

16.05 Jonathan's Victory over Philistines; Eats Honey (1 Samuel 14)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *armor bearer*: a man who carried a shield or weapons into battle for a soldier who actually fought
- *crag*: a steep or rugged cliff or rock face
- *to ransom*: to deliver someone from calamity, usually by paying a price; to redeem

Scripture: (ESV)

1 Samuel 14:1 One day Jonathan the son of Saul said to the young man who carried his armor, “Come, let us go over to the Philistine garrison on the other side.” But he did not tell his father. 2 Saul was staying in the outskirts of Gibeah in the pomegranate cave at Micron. The people who were with him were about six hundred men, 3 including Ahijah the son of Ahitub, Ichabod’s brother, son of Phinehas, son of Eli, the priest of the Lord in Shiloh, wearing an ephod. And the people did not know that Jonathan had gone. 4 Within the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistine garrison, there was a rocky crag on the one side and a rocky crag on the other side. The name of the one was Bozez, and the name of the other Seneh. 5 The one crag rose on the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in front of Geba.

6 Jonathan said to the young man who carried his armor, “Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by few.” 7 And his armor-bearer said to him, “Do all that is in your heart. Do as you wish. Behold, I am with you heart and soul.” 8 Then Jonathan said, “Behold, we will cross over to the men, and we will show ourselves to them. 9 If they say to us, ‘Wait until we come to you,’ then we will stand still in our place, and we will not go up to them. 10 But if they say, ‘Come up to us,’ then we will go up, for the Lord has given them into our hand. And this shall be the sign to us.” 11 So both of them showed themselves to the garrison of the Philistines. And the Philistines said, “Look, Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have hidden themselves.” 12 And the men of the garrison hailed Jonathan and his armor-bearer and said, “Come up to us, and we will show you a thing.” And Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, “Come up after me, for the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel.” 13 Then Jonathan climbed up on his hands and feet, and his armor-bearer after him. And they fell before Jonathan, and his armor-bearer killed them after him. 14 And that first strike, which Jonathan and his armor-bearer made, killed about twenty men within as it were half a furrow’s length in an acre of land. 15 And there was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among all the people. The garrison and even the raiders trembled, the earth quaked, and it became a very great panic.

16 And the watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked, and behold, the multitude was dispersing here and there. 17 Then Saul said to the people who were with him, “Count and see who has gone from us.” And when they had counted, behold, Jonathan and his armor-bearer were not there. 18 So Saul said to Ahijah, “Bring the ark of God here.” For the ark of God went at that time with the people of Israel. 19 Now while Saul was talking to the priest, the tumult in the camp of the Philistines increased more and more. So Saul said to the priest, “Withdraw your hand.” 20 Then Saul and all the people who were with him rallied and went into the battle. And behold, every Philistine’s sword was against his fellow, and there was very great confusion. 21 Now the Hebrews who had been with the Philistines before that time and who had gone up with them into the camp, even they also turned to be with the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan. 22 Likewise, when all the men of Israel who had hidden themselves in the hill country of Ephraim heard that the Philistines were fleeing, they

too followed hard after them in the battle. 23 So the Lord saved Israel that day. And the battle passed beyond Beth-aven.

24 And the men of Israel had been hard pressed that day, so Saul had laid an oath on the people, saying, "Cursed be the man who eats food until it is evening and I am avenged on my enemies." So none of the people had tasted food. 25 Now when all the people came to the forest, behold, there was honey on the ground. 26 And when the people entered the forest, behold, the honey was dropping, but no one put his hand to his mouth, for the people feared the oath. 27 But Jonathan had not heard his father charge the people with the oath, so he put out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it in the honeycomb and put his hand to his mouth, and his eyes became bright. 28 Then one of the people said, "Your father strictly charged the people with an oath, saying, 'Cursed be the man who eats food this day.'" And the people were faint. 29 Then Jonathan said, "My father has troubled the land. See how my eyes have become bright because I tasted a little of this honey. 30 How much better if the people had eaten freely today of the spoil of their enemies that they found. For now the defeat among the Philistines has not been great."

31 They struck down the Philistines that day from Michmash to Aijalon. And the people were very faint. 32 The people pounced on the spoil and took sheep and oxen and calves and slaughtered them on the ground. And the people ate them with the blood. 33 Then they told Saul, "Behold, the people are sinning against the Lord by eating with the blood." And he said, "You have dealt treacherously; roll a great stone to me here." 34 And Saul said, "Disperse yourselves among the people and say to them, 'Let every man bring his ox or his sheep and slaughter them here and eat, and do not sin against the Lord by eating with the blood.'" So every one of the people brought his ox with him that night and they slaughtered them there. 35 And Saul built an altar to the Lord; it was the first altar that he built to the Lord.

