



FOR A MOMENT, ALL IS STILL.

THEN ...

MY  
FATHER!



WHEN ELIJAH'S MANTLE DROPS FROM HEAVEN, IT CONFIRMS THAT THE MIRACLE ELISHA WITNESSED MEANS HE IS TO CARRY ON ELIJAH'S WORK BY HIMSELF.



WHEN ELISHA GOES BACK TO THE JORDAN RIVER, HE STRIKES THE WATER WITH ELIJAH'S MANTLE—AND THE WATERS PART.



A GROUP OF YOUNG PROPHETS ARE WAITING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER, AND THEY WITNESS ELISHA'S PARTING OF THE WATERS.



LOOK ALL YOU LIKE, THERE WILL BE NOTHING FOR YOU TO FIND.



GOD'S POWER HAS COME TO ME. THANK YOU, MY LORD.



WE KNOW GOD HAS TAKEN ELIJAH'S SPIRIT, AND NOW WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE TRULY HIS HEIR.



SHOULD WE LOOK FOR ELIJAH'S BODY SO WE CAN GIVE HIM A PROPER BURIAL?



THE PROPHETS SPREAD THE NEWS THROUGHOUT ISRAEL THAT ELIJAH HAS BEEN TAKEN UP TO HEAVEN, AND ELISHA HAS TAKEN HIS PLACE.

# A Rash of Miracles

BASED ON  
2 KINGS 2:19-24; 4: 6:1-7

NEWS THAT ELIJAH IS GONE SPREADS QUICKLY. IN THE PALACE OF SAMARIA, QUEEN JEZEBEL GLADLY PASSES THE NEWS ON TO HER SON.

WITH ELIJAH OUT OF THE WAY, WE CAN RULE ISRAEL AS WE PLEASE.



UNDER THE QUEEN'S EVIL INFLUENCE, MEN FEEL FREE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THOSE WHO HAVE OPPOSED THE QUEEN.

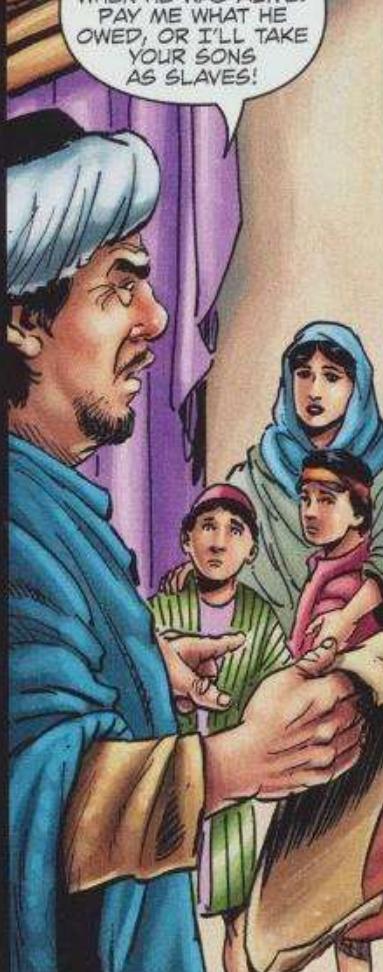
YOUR HUSBAND OWED ME MONEY WHEN HE WAS ALIVE. PAY ME WHAT HE OWED, OR I'LL TAKE YOUR SONS AS SLAVES!

SLAVES! NO! O GOD, WHAT CAN I DO?

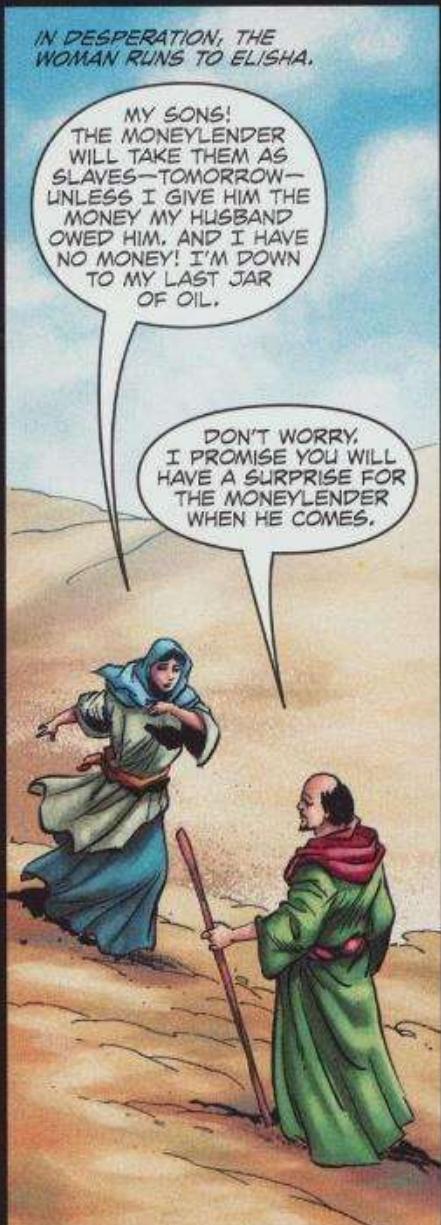
IN DESPERATION, THE WOMAN RUNS TO ELISHA.

MY SONS! THE MONEYLENDER WILL TAKE THEM AS SLAVES—TOMORROW—UNLESS I GIVE HIM THE MONEY MY HUSBAND OWED HIM. AND I HAVE NO MONEY! I'M DOWN TO MY LAST JAR OF OIL.

DON'T WORRY. I PROMISE YOU WILL HAVE A SURPRISE FOR THE MONEYLENDER WHEN HE COMES.

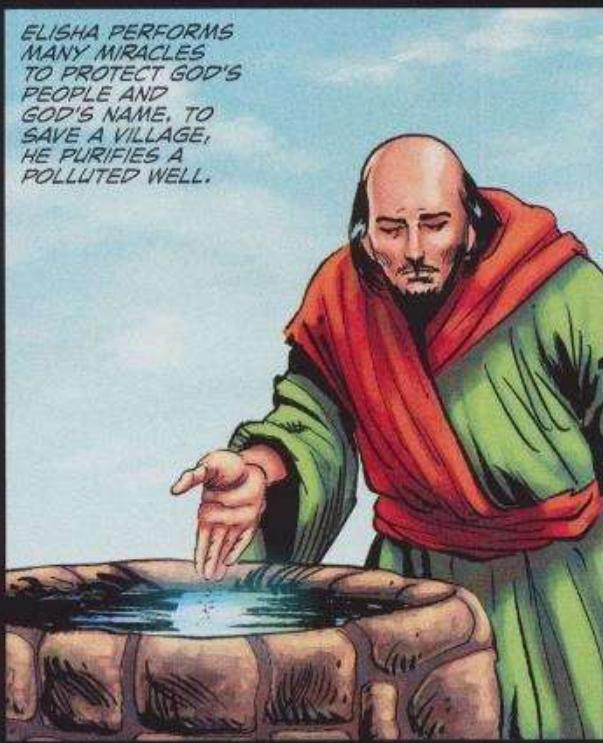


SADLY, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING YOU CAN DO. LUCKILY, YOUR BOYS WILL MAKE WONDERFUL SLAVES. REMEMBER, THE LAW IS ON MY SIDE.

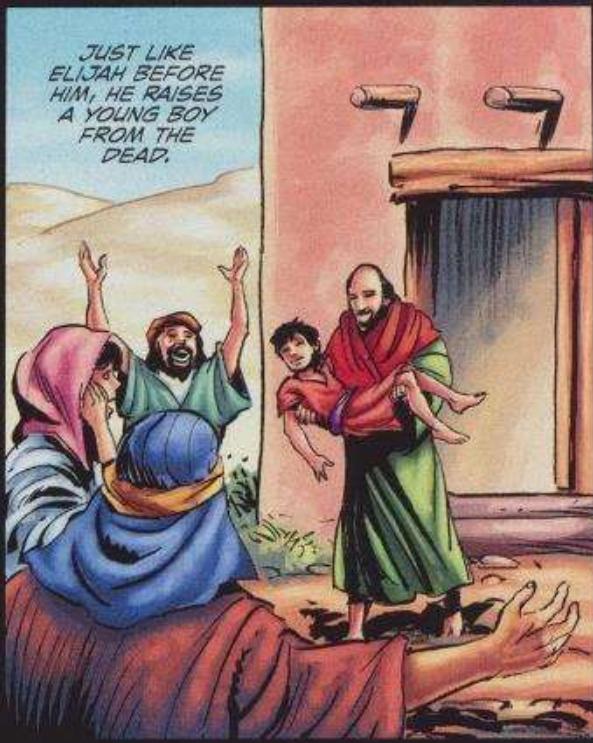




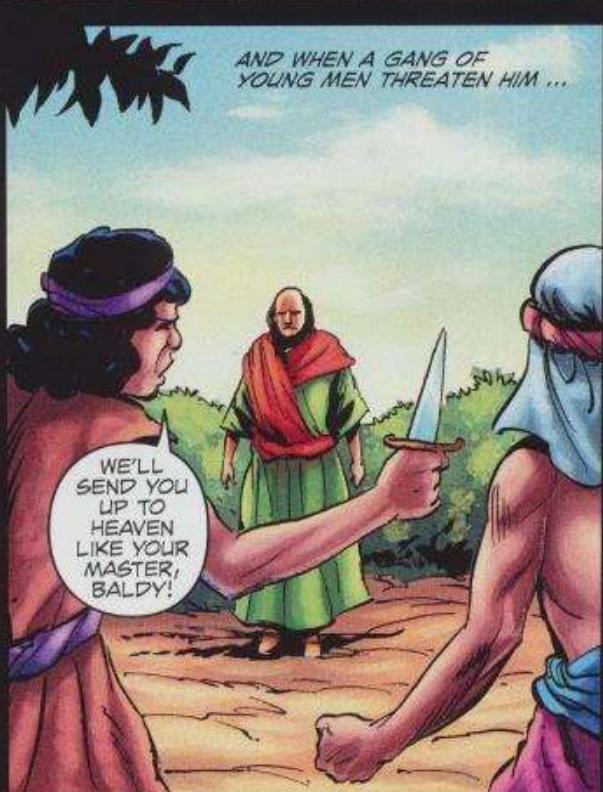
ELISHA PERFORMS MANY MIRACLES TO PROTECT GOD'S PEOPLE AND GOD'S NAME. TO SAVE A VILLAGE, HE PURIFIES A POLLUTED WELL.



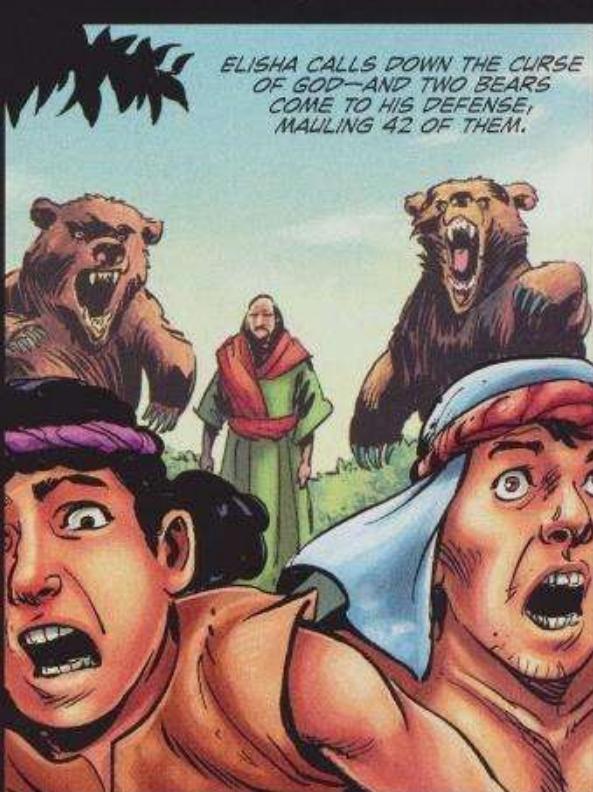
JUST LIKE ELIJAH BEFORE HIM, HE RAISES A YOUNG BOY FROM THE DEAD.



AND WHEN A GANG OF YOUNG MEN THREATEN HIM ...



ELISHA CALLS DOWN THE CURSE OF GOD—AND TWO BEARS COME TO HIS DEFENSE, Mauling 42 OF THEM.



WHEN THE COMPANY OF PROPHETS IS BUILDING A SETTLEMENT FOR ELISHA TO LIVE IN, AN ACCIDENT HAPPENS.



ELISHA MIRACULOUSLY MAKES THE HEAVY IRON AXHEAD FLOAT.



# A Miracle for a Rash

BASED ON  
2 KINGS 5

IN THE NEIGHBORING LAND OF ARAM, THE BEST GENERAL IN THE ARMY IS A MAN NAMED NAAMAN. HE IS NOBLE AND HONORABLE AND HAS WON MANY BATTLES FOR HIS KING. BUT ONE DAY HE COMES DOWN WITH A DISEASE THAT WILL CHANGE HIS LIFE FOREVER.

WHAT IS THAT ON YOUR ARM, NAAMAN? DID YOU HURT YOURSELF?

I DON'T THINK SO. IT'S A RASH.

OH NO! IT'S LEPROSY!

BUT GOD HAS SET THE STAGE TO SHOW HIS POWER ONCE AGAIN. NAAMAN'S HOUSEHOLD HAS SEVERAL ISRAELITE SLAVES. HE HAS ALWAYS TREATED THEM WELL, AND ONE SERVANT GIRL WISHES TO HELP HER MASTER IN RETURN.

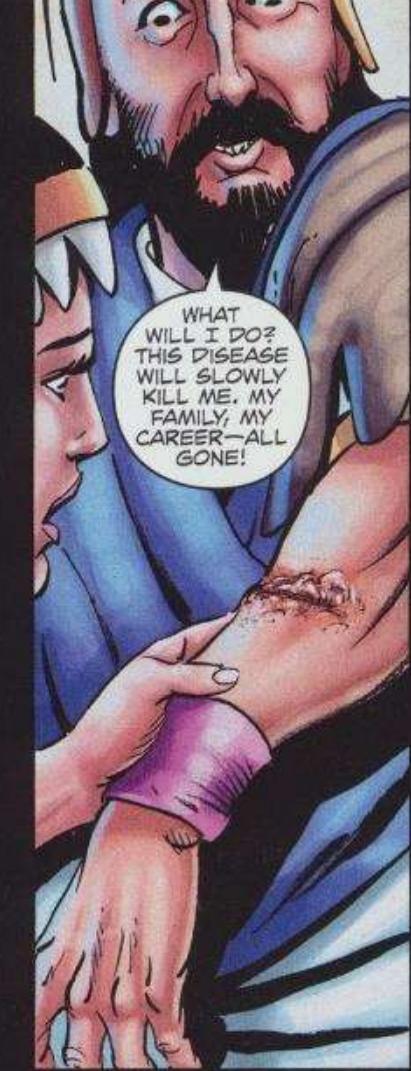
WHAT WILL I DO? THIS DISEASE WILL SLOWLY KILL ME. MY FAMILY, MY CAREER—ALL GONE!

THERE'S NO CURE!  
THERE IS A PROPHET IN ISRAEL WHO CAN DO MIRACULOUS THINGS.

IF MY MASTER WOULD GO TO HIM, HE WOULD SURELY BE CURED.

ALTHOUGH NORMALLY NAAMAN WOULD NEVER SEEK HELP FROM FOREIGNERS, HE FEELS HE HAS NO CHOICE. NAAMAN GOES TO ASK HIS KING FOR PERMISSION TO VISIT ISRAEL, AN ENEMY COUNTRY.

I'M AFRAID IT IS A FOOL'S ERRAND, NAAMAN, BUT IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE OF A CURE, I WANT YOU TO FIND IT. I'LL GIVE YOU A LETTER TO TAKE TO THE KING OF ISRAEL.



NAAMAN SENDS THE LETTER TO KING JORAM IN SAMARIA, THE CAPITAL OF ISRAEL. THE LETTER DOES NOT MENTION ELISHA BY NAME, SO THE KING DOESN'T UNDERSTAND IT.

WHAT'S THIS?  
THE KING OF ARAM  
IS ASKING ME TO  
CURE HIS GENERAL  
OF LEPROSY?

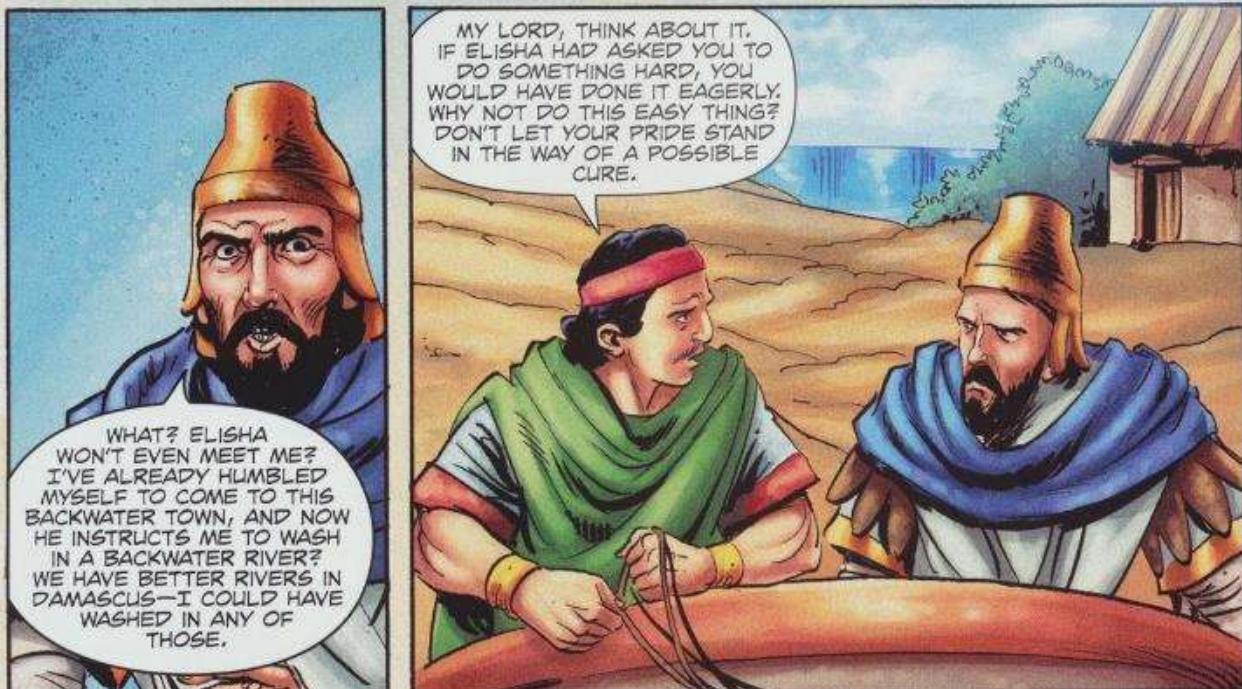
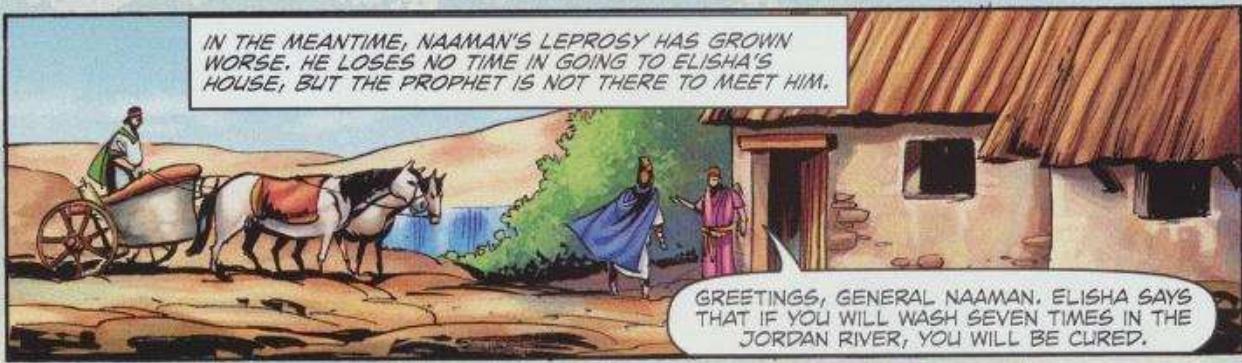
ARAM HAS BEEN FIGHTING WITH ISRAEL ON AND OFF FOR SEVERAL YEARS, INCLUDING THE BATTLE THAT KILLED JORAM'S FATHER, KING Ahab. JORAM SUSPECTS THIS IS AN EXCUSE FOR ARAM TO WAGE WAR AGAINST ISRAEL AGAIN.

AM I A GOD  
THAT I CAN CURE  
AN INCURABLE  
DISEASE? IS THE  
KING OF ARAM  
TRYING TO PICK A  
FIGHT WITH ME IF  
I DON'T DO THIS  
IMPOSSIBLE  
REQUEST?

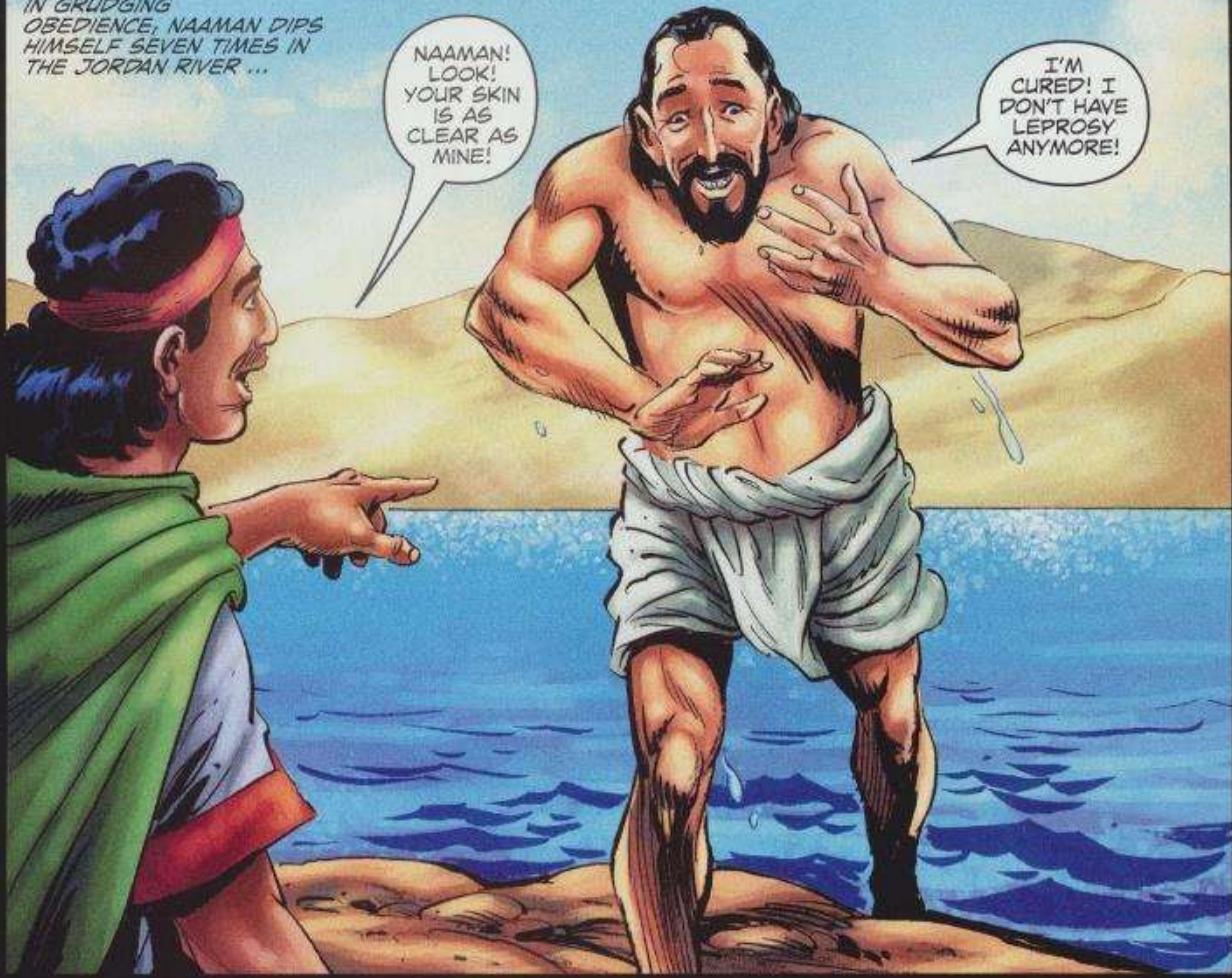
WHEN ELISHA HEARS OF  
KING JORAM'S DISTRESS,  
HE SENDS HIS SERVANT  
TO THE KING.

DON'T PANIC,  
ELISHA SAYS THAT  
IF YOU SEND NAAMAN  
TO HIM, THE GENERAL  
WILL LEARN THE  
POWER OF GOD  
IN ISRAEL.

IN THE MEANTIME, NAAMAN'S LEPROSY HAS GROWN WORSE. HE LOSES NO TIME IN GOING TO ELISHA'S HOUSE, BUT THE PROPHET IS NOT THERE TO MEET HIM.



IN GRUDGING OBEDIENCE, NAAMAN DIPS HIMSELF SEVEN TIMES IN THE JORDAN RIVER ...



OVERCOME WITH GRATITUDE, NAAMAN RETURNS AT ONCE TO ELISHA'S HOUSE.



THEN NAAMAN RETURNS TO HIS HOME IN ARAM, TO THE FAMILY HE THOUGHT HE WAS ABOUT TO LOSE.



# Invisible Army

BASED ON 2 KINGS 6:8-23

STOP!  
ELISHA SENDS WORD  
FOR YOU TO TAKE  
ANOTHER ROAD THE  
ARAMEANS ARE WAITING  
ON THIS ROAD TO  
CAPTURE YOU.

BUT THE HEALING OF NAAMAN DOES NOT  
KEEP THE KING OF ARAM FROM PLOTTING  
AGAINST ISRAEL. HE HAS HIS SOLDIERS  
SET UP AN AMBUSH TO CAPTURE THE  
KING OF ISRAEL. BUT AS KING JORAM IS  
ABOUT TO RIDE INTO THE TRAP ...



FOR DAYS, THE ARAMEAN SOLDIERS WAIT FOR THE ISRAELITE KING—BUT HE  
DOESN'T COME. TIME AND TIME AGAIN, THE ARAMEAN KING SETS UP A TRAP,  
AND ELISHA WARNS THE ISRAELITE KING TO ESCAPE. FINALLY, IN FRUSTRATION ...



I'VE HAD ENOUGH!  
WHICH OF YOU IS A  
TRAITOR??

NONE OF US, O KING. IT'S  
ELISHA, THE PROPHET IN ISRAEL.  
HE KNOWS EVERYTHING YOU DO.

ELISHA, IS IT? FIND OUT  
WHERE HE IS, AND I'LL  
SEND AN ARMY TO KILL HIM.

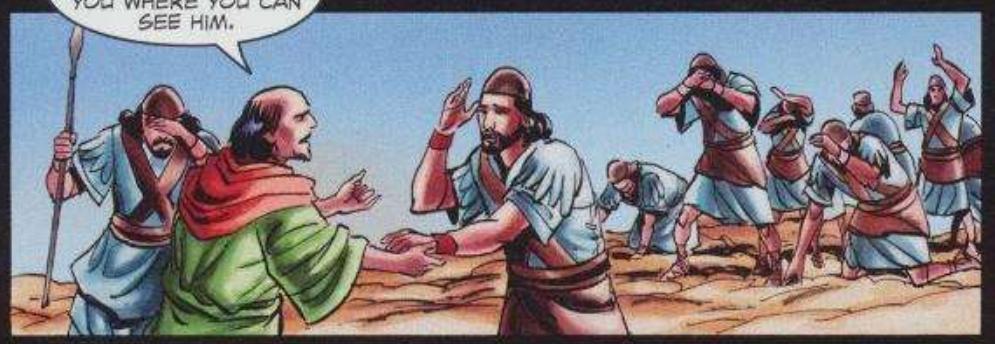
THE ARAMEANS QUIETLY SNEAK IN AND  
SET UP THEIR CAMP BY NIGHT. THE  
NEXT MORNING, ELISHA'S SERVANT  
RISES EARLY AND SEES THE ARMY.

ELISHA! WE'RE  
SURROUNDED BY  
THE WHOLE ARAMEAN  
ARMY! WE'RE  
OUTNUMBERED.

NO,  
THEY  
ARE.

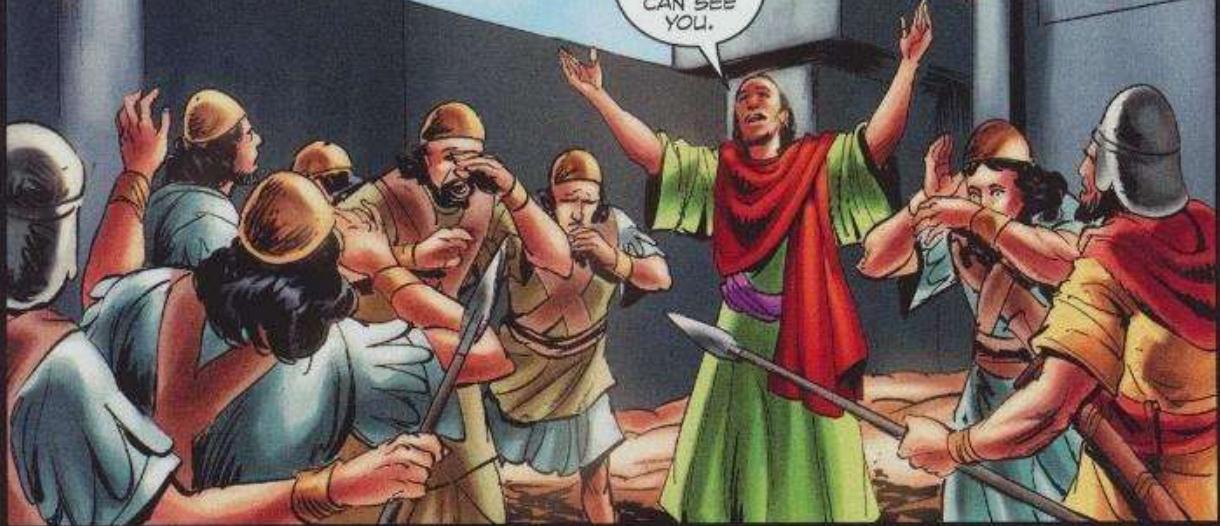


ELISHA PRAYS, AND THE SERVANT'S  
EYES ARE SUDDENLY OPENED. HE  
LOOKS OUT OVER THE SURROUNDING  
ARAMEAN ARMY, BUT NOW HE SEES ...



ELISHA LEADS THE ENEMY SOLDIERS TEN MILES SOUTH AND INTO THE CAPITAL CITY OF ISRAEL.

O LORD, OPEN THEIR EYES SO THEY CAN SEE YOU.



INSTANTLY, SIGHT RETURNS TO THE ARAMEANS.

WE'RE IN SAMARIA!

WE'RE TRAPPED! THEY'LL KILL US!

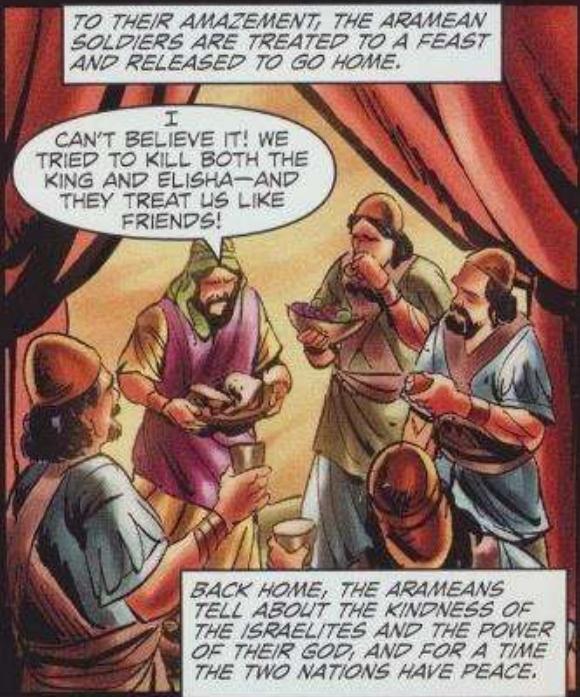


SHALL WE KILL THEM, ELSHA?

NO! THEY'RE MY GUESTS. FEED THEM AND SEND THEM HOME.

TO THEIR AMAZEMENT, THE ARAMEAN SOLDIERS ARE TREATED TO A FEAST AND RELEASED TO GO HOME.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WE TRIED TO KILL BOTH THE KING AND ELSHA—AND THEY TREAT US LIKE FRIENDS!



# Lepers Under Siege!

BASED ON 2 KINGS 6:24-7:16

ISRAEL AND ARAM HAVE LONG ALTERNATED BETWEEN OUTRIGHT WAR AND LINEASy PEACE. THE WARMONGERING KING OF ARAM CHAFES AT THE CURRENT TRUCE WITH ISRAEL.

WE'LL CUT OFF THE FOOD SUPPLY TO SAMARIA. THEN WE'LL SURROUND IT AND STARVE THE PEOPLE INTO SURRENDER.

EXCELLENT! THE LONGER THEY HOLD OUT, THE EASIER IT WILL BE TO CONQUER THEM.

SO THE ARAMEAN ARMY PITCHES ITS TENTS AROUND THE WALLS OF SAMARIA AND WAITS ...

I WONDER HOW LONG THEY CAN HOLD OUT.

THE CITY MAKES A BRAVE STAND TO HOLD OUT, BUT AS THE MONTHS PASS AND NO FOOD IS ALLOWED THROUGH THE GATES, THE ISRAELITES ARE REDUCED TO EATING DONKEY HEADS AND BIRD DROPPINGS—AND WORSE! THE PEOPLE PLEAD FOR THE KING TO TAKE ACTION.

I'D RATHER TAKE MY CHANCES FIGHTING THE ENEMY THAN STARVING TO DEATH.

WE'RE SO WEAK NOW, THEY'D DEFEAT US EASILY.

THIS IS THE MOMENT THE QUEEN MOTHER, JEZEBEL, HAS BEEN WAITING FOR.

YOUR PEOPLE ARE STARVING—AND WHAT IS ELISHA'S GOD DOING ABOUT IT? NOTHING! GET RID OF ELISHA AND CALL ON MY GOD, BAAL.

YOU'RE RIGHT, MOTHER. I'LL ORDER HIM PUT TO DEATH IMMEDIATELY.

BUT ELISHA HAS NO FEAR OF THE WEAK KING WHO WAVERS BETWEEN GOD AND BAAL.

THIS SIEGE IS NOT THE LORD'S FAULT. IT IS ISRAEL'S OWN PUNISHMENT FOR NOT STAYING FAITHFUL TO GOD. NEVERTHELESS, THE LORD SAYS THERE WILL BE ENOUGH FOOD FOR EVERYONE TOMORROW.

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! WHAT WILL YOU MAKE THE WHOLE ARMY DISAPPEAR? EVEN THEN, IT WOULD TAKE DAYS FOR FOOD TO GET HERE.

MEANWHILE FOUR LEPROS EXILED OUTSIDE THE CITY PONDER THEIR FATE.

I'M STARVING.

WHAT CAN YOU DO? THERE'S NO FOOD IN THE CITY. THE ARAMEAN SOLDIERS ARE THE ONLY ONES WITH FOOD AROUND HERE.

THEN LET'S GO OVER TO THE ARAMEAN CAMP. MAYBE THEY'LL GIVE US SOMETHING TO EAT. IF WE STAY HERE, WE'LL DEFINITELY DIE.

IF WE SURRENDER TO THE ARAMEAN SOLDIERS WE MIGHT DIE—BUT THEY ALSO MIGHT HAVE MERCY ON US AND FEED US. EITHER WAY, WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE.

I WANT TO SURRENDER FIRST! MAYBE THEY'LL GIVE ME FIRST CHOICE OF FOOD.

IN DESPERATION,  
THE FOUR HUNGRY  
LEPERS APPROACH  
THE ARAMEAN CAMP.

SOMETHING  
STRANGE IS GOING  
ON. THERE'S NOT  
A GUARD IN SIGHT.  
MAYBE IT'S A  
TRAP ...

MAYBE IT IS—  
BUT IT'S THIS OR  
STARVE TO DEATH.  
I'D RATHER DIE  
QUICKLY THAN  
SLOWLY.

HOW CAN I  
SURRENDER  
WITHOUT A GUARD  
TO SURRENDER  
TO?

THERE'S  
NOBODY  
HERE!  
BUT  
THEY LEFT  
ALL THEIR  
FOOD.

AND THEIR  
STUFF. LOOK,  
GOLD! WE'RE  
RICH!

FOR A WHILE,  
THE LEPERS REVEL IN  
THEIR GOOD FORTUNE.  
BUT THEN ...

YOU KNOW,  
IT'S PROBABLY NOT  
RIGHT TO KEEP ALL OF  
THIS FOOD FROM THE  
STARVING PEOPLE IN  
THE CITY.

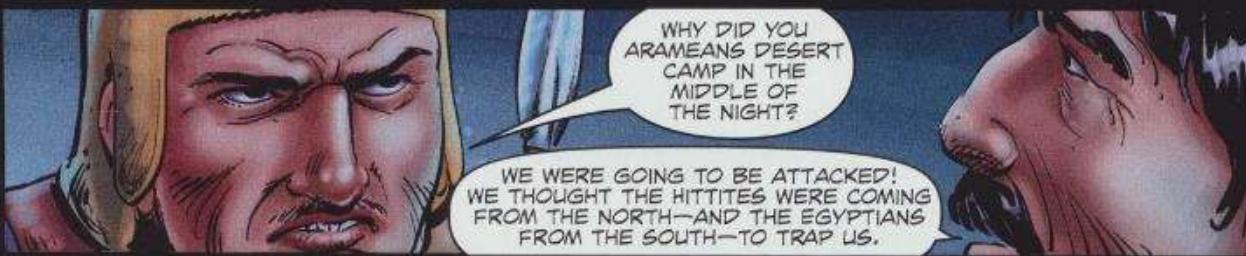
IF WE  
DON'T SHARE  
THE GOOD NEWS,  
PEOPLE MIGHT  
BLAME US.

WELL,  
OKAY, BUT FIRST  
LET'S HIDE SOME  
TREASURE FOR  
OURSELVES.



THE ISRAELITE SCOUTS FOLLOW THE FLEEING ARAMEAN ARMY TO THE JORDAN RIVER. ALONG THE WAY THEY OVERTAKE ONE OF THE ENEMY SOLDIERS.

PULL UP—  
HERE'S ONE WHO DROPPED BEHIND.  
MAYBE HE CAN TELL US WHAT HAPPENED.



BACK IN SAMARIA, THE STARVING ISRAELITES RUSH OUT TO THE ARAMEAN CAMP, EAT THEIR FILL, AND HAUL THE REST OF THE FOOD BACK TO THE CITY.



