

20.10 The Reign of Ahaziah⁸ ☹ / Alliance with Jehoshaphat (1 Kings 22:44–53; 2 Kings 1:1–18; 2 Chronicles 20:35–37)

In the story title above, the name to the left of the slash indicates a northern king (of Israel); the name on the right, a southern king (of Judah). The superscript number indicates the king's accession number, and the sad face shows this king was evil.

✓ “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.
- (Optional) Flannelgraph with palace background, figures of a king, 2 men, Elijah, bed, captain and soldiers, fire

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.

- *Baal-zebub*: a false god whose name means “lord of the house (temple)” or “lord of the flies”
- *Beelzebub*: a name that Jesus later used for the devil

Scripture: (ESV)

2 Chronicles 20:35 After this Jehoshaphat king of Judah joined with Ahaziah king of Israel, who acted wickedly. 36 He joined him in building ships to go to Tarshish, and they built the ships in Ezion-geber. 37 Then Eliezer the son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, “Because you have joined with Ahaziah, the Lord will destroy what you have made.” And the ships were wrecked and were not able to go to Tarshish.

1 Kings 22:48 Jehoshaphat made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold, but they did not go, for the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber. 49 Then Ahaziah the son of Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, “Let my servants go with your servants in the ships,” but Jehoshaphat was not willing. 50 And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Jehoram his son reigned in his place.

51 Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned two years over Israel. 52 He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. 53 He served Baal and worshiped him and provoked the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger in every way that his father had done.

2 Kings 1:1 After the death of Ahab, Moab rebelled against Israel.

2 Now Ahaziah fell through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria, and lay sick; so he sent messengers, telling them, “Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover from this sickness.” 3 But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, “Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say to them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? 4 Now therefore thus says the Lord, You shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” So Elijah went.

5 The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, “Why have you returned?” 6 And they said to him, “There came a man to meet us, and said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says the Lord, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’” 7 He said to them, “What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?” 8 They

answered him, “He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist.” And he said, “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

9 Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’” 10 But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

11 Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, “O man of God, this is the king’s order, ‘Come down quickly!’” 12 But Elijah answered them, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.” Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

13 Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah and entreated him, “O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight. 14 Behold, fire came down from heaven and consumed the two former captains of fifty men with their fifties, but now let my life be precious in your sight.” 15 Then the angel of the Lord said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.” So he arose and went down with him to the king 16 and said to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Because you have sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron—is it because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word?—therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.’”

17 So he died according to the word of the Lord that Elijah had spoken. Jehoram became king in his place in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, because Ahaziah had no son. 18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah that he did, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel?

Introduction/Review:

Ahab, wicked king of Israel had died in battle. Jehoshaphat, good king of Judah, almost died in that same battle because he befriended such a wicked man. Then God sent an enemy against Jehoshaphat. That caused Jehoshaphat to fast and pray. Therefore, God won that battle against that enemy. How did he do it? [When the people sang and praised the Lord, He caused the enemy to fight against itself.] Did Judah fight hard? [No.] Did they fight at all? [No.] Who fought? [God.] What did Judah do when they saw all the dead soldiers? [Got all the spoil.] How many days did it take to collect the goods? [Three.] What did the soldiers do before they left the battlefield? [Gave thanks to God in the valley of Berachah—”blessing.”] What did they do as they returned home to Jerusalem? [Played trumpets and harps in praise to God.]

Jehoshaphat led the people in all these wonderful spiritual and godly exercises—even going throughout Judah himself to teach the people God’s ways. Yet, his desire to be friendly to everyone again got him into trouble.

Story:

Friendship with the wicked

Ahab’s son, Ahaziah, became king after Ahab died. Do you suppose he was wicked, or was he good? Remember, he was king in northern Israel, and none of those kings was good. Therefore, you know he was wicked. Should Jehoshaphat be this wicked king’s friend even if his daughter-in-law is sister or half sister to Ahaziah? [No.] What if Jehoshaphat’s grandson has the same name as Ahaziah and might have been named after him? [No.]

After all the warnings and at least one close call with death that Jehoshaphat had experienced after joining up with wicked Israelite kings, one would think he had learned his lesson. But I’m sorry to say Jehoshaphat still hadn’t really learned not to befriend the wicked, for he and Ahaziah, wicked king of Israel, went into business together. Their business was to build ships in Ezion Geber [located at the north point of the eastern finger of the Red Sea]. The idea was to build these ships so that they could sail to Ophir,¹ where they could get fine gold.