36 Then Saul said, "Let us go down after the Philistines by night and plunder them until the morning light; let us not leave a man of them." And they said, "Do whatever seems good to you." But the priest said, "Let us draw near to God here." 37 And Saul inquired of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Will you give them into the hand of Israel?" But he did not answer him that day. 38 And Saul said, "Come here, all you leaders of the people, and know and see how this sin has arisen today. 39 For as the Lord lives who saves Israel, though it be in Jonathan my son, he shall surely die." But there was not a man among all the people who answered him. 40 Then he said to all Israel, "You shall be on one side, and I and Jonathan my son will be on the other side." And the people said to Saul, "Do what seems good to you." 41 Therefore Saul said, "O Lord God of Israel, why have you not answered your servant this day? If this guilt is in me or in Jonathan my son, O Lord, God of Israel, give Urim. But if this guilt is in your people Israel, give Thummim." And Jonathan and Saul were taken, but the people escaped. 42 Then Saul said, "Cast the lot between me and my son Jonathan." And Jonathan was taken.

43 Then Saul said to Jonathan, "Tell me what you have done." And Jonathan told him, "I tasted a little honey with the tip of the staff that was in my hand. Here I am; I will die." 44 And Saul said, "God do so to me and more also; you shall surely die, Jonathan." 45 Then the people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far from it! As the Lord lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day." So the people ransomed Jonathan, so that he did not die. 46 Then Saul went up from pursuing the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own place.

47 When Saul had taken the kingship over Israel, he fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, against the Ammonites, against Edom, against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines. Wherever he turned he routed them. 48 And he did valiantly and struck the Amalekites and delivered Israel out of the hands of those who plundered them.

49 Now the sons of Saul were Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchi-shua. And the names of his two daughters were these: the name of the firstborn was Merab, and the name of the younger Michal. 50 And the name of Saul's wife was Ahinoam the daughter of Ahimaaz. And the name of the commander of his army was Abner the son of Ner, Saul's uncle. 51 Kish was the father of Saul, and Ner the father of Abner was the son of Abiel.

52 There was hard fighting against the Philistines all the days of Saul. And when Saul saw any strong man,

or any valiant man, he attached him to himself.

Introduction/Review:

Jonathan and his men had defeated some of the Philistines. When this had happened, Saul sent men to blow trumpets throughout Israel, calling soldiers to come and fight. But instead of getting more than their original 3000 men, they ended up in Gibeah with only 600 men, one fifth of all they started with. Why? Because many of the soldiers were afraid; so they deserted, hiding in caves, pits, *etc.* Why were they afraid? Because the Philistines had come to Michmash with 30,000 chariots, 6000 horsemen, and foot soldiers as many as the sand on the seashore. Israel was vastly outnumbered. In addition, the Philistines had swords, but Israel had none.

Now, Samuel had told Saul to wait seven days for him to come and offer a sacrifice to God before going to battle. But Saul grew anxious as his men were leaving him and the Philistines were raiding and threatening an all-out attack. Saul offered the sacrifice himself. No sooner had he done so but Samuel arrived and said that because of Saul's disobedience his sons would not follow him as kings.

Story:

Jonathan's bravery

Apparently, Saul himself was not too eager to fight the Philistines, but Jonathan his son was. Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Let's go across the valley to the Philistine camp."

In order to get down from Geba [locate these places on "The Battle of Michmash" map at the end of this lesson], they had to go down steep, sharp rocks, and in order to get up to Michmash, where the Philistines were, they had to climb more sharp, steep rocks. ✓Two rocky crags were so notoriously steep that they actually had names, Bozez and Seneh.

Jonathan said, "Maybe the Lord will work for us. He can save with many or with few."

What wonderful faith! Did God save with many or with few when Gideon fought? [Few.] Can God use a small church to save people from their sins? [Yes.] Can God use a young person like you to do His will? [Yes.]

Jonathan's armor bearer agreed with Jonathan: "Do whatever you want. I'll be right there with you."

"Listen," said Jonathan. "When those Philistines see us, they'll say either, 'Stay where you are!' or 'Come here.' If they say, 'Stay,' we'll know not to fight them. But if they say, 'Come here,' it will be a sign that the Lord has delivered them into our hands, and we will win the battle."

