

19.04 Baasha³ ☹, Elah⁴ ☹, Zimri⁵ ☹, Omri⁶ ☹, / Asa³ ☺ (1 Kings 15:9–24, 33, 34; 16:1–28; 17:1; 2 Chron. 14:1–15; 15:1–22; 16:1–10)

In the story title above, the names to the left of the slash indicate northern kings (of Israel); the name on the right, a southern king (of Judah). The superscript numbers indicate the king's accession number, and the happy or sad faces show whether the king was good or bad.

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

Brackets [. . .] indicate a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud, or they show 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.

- *treason*: the crime of betraying one's country, especially by attempting to kill the sovereign or overthrow the government
- *capital city*: the most important city or town of a country or region, usually its center of government

Scripture: (ESV)

1 Kings 15:9 In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel, Asa began to reign over Judah, 10 and he reigned forty-one years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. 11 And Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as David his father had done. 12 He put away the male cult prostitutes out of the land and removed all the idols that his fathers had made. 13 He also removed Maacah his mother from being queen mother because she had made an abominable image for Asherah. And Asa cut down her image and burned it at the brook Kidron. 14 But the high places were not taken away. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true to the Lord all his days. 15 And he brought into the house of the Lord the sacred gifts of his father and his own sacred gifts, silver, and gold, and vessels.

16 And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days. 17 Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 18 Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were left in the treasures of the house of the Lord and the treasures of the king's house and gave them into the hands of his servants. And King Asa sent them to Ben-hadad the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, 19 “Let there be a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you a present of silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me.” 20 And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel and conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and all Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. 21 And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah, and he lived in Tirzah. 22 Then King Asa made a proclamation to all Judah, none was exempt, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them King Asa built Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah. 23 Now the rest of all the acts of Asa, all his might, and all that he did, and the cities that he built, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah? But in his old age he was diseased in his feet. 24 And Asa slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his place. . . .

33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah, Baasha the son of Ahijah began to reign over all Israel at Tirzah, and he reigned twenty-four years. 34 He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of Jeroboam and in his sin which he made Israel to sin.

16:1 And the word of the Lord came to Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha, saying, 2 “Since I exalted you out of the dust and made you leader over my people Israel, and you have walked in the way of Jeroboam

and have made my people Israel to sin, provoking me to anger with their sins, 3 behold, I will utterly sweep away Baasha and his house, and I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. 4 Anyone belonging to Baasha who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone of his who dies in the field the birds of the heavens shall eat.”

5 Now the rest of the acts of Baasha and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 6 And Baasha slept with his fathers and was buried at Tirzah, and Elah his son reigned in his place. 7 Moreover, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani against Baasha and his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord, provoking him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and also because he destroyed it.

8 In the twenty-sixth year of Asa king of Judah, Elah the son of Baasha began to reign over Israel in Tirzah, and he reigned two years. 9 But his servant Zimri, commander of half his chariots, conspired against him. When he was at Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over the household in Tirzah, 10 Zimri came in and struck him down and killed him, in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his place.

11 When he began to reign, as soon as he had seated himself on his throne, he struck down all the house of Baasha. He did not leave him a single male of his relatives or his friends. 12 Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke against Baasha by Jehu the prophet, 13 for all the sins of Baasha and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned and which they made Israel to sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols. 14 Now the rest of the acts of Elah and all that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

15 In the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, Zimri reigned seven days in Tirzah. Now the troops were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philistines, 16 and the troops who were encamped heard it said, “Zimri has conspired, and he has killed the king.” Therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp. 17 So Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. 18 And when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king’s house and burned the king’s house over him with fire and died, 19 because of his sins that he committed, doing evil in the sight of the Lord, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and for his sin which he committed, making Israel to sin. 20 Now the rest of the acts of Zimri, and the conspiracy that he made, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

21 Then the people of Israel were divided into two parts. Half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make him king, and half followed Omri. 22 But the people who followed Omri overcame the people who followed Tibni the son of Ginath. So Tibni died, and Omri became king. 23 In the thirty-first year of Asa king of Judah, Omri began to reign over Israel, and he reigned for twelve years; six years he reigned in Tirzah. 24 He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver, and he fortified the hill and called the name of the city that he built Samaria, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill.

25 Omri did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and did more evil than all who were before him. 26 For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in the sins that he made Israel to sin, provoking the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger by their idols. 27 Now the rest of the acts of Omri that he did, and the might that he showed, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel? 28 And Omri slept with his fathers and was buried in Samaria, and Ahab his son reigned in his place.

2 Chronicles 14:1 Abijah slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his place. In his days the land had rest for ten years. 2 And Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. 3 He took away the foreign altars and the high places and broke down the pillars and cut down the Asherim 4 and commanded Judah to seek the Lord, the God of their fathers, and to keep the law and the commandment. 5 He also took out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the incense altars. And the kingdom had rest under him. 6 He built fortified cities in Judah, for the land had rest. He had no war in those years, for the Lord gave him peace. 7 And he said to Judah, “Let us build these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars. The land is still ours, because we have sought the Lord our God. We have

sought him, and he has given us peace on every side.” So they built and prospered. 8 And Asa had an army of 300,000 from Judah, armed with large shields and spears, and 280,000 men from Benjamin that carried shields and drew bows. All these were mighty men of valor.

9 Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots, and came as far as Mareshah. 10 And Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up their lines of battle in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. 11 And Asa cried to the Lord his God, “O Lord, there is none like you to help, between the mighty and the weak. Help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O Lord, you are our God; let not man prevail against you.” 12 So the Lord defeated the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. 13 Asa and the people who were with him pursued them as far as Gerar, and the Ethiopians fell until none remained alive, for they were broken before the Lord and his army. The men of Judah carried away very much spoil. 14 And they attacked all the cities around Gerar, for the fear of the Lord was upon them. They plundered all the cities, for there was much plunder in them. 15 And they struck down the tents of those who had livestock and carried away sheep in abundance and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

15:1 The Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded, 2 and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, “Hear me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The Lord is with you while you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you. 3 For a long time Israel was without the true God, and without a teaching priest and without law, 4 but when in their distress they turned to the Lord, the God of Israel, and sought him, he was found by them. 5 In those times there was no peace to him who went out or to him who came in, for great disturbances afflicted all the inhabitants of the lands. 6 They were broken in pieces. Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God troubled them with every sort of distress. 7 But you, take courage! Do not let your hands be weak, for your work shall be rewarded.”

