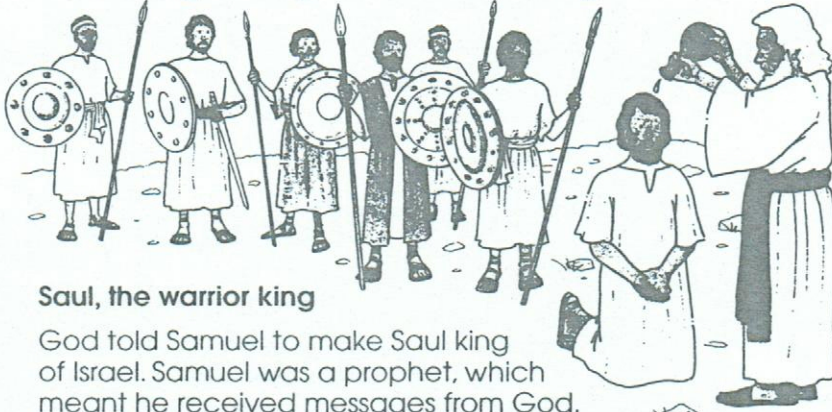


The Great Fast

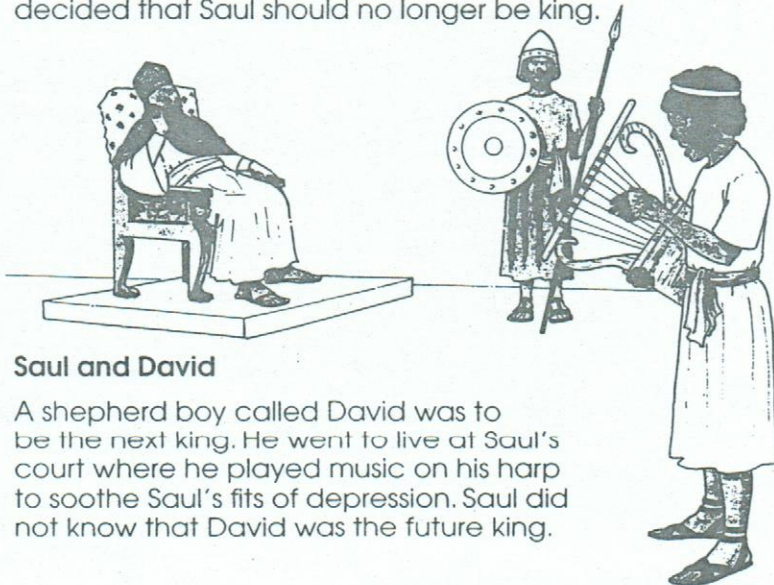
King Saul

For a long time after they had settled in Canaan, the tribes of Israel had many enemies. They fought battles against fierce armies, led by powerful kings. Their most deadly enemies were the Philistines. The people of Israel decided that it was time they had their own king to lead them against their enemies. This was because they had turned away from God, and no longer thought of him as their king.



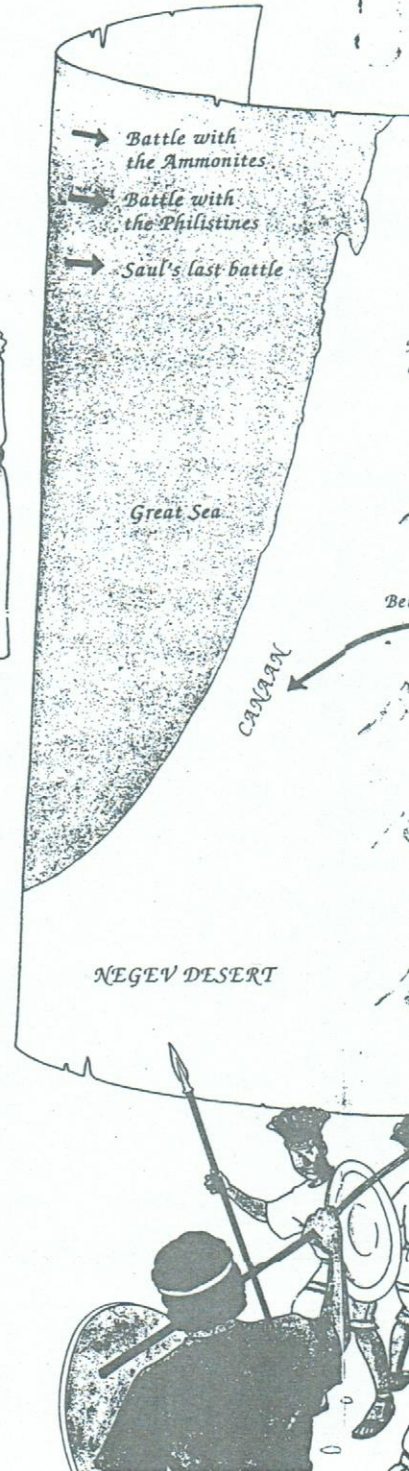
Saul, the warrior king

God told Samuel to make Saul king of Israel. Samuel was a prophet, which meant he received messages from God. Saul led his army against the Ammonites and won a great victory. Then he defeated the Philistines. Saul won many battles, but he didn't always obey God. God was angry and decided that Saul should no longer be king.



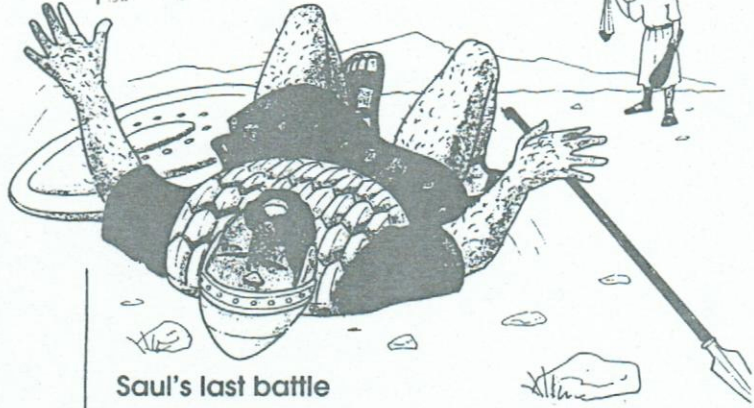
Saul and David

A shepherd boy called David was to be the next king. He went to live at Saul's court where he played music on his harp to soothe Saul's fits of depression. Saul did not know that David was the future king.



David and Goliath

The Philistines challenged Saul to send a champion to fight their giant warrior, Goliath. No Israelite soldier dared, but David went to fight Goliath with only a sling and stones. He hit the giant's forehead, and he fell. David took Goliath's own sword and killed him.



Saul's last battle

Gradually, David became very popular, and Saul grew jealous. He became moody and violent, and plotted to kill David, who fled from Saul and lived among the Philistines. Finally, the Philistines attacked the Israelites. Saul's sons were killed in the battle on Mount Gilboa, and Saul, severely wounded, killed himself with his own sword.

