



EPISODE 5 - THE HUNTED

Illustration by Dean Zachary,
Colors by Mitch Foust

SAUL'S ARMY IS TEN TIMES OUR FIGHTING MEN. HOW WILL WE FIGHT THEM?

WE WILL KEEP MOVING,

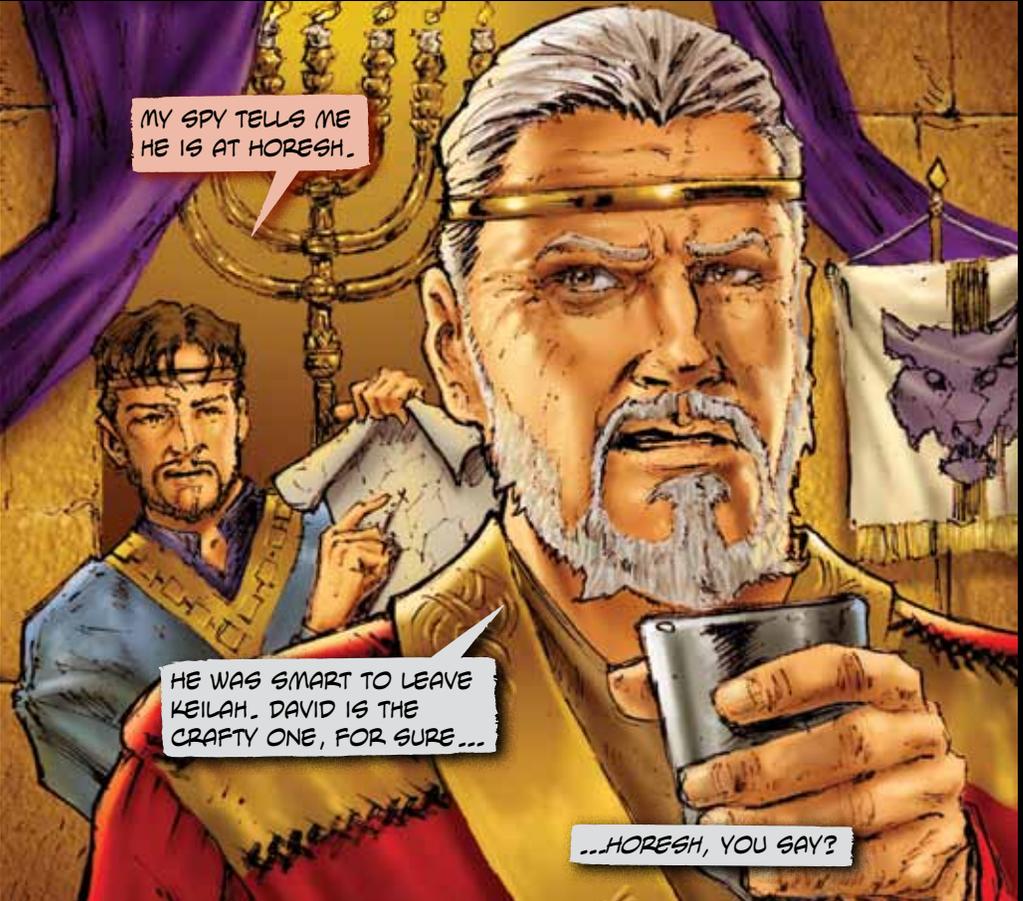
NOT STAYING IN ONE PLACE FOR TOO LONG.



MY SPY TELLS ME HE IS AT HORESH.

HE WAS SMART TO LEAVE KEILAH. DAVID IS THE CRAFTY ONE, FOR SURE...

...HORESH, YOU SAY?



JONATHAN VISITS DAVID AT HORESH

HIS ARMY IS ON THE WAY HERE. BUT, DAVID, DON'T BE AFRAID. GOD WILL NOT ALLOW MY FATHER TO LAY A HAND ON YOU. YOU WILL BE KING OVER ISRAEL, AND I WILL BE SECOND TO YOU. EVEN MY FATHER KNOWS THIS IN HIS HEART.



JONATHAN, YOU HAVE BEEN MY TRUE FRIEND. MY ONLY TRUE FRIEND. WE'VE SHARED OUR DEEPEST THOUGHTS AND CONFIDENCES. WE'VE ENCOURAGED EACH OTHER IN THE FAITH OF OUR LORD. I SENSE THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME WE SEE EACH OTHER.

MAY WE BOTH ALWAYS TRUST HIM AND NEVER RELY ON OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING.



THE ZIPHITES REVEAL DAVID'S HIDING PLACE

KING SAUL, WE HEAR THAT DAVID IS YOUR ENEMY, AND YOU WISH TO KILL HIM.

WHY ARE YOU TELLING THE KING THIS?

WE WANT TO EARN THE KING'S FAVOR.

WE KNOW WHERE DAVID IS HIDING.

