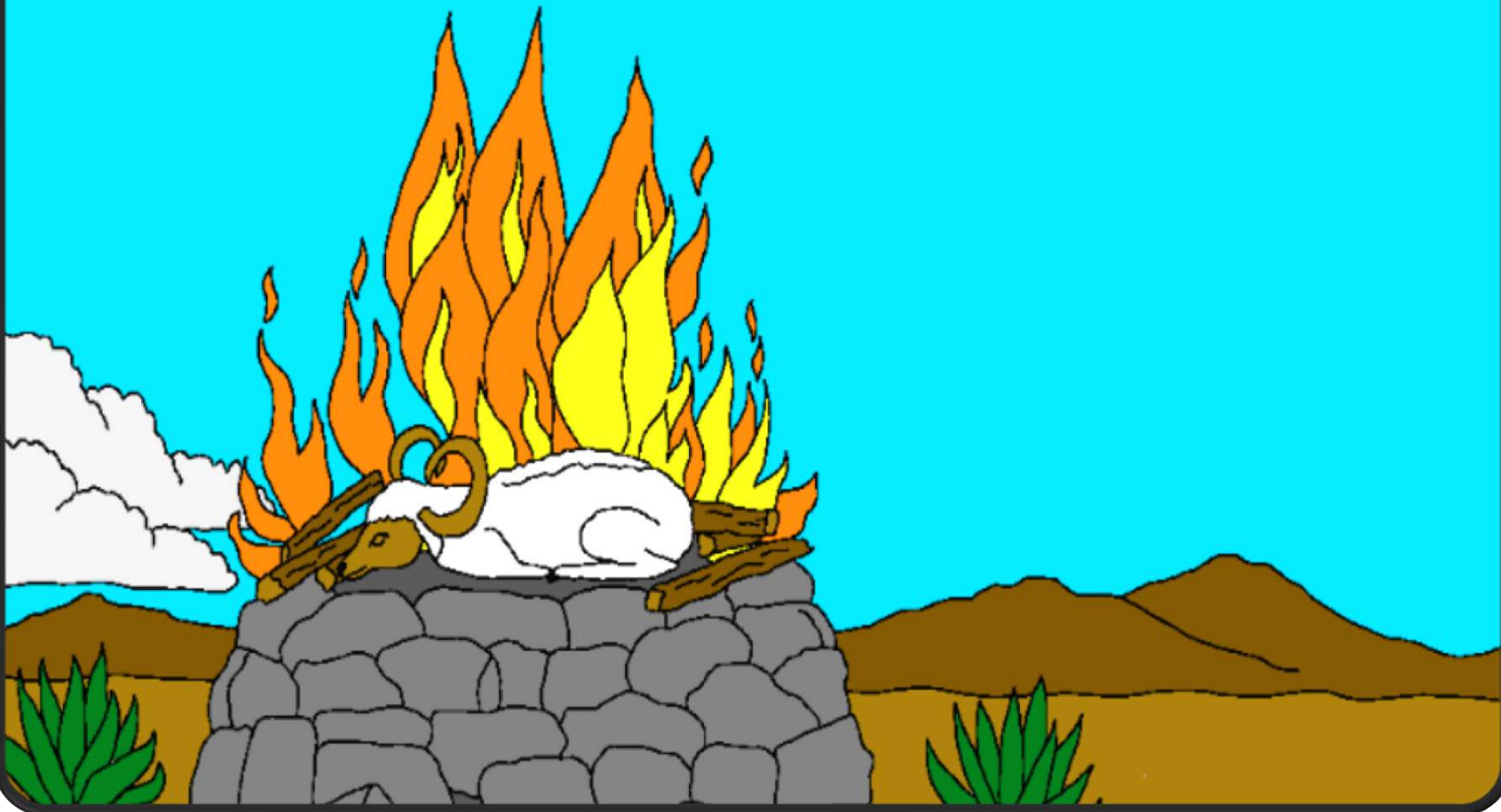


When the two armies met, Saul destroyed the Ammonites and rescued the city. King Saul gave God the glory, saying "... today the LORD has accomplished salvation in Israel!"