Was God pleased with this partnership? No, for He had already said through Hanani the seer, “Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord? Because of this, wrath has gone out against you from the Lord” (2 Chronicles 19:2). The New Testament states, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 6:14), for that’s like trying to put light and darkness together. It just is wrong: where there is light there cannot be darkness.

God let Jehoshaphat know, again through a prophet, this time one named Eliezer, that Jehoshaphat had done wrong. “Because you have joined with Ahaziah, the Lord will destroy what you have made” (2 Chronicles 20:37).

Eliezer was God’s true prophet, for what he prophesied happened: those ships were wrecked, ✓perhaps by strong wind. The Bible tells us only that the ships were destroyed where they were being built in Ezion Geber. Ahaziah wanted to keep this deal going, but, finally, Jehoshaphat gave up the ship-building business and would no longer work with Ahaziah.

Worship of a Philistine god

As the king of Israel, Ahaziah did wickedly “in every way” as his mother Jezebel and his father had done (1 Kings 22:51). He worshiped and served Baal, thus angering the one true God of Israel.

One day Ahaziah was upstairs in the palace in Samaria when he fell through lattice and was badly injured. From his bed he called for messengers to go to Ekron [locate in Philistia]. “Go ask Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether or not I’m going to die or recover from these injuries,” he commanded.

Was Ekron in Israel or in Judah? No, it was in Philistia, the land that was an enemy against Israel. The god that Ahaziah wanted to consult was ✓Baal-zebub, whose name means “lord of the house (temple)” or “lord of the flies.” Can you imagine someone’s expecting help from a lord of flies?! Could such a god be more powerful than man? Why, I can swat and kill a fly pretty easily. How foolish Ahaziah was to believe in such a god.

Later, in Jesus’ time, Jesus used a name similar to Baal-zebub—Beelzebub—when He referred to the devil.

Apparently, Ahaziah didn’t trust even the Baal god he had been worshiping in Samaria. He didn’t even want to consult the one true God of Israel, but the one true God was about to answer.

The angel of the Lord came and said to Elijah, the great prophet of God, “Get up. Go meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and tell them, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going up to pray to Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? God says you will not get off that sick bed, but you will surely die.’”

Elijah went and did as God said. He delivered his message and went back home. The messengers returned to the king.

“Why have you returned?” asked Ahaziah.

The messengers answered, “A man came to meet us and said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you and tell him, “This is what the Lord says, ‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to ask Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron. Therefore, you shall not get off that bed ✓as a healthy man but shall surely die.’”

“What kind of a man was it who met you and told you these things?” asked Ahaziah.

“Well, he wore a haircloth robe that had a leather belt.”

“Aha!” replied Ahaziah. “It is Elijah the Tishbite.”

Assassination of Ahaziah

Now, do you suppose Ahaziah was happy with this message from God? You’re right; he wasn’t. Ahaziah did what many do. He couldn’t very well get rid of God; so he tried to get rid of the person who gave God’s message. He called a captain of fifty soldiers. “Go get Elijah,” he commanded.

The captain and his fifty men found Elijah on the top of a hill and called to him. “O man of God, the king says, ‘Come down.’”

Elijah answered, “If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your soldiers.” Immediately, fire did come down from heaven and consumed them all. Yes, Elijah proved he was a man of God.

When the king heard about this calamity done to his men, he wasn’t stopped. He sent another captain with another fifty soldiers. This captain also called to Elijah, “O man of God, this is the king’s order: ‘Come down quickly!’”

What did Elijah say? You guessed it: “If I am a man of God, let fire come down and consume you and your fifty.” Fire came down and consumed those fifty-one men.

But wicked King Ahaziah was still not finished with his plans to get Elijah. He commanded another captain and fifty soldiers to go get Elijah. I’m glad I wasn’t that captain. He didn’t want to do this job, but he was commanded to do it by his king. He went to Elijah, fell to his knees in front of him, and begged, “O man of God, please save my life and the lives of these fifty men. I know fire came from heaven and consumed the other two captains and the other two groups of fifty soldiers, but please save my life.”

Prophetship of Elijah

The angel of the Lord said to Elijah, “Go down with him; do not be afraid of him.”

So Elijah went with the captain to the king, but Elijah did not change his message. He said, “Is there no God in Israel to pray to? Because you sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, therefore you shall not get off that bed ✓as a healthy man but you shall surely die.”

So Ahaziah died according to the word of the Lord that Elijah had spoken. Since Ahaziah didn’t have a son, his brother Jehoram became king of Israel.

God had promised to wipe out Ahab’s family. So far, it hadn’t happened, but it was beginning.