DAVID IS CRAFTY. HE MOVES TOO MUCH FOR US TO CATCH HIM. I WANT YOU TO DO THIS... SEND MEN TO FIND **ALL** OF HIS HIDE-OUTS. COME BACK WITH DEFINITE INFORMATION.

THEN I WILL GO WITH YOU. IF HE IS CLOSE, I WILL TRACK HIM DOWN.



DAVID, THE ZIPHITES HAVE TOLD SAUL THAT YOU ARE CAMPED AT HORESH.

THEN WE MUST LEAVE.

WHERE WILL WE GO?

THE ROCK. AT MAON.

CONTEND, O LORD, WITH THOSE WHO CONTEND WITH ME; FIGHT AGAINST THOSE WHO FIGHT AGAINST ME.

SOME YEARS LATER IN THE DESERT OF MAON

WE HAVE NO WAY OUT!

TAKE UP SHIELD AND BUCKLER; ARISE AND COME TO MY AID. BRANDISH SPEAR AND JAVELIN AGAINST THOSE WHO PURSUE ME. SAY TO MY SOUL, "I AM YOUR SALVATION."

YOUR MAJESTY! COME QUICKLY! THE PHILISTINES ARE RAIDING OUR LAND!

MAY THOSE WHO SEEK MY LIFE BE DISGRACED AND PUT TO SHAME MAY THOSE WHO PLOT MY RUIN BE TURNED BACK IN DISMAY.

A FEW YEARS LATER, AFTER SAUL HAD AGAIN DEFEATED THE PHILISTINES

WE HAVE RECEIVED WORD.

DAVID IS IN THE DESERT OF EN GEDI.

CHOOSE 3,000 MEN.

WE WILL LEAVE AT DAWN.

CAVES OF EN GEDI

REST THE MEN AND ANIMALS. I MUST RELIEVE MYSELF.





THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD SPOKE OF WHEN HE SAID TO YOU, 'I WILL GIVE YOUR ENEMY INTO YOUR HANDS TO DEAL WITH AS YOU WISH.'



WHY?

WHY DIDN'T YOU **KILL** HIM!?

I THOUGHT I WOULD...**BUT**...LORD FORBID THAT I WOULD DO SUCH A THING TO MY MASTER OR LIFT MY HAND AGAINST HIM.

HE IS **STILL** THE LORD'S ANOINTED.



WHY DO YOU LISTEN WHEN MEN SAY, 'DAVID IS BENT ON HARMING YOU'? THIS DAY YOU HAVE SEEN WITH YOUR OWN EYES HOW THE LORD DELIVERED YOU INTO MY HANDS IN THE CAVE. SOME URGED ME TO KILL YOU. BUT I **SPARED** YOU.



I SAID 'I WILL NOT LIFT MY HAND AGAINST MY MASTER, BECAUSE HE IS THE LORD'S ANOINTED.'

DAVID, AT LEAST LET HIM KNOW THAT YOU **COULD** HAVE KILLED HIM. MAYBE HE WILL END HIS PURSUIT OF YOU.



MY LORD, THE KING!



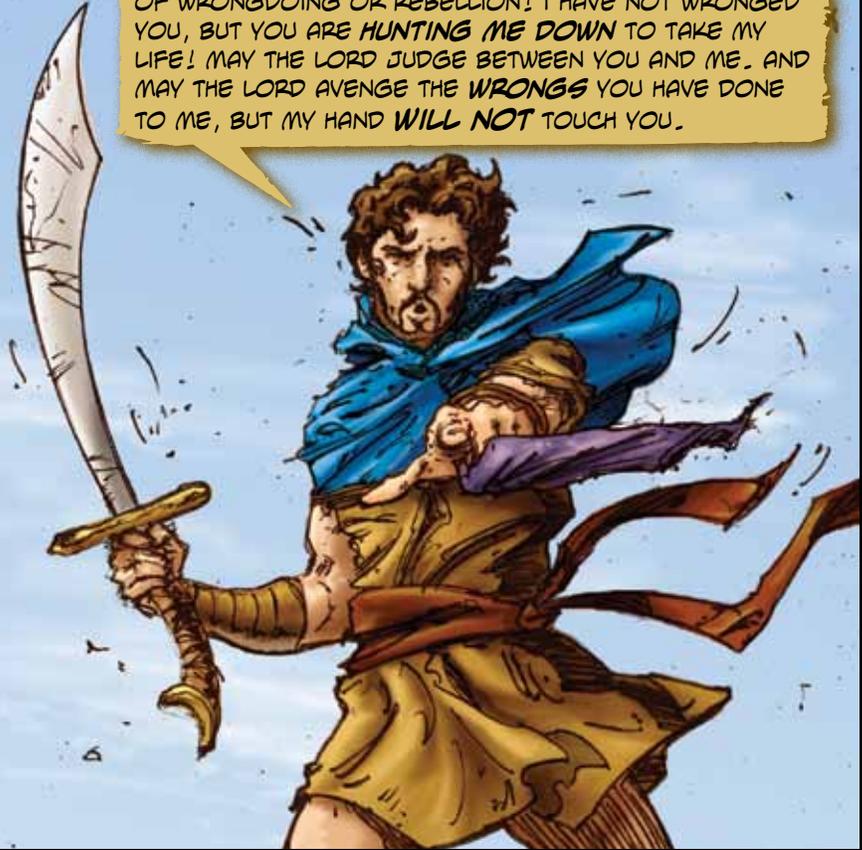
SEE?

