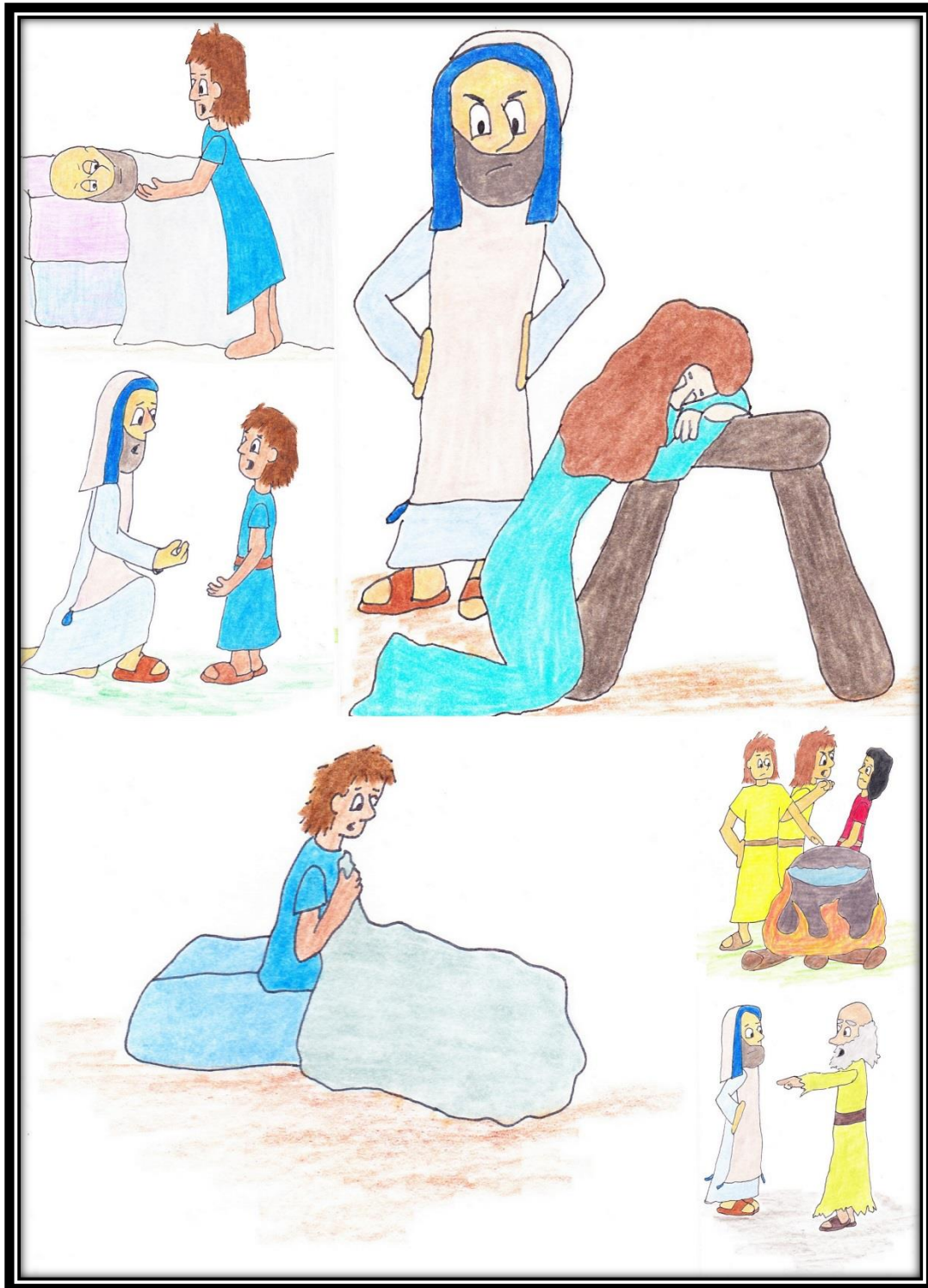


God Calls Samuel

1 Samuel 1:1-4:22





In the time of the Judges there was a man married to two women. The first had many sons and daughters, but the second, Hannah, could not have children.