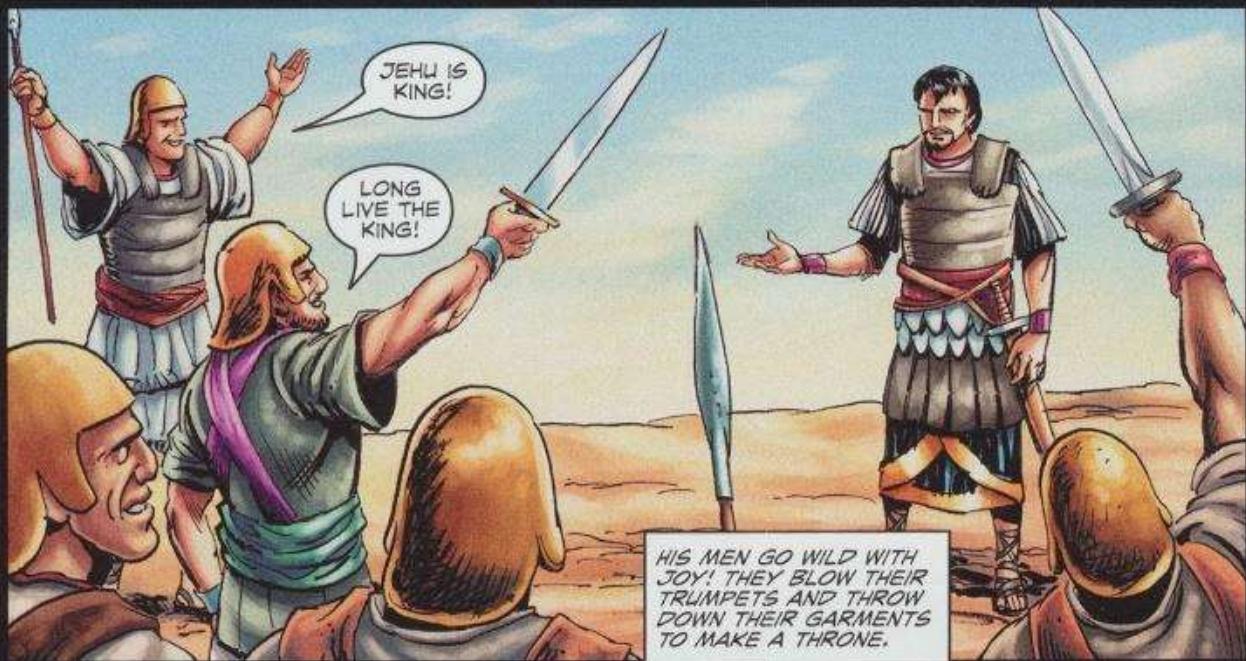
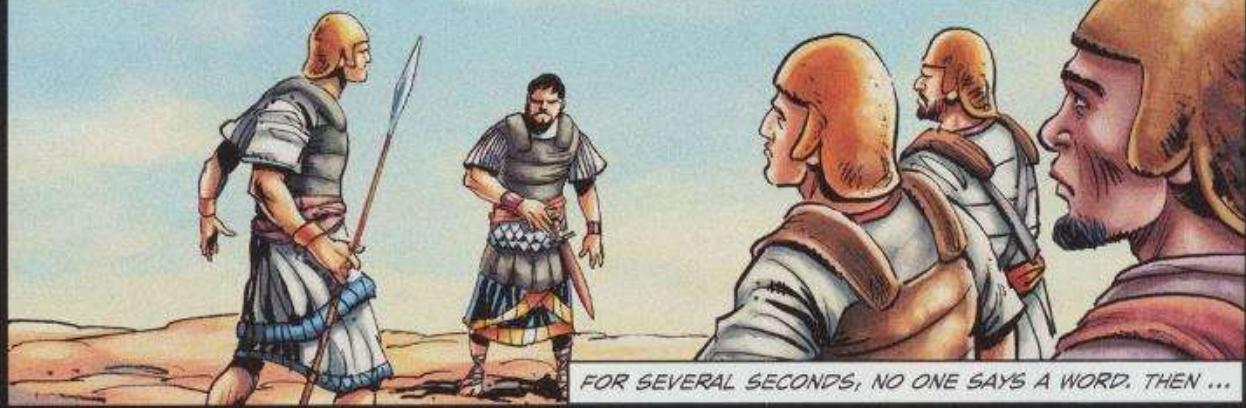
# Anointed Jehu, Painted Jezebel

BASED ON 2 KINGS 9

IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT GOD HAD SAVED ISRAEL, KING JORAM AND HIS MOTHER KEEP ON WORSHIPPING BAAL. IN ANOTHER BATTLE AGAINST ARAM, JORAM IS WOUNDED. HE LEAVES CAPTAIN JEHU IN CHARGE AND RETURNS HOME TO RECUPERATE. THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE LORD'S PROPHECY TO ELIJAH TO BE FULFILLED. ELISHA CALLS FOR A YOUNG PROPHET TO MAKE A QUICK JOURNEY FOR HIM.



IT IS A TENSE  
MOMENT. WILL THE  
ARMY SUPPORT  
JEHU OR JORAM?



JORAM THINKS JEHU IS BRINGING NEWS OF THE WAR. SO WITH HIS NEPHEW-KING AHAZIAH OF JUDAH—HE RIDES OUT TO MEET JEHU.

DO YOU  
BRING NEWS  
OF PEACE?

HOW CAN THERE BE PEACE IN ISRAEL  
WHILE YOU AND YOUR MOTHER,  
JEZEBEL, WORSHIP BAAL?

TREACHERY,  
AHAZIAH!  
FLEE FOR  
YOUR LIFE!



KREEEK



IS IT RIGHT  
FOR JEHU TO  
ORDER AHAZIAH'S  
DEATH? HE'S A  
DESCENDANT  
OF DAVID!

BUT ALSO A DESCENDANT  
OF Ahab. HE AND HIS MOTHER,  
ATHALIAH, WORSHIP BAAL IN  
JUDAH. WE MUST FOLLOW  
JEHU'S ORDERS, RIGHT  
OR NOT.

MEANWHILE, NEWS OF JEHU'S REBELLION REACHES THE PALACE IN JEZREEL BEFORE HE DOES.

QUEEN JEZEBEL! JEHU HAS KILLED YOUR SON!

JEHU! HE'LL BE HERE NEXT!

WITHOUT PANICKING, JEZEBEL CALMLY SITS AT HER MIRROR AND PUTS ON HER FINEST MAKEUP.

HE WILL NOT SEE ME CRY, AND I WILL NOT BEG FOR MY LIFE.

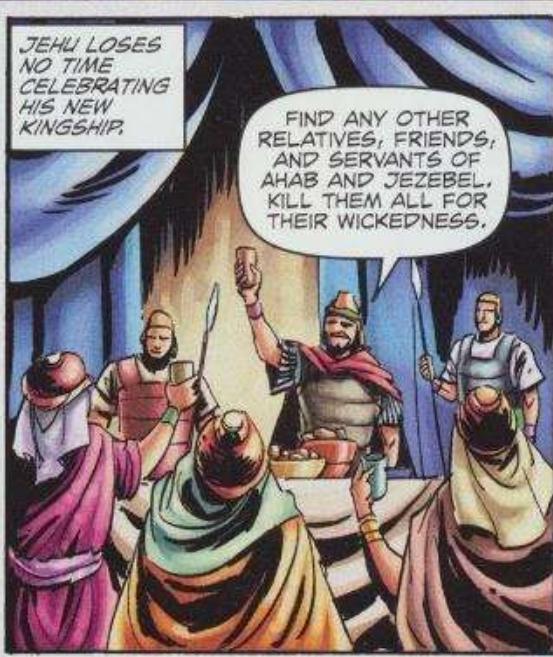
JEZEBEL! IT IS FINALLY TIME FOR YOU TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS.

THAT'S WHAT ALL REBELLIOUS SERVANTS SAY. YOU WILL NOT LAST A WEEK AS KING.

JEHU ORDERS THE PALACE SERVANTS TO SHOW THEIR ALLEGIANCE TO HIM BY PUSHING QUEEN JEZEBEL FROM THE WINDOW TO HER DEATH IN THE STREET BELOW. HER BODY IS LEFT UNBURIED, AND THE WILD ANIMALS EAT HER REMAINS. SO JEZEBEL PAYS WITH HER LIFE FOR THE EVIL SHE HAS DONE—AND THE FINAL PART OF ELIJAH'S PROPHECY COMES TRUE.



JEHU LOSES NO TIME CELEBRATING HIS NEW KINGSHIP.



DESTROY THE IDOLS OF BAAL!



JEHU WIPES OUT THE WORSHIP OF BAAL IN ISRAEL. BUT EVEN THOUGH HE COMMITS GOOD ACTS FOR THE LORD, HE IS MOSTLY REMEMBERED FOR HIS EAGERNESS TO KILL ANYONE HE THOUGHT MIGHT CHALLENGE HIS RULE.

PRIDE GOES BEFORE THE FALL.



# A Queen's Plot

BASED ON 2 KINGS 11:1-3;  
2 CHRONICLES 22:10-12

ELISHA HAS ANOINTED JEHU TO BE THE NEXT KING OF ISRAEL. JEHU ASSURES HIS CLAIM TO THE THRONE BY KILLING ANYONE RELATED TO THE WICKED Ahab AND JEZEBEL. TO THE SOUTH, IN THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH, AHAZIAH'S MOTHER, ATHALIAH, RECEIVES THE NEWS ...

I BRING BAD NEWS. YOUR MOTHER, QUEEN JEZEBEL, AND BROTHER, KING JORAM, ARE DEAD. AND YOUR SON, KING AHAZIAH, IS DEAD TOO. ISRAEL'S NEW KING—JEHU—HAS KILLED THEM ALL.



BUT ATHALIAH'S GRIEF IS ONLY A COVER FOR HER PLAN.

THE GOD OF ISRAEL HAS KILLED ALL MY FAMILY. VERY WELL, I WILL KILL ALL OF HIS FAMILY. NO DESCENDANT OF DAVID WILL BE LEFT ALIVE TO RULE IN JUDAH. THEN I CAN BE QUEEN AND WORSHIP BAAL LIKE MY MOTHER TAUGHT ME.

SHE ACTS AT ONCE TO CARRY OUT HER BOLD PLOT.

ORDER YOUR SOLDIERS TO KILL ALL OF THE KING'S MALE RELATIVES. DON'T LET EVEN ONE OF THEM ESCAPE—NOT ONE.



BUT NEWS OF THE PLOT REACHES JEHOSEBA, THE WIFE OF THE HIGH PRIEST AND SISTER TO THE DEAD KING AHAZIAH.



UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS, THE TWO WOMEN HURRY TO THE TEMPLE OF GOD. THEY MEET JEHOIADA AT THE SUR GATE.



A FEW HOURS LATER, THE QUEEN'S OFFICER REPORTS THAT ALL MALE DESCENDANTS TO THE THRONE ARE DEAD—NOT REALIZING THAT THEY HAVE MISSED ONE.



ONCE THE IMMEDIATE DANGER IS OVER, JEHOSHEBA REJOINS JEHOIADA IN THE TEMPLE. FOR SIX YEARS, ATHALIAH RULES JUDAH WITH A CRUEL HAND UNTIL AT LAST THE PEOPLE BEGIN TO COMPLAIN. UNKNOWN TO THEM—IN A SECRET ROOM OF THE TEMPLE—YOUNG PRINCE JOASH SPENDS THOSE SIX YEARS BEING RAISED BY THE HIGH PRIEST AND HIS WIFE.

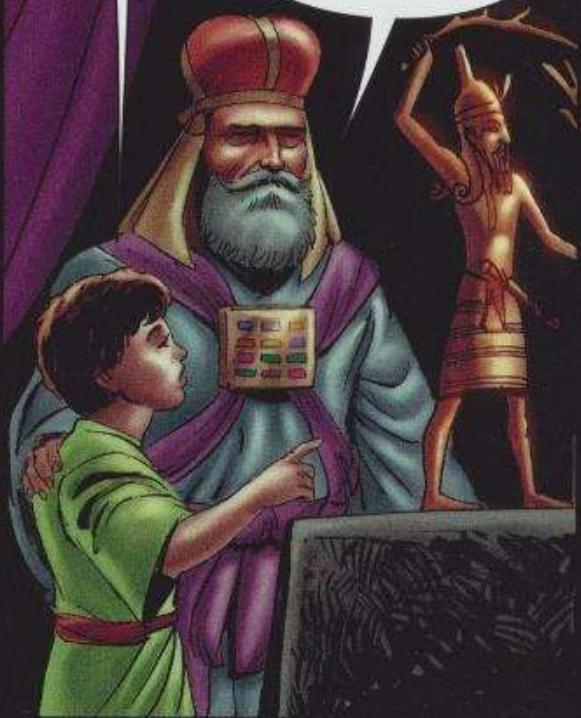
# The Boy King of Judah

BASED ON 2 KINGS 11:4-21;  
2 CHRONICLES 23

FOR YEARS JEHOIADA RAISES THE YOUNG PRINCE JOASH SECRETLY IN THE TEMPLE.

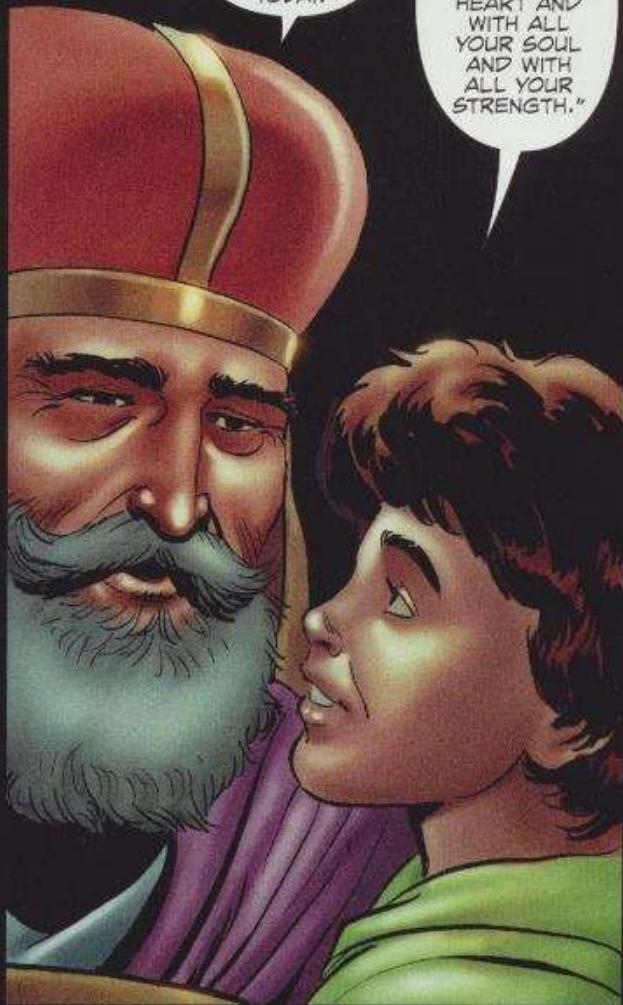
WHAT'S THIS?

THE IDOL BAAL—  
THE CAUSE OF ALL THE TROUBLE IN JUDAH. YOUR GRANDMOTHER WORSHIPS IT. WHEN YOU ARE KING, YOU MUST DESTROY IT AND LEAD YOUR PEOPLE BACK TO GOD.



NOW,  
TELL ME THE WORD OF GOD YOU HAVE LEARNED TODAY.

"YOU MUST LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH."



JEHOIADA WAITS UNTIL THE PEOPLE ARE TIRED OF ATHALIAH AND READY TO SHAKE OFF HER RULE. THEN HE CALLS TOGETHER ALL THE COMMANDERS OF THE GUARDS WHO ARE FAITHFUL TO THE LORD AND HE KNOWS HE CAN TRUST.

MEN, FOR SIX YEARS WE HAVE LIVED UNDER THE YOKE OF A BAAL-WORSHIPPING TYRANT. YOU DID THIS BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT THERE WAS NO LONGER AN HEIR OF DAVID. THIS IS PRINCE JOASH, YOUR RIGHTFUL RULER, WHO EVERYONE THOUGHT WAS DEAD. I AM GOING TO ANOINT HIM KING OF JUDAH ON THE NEXT SABBATH. BE THERE WITH YOUR MEN TO PROTECT HIM ... AND TO MAKE SURE ATHALIAH DOES NOT ESCAPE.



THE NEXT SABBATH IN THE TEMPLE, JEHOIADA HANDS OUT THE SPEARS AND SHIELDS IN THE TEMPLE, WEAPONS THAT USED TO BELONG TO KING DAVID.

GOD PROTECT US, AND DAVID'S WEAPONS DEFEND US.



MEANWHILE, IN THE PALACE ...

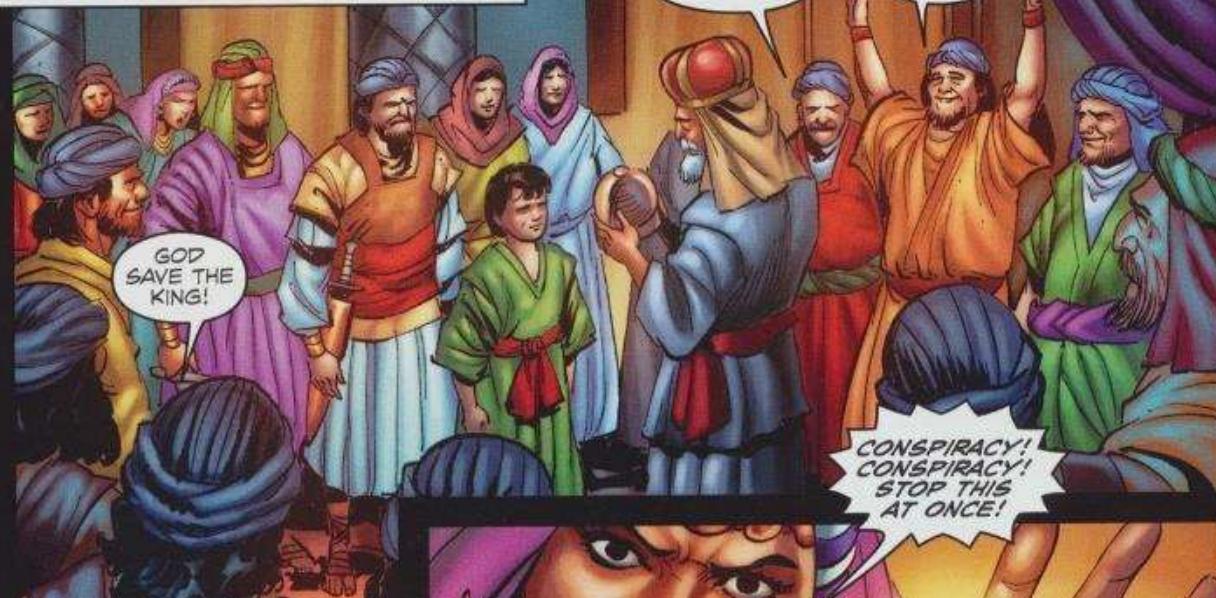
THE SOUND OF CHEERING—IT'S COMING FROM THE TEMPLE. I WONDER WHAT IT MEANS!

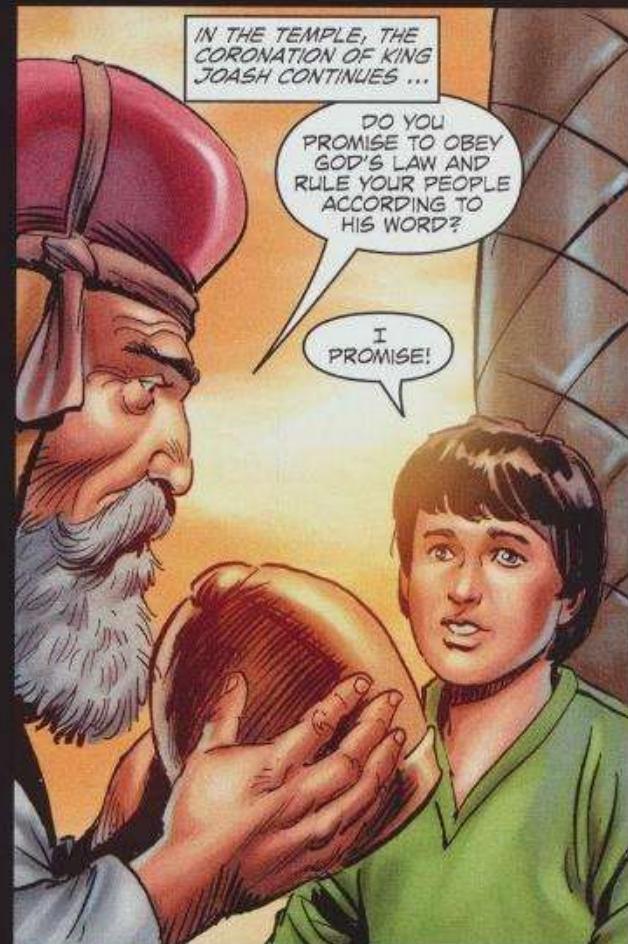
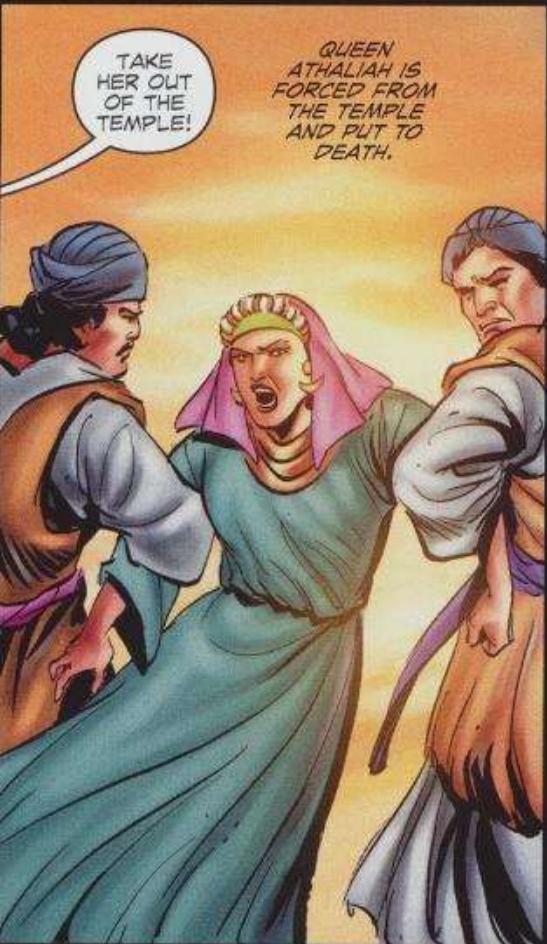
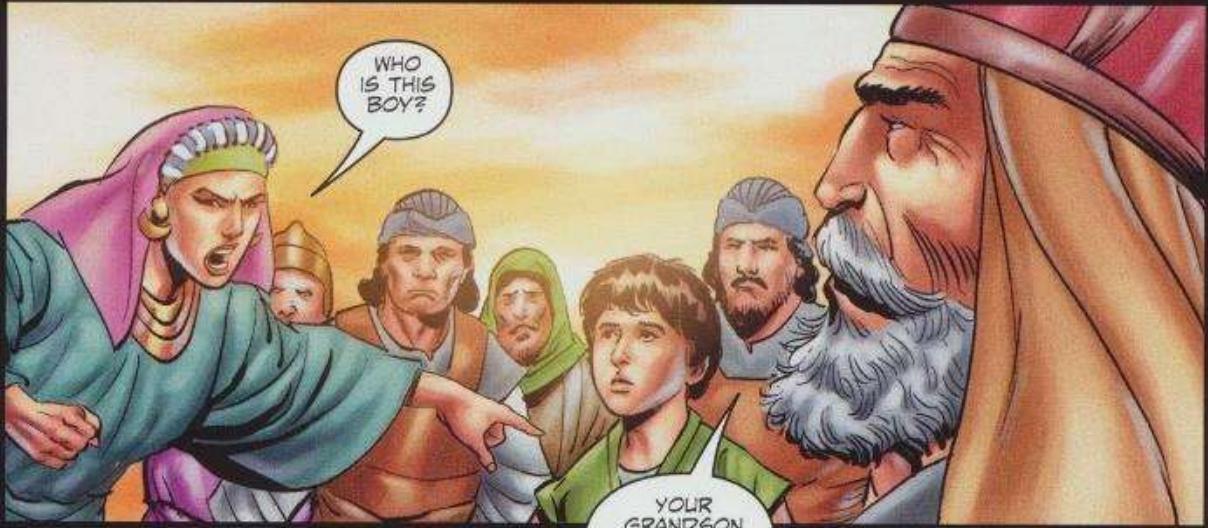


QUEEN ATHALIAH HEARS THE SOUND OF SHOUTING AND RUSHES TO THE TEMPLE—TO FIND A SMALL BOY BEING CROWNED KING.

LONG LIVE THE KING OF JUDAH!

GOD SAVE THE KING!

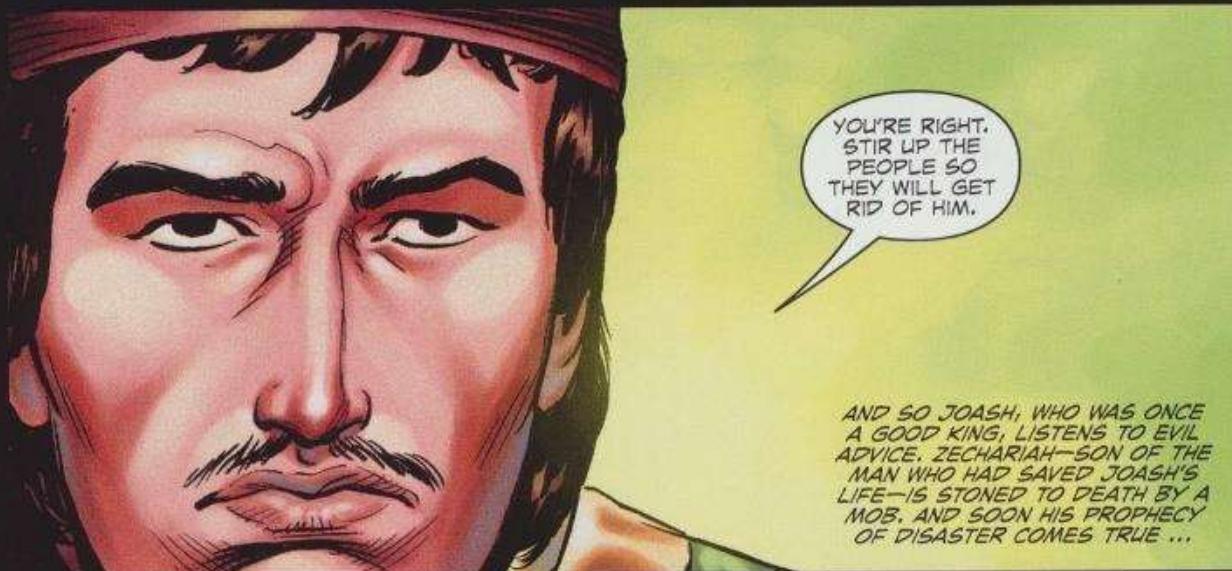
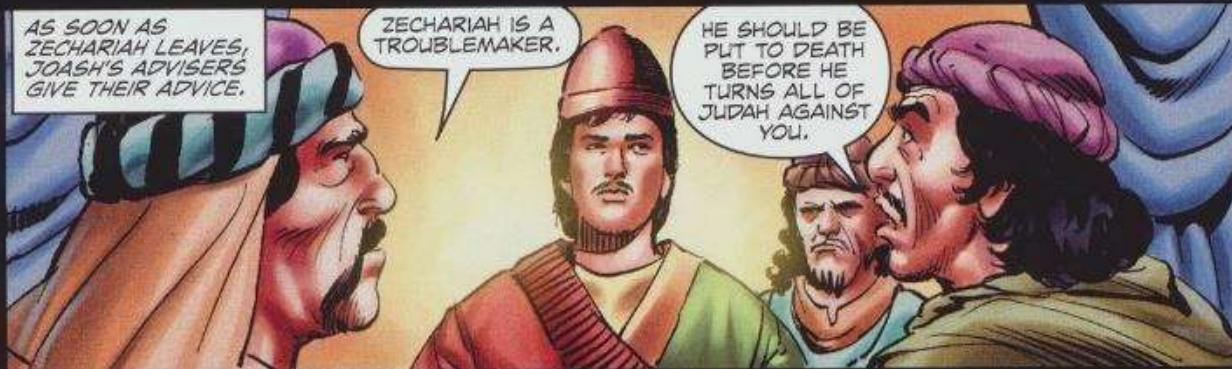
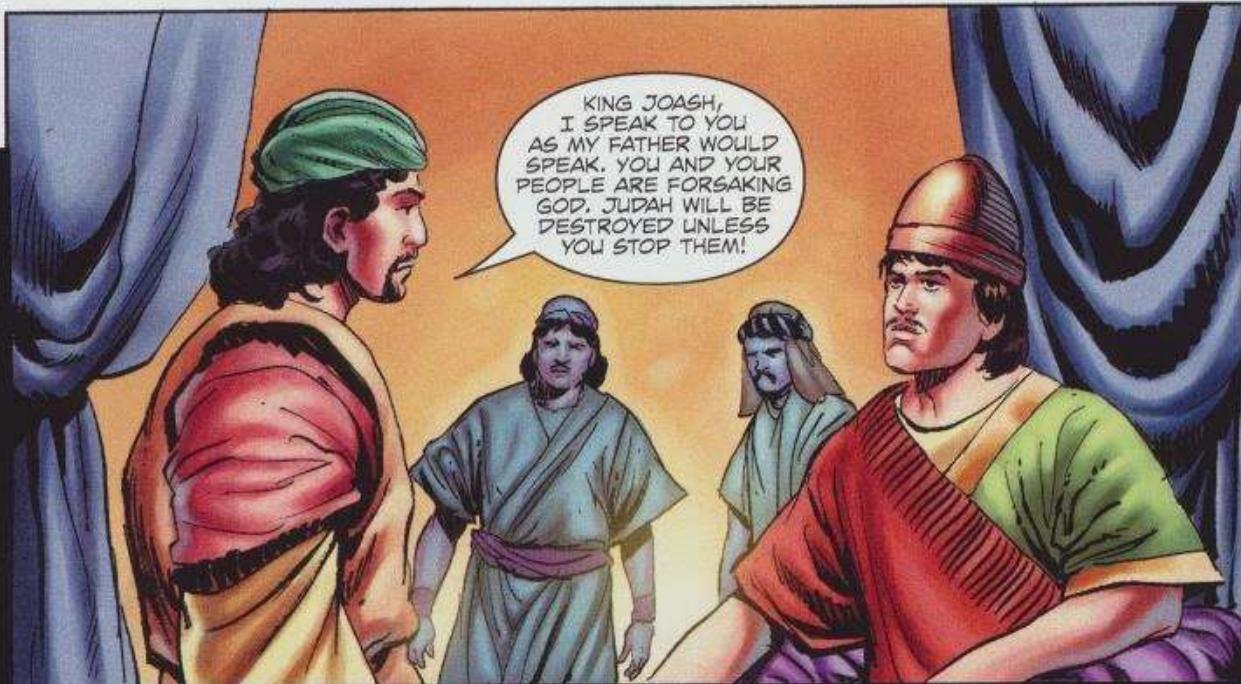




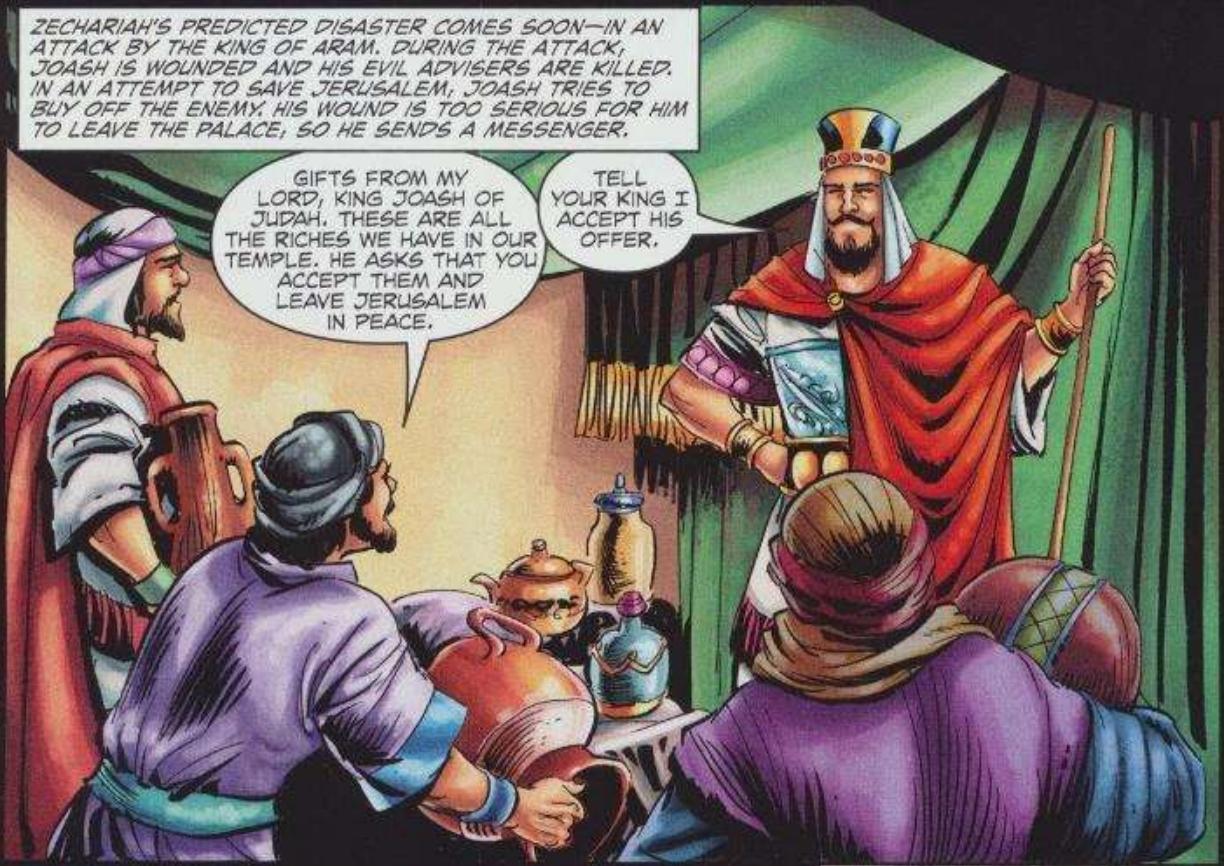
# Dagger in the Night

BASED ON 2 CHRONICLES 24:17-27; 2 KINGS 12

UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF JEHOIADA, THE HIGH PRIEST, JOASH DESTROYS THE TEMPLE OF BAAL AND LEADS HIS PEOPLE BACK TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD. THE HOUSE OF GOD IS REPAIRED, AND FOR YEARS JUDAH PROSPERS. BUT WHEN JEHOIADA DIES, JOASH IS TOO WEAK TO STAND UP UNDER THE PRESSURE OF THOSE WHO WANT TO TURN HIM AWAY FROM GOD. FINALLY, JEHOIADA'S SON, ZECHARIAH, GOES TO THE KING.



ZECHARIAH'S PREDICTED DISASTER COMES SOON—IN AN ATTACK BY THE KING OF ARAM. DURING THE ATTACK, JOASH IS WOUNDED AND HIS EVIL ADVISERS ARE KILLED. IN AN ATTEMPT TO SAVE JERUSALEM, JOASH TRIES TO BUY OFF THE ENEMY. HIS WOUND IS TOO SERIOUS FOR HIM TO LEAVE THE PALACE, SO HE SENDS A MESSENGER.

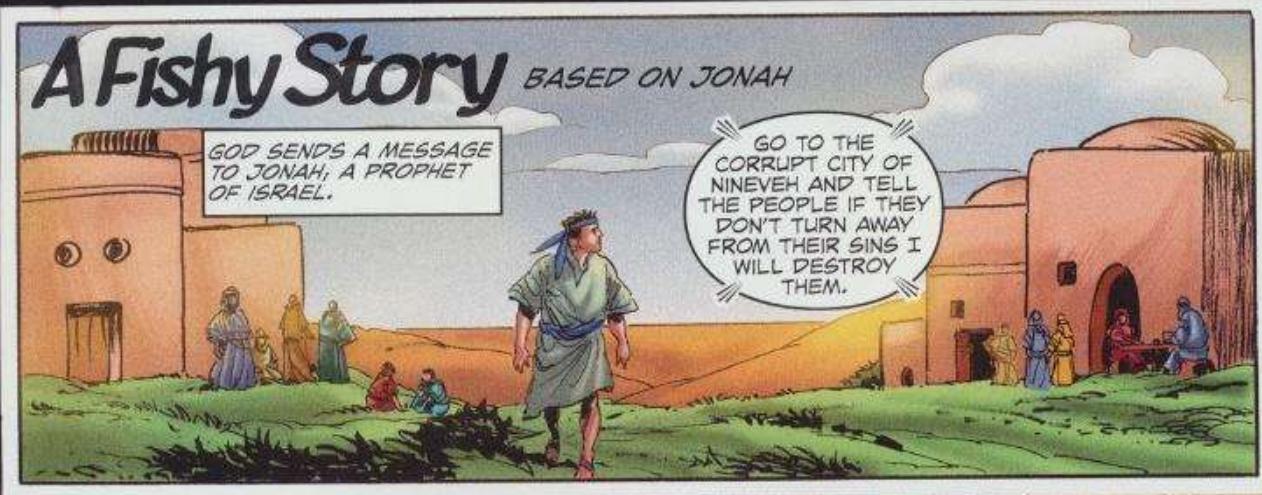


# A Fishy Story

BASED ON JONAH

GOD SENDS A MESSAGE TO JONAH, A PROPHET OF ISRAEL.

GO TO THE CORRUPT CITY OF NINEVEH AND TELL THE PEOPLE IF THEY DON'T TURN AWAY FROM THEIR SINS I WILL DESTROY THEM.



JONAH IMMEDIATELY MAKES HIS WAY TO JOPPA, A BUSY SEAPORT TOWN WITH SHIPS GOING TO ALL CORNERS OF CIVILIZATION. THERE HE INQUIRES OF A SHIP'S CAPTAIN ...

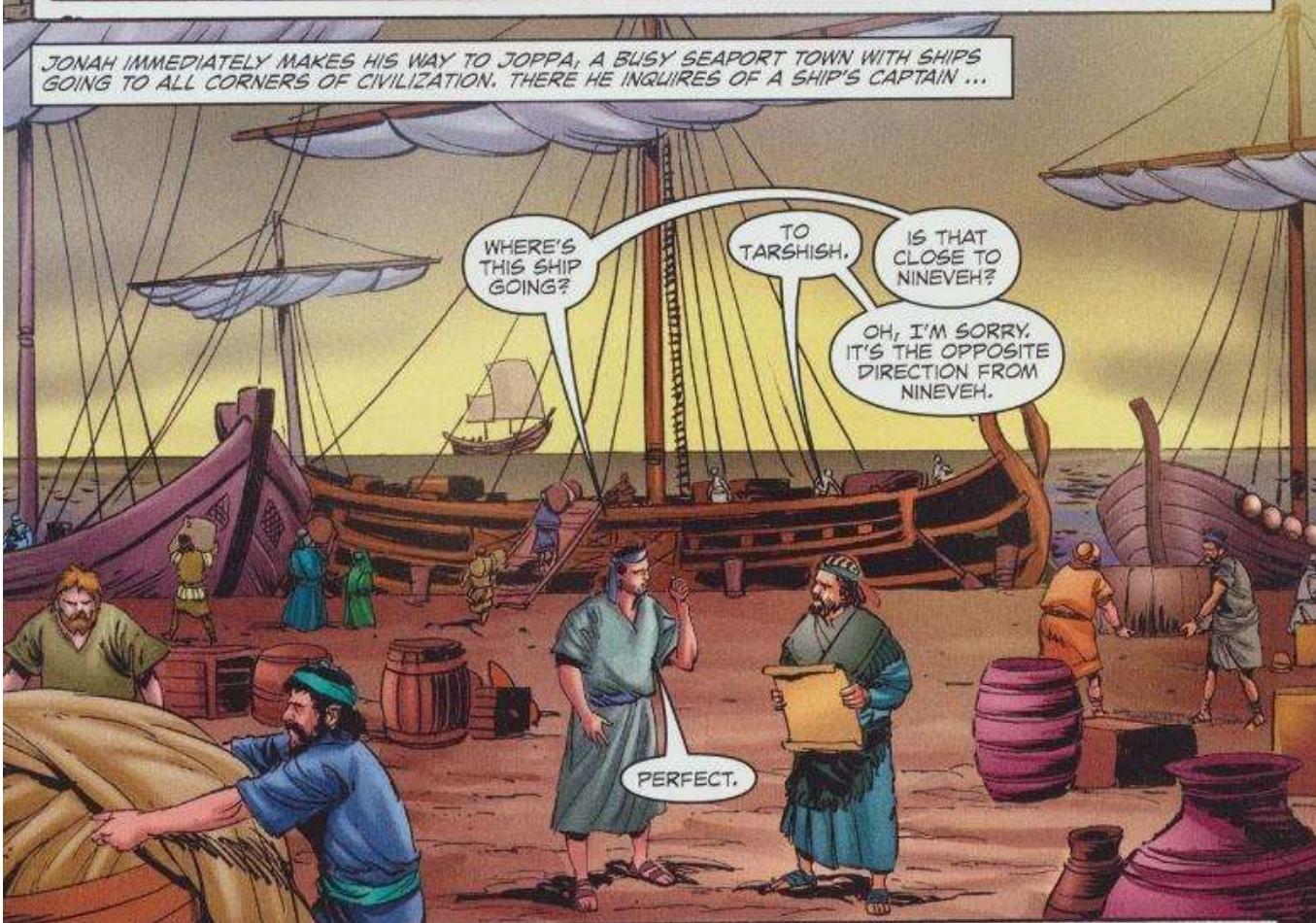
WHERE'S THIS SHIP GOING?