LOOK AT THIS PIECE OF ROBE IN MY HANDS! I CUT OFF THE CORNER OF YOUR ROBE

BUT DID NOT KILL YOU.



NOW UNDERSTAND AND RECOGNIZE THAT I AM NOT GUILTY OF WRONGDOING OR REBELLION! I HAVE NOT WRONGED YOU, BUT YOU ARE HUNTING ME DOWN TO TAKE MY LIFE! MAY THE LORD JUDGE BETWEEN YOU AND ME. AND MAY THE LORD AVENGE THE **WRONGS** YOU HAVE DONE TO ME, BUT MY HAND **WILL NOT** TOUCH YOU.



AGAINST WHOM HAS THE KING OF ISRAEL COME OUT? WHOM ARE YOU PURSUING? A DEAD DOG!? A FLEA? MAY THE LORD BE OUR JUDGE AND DECIDE BETWEEN US.

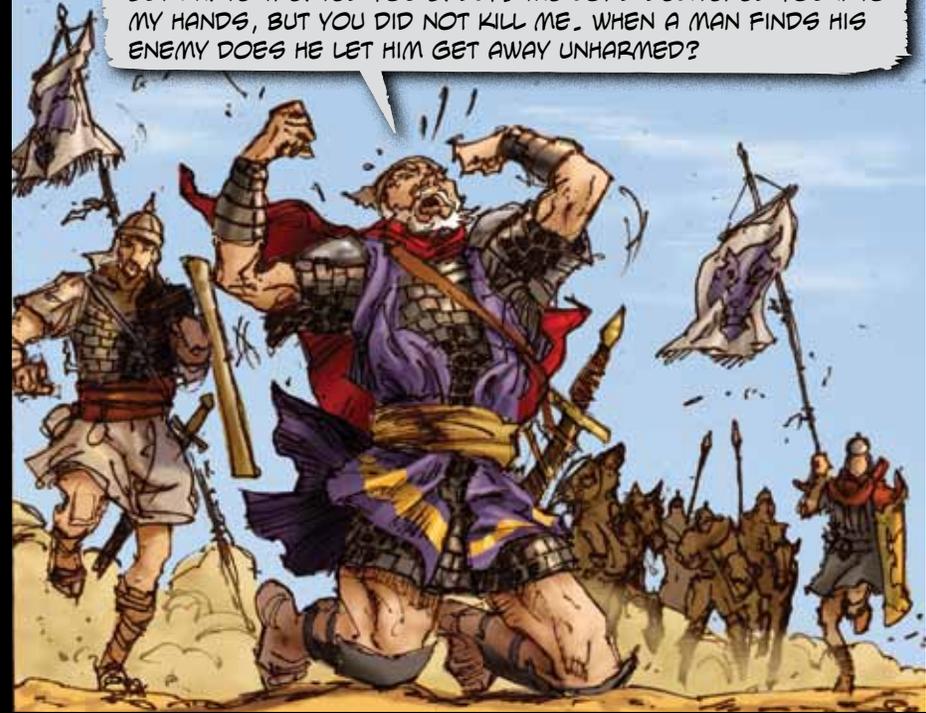
MAY HE CONSIDER MY CAUSE AND **UPHOLD** IT; MAY HE VINDICATE ME BY DELIVERING MY FROM YOUR HAND!



IS THAT YOUR VOICE...DAVID...MY SON!?

OOOOHHHH MY SON!

YOU ARE MORE RIGHTEOUS THAN I. YOU HAVE TREATED ME WELL, BUT I HAVE TREATED YOU BADLY. THE LORD DELIVERED YOU INTO MY HANDS, BUT YOU DID NOT KILL ME. WHEN A MAN FINDS HIS ENEMY DOES HE LET HIM GET AWAY UNHARMED?



MAY THE LORD REWARD YOU WELL FOR THE WAY YOU TREATED ME TODAY. I KNOW THAT YOU WILL SURELY BE KING AND THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN YOUR HANDS.

NOW SWEAR TO ME BY THE LORD THAT YOU WILL NOT CUT OFF MY DESCENDANTS OR WIPE OUT MY NAME FROM MY FATHER'S FAMILY.

YOU HAVE MY OATH. I WILL DO AS YOU ASK.