The other wife teased Hannah, “Look how my children contribute to the family. They work so hard.”

Hannah would cry to her husband, wishing for a baby. “Am I not better than any baby you could have?” he asked.



Every year they went to give offerings and pray at the tabernacle. Hannah went in early one morning, crying and asking God for a baby.

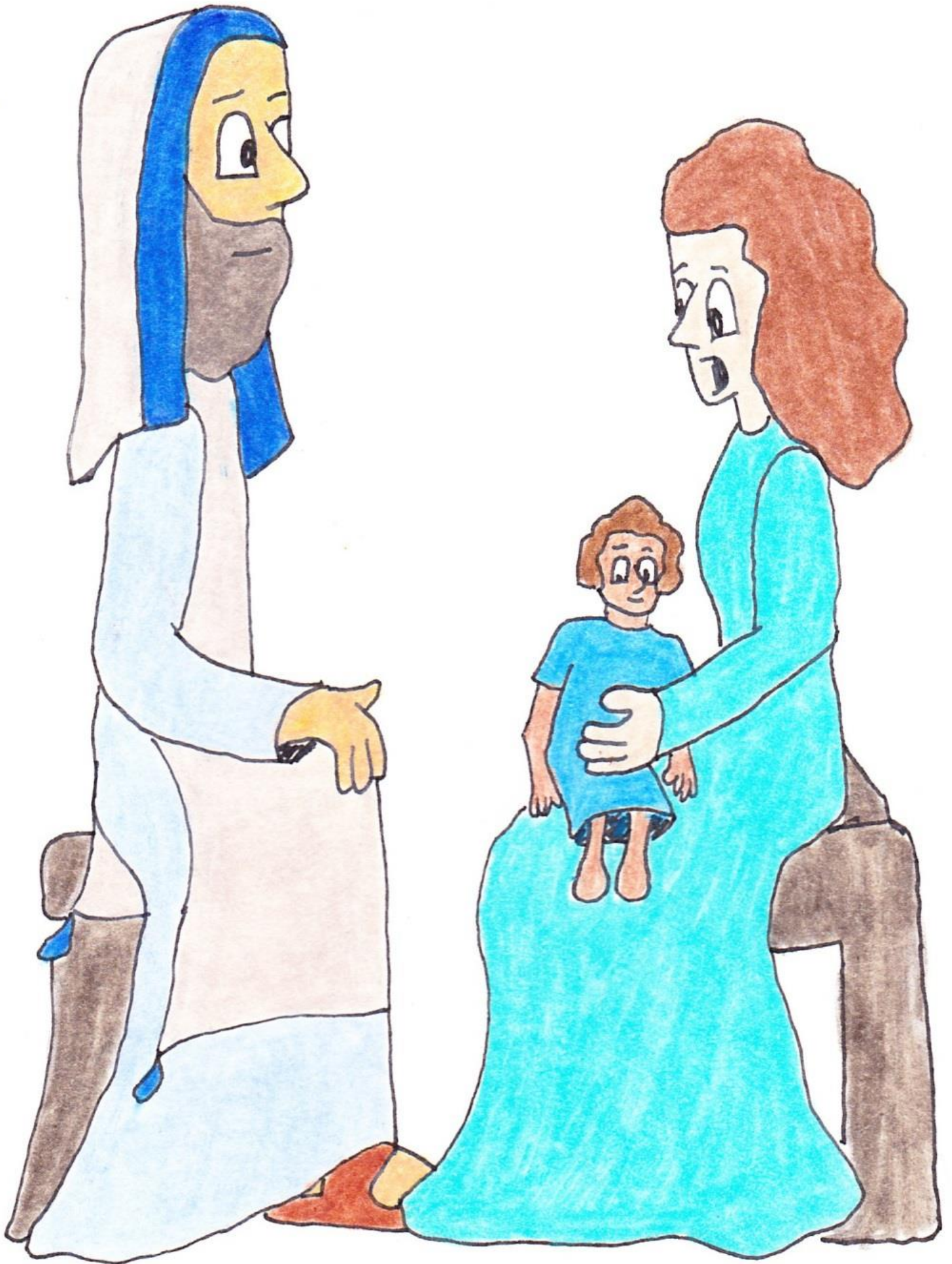
Silently she prayed, “Lord, if you give me a son, I will dedicate him to you for all of his life”

She was praying so earnestly she didn’t see Eli come in.

