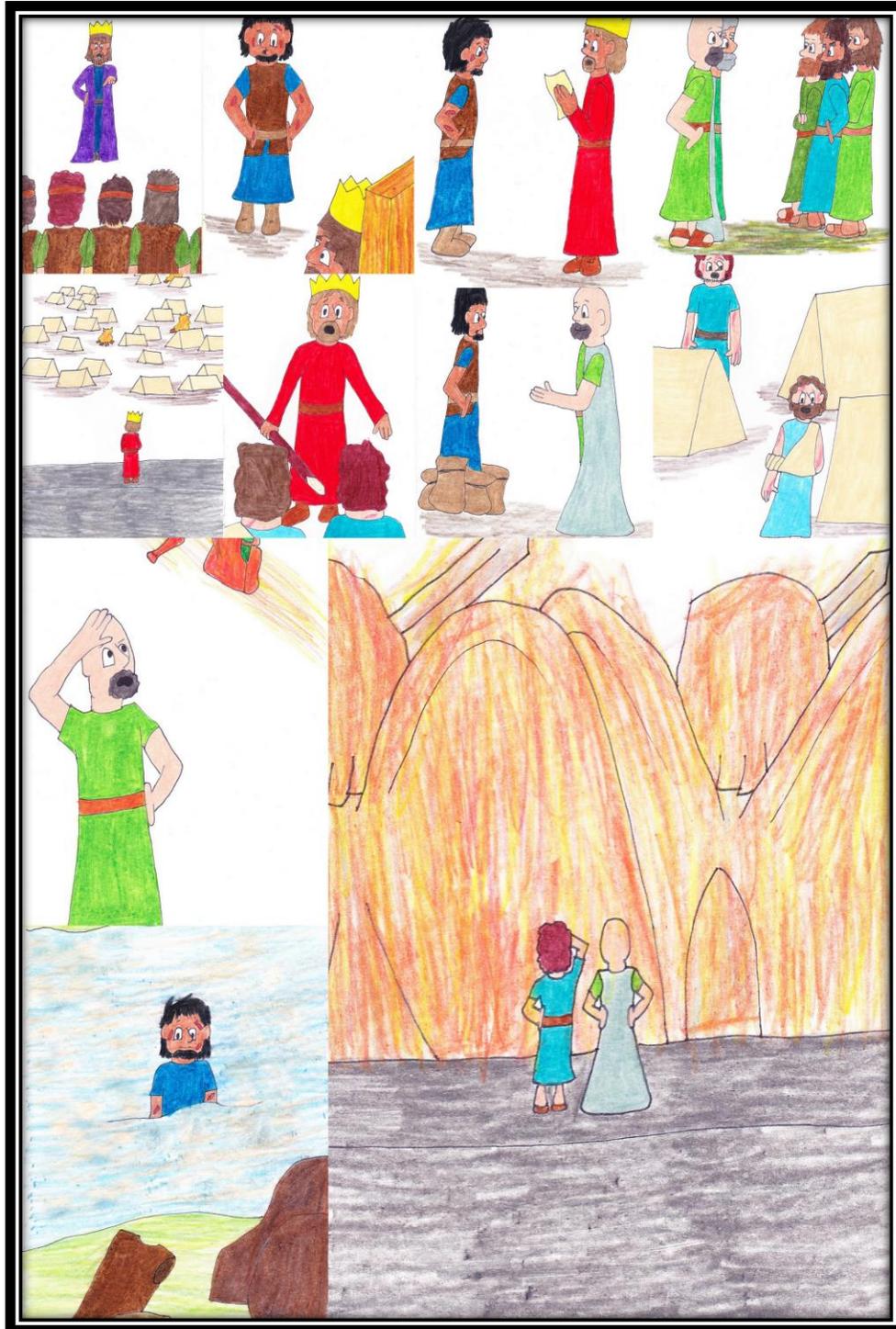