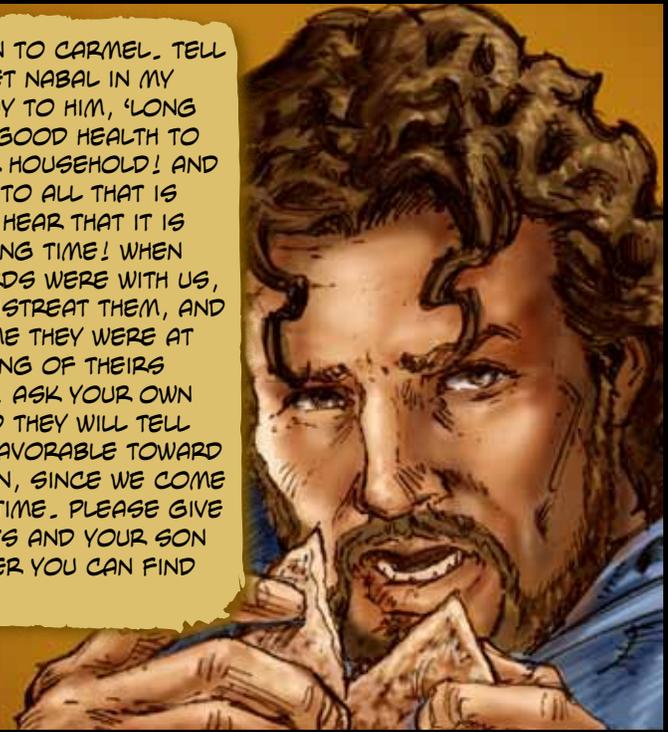
SO SAUL RETURNS HOME, BUT DAVID AND HIS MEN JOURNEY TO THE STRONGHOLDS OF ZIPH.

WE MUST STAY AWAY FROM GIBEAH, AS LONG AS GOD SEES FIT TO KEEP SAUL AS KING. WHO KNOWS FOR SURE IF THE EVIL SPIRIT IS STILL IN HIM, OR NOT?

THIS LAND HOLDS VERY LITTLE FOR US IN THE WAY OF FOOD.

WE HAVE BEEN PROTECTING THE PROPERTY OF EVERY MAN FOR MILES. NABAL IS THE WEALTHIEST. HE HAS 1,000 GOATS AND 3,000 SHEEP, WHICH HE HAS TAKEN TO CARMEL FOR SHEARING. SURELY HE WILL REWARD US FOR PROTECTING HIS PROPERTY ALL THIS TIME.

SEND TEN MEN TO CARMEL. TELL THEM TO GREET NABAL IN MY NAME, AND SAY TO HIM, 'LONG LIFE TO YOU! GOOD HEALTH TO YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD! AND GOOD HEALTH TO ALL THAT IS YOURS! NOW I HEAR THAT IT IS SHEEP-SHEARING TIME! WHEN YOUR SHEPHERDS WERE WITH US, WE DID NOT MISTREAT THEM, AND THE WHOLE TIME THEY WERE AT CARMEL NOTHING OF THEIRS WAS MISSING. ASK YOUR OWN SERVANTS AND THEY WILL TELL YOU. SO BE FAVORABLE TOWARD MY YOUNG MEN, SINCE WE COME AT A FESTIVE TIME. PLEASE GIVE YOUR SERVANTS AND YOUR SON DAVID WHATEVER YOU CAN FIND FOR THEM.'



WHO IS THIS DAVID? WHO IS THIS SON OF JESSE? MANY SERVANTS ARE BREAKING AWAY FROM THEIR MASTERS THESE DAYS.



WHY SHOULD I TAKE MY BREAD, AND MY WATER, AND MY MEAT AND GIVE IT TO MEN COMING FROM WHO KNOWS WHERE!?

AS SURELY AS WE STAND HERE, THOSE WERE HIS WORDS.

ABISHAI, SELECT FOUR HUNDRED MEN TO GO WITH US. LEAVE THE OTHER TWO HUNDRED TO GUARD THE WOMEN, CHILDREN AND SUPPLIES.

PUT ON YOUR SWORDS.

A SERVANT TELLS ABIGAIL, NABAL'S WIFE, ABOUT DAVID'S REQUEST

DAVID SENT MESSENGERS TO GIVE OUR MASTER HIS GREETINGS, BUT HE HURLED INSULTS AT THEM. YET THESE MEN WERE VERY GOOD TO US. THE WHOLE TIME WE WERE OUT IN THE FIELDS WITH THEM NOTHING WAS MISSING. NIGHT AND DAY THEY WERE A WALL AROUND US AND WE WERE HERDING OUR SHEEP NEAR THEM. NOW, THINK IT OVER AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN DO, BECAUSE DISASTER IS HANGING OVER OUR MASTER AND HIS WHOLE HOUSEHOLD. HE IS SUCH A WICKED MAN THAT NO ONE CAN TALK TO HIM.