“What are you doing woman? How could you be drunk so early.” Eli had seen her lips moving and thought she was drunk.

“No sir,” Hannah answered. “I am only very sad. I’ve been praying for a child.”

Eli’s heart softened and he smiled, “Go in peace, and may God grant what you have asked.”



Hannah had a son and named him Samuel, saying “I have prayed for this child.”

When Samuel was old enough she took him up to Shiloh and gave the boy to Eli.

“Please sir,” she said. “I have prayed for this boy for many years, and now I give him back to God. I praise God for my child.”

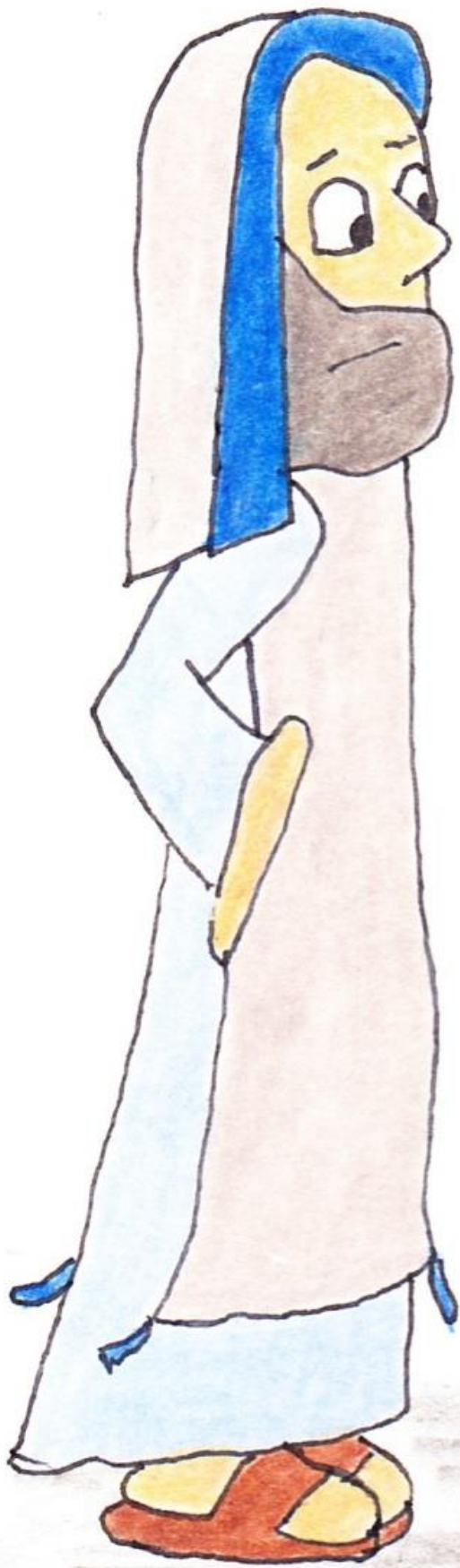
Samuel lived with Eli at the tabernacle from then on.



Eli had two sons, but they did not love God like Eli did. They were bullies.

They would come and take meat from the offering intended for God. If someone objected they laughed out loud and took it anyways.