¹“About which place there are various opinions; some take it to be the little island of Zocatora, on the eastern coast of Africa, at a small distance from the straits of Babelmandel; others the island of Ceylon; others Sofala in Africa,” says John Gill at [1 Kings 9:28 - Meaning and Commentary on Bible Verse \(biblestudytools.com\)](http://www.biblestudytools.com/1-kings/9/28-meaning-and-commentary-on-bible-verse.html). Footnotes at this site show other possibilities: Peru in America; Vatablus the island of Hispaniola in the West Indies; the southern part of Arabia; Malacca, which is a peninsula in the true Red sea. An internet search also yields the Philippine Islands and Australia among other suggestions.

Lessons from This Lesson:

- We see Jesus:
Elijah proved again and again by the signs he did that he was a true man of God. Jesus proved by His signs and miracles that he was not just a prophet but the Son of God—God Himself.
- God hates false worship of false gods.
- God does not want His people to be buddy-buddy with those who hate God.

Activities:

- Play dough: bed, fire
- Snack: Hot Cheetos®
- Sing “Let’s Be True to Jesus” (song sheet found below).

- Small children may count 50 pennies or plastic soldiers
- Review questions: (Game: Students who answer questions correctly may place five plastic soldiers or five pennies on a tray.)
 1. What was the name of Ahab's son who ruled after Ahab's death? [Ahaziah.]
 2. What business did Ahaziah and Jehoshaphat get into together? [Ship-building.]
 3. Why did they quit? [As God had said through a prophet, the ships were wrecked.]
 4. When Ahaziah fell through the lattice and was badly injured, whom did he want to heal him? [Baalzebub, the god of Ekron.]
 5. Who met the messengers with God's message? [Elijah.]
 6. What was Elijah's message from God? [Ahaziah would not live.]
 7. What did Ahaziah do twice, attempting to get rid of Elijah? [Sent a captain and fifty soldiers.]
 8. When the third captain and his fifty men pled for their lives, what did the angel of the Lord tell Elijah to do? [Go with the men to Ahaziah.]
 9. How do we know Elijah was a true prophet of God? [His prophecy came true; Ahaziah died.]
 10. Why did Jerhoram, Ahaziah's brother, and not his son become the next king? [Because Ahaziah had no son.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. 2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, 3 though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. 5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. 6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. 7 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has brought desolations on the earth. 9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. 10 "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" 11 The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

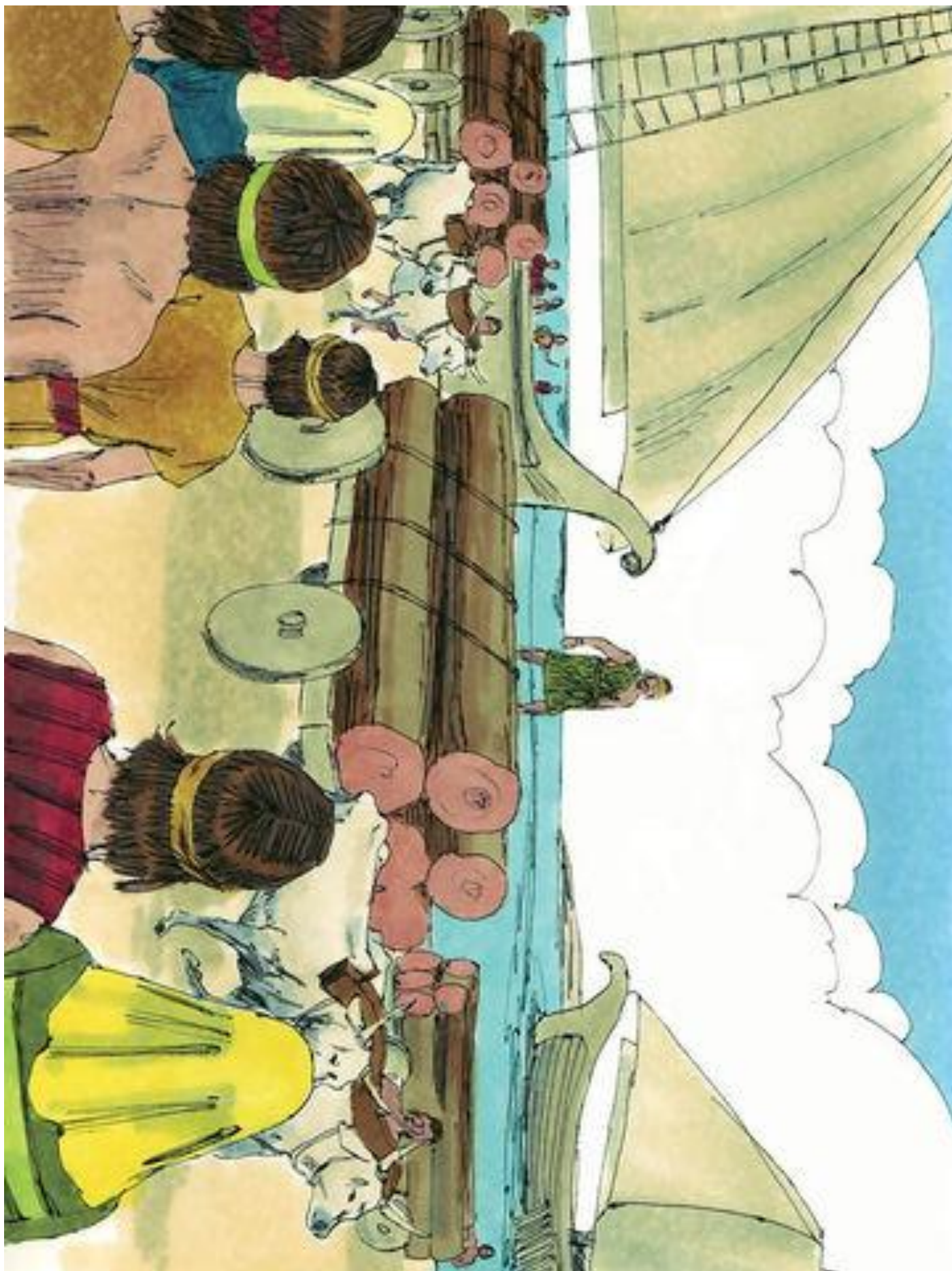
Handwork:

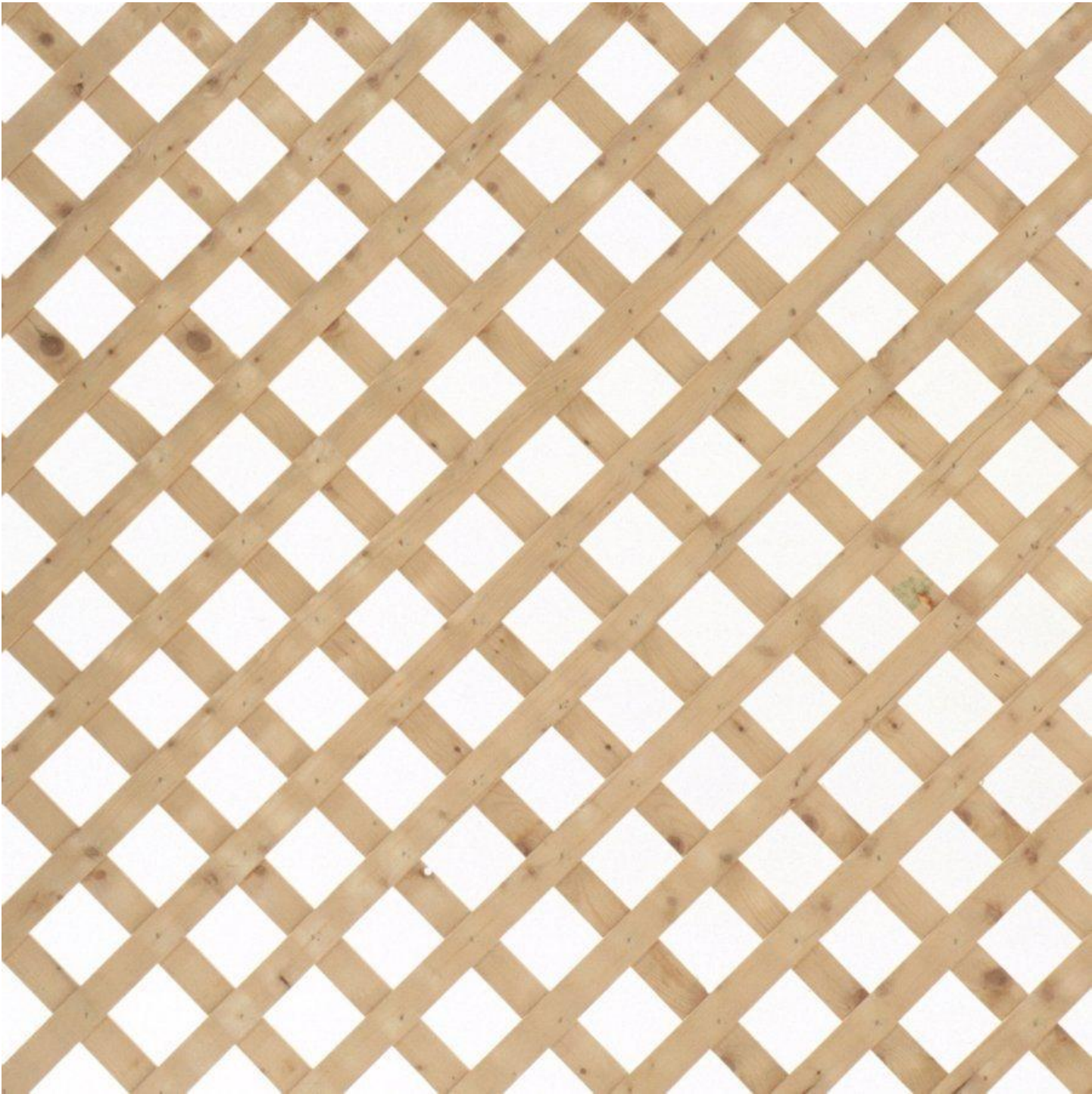
- Cut twelve ½" strips of paper for each student. Students will glue the strips to the clipart lattice found at the end of this lesson, first covering all the lattice pieces going one direction and then covering all the lattice pieces going the other direction, cutting strips to fit as they glue. Students may color the line drawing of the child in bed. (Lattice clipart is from [lattice line drawing - Bing images](#). Child in bed clipart is from [line drawing of child in bed - Bing images](#).)