TO TARSHISH.

IS THAT CLOSE TO NINEVEH?

OH, I'M SORRY. IT'S THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM NINEVEH.

PERFECT.

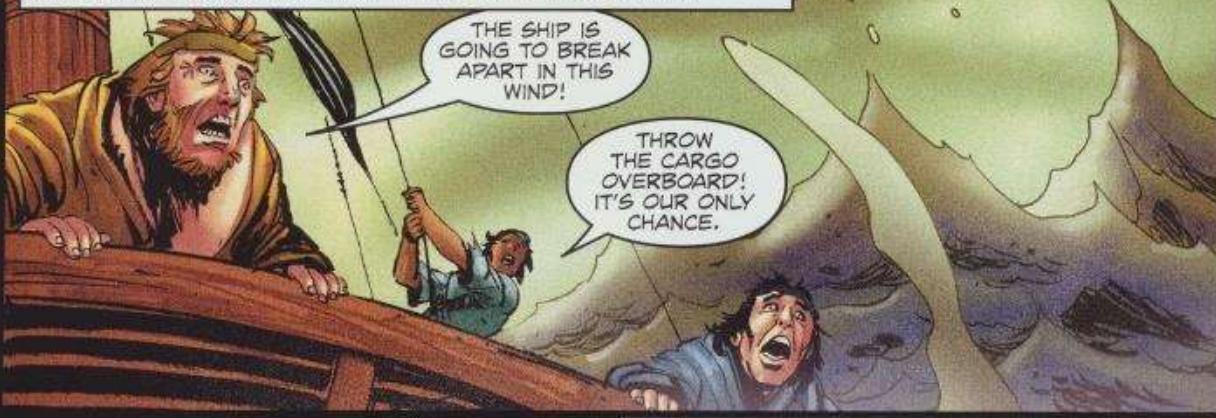


HAVING PAID FOR HIS JOURNEY OF DISOBEDIENCE, JONAH BOARDS THE SHIP.

I'M SORRY, GOD. I CAN'T GO TO SUCH A FILTHY, DESPICABLE PLACE AS NINEVEH.



BUT GOD ISN'T ABOUT TO LET JONAH GET AWAY FROM HIS DUTY THAT EASILY. HE HURLS A GREAT STORM AT JONAH'S SHIP.



BUT THE STORM ONLY RAGES ON MORE FIERCELY.



ALTHOUGH JONAH KNOWS THAT GOD IS ANGRY WITH HIM, HE DOESN'T ADMIT TO THE SAILORS THAT HIS DISOBEDIENCE IS THE CAUSE OF THE STORM. IN DESPERATION, THEY DRAW STRAWS TO FIND OUT WHO HAS ANGERED THE GODS.



BUT THE SAILORS DON'T WANT TO THROW JONAH INTO THE SEA. THEY TRY TO ROW BACK TO LAND, BUT THE SEA GETS EVEN MORE ROUGH.

WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT! IT'S GETTING WORSE.

WE HAVE NO CHOICE! WE'LL HAVE TO THROW JONAH OVERBOARD.

LORD, DON'T BE MAD AT US FOR THROWING THIS MAN INTO THE SEA.

LOOK! WHAT IS THAT THING?

JONAH ASSUMES HE WILL DROWN, BUT GOD DOESN'T INTEND TO LET HIM OFF THE HOOK THAT EASILY.

LORD, HELP ME!

THE MOMENT THE SEA MONSTER SWALLOWS JONAH, THE STORM CALMS. AT THIS, THE SAILORS GIVE PRAISE TO GOD, WHO THEY NOW KNOW COMMANDS ALL OF NATURE.



BUT JONAH IS NOT DEAD. GOD KEEPS HIM ALIVE INSIDE THE GIANT FISH FOR THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS. THIS GIVES HIM LOTS OF TIME TO THINK AND PRAY ... AND MAYBE REALIZE HOW ARROGANT IT WAS TO DISOBEDI

LORD, I CALLED OUT TO YOU AND YOU SAVED ME. THE WATERS WERE ALL AROUND ME, BUT YOU KEPT ME SAFE. YOU ARE THE ONE WHO SAVES!

GOD HEARS JONAH'S PRAYER AND MAKES THE FISH SPIT HIM UP ON DRY GROUND.

NOW DO WHAT I HAVE COMMANDED!

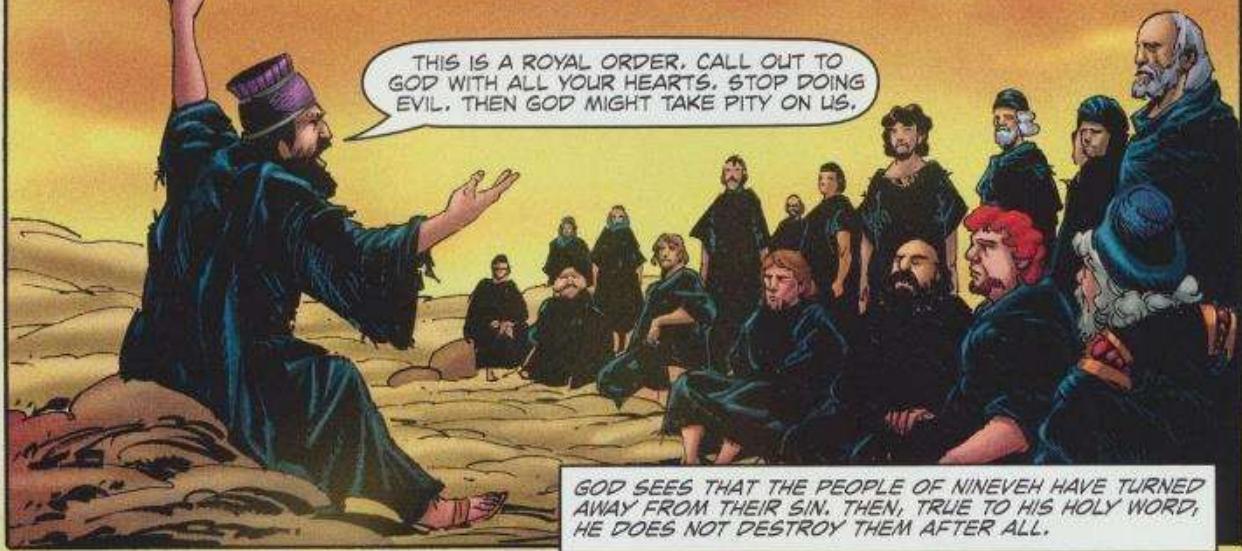
ONCE AGAIN, GOD TELLS JONAH TO GO TO NINEVEH. THIS TIME JONAH OBEYS.

TURN AWAY FROM YOUR SIN, OR THE WHOLE CITY WILL BE DESTROYED. THIS IS WHAT GOD SAYS.

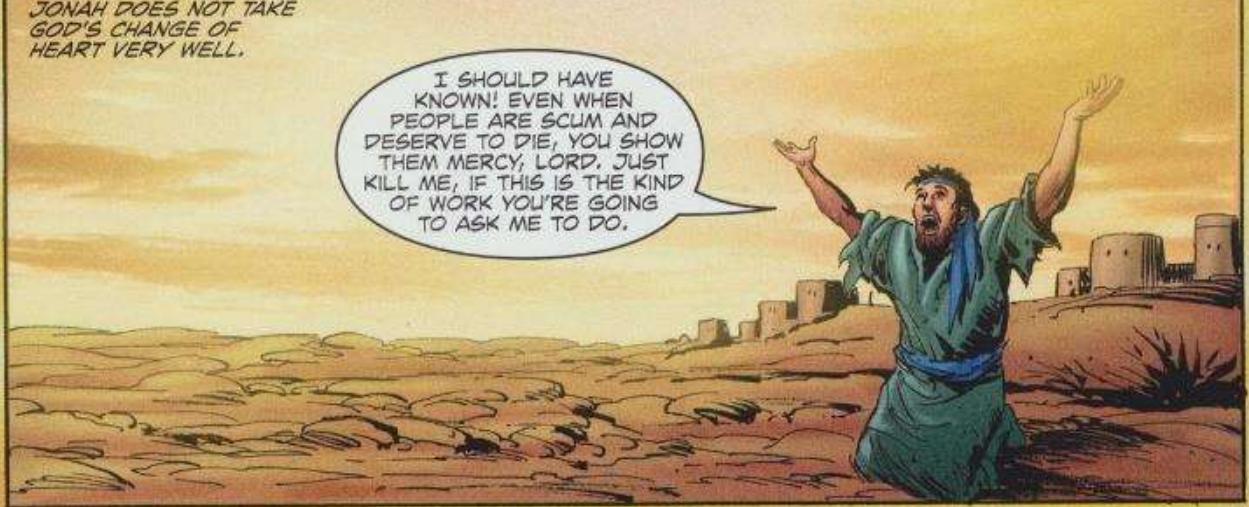
AND WHEN GOD DOES PUNISH YOU LIKE YOU DESERVE, DON'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YOU.



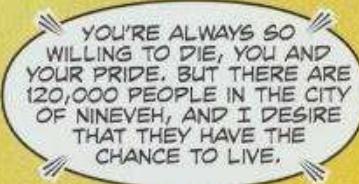
BUT TO JONAH'S SHOCK AND DISMAY, THE PEOPLE ACTUALLY LISTEN TO HIM. TO SHOW HOW SORRY THEY ARE, THEY PUT ON BLACK CLOTHES—EVEN THE KING!

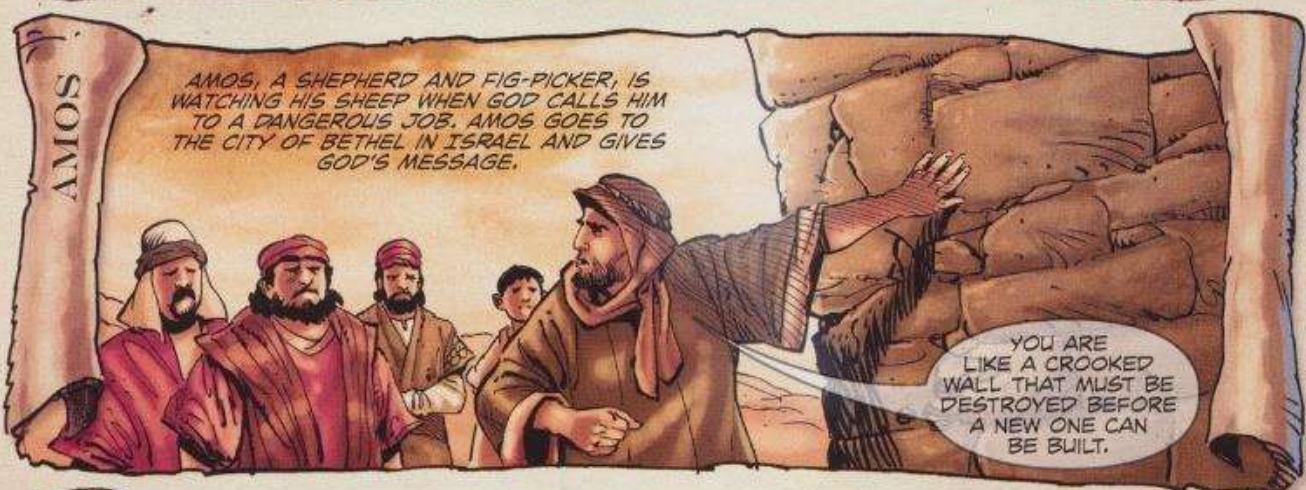
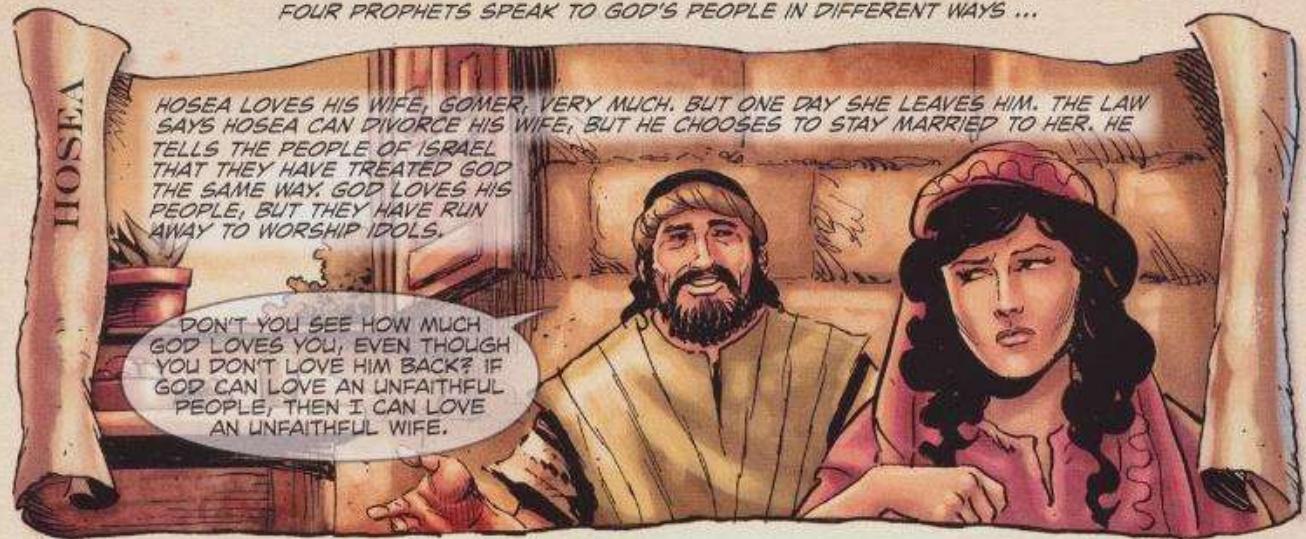


JONAH DOES NOT TAKE GOD'S CHANGE OF HEART VERY WELL.



BUT GOD SCOLDS JONAH FOR HIS ATTITUDE.

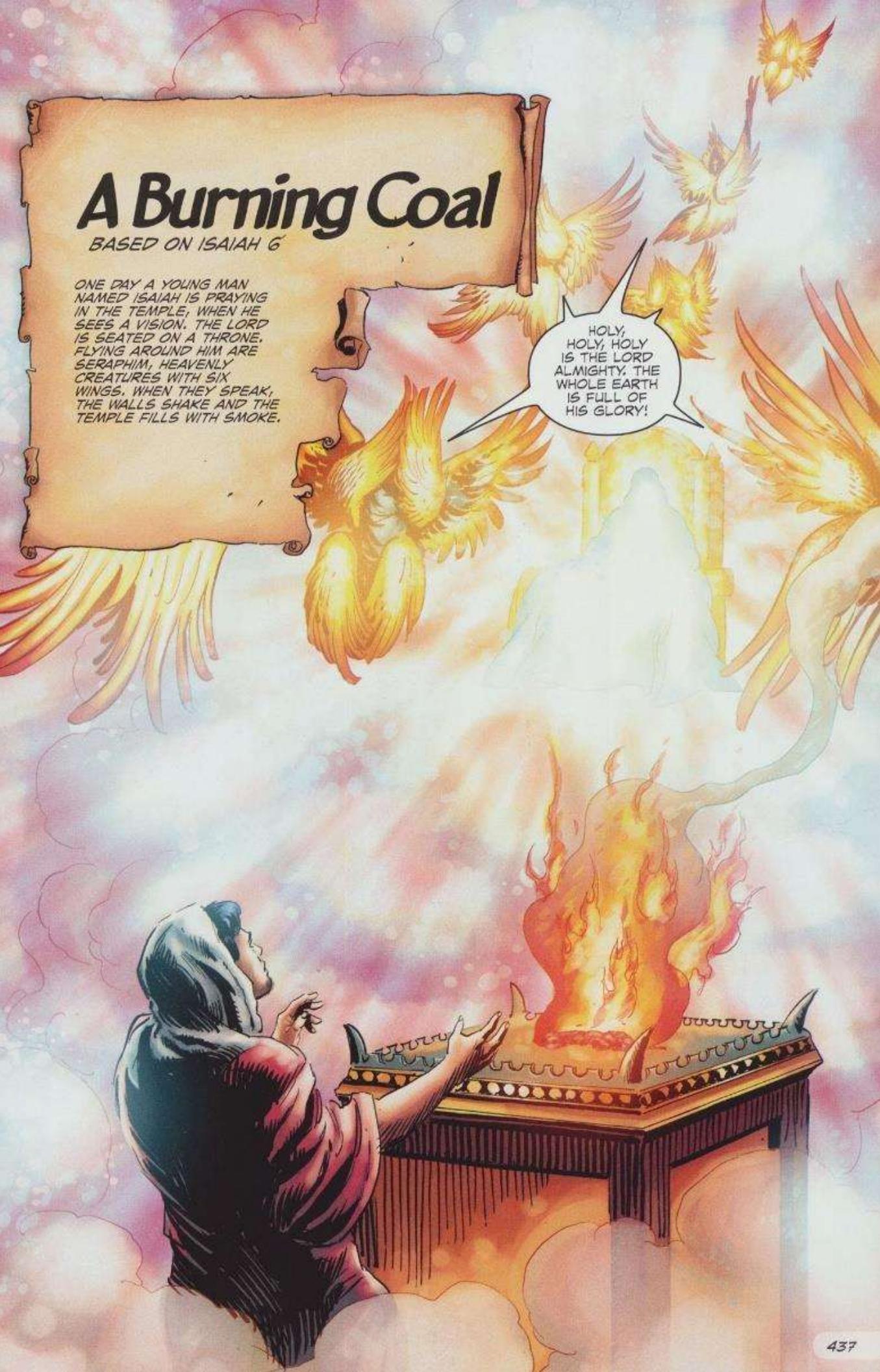




# A Burning Coal

BASED ON ISAIAH 6

ONE DAY A YOUNG MAN NAMED ISAIAH IS PRAYING IN THE TEMPLE. WHEN HE SEES A VISION. THE LORD IS SEATED ON A THRONE. FLYING AROUND HIM ARE SERAPHIM, HEAVENLY CREATURES WITH SIX WINGS. WHEN THEY SPEAK, THE WALLS SHAKE AND THE TEMPLE FILLS WITH SMOKE.



HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD ALMIGHTY. THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY!



WITH THIS COURAGEOUS ANSWER, ISAIAH STARTS ON HIS JOURNEY TO BECOME ONE OF THE GREATEST OF THE HEBREW PROPHETS. HE PROPHESIES MOSTLY DURING THE REIGN OF KING HEZEKIAH.

# Hezekiah's Healing

BASED ON 2 KINGS 17:1-18:16; 20;  
2 CHRONICLES 29-30; ISAIAH 38-39

THROUGH THE  
INFLUENCE OF PROPHETS  
LIKE ISAIAH, HEZEKIAH IS  
A RIGHTEOUS KING.

OUR FATHERS  
DISOBEYED GOD,  
AND JUDAH HAS BECOME  
WEAK. WE WILL SERVE  
THE LORD, AND WITH  
HIS HELP MAKE OUR  
NATION STRONG  
AGAIN.



BUT BEFORE HEZEKIAH CAN BEGIN TO  
REFORM THE RELIGION OF JUDAH, A  
CATASTROPHE STRIKES. OFF TO THE  
NORTH, THE PEOPLE SEE SMOKE  
AND FEAR THE WORST.



BEFORE LONG, SHOCKING  
NEWS FILLS THE STREETS  
OF JERUSALEM WITH  
GRIEF AND ALARM.

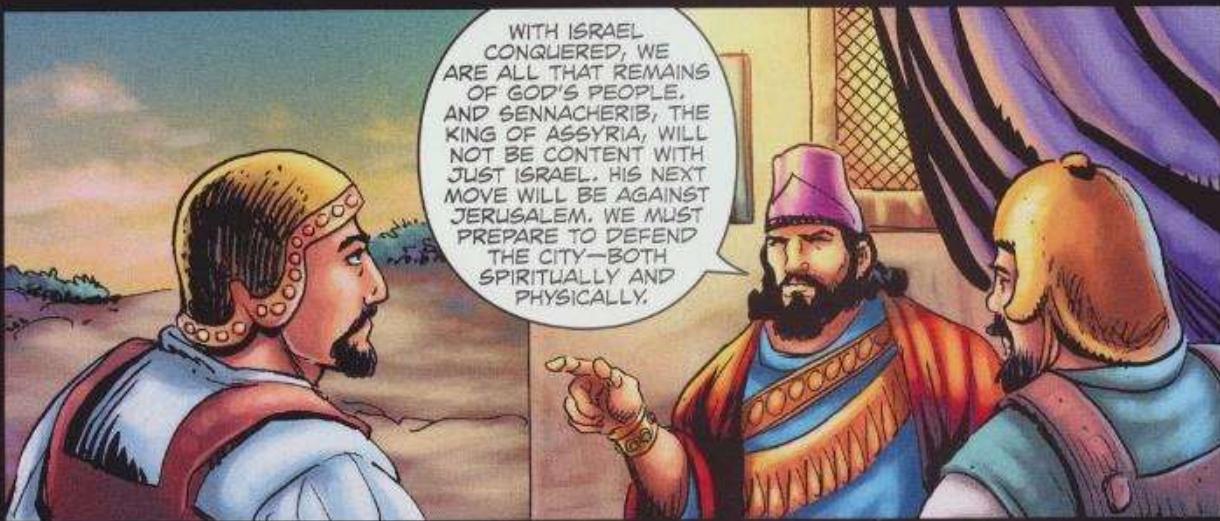
THE KING  
OF ASSYRIA HAS  
DESTROYED THE  
CITY OF SAMARIA AND  
TAKEN THE PEOPLE  
OF ISRAEL AWAY  
AS CAPTIVES.

OUR BROTHERS  
MURDERED! OUR  
SISTERS TAKEN  
FROM THE LAND  
GOD GAVE US!



WITH THE FALL OF SAMARIA, THE  
NORTHERN KINGDOM OF ISRAEL COMES  
TO AN END. GREAT MASSES OF PEOPLE  
ARE CARRIED AWAY, NEVER TO RETURN.  
THE FEW ISRAELITES LEFT IN THE LAND  
MIX WITH THE OTHER NATIONS THAT THE  
CONQUERORS BRING IN.





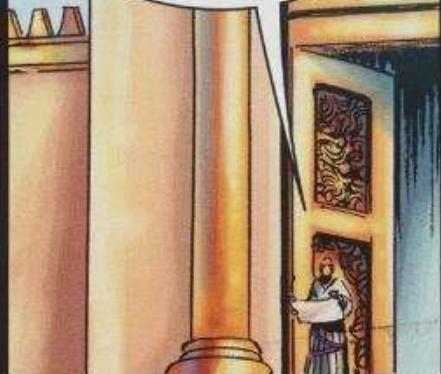
AT HEZEKIAH'S ORDERS, THE TEMPLE IS REPAIRED, AND THE KING LEADS HIS PEOPLE BACK TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD.

GOD'S HOLY TEMPLE HAS BEEN REBUILT IN JERUSALEM. KING HEZEKIAH INVITES ALL ISRAELITES EVERYWHERE TO COME AND WORSHIP IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, ESPECIALLY THOSE SCATTERED IN EXILE BY THE ASSYRIANS—WE WELCOME YOU HOME TO GOD'S TEMPLE.

AT HEZEKIAH'S DIRECTION, WORKERS BUILD A TUNNEL BETWEEN A SPRING OUTSIDE THE WALLS AND A POOL INSIDE THE CITY.

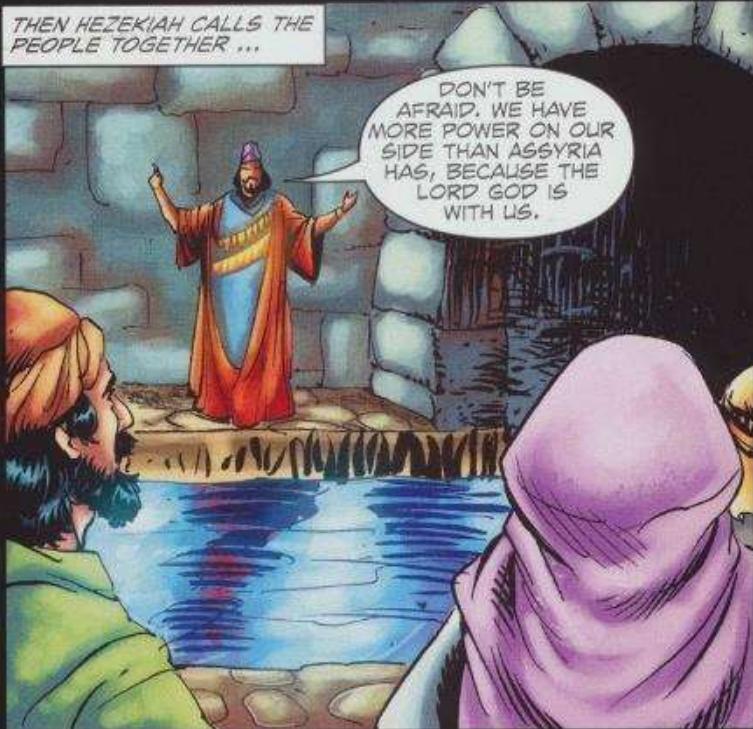
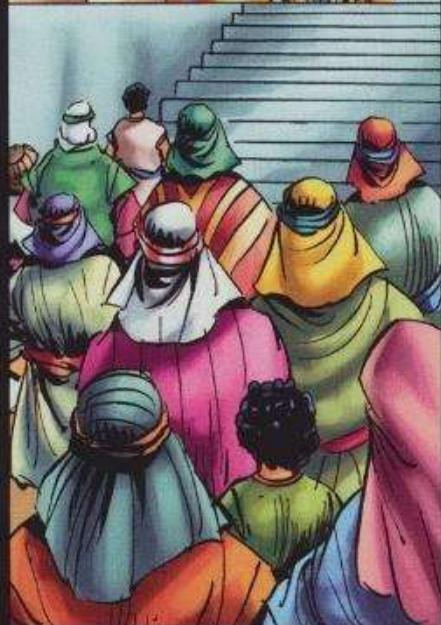
THIS WILL PROTECT THE FLOW OF WATER TO US AND CUT OFF THE WATER SUPPLY FOR THE ASSYRIANS.

MY BROTHERS ARE HELPING TO BUILD UP THE WALLS. THANK GOD WE HAVE A KING WHO WILL DEFEND US.



THEN HEZEKIAH CALLS THE PEOPLE TOGETHER ...

DON'T BE AFRAID. WE HAVE MORE POWER ON OUR SIDE THAN ASSYRIA HAS, BECAUSE THE LORD GOD IS WITH US.



HEZEKIAH FIGHTS OFF ASSYRIA. BUT TEN YEARS LATER THE ASSYRIANS ATTACK AGAIN. THIS TIME HE PAYS ASSYRIA A RANSOM OF SILVER AND GOLD TO LEAVE JUDAH ALONE—AND HE IS FORCED TO TAKE SOME OF IT FROM GOD'S TEMPLE. SOON AFTERWARD, HE BECOMES DEATHLY ILL. THE PROPHET ISAIAH VISITS HIM AT HIS SICKBED.

I AM SORRY, MY KING. THE LORD HAS SPOKEN: "GET YOUR WILL READY AND CHOOSE YOUR HEIR TO THE THRONE. YOU WILL NOT RECOVER FROM THIS SICKNESS."

AFTER ISAIAH LEAVES, HEZEKIAH CRIES OUT TO THE LORD.

LORD!  
HAVEN'T I BEEN  
YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANT?  
I'VE SERVED YOU WITH  
MY WHOLE HEART AND  
TRIED TO DO WHAT YOU  
THINK IS GOOD.

AT THAT MOMENT, ISAIAH COMES BACK INTO THE ROOM.

VERY WELL, GOD HAS HEARD YOUR PRAYERS. HE WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER 15 YEARS TO LEAD HIS PEOPLE. BUT DON'T RULE IN FEAR! MAKE SURE YOU LEAD THEM IN HOLINESS AND FAITH.

THANK YOU, LORD! AS PROOF OF YOUR PROMISE, WILL YOU MAKE THE SHADOW ON THE SUNDIAL OF AHAZ GO BACKWARD TEN DEGREES?

HEZEKIAH LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW AT THE STEPS OF THE SUNDIAL ...

GOD MIRACULOUSLY MAKES THE SUN MOVE BACKWARD IN THE SKY TO SHOW HE WILL KEEP HIS PROMISE TO HEZEKIAH.

AFTER HEZEKIAH GETS BETTER, AMBASSADORS VISIT HIM FROM A DISTANT COUNTRY CALLED BABYLON.

OUR KING HEARD YOU WERE SICK, AND SENT US WITH THESE LETTERS AND A GIFT.

WELL, THANK YOUR KING FOR ME. MAY I SHOW YOU AROUND?

HEZEKIAH SHOWS OFF HIS ARMY AND ALL THE RICHES HE HAS STORED UP IN THE TEMPLE AND HIS VARIOUS WAREHOUSES.

AFTER THEY'VE SEEN EVERY PIECE OF WEALTH IN THE CITY, THE AMBASSADORS HEAD BACK TO BABYLON. AS THEY'RE LEAVING, THE PROPHET ISAIAH COMES TO SEE HIS KING.

YOU PRIDEFUL KING! YOU MAY DEFEAT THE ASSYRIANS, BUT BABYLON WILL ONE DAY BE THE DESTRUCTION OF JUDAH! YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE TAKEN AWAY FROM JERUSALEM AND SERVE AS SLAVES TO THE BABYLONIAN KING.

THEY WERE AMBASSADORS FROM SOME FAR-OFF COUNTRY YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF—I FORGET THE NAME ... BABEL? ... BABILLU? ... BABYLON! VERY NICE FELLOWS, I SHOWED THEM ALL MY TREASURES.

OH! WELL, AT LEAST IT WON'T HAPPEN IN MY LIFETIME.

# Insults and Prophecies

BASED ON 2 KINGS 18:17–19:37; 2 CHRONICLES 32; ISAIAH 9:6; 36; 52:13–53:12; NAHUM

EVENTUALLY, THE DAY THAT HEZEKIAH HAS BEEN PREPARING FOR COMES. SENNACHERIB SENDS THE ASSYRIAN ARMY AGAINST JERUSALEM. BUT INSTEAD OF MAKING AN ARMED ATTACK ON THE CITY, THE ASSYRIAN KING SENDS A TASK FORCE TO TRY TO FRIGHTEN THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM INTO SURRENDERING.

WE HAVE CONQUERED OTHER CITIES, AND THEIR GODS DIDN'T SAVE THEM. WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOUR GOD CAN SAVE YOU?



HEZEKIAH'S COMMANDERS TRY TO HAVE A DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATION WITH THE ASSYRIAN FIELD COMMANDER.

PLEASE! I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR LANGUAGE. DON'T SAY SUCH THINGS IN HEBREW, WHERE OUR SOLDIERS CAN HEAR.

BUT WE WANT YOUR MEN TO HEAR. AND WE WANT THEM TO UNDERSTAND US WHEN WE TELL THEM ...



AFTER A WHILE, THIS KIND OF ATTACK BEGINS TO HAVE AN EFFECT.

HOW DO WE KNOW GOD WILL SAVE US?

OTHER CITIES HAVE FALLEN. AND REMEMBER, THE ASSYRIANS ALREADY CONQUERED ISRAEL. THE LORD DIDN'T SAVE THEM!



WHEN NEWS OF THE PEOPLE'S FEAR REACHES KING HEZEKIAH, HE TEARS HIS CLOTHES IN ANGUISH.



IN DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES LIKE THESE, ONLY GOD CAN SAVE US. SEND FOR ISAIAH! ASK HIM IF GOD HAS ANY COMFORT.

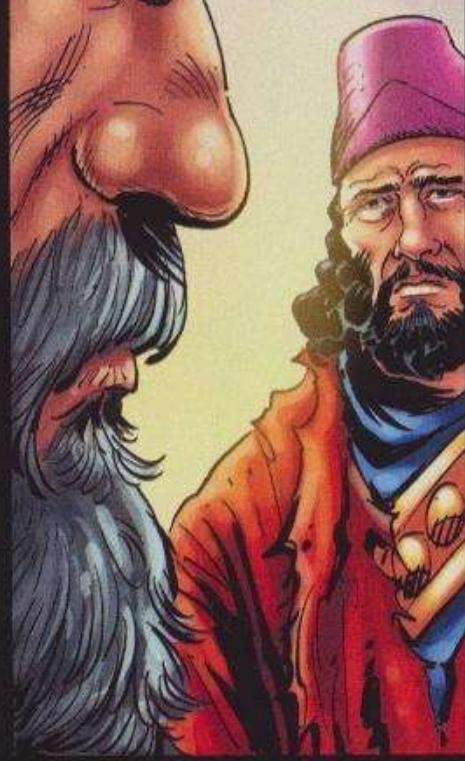
ISAIAH BRINGS AN ENCOURAGING WORD FROM THE LORD.



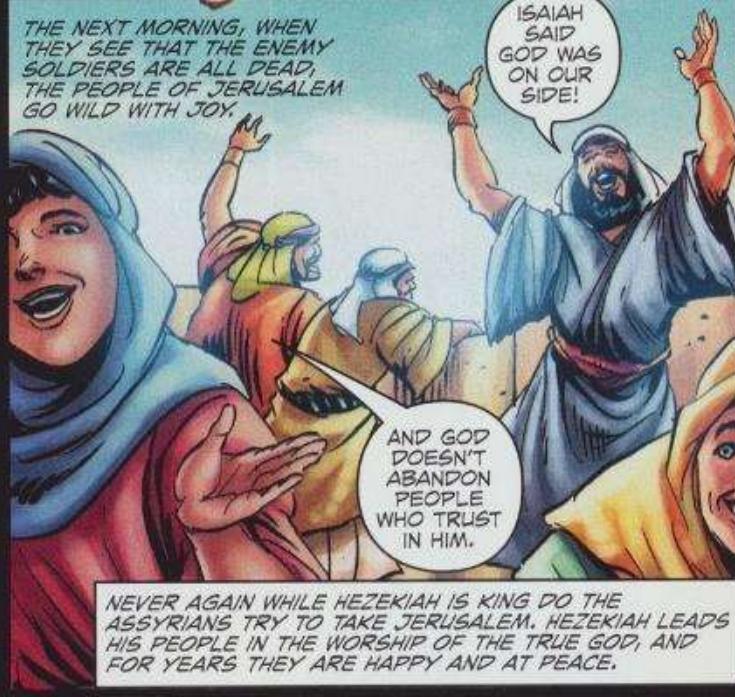
DO NOT LISTEN TO THE INSULTS OF THIS ARROGANT KING. THE LORD WILL DEFEND HIS CITY—THE CITY OF HIS SERVANT DAVID. HAVE FAITH! GOD WILL NOT DESERT US.



THAT NIGHT, THE LORD SENDS AN ANGEL WHO ANNIHILATES THE ASSYRIAN ARMY.



THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN THEY SEE THAT THE ENEMY SOLDIERS ARE ALL DEAD, THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM GO WILD WITH JOY.



ISAIAH SAID GOD WAS ON OUR SIDE!

AND GOD DOESN'T ABANDON PEOPLE WHO TRUST IN HIM.

NEVER AGAIN WHILE HEZEKIAH IS KING DO THE ASSYRIANS TRY TO TAKE JERUSALEM. HEZEKIAH LEADS HIS PEOPLE IN THE WORSHIP OF THE TRUE GOD, AND FOR YEARS THEY ARE HAPPY AND AT PEACE.

MEANWHILE, SENNACHERIB RETREATS BACK TO NINEVEH IN DISGRACE. THERE HIS OWN SON ASSASSINATES HIM. OVER A CENTURY BEFORE, ALL OF NINEVEH HAD REPENTED WHEN THE PROPHET JONAH BROUGHT THEM GOD'S WARNING. NOW THEY SEEK WORLD DOMINATION THROUGH WAR AND CRUELTY. SO THE PROPHET NAHUM GOES TO ASSYRIA'S CAPITAL TO SHARE ONE FINAL WARNING. THEIR EVIL WAYS WILL EVENTUALLY CATCH UP WITH THEM, AND THEY WILL BE DESTROYED.

THE LORD PROTECTS THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM, BUT HE WILL DROWN NINEVEH IN ITS OWN ARROGANCE.

UNDER HEZEKIAH'S REIGN, JUDAH TRUSTS IN THE LORD. BUT WHEN HEZEKIAH EVENTUALLY DIES, HIS SON LEADS JUDAH INTO IDOLATRY. ISAIAH SPENDS HIS REMAINING YEARS PLEADING WITH HIS PEOPLE TO DESTROY THEIR IDOLS AND RETURN TO GOD. BUT ONLY A FEW LISTEN. HE WARNS THE KINGS OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THEY DISOBEY GOD, BUT THE KINGS IGNORE HIS WARNINGS. AT LAST ISAIAH PROPHESIES DESTRUCTION ...

BECAUSE JUDAH HAS TURNED AWAY FROM THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, IT WILL BE DESTROYED. THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM WILL BE CARRIED AWAY AS CAPTIVES.

IS THERE NO HOPE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE?

YES, GOD WILL SEND A DELIVERER TO SAVE ALL WHO BELIEVE IN HIM. AND HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, AND THE PRINCE OF PEACE.

GOD'S SERVANT WILL SUFFER FOR US. HE WILL BE DESPISED AND REJECTED BY MEN. BUT EVEN THOUGH WE REJECT HIM, HE WILL BE SPEARED AND TORTURED FOR OUR SINS.

AND BY HIS WOUNDS ... WE WILL BE HEALED!

THE PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND AT THE TIME, BUT ISAIAH IS PREDICTING THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST.

# A Righteous King and a Reluctant Prophet

BASED ON 2 KINGS 22-23;  
2 CHRONICLES 34-35;  
JEREMIAH 1

JOSIAH BECOMES THE KING OF JUDAH WHEN HE IS ONLY EIGHT YEARS OLD. THE HIGH PRIEST HILKIAH HELPS RAISE HIM, TEACHING THE YOUNG KING TO REMAIN TRUE TO GOD.

BUT GOD ISN'T ONLY RAISING UP A RIGHTEOUS KING—HE IS ALSO RAISING UP A RELUCTANT PROPHET.

HIS FAITH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS ARE LIKE THAT OF A YOUNG DAVID.

THIRTEEN YEARS LATER, GOD SPEAKS TO A YOUNG MAN NAMED JEREMIAH.