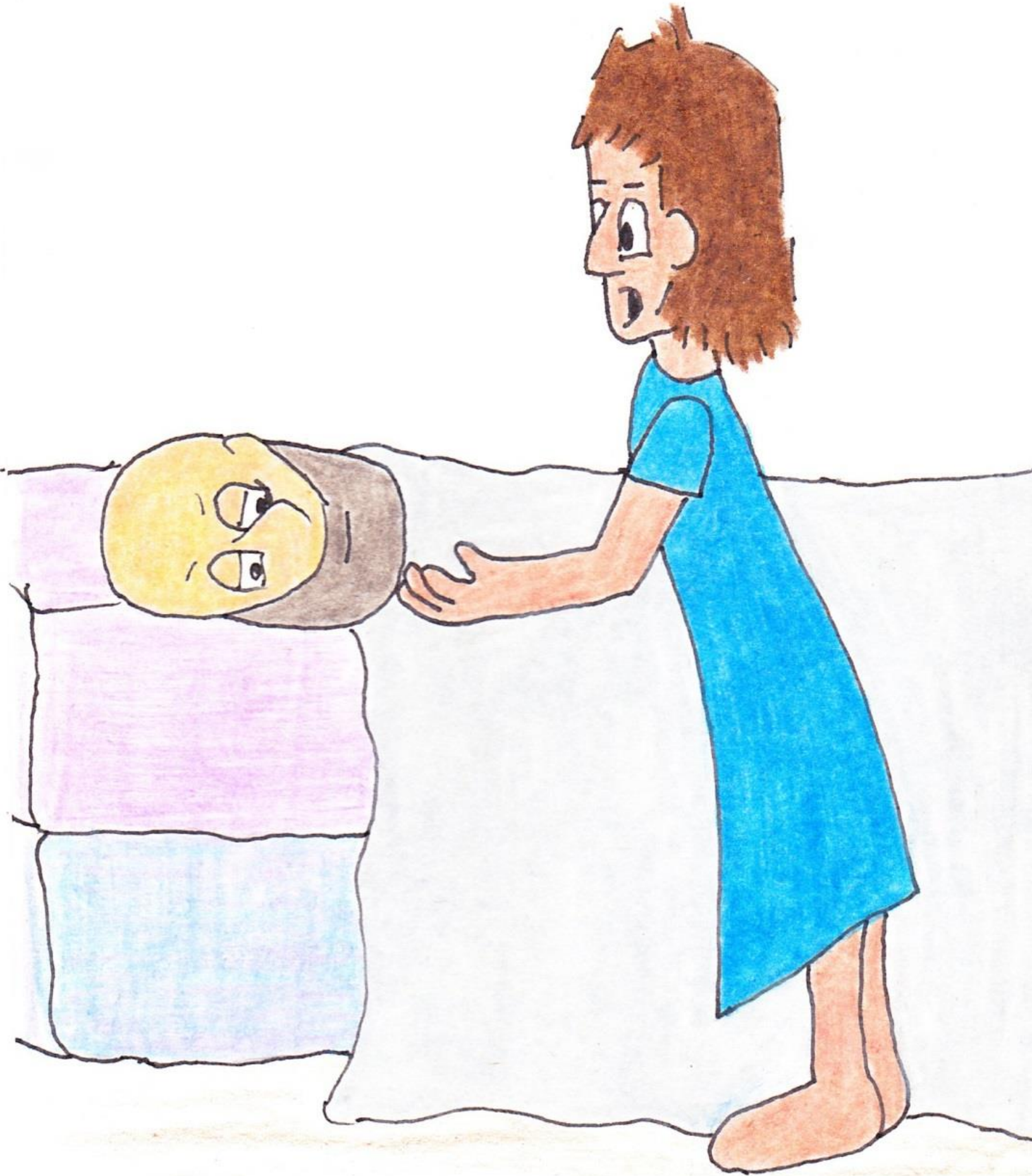
Eli heard about this and tried to stop them, but they didn't listen to him.



Eventually a prophet from God came to Eli, “I chose your family to be priests and set you apart for me. But you honor your sons more than Me. Therefore I will destroy your family. Your sons will die. I will raise up a faithful priest to Me. Thus says the Lord,” and the prophet left.

Eli stood stunned and didn’t know what to do.

But in all of this Samuel grew up to be a boy who loved God and served Him.