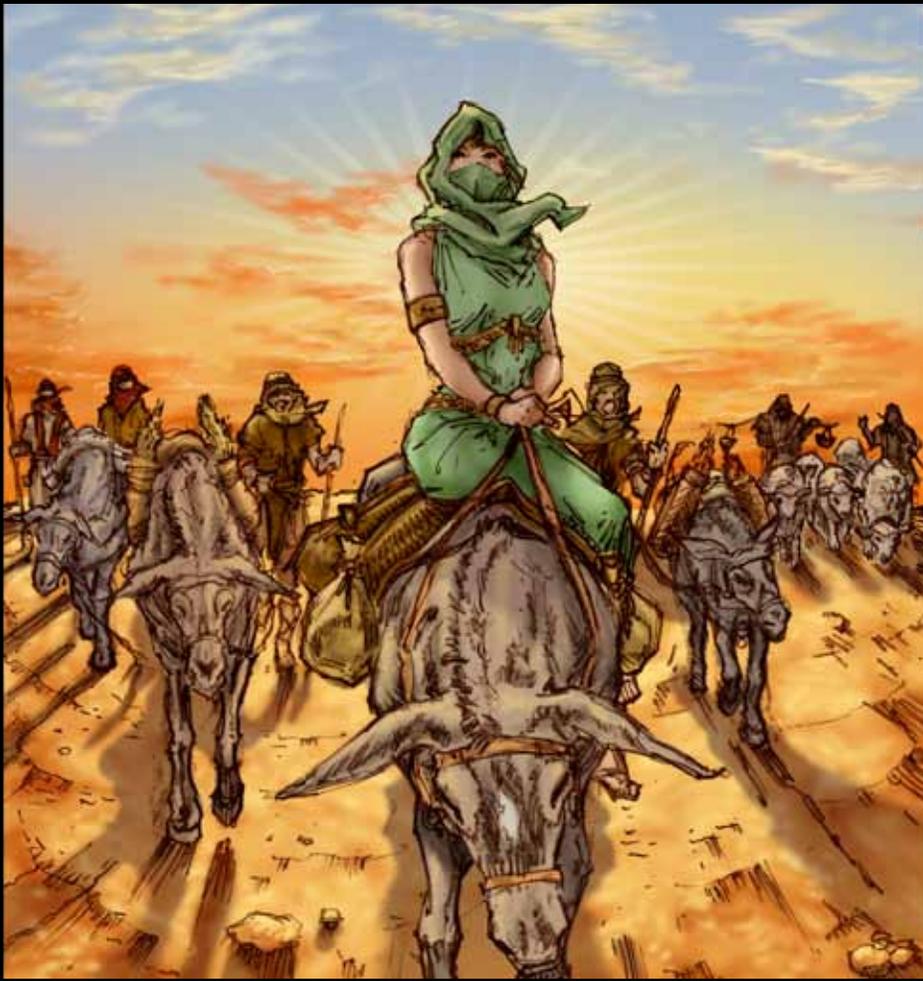
QUICKLY, GATHER 200 LOAVES OF BREAD, TWO SKINS OF WINE, FIVE DRESSED SHEEP, FIVE SHEAVES OF ROASTED GRAIN, 100 CAKES OF RAISIN AND 200 CAKES OF PRESSED FIGS.

GO ON AHEAD. I WILL CATCH UP WITH YOU.

BUT NABAL?

DO NOT WORRY ABOUT NABAL.

HE WILL NOT KNOW.



MY LORD, LET THE BLAME BE ON ME ALONE. PLEASE HEAR WHAT YOUR SERVANT HAS TO SAY.

SPEAK.

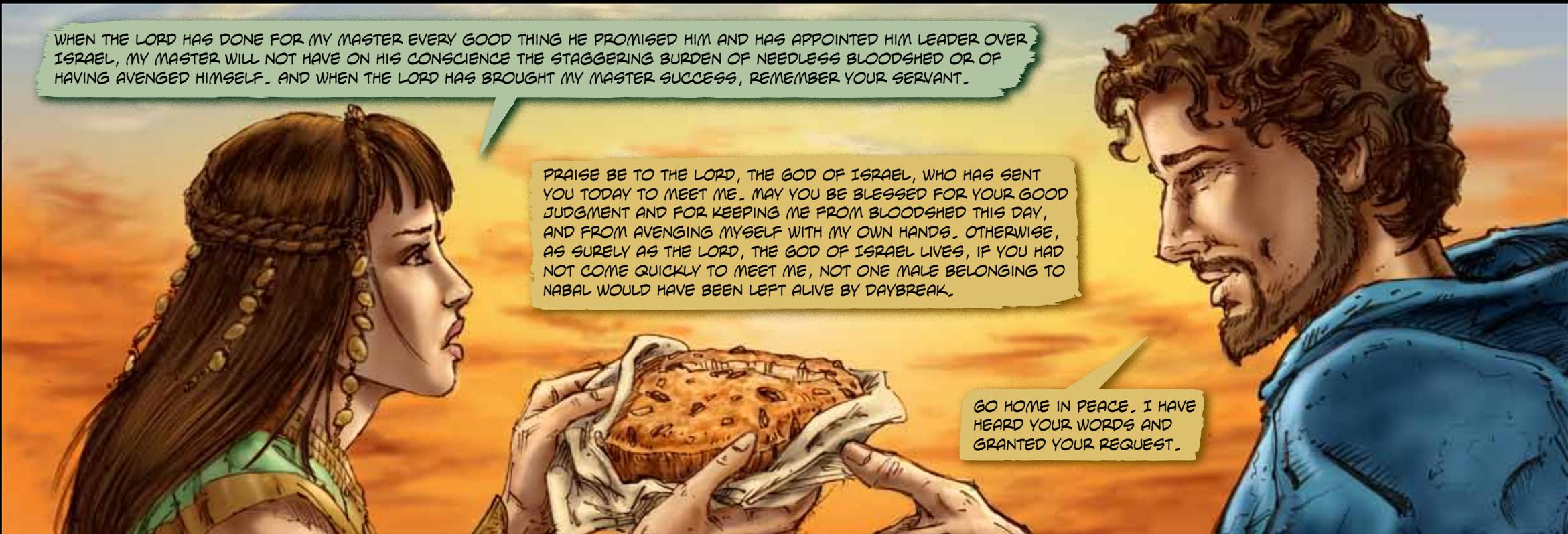
MAY MY LORD PAY NO ATTENTION TO THAT WICKED MAN, NABAL. AND LET THIS GIFT, WHICH YOUR SERVANT HAS BROUGHT, BE GIVEN TO THE MEN WHO FOLLOW YOU.