Baal-zebub

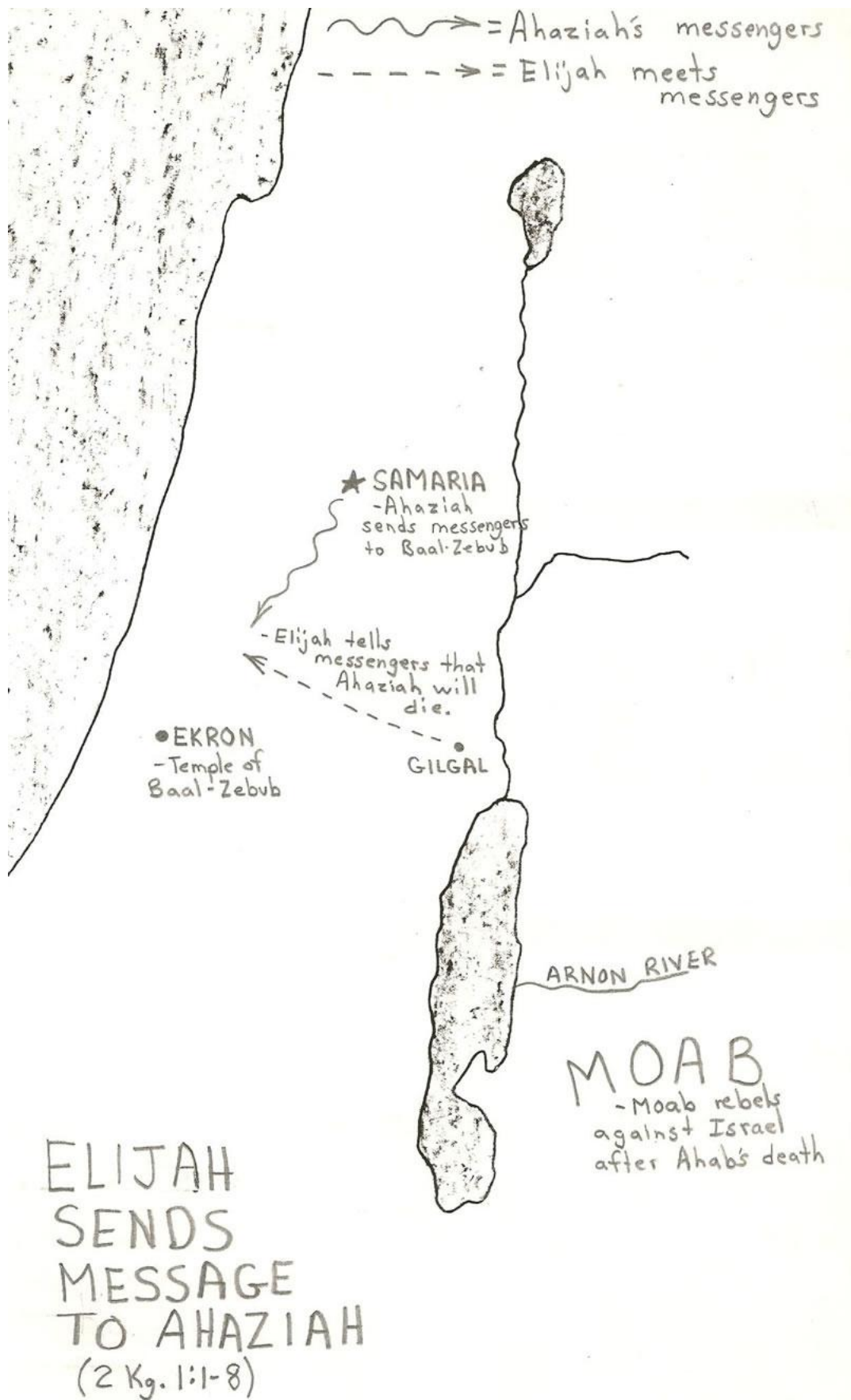
Beelzebub

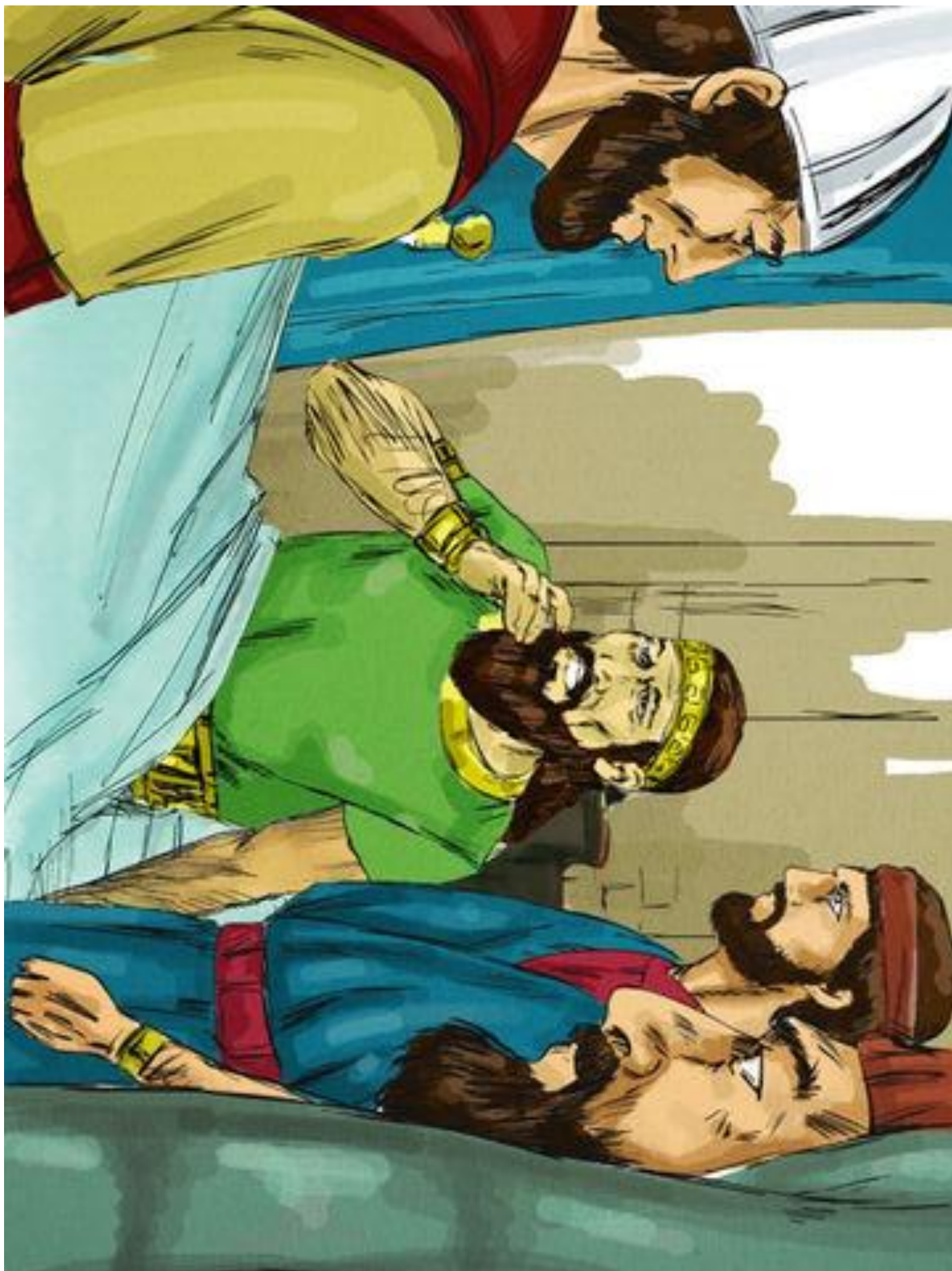






