

Joshua, Jordan, and Jericho

Joshua became the new leader of the big team of people who were ready to enter into their new country.

God told Joshua what to do, and how to enter the new land.

The priests carried the Ark of the Covenant to the Jordan River and as soon as their feet touched the water, God parted it and made a pathway through the water. They walked across on dry land.

Next, a team of people and priests marched around the big high walls of the city of Jericho, once a day for six days and then seven times on the seventh day.

The seventh day they shouted and blew trumpets, and God made those strong walls fall flat.

There was nothing in the way any more, and the Israelites could walk into their new land and make it their home.



Gideon and the Angel

The people that God had chosen to follow Him were no longer obeying Him. Then trouble happened, and as a result there wasn't enough food, because selfish people from another area came and took it.

The people needed help, and they needed to start obeying God again. God chose Gideon to help the Israelites.

An angel came and told Gideon that God needed him for an important job.

Then the angel showed Gideon something amazing. With a touch of his staff, he made fire come out of a rock!

Gideon believed that God had sent the angel, and prayed for God to help him. He wanted to obey whatever God said to do.



A Pitcher, a Torch, and a Trumpet

God surprised Gideon!

He said that even though it was a very big job to make the land of Israel safe again, that Gideon only needed a small team of helpers to do the job of making some unkind and selfish people leave their country.

Gideon and his team did as God said, and each one carried a clay pitcher, a torch, and a trumpet. At just the right time each one of them blew their trumpets loudly, broke the pitchers, and yelled out, holding up their torches.

This shocked the sleeping, troublesome folks so much, that they started running away! God made them go away. Hurray!

God promised that things would be nice again in the land of Israel, if they continued to obey and follow Him.



A Strong Man

An angel of God appeared to a woman, telling her about a special child that God was going to give her and her husband.

God gave specific instructions to them on how they were to care for him. The child's name was Samson. God had told them that he should have long hair.

Samson learned about God and obeyed His Word, and when Samson was grown he became a judge. He helped to tell the people about God's ways. God also used him to try to stop the people who were causing them all a lot of trouble.

Samson had a special gift from God that helped him do his job. He was given extra strength! With God's help, when a miracle was needed, Samson was stronger than anyone else.

Whenever he prayed for God's help and obeyed God's instructions, no one could stop him from doing what God wanted him to do.



Kind Ruth

Naomi travelled to her home country, together with Ruth—who was like a daughter to her.

When they arrived, it was the time when the barley was being harvested and Ruth went to the field to see if there was any spare grain for her and Naomi, as they needed food.

A kind man called Boaz, who was the owner of the field, was a relative of Naomi. He was very generous, and let Ruth gather the spare barley every day of the harvest. He knew that she was a kind lady, and was taking good care of Naomi.

Boaz loved Ruth and married her, and they had a baby who they called Obed. He was a joy to their family, and Grandma Naomi loved caring for him also.

God was taking good care of them all, and everyone was very happy!



Hannah's Prayer and Promise

At first, Hannah was sad because she didn't have any children like other women did.

Then Hannah prayed for a child—a little baby boy. She told God that she would like her child to love and follow Him all his life.

So God gave her a son, just as she had prayed, and she was very happy!

Hannah named her baby Samuel. He was a special child.—An answer to Hannah's prayers!

Hannah loved him so much, and she prayed that he would follow God all his life and do what was best.

She had waited so long to have a child, and it made her very glad that God had answered her prayer and gave her a baby.



Little Boy Samuel

Hannah loved her little boy Samuel, and praised God for giving her such a special child.

When he was old enough, Samuel was brought to live with Priest Eli in the temple. That's where he could learn so many things, and could read God's Word written on the special scrolls—the very old books, like the ones that God helped Moses to write.

Each year when Hannah and her husband Elkanah visited, she brought him a nice new coat that she made. The coat would fit him and keep him warm for the next year.

Samuel grew strong and wise, and learned God's Word. After Samuel, Hannah had other children too! God took good care of Samuel and helped him to be a good example of loving God and following in His ways.



Listening to God Speak

The Lord called out to Samuel one night, and Samuel heard Him.

At first Samuel thought it was Eli calling him, but it wasn't. Samuel then sat quietly and listened to the Lord. He was helping Samuel learn what he needed to know, so that he could do a good job.

Samuel grew strong and wise. He prayed and listened to God a lot. Even when others were doing the wrong things Samuel made good choices. Listening to God's Words helped him to know what was right.

When Samuel was an adult he was a prophet and judge. He told the people what God said, and helped them to follow in His ways.



A Faithful Judge and Prophet

Samuel was a good example. He read and studied God's Word and then put it into action. People began to listen to what Samuel said and to follow what he told them from the Lord.

Samuel prayed for them. He told them to love and obey God most of all, and then things would get better for them—and that's just what happened!

The country began to be a better place, as the people obeyed God's Words.

Samuel was a faithful judge and prophet. He travelled around helping as many people as he could to learn how wonderful God's Word was.

The more people remembered and did what God said, the happier they were.



Samuel and Saul

After Samuel had been the judge of Israel for many years, the people wanted to have a king to rule over their country.

One day, God told Samuel that there was a man coming to see him the next day, who was to be the king.

Saul was looking for his father's donkeys and couldn't find them, so he asked Samuel to pray and ask God where they were.

Samuel told Saul not to worry about the donkeys, because God said they had already been found. Samuel then told Saul that God was calling him to do an important job.

As a sign that God would help him, Samuel poured special oil on Saul's head. Saul would make a good king if he stayed humble and obedient to God.



King Saul

Saul was the first king, for the people of Israel! He was a tall and strong man. At first he wasn't proud, so God chose him to be the new king.