One night Samuel woke up to a voice calling him. As quick as he could Samuel ran to Eli, thinking it was him.

“Here I am! You called me.”

Muttering and half waking up, Eli blinked at him, “What what? You must have heard something. Go back to sleep.”

Samuel went back to bed and fell asleep again. Again a voice called Samuel, and again Samuel ran to Eli.

Again Eli said, “Go back to sleep.”



A third time the voice called Samuel, and again he ran to Eli.

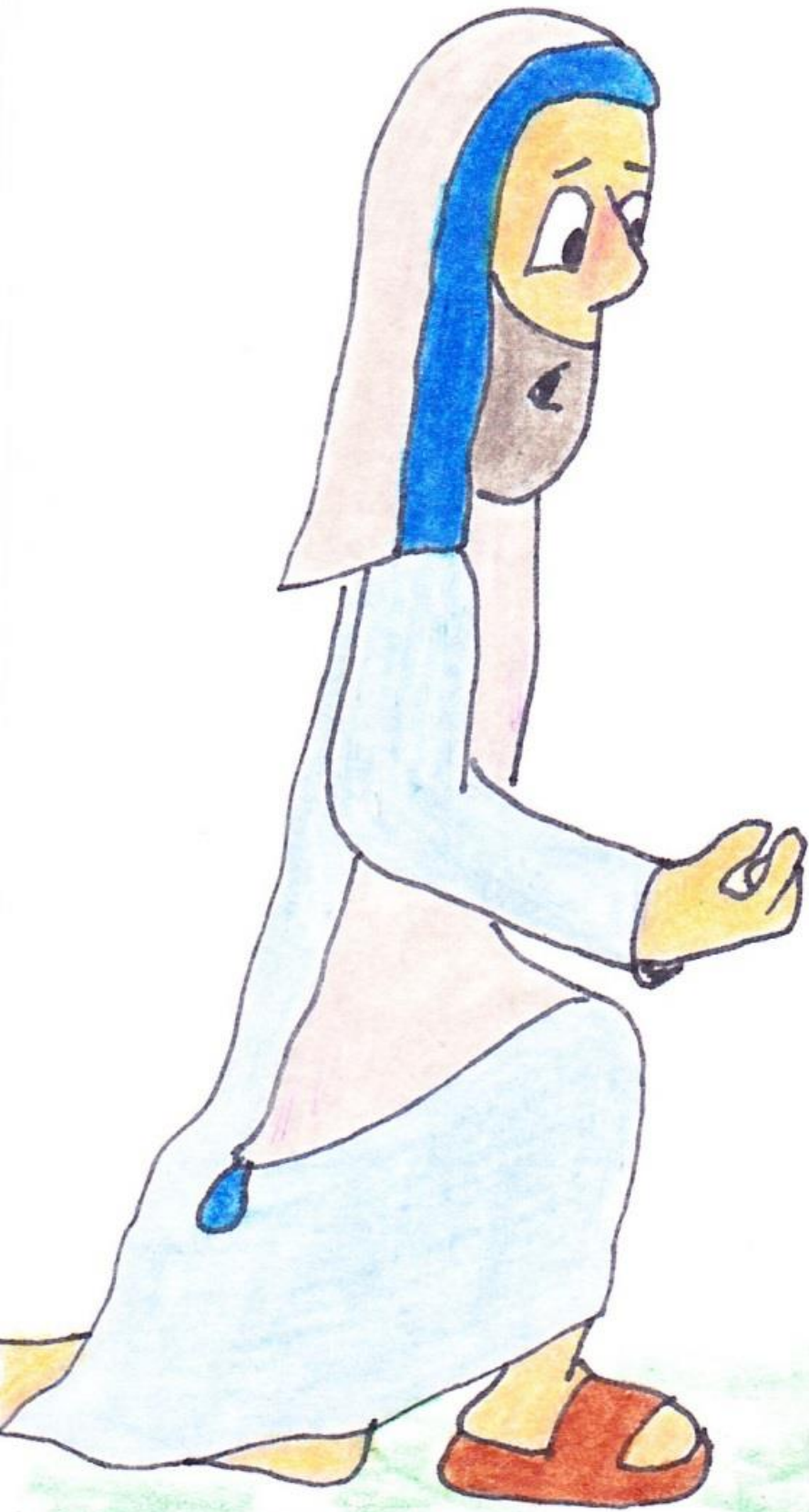
“Here I am. You called me.”