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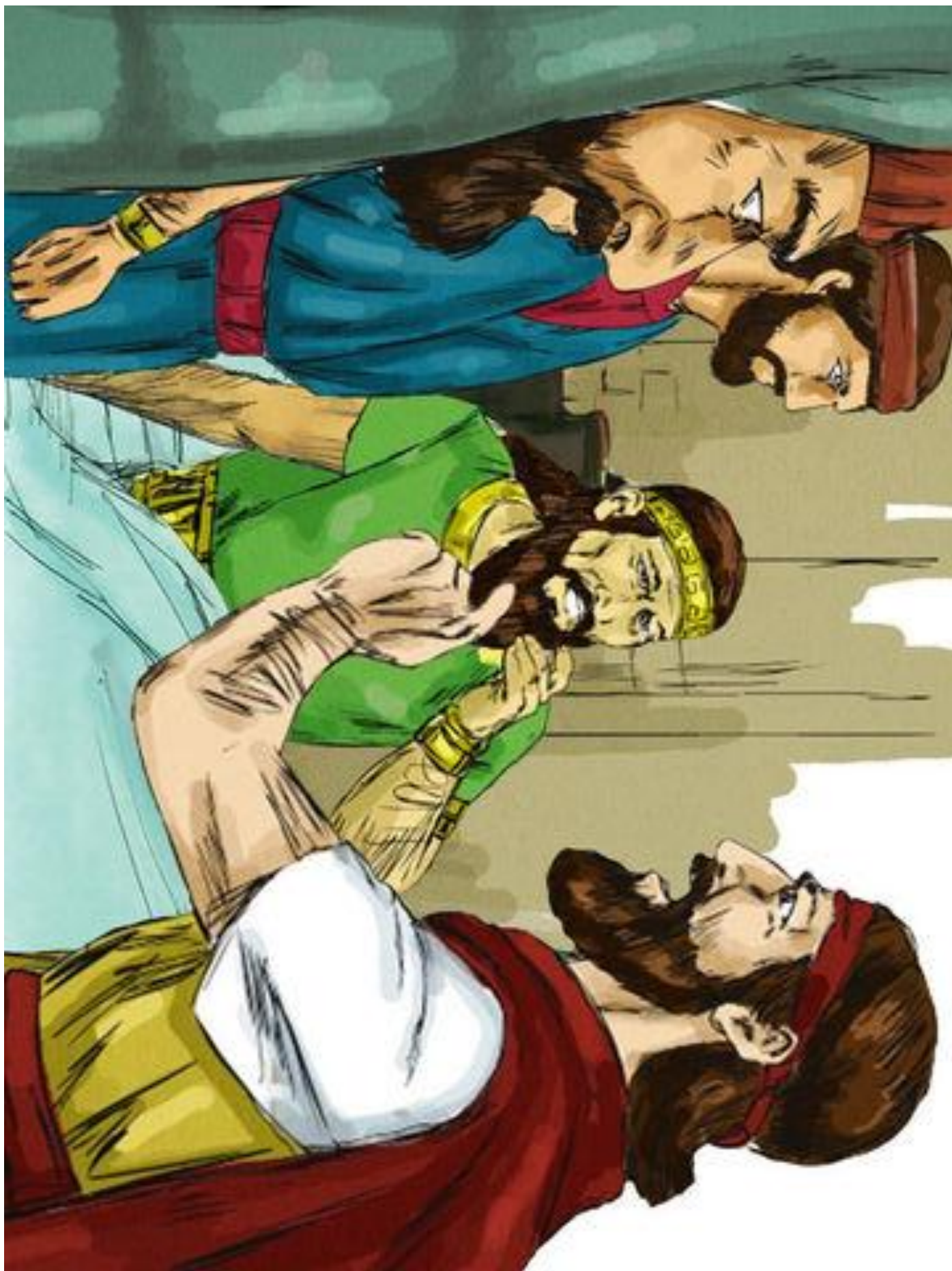
FreeBibleimages :: King Ahaziah, Elijah and fire from heaven :: When King Ahaziah seeks guidance from a false god, God sends Elijah to intervene (2 Kings 1:1-18)