8 As soon as Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Azariah the son of Oded, he took courage and put away the detestable idols from all the land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had taken in the hill country of Ephraim, and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was in front of the vestibule of the house of the Lord. 9 And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and those from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who were residing with them, for great numbers had deserted to him from Israel when they saw that the Lord his God was with him. 10 They were gathered at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa. 11 They sacrificed to the Lord on that day from the spoil that they had brought 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep. 12 And they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord, the God of their fathers, with all their heart and with all their soul, 13 but that whoever would not seek the Lord, the God of Israel, should be put to death, whether young or old, man or woman. 14 They swore an oath to the Lord with a loud voice and with shouting and with trumpets and with horns. 15 And all Judah rejoiced over the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart and had sought him with their whole desire, and he was found by them, and the Lord gave them rest all around.

16 Even Maacah, his mother, King Asa removed from being queen mother because she had made a detestable image for Asherah. Asa cut down her image, crushed it, and burned it at the brook Kidron. 17 But the high places were not taken out of Israel. Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was wholly true all his days. 18 And he brought into the house of God the sacred gifts of his father and his own sacred gifts, silver, and gold, and vessels. 19 And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

16:1 In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah and built Ramah, that he might permit no one to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. 2 Then Asa took silver and gold from the treasures of the house of the Lord and the king’s house and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Syria, who lived in Damascus, saying, 3 “There is a covenant between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. Behold, I am sending to you silver and gold. Go, break your covenant with Baasha king of Israel, that he may withdraw from me.” 4 And Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the commanders of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they conquered Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the store cities of Naphtali. 5 And when Baasha heard of it, he stopped building Ramah and let his work cease. 6 Then King Asa took all Judah, and they carried away the stones of Ramah and its timber, with which Baasha had been building, and with them he built Geba and Mizpah.

7 At that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, “Because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the Lord your God, the army of the king of Syria has escaped you. 8 Were not the Ethiopians and the Libyans a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because you relied on the Lord, he gave them into your hand. 9 For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars.” 10 Then Asa was angry with the seer and put him in the stocks in prison, for he was in a rage with him because of this. And Asa inflicted cruelties upon some of the people at the same time.

11 The acts of Asa, from first to last, are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 12 In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was diseased in his feet, and his disease became severe. Yet even in his disease he did not seek the Lord, but sought help from physicians. 13 And Asa slept with his fathers, dying in the forty-first year of his reign. 14 They buried him in the tomb that he had cut for himself in the city of David. They laid him on a bier that had been filled with various kinds of spices prepared by the perfumer’s art, and they made a very great fire in his honor.

Introduction/Review:

Israel was divided into two parts. What were they? [North, Israel; South, Judah.] Which part, Israel [point north—up], or Judah [point south—down] had David’s grandsons to be kings? [Judah.] Who was the first king of Israel? [Jeroboam.] The Bible states Jeroboam repeatedly made Israel to sin. How did Jeroboam make Israel sin? [He built two golden calves and altars where the people worshiped. He let anyone, not Levites, be priest. He made new feast days.] Which two of the Ten Commandments did Jeroboam break? [First—no other gods; second—no images.]

God’s prophet, Ahijah, said God would punish Jeroboam. How would God punish Jeroboam? [By causing all his family except the sick son, Abijah, to die violent deaths.] God did what He said he would do. After Jeroboam died, Nadab, his son, became a bad king, just like his father. He reigned for only two years. A man named Baasha committed treason and struck down King Nadab. As soon as he was king, he slew every single family member of Jeroboam, just as Ahijah had said, because Jeroboam had sinned and had made Israel to sin. Thus, Israel (in the north) had Jeroboam, Nadab, and now Baasha—three kings so far.

Story:

Baasha, king of Israel

Will Baasha follow God? Well, he was king 24 years. Do you suppose he was a good king? He wasn’t. Jehu, God’s prophet, came to Baasha and said, “I brought you up out of the dust to become the ruler of my people Israel, but you have walked in the same sins as Jeroboam did and have made my people Israel to sin, provoking me to anger with their sins. Now I will totally destroy your family, just as Jeroboam’s family was destroyed.”

Elah, king of Israel

When Baasha died, his son, Elah, became king and ruled two years. (This sounds like Jeroboam’s son, who also reigned two years.) One day when Elah was drinking himself drunk in Tirzah, the capital city, Elah’s servant, named Zimri, who was commander of half his chariots, committed treason and struck down Elah.

Zimri, king of Israel

Then Zimri became king. As soon as he sat on the throne, what do you suppose he did? Yes, he slew all of Baasha’s family and friends. This is what the prophet Jehu had said would happen because of Baasha’s and Elah’s sins that they made Israel to sin, provoking the Lord with their idols.

Guess how long Zimri ruled. I’ll give you a hint: The number 7 is in your answer. Was it 7 years, 7 months, or 7 days? [Allow guesses/votes.] The answer is 7 days, for the army of Israel heard about Zimri’s becoming king and decided they wanted another king—their army commander, Omri.

Omri, king of Israel

Omri and his men came against Zimri at Tirzah, the capital city. When Zimri saw that he couldn't win against Omri, he went to his house, set the house on fire, and died in the fire. Again, Zimri had sinned and made Israel sin. He, too, died a violent death.

Will Omri be different? Will *he* follow God? Remember this is Israel in the north. So far, not one of the five kings has served God. Omri, I'm sorry to say, was not only as bad as the other kings, but he was *worse*, making Israel to sin by worshiping idols and provoking the Lord to anger. He changed the capital city of Israel from Tirzah [locate] to Samaria [locate] and reigned twelve years before he died.

Asa, king of Judah

While all of this was going on in Israel, after Rehoboam and his son Abijah had died, another great, great grandson of David, Asa by name, became king of Judah in the south. Rehoboam and Abijah had both been bad kings. Would Asa be different? Yes! he *was different*! He broke down the altars to false gods, *and* he also commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to keep the law and the commandments. He even removed his own *mother* from the position of being queen mother because she had a special idol she worshiped. Asa broke the idol, crushed it, and burned it up.