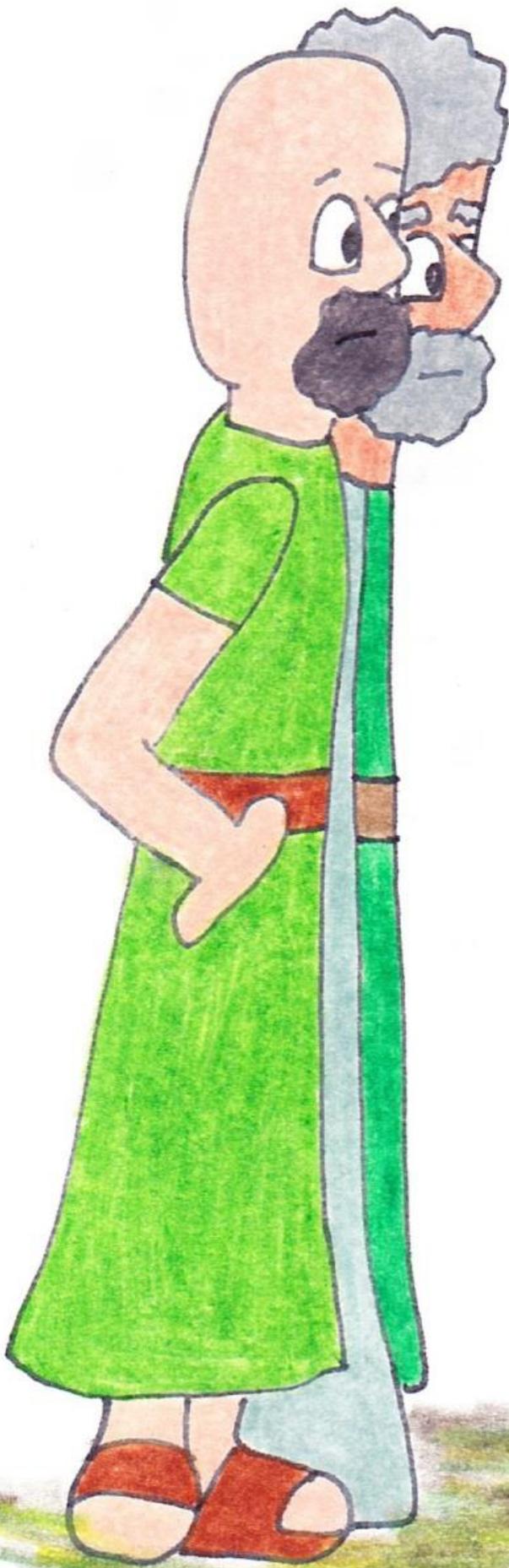