These two brave men did not go to the Philistines at night but in broad daylight. The Philistines saw them coming and called, "Look. Those Hebrews are coming out of their hiding places. Come here, and *we* will show *you* something." [Teacher, flex your muscles.]

Jonathan said, "Let's go, for the Lord has delivered them into the hand of Israel."

Jonathan began fighting. Then his armor bearer, ✓perhaps picking up the sword of the first fallen Philistine, also fought. Twenty Philistines died in the skirmish on a piece of land one-half acre in size—a piece of land about as large as the land on which this building is. [Teacher, compare to a half-acre known to the students.]

Saul's rash oath

Only twenty men died in the beginning of the battle, but God sent a fear and trembling among those Philistines. The earth quaked. Who could make that happen? [Only God.] The Philistines became terrified and slew each other so that from Saul's camp on the other side of the valley, it almost looked as if the enemy was melting away.

"Who's gone?" Saul demanded.

“Jonathan,” answered his men.

“Bring me the ark of God! Priest, what does God want us to do—fight or not? Wow! It’s getting noisier and noisier over there in the Philistine camp. Oh, stop! Don’t ask God anymore. Let’s fight! Gather the men! We’re going after the Philistines, but listen to me. I don’t want any of you eating during daylight today. In fact, if you eat anything before evening, you will be cursed, for we will get revenge on our enemies. Let’s go! Haiyah!”

So those 600 pursued the Philistines with shouts of victory. The scaredy-cat Israelites who before had hid themselves joined Saul’s men. Some Israelites, who were actually with the Philistines before, now turned on the Philistines.

Israel’s victory

The Israelites caught up with Jonathan, and they all came to a woods. There, hanging from a tree, was a honeycomb full of honey. It looked so good, and the men were so hungry and so tired that they wanted to eat that honey. But did they eat it? No. Why not? [Because of Saul’s curse.] Did Jonathan know about the curse? No, because he was gone when Saul pronounced it.

Jonathan, weary, stuck his rod into that honeycomb and sucked out the honey. Oh, boy! Eating it made him feel much stronger. Then, when one of the men told about the curse, Jonathan replied, “My father has troubled Israel today, for think how many more Philistines we could have defeated if the soldiers had eaten food left behind by the Philistines as they ran away.”

Nevertheless, the people continued to follow Saul’s orders. But, oh, they were weak from fighting and chasing. As soon as the sun went down, they got all the food they could and gorged themselves, eating meat with the blood, which was against God’s law. Saul saw this sin and corrected the people by providing a way to eat the food as God desired.

Later, when Saul found out Jonathan had eaten honey before the sun went down and was therefore under his curse, Saul determined to fulfill his oath and actually proceeded to slay Jonathan his son. But the people intervened, saying, “Shall Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far from it! As the Lord lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day.”

By these words, the people ransomed Jonathan so that he did not die.

Since Israel had won this battle so decisively, the Philistines returned to their country, and Israel stopped pursuing them.

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

Jesus is the great Redeemer: He ransomed his children from sin, death, and hell by His payment for sin on the cross.

Jesus Christ was Creator of all things. The bee—its body, eyes, means of communication, preservation, government, and so much more—is a stunning example of His inventiveness.

Activities:

- Play dough: six-sided figures like a honeycomb; steep rocks
- Snack: Spread honey from a honeycomb on a slice of buttered bread
- Older students might watch an old Moody science video (27+ minutes) about bees’ working together at the following site: [Moody Science Videos - 01 - City of Bees - Bing video](#). (A gospel presentation begins at 20 minutes 30 seconds.)
- An interesting fact about bees is that in order to make 125 pounds of honey, bees fly as far as to the

moon and back thirteen times. Also, the hexagon-shaped cells of a honeycomb are the most efficient and strongest type of construction.