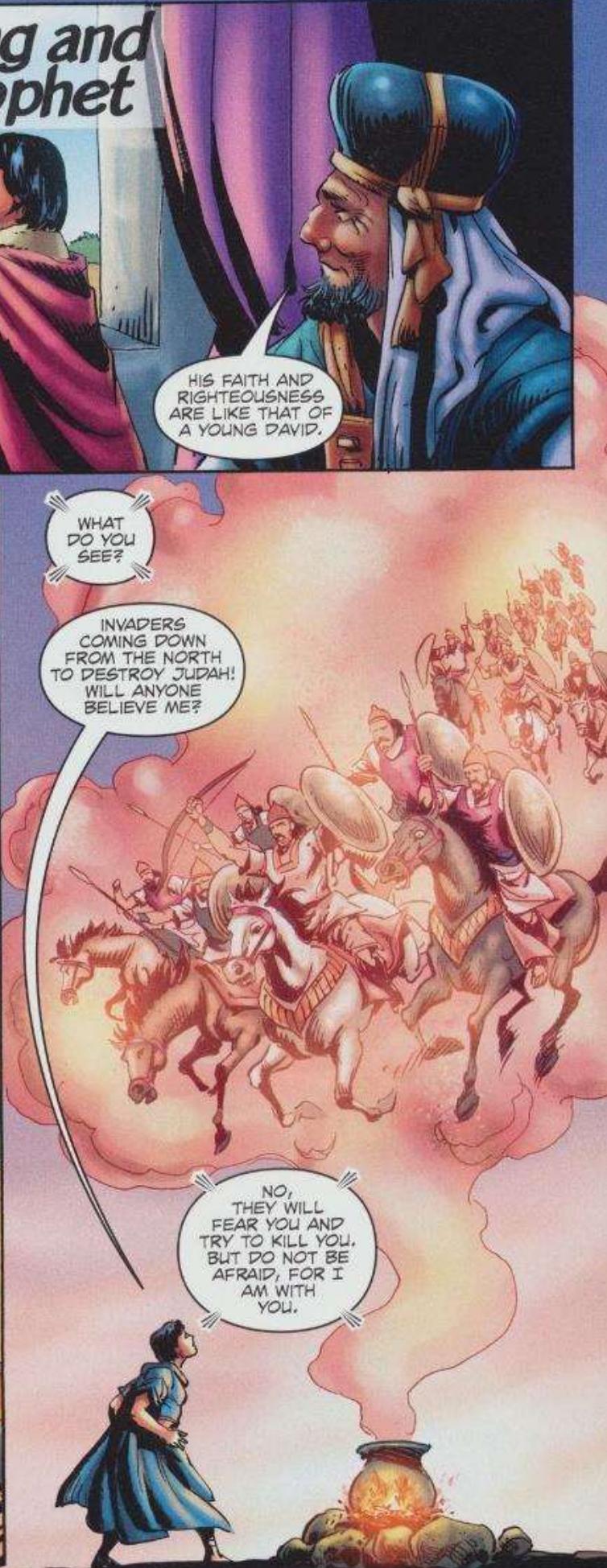
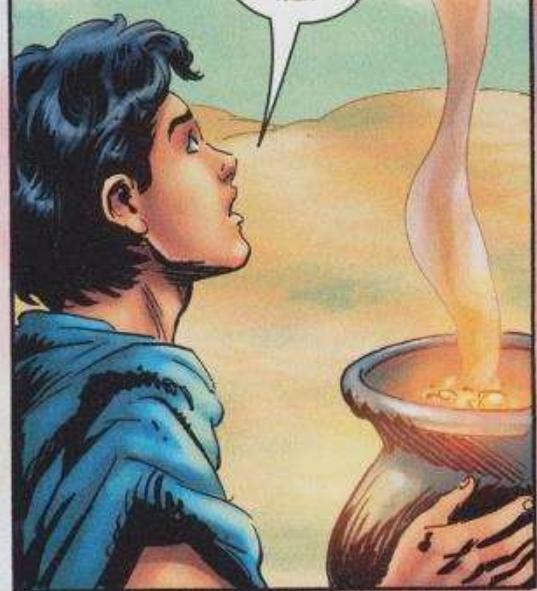
BEFORE I FORMED YOU IN THE WOMB I KNEW YOU. AND I SET YOU APART TO BE A PROPHET TO THE NATIONS.

BUT I AM JUST A CHILD. NO ONE WILL LISTEN TO ME.

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

INVADERS COMING DOWN FROM THE NORTH TO DESTROY JUDAH! WILL ANYONE BELIEVE ME?

NO, THEY WILL FEAR YOU AND TRY TO KILL YOU. BUT DO NOT BE AFRAID, FOR I AM WITH YOU.



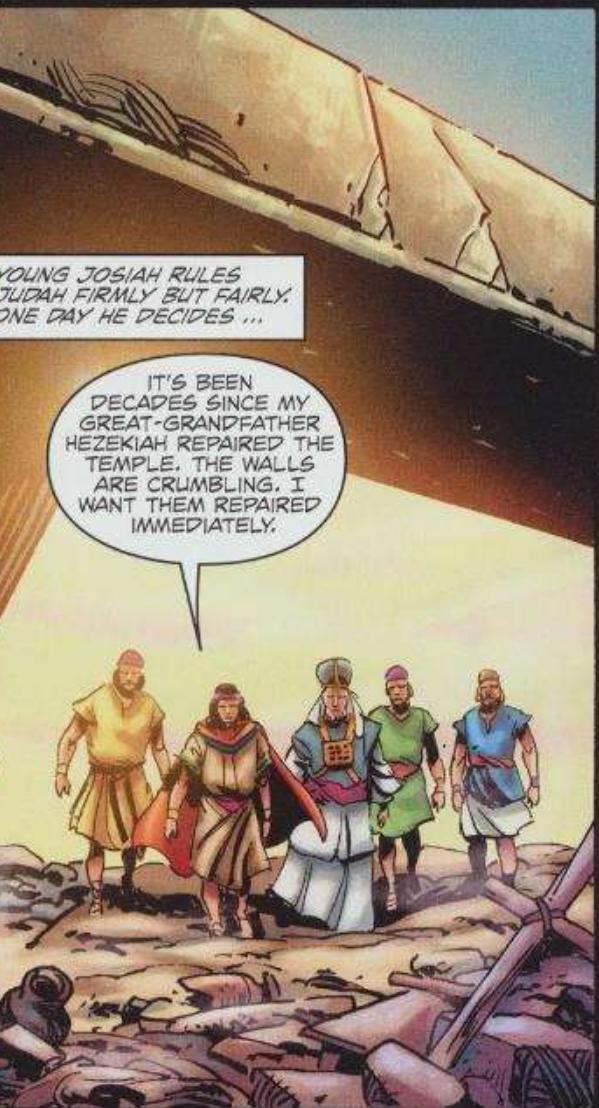
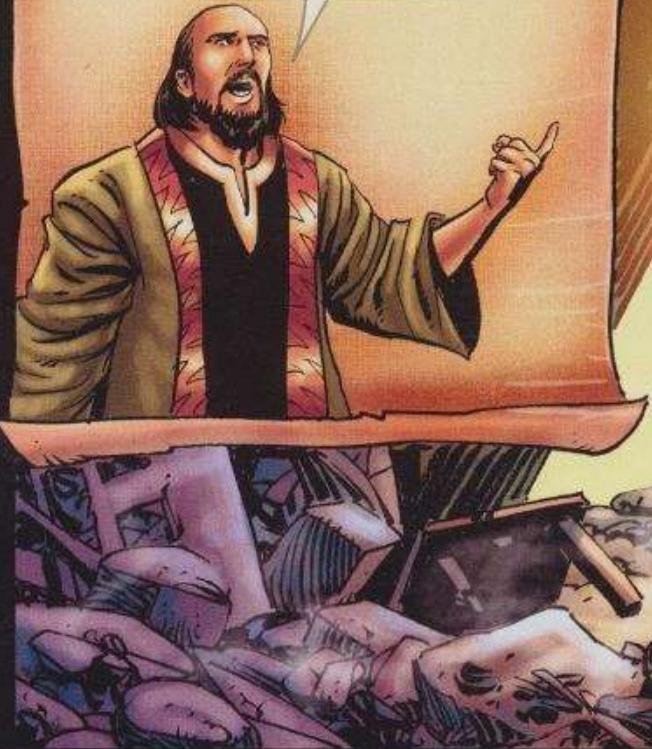
## ZEPHANIAH

DURING THE YOUTH OF BOTH JOSIAH AND JEREMIAH, ZEPHANIAH PROPHESIES ABOUT THE DAY OF THE LORD, WHEN GOD WILL PUNISH ALL THE NATIONS WHO DISOBEY HIM.

BUT FOR THOSE WHO ARE FAITHFUL—THE LORD YOUR GOD IS WITH YOU, AND HE IS A MIGHTY SAVIOR. HE WILL TAKE GREAT DELIGHT IN YOU; HE WILL COMFORT YOU WITH HIS LOVE; HE WILL SING WITH JOY ABOUT YOU.

YOUNG JOSIAH RULES JUDAH FIRMLY BUT FAIRLY. ONE DAY HE DECIDES ...

IT'S BEEN DECADES SINCE MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER HEZEKIAH REPAIRED THE TEMPLE. THE WALLS ARE CRUMBLING. I WANT THEM REPAIRED IMMEDIATELY.



WORKERS BEGIN AT ONCE. AS THEY CLEAR THE RUBBLE, THE HIGH PRIEST HILKIAH NOTICES ...

STOP! WHAT'S THAT OBJECT BEHIND THOSE STONES?



WHEN HILKIAH OPENS THE ANCIENT SCROLL, HE IMMEDIATELY REALIZES ...

PRAY GOD! IT'S THE LONG-LOST TORAH—THE BOOK OF THE LAW THAT GOD GAVE TO MOSES!



BUT AS HE READS THE SCROLL TO KING JOSIAH, HILKIAH'S JOY TURNS TO DESPAIR.

GOD'S LAWS ARE CLEARLY STATED—AND SO IS THE PUNISHMENT FOR ANYONE WHO DISOBEYS THEM.

THEN JUDAH IS DOOMED! WE HAVE BROKEN GOD'S LAWS MANY TIMES. I HAD NO IDEA.



JOSIAH IS SO UPSET THAT HE QUICKLY SENDS SEVERAL HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS TO THE PROPHETESS HULDAH.

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT CAN BE DONE?

THIS IS WHAT GOD SAYS: "BECAUSE JUDAH DISOBEYED ME, JUDAH WILL BE DESTROYED. BUT BECAUSE JOSIAH'S HEART IS HUMBLE BEFORE THE LORD, THE DESTRUCTION WILL NOT HAPPEN WHILE JOSIAH IS KING."



HOPING TO WIN GOD'S FORGIVENESS FOR HIS NATION, JOSIAH READS THE SCROLL OF GOD'S LAWS TO THE PEOPLE. HE ASKS THEM TO COMMIT TO FOLLOWING GOD'S COMMANDS, AND HE REESTABLISHES THE CELEBRATION OF PASSOVER.

WHY IS THIS NIGHT DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHER NIGHTS? ...



# Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?

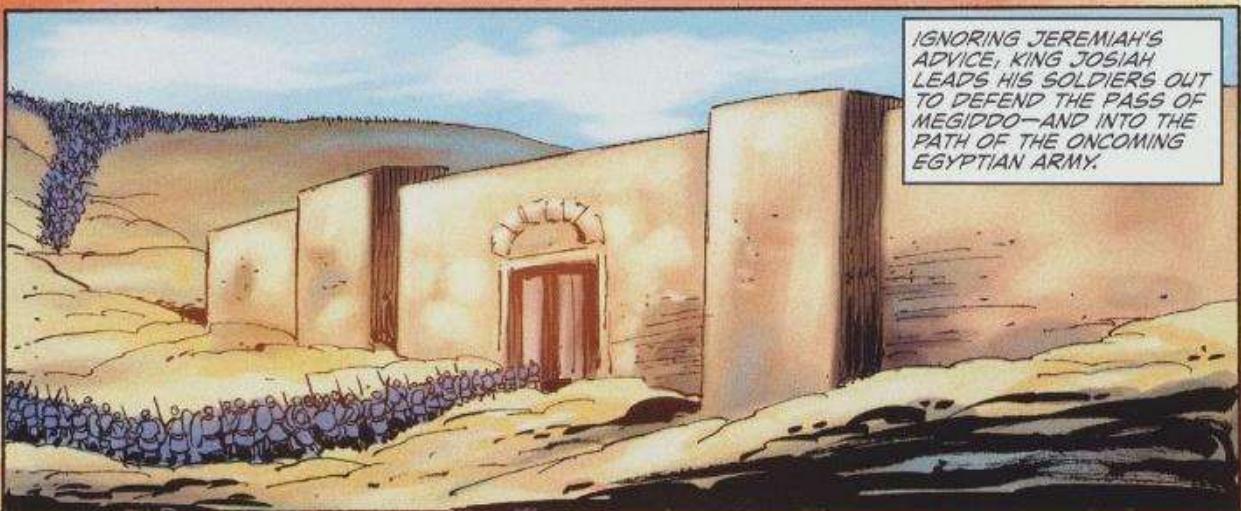
BASED ON 2 KINGS 23:29-24:4; HABAKKUK

FOR SEVERAL YEARS, JEREMIAH AND THE KING WORK TOGETHER TO DESTROY IDOL WORSHIP. NEVER BEFORE OR SINCE HAS THERE BEEN A KING LIKE JOSIAH. HE SERVES THE LORD WITH ALL HIS HEART, SOUL, AND STRENGTH. THEN ONE DAY, A MILITARY COMMANDER BRINGS SOME FRIGHTENING NEWS.

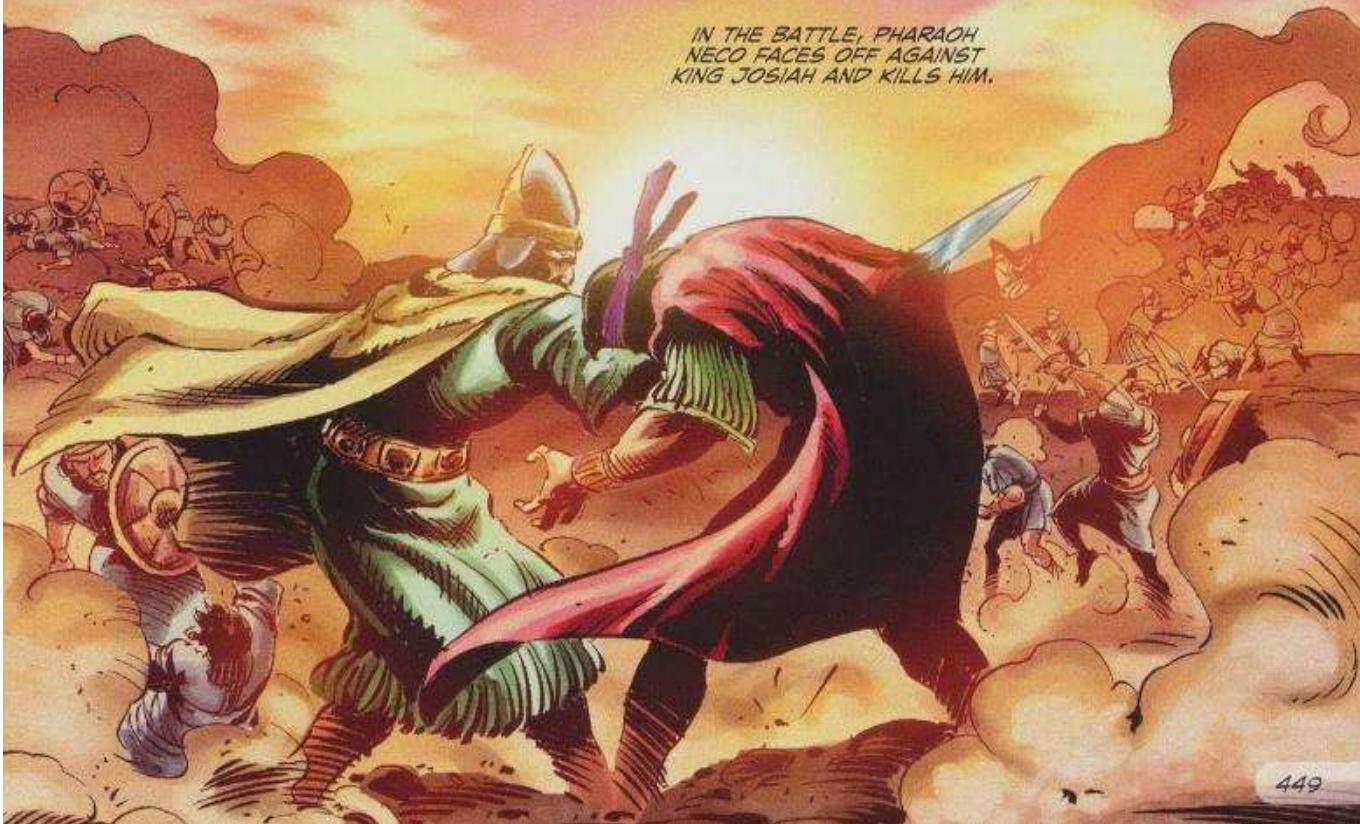
THE ASSYRIAN EMPIRE IS FALLING APART, JUST LIKE NAHUM PREDICTED. EGYPT'S ARMY IS MARCHING NORTH. I THINK PHARAOH NECO HOPES TO GRAB WHAT'S LEFT.

IF EGYPT BECOMES THE NEXT SUPERPOWER, THEY WILL WANT TO CONTROL JUDAH AS WELL. I MUST STOP THEM.

STOP EGYPT? BUT IT'S ONE OF THE STRONGEST COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD, AND GOD HAS WARNED ME THAT BABYLON IS THE COUNTRY THAT WILL ONE DAY DESTROY JERUSALEM, NOT EGYPT.



IGNORING JEREMIAH'S ADVICE, KING JOSIAH LEADS HIS SOLDIERS OUT TO DEFEND THE PASS OF MEGIDDO—AND INTO THE PATH OF THE ONCOMING EGYPTIAN ARMY.



IN THE BATTLE, PHARAOH NECO FACES OFF AGAINST KING JOSIAH AND KILLS HIM.

WHEN SOLDIERS BRING JOSIAH'S BODY BACK IN HIS CHARIOT, JEREMIAH IS OVERCOME WITH GRIEF AT THE DEATH OF HIS GODLY KING. HE KNOWS THAT JOSIAH'S DEATH MARKS THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR JERUSALEM. NOW JEHOIAKIM SITS ON THE THRONE OF JUDAH AS A PUPPET RULER FOR EGYPT. BUT HE DOES EVIL AND LEADS HIS PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE LORD—AND DISREGARDS JEREMIAH'S WARNINGS.



## HABAKKUK

AT THIS TIME, THE PROPHET HABAKKUK ASKS GOD SOME TOUGH QUESTIONS. WHY IS THE WORLD SO UNFAIR? WHY WOULD GOD LET A GOOD KING DIE, WHILE WICKED PEOPLE LEAD RICH AND HAPPY LIVES?



WATCH AND WAIT! I PROMISE THAT IN THE END, EVERYONE WILL GET WHAT HE DESERVES. BUT FOR NOW, THE RIGHTEOUS MUST TRUST IN ME AND LIVE BY FAITH.

I WILL TRUST IN THE SOVEREIGN LORD, WHO GIVES ME SURE FOOTING ON TREACHEROUS GROUND.

HOW LONG, O LORD, MUST THE RIGHTEOUS CALL FOR YOUR HELP? WHY DO CRIMES GO UNPUNISHED? ANSWER ME, PLEASE!

IN THE MEANTIME, MORE BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO JUDAH. BABYLON COMES TO POWER JUST LIKE JEREMIAH PREDICTED. THE BABYLONIAN KING, NEBUCHADNEZZAR, CONQUERS EGYPT AND FORCES JUDAH TO SURRENDER. TO ENSURE JEHOIAKIM'S LOYALTY, NEBUCHADNEZZAR TAKES MANY OF THE PRINCES AND JERUSALEM'S FINEST YOUNG MEN AS HOSTAGES.

ALL JERUSALEM SADLY WATCHES ITS FINEST YOUNG MEN BEING MARCHED AWAY. AMONG THE HOSTAGES ARE A YOUNG MAN NAMED DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS. GOD WILL SOON SHOW HOW HE CAN WORK GOOD OUT OF THIS SAD EVENT.



# Unpopular Prophecies

BASED ON JEREMIAH; 2 KINGS 23:36-24:1

THE NEW YOUNG KING JEHOIAKIM CONTINUES HIS ANCESTORS' TRADITION OF DISHONORING GOD.

MY FATHER ORDERED US NOT TO WORSHIP ANY GOD BUT JEHOVAH, AND LOOK WHAT HAPPENED! JUDAH IS NO LONGER A FREE COUNTRY. CLEARLY GOD CANNOT SAVE US. IT SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO WORSHIP ANY GOD ANYBODY THINKS MIGHT HELP US. MAYBE THE BABYLONIANS' GODS ...

TO JEREMIAH'S DISMAY, THE PEOPLE HAD NOT REALLY BELIEVED IN JOSIAH'S REFORMS. IN THEIR HEARTS, THEY ARE HAPPY TO FOLLOW JEHOIAKIM IN HIS IDOL WORSHIP. SO JEREMIAH PREACHES AT THE ENTRANCE TO GOD'S TEMPLE.

YOU THINK GOD IS SATISFIED WITH YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE CIRCUMCISED, BUT YOU MUST ALSO CIRCUMCISE YOUR HEARTS!

THE PEOPLE DON'T LISTEN, SO JEREMIAH COMES BACK TO PROPHESY AT THE TEMPLE AGAIN.

BECAUSE YOUR HEARTS ARE FALSE, YOUR WORSHIP DOES YOU NO GOOD. YOUR PRAYERS DO YOU NO GOOD, YOUR SACRIFICES DO YOU NO GOOD.

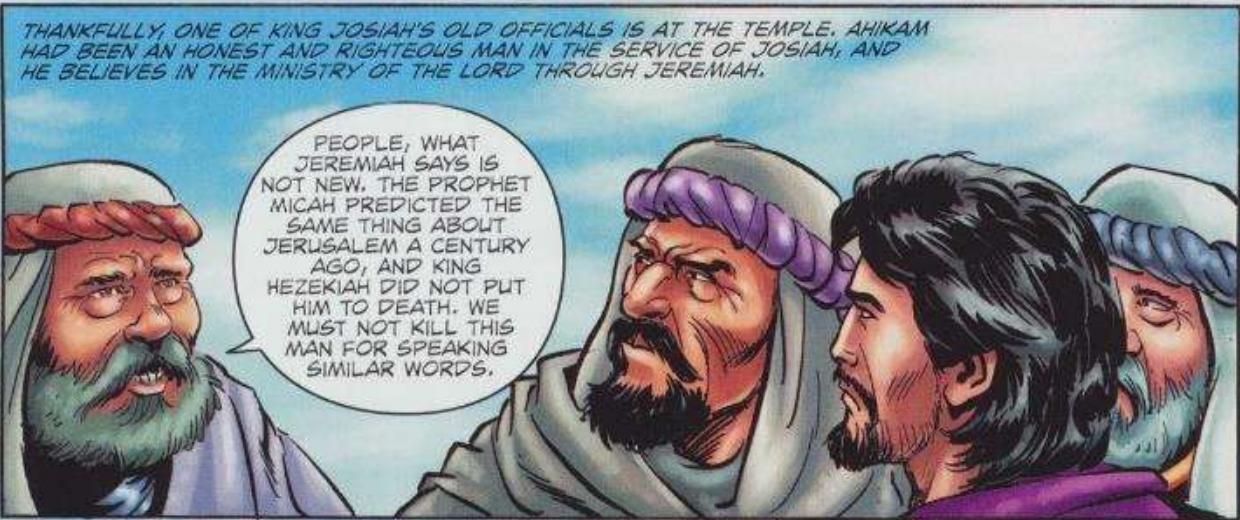
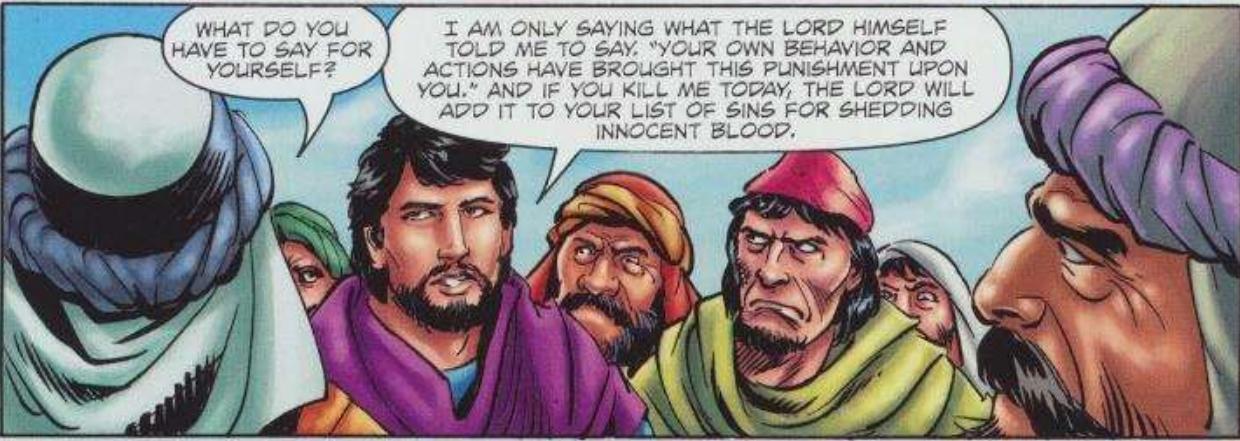
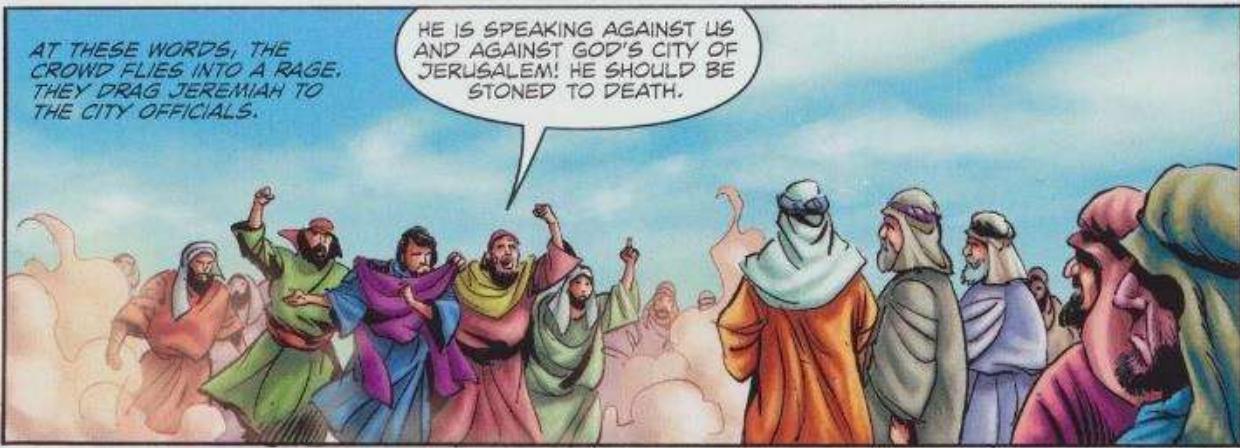
AND AGAIN ...

GOD HAS TRIED TO DISCIPLINE AND CORRECT YOU, BUT IT DOES YOU NO GOOD. SO NOW GOD WILL DESTROY JERUSALEM AND EXILE YOU TO BABYLON! BECAUSE YOU SERVE FOREIGN GODS IN YOUR OWN LAND, YOU WILL NOW SERVE FOREIGNERS IN A FOREIGN LAND.

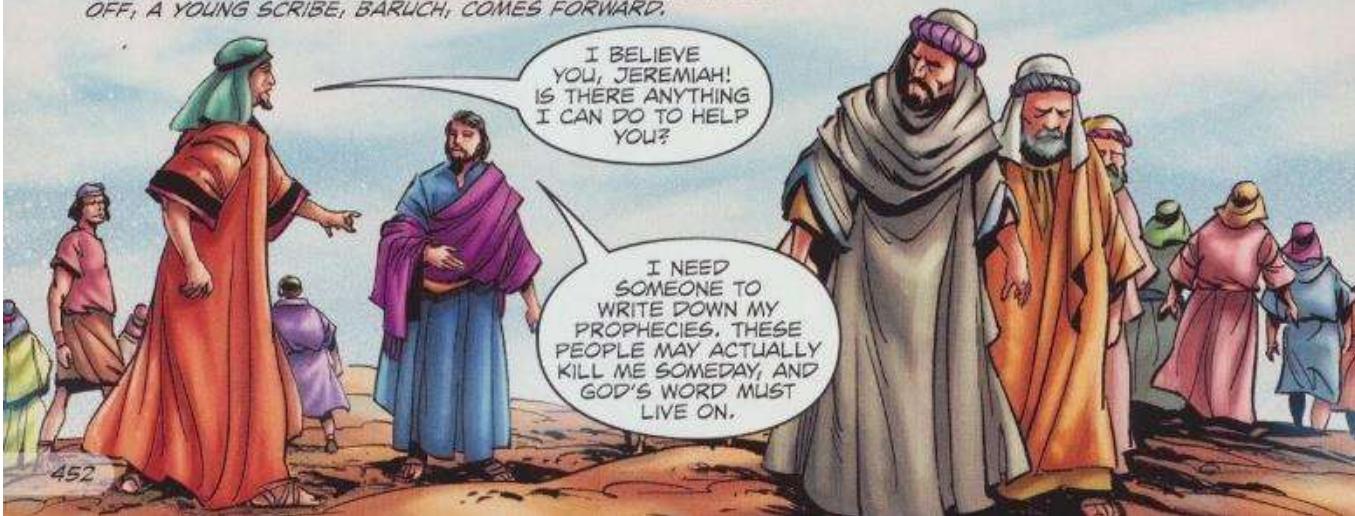
AND AGAIN ...

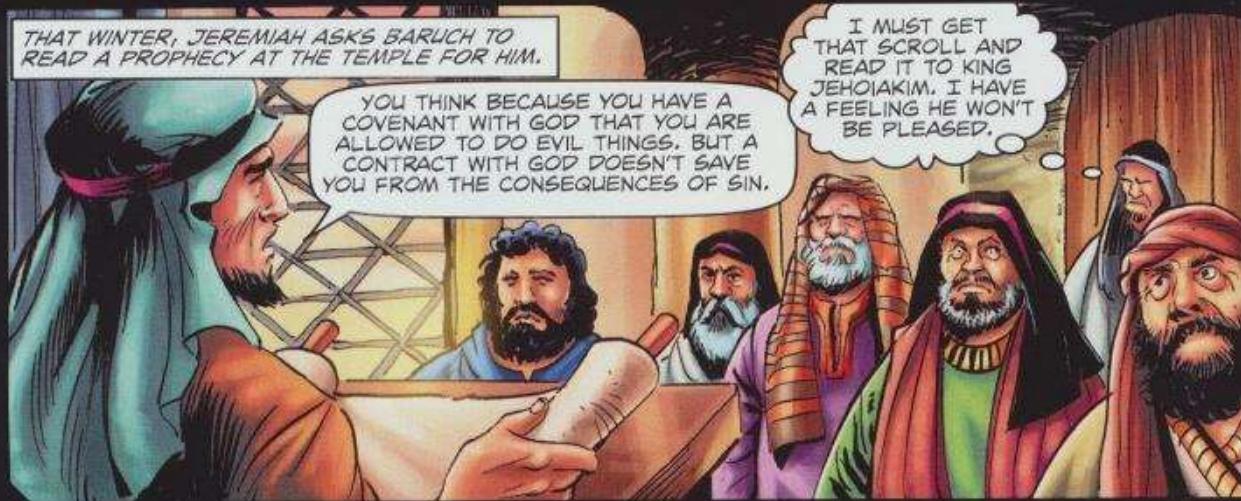
IF YOU REALLY KNOW EVERYTHING, WHEN IS THIS SUPPOSED "EXILE" GOING TO HAPPEN?

YOU SHOULD START PACKING.



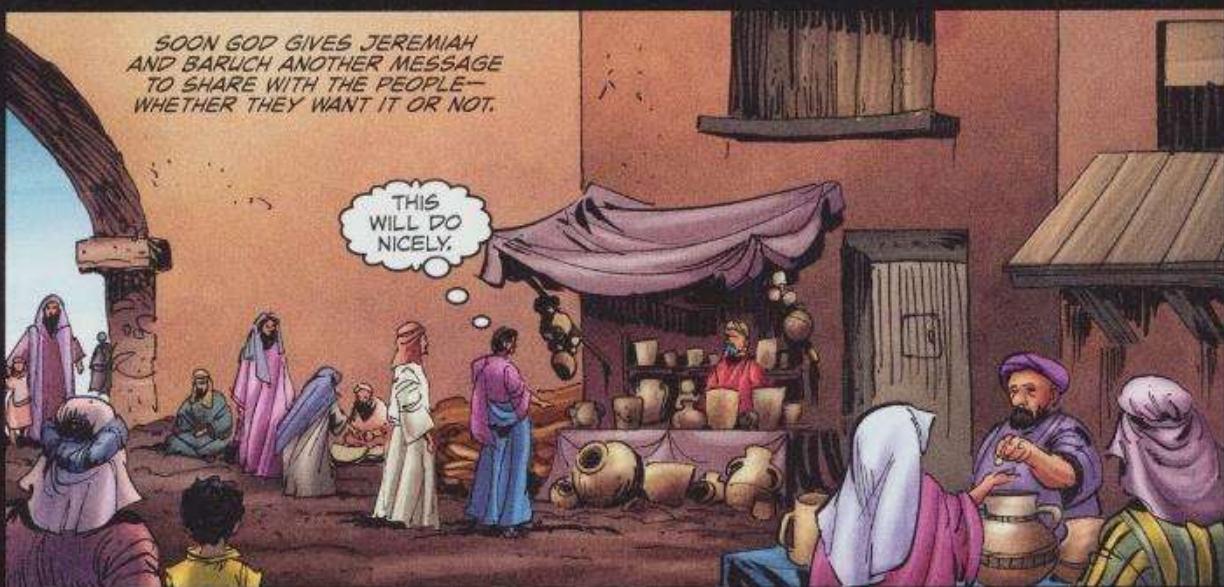
THE PEOPLE ARE STILL INFURIATED AT JEREMIAH, BUT THEY CANNOT STONE HIM WITHOUT AHIKAM'S PERMISSION. SULKILY THEY RETREAT ... FOR NOW. AS JEREMIAH BRUSHES HIMSELF OFF, A YOUNG SCRIBE, BARUCH, COMES FORWARD.





SOON GOD GIVES JEREMIAH AND BARUCH ANOTHER MESSAGE TO SHARE WITH THE PEOPLE—WHETHER THEY WANT IT OR NOT.

THIS WILL DO NICELY.



I'D LIKE TO BUY THIS POT, PLEASE.



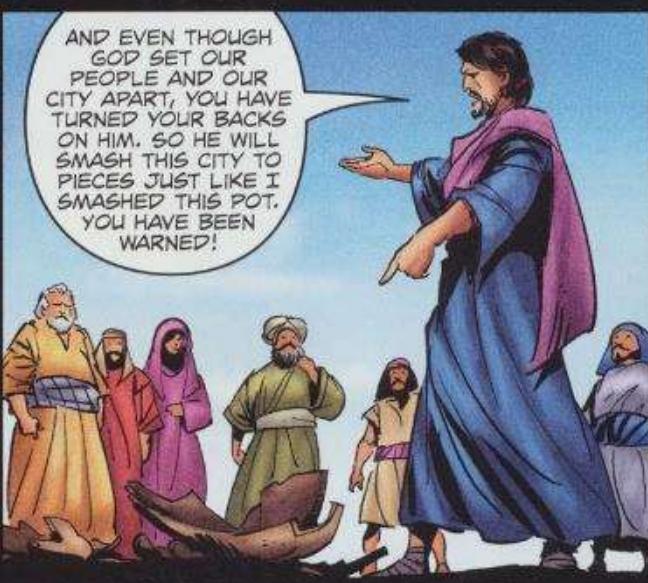
PEOPLE! ISN'T THIS A FINE POT? THE POTTER CLEARLY TOOK HIS TIME AND CRAFTED A BEAUTIFUL PIECE OF ART.



SUDDENLY, HE SMASHES THE POT TO THE GROUND.



AND EVEN THOUGH GOD SET OUR PEOPLE AND OUR CITY APART, YOU HAVE TURNED YOUR BACKS ON HIM. SO HE WILL SMASH THIS CITY TO PIECES JUST LIKE I SMASHED THIS POT. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!



A PRIEST NAMED PASHHUR HEARS THE COMMOTION. HE COMES OVER AND SEES THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF THE POT AND THE PEOPLE MURMURING AMONG THEMSELVES.



AT THIS INSOLENCE, PASHHUR HAS JEREMIAH BEATEN AND THROWN INTO STOCKS FOR THE NIGHT. IN HUMILIATION AND PAIN, JEREMIAH CRIES OUT TO THE LORD.

CURSE THE DAY I WAS BORN! WHY DIDN'T YOU LEAVE ME IN THE WOMB, LORD? WHY DID YOU FORCE ME INTO BEING YOUR PROPHET? YOUR WORDS ARE NOTHING BUT DOOM AND DESTRUCTION, AND THE PEOPLE HATE ME FOR IT. BUT IF I TRY TO IGNORE YOUR PROPHECIES, YOUR WORD BURNS IN MY HEART AND SETS FIRE TO MY BONES.

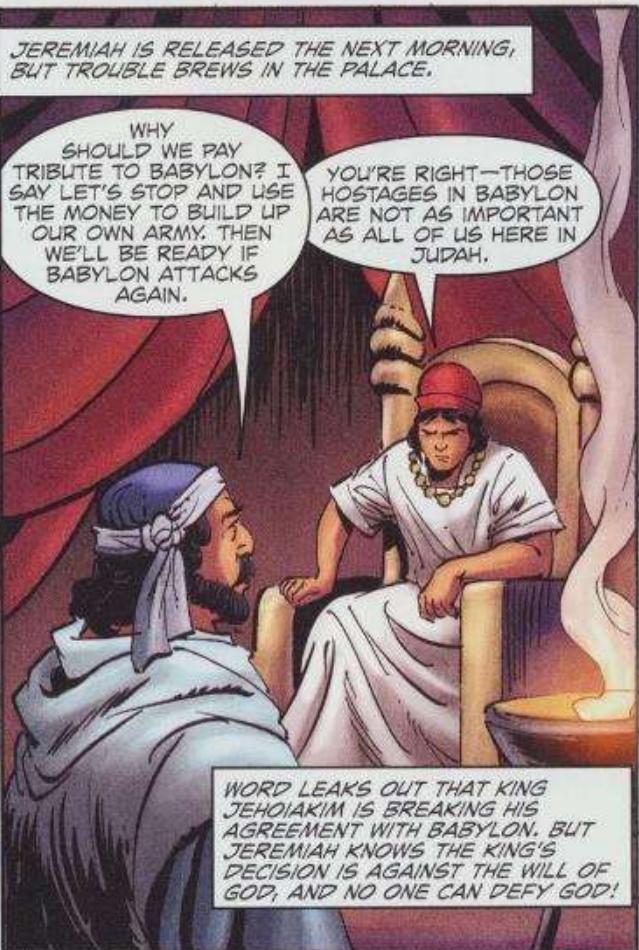
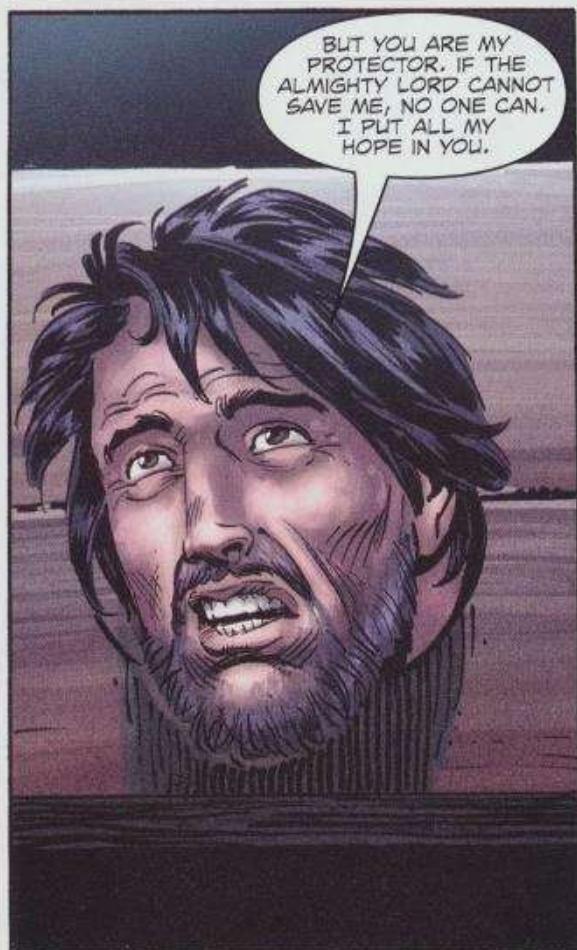


BUT YOU ARE MY PROTECTOR. IF THE ALMIGHTY LORD CANNOT SAVE ME, NO ONE CAN. I PUT ALL MY HOPE IN YOU.

JEREMIAH IS RELEASED THE NEXT MORNING, BUT TROUBLE BREWS IN THE PALACE.

WHY SHOULD WE PAY TRIBUTE TO BABYLON? I SAY LET'S STOP AND USE THE MONEY TO BUILD UP OUR OWN ARMY. THEN WE'LL BE READY IF BABYLON ATTACKS AGAIN.

YOU'RE RIGHT—THOSE HOSTAGES IN BABYLON ARE NOT AS IMPORTANT AS ALL OF US HERE IN JUDAH.



WORD LEAKS OUT THAT KING JEHOIAKIM IS BREAKING HIS AGREEMENT WITH BABYLON. BUT JEREMIAH KNOWS THE KING'S DECISION IS AGAINST THE WILL OF GOD, AND NO ONE CAN DEFY GOD!