Asa also built strong cities, and because he had followed God, the Lord gave Judah rest from their enemies ten years. After that ten years, however, Zerah and his army from Ethiopia [locate] decided they wanted to fight Judah. They had almost twice as many soldiers as Judah. When Judah and Ethiopia met for battle, Asa cried to God for help. "Lord, no one is like You to help. We depend on You, and in Your name we come against this huge army. Lord, don't let them win."

The Lord delivered Judah. Not one of the enemy soldiers survived! One million were gone! (That is about half the population of Denver.) What a victory!

Azariah, prophet to Asa

God's prophet, Azariah, came to Asa with God's words: "If you seek God and His ways, He will be with you. If not, He will forsake you."

God had said that to other kings. One was David. Did David seek God? [Yes.] Another was Solomon. Did he seek God's ways? [For a while.] Another was Jeroboam. Did he seek God's ways? [No!] Now, Asa. Will he seek God's ways? Listen.

When Asa heard Azariah's words, he became even more bold and broke down more altars to idols. He repaired the Temple altar. He gathered the people, including ones who had come from Israel, to sacrifice to God. While the people were together, they made a solemn promise that his people would seek the Lord, the God of their fathers, with all their hearts and with all their souls.

All of Judah was as happy as could be, for they promised with all their heart, and the Lord heard and blessed them with peace.

Ramah, city of Israel

Now, Baasha, king of Israel, didn't like the fact that people were leaving Israel in order to go down to live in Judah. He built Ramah [locate], Samuel's city, only 5 ½ miles from Jerusalem, in order to keep people in Israel. [Teacher, give a comparison of this distance in your town. In our town it's the distance from the church to the campground on the highway to the west of town.] He also fought against Asa and his army.

Ben-Hadad, king of Syria

Asa had trusted God when he had fought those million Ethiopians soldiers, but now he wasn't so sure about God. He got the treasures that were left in the Temple—lots of silver and gold—and sent them to Ben Hadad, king of Syria [locate], north of Israel. "You may have this gold if you fight against Israel," said Asa's messengers.

"Good enough for me," said Ben Hadad, and he captured some cities in the land of Israel, taking them from

Israel. Baasha had to stop building Ramah so that he could fight against Ben Hadad.

When Ben Hadad left, Asa's men came and tore that city apart, taking the timbers and stones for building other cities in Judah.

Hanani, prophet to Asa

Was God pleased with Asa for getting help from Syria? No. God sent His prophet Hanani to Asa. "Because you relied on the king of Syria, that country will escape from you when you fight it. Didn't I, the Lord, help you when a million men came against you? Because you have done this, you will no longer have peace but wars."

Asa was so angry with Hanani for saying this that he put Hanani in prison and also hurt some of the people. (He was the first king to persecute God's prophets.) Before long, Asa himself suffered a painful disease in his feet, but, again, instead of trusting and calling on God, he trusted his doctors. Within two years, he died, having started out well but ending poorly. He had reigned 41 years.

What a warning his life should be for us. Let's remember how he loved and served God at first. The greatest commandment is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."

Lessons from This Lesson:

- We see Jesus:

The Bible verse, 2 Chronicles 16:9, "The eyes of the Lord [look] to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him," is an example of God's knowing all things—His omniscience. Jesus, God who became man, also knew all things. Here are a few examples:

- John 1:48: "Jesus answered [Nathanael], 'Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.'"
- John 16:30: The people said, "Now we know that You [Jesus] know all things."
- Matthew 12:25: "And knowing their thoughts Jesus said . . ."
- Luke 6:8: "He [Jesus] knew what they were thinking."
- Elah died while he was drunk. We must avoid drinking alcohol. Letting alcohol control us is the opposite of what God wants for us, which is to be controlled by the Holy Spirit (
- Let us be faithful to God to the very end of our lives.

Activities:

- Play dough: soldiers
- Snack: Popcorn (Snacking on popcorn is common in Ethiopia, according to [ethiopian snack for kids - Bing images](#).)
- Use plastic soldiers to fight, two against one.
- Build Lego® or other building-block altars; smash them.
- Sing or say this verse, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself. Do this and you will live" (Luke 10:27, 28).
- Review questions: (Game: Using the 3 maps found below, have a student who answers a question correctly locate the following places: Judah, Israel, Ethiopia, Valley of Zephathah, Mareshah, Gerar, Syria, Ramah, Tirzah, Samaria.)

1. Who was king in Judah after Abijah/m? [Asa.]

2. Was Asa a good or an evil king? [Good.]
3. Which country sent an army, two times larger than Asa's, against Judah? [Ethiopia.]
4. Why did Asa's army beat Ethiopia? [Because they cried out to God, who helped them.]
5. Which king built the city of Ramah, Baasha of Israel or Asa of Judah? [Baasha.]
6. Why did Baasha build Ramah? [To keep the people of Israel from going to Judah.]
7. Why did Asa send treasures to Ben-Hadad, king of Syria? [So that he would fight against Israel.]
8. What did God tell Asa through Hanani, the prophet, about Asa's trusting Ben-Hadad? ["You have done foolishly because you relied on the king of Syria, and did not rely on the Lord your God. From now on you will have wars."]
9. What did Asa do to Hanani, the prophet? [Put him in prison.]
10. Fill in the blank. Besides giving treasures to Ben-Hadad and besides putting Hanani in prison, Asa did right. He even removed his _____ from being queen because she had made an abominable image for a false god. [Mother.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- 2 Chronicles 16:9: For the eyes of the Lord [look] to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him.