- Review questions: (Game: Using cardstock hexagons as in the Handwork found below, let a student who answers a question correctly place a magnetized hexagon on a cookie sheet or magnetized board. Another option is to back the hexagons with paper towel or flannel to be placed on a flannel board.)
 1. Who went with Jonathan to the Philistines? [His armor bearer.]
 2. What kind of landscape was near the Philistines? [Rocky crags.]
 3. Fill in the blank. Jonathan said, “It may be that the Lord will work for us, for nothing can hinder the Lord from saving by many or by _____.” [Few.]
 4. What would Jonathan and his armor bearer do if the Philistines said, “Wait until we come to you”? [They would not go up to them.]
 5. What would Jonathan and his armor bearer do if the Philistines said, “Come up to us”? [They would fight, and God would give the victory.]
 6. Name one thing that happened when Jonathan and his armor bearer fought those Philistines. [They slew about twenty men; there was a panic in the camp, in the field, and among all the people; the garrison and even the raiders trembled; the earth quaked; the Philistines greatly panicked; every Philistine’s sword was against his fellow; there was very great confusion.]
 7. Name two people or groups of people who followed after Jonathan against the Philistines. [Saul, all the people who were with him, the Hebrews who had been with the Philistines, the men of Israel who had previously hidden themselves.]
 8. Why did the soldiers not eat the honey found in the woods? [Because Saul had said not to eat anything.]
 9. Who ransomed Jonathan from Saul’s intention to slay his own son? [The people.]
 10. What did the people say that saved Jonathan’s life? [Teacher, allow a general answer.] [“Shall Jonathan die, who has worked this great salvation in Israel? Far from it! As the Lord lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he has worked with God this day.”]

Memory Verse[s]: (ESV)

- 1 Samuel 12:20–25: And Samuel said to the people, “Do not be afraid; you have done all this evil. Yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. And do not turn aside after empty things that cannot profit or deliver, for they are empty. For the LORD will not forsake his people, for his great name’s sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you a people for himself. Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you, and I will instruct you in the good and the right way. Only fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart. For consider what great things he has done for you. But if you still do wickedly, you shall be swept away, both you and your king.”

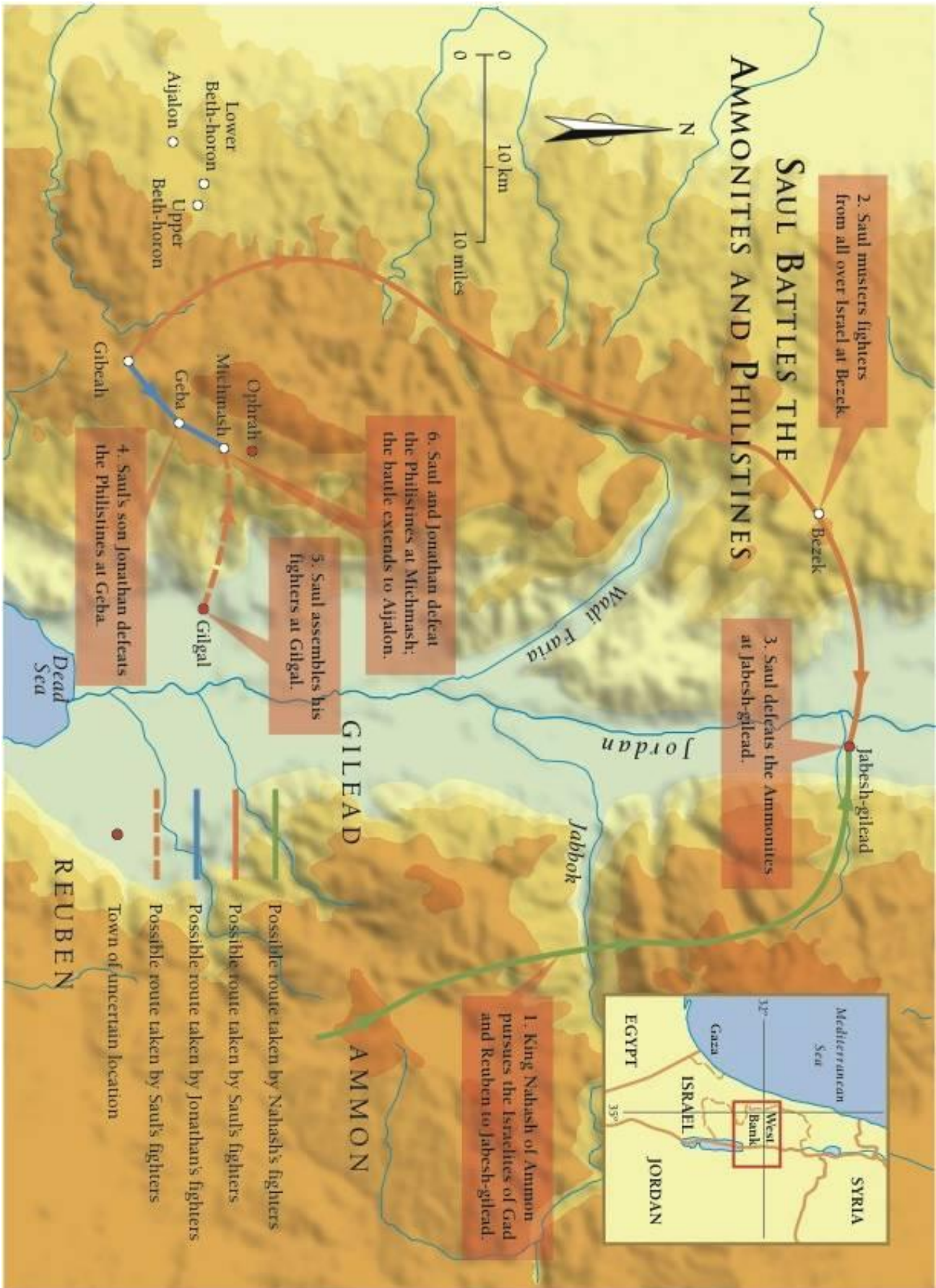
Handwork:

- Using the template found below, cut out hexagons of the same size but of different colors, patterns, and textures. Students will arrange a pattern of various hexagons and glue to another sheet of paper labeled “The hexagon is the best design for bees’ honeycombs because God made it so.”
- Or copy a picture to color at [brave-prince-jonathon-wkst.jpg \(1272×1644\) \(wordpress.com\)](http://brave-prince-jonathon-wkst.jpg). The shield is made from a foil top of a coffee can.
- Or make a bee puppet. See [Easy Paper Bag Bee Puppet For Kids \(Great For Pretend Play!\) \(everydaychaosandcalm.com\)](http://everydaychaosandcalm.com). (Beware of green “Start” buttons or other extraneous items on this site.)

armor bearer

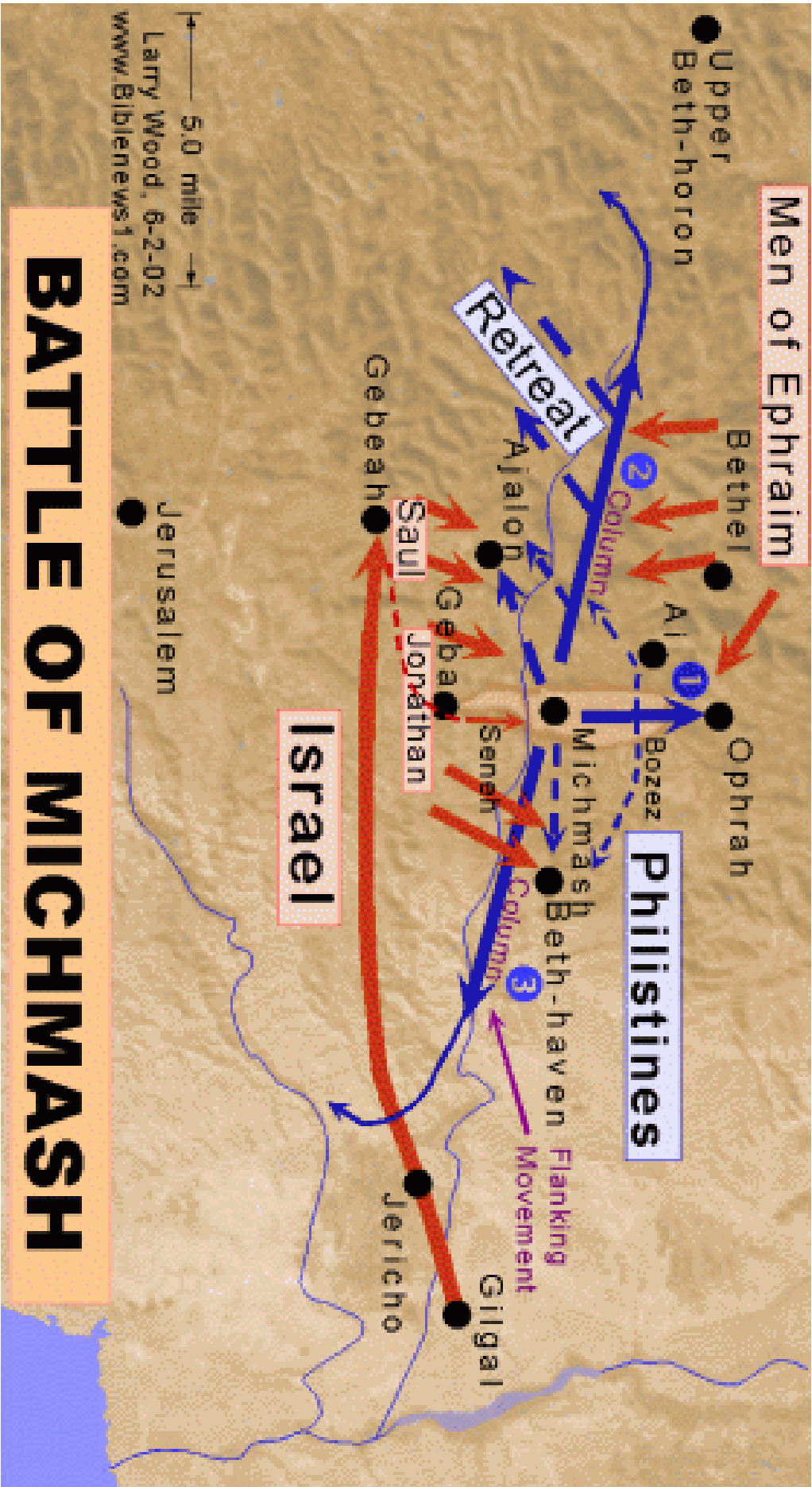
crag

ransom



<http://www.gospeldoctrine.com/sites/gospeldoctrine.com/files/1sam11map.jpg>

(This map was also included last week.)