# Ezekiel's Exile

BASED ON EZEKIEL; JEREMIAH 29:1-14

KING JEHOIAKIM'S REVOLT AGAINST BABYLON IS WELL UNDER WAY WHEN—SUDENLY—HE DIES. BABYLON EASILY OVERWHELMs JUDAH'S ARMY. YOUNG KING JEHOIACHIN, WHO HAS RULED THREE MONTHS, IS FORCED TO SURRENDER TO KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

THIS TIME I WILL TAKE YOUR TREASURES, YOUR NOBLES, YOUR SKILLED WORKERS, AND YOUR KING! LET THIS BE A LESSON TO THE ONES WHO ARE LEFT.



SO JEREMIAH'S PROPHECY COMES TRUE! THE TEMPLE TREASURES ARE LOOTED; THE KING AND 10,000 OF JUDAH'S STRONGEST MEN ARE LED AWAY. PRINCE ZEDEKIAH IS MADE KING—AFTER HE PROMISES LOYALTY TO BABYLON.

FRIGHTENED AND WEARY FROM THE 900-MILE MARCH, THE 10,000 CAPTIVES FROM JUDAH REACH THE GATES OF BABYLON, THE GIANT CITY OF THEIR CONQUERORS. EZEKIEL, A YOUNG PRIEST, AND HIS WIFE ARE AMONG THE CAPTIVES WONDERING WHERE THEY WILL LIVE.

YOU ISRAELITES CAN GO TO TEL-ABIB ON THE KEBAR RIVER. THERE'S UNCLAIMED LAND THERE WHERE YOU CAN FARM AND BUILD YOUR HOMES.

I SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE PREPARING TO BE A PRIEST IN JERUSALEM. BUT GOD IS STRONG, EVEN WHEN JUDAH IS WEAK. HE IS GOD, EVEN IN THIS FOREIGN LAND.



IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOW, EZEKIEL WORKS HARD TO MAKE A LIVING IN THE NEW LAND.

IT IS NOT AS BAD AS I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE. WE'RE TOGETHER, AND THEY TREAT US WELL.



BUT GOD HAS MORE IN STORE FOR EZEKIEL THAN BEING A FARMER IN A FOREIGN LAND...

ONE DAY, OUT BY HIMSELF ALONG THE KEBAR RIVER, EZEKIEL SEES AN AWE-INSPIRING SIGHT IN THE SKY.

THAT'S LIKE NO STORM I'VE EVER SEEN.

FIRE BURSTS FROM THE CLOUD. FOUR CREATURES-EACH WITH FOUR WINGS AND FOUR DIFFERENT FACES-FLASH BACK AND FORTH LIKE LIGHTNING. BY EACH CREATURE IS A WHEEL WITHIN A WHEEL, AND ABOVE ALL THIS IS A GLORIOUS THRONE.

IT'S A VISION OF THE GLORY OF GOD!



IN A STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL VISION, GOD CALLS EZEKIEL TO BE HIS PROPHET AND SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM WHO ARE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON.

YOU ARE MY WATCHMAN, EZEKIEL. YOU MUST WARN THE PEOPLE OF DANGER. IF YOU WARN THEM AND THEY DON'T LISTEN, THEN I WILL STILL BE PROUD OF YOU. BUT IF YOU DON'T WARN THEM, I WILL BLAME YOU FOR THEIR DEATHS.

FOLLOWING GOD'S COMMAND, EZEKIEL BUILDS A MODEL OF A CITY, AND AROUND IT HE PUTS AN ENEMY CAMP. THEN HE TOUCHES A TORCH TO HIS MODEL, SETTING IT ON FIRE!

NO! NOT JERUSALEM!  
NOT OUR HOLY CITY!

IT WILL BE DESTROYED.

TO CONFIRM EZEKIEL'S PROPHECY, JEREMIAH WRITES A LETTER FROM JERUSALEM TO THE CAPTIVES.

JEREMIAH SAYS IT IS GOD'S WILL THAT WE MAKE OUR LIVES HERE BECAUSE JERUSALEM REALLY WILL BE DESTROYED. AFTER 70 YEARS, GOD WILL LET US GO BACK. "I'VE ALREADY MADE PLANS FOR YOU," GOD SAYS. "PLANS THAT WILL GIVE YOU HOPE AND A BRIGHT FUTURE."

THE PEOPLE ARE DISMAYED TO HEAR ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM. THE HOPE THAT JEREMIAH PROMISES SOUNDS LIKE SMALL COMFORT COMPARED TO LOSING THEIR HOMELAND.

OUR BEAUTIFUL CITY—IN ASHES!  
WHY WOULD GOD ALLOW IT?

OUR FOREFATHERS WORSHIPPED IDOLS.  
THEY'RE TO BLAME FOR THIS.  
IT ISN'T FAIR THAT WE HAVE TO PAY FOR THE SINS OF OTHERS.

NO—YOU, TOO,  
HAVE SINNED. IT'S YOUR FAULT TOO. BUT GOD LOVES YOU. HE WILL FORGIVE YOU IF YOU STOP DOING WRONG AND START DOING WHAT HE WANTS YOU TO DO. THOSE WHO OBEY GOD WILL RETURN HOME—AND BUILD A NEW NATION!

ONE DAY THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD WHISKS EZEKIEL FAR AWAY TO AN ANCIENT BATTLEFIELD, WHERE MANY BRAVE SOLDIERS HAD DIED. IN THIS FORGOTTEN VALLEY, TIME AND NATURE HAVE LEFT NOTHING BUT THE BONES OF SOLDIERS LONG DEAD.

WHAT DO YOU THINK, EZEKIEL? IS IT POSSIBLE FOR THESE DUSTY OLD BONES TO COME BACK TO LIFE?

THAT'S A TRICK QUESTION, LORD. ONLY YOU KNOW WHAT MIRACLES YOU CAN DO.

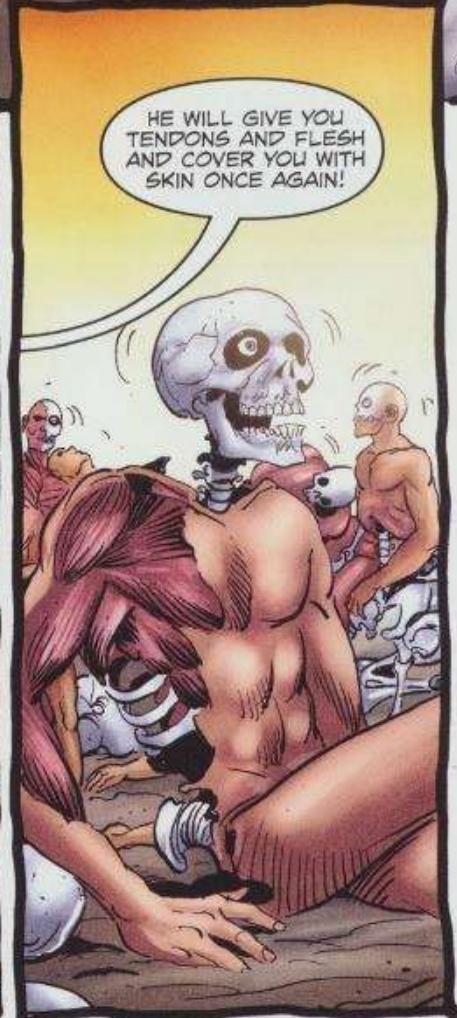
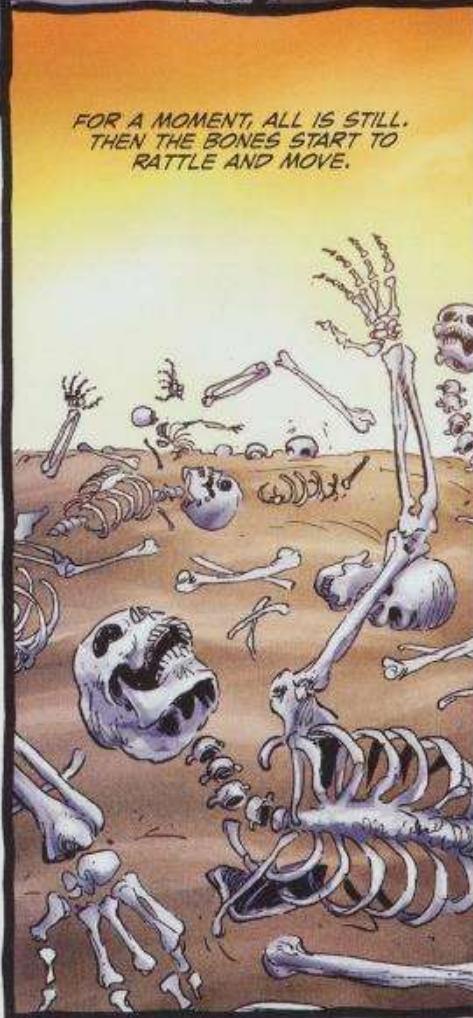
PROPHESY TO THEM, EZEKIEL. TELL THEM THAT I WILL KNIT THEM BACK TOGETHER AGAIN!

FEELING A BIT SILLY, EZEKIEL OBEYS.

BONES! HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD! HE WILL BRING YOU TO LIFE!

FOR A MOMENT, ALL IS STILL. THEN THE BONES START TO RATTLE AND MOVE.

HE WILL GIVE YOU TENDONS AND FLESH AND COVER YOU WITH SKIN ONCE AGAIN!

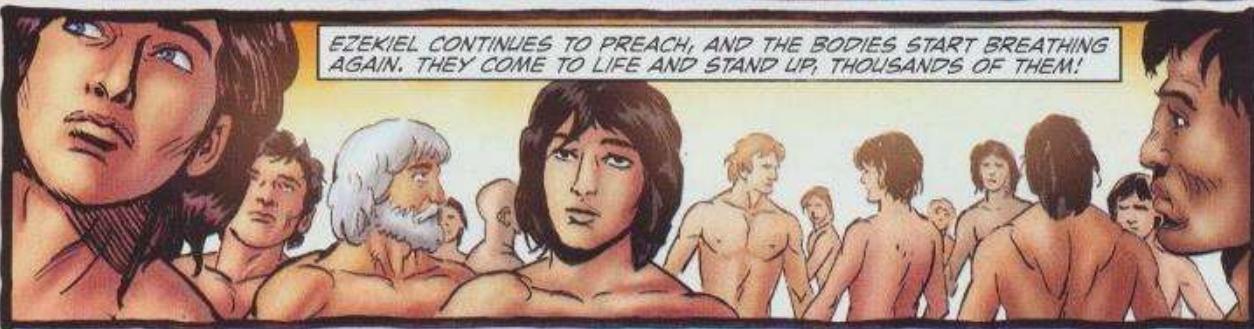


AS EZEKIEL PROPHESIES, THE BONES FORM BACK INTO HUMAN BEINGS—  
BUT THERE IS STILL NO LIFE IN THEM.

TELL THEM I  
WILL FILL THEM  
WITH MY BREATH,  
MY SPIRIT.



EZEKIEL CONTINUES TO PREACH, AND THE BODIES START BREATHING AGAIN. THEY COME TO LIFE AND STAND UP, THOUSANDS OF THEM!



EZEKIEL IS TRANSPORTED BACK TO HIS FELLOW JEWS IN BABYLON, WHERE HE TELLS THEM THIS STORY.

... AND THOSE BONES REPRESENT ISRAEL! IF GOD CAN  
BRING DEAD BONES TO LIFE, HE CAN BRING THE PEOPLE  
OF ISRAEL BACK TO JERUSALEM SOMEDAY. AND WHEN  
HE DOES, HE WILL FILL US WITH HIS SPIRIT.

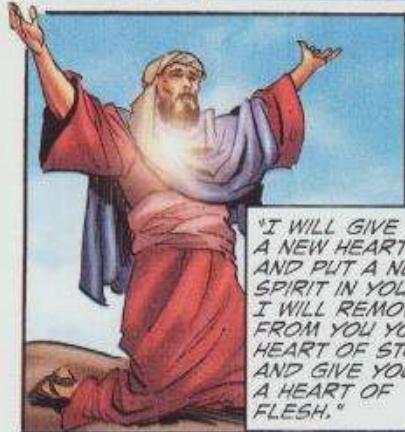


GOD SAYS:  
"I WILL  
GATHER  
YOU FROM  
ALL THE  
COUNTRIES  
IN THE  
WORLD  
AND  
BRING  
YOU BACK  
INTO YOUR  
OWN LAND."



"I WILL  
CLEANSE  
YOU FROM  
ALL YOUR  
FILTH AND  
IDOLS."

"AND I WILL PUT MY  
SPIRIT IN YOU AND  
MOVE YOU TO  
FOLLOW MY DECREES  
AND KEEP MY LAWS.  
YOU WILL LIVE IN THE  
LAND I PROMISED  
YOU; YOU WILL BE MY  
PEOPLE, AND I WILL  
BE YOUR GOD."



"I WILL GIVE YOU  
A NEW HEART  
AND PUT A NEW  
SPIRIT IN YOU;  
I WILL REMOVE  
FROM YOU YOUR  
HEART OF STONE  
AND GIVE YOU  
A HEART OF  
FLESH."



"THERE WILL BE A NEW TEMPLE  
AND A NEW JERUSALEM, BUT  
JERUSALEM WILL HAVE A NEW  
NAME THAT MEANS ...

... THE LORD IS THERE!"

# The Yoke's on Jeremiah

BASED ON JEREMIAH 27: 37-38

BACK IN JERUSALEM, KING ZEDEKIAH STILL RULES—AS LONG AS HE REMAINS LOYAL TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR. FOR A FEW YEARS ZEDEKIAH PAYS HIS TRIBUTE TO BABYLON. THEN, IN SPITE OF JEREMIAH'S WARNINGS, HE BEGINS TO THINK ABOUT REBELLING. HE CALLS TOGETHER THE OTHER FOREIGN KINGS WHO ARE RULED BY BABYLON.

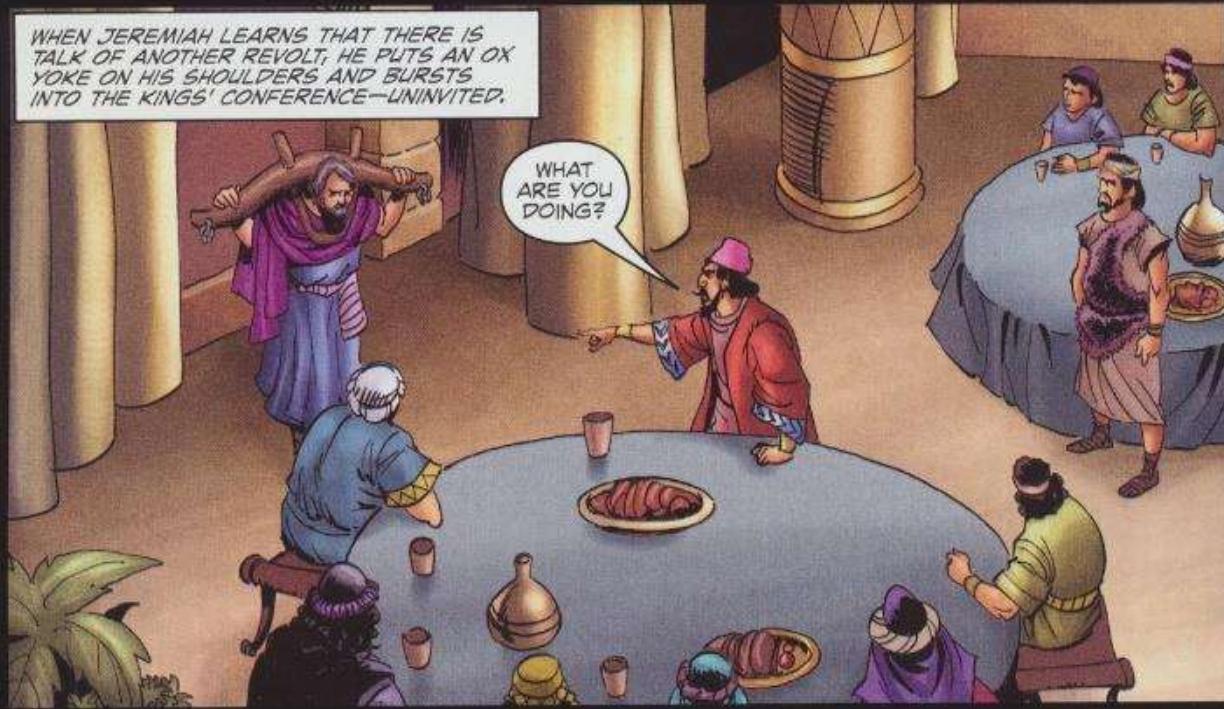


WHAT DO WE GET FROM THE MONEY WE PAY TO BABYLON?

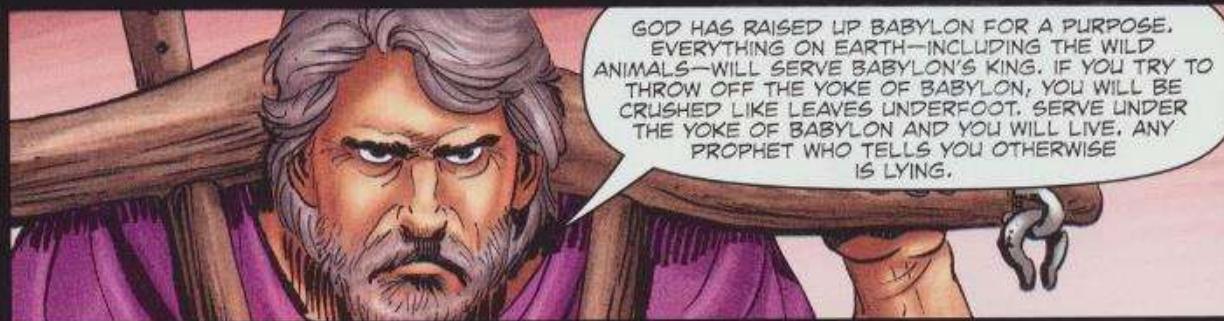
WE GET PEACE!



PEACE—BUT NOT FREEDOM! MAYBE THE EGYPTIANS WILL JOIN US. THEY HATE BABYLON TOO.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?



GOD HAS RAISED UP BABYLON FOR A PURPOSE. EVERYTHING ON EARTH—INCLUDING THE WILD ANIMALS—WILL SERVE BABYLON'S KING. IF YOU TRY TO THROW OFF THE YOKE OF BABYLON, YOU WILL BE CRUSHED LIKE LEAVES UNDERFOOT. SERVE UNDER THE YOKE OF BABYLON AND YOU WILL LIVE. ANY PROPHET WHO TELLS YOU OTHERWISE IS LYING.

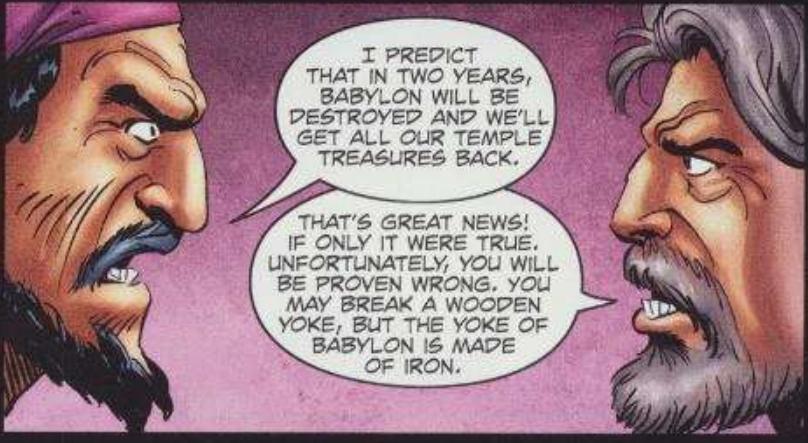


BUT ONE OF THE PROPHETS IN ATTENDANCE—HANANIAH—DOESN'T APPRECIATE JEREMIAH'S INTERRUPTION.

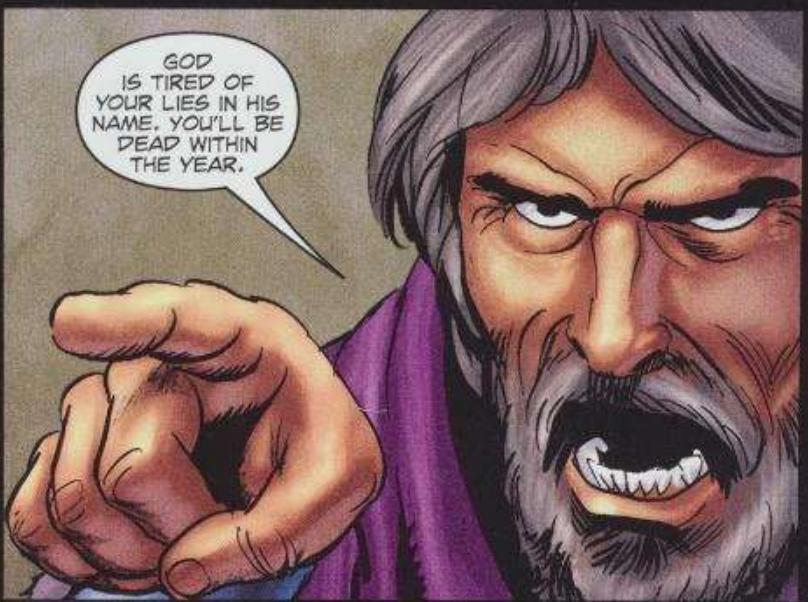
OH, REALLY? BECAUSE GOD TOLD ME EXACTLY WHAT TO DO WITH THE YOKE OF BABYLON. BREAK IT!



I PREDICT THAT IN TWO YEARS, BABYLON WILL BE DESTROYED AND WE'LL GET ALL OUR TEMPLE TREASURES BACK.



THAT'S GREAT NEWS! IF ONLY IT WERE TRUE. UNFORTUNATELY, YOU WILL BE PROVEN WRONG. YOU MAY BREAK A WOODEN YOKE, BUT THE YOKE OF BABYLON IS MADE OF IRON.



GOD IS TIRED OF YOUR LIES IN HIS NAME. YOU'LL BE DEAD WITHIN THE YEAR.

**KRAK!**  
ZEDEKIAH KNOWS JEREMIAH IS A TRUE MAN OF GOD, BUT HE DOESN'T WANT TO LISTEN. EVEN WHEN HANANIAH DIES A FEW MONTHS LATER, ZEDEKIAH STILL DOESN'T WANT TO BELIEVE JEREMIAH. DURING ALL OF THIS TIME, EGYPT HAS KEPT AN ANXIOUS EYE ON THE GROWING TENSIONS IN JUDAH. AT THE RIGHT MOMENT, IT SENDS AN AMBASSADOR TO KING ZEDEKIAH.



BABYLON IS YOUR ENEMY AS WELL AS OURS. ALONE, NEITHER OF US CAN DEFEAT THEM, BUT ...

TOGETHER, WE CAN DO IT!

AS JEREMIAH PROPHESIED, BABYLON ANSWERS THIS LATEST REVOLT WITH A SWIFT ATTACK. FOR WEEKS THE SOLDIERS OF JUDAH FIGHT TO DEFEND JERUSALEM'S WALLS.

WHERE ARE THE EGYPTIANS? THEY PROMISED THEY WOULD COME.

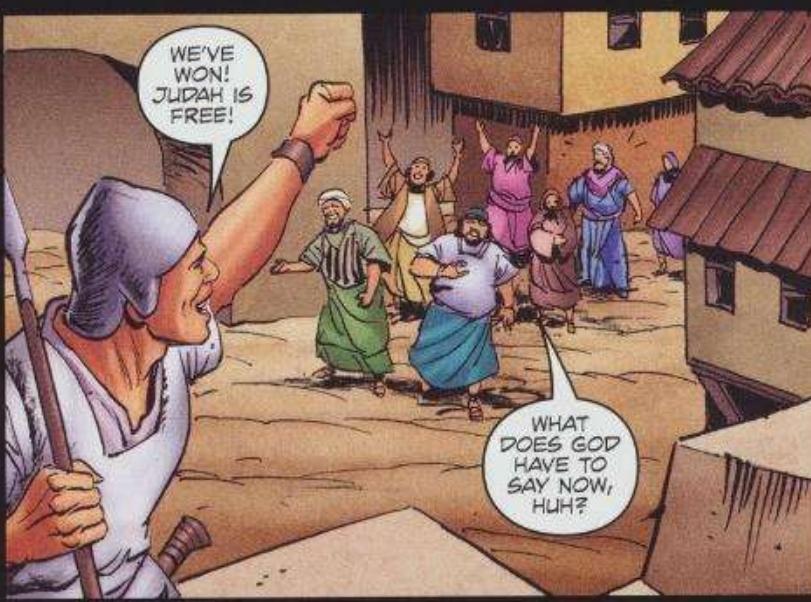


SUDDENLY, THE ATTACK STOPS ...

THE BABYLONIANS ARE BREAKING CAMP. THEY'VE GIVEN UP THE SIEGE!

WE'VE WON! JUDAH IS FREE!

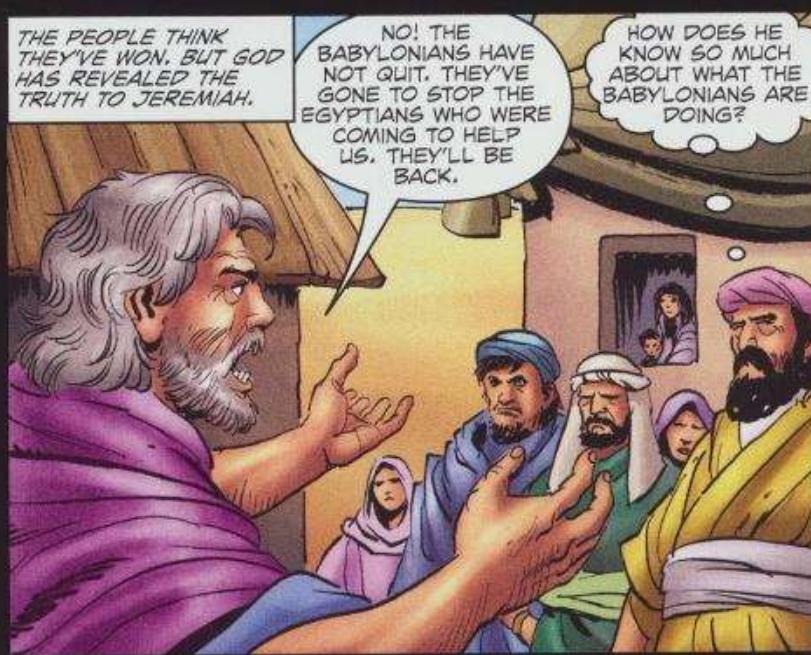
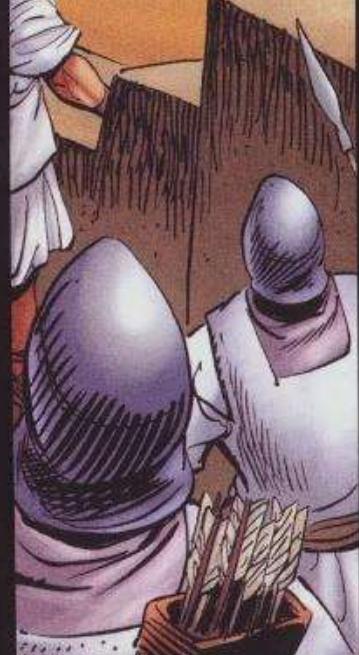
WHAT DOES GOD HAVE TO SAY NOW, HUH?

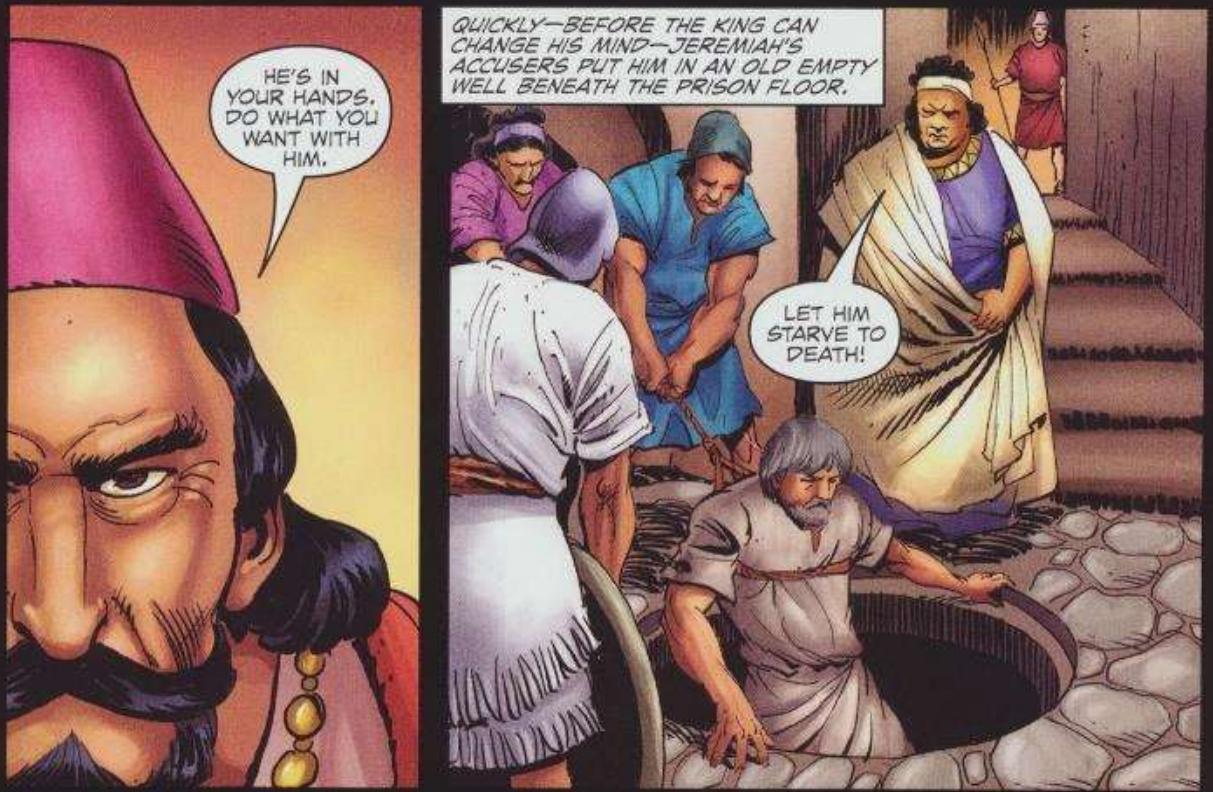
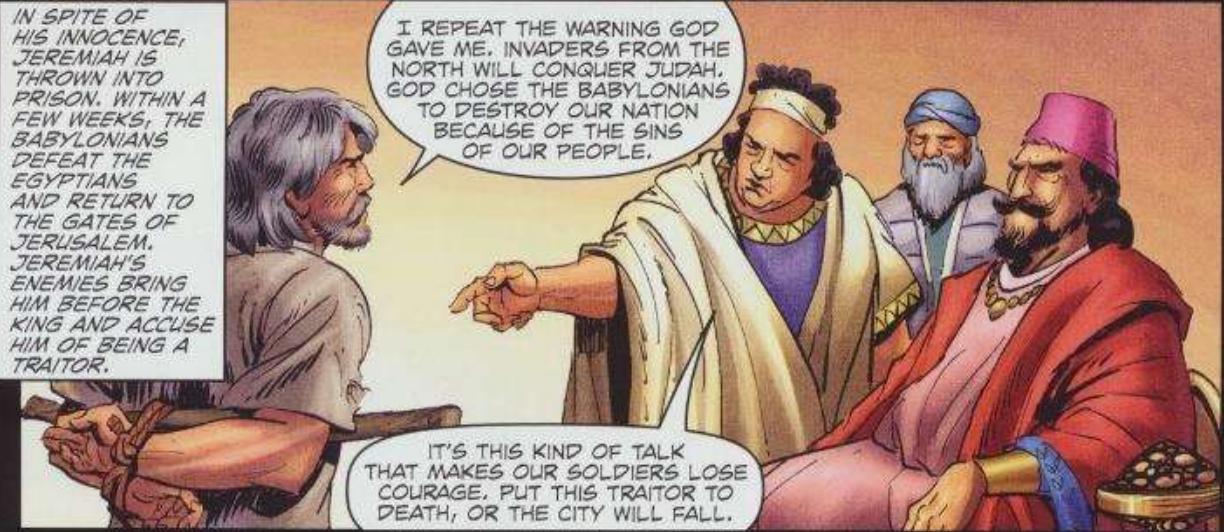
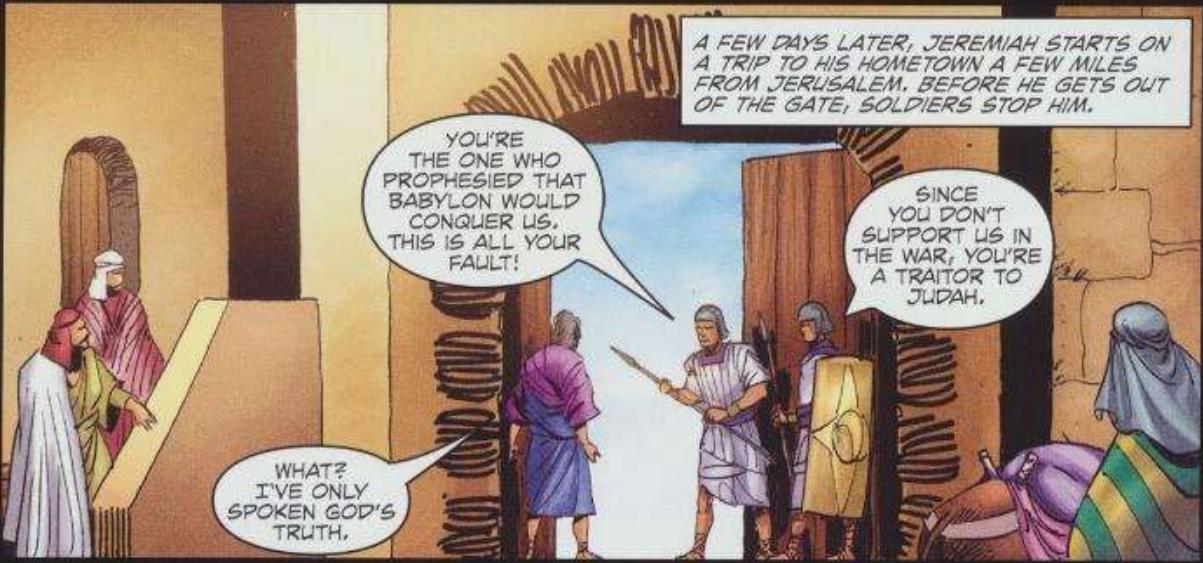


THE PEOPLE THINK THEY'VE WON. BUT GOD HAS REVEALED THE TRUTH TO JEREMIAH.

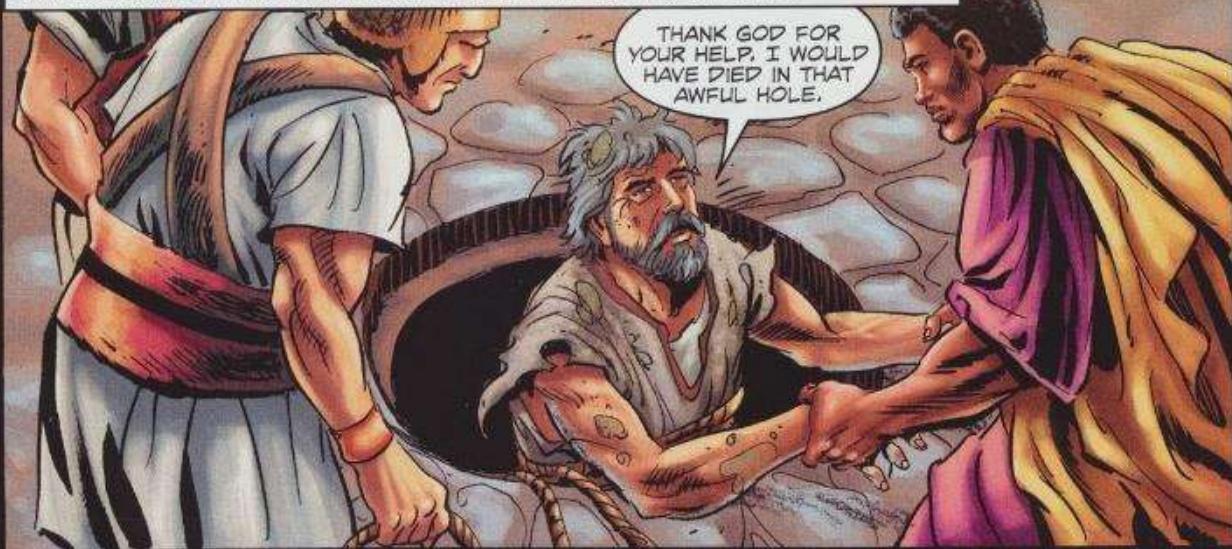
NO! THE BABYLONIANS HAVE NOT QUIT. THEY'VE GONE TO STOP THE EGYPTIANS WHO WERE COMING TO HELP US. THEY'LL BE BACK.

HOW DOES HE KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT WHAT THE BABYLONIANS ARE DOING?

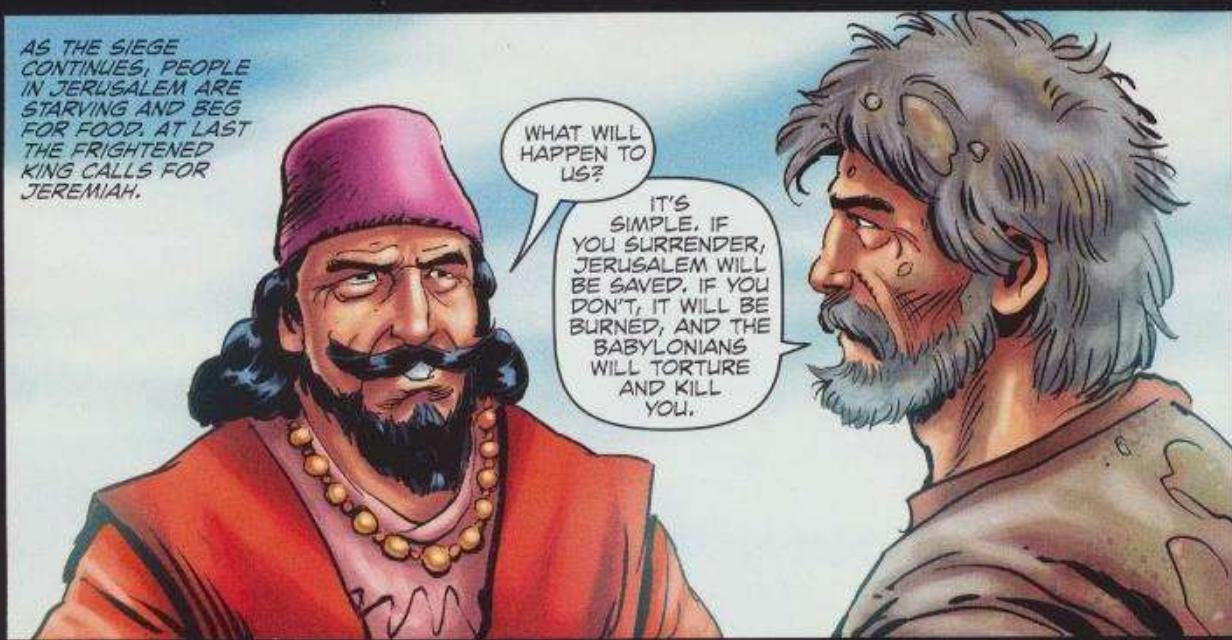




THE OLD WELL DOESN'T HAVE WATER IN IT ANYMORE—BUT IT DOES STILL HAVE MUD AND SLIME. JEREMIAH GAGS TO BE TRAPPED IN SUCH FILTH AND WONDERS HOW LONG HE CAN SURVIVE. BUT EBED-MELECH, A SERVANT IN THE PALACE, GETS PERMISSION FROM THE KING TO PUT JEREMIAH IN THE PRISON YARD.