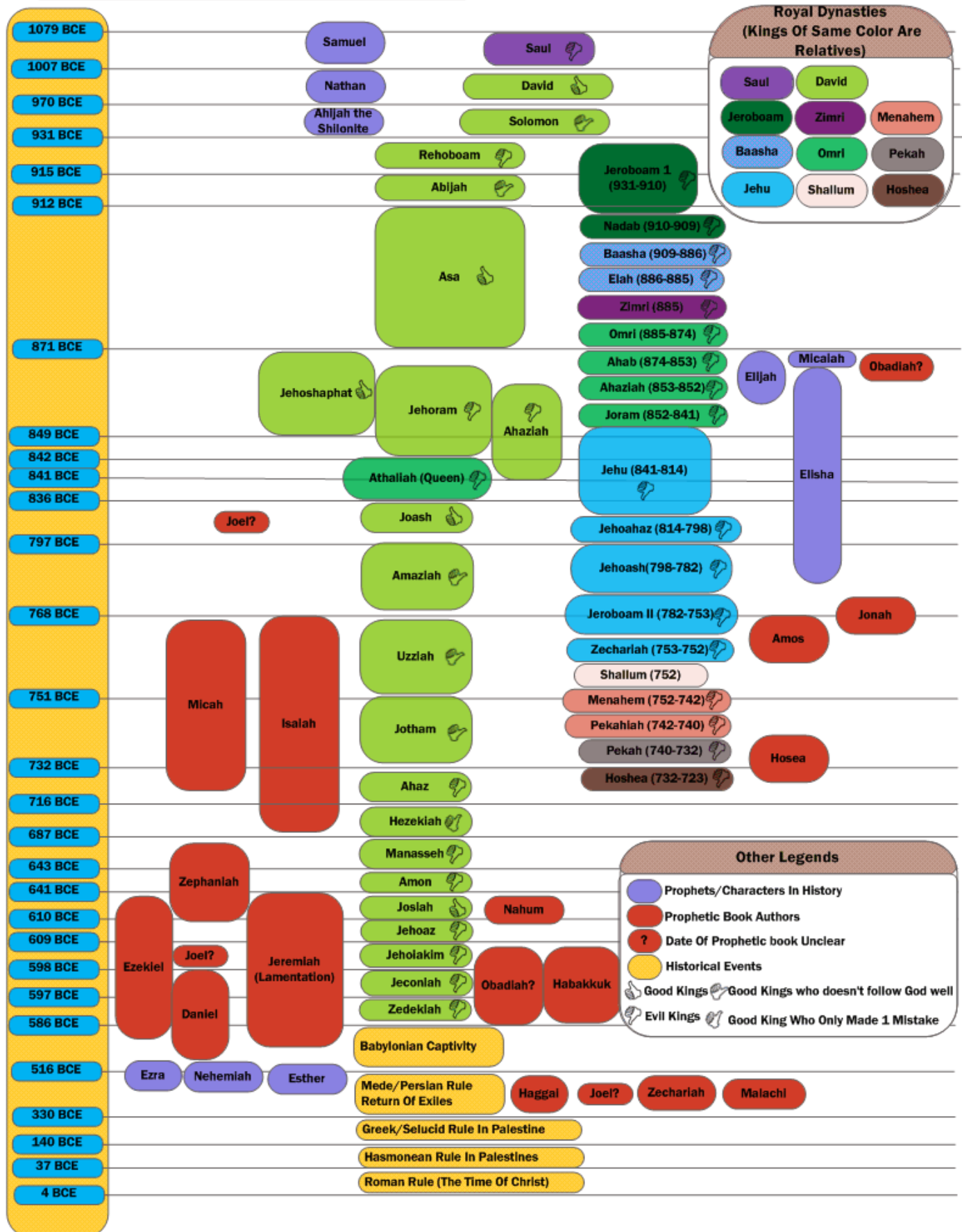
Handwork:

- Print a copy for each student of the page found at the end of this lesson. Students will count the number of people who think they are hiding from God. (Answer is twelve.) Students may color the picture.