Elisha serves God

2 Kings 2:1-14, 5:1-27; 6:7-7:20





Elijah had served God for a long time and he was tired. God came to Elijah and said, “Today I will bring you home to rest.”

Elijah bowed his head in thanks and asked Elisha to stay behind while he traveled on.

But, Elisha followed him anyways. Some of God’s prophets saw Elisha and warned him, “God is taking Elijah today.”

“I know, but I will stay with him as long as I can.”

Again Elijah said, “Elisha stay here, for God is taking me home when I reach the Jordan.”

“I will follow you.”



Elisha followed Elijah all the way to the Jordan and across it, finally Elijah turned and asked, “What can I do for you before God takes me?”

Elisha thought for a moment and answered, “I want to lead God’s prophets to make Him known.”

“That is a big request, and I can’t guarantee God will grant it. But, if God lets you see me taken home then it will be given to you,” said Elijah.

As they walked a great chariot of fire pulled by fiery horses came between them.

Elijah went up to heaven on the chariot in a whirlwind, and Elisha watched him go.

Elisha reached down and picked up Elijah’s coat that had been left behind. He shook it and put it on.

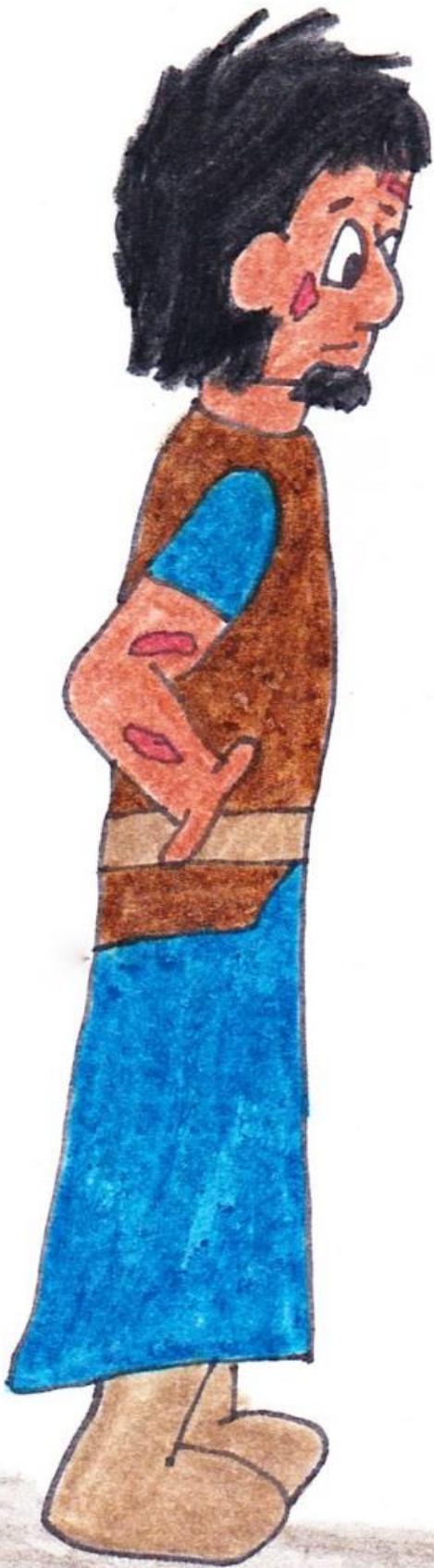


Meanwhile in the country of Syria, Namaan, a commander in army, was sick with leprosy. He was a brave and kind man, but his disease was slowly killing him.

One day an Israelite slave girl said to him, “Why don’t you go to Israel and ask Elisha to save you?”

Namaan had tried everything else and was willing to try anything now, so he went to his king for permission to seek Elisha.

“I’ll send you to the king of Israel and he’ll make sure you’re cured,” said the king. “Just give this letter to him.”



Joram, king of Israel, looked at the letter in dread, “How am I supposed to cure him? I don’t know how to do this! Is this just an excuse to start a war?”

As Joram paced back and forth in his room trying to figure out his answer, a letter arrived from Elisha, “Send him to me. This is all part of God’s plan.”

Joram happily sent Namaan to Elisha. Namaan headed to Elisha’s house with all of his chariots and servants following behind him.

Before Namaan got to the house, he was met by Elisha’s servant, “My master bids you to go and bathe seven times in the Jordan River.”