WHEN THE LORD HAS DONE FOR MY MASTER EVERY GOOD THING HE PROMISED HIM AND HAS APPOINTED HIM LEADER OVER ISRAEL, MY MASTER WILL NOT HAVE ON HIS CONSCIENCE THE STAGGERING BURDEN OF NEEDLESS BLOODSHED OR OF HAVING AVENGED HIMSELF. AND WHEN THE LORD HAS BROUGHT MY MASTER SUCCESS, REMEMBER YOUR SERVANT.

PRAISE BE TO THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL, WHO HAS SENT YOU TODAY TO MEET ME. MAY YOU BE BLESSED FOR YOUR GOOD JUDGMENT AND FOR KEEPING ME FROM BLOODSHED THIS DAY, AND FROM AVENGING MYSELF WITH MY OWN HANDS. OTHERWISE, AS SURELY AS THE LORD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL LIVES, IF YOU HAD NOT COME QUICKLY TO MEET ME, NOT ONE MALE BELONGING TO NABAL WOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT ALIVE BY DAYBREAK.

GO HOME IN PEACE. I HAVE HEARD YOUR WORDS AND GRANTED YOUR REQUEST.





I WILL WAIT UNTIL MORNING, WHEN HE IS SOBER, TO TELL HIM.



YOU HAVE DONE WHAT?!

YOU PERVERSE WOMAN, I WILL KILL YOU WITH MY BARE HANDS!



ARRGH!

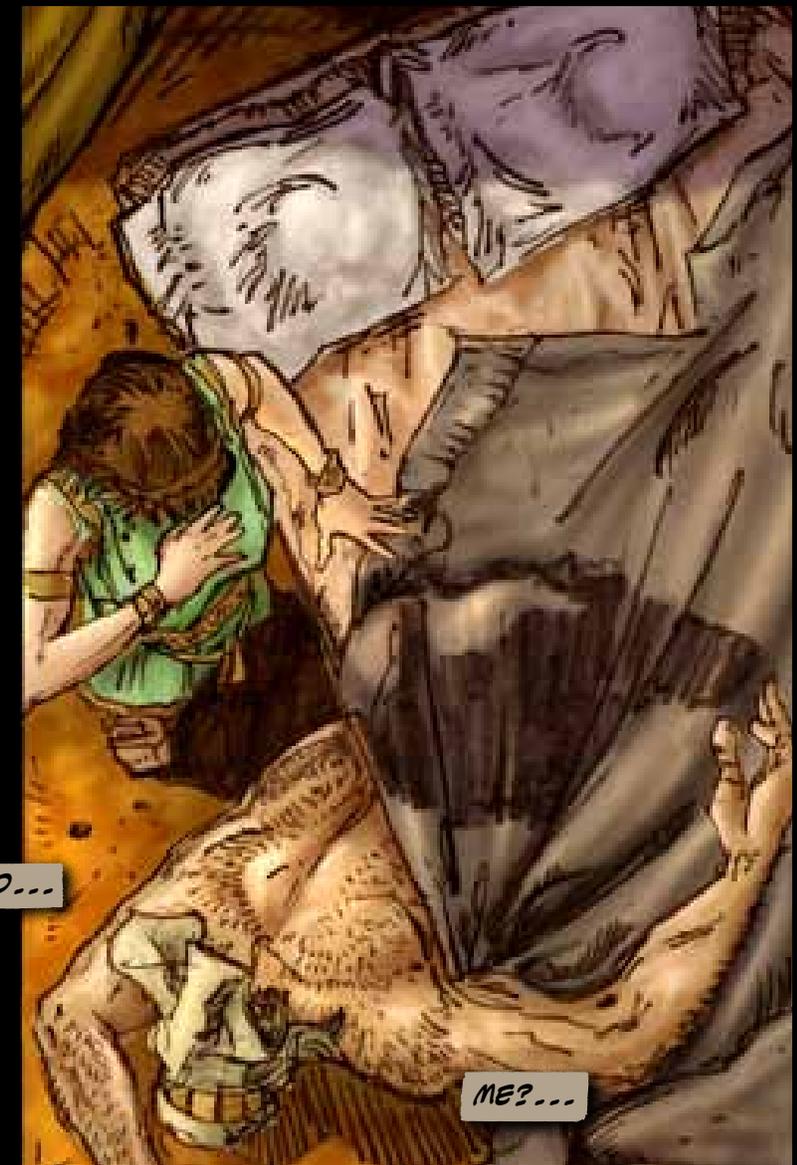
MY...MY CHEST!