treason

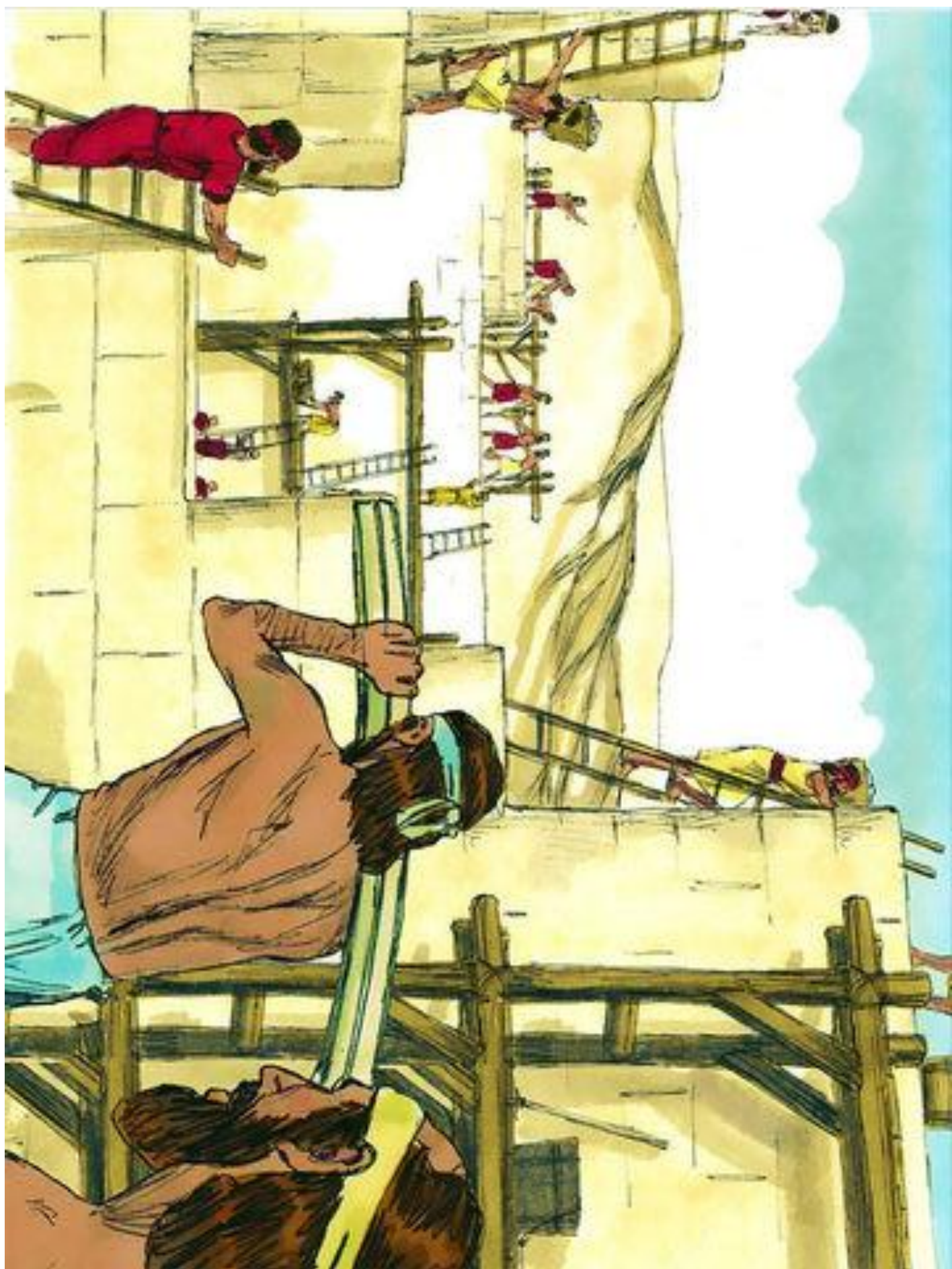
capital city

Chronological Timeline Of Kings and Prophets

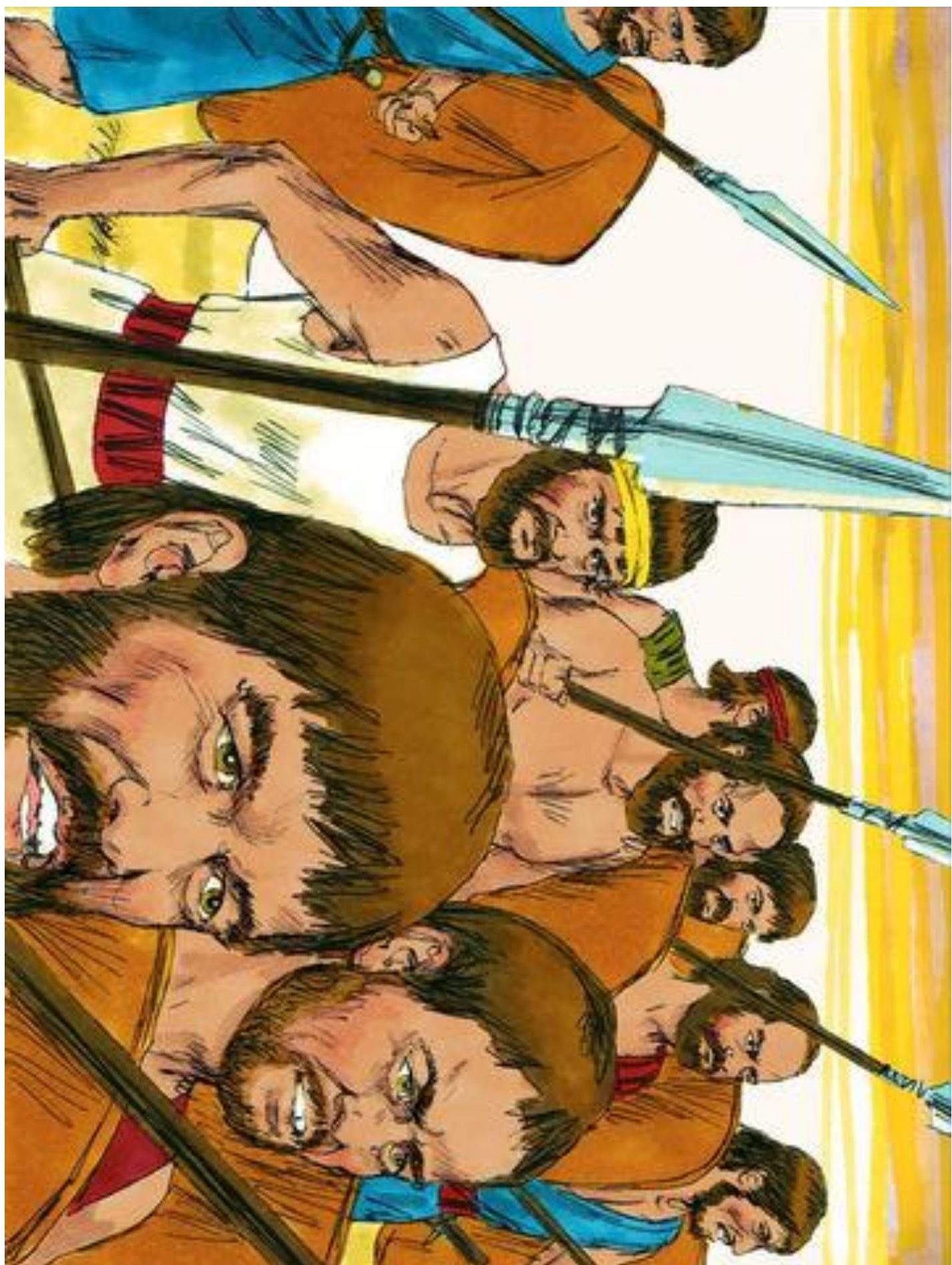




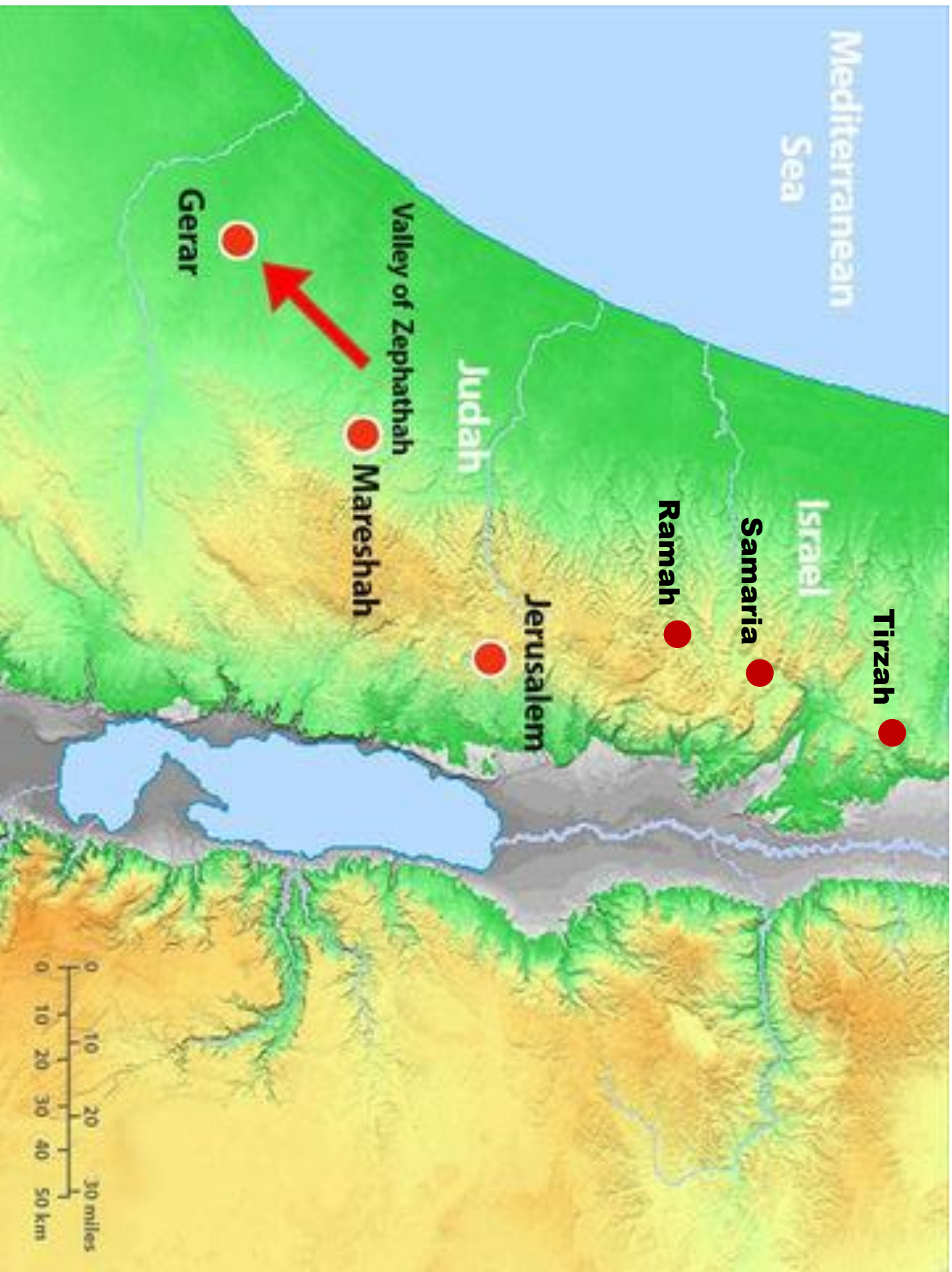
FreeBibleimages :: King Asa trusts God for victory and peace :: King Asa asks God for help when the Cushites attack (1 Kings 15:9-15, 2 Chronicles 14:1-15:19)