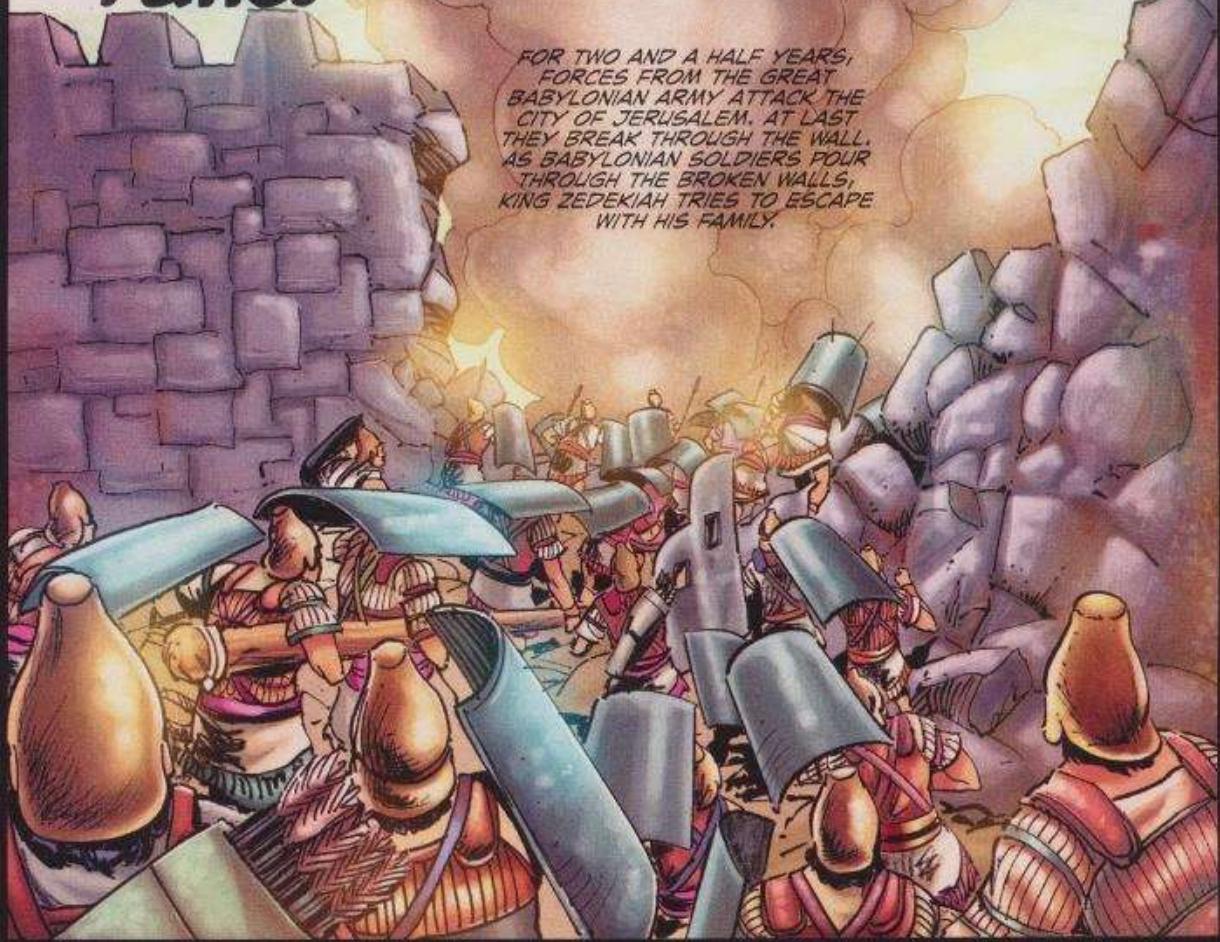
AS THE SIEGE CONTINUES, PEOPLE IN JERUSALEM ARE STARVING AND BEG FOR FOOD. AT LAST THE FRIGHTENED KING CALLS FOR JEREMIAH.



# Jerusalem Falls!

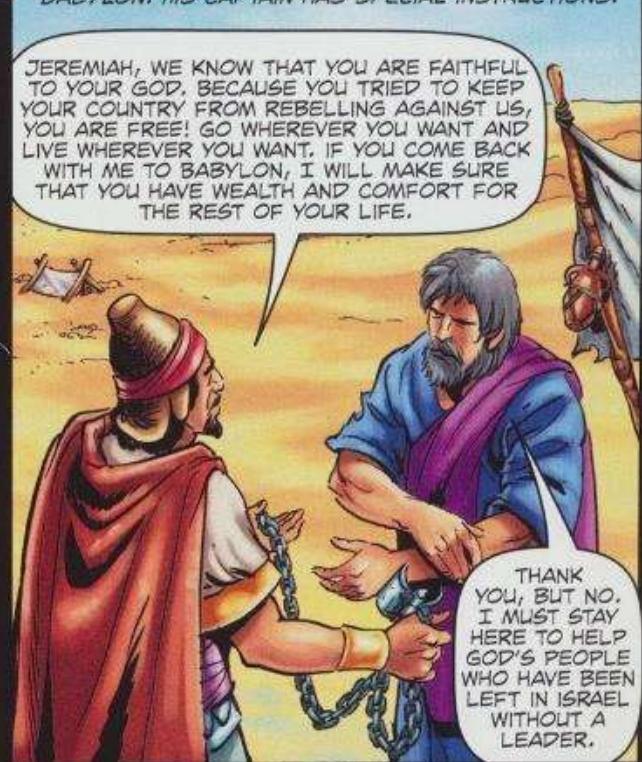
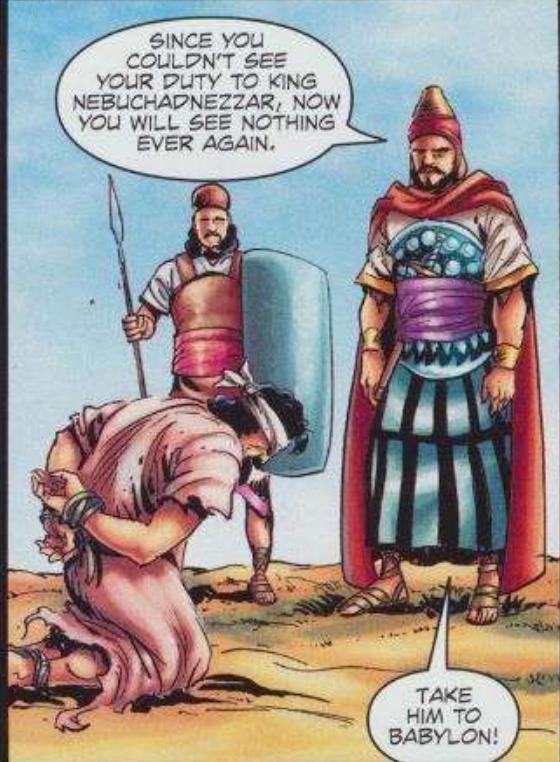
BASED ON JEREMIAH 39-44; 2 KINGS 25;  
2 CHRONICLES 36:15-23;  
LAMENTATIONS; OBADIAH

FOR TWO AND A HALF YEARS, FORCES FROM THE GREAT BABYLONIAN ARMY ATTACK THE CITY OF JERUSALEM. AT LAST THEY BREAK THROUGH THE WALL. AS BABYLONIAN SOLDIERS POUR THROUGH THE BROKEN WALLS, KING ZEDEKIAH TRIES TO ESCAPE WITH HIS FAMILY.

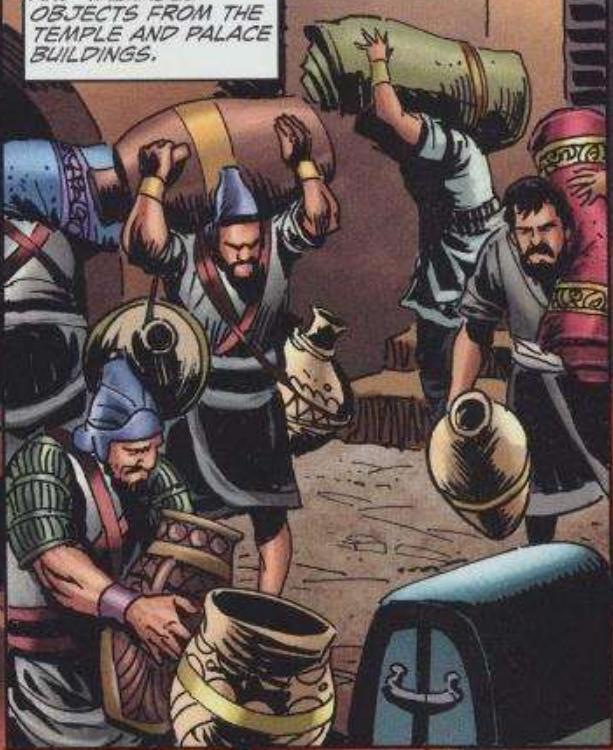


THE BABYLONIANS CAPTURE ZEDEKIAH BEFORE HE CAN REACH THE RIVER. THEY PUT OUT HIS EYES AND BRING HIM TO THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

BUT KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR HAS HEARD OF JEREMIAH'S PROPHECIES ALL THE WAY FROM BABYLON. HIS CAPTAIN HAS SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.



THEN THE BABYLONIANS STRIP THE SILVER, GOLD, AND VALUABLE OBJECTS FROM THE TEMPLE AND PALACE BUILDINGS.



SET FIRE TO EVERY CORNER OF THE CITY. DON'T LET ANYTHING SURVIVE THAT WOULD GIVE ANYONE IDEAS ABOUT REBUILDING JERUSALEM.



FOR DAYS, THE FIRE RAGES—UNTIL ALL THAT IS LEFT OF THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF JERUSALEM IS A HEAP OF ASHES AND BLACKENED STONES.

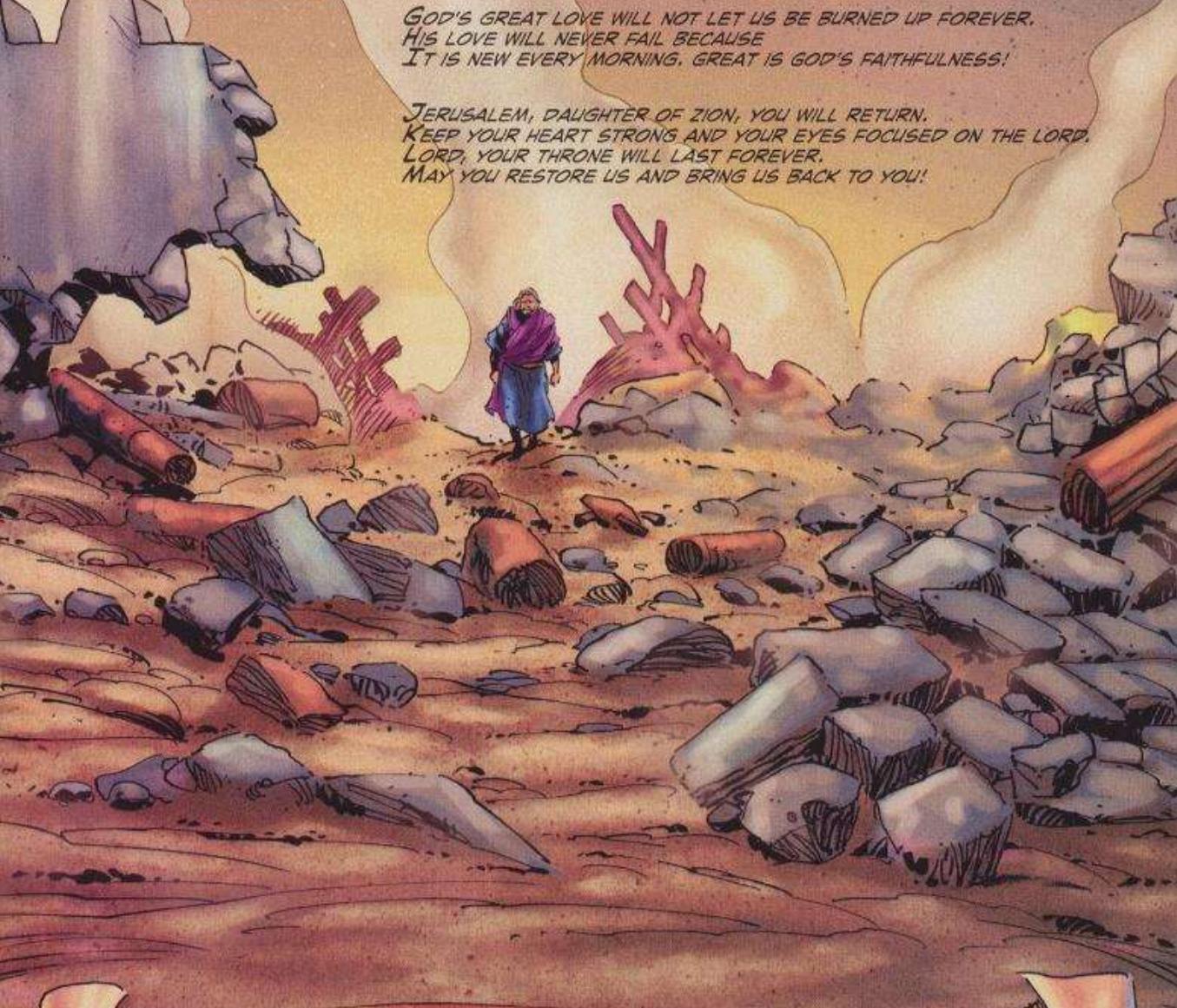


TO LAMENT MEANS TO EXPRESS SORROW. IN THE BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS, JEREMIAH SHARES THE GRIEF THE JEWS FEEL OVER THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

AND NOW THE STREETS OF JERUSALEM LIE EMPTY. BITTERLY OUR CITY WEEPS TONIGHT—COMFORT IS FAR FROM HER. DESTRUCTION HAS COME FROM BABYLON; ENEMIES HAVE TAKEN HER TREASURES, FOR THE LORD HAS REJECTED HER. BUT REMEMBER,

GOD'S GREAT LOVE WILL NOT LET US BE BURNED UP FOREVER. HIS LOVE WILL NEVER FAIL BECAUSE IT IS NEW EVERY MORNING. GREAT IS GOD'S FAITHFULNESS!

JERUSALEM, DAUGHTER OF ZION, YOU WILL RETURN. KEEP YOUR HEART STRONG AND YOUR EYES FOCUSED ON THE LORD. LORD, YOUR THRONE WILL LAST FOREVER. MAY YOU RESTORE US AND BRING US BACK TO YOU!



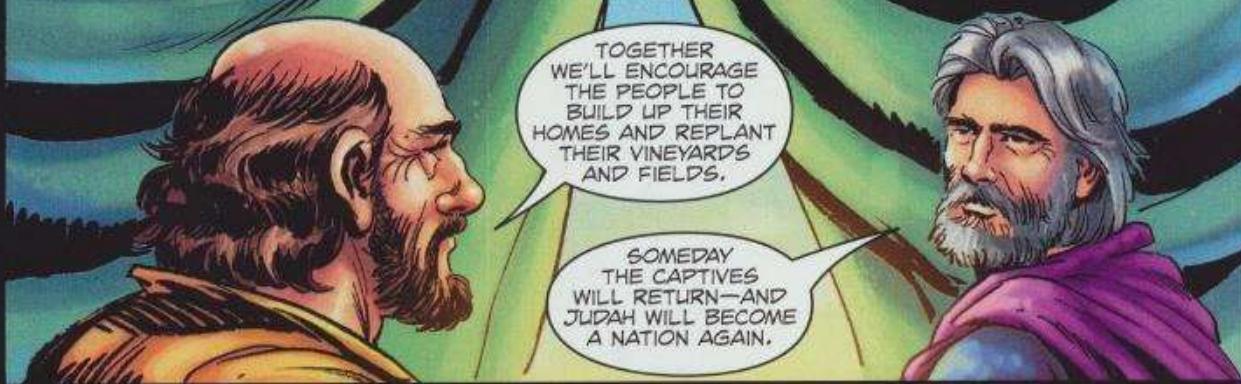
ISRAEL'S ANCESTOR, JACOB, SPENT A LIFETIME FIGHTING WITH HIS BROTHER ESAU. NOW ESAU'S DESCENDANTS, THE EDOMITES, CELEBRATE THAT THEIR COUSINS IN JERUSALEM HAVE BEEN CONQUERED. THE PROPHET OBADIAH SCOLDS THEM FOR THEIR HEARTLESS ATTITUDE.

YOU SHOULD NOT KICK YOUR BROTHER WHEN HE IS DOWN. DO NOT TAKE JOY OVER THE PEOPLE OF JUDAH IN THE DAY OF THEIR DESTRUCTION, AND DO NOT MOCK THEIR TROUBLES, FOR THESE SAME TROUBLES WILL COME TO YOU SOMEDAY.

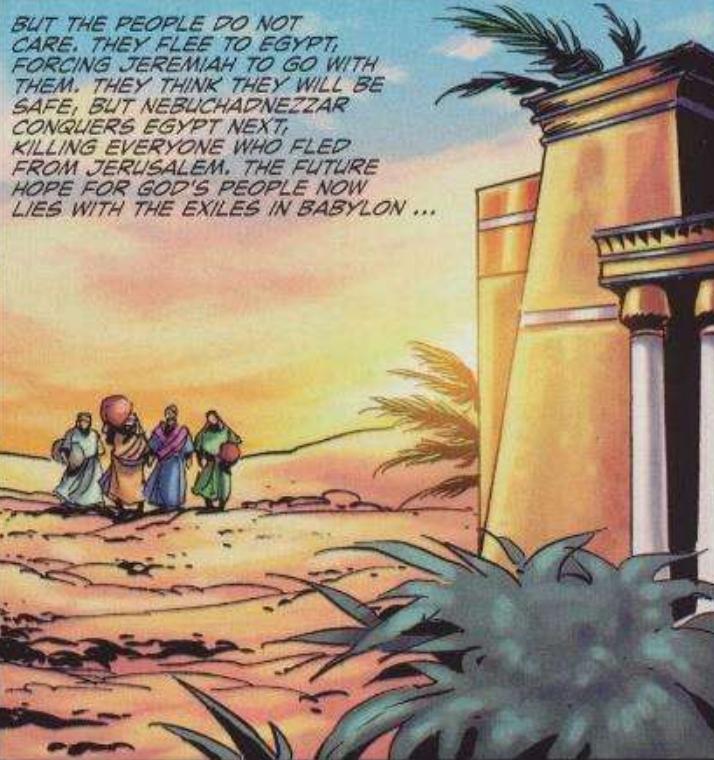
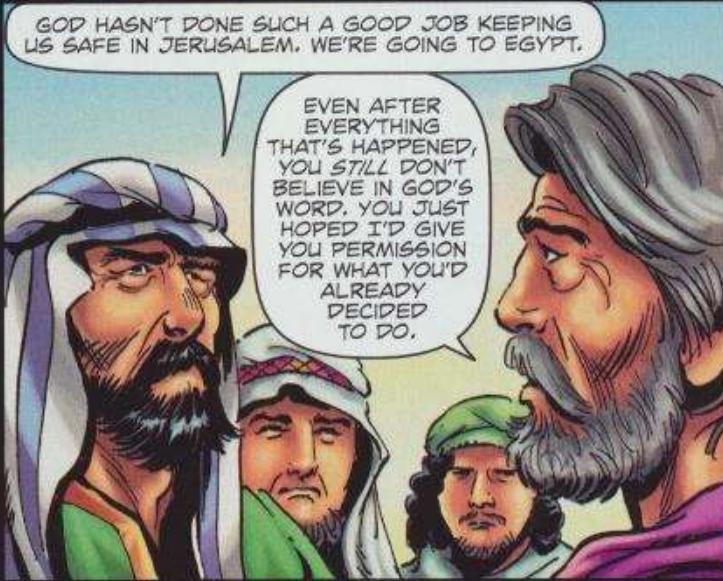
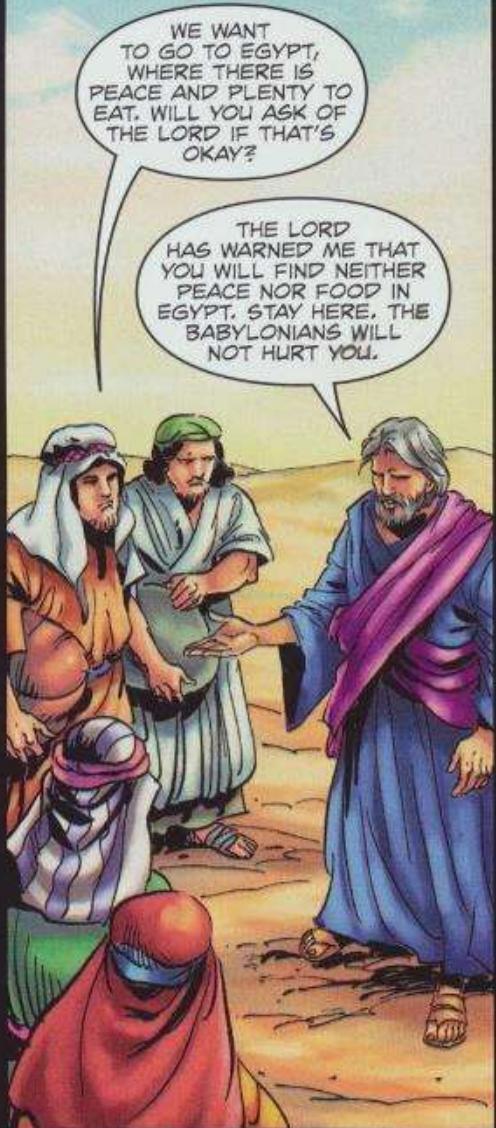
OBADIAH



THE BABYLONIANS SET UP HEADQUARTERS AT MIZPAH AND APPOINT GEDALIAH AS GOVERNOR. GEDALIAH HAS ALWAYS BEEN FAITHFUL TO THE LORD AND BELIEVED THE WORDS OF JEREMIAH. PLEASED TO HAVE A GODLY GOVERNOR, JEREMIAH JOINS HIM AND BECOMES HIS ADVISER.



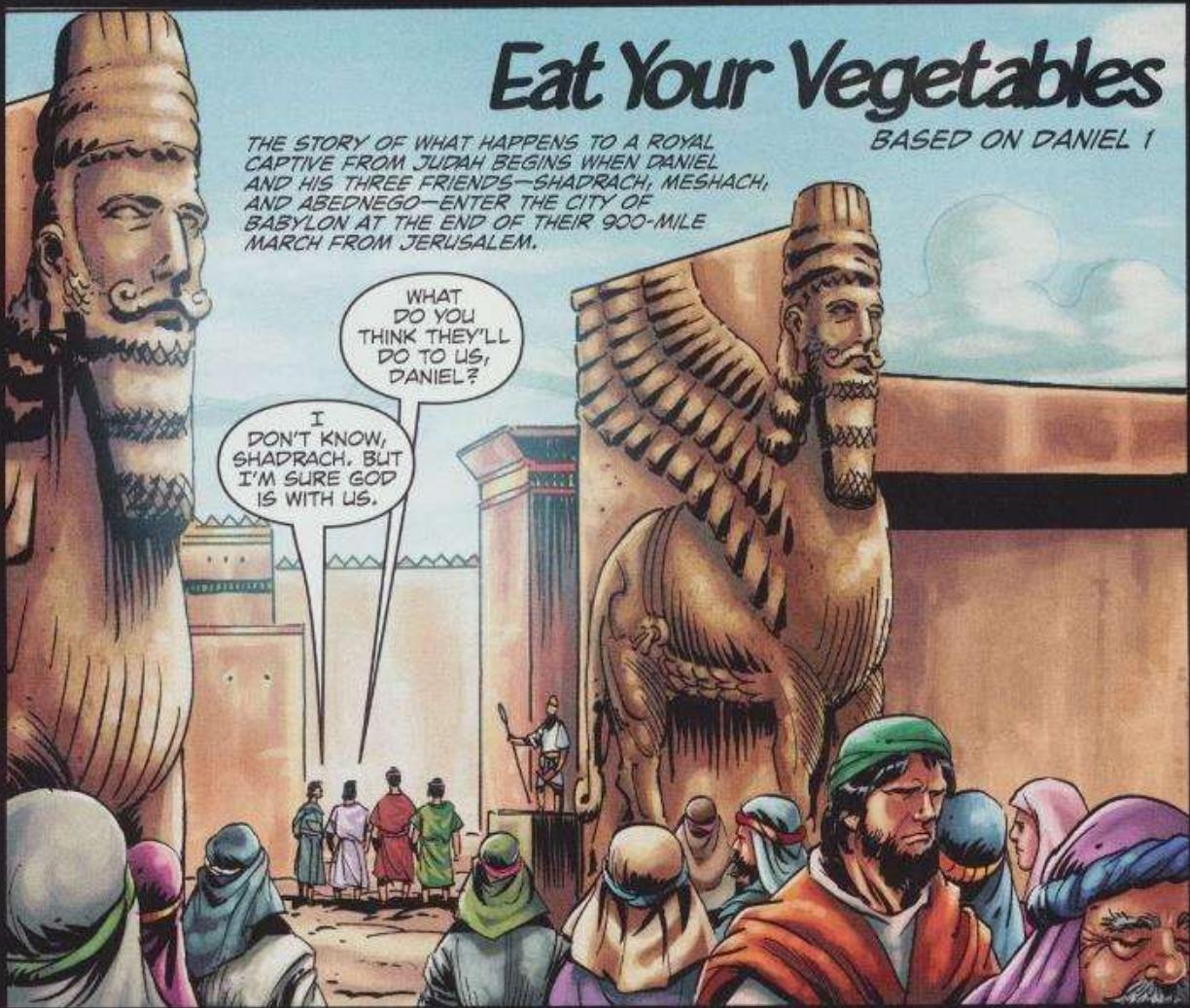
BUT GOOD NEWS IS ALWAYS TEMPORARY FOR JEREMIAH. BEFORE THE GOVERNOR'S DREAM CAN COME TRUE, HE IS MURDERED. FEARFUL THAT BABYLON WILL BLAME ALL ISRAEL FOR THE MURDER, A GROUP OF PEOPLE GO TO SEE JEREMIAH ...



# Eat Your Vegetables

BASED ON DANIEL 1

THE STORY OF WHAT HAPPENS TO A ROYAL CAPTIVE FROM JUDAH BEGINS WHEN DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS—SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO—ENTER THE CITY OF BABYLON AT THE END OF THEIR 900-MILE MARCH FROM JERUSALEM.



SOON AFTER THE PRISONERS REACH THE CITY, DANIEL AND SEVERAL OTHERS ARE BROUGHT BEFORE AN OFFICER OF KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

AS NOBLES FROM JERUSALEM, YOU WILL BE GIVEN A CHANCE TO TRY OUT FOR POSITIONS IN THE KING'S COURT. BUT I WARN YOU—YOU MUST BE STRONG, SMART, AND HANDSOME.



THE CHIEF OFFICIAL MOVES THROUGH THE RANKS OF EXILES. HE STOPS IN FRONT OF DANIEL.

IF YOUR GOD IS SO POWERFUL, WHY DID HE LET YOU HEBREWS BE CONQUERED?

DOESN'T A FATHER SOMETIMES NEED TO PUNISH HIS OWN CHILDREN?



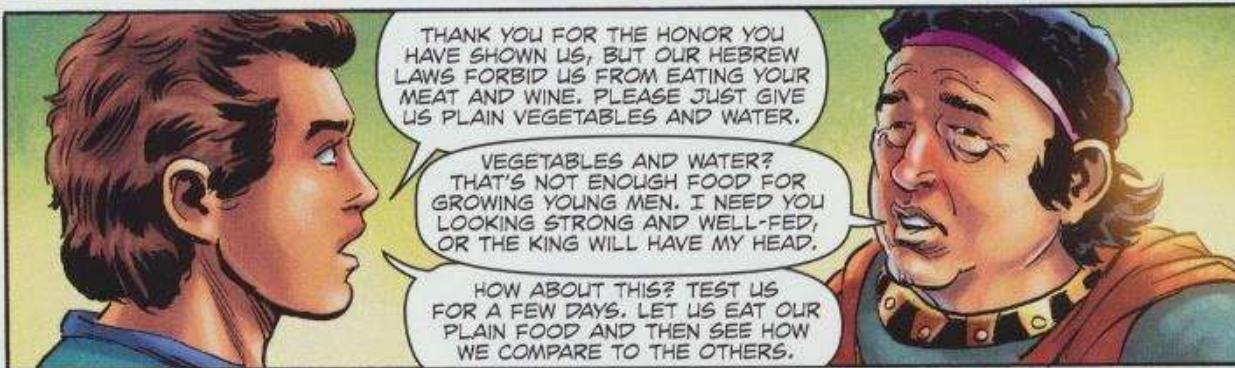
THE NEXT DAY ...

YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN! NOW YOU'LL BE GIVEN THREE YEARS TO STUDY UNDER OUR WISE MEN. AFTER THAT, THE KING HIMSELF WILL CHOOSE THOSE BEST QUALIFIED TO BE HIS ADVISERS. AS A BONUS, YOU WILL GET TO EAT THE EXTRA FOOD FROM THE KING'S TABLE!

THE YOUNG MEN ARE ASSIGNED A ROOM AT THE PALACE TO BEGIN THEIR STUDIES. EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE TECHNICALLY CAPTIVES, THEY RECEIVE THE BEST OF EVERYTHING—INCLUDING THE KING'S FOOD.



WE CAN'T EAT THIS! IT'S BEEN DEDICATED TO THE BABYLONIAN IDOLS.



THANK YOU FOR THE HONOR YOU HAVE SHOWN US, BUT OUR HEBREW LAWS FORBID US FROM EATING YOUR MEAT AND WINE. PLEASE JUST GIVE US PLAIN VEGETABLES AND WATER.

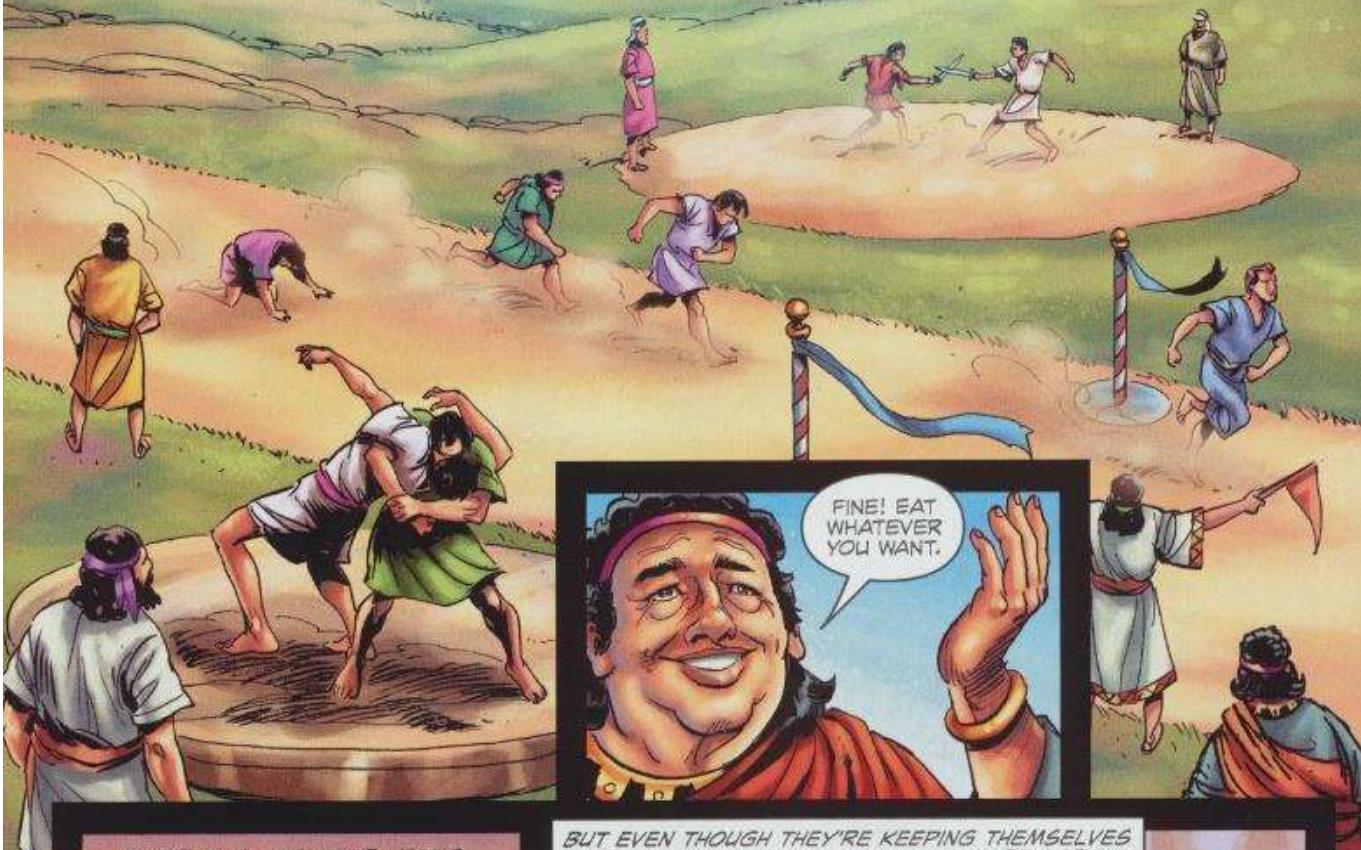
VEGETABLES AND WATER? THAT'S NOT ENOUGH FOOD FOR GROWING YOUNG MEN. I NEED YOU LOOKING STRONG AND WELL-FED, OR THE KING WILL HAVE MY HEAD.

HOW ABOUT THIS? TEST US FOR A FEW DAYS. LET US EAT OUR PLAIN FOOD AND THEN SEE HOW WE COMPARE TO THE OTHERS.

FOR TEN DAYS, THE OTHER TRAINEES EAT THEIR STEAK AND FINE WINE TAKEN FROM THE TEMPLE OF MARDUK. DANIEL AND HIS THREE FRIENDS EAT NOTHING BUT BOILED VEGETABLES AND WATER.



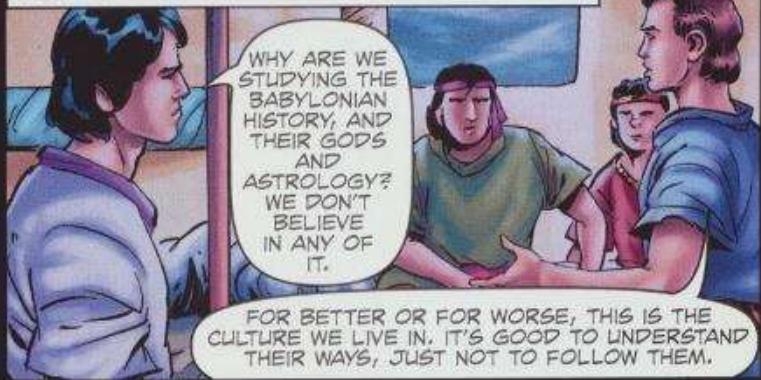
AT THE END OF TEN DAYS, THERE'S NO DOUBT—DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS NOT ONLY LOOK BETTER, BUT THEY ARE CLEARLY STRONGER AND FASTER THAN THEIR PEERS.



AFTER THIS, THE FOUR YOUNG HEBREWS BUSY THEMSELVES WITH THEIR STUDIES, LEARNING EVERYTHING THEIR BABYLONIAN TEACHERS CAN TEACH.



BUT EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE KEEPING THEMSELVES PURE FROM UNGODLY FOOD, THEY WORRY ABOUT THEIR UNGODLY STUDIES AS WELL.



THE FOUR YOUNG MEN CONSISTENTLY PRAY TO GOD THREE TIMES A DAY. IN ANSWER TO THEIR FAITHFULNESS, GOD GIVES THEM KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM. TO DANIEL, GOD EVEN GIVES AN UNDERSTANDING OF DREAMS. AT THE END OF THE THREE YEARS, THE YOUNG MEN ARE TAKEN BEFORE THE KING. HE TALKS WITH EACH ONE, THEN MAKES HIS DECISION.

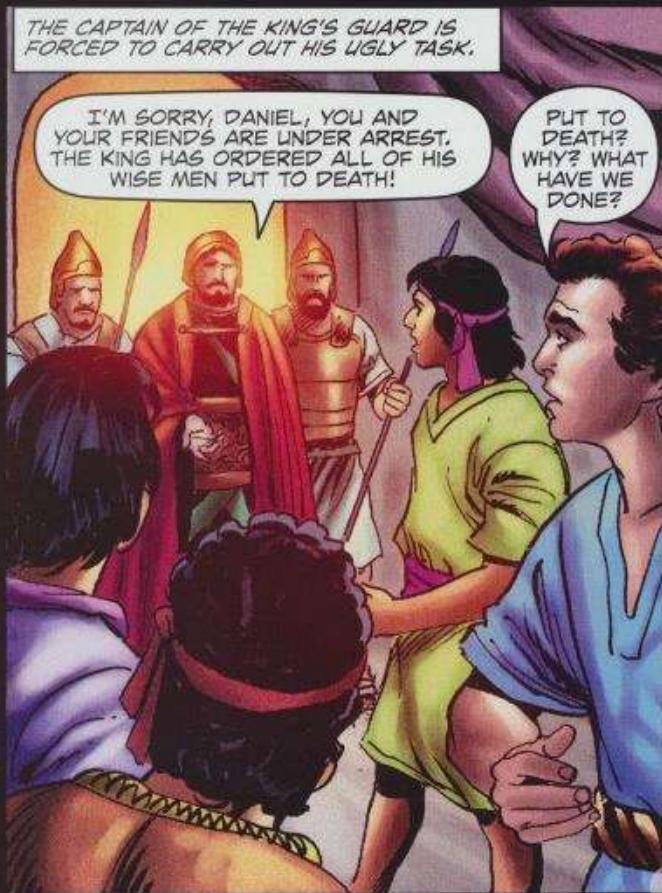
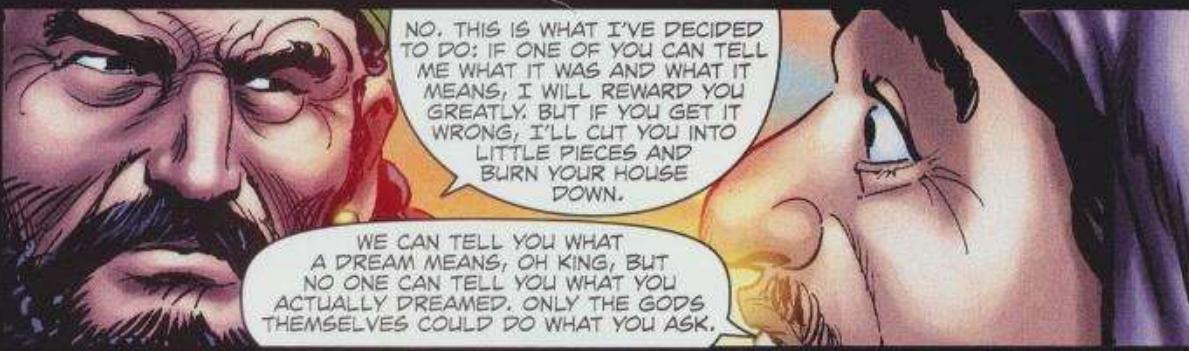


I HAVE CHOSEN THESE FOUR—DANIEL, SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO—to serve in my government. They are ten times better than all my magicians, enchanters, and advisers!

# A Deadly Dream

BASED ON DANIEL 2

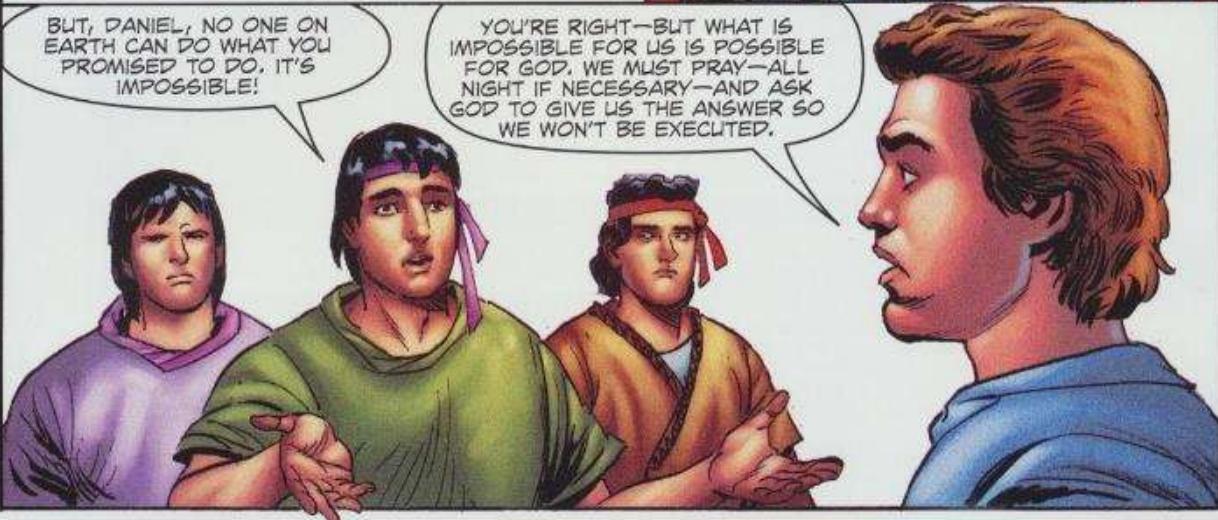
DANIEL AND HIS FRIENDS BECOME POPULAR MEMBERS OF THE KING'S COURT. BUT ONE DAY, THE KING HAS AN UNUSUALLY DIFFICULT PROBLEM AND HE CALLS FOR HIS OLDER, MORE EXPERIENCED ADVISERS.