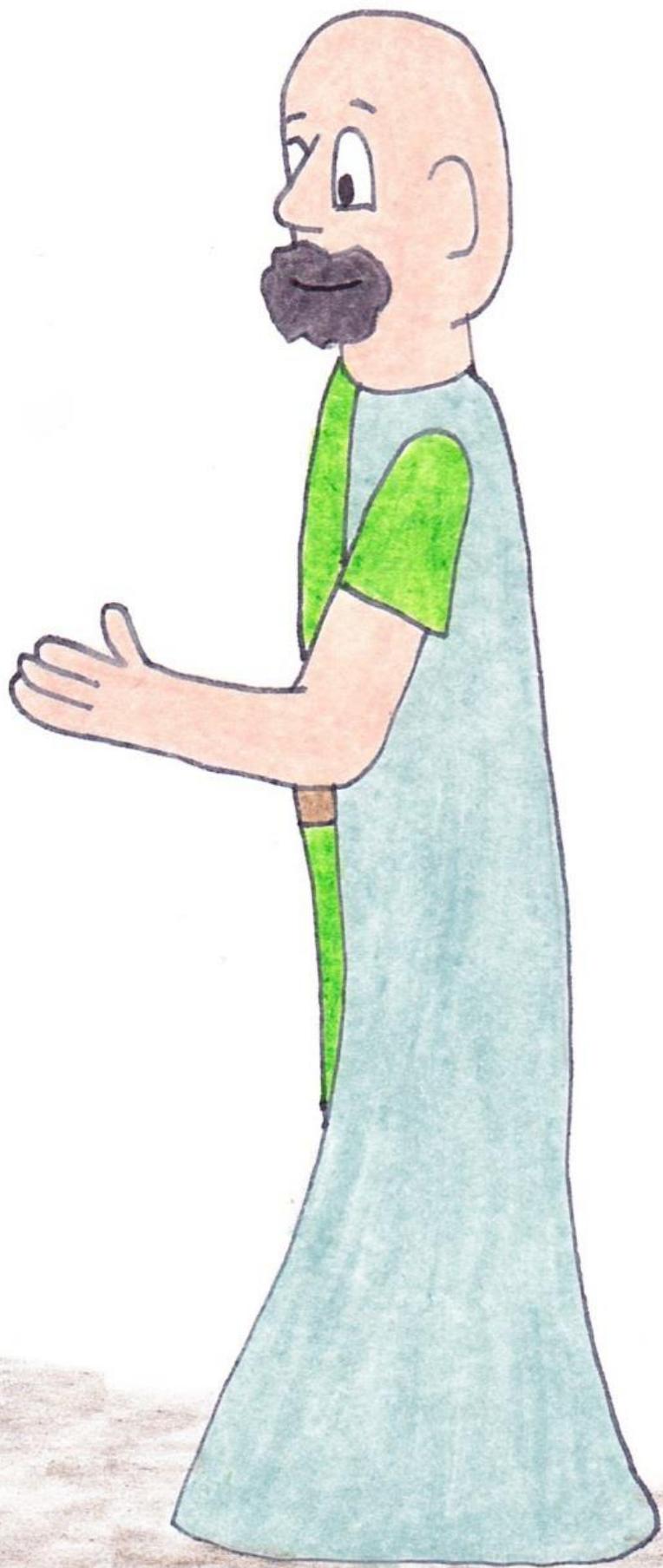
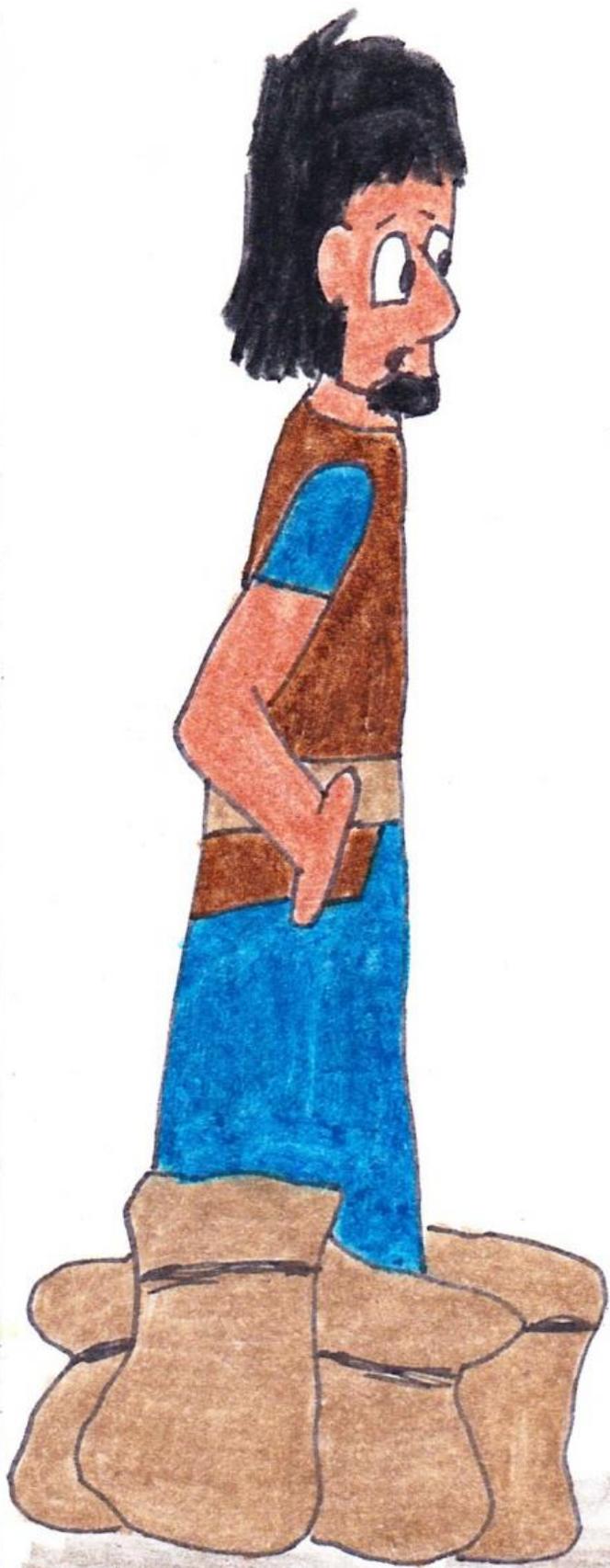