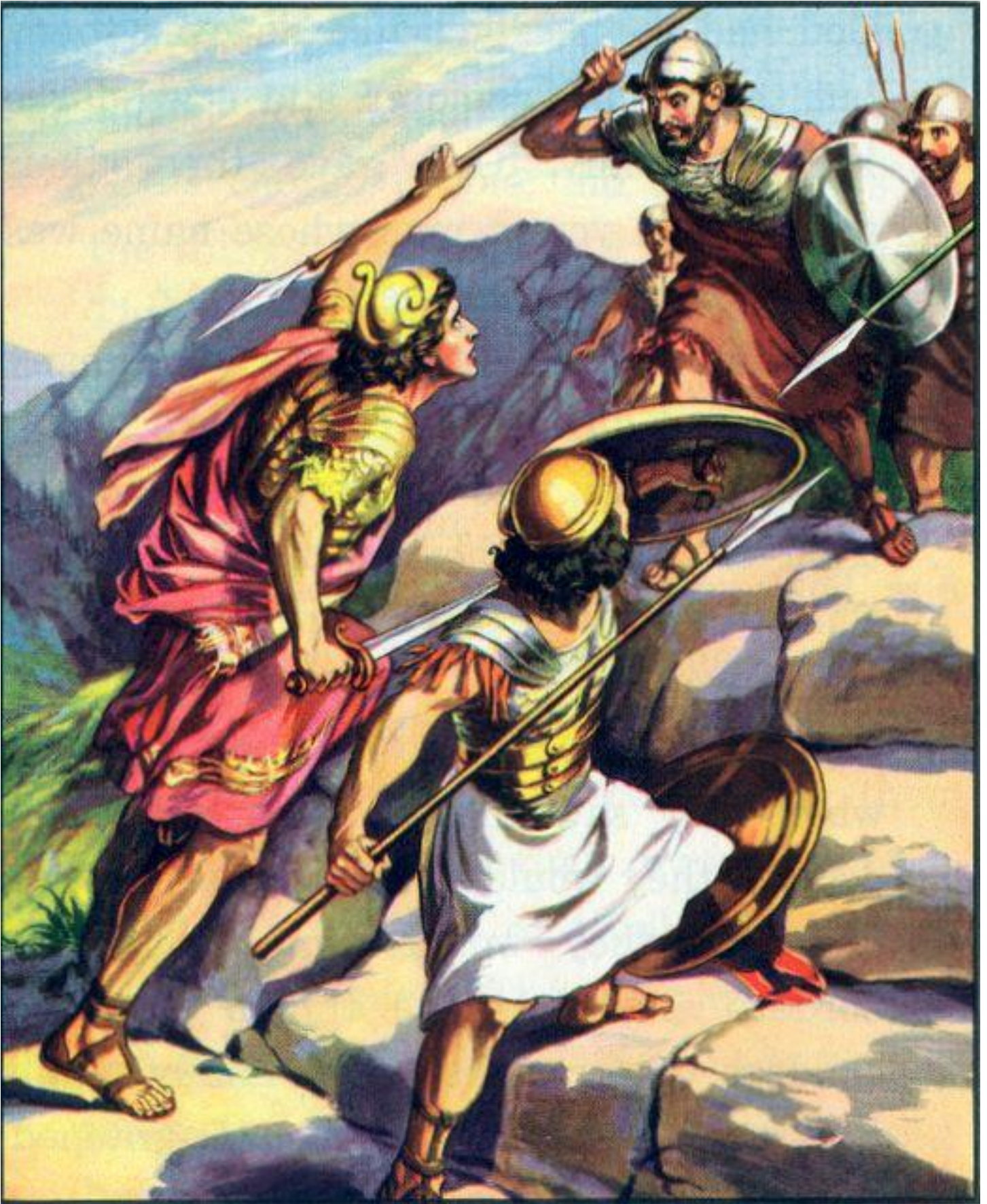


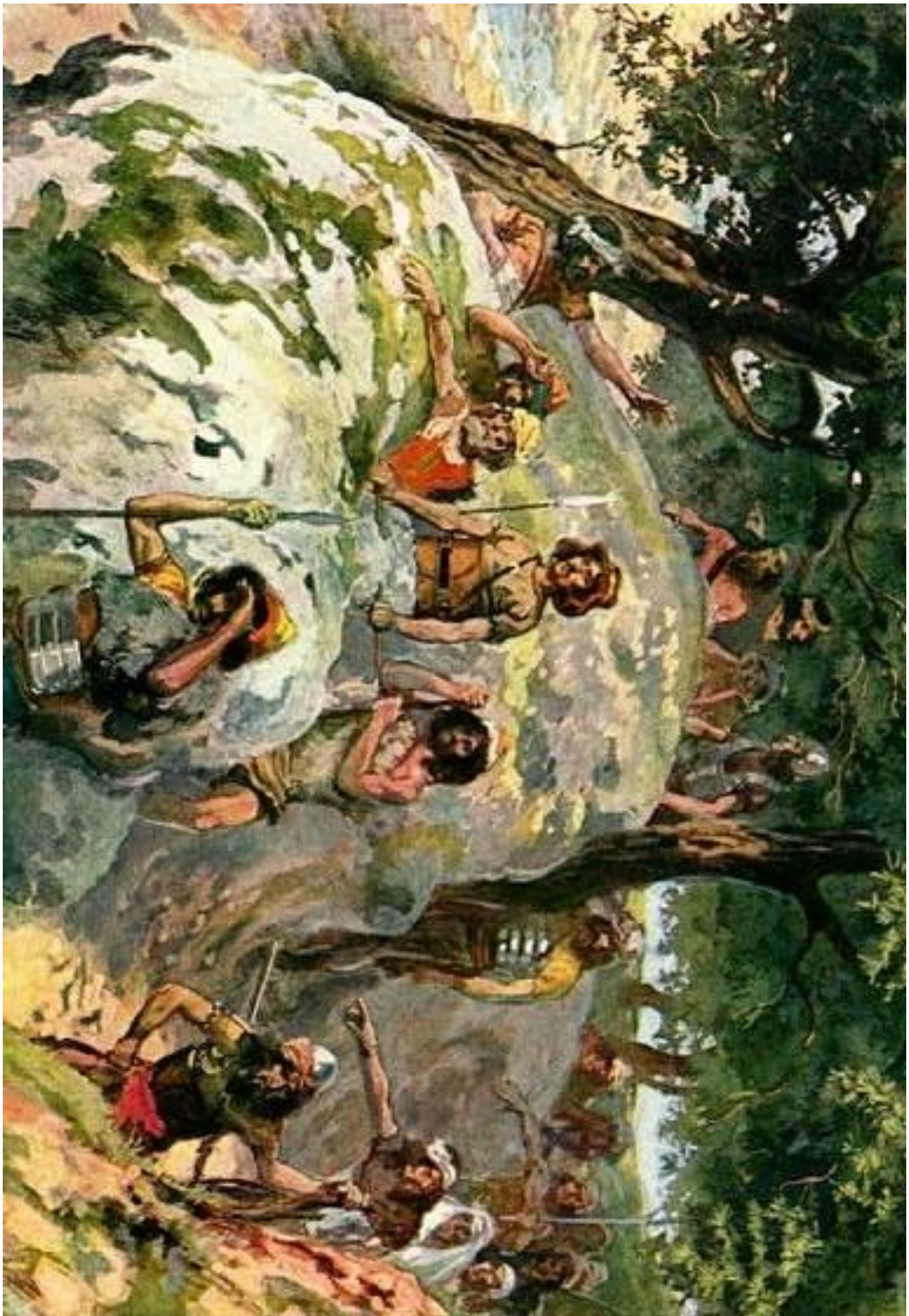
BATTLE OF MICHMASH