WHEN THE GUARD EXPLAINS NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S ANGER, DANIEL REACTS CALMLY AND WISELY. HE ASKS FOR PERMISSION TO SPEAK TO THE KING.



DANIEL RUSHES BACK TO HIS FRIENDS WITH THE NEWS.



AS THE FOUR YOUNG HEBREWS PRAY, GOD SHOWS DANIEL THE DREAM AND ITS MEANING.



THE NEXT DAY ...

HAVE YOU COME  
TO ASK FOR MORE  
TIME—OR CAN YOU  
TELL ME MY  
DREAM?

NO MAN  
CAN DO WHAT  
YOU HAVE ASKED.  
BUT THERE IS A  
GOD IN HEAVEN  
WHO HAS SHOWN  
YOUR DREAM  
TO ME.

YOU SAW  
A MIGHTY  
STATUE. ITS  
HEAD WAS MADE  
OF GOLD, ITS  
SHOULDERS OF  
SILVER, AND  
ITS LEGS OF  
BRONZE AND  
IRON. BUT ITS  
FEET WERE  
MADE OF CLAY.  
THEN YOU SAW  
A LARGE STONE  
STRIKE AT THE  
FEET OF THE  
STATUE AND  
BREAK IT INTO  
MANY PIECES.

YES! THAT'S  
RIGHT! BUT  
WHAT DOES IT  
MEAN?

THE HEAD  
OF GOLD STANDS  
FOR YOU AND YOUR  
GREAT KINGDOM. OTHER  
LESSER KINGDOMS WILL  
FOLLOW, BUT AFTER  
THEY FALL, GOD WILL  
SET UP A KINGDOM  
THAT WILL NEVER BE  
DESTROYED.

YOUR GOD  
IS A GOD ABOVE  
ALL GODS. AND YOU  
SHALL BE RULER OF  
THE PROVINCE OF  
BABYLON OVER ALL  
THE WISE MEN WHOSE  
LIVES YOU SAVED  
TODAY.



# Facing the Heat

BASED ON DANIEL 3

THANKS TO DANIEL'S MIRACULOUS INTERPRETATION OF THE KING'S DREAM, NEBUCHADNEZZAR PROMOTES HIM AND HIS THREE FRIENDS TO HIGH POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT. YEARS PASS, AND THE FOUR HEBREW MEN RULE WISELY AND WELL. BUT THE NEWS DOES NOT MAKE THE KING'S OTHER ADVISERS VERY HAPPY.

WHY SHOULD FOREIGNERS GET POWER AND HONOR INSTEAD OF US? WE HAVE TO GET RID OF DANIEL.

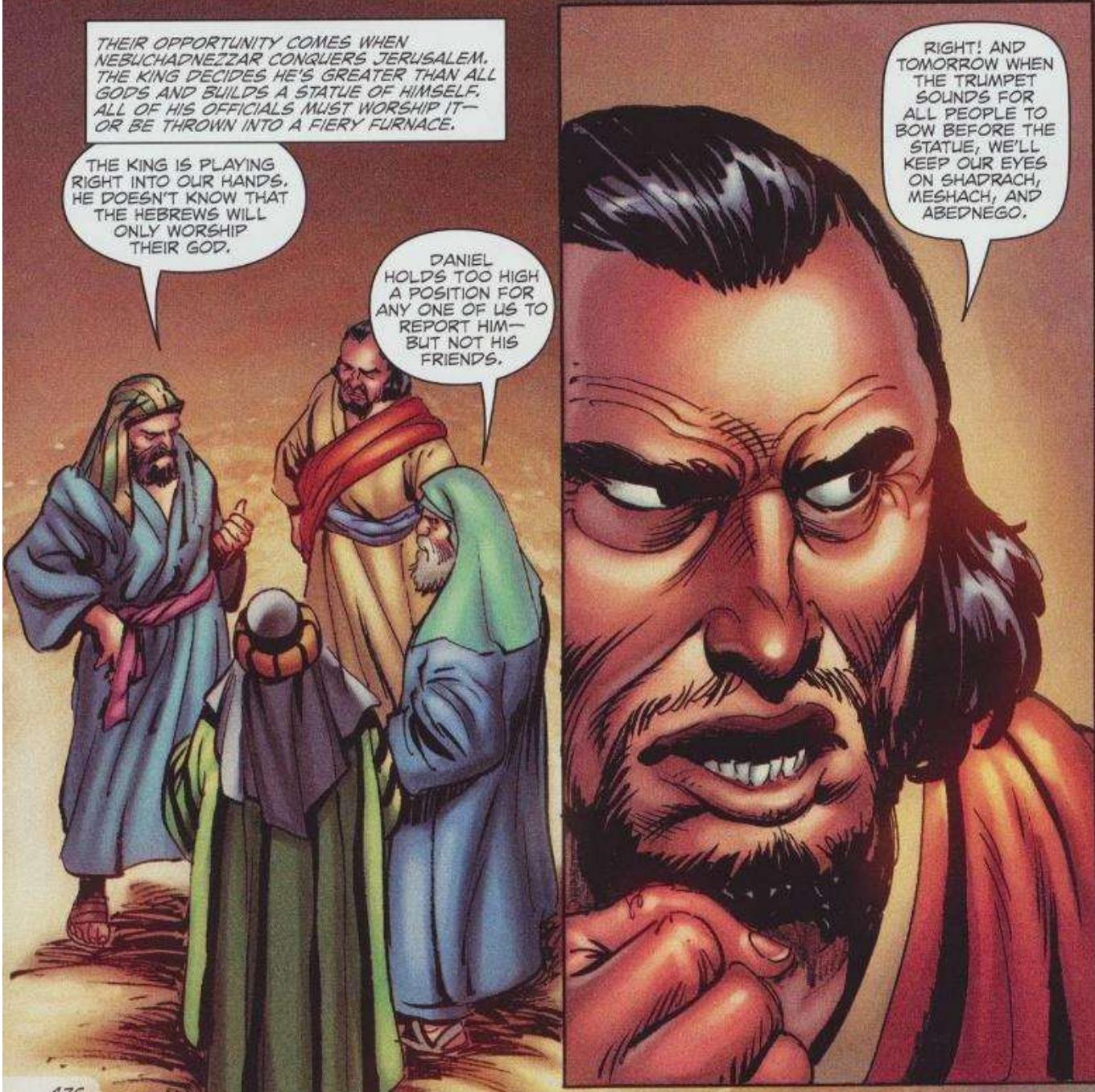
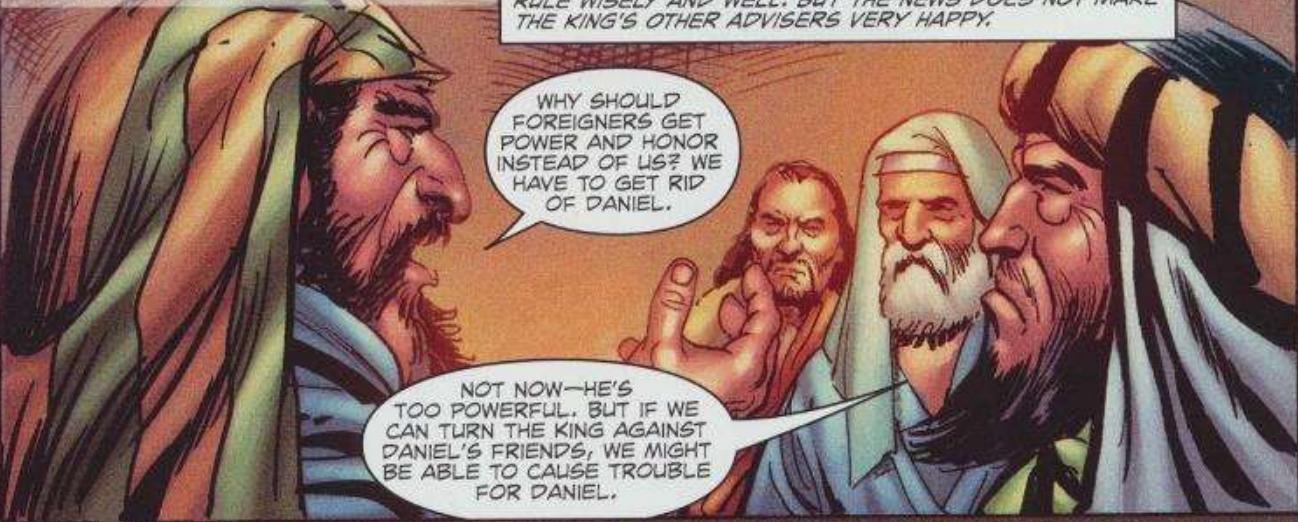
NOT NOW—HE'S TOO POWERFUL. BUT IF WE CAN TURN THE KING AGAINST DANIEL'S FRIENDS, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO CAUSE TROUBLE FOR DANIEL.

THEIR OPPORTUNITY COMES WHEN NEBUCHADNEZZAR CONQUERS JERUSALEM. THE KING DECIDES HE'S GREATER THAN ALL GODS AND BUILDS A STATUE OF HIMSELF. ALL OF HIS OFFICIALS MUST WORSHIP IT—OR BE THROWN INTO A FIERY FURNACE.

THE KING IS PLAYING RIGHT INTO OUR HANDS. HE DOESN'T KNOW THAT THE HEBREWS WILL ONLY WORSHIP THEIR GOD.

DANIEL HOLDS TOO HIGH A POSITION FOR ANY ONE OF US TO REPORT HIM—BUT NOT HIS FRIENDS.

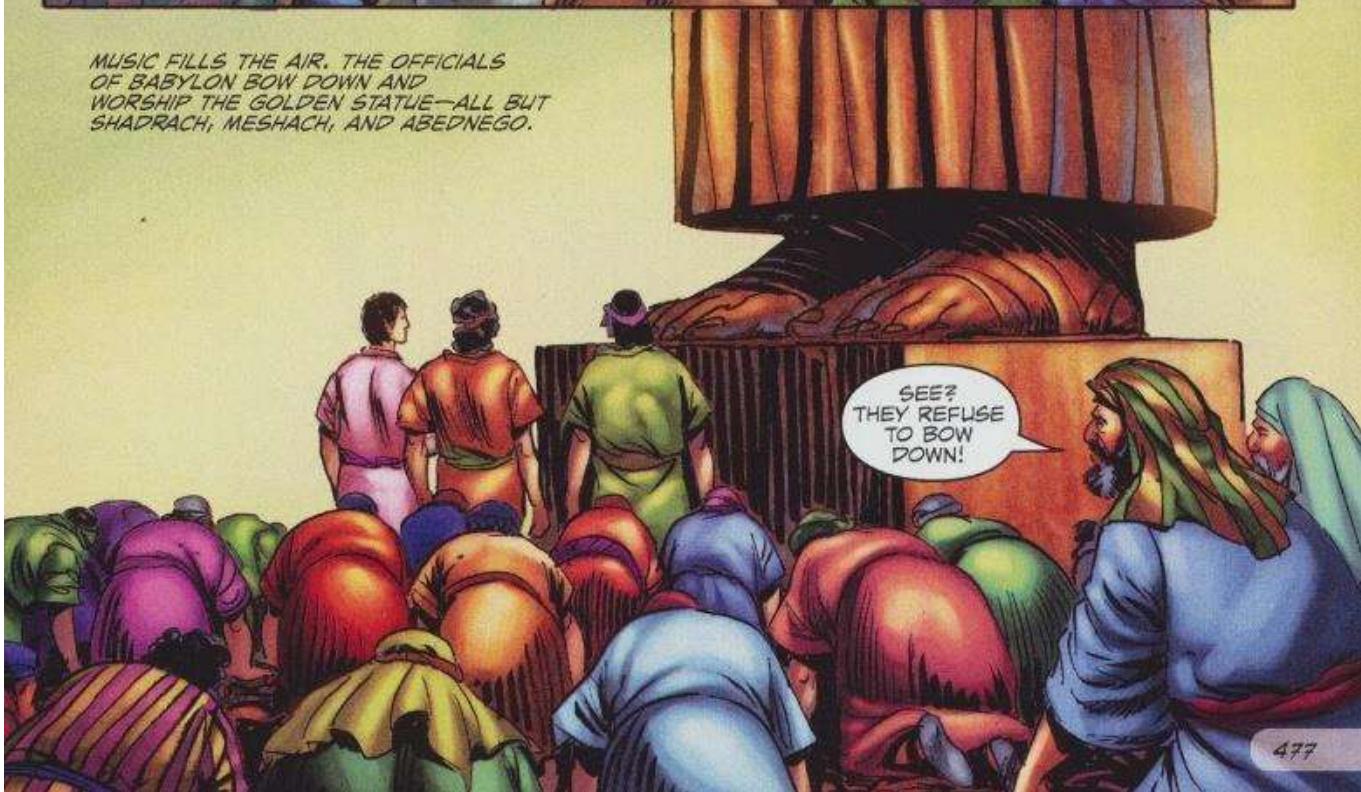
RIGHT! AND TOMORROW WHEN THE TRUMPET SOUNDS FOR ALL PEOPLE TO BOW BEFORE THE STATUE, WE'LL KEEP OUR EYES ON SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO.



AT KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S COMMAND, A GIANT STATUE—90 FEET HIGH—HAS BEEN BUILT ON THE PLAINS OF DURA. ALL OF THE OFFICIALS OF BABYLON ARE ORDERED TO WORSHIP IT. THE HOUR OF WORSHIP COMES—THE MOMENT THE KING'S JEALOUS ADVISERS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR ...



MUSIC FILLS THE AIR. THE OFFICIALS OF BABYLON BOW DOWN AND WORSHIP THE GOLDEN STATUE—ALL BUT SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABEDNEGO.



EAGERLY, THE JEALOUS ADVISERS REPORT TO THE KING.

O KING, THREE OF YOUR HEBREW OFFICIALS HAVE DEFIED YOU. THEY REFUSE TO WORSHIP YOUR STATUE.

WHAT? BRING THEM TO ME AT ONCE!

WORSHIP THE STATUE—OR I'LL THROW YOU INTO THE FIERY FURNACE. TELL ME, WHAT GOD CAN SAVE YOU FROM THAT?

HEAT THE FURNACE SEVEN TIMES HOTTER THAN EVER BEFORE—AND THROW THEM IN!

THE THREE HEBREWS ARE QUICKLY BOUND AND THROWN INTO THE RAGING FIRE.

THE GOD WE SERVE CAN SAVE US FROM ANYTHING, INCLUDING FIRE! BUT EVEN IF HE DOESN'T, WE WILL NEVER WORSHIP AN IDOL.

AAAH! IT'S TOO HOT. I'M BURNING!

BUT WHEN THE KING LOOKS INTO THE FURNACE ...

THEY'RE ALIVE! THE FLAMES HAVEN'T EVEN TOUCHED THEM. DIDN'T WE THROW THREE MEN INTO THE FIRE?

BUT I SEE FOUR! AND THE FOURTH LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE FROM HEAVEN.

SHADRACH! MESHACH! ABED'NEGO! COME OUT!

KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR IS STRUCK WITH AWE AND WONDER.

BLESSED BE THE GOD OF SHADRACH, MESHACH, AND ABED'NEGO, WHO SENT HIS ANGEL TO SAVE THEM. FROM NOW ON, ANYONE WHO DARES TO SAY A WORD AGAINST THEIR GOD WILL DIE!

WE SHOULD PROBABLY NOT MAKE ANY MORE ATTACKS ON THE HEBREWS.

# The Four Beasts from Below

BASED ON DANIEL 7

ONE NIGHT, DANIEL HAS A DREAM. FOUR BEASTS RISE OUT OF THE SURGING SEA ...

THEN, A FEROCIOUS BEAR COMES FORTH.

THIRD, A BEAST LIKE A LEOPARD WITH FOUR HEADS AND FOUR WINGS.

FIRST, A LION WITH EAGLE'S WINGS.

FINALLY, A TERRIFYING AND POWERFUL BEAST WITH IRON TEETH RISES UP. IT CRUSHES AND DEVOURS ALL THE BEASTS THAT CAME BEFORE IT. NOTHING CAN STOP IT.

GOD GIVES HIM THE MEANING OF THIS DREAM. THE FOUR BEASTS, JUST LIKE THE FOUR METALS IN NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S STATUE, REPRESENT FOUR KINGDOMS—BABYLON, PERSIA, GREECE, AND ROME. BUT A DIFFERENT KIND OF KINGDOM—GOD'S KINGDOM—WILL COME AFTER ROME, AND IT WILL LAST FOREVER.

# The Writing on the Wall

BASED ON DANIEL 5

AFTER NEBUCHADNEZZAR DIES, DANIEL CONTINUES TO GOVERN UNDER MANY DIFFERENT KINGS. BUT THE NEW RULER, BELSHAZZAR, IS YOUNG AND SPOILED. HE SPENDS ALL HIS TIME IN FEASTS AND PARTIES AND DOESN'T EVEN KNOW THAT DANIEL QUIETLY KEEPS THE KINGDOM RUNNING. HE LAUGHS AT TWO GREAT THREATS TO HIS KINGDOM: ANGRY PRIESTS WHO ARE TURNING AGAINST HIM AND THE APPROACH OF THE MIGHTY PERSIAN ARMY. INSTEAD HE PREPARES A GREAT FEAST AND INVITES A THOUSAND GUESTS.



HE GIVES NO THOUGHT TO THE ENEMY AT HIS GATES OR THE GOD HE HAS OFFENDED.

BRING THE GOBLETS AND PLATES THAT WE TOOK FROM THE HEBREW TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM!



I'D LIKE TO GIVE THANKS TO THE GOD OF GOLD FOR MAKING THIS CUP!

AND TO THE GOD OF SILVER FOR MAKING THIS PLATE.

AND TO THE GOD OF WOOD FOR MAKING THIS WALL ... OR ELSE I'D FALL DOWN.



BUT THEIR DRUNKENNESS AND BLASPHEMY IS CUT SHORT. SUDDENLY, BELSHAZZAR STARES AT A PLACE HIGH ON THE BANQUET WALL. HE TURNS PALE AND HIS HANDS TREMBLE ...

LOOK! ON THE WALL! WHAT IS IT? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



KING BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST HAS BEEN DISRUPTED BY A SUPERNATURAL SIGHT. A GHOSTLY HAND WRITES THREE WORDS ON THE WALL.

# NUMBERED MEASURED DIVIDED

ENCHANTERS!  
ASTROLOGERS!  
WHOEVER CAN TELL  
ME THE MEANING OF  
THIS WRITING WILL  
HAVE RICHES AND A  
PROMOTION.

BUT NONE OF HIS ROYAL WISE MEN CAN EXPLAIN THE MEANING. AT THIS, BELSHAZZAR BECOMES EVEN MORE TERRIFIED. WHEN THE KING'S MOTHER HEARS THE EXCITEMENT IN THE BANQUET HALL, SHE RUSHES TO HER SON.

MY SON, DON'T BE ALARMED! THERE IS A MAN IN YOUR KINGDOM WITH THE POWER OF THE GODS. THIS MAN DANIEL IS WISE—

—WITH THE ABILITY TO INTERPRET DREAMS AND EXPLAIN RIDDLES. CALL FOR DANIEL, AND HE WILL TELL YOU WHAT THE WRITING MEANS.

DANIEL! YES!  
BRING HIM HERE AT ONCE.

THE BANQUET HALL IS SO QUIET YOU CAN HEAR A PIN DROP UNTIL DANIEL APPEARS BEFORE THE KING.

DIVIDE

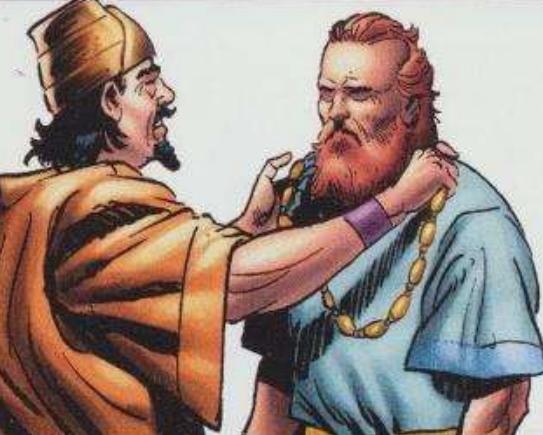
TELL ME WHAT THOSE WORDS MEAN AND YOU WILL BE THE THIRD HIGHEST RULER IN BABYLON. I'LL GIVE YOU HALF MY WEALTH!

KEEP YOUR RICHES TO YOURSELF AND GIVE YOUR PROMOTION TO SOMEONE ELSE. YOUR ANCESTOR NEBUCHADNEZZAR MADE MISTAKES, BUT AT LEAST HE LEARNED FROM THEM AND GAVE HONOR TO GOD. BUT YOU ARE ARROGANT. YOU ATE AND DRANK OUT OF THE SACRED TREASURES OF GOD'S TEMPLE. YOU PRAISED THE GODS OF GOLD AND SILVER AND WOOD—WHICH DON'T EVEN EXIST! BUT YOU HAVE GIVEN NO HONOR TO GOD.

THESE WORDS ARE GOD'S PROMISE TO YOU. THEY MEAN THIS: YOUR DAYS ARE NUMBERED! YOU'VE BEEN MEASURED AND FOUND WANTING! AND YOUR KINGDOM WILL BE DIVIDED AMONG THE PERSIANS!

WELL, THAT SOUNDS A LITTLE FARFETCHED, BUT I'LL KEEP MY PROMISE. HERE, THIS CHAIN MAKES YOU NEXT TO ME IN ALL THE KINGDOM.

NOW, ON WITH THE FEAST!



AS BELSHAZZAR SPEAKS, PERSIAN SOLDIERS SUDDENLY FILL THE HALL AND TAKE HIM PRISONER.

SOLDIERS? WHERE DID THEY COME FROM? WHERE ARE MY GUARDS?

BEFORE MORNING, THE CITY IS IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY. BELSHAZZAR IS EXECUTED BY THE CONQUERING PERSIANS.



# Lion Taming

BASED ON DANIEL 6

BABYLON, WHICH HAD CONQUERED JUDAH, HAS NOW BEEN CONQUERED BY DARIUS, THE PERSIAN KING, JUST LIKE DANIEL'S DREAMS PREDICTED. DARIUS NEEDS TRUSTWORTHY OFFICIALS TO HELP HIM RUN HIS NEW EMPIRE. EVEN THOUGH DANIEL IS QUITE OLD, DARIUS SEES THAT HE HAS INTEGRITY.

YOU WILL HELP RULE OVER MY NOBLES AS LONG AS YOU OBEY ME. MAKE SURE THAT TAXES ARE PAID AND NOBODY CHEATS ME OUT OF MY MONEY.

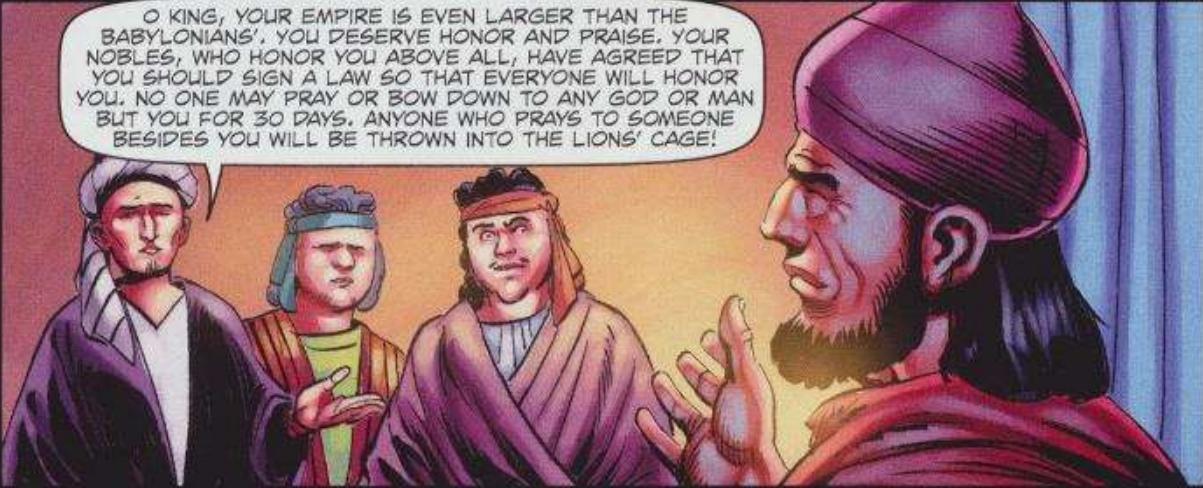
DANIEL DOES SUCH EXCEPTIONAL WORK THAT DARIUS DECIDES TO PROMOTE HIM TO RUN THE WHOLE KINGDOM BY HIMSELF. THIS DOES NOT PLEASE HIS YOUNG OFFICIALS.

WE'LL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO MAKE MONEY OFF OF BRIBES IF DANIEL IS WATCHING US.

IF WE COULD ONLY CATCH HIM IN SOME CORRUPTION ... BUT DANIEL IS TOO HONEST.

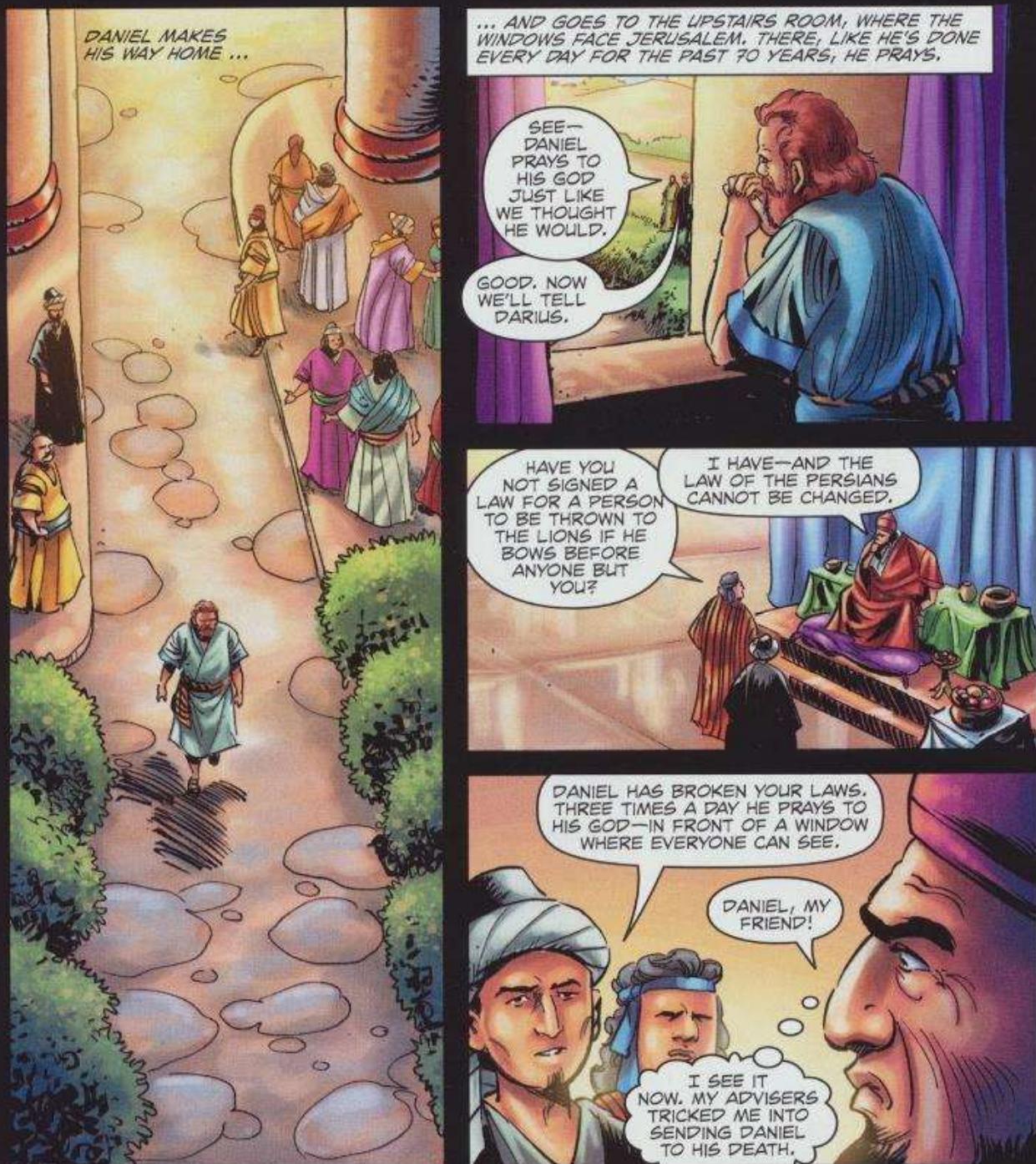
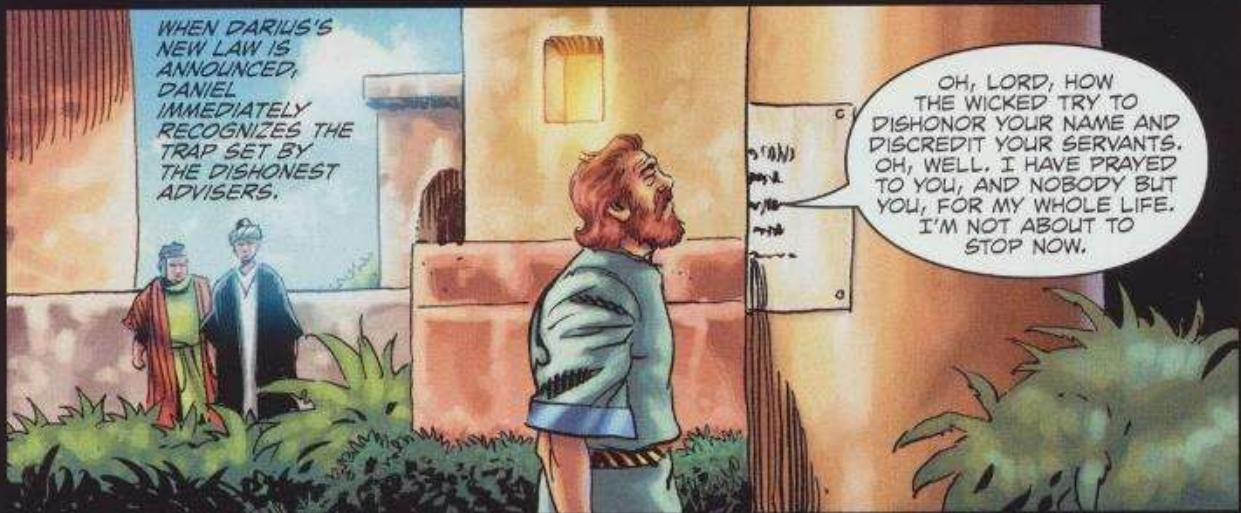
WE'LL NEVER FIND ANY DIRT ON DANIEL, UNLESS WE CAN TRAP HIM WITH SOMETHING ABOUT THE LAWS OF HIS GOD! HE WILL NEVER DISHONOR HIS HEBREW GOD.

O KING, YOUR EMPIRE IS EVEN LARGER THAN THE BABYLONIANS'. YOU DESERVE HONOR AND PRAISE. YOUR NOBLES, WHO HONOR YOU ABOVE ALL, HAVE AGREED THAT YOU SHOULD SIGN A LAW SO THAT EVERYONE WILL HONOR YOU. NO ONE MAY PRAY OR BOW DOWN TO ANY GOD OR MAN BUT YOU FOR 30 DAYS. ANYONE WHO PRAYS TO SOMEONE BESIDES YOU WILL BE THROWN INTO THE LIONS' CAGE!



WELL, IF YOU REALLY THINK I DESERVE SUCH HONOR ... OKAY, IF ALL OF YOU WANT SUCH A LAW, I'LL SIGN IT.

AS YOU KNOW, ONCE THIS LAW IS IN WRITING, IT CANNOT BE TAKEN BACK OR CHANGED. THAT IS THE RULE OF PERSIAN LAW.



KING DARIUS HAD NOT THOUGHT OF THIS POSSIBLE OUTCOME FROM HIS LAW. HE WORKS ALL DAY TO TRY TO SAVE HIS TRUSTED ADVISER.

COULDN'T YOU MAYBE HOLD OFF ON PRAYING FOR ANOTHER 29 DAYS? YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO PRAY TO ME. OR MAYBE JUST PRAY WHERE PEOPLE CAN'T SEE YOU FOR A FEW WEEKS?

YOU TRUST ME BECAUSE I DO NOT COMPROMISE MY PRINCIPLES. I CANNOT COMPROMISE TO MY GOD.

DANIEL REMAINS FIRM. AND AT THE END OF THE DAY, KING DARIUS CANNOT CHANGE THE LAW; EVEN ONE THAT HE HIMSELF SIGNED.

RELUCTANTLY, HE ORDERS HIS GUARDS TO TAKE DANIEL TO THE LIONS' DEN AND THROW HIM IN.

LOOK! DANIEL DOESN'T SEEM TO BE AFRAID.

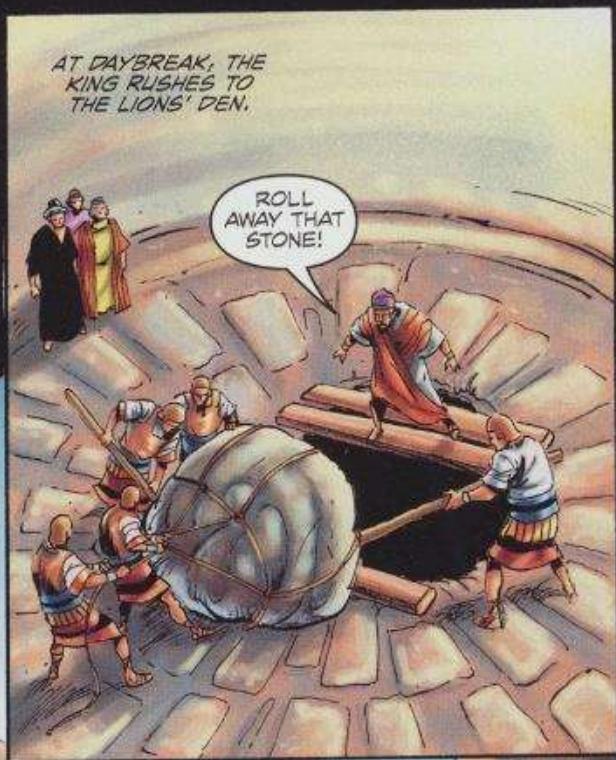
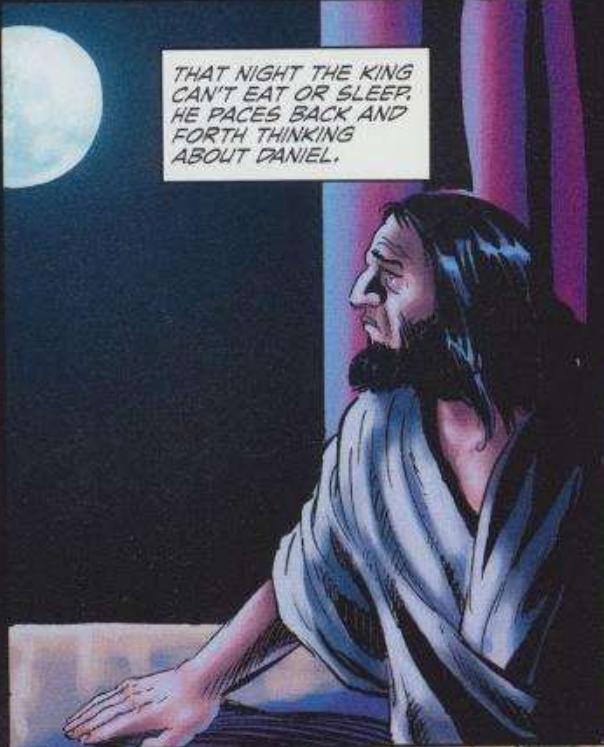
HE WILL BE WHEN HE GETS TO THE LIONS' DEN. OUR PLAN TO GET RID OF HIM IS WORKING PERFECTLY.

A FEW MINUTES LATER, DANIEL, WHO BROKE THE KING'S LAW BY PRAYING TO GOD, IS THROWN IN WITH THE LIONS.

SEAL THE DEN WITH A STONE SO THAT EVERYONE WILL KNOW I AM ENFORCING THE LAW.

MY OWN PRIDE AND THIS STUPID LAW HAVE COST ME MY ONLY TRUSTED FRIEND.

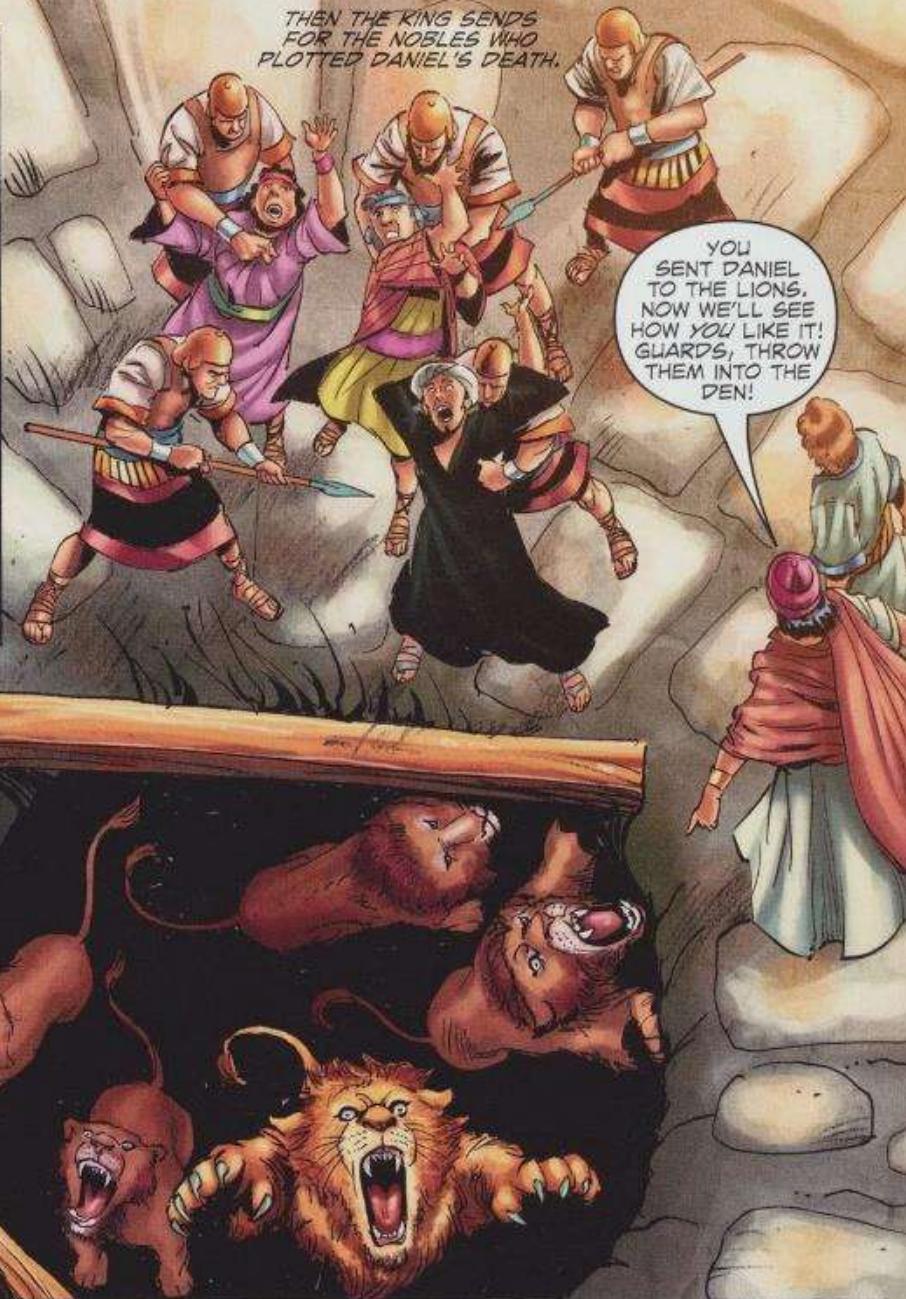
MY ONLY HOPE NOW IS THAT YOUR GOD IS STRONG ENOUGH TO SAVE YOU!