“What?” roared Namaan, “Why doesn’t he come cure me in person? Am I not important enough for him to talk to me? The rivers in Syria are much cleaner, so why couldn’t I just take a bath there? If that’s how I’m going to be treated, than we should just go home!”

“Sir,” interrupted his servant, “We came all this way, why not try it?”

“Oh very well,” grumbled Namaan. He removed his armor and weapons and dipped himself in the Jordan River.

“See nothing is happening,” he mumbled. But as he raised himself from the river after the seventh time the leprosy had left him.



“It’s amazing!” Namaan cried. He hurried up to Elisha’s house banging on the door to be let in.

“Welcome to my home, come in.” Elisha opened the door and escorted the Syrians in.

“Thank you,” Namaan exclaimed bowing low. “You have done me a great service curing me, and I want to give you a present to show my earnestness and to show that I now believe your God is the only god.”

Elisha pushed back the offered presents, “The glory is for God alone, and He does not want any presents. I need no thanks.”

“Then can I have some dirt? I want to worship your God on Israelite soil. I want to give Him the proper honor He deserves.”

“You may take some and go in peace.”



Namaan went back to the Syrian king healed, but soon the king forgot what God and Israel had done for his general. He planned attacks on Israel, but they all failed.

“How is this happening?” he roared at his generals. “Who is the spy?”

“Sire, Elisha, God’s prophet, he knows your plans and tells the king.”

“Then bring him to me,” said the king. “He can tell us where our enemy lies.”

So, the Syrian army surrounded the city of Dothan where Elisha was staying during the night. When the town woke up the next morning they saw the soldiers all around.

Elisha’s servant looked out at the army and said in a quavering voice, “We’re going to die.”