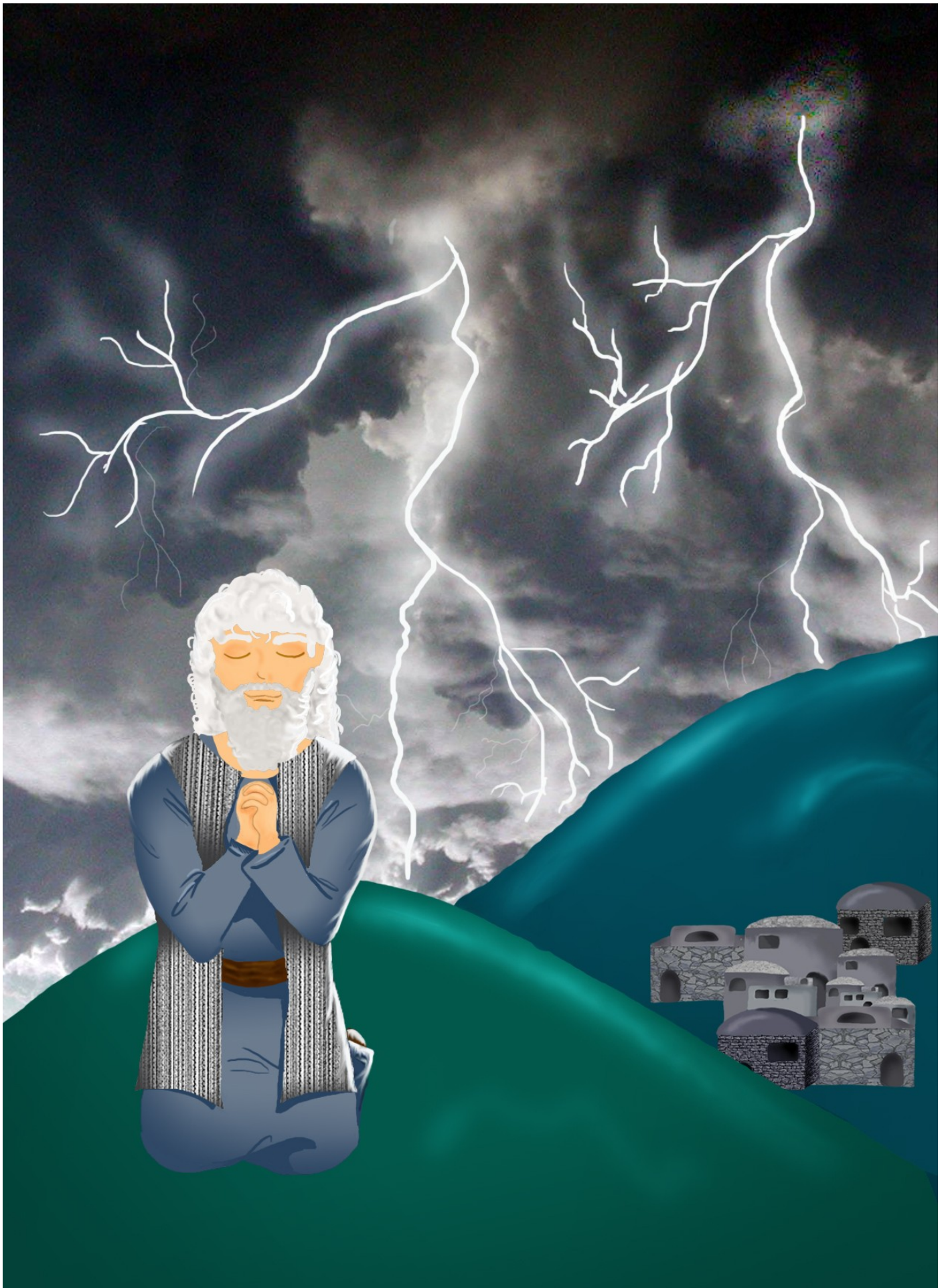
Samuel talked with Saul and told him what God said would happen as he walked back home. Then those things happened just like Samuel said.

Saul met some people who gave him bread, and also prophets with instruments. When Saul met them, amazingly he prophesied along with them. He was surprised!

God's Spirit had changed him—inside his heart and mind.

When everyone gathered together to see who their king would be, Saul was shy at first, but then he was brave and stood up for everyone to see him.

They all shouted, "God save the king!"



A Thundery Demonstration

It would be a big job for Saul to be the leader of the people. He would need to listen to Samuel the prophet, and obey God's instructions given to him.

When Samuel was talking to the people on a bright and sunny day, he prayed for the Lord to have it rain and make a thunderstorm happen right then—and it did! This reminded everyone that it is good to respect and listen to God.

God told the people, and King Saul, that they needed to follow His Words and be obedient to Him if they wanted things to go well in their country. God hears everyone's prayers and will help those who love and follow Him.

Samuel said that he would always remember to pray for the people. That was one of his most important jobs and would be the biggest help to everyone.



A Good Heart

One day God said that it was time to prepare someone else to be the new king, as King Saul had stopped obeying what God said to do. He had become too proud.

There was a young man named David who was watching over the sheep. He and his family were invited to a feast with Samuel, where God said that David was to be the new king after King Saul. Even though David's brothers were strong, tall and handsome, God said that the most important thing for a king to have is a good heart.

David's heart was humble and obedient, and he loved God very much and wanted to please Him. God looks at people's hearts and is glad to find those whose hearts are filled with love and who want to follow in His way.

Samuel poured oil on David to demonstrate that he was chosen by God to do an important job, and that God's Spirit would be with him. David was chosen then, but he had many more years to prepare for his new job of being a king later on.