THE KING IS OVERJOYED AND ORDERS A ROPE THROWN DOWN INTO THE DEN. DANIEL IS PULLED OUT.

THEN THE KING SENDS FOR THE NOBLES WHO PLOTTED DANIEL'S DEATH.

YOU SENT DANIEL TO THE LIONS. NOW WE'LL SEE HOW YOU LIKE IT! GUARDS, THROW THEM INTO THE DEN!



THE LIONS, WHO HAD SEEMED SO TAME JUST A MOMENT BEFORE, IMMEDIATELY DEVOUR THE WICKED ADVISERS.

KING DARIUS MAKES A DECREE ...

I, DARIUS, COMMAND ALL PEOPLE IN THIS KINGDOM TO HONOR THE GOD THAT DANIEL WORSHIPS AND SERVES.

AND FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE, DANIEL HELPS THE PERSIANS RULE BABYLON, THE COUNTRY HE ENTERED AS A CAPTIVE. AGAINST ALL ODDS, HE BOLDLY STANDS FOR GOD—AND GOD REWARDS HIM.

# A Pair of Queens

BASED ON  
ESTHER 1:1-2:18

IN THE YEARS SINCE THE PERSIANS CONQUERED BABYLON, THE PERSIAN EMPIRE HAS BECOME THE MOST POWERFUL IN ALL THE WORLD—REACHING FROM INDIA TO ETHIOPIA. KING XERXES NOW SITS ON THE THRONE AT SUSA. TO CELEBRATE HIS GREATNESS, HE THROWS A PARTY FOR HIS NOBLEMEN—A BIG, EXPENSIVE, AND LONG PARTY.

THE KING HAS BEEN ENTERTAINING HIGH-RANKING OFFICIALS FOR SIX MONTHS NOW! HOW MUCH LONGER WILL THIS FEASTING GO ON?

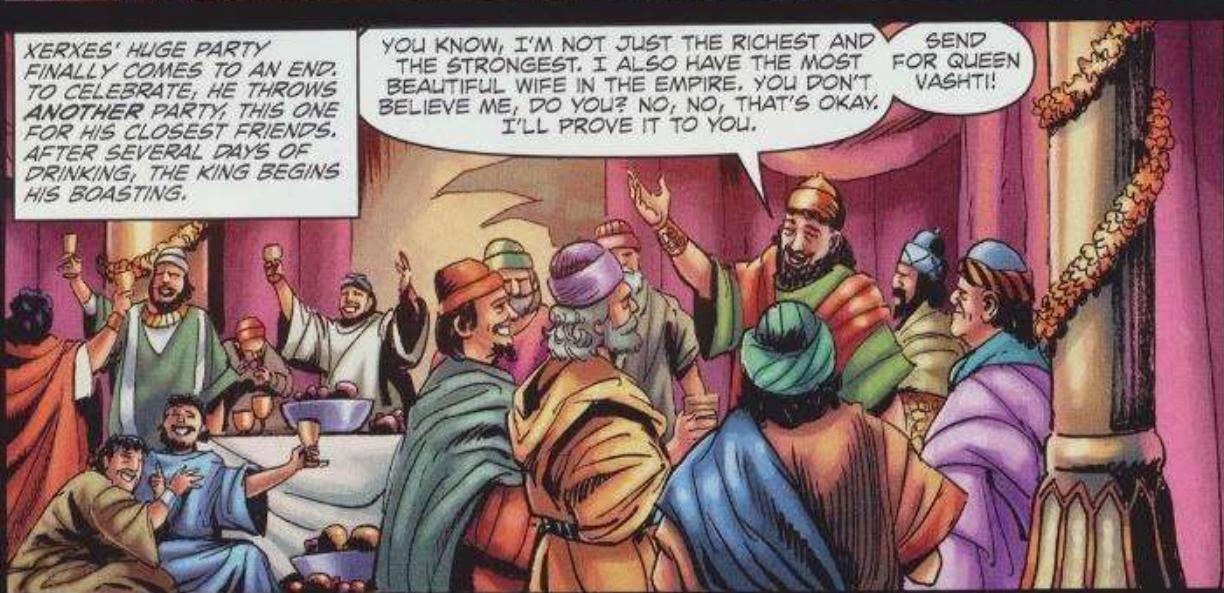
UNTIL HE THINKS HE HAS IMPRESSED ALL OF HIS SUBJECTS WITH HIS WEALTH AND POWER.



XERXES' HUGE PARTY FINALLY COMES TO AN END. TO CELEBRATE, HE THROWS ANOTHER PARTY, THIS ONE FOR HIS CLOSEST FRIENDS. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF DRINKING, THE KING BEGINS HIS BOASTING.

YOU KNOW, I'M NOT JUST THE RICHEST AND THE STRONGEST. I ALSO HAVE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WIFE IN THE EMPIRE. YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, DO YOU? NO, NO, THAT'S OKAY. I'LL PROVE IT TO YOU.

SEND FOR QUEEN VASHTI!



JUST YOU WAIT. SHE'S STUNNING.

UHH ... YOUR HIGHNESS? THE QUEEN REFUSES TO COME.



WHAT???



THIS IS HORRIBLE. MY WIFE DOESN'T OBEY MY COMMANDS. MY NOBLEMEN, YOU MUST HELP ME. ACCORDING TO PERSIAN LAW, WHAT CAN I DO TO UNDO WHAT SHE DIDN'T DO?

AFTER PUZZLING THROUGH THE KING'S QUESTION, ONE OF HIS ADVISERS STANDS UP AND POINTS OUT THAT THE CONSEQUENCES ARE MUCH WORSE THAN THEY EVEN REALIZE ...

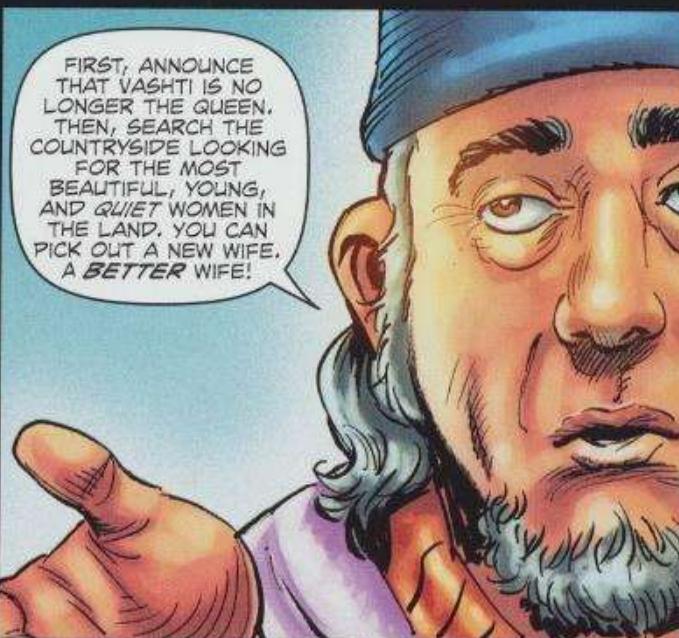


SHE HAS NOT JUST OFFENDED YOU, O KING. SHE HAS BROUGHT DISASTER UPON ALL THE MEN IN THE KINGDOM! ONCE WOMEN HEAR THAT QUEEN VASHTI HAS DISOBeyed YOU, THEY WILL START DISOBEYING THEIR OWN HUSBANDS. THEY'LL DO WHATEVER THEY WANT. THEY MIGHT EVEN TALK TO US! IT WILL BE CHAOS!

NOW IF I UNDERSTAND THE KING RIGHTLY, AND I THINK I DO, THEN THE KING SHOULD DO WHAT I WOULD DO.



FIRST, ANNOUNCE THAT VASHTI IS NO LONGER THE QUEEN. THEN, SEARCH THE COUNTRYSIDE LOOKING FOR THE MOST BEAUTIFUL, YOUNG, AND QUIET WOMEN IN THE LAND. YOU CAN PICK OUT A NEW WIFE, A BETTER WIFE!

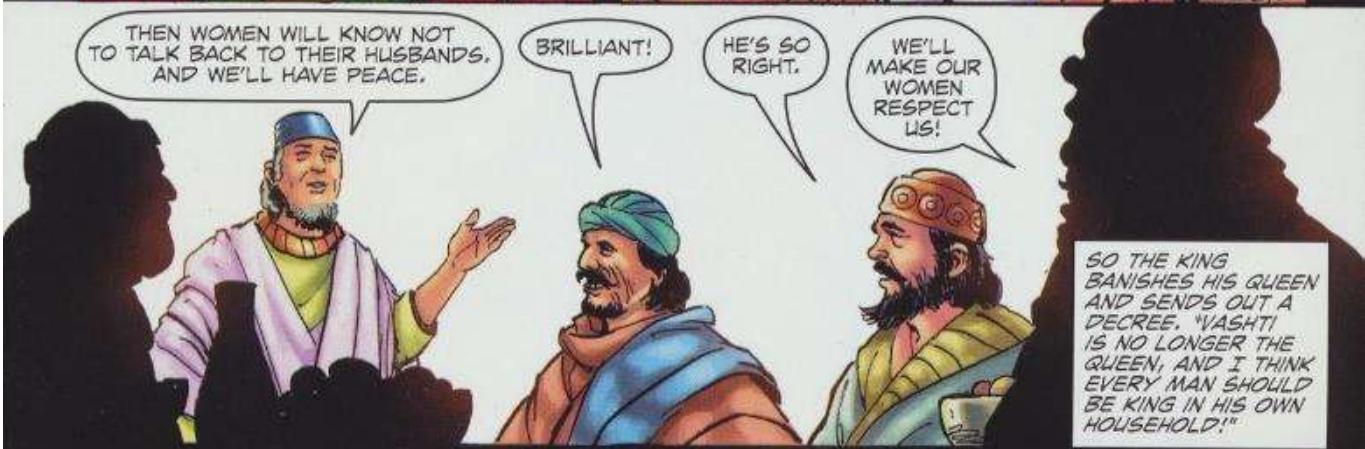


THEN WOMEN WILL KNOW NOT TO TALK BACK TO THEIR HUSBANDS. AND WE'LL HAVE PEACE.

BRILLIANT!

HE'S SO RIGHT.

WE'LL MAKE OUR WOMEN RESPECT US!



SO THE KING BANISHES HIS QUEEN AND SENDS OUT A DECREE. "VASHTI IS NO LONGER THE QUEEN, AND I THINK EVERY MAN SHOULD BE KING IN HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD!"

AFTER HIS RAGE—AND THE WINE—WEARS OFF, KING XERXES STARTS TO MISS VASHTI. THEN HE REMEMBERS WHAT SHE HAD DONE—AND WHAT HE HAD DONE.

I DON'T HAVE A BEAUTIFUL QUEEN ANYMORE! AND I CAN'T BRING VASHTI BACK BECAUSE I CANNOT UNDO THE NEW LAW.

I KNOW WHAT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER. WE'LL BRING YOU ALL THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMEN IN THE KINGDOM. YOU CAN PICK YOUR FAVORITE TO BE YOUR NEW QUEEN. AND THE ONE YOU PICK WILL BE EVEN MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN VASHTI.

THE SHALLOW KING AGREES.

NOW THERE IS A JEWISH MAN NAMED MORDECAI WHO WORKS IN THE COURTS OF THE CAPITAL CITY OF SUSA. HE HAS A COUSIN NAMED ESTHER. ESTHER'S PARENTS DIED WHEN SHE WAS VERY YOUNG, SO MORDECAI HAS RAISED HER LIKE HIS OWN DAUGHTER. NOW THAT SHE'S GROWN UP, ESTHER IS A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN WHO IMPRESSES EVERYONE SHE MEETS.

WHEN ALL THE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN IN THE LAND ARE BROUGHT TO THE KING'S PALACE, ESTHER IS AMONG THEM.

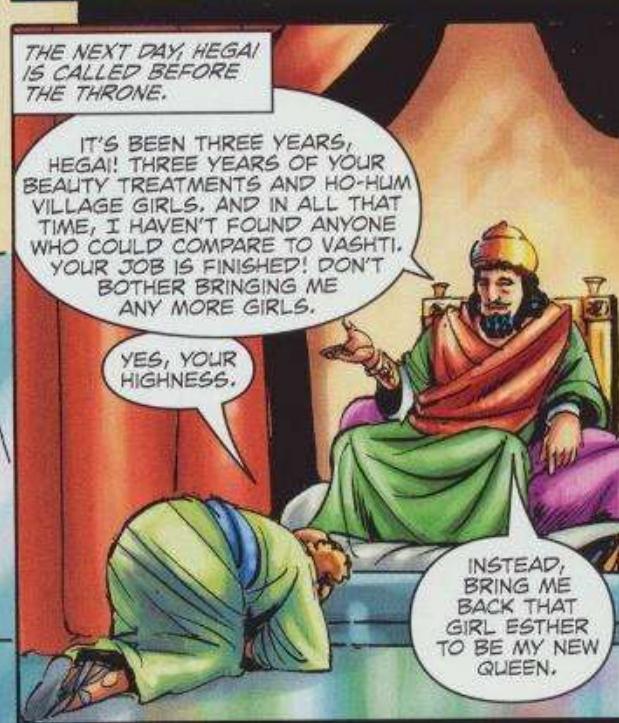
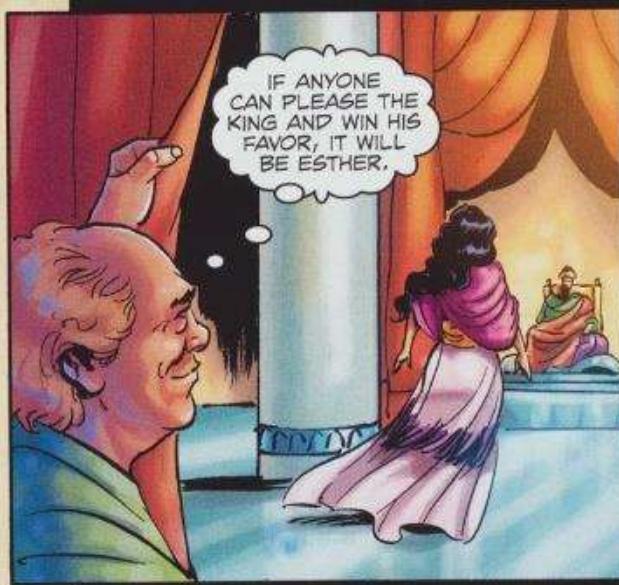
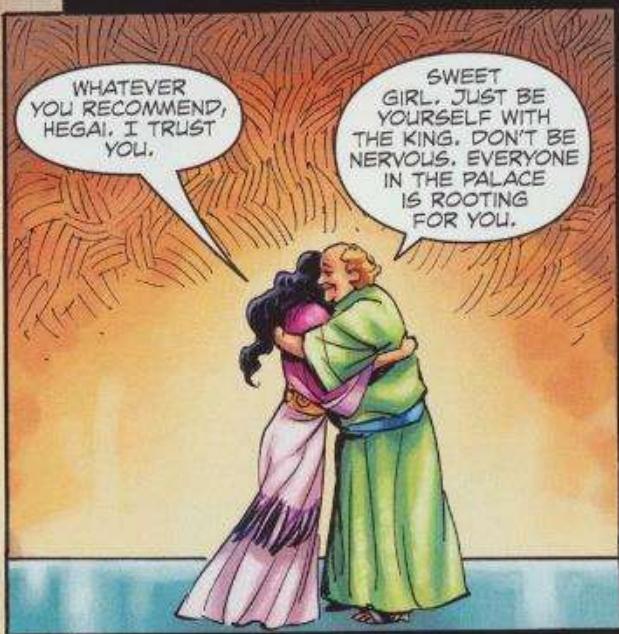
DON'T BE AFRAID, YOU WILL BE TREATED WELL IN THE PALACE. BUT DON'T LET ANYONE KNOW THAT YOU ARE JEWISH!

IN THE PALACE, THE YOUNG WOMEN ARE BROUGHT BEFORE HEGAI, THE HEAD SERVANT IN CHARGE OF MAKING SURE ALL THE CANDIDATES ARE AS BEAUTIFUL AS CAN BE.

YOU GIRLS MAY HAVE BEEN PRETTY ENOUGH FOR THE PIG HERDER IN YOUR TINY TOWN. BUT NONE OF YOU IS PRETTY ENOUGH FOR THE KING! AT LEAST, NOT YET. NOT UNTIL I'VE WORKED MY MAGIC. YOU WON'T EVEN GET TO SEE THE KING UNTIL I'VE POLISHED YOUR LOOKS LIKE A JEWELER POLISHING A BEAUTIFUL GEMSTONE.



FINALLY, AFTER 12 MONTHS OF BEAUTY TREATMENTS, HEGAI THINKS ESTHER IS READY TO BE PRESENTED TO THE KING.



# Persian Politics

BASED ON ESTHER 2:19-3:15

FOR MONTHS, ESTHER—ALONG WITH HUNDREDS OF BEAUTIFUL WOMEN OF PERSIA—HAS LIVED IN THE PALACE WAITING FOR THE KING TO CHOOSE ONE OF THEM TO BE HIS WIFE. THE KING HAS FINALLY MADE HIS CHOICE ...

ESTHER, YOU ARE NOW MY WIFE, QUEEN OF ALL PERSIA.

I AM HONORED, MY LORD.

BUT ESTHER HAS KEPT HER FAMILY A SECRET. SHE HASN'T TOLD ANYONE ABOUT HER ADOPTED FATHER, MORDECAI, A JEWISH CITY OFFICIAL. LATE THAT NIGHT, HE GOES TO THE WALLS OF THE HAREM TO CHECK ON ESTHER, THE NEW QUEEN.

I AM SO PROUD AND HAPPY FOR YOU! BUT REMEMBER, EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE THE QUEEN NOW, DON'T LET ANYONE KNOW THAT YOU'RE JEWISH.

AS HE'S LEAVING ESTHER'S GARDEN, MORDECAI OVERHEARS TWO OF THE KING'S SERVANTS ...

OUR PLAN CANNOT FAIL.

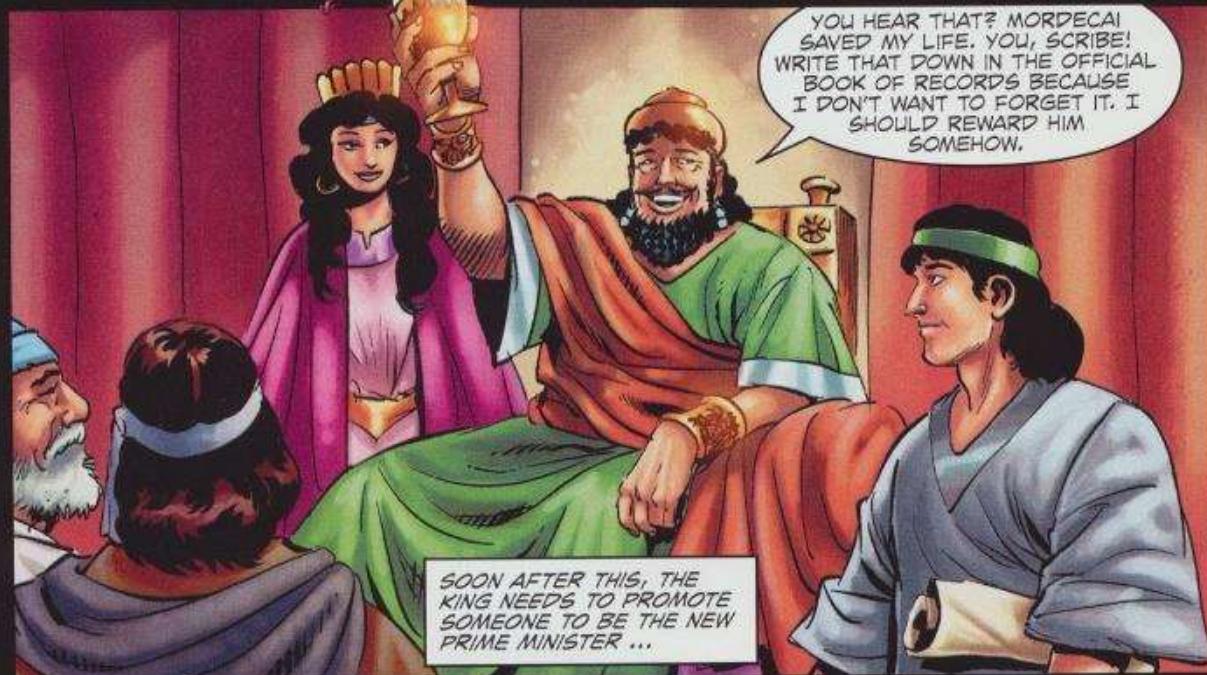
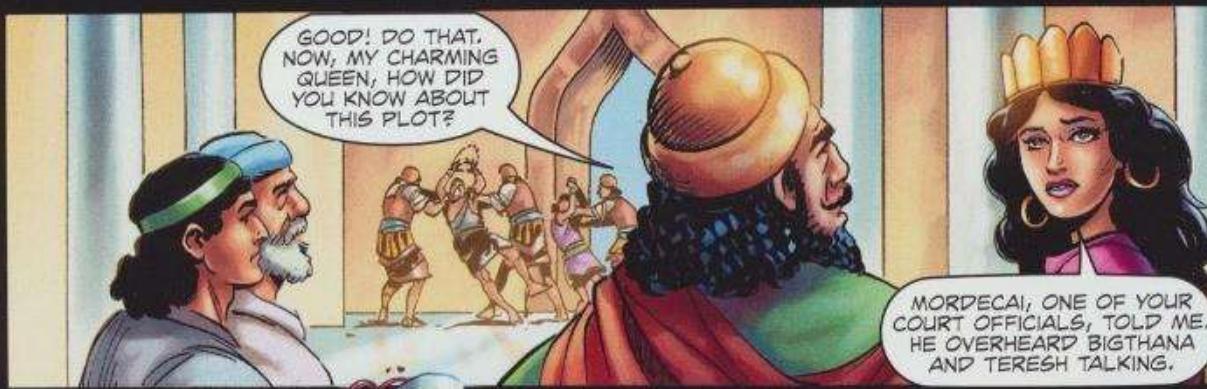
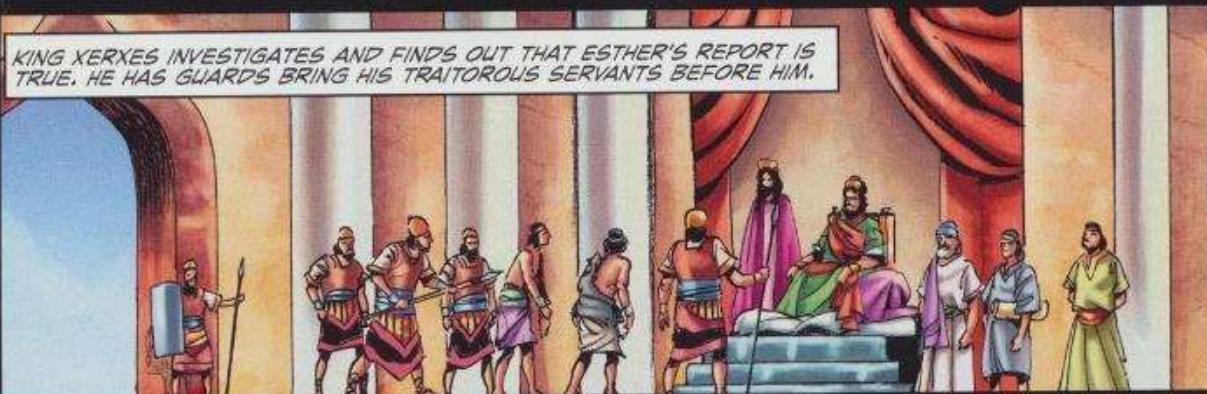
NO, BY THIS TIME TOMORROW, THE KING WILL BE DEAD, AND NO ONE WILL KNOW WHO KILLED HIM.

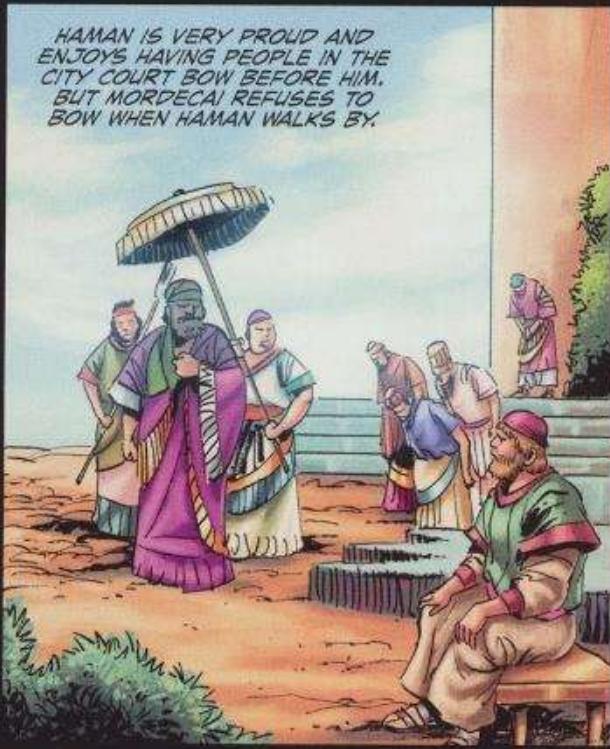
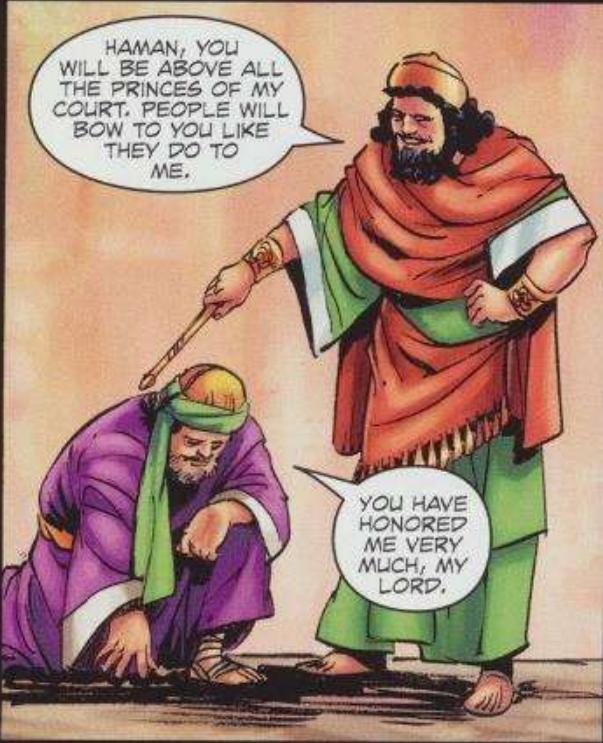
MORDECAI QUICKLY SENDS WORD OF THE PLOT TO ESTHER. THAT VERY NIGHT, THE KING CALLS FOR HER.

WHY DO YOU LOOK TROUBLED, MY LOVELY? IT GIVES YOU WRINKLES.

MY KING, TWO OF YOUR SERVANTS PLAN TO ASSASSINATE YOU!

KING XERXES INVESTIGATES AND FINDS OUT THAT ESTHER'S REPORT IS TRUE. HE HAS GUARDS BRING HIS TRAITOROUS SERVANTS BEFORE HIM.





ANGERED BECAUSE MORDECAI WILL NOT BOW BEFORE HIM, HAMAN PREPARES HIS REVENGE. BUT FIRST HE MUST TRICK HIS FOOLISH KING.

MY KING, THERE'S A RACE OF PEOPLE IN YOUR KINGDOM WHO DO NOT OBEY YOU. FOR YOUR SAFETY, THEY SHOULD BE DESTROYED. GIVE ME PERMISSION TO MAKE A LAW THAT WILL GET RID OF THEM IN PERSIA.

OH, WOW! I'M GLAD YOU BROUGHT THIS TO MY ATTENTION, HAMAN. DO WHAT YOU NEED TO DO TO PROTECT ME. USE MY RING TO SEAL THE NEW LAW. THEN EVERYONE WILL KNOW THAT YOUR LAW IS MY LAW.

HAMAN'S LAW IS QUICKLY DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE KINGDOM OF PERSIA.

Every Jew in Persia is to be destroyed on the 13th day of the 12th month. Anyone who kills the Jews may keep everything that belongs to the Jews they kill.

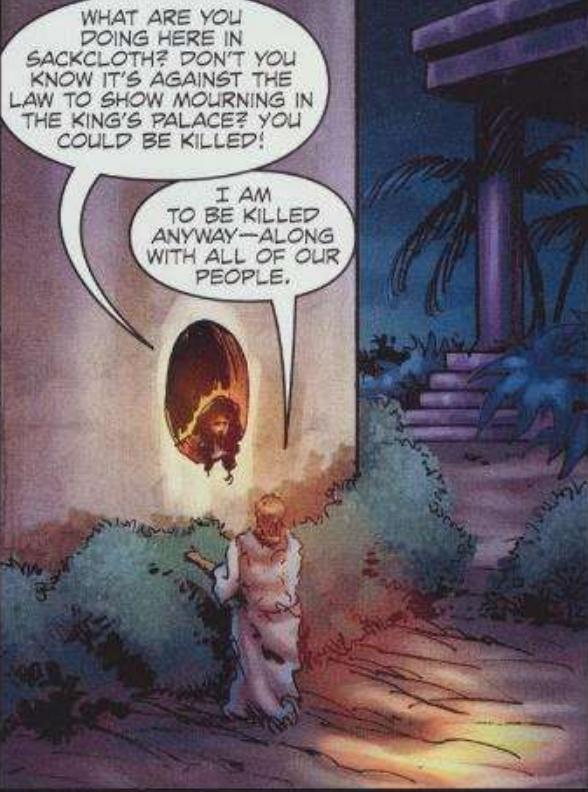
LET US CELEBRATE YOUR GOOD DECISION, TO MY LOYAL PRIME MINISTER!

WHY WOULD THE KING DO THIS TO US? WE HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING WRONG!

# If I Perish, I Perish

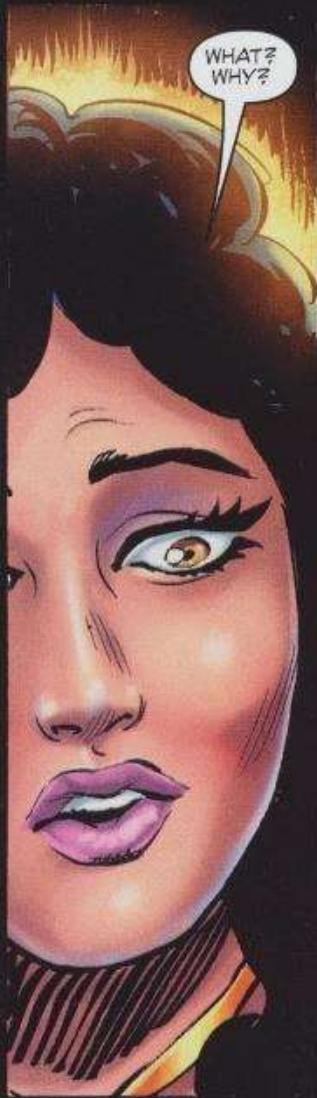
BASED ON ESTHER 4

WHEN MORDECAI HEARS THE ORDERS, HE DRESSES IN SACKCLOTH AND POURS ASHES OVER HIS HEAD TO SHOW HIS GRIEF. THEN HE VISITS ESTHER, WHO HE HOPES WILL BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING.



WHAT?  
WHY?

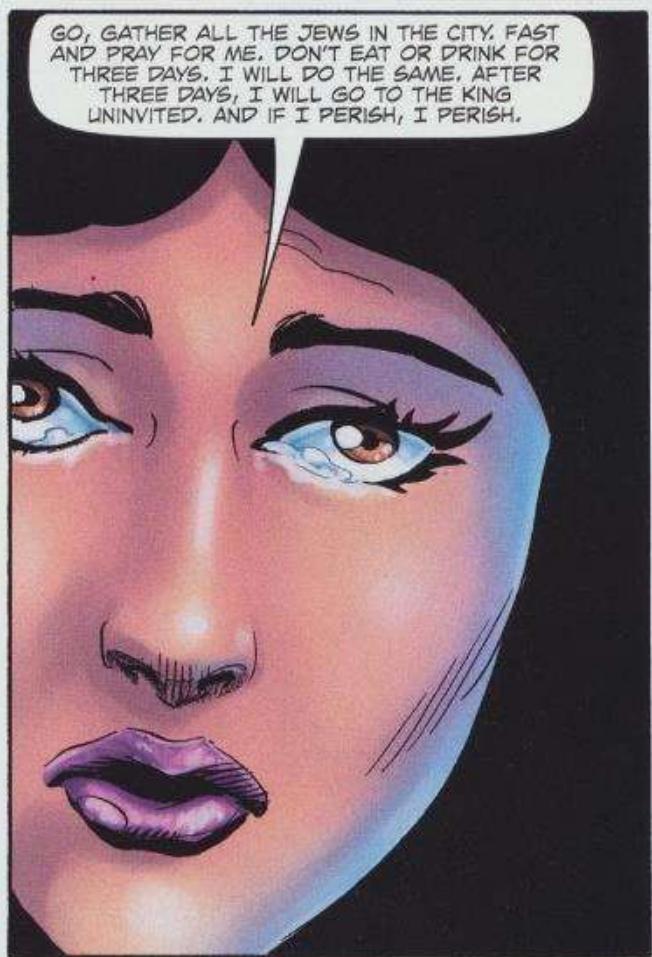
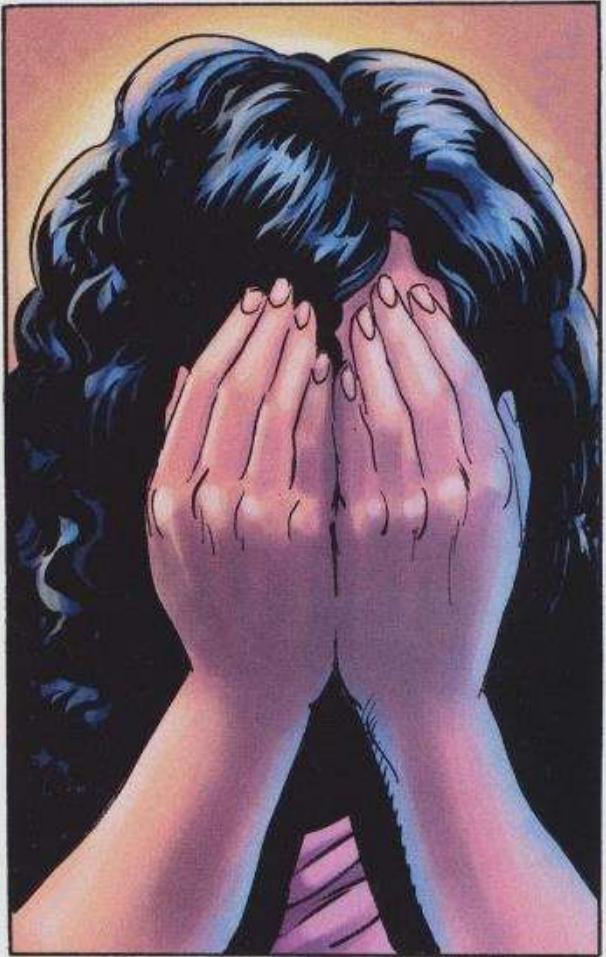
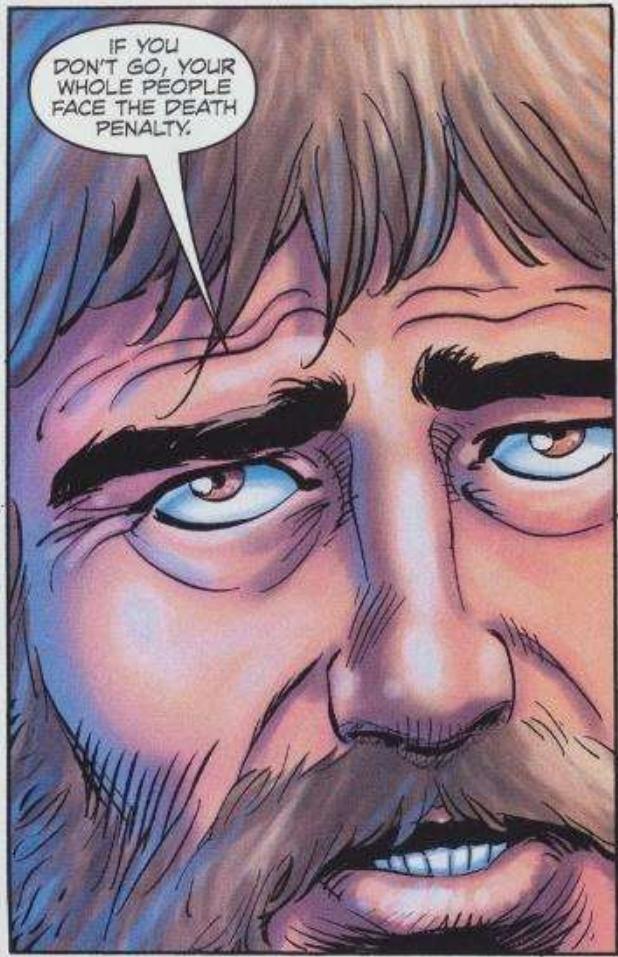
THE KING HAS PASSED A NEW LAW ORDERING THAT ALL JEWS ARE TO BE KILLED. IT MUST BE HAMAN'S DOING. HIS PEOPLE HAVE HATED OUR PEOPLE EVER SINCE THE TIME OF KING SAUL.



YOU MUST GO TO THE KING AND ASK HIM TO SPARE THE JEWS.

I SHOULD GO SEE THE KING?  
THE KING HAS ONE RULE ABOUT ANYONE WHO APPROACHES HIM WITHOUT BEING INVITED:  
DEATH! UNLESS HE DECIDES TO HOLD OUT HIS SCEPTER. AND THE KING HASN'T CALLED FOR ME IN A MONTH.  
IF I GO TO KING XERXES UNINVITED, I FACE THE DEATH PENALTY!





# Who Will Be Hanged?

BASED ON ESTHER 5-10

QUEEN ESTHER BREAKS A LAW BY APPEARING BEFORE THE KING WITHOUT AN INVITATION—SHE COULD BE PUNISHED BY DEATH. BUT THE LIVES OF HER PEOPLE, THE JEWS, ARE IN DANGER, AND SHE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO MAY BE ABLE TO SAVE THEM.

ESTHER! I DIDN'T INVITE HER TO COME BEFORE ME!

BUT AS XERXES LOOKS AT HIS BEAUTIFUL NEW QUEEN, HE DECIDES HE DOESN'T MIND THE INTRUSION. HE HOLDS OUT HIS SCEPTER TO SHOW HIS FORGIVENESS.

THE MOMENT HAS COME WHEN ESTHER CAN ASK KING XERXES TO SPARE HER PEOPLE.

WHAT IS IT, MY BREATHTAKING BEAUTY? WHAT IS YOUR REQUEST? EVEN IF YOU WANTED HALF OF MY KINGDOM, I WOULD GIVE IT TO YOU.

I ... REQUEST ... THAT YOU AND HAMAN ... COME TO A PRIVATE PARTY. JUST THE THREE OF US.

A PARTY WITH YOU? ABSOLUTELY! FIND HAMAN NOW!

ESTHER ENTERTAINS THE KING AND HAMAN IN HER OWN PRIVATE GARDEN. BUT SHE STILL DOESN'T TELL XERXES HER REAL REQUEST. INSTEAD, SHE INVITES HIM AND HAMAN TO COME TO ANOTHER PARTY TOMORROW. THEN, SHE PROMISES, SHE'LL TELL HIM HER TRUE REQUEST. THE KING ACCEPTS, AND SO DOES HAMAN, WHO IS OVERJOYED TO BE INCLUDED.