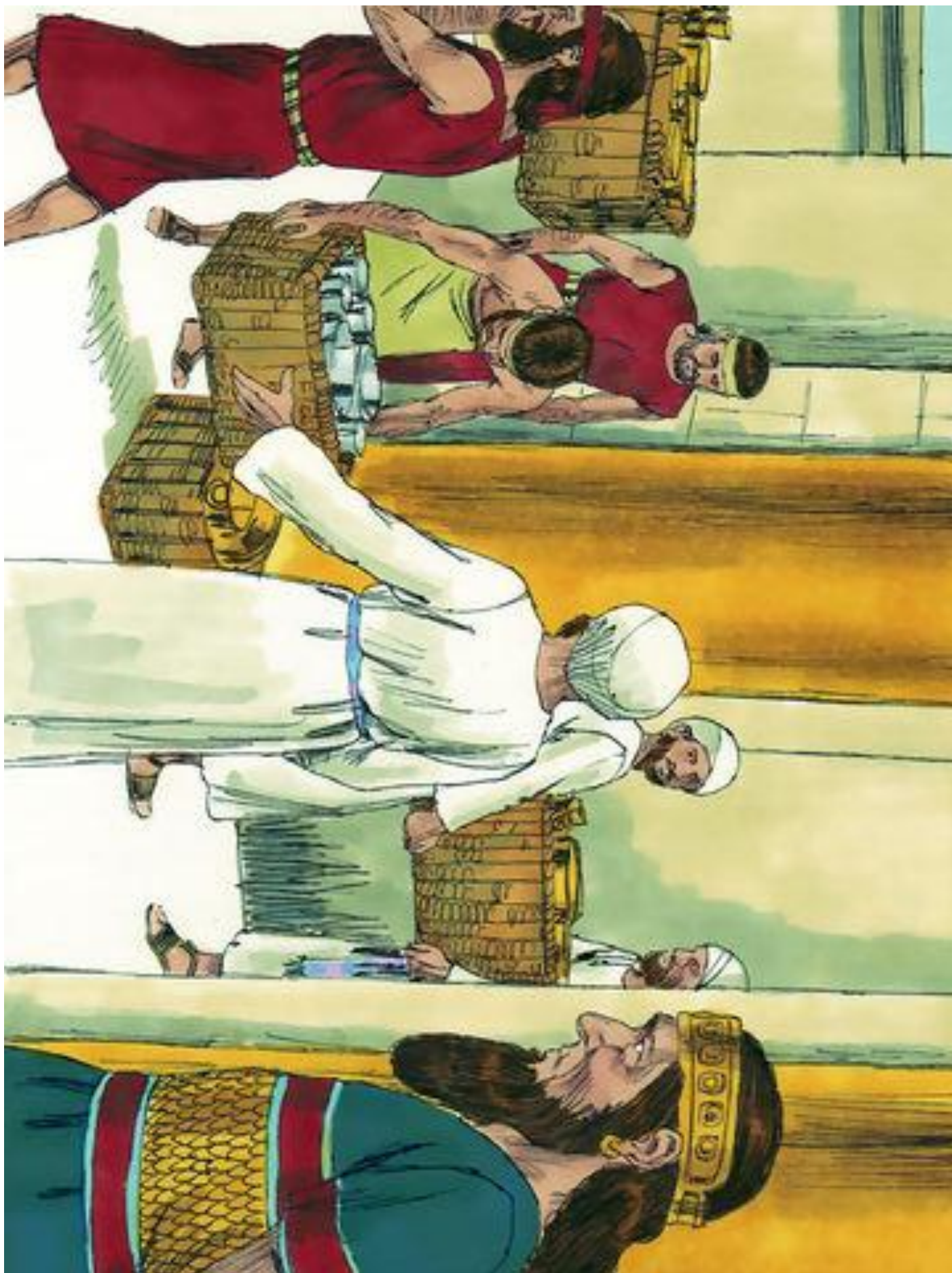














Mediterranean Sea

JUDAH

Jerusalem

Dead
Sea

ISRAEL

Samaria

Ramah

Abel Maim

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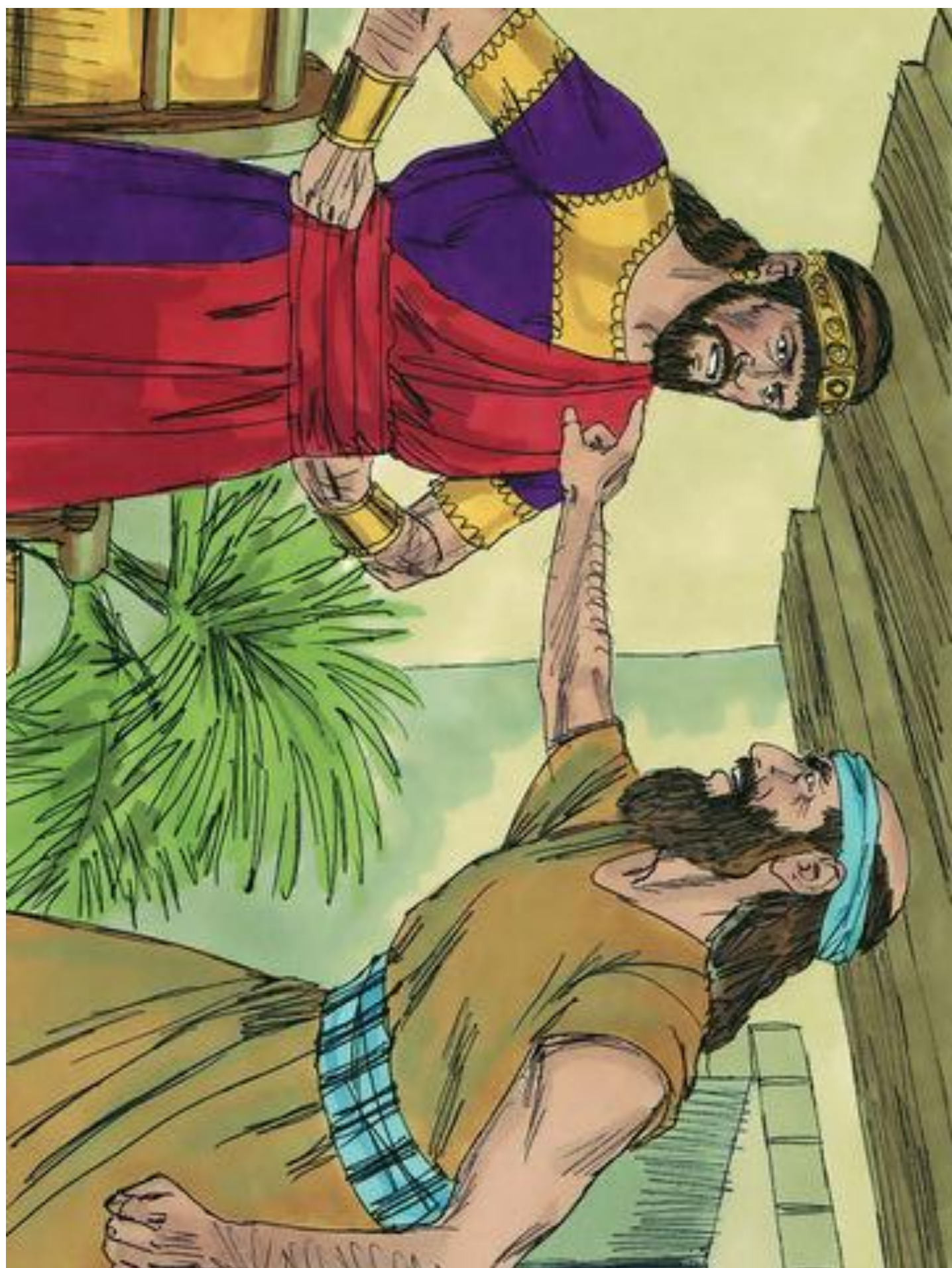