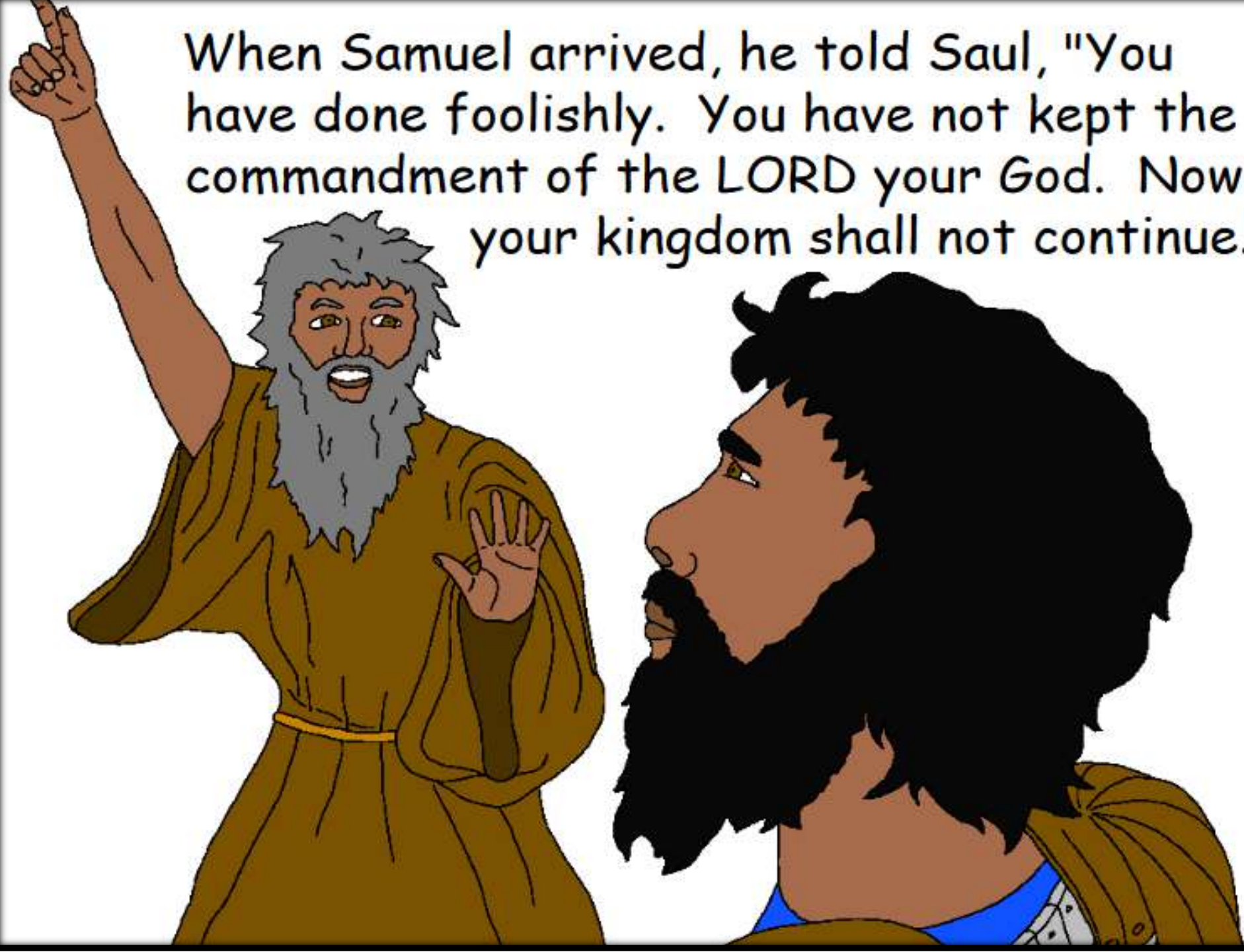
God gave Saul a great victory that day. But Saul did not always honor God. One day, before fighting the Philistines, Saul offered a sacrifice to God.