WHAT'S...

HAPPENING...

TO...



ME?...



MY LORD, NABAL IS DEAD.
HIS HEART GAVE WAY.

THE LORD HAS KEPT HIS SERVANT
FROM DOING WRONG, AND HAS
BROUGHT NABAL'S WRONGDOING
DOWN ON HIS OWN HEAD.

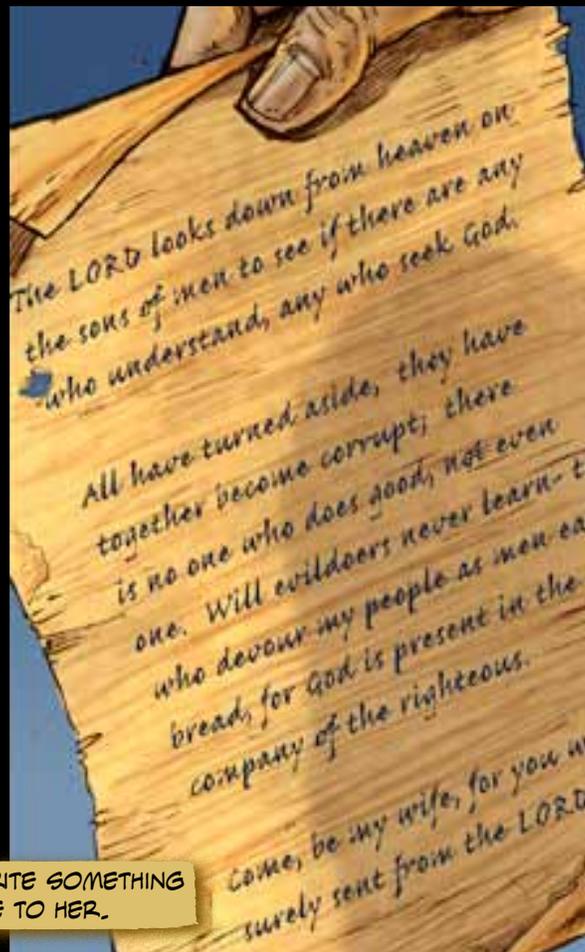


AND THE WOMAN, ABIGAIL..... HOW IS SHE?