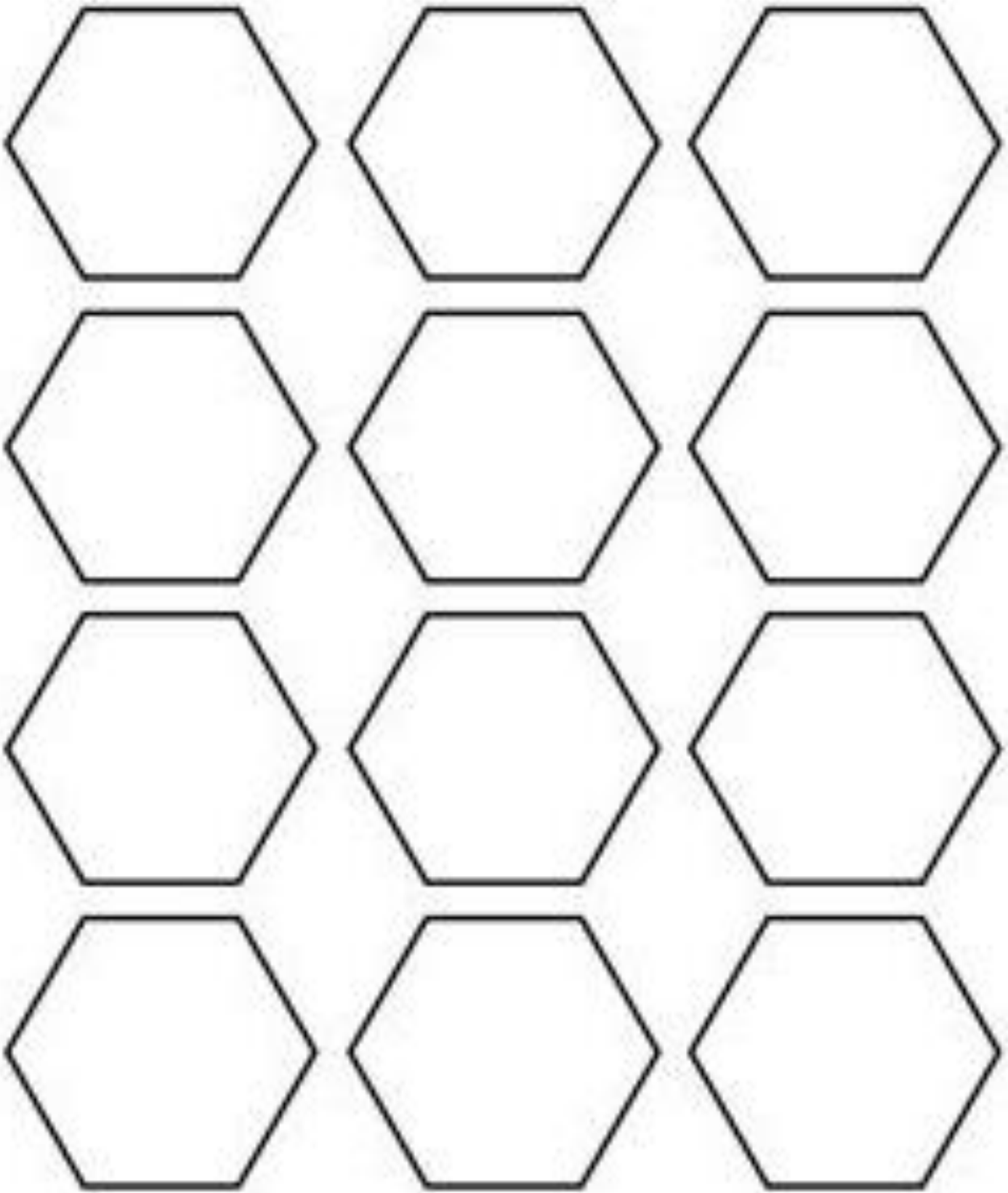
Map of Philistine Cities and Conquests



Bible History Online







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**The hexagon is the best design for bees'
honeycombs because God made it so.**