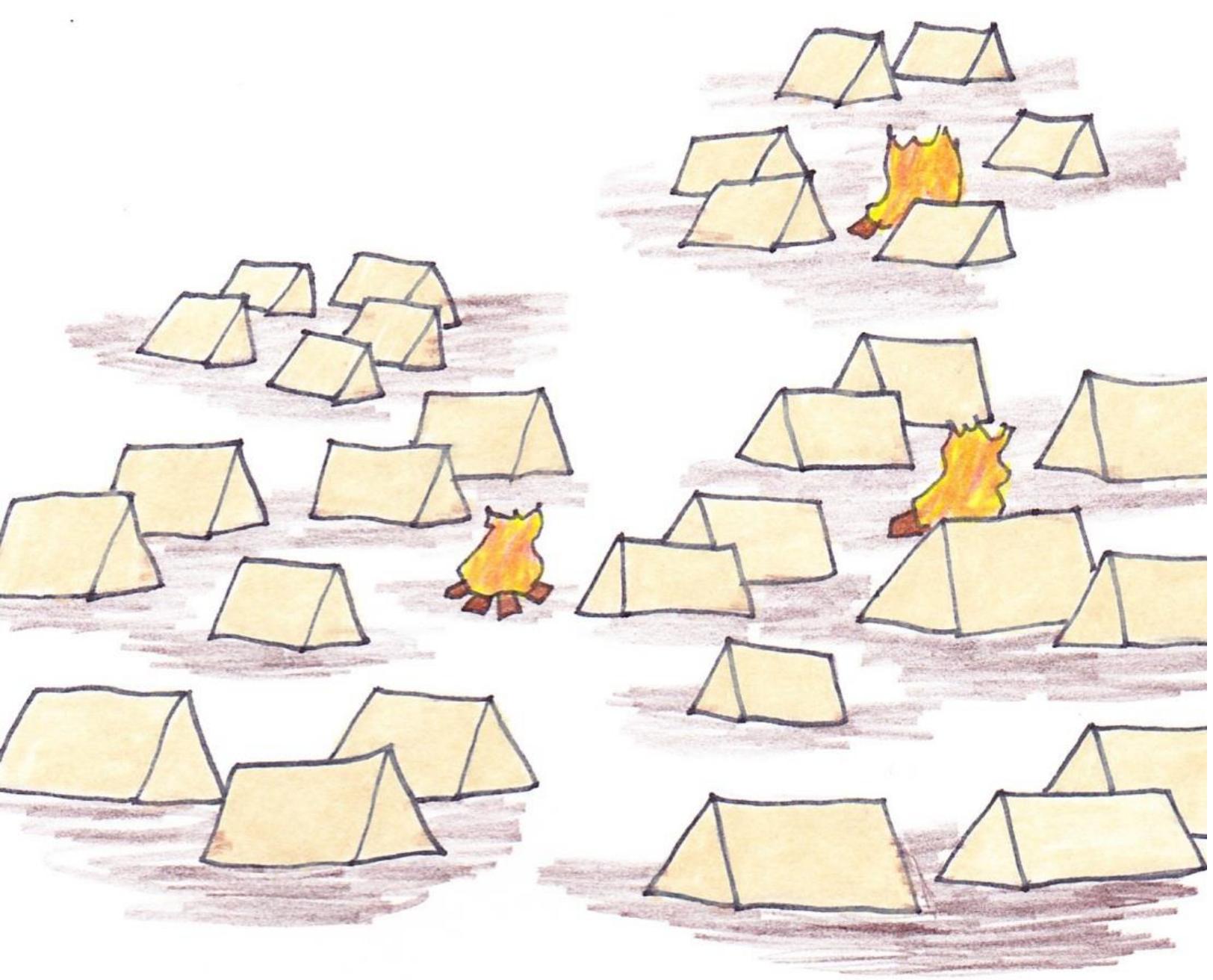
Elisha grabbed his servant's shoulder, "Look again, the army God has sent is far greater than our enemy's." Elisha prayed, "Lord, please open my servant's eyes."

The servant turned and saw an army of fire standing guard outside the city walls.

As the servant watched in amazement Elisha prayed again, "Lord blind our enemies." Then Elisha went out among the soldiers and led them away saying, "This is not where your enemy is, follow me." The soldiers followed Elisha and when they had arrived at the palace Elisha prayed to God again, "Lord open their eyes," and they could see.

Joram looked at Elisha in confusion, "What should I do with them? Kill all of them?"