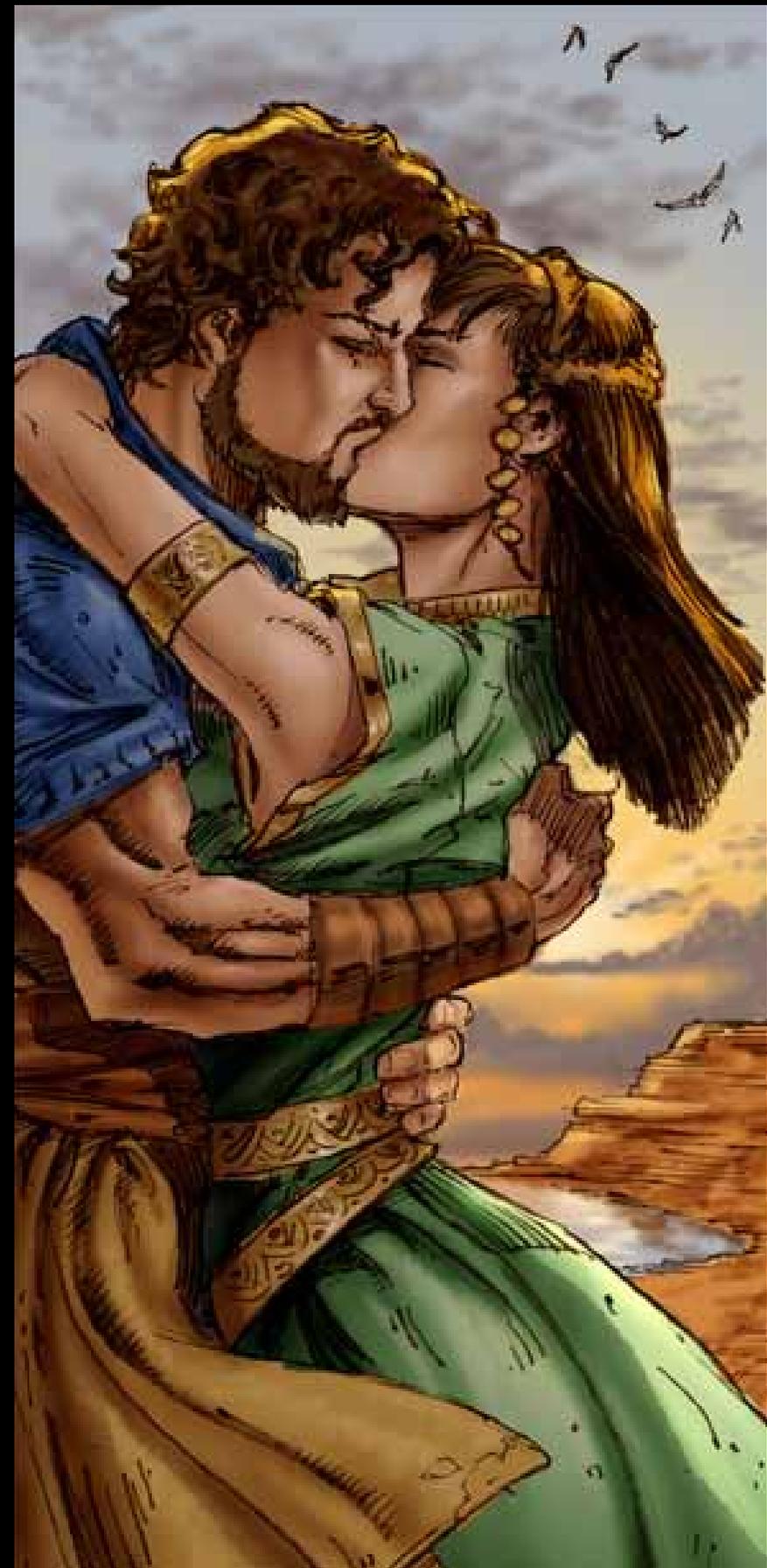
SHE IS BETTER OFF.

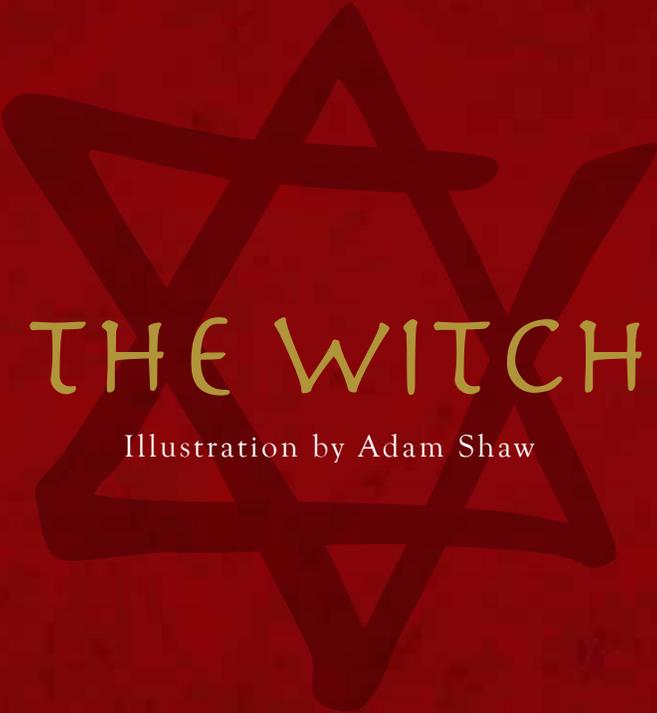
SEND FOR HER. ASK HER TO BECOME
MY WIFE, FOR SHE IS A RIGHTEOUS
WOMAN OF THE LORD.

WAIT.... I WILL WRITE SOMETHING
FOR YOU TO TAKE TO HER.



The LORD looks down from heaven on
the sons of men to see if there are any
who understand, any who seek God.
All have turned aside, they have
together become corrupt; there
is no one who does good, not even
one. Will evildoers never learn -
who devour my people as men eat
bread, for God is present in the
company of the righteous.
Come, be my wife, for you will
surely be sent from the LORD.





EPISODE 6 - THE WITCH OF ENDOR

Illustration by Adam Shaw

THE STORY CONTINUES

Volume II

David is older and he is crowned King after Saul's death. He takes Jerusalem back as Israel's stronghold. He dances half-naked in the streets, glorifying God for the Ark's return. He commits adultery with Bathsheba, murders Uriah, loses his new-born son, lives the life of a revered king, runs from his son, Absalom...until finally, in old age, he anoints Solomon just as his fourth son, Adonijah, is leading a revolt to take over as king. David gives Solomon instructions for building the temple that will be a permanent home for the Ark.

DA☆VID

THE ILLUSTRATED NOVEL