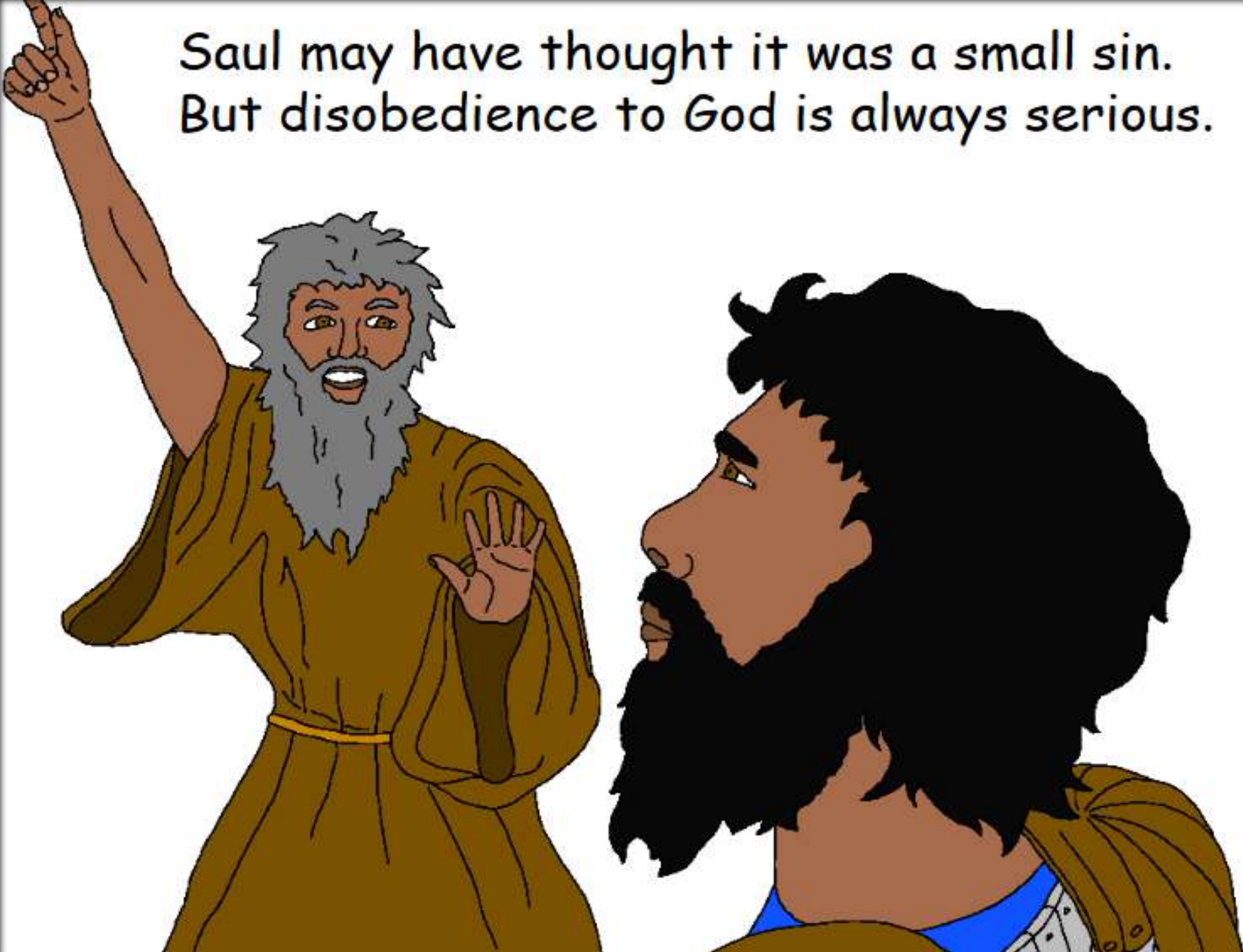
He knew that was Samuel's job. He knew God wanted him to wait until Samuel came to do it. But Saul disobeyed God!



When Samuel arrived, he told Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the commandment of the LORD your God. Now your kingdom shall not continue."



Saul may have thought it was a small sin.
But disobedience to God is always serious.