"No, feed them and send them home. Would you kill those who you did not capture?" Elisha answered. So, Joram prepared a feast for the soldiers and sent them home.



The king of Syria was tired of being outsmarted by Elisha and Israel's God, so he surrounded the capital city with Elisha, Joram, and everyone in it and decided to starve them out.

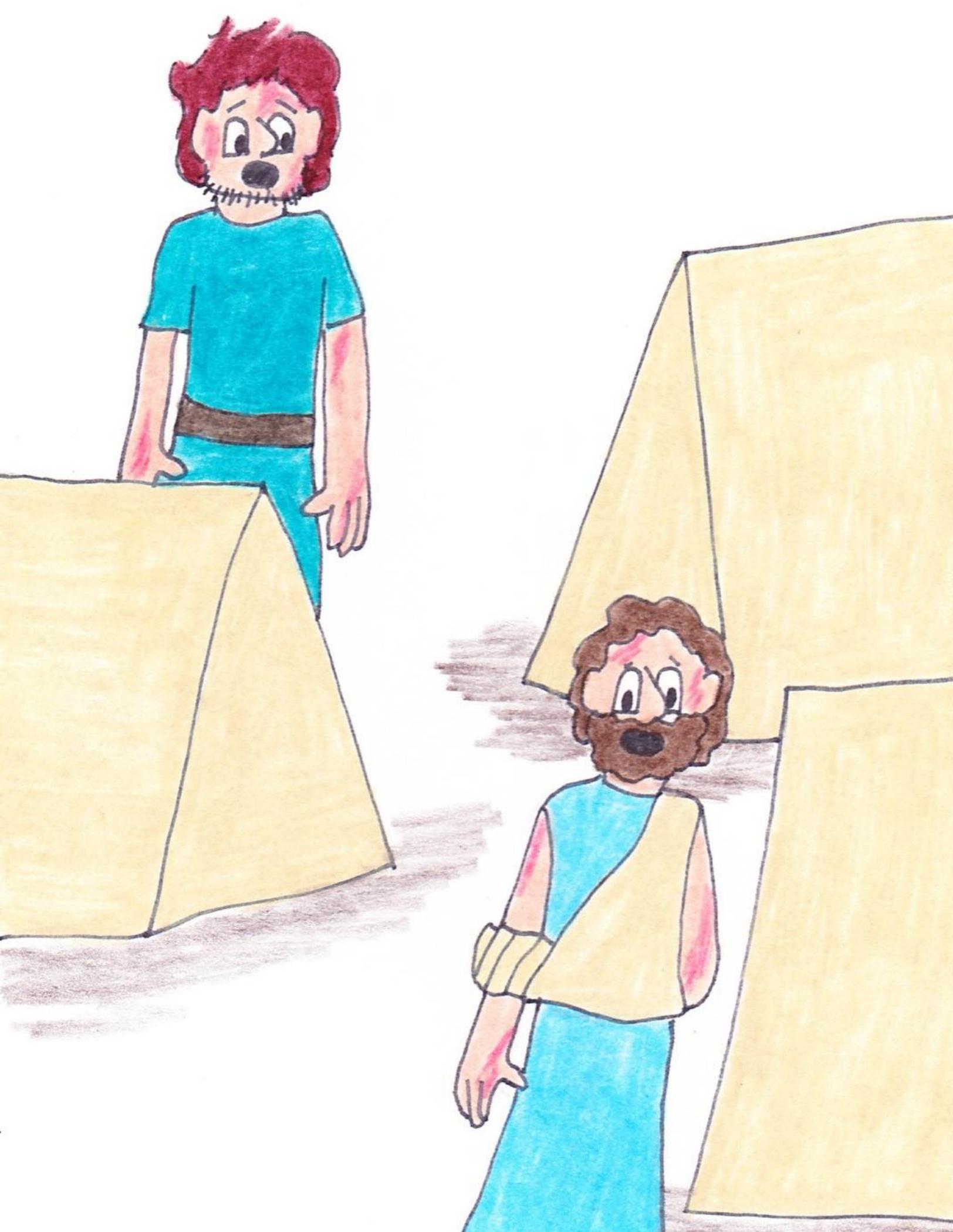
All of Samaria starved as food became scarce, people were eating anything they could find.