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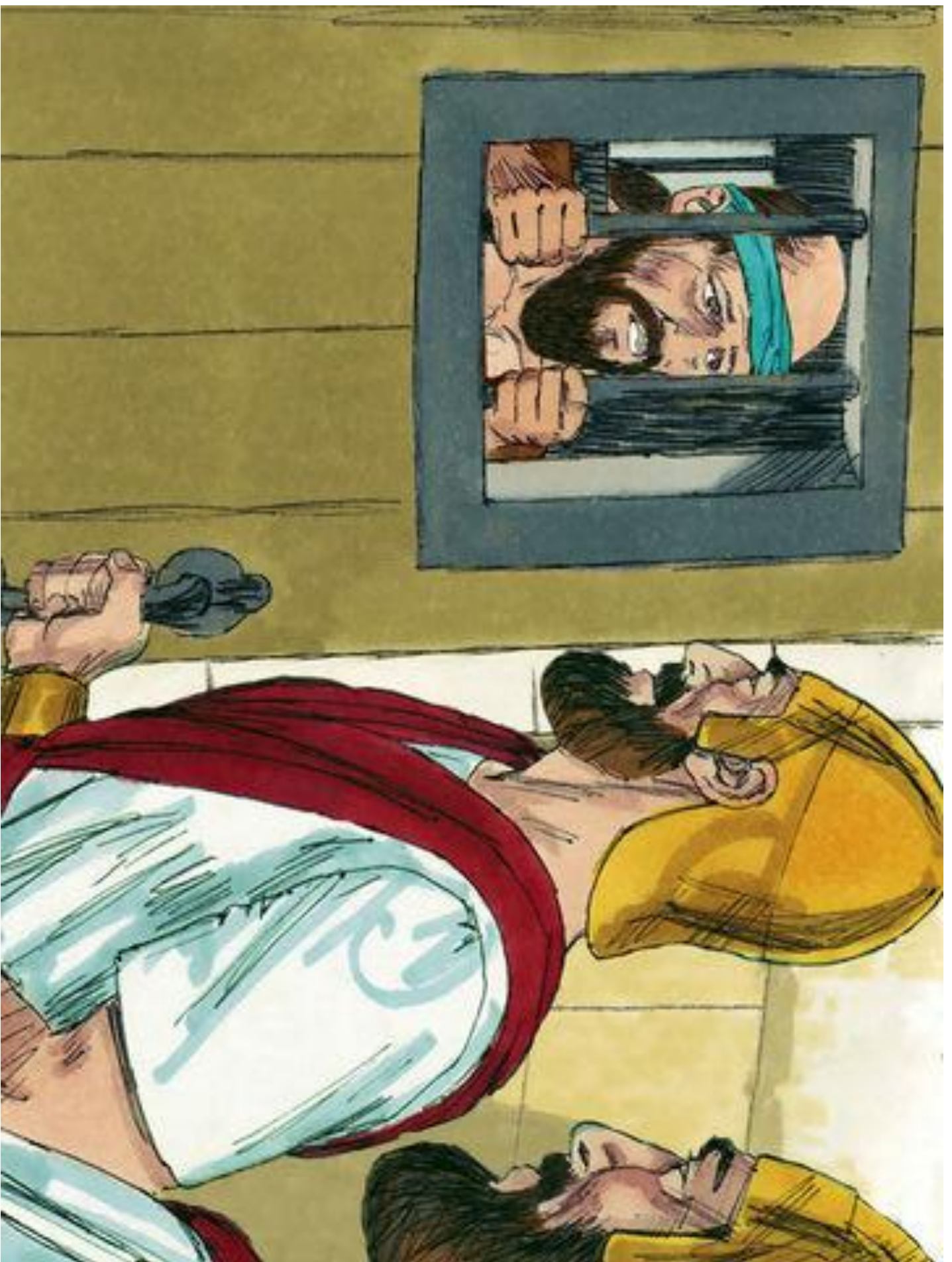
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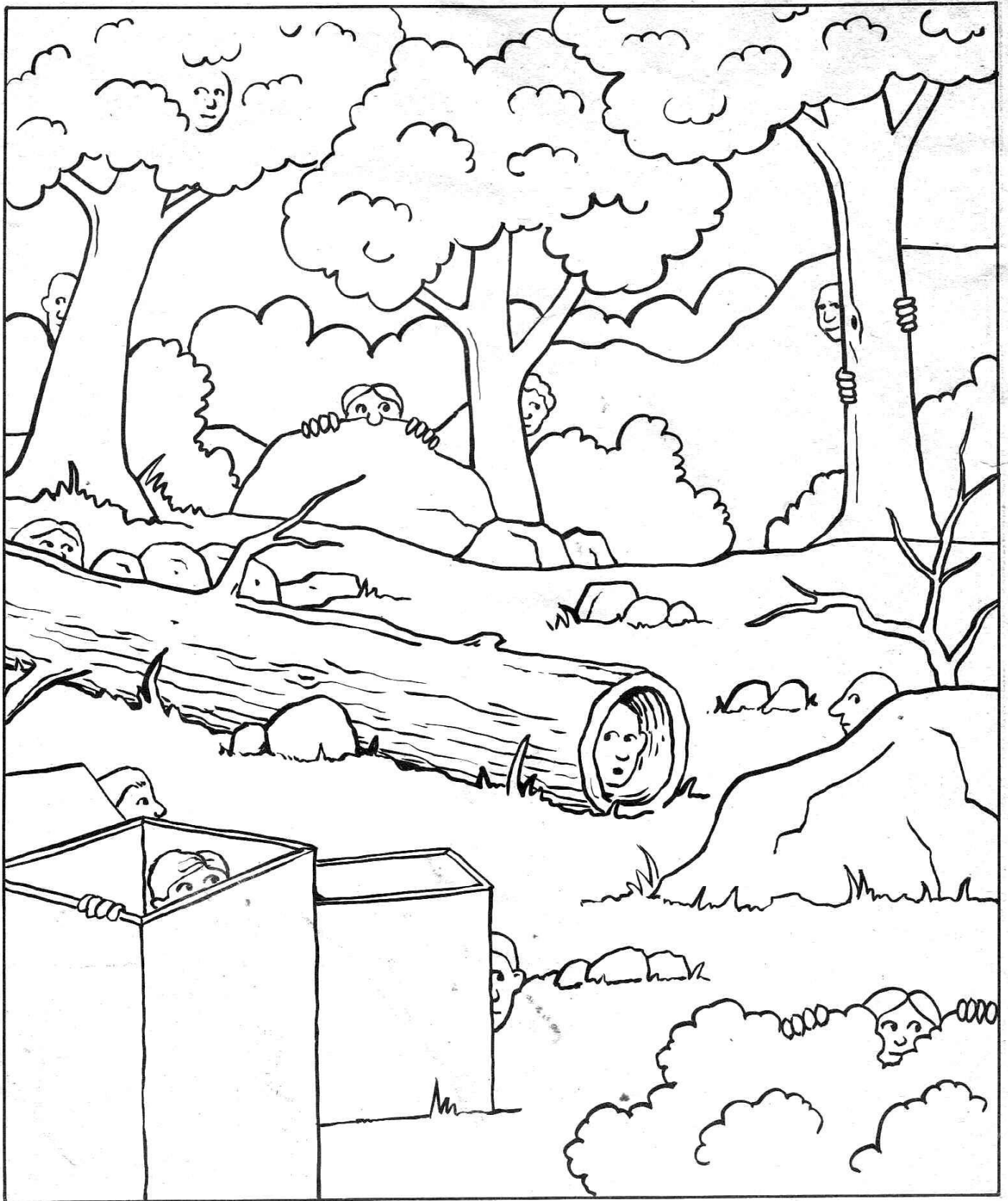
Damascus



KING BEN-HADAD







God sees everyone. How many people are hidden in this picture?

2 CHR. 16:9; ZECH. 4:10