This time Eli understood it was God calling him. “When you go back to bed, if you hear your name again say, ‘Speak Lord, Your servant is listening.’”

Samuel lay back down waiting and he heard his name again. “Speak Lord, Your servant is listening.”

Then God told Samuel His plans, “I am going to do something that will make all of Israel sad. That day I will do what I promised to Eli, his sons will die for their sins.”

Samuel lay back down afraid to tell what God had said.



The next morning Eli asked what God had told Samuel. Samuel looked at the ground and told Eli everything.

Leaning back into his chair and covering his eyes Eli said, “He is God and He will do what He knows is good. Blessed be God.”

All of Israel learned that God was speaking to Samuel.

Some years later Israel went out to fight the Philistines and lost. All of Israel was shocked, but they decided they would win if they brought the Ark of the Covenant with them.

Eli’s sons brought it onto the battlefield and the Philistines were scared, they’d heard what God did to the Egyptians.



The Philistine generals went through the army shouting, “Man up, we must face them like men or we’ll be destroyed!”

They ran in to fight and destroyed the Israelites, capturing the Ark.

A Benjaminite ran all the way back to Eli and told him everything that happened.

When Eli heard the Ark had been taken and his sons were dead, he fell out of his chair and died.

Samuel took up the mantle of priest, prophet, and judge.

Questions

Younger Kids

1. What did Hannah do when she wanted a baby?
2. Did Eli's sons love God?
3. What did Samuel do when God called him?
4. What happened to the ark?

Middle Kids

1. Read 1 Samuel 1:20. Who does Hannah give credit to for her child?
2. Read 1 Samuel 2:11. How old do you think Samuel is? What is he doing? How can you serve God right now?
3. Read 1 Samuel 3:5 and 6. How did Samuel respond? How do you respond to your parents?
4. Read 1 Samuel 4:5. Who are the Israelites cheering for?

Older Guys

1. Read 1 Samuel 1:1-5 and 8. What do you observe about Elkahan? How can you apply these things?
2. Read 1 Samuel 1:5-7. Who did God bless with kids? Does that seem fair? Does God always bless who we expect to be blessed?
3. Read 1 Samuel 1:12-14. What is Eli's immediate response to Hannah? Is that right? Now read 1 Samuel 1:17. Did he change his response when he had more information? Do you?
4. How did Hannah respond when tested by Eli? Read 1 Samuel 1:15-16.
5. Read 1 Samuel 3:5-9. How do you respond to God's calling? Do you recognize His prompting?
6. Read 1 Samuel 3:15-18. Who are you more likely to respond as when finding out bad news, Samuel or Eli?
7. Read 1 Samuel 4:1-5. Does God tolerate being treated as a genie to grant wishes? Read 1 Samuel 4:10-11.

Activities

1. Take turns as parents calling your kids and have them come running from different parts of the house saying “Here I am.” Occasionally thorough out the day, call for them and see who can run the fastest.
2. Brainstorm ways to respond when people aren’t nice or don’t understand what you are doing. Look back at how Hannah responded.

Online

1. Hannah and Samuel coloring pages-
<http://www.coloring.ws/hannah.htm>
2. a couple of activities to do with this story-
<http://handsonbibleteacher.blogspot.com/2011/04/god-called-samuel-exploring-bible.html>
3. Speak Lord your servant hears craft-
<https://histreasureseekers.wordpress.com/2011/07/23/speak-lord-for-your-servant-hears/>
4. Hannah prayer craft-
<http://craftingthewordofgod.com/2013/10/09/samuels-birth/>