Joram looked out over the city and his people and moaned at their fate, he turned to his soldiers, "Bring me the head of Elisha. Maybe they will be happy with his death and leave us alone."

The soldiers came and Elisha welcomed them in, "Joram is blaming me for his murders and his sins. Tomorrow we'll have food."

The captain of the guard laughed, "How is that going to happen?"

"God will provide," Elisha answered, "but because you scoffed at God's plan, you will see God's provision, but you will die before you eat any of it."



At the city gates two lepers stood outside, “Why should we sit here and starve to death? We should go to the Syrian camp and maybe they’ll feed us. If not they’ll kill us quickly, and we’ll still be dead.”

So they walked out to the camp expecting to be shot at any moment, but nothing happened.

They walked into the enemy camp, not a person was there. God had worked a miracle. The Syrian army heard a larger army approaching and thought Israel had found allies to help them. They ran away to escape capture.

The lepers wandered through camp eating all they could and picking up any gold they found. Suddenly they looked at each other and said, “We need to share this good news.”



They went back to town and told the captain of the guard. He reported it to Joram, who sent out scouts. They reported back exactly what the lepers had seen. An empty camp with food lying on the ground.

The king had the soldiers open the gates and let everyone out. The people were so excited to finally get food again, that the captain of the guard was killed in the stampede. Just as God had said.

Elisha continued to serve God the rest of his life.

Questions

Younger Kids

1. Why do you think Elisha asked to lead the prophets of God? Would you want to lead?
2. Who told Namaan to go visit Elisha?
3. Did Elisha take credit for Namaan's healing?
Who gave you your skills?
4. When the lepers found the camp empty what did they do?

Middle Kids

1. Why do you think Elijah discouraged Elisha from following him? Read 2 Kings 2:2, 4, and 6.
2. Read 2 Kings 5:11-13. What was Namaan's reaction to Elisha's message? Why is it sometimes harder to obey simple commands than hard commands?
3. Read 2 Kings 6:15. What is Elijah's servant's response? Have you ever not seen God's bigger plan?

4. What is the leper's plan? Read 2 Kings 7:3-4 and 9. Do they share the good news? Read 2 Kings 7:9. What news do you have to share?

Older Guys

1. Read 2 Kings 2:9-10. What does Elisha's request mean? What audacious request can you make?
2. Read 2 Kings 5:17-19. What requests does Naaman make? What is Elisha's response? How have you adapted the Christian faith to make it work for you? For example, I am not a morning person, but I know studying God's word is important, so I study my Bible at night.
3. How is the king told to treat the captured soldiers? Read 2 Kings 6:22. How do you treat perceived enemies?
4. Read 2 Kings 7:12-15. What is the king's immediate response? Does he listen to advice? Are you cautious or paranoid?

Activities

1. I've always imagined the warriors guarding Elisha and the city as huge flaming warriors. Draw what you imagine they looked like. Or try building some out of Legos
2. What is the best news you've ever heard? When you heard it what did you do right away? The gospel is like that news, or like the news the lepers found. Think of friends you have who need to know about Jesus.

Online

1. Elijah taken into heaven in the fiery chariot-
<http://solapublishing.blogspot.com/2010/11/activity-series-a2-lesson-3-fiery-wagon.html>
2. Namaan is saved-
<http://auntiesbiblelessons.wordpress.com/2011/08/19/naamans-leprosy/>
3. Namaan is healed activity-
<http://bibleclasscreations.blogspot.com/2013/02/naaman-is-healed.html>
4. Namaan is healed craft-
<http://bibleclasscreations.blogspot.ca/2013/06/naaman.html>