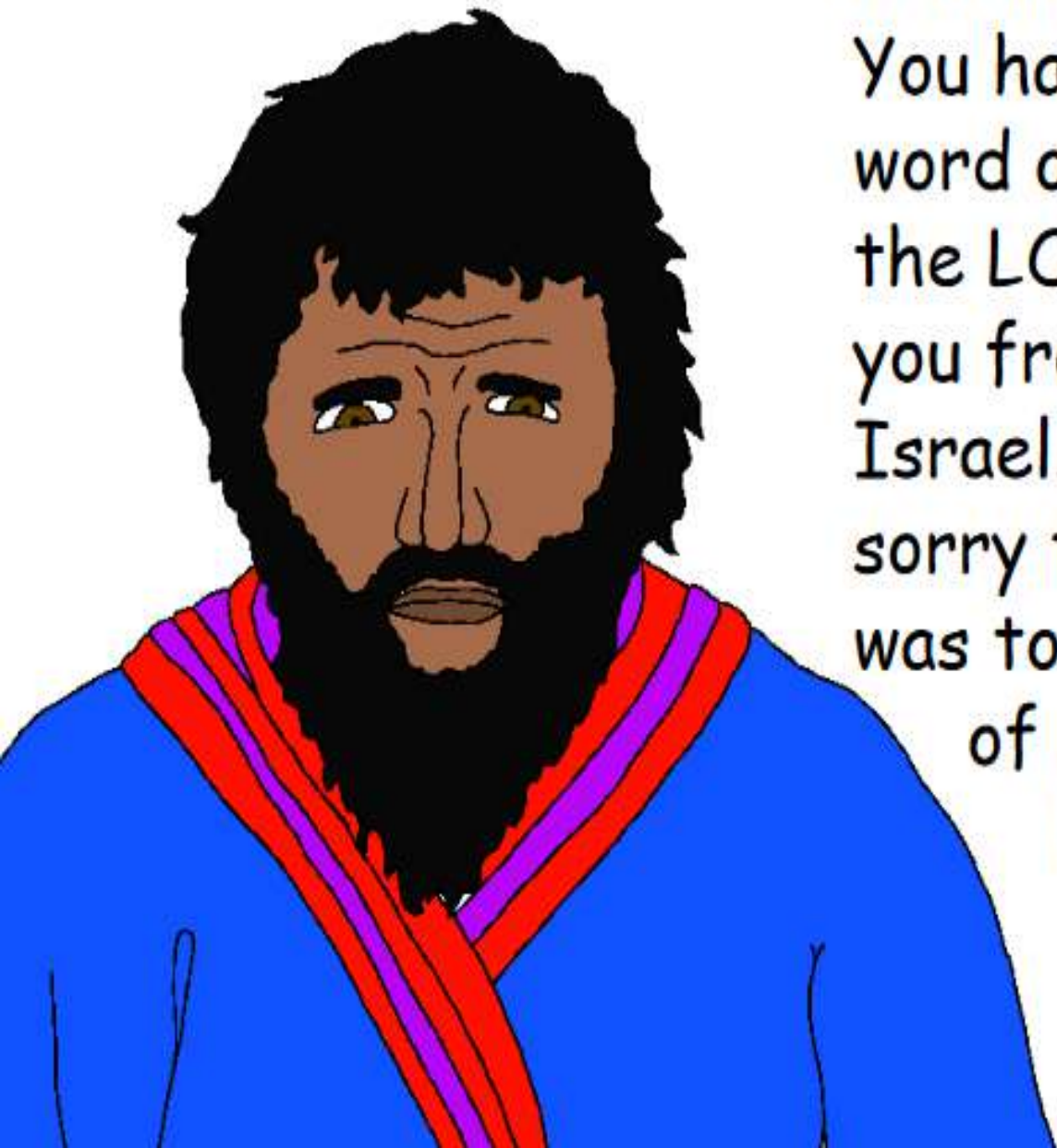
Another time, God ordered Saul to destroy the wicked people of Amalek.



But Saul and the people led by King Agag of Amalek live.

They also kept valuables,
sheep and oxen. Saul
said they had kept these
things to sacrifice to the
LORD.





Samuel told Saul, "To obey is better than sacrifice. You have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel." Saul was very sorry for his sin. But it was too late. The rest of his life was unhappy because he would not obey the LORD.