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LET'S BE TRUE TO JESUS

Annabelle McGuill

*Effective as a Duet*Old Tune
Harmonized by Robert Savage

Let's be true to Je-sus, tho' a thousand voices from the world may call; 'Twas



He who died to save us, and demands our life, our loy-al-ty, our all. Since we'll

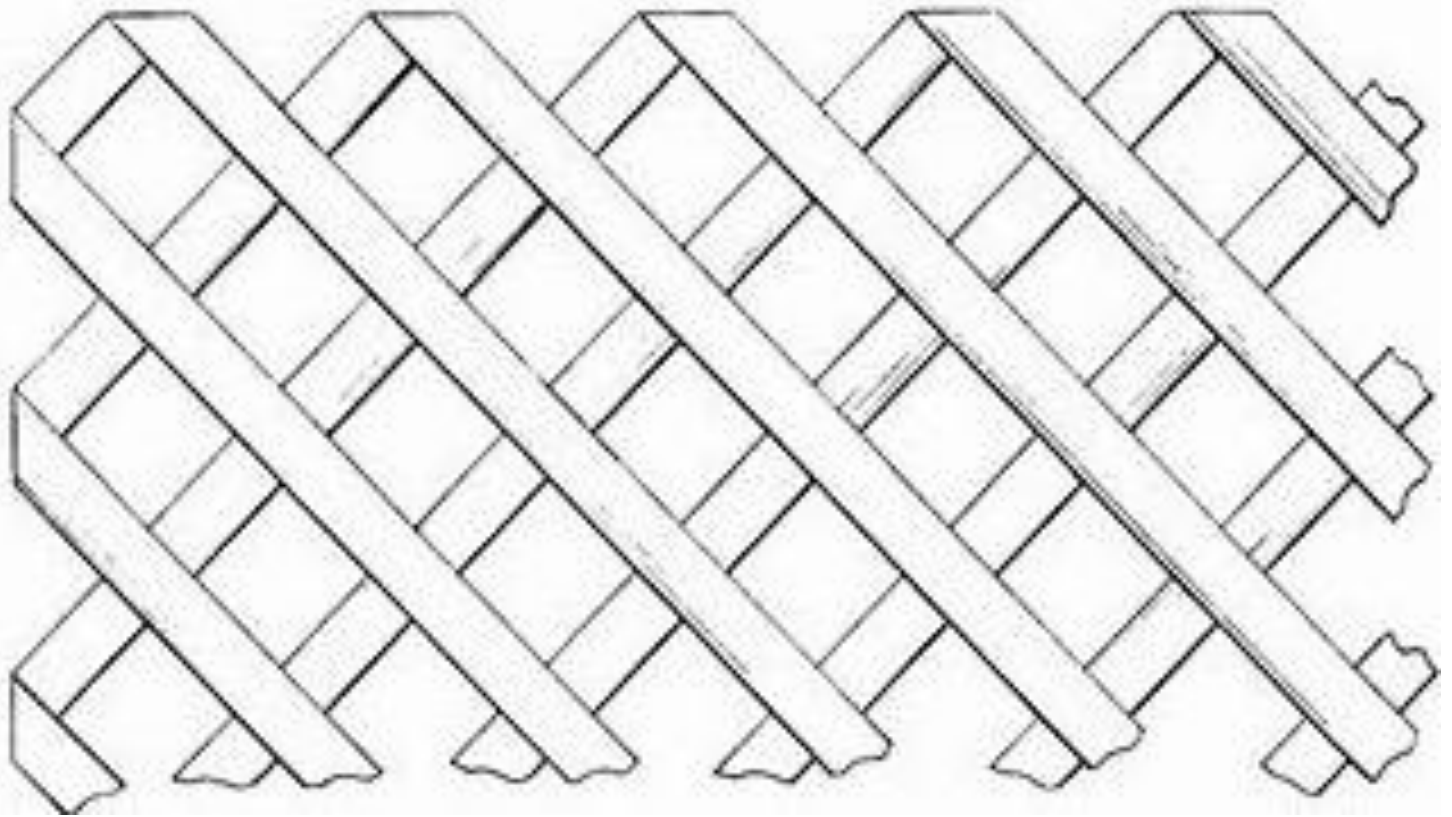


walk and talk with Him when our life on earth is o'er, Let us labor now to point the sinner



to the open door. Let's be true to Jesus, and we'll reap eternal blessing by and by.





King Ahaziah fell through the lattice from an upper level and was badly injured.

Because he looked to a false god rather than the true God of Israel, he died (2 Kings 1).

Let's be true to Jesus, even when we hurt.

