

*Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Matthew 14, 22-34*



An angel talks to Gideon.

Judges 6:1-24

The Midianites were the Israelites' enemies. They stole everything from the Israelites! The Israelites were so afraid they hid in caves in the mountains. The Israelites asked God to help them.

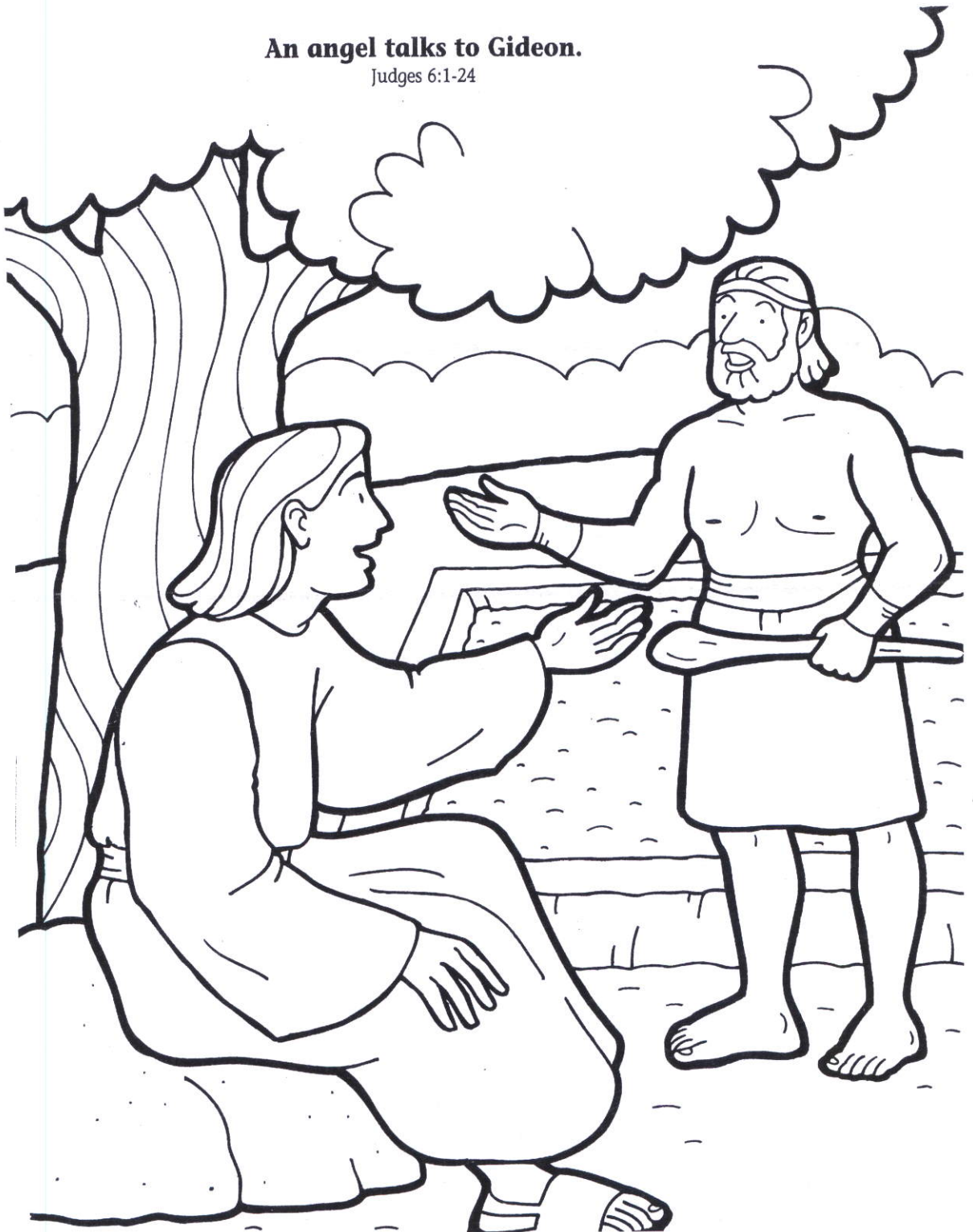
One day an Israelite named Gideon was hiding from the Midianites. Gideon was hiding because he didn't want the Midianites to come and steal the wheat he was threshing.

Suddenly an angel appeared and said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." What a funny way to talk to someone who was hiding!

God told Gideon to save Israel from the Midianites. Gideon didn't think that he could save Israel, but God said that He would go with Gideon and help him. Gideon still wasn't sure, so he asked the angel to prove he was speaking from God. The angel did! After that, Gideon did what the angel told him to do.

An angel talks to Gideon.

Judges 6:1-24



GIDEON

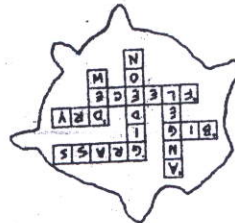
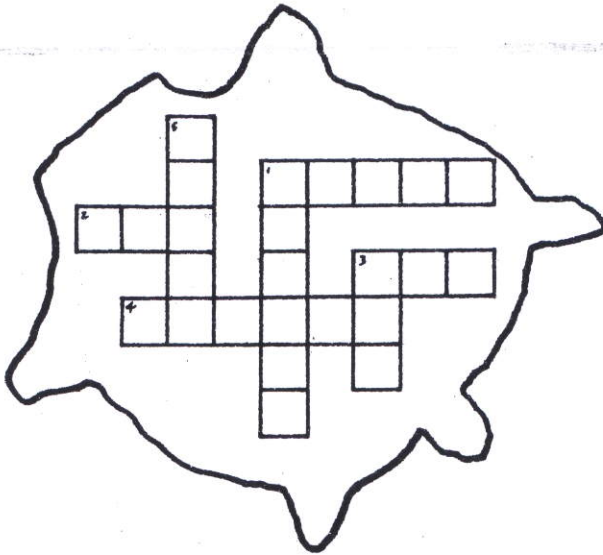
JUDGES 6

ACROSS

- 1) ANIMALS THAT GRAZE
EAT GREEN _____.
- 2) AN ANGEL SPOKE TO
GIDEON FROM UNDER
A _____ OAK TREE.
(OPPOSITE OF SMALL)
- 3) OPPOSITE OF WET
- 4) SHEEPSKIN, WOOL -
RHYMES WITH
"PEACE"

DOWN

- 1) GOD CHOSE _____ TO
SAVE HIS PEOPLE
FROM THE
MIDIANTES.
- 3) WATER DROPLETS ON
GRASS IN THE
MORNING
- 5) MESSENGER OF GOD



**ELIAS
THE
PROPHET**



David and Solomon were great kings who honored God. But as time passed, evil men came to the throne of Israel. One of the worst was Ahab. He worshiped Baal instead of God.

God sent the prophet Elijah to deal with Ahab. Elijah got right in Ahab's face and declared, "As the Lord lives, it will not rain in Israel unless I say so."



God directed Elijah to go hide by a brook to avoid the king's anger. So Elijah did what God said.

While it didn't rain in Israel, Elijah had plenty of fresh water from the brook. God sent ravens every morning and evening with bread and meat for the prophet. But, finally, even the brook dried up.



Then God sent Elijah to a town and told him to find a certain widow and ask her for food and shelter.

The widow replied, "I have just a bit of flour and oil. I was going to make my last loaf of bread. After it's gone, my son and I will die."



Elijah told her, "Don't be afraid. Go make your bread. But bring me a little bread first. This is what the God of Israel says: 'Your flour won't be used up and your oil jug won't run dry until the Lord makes it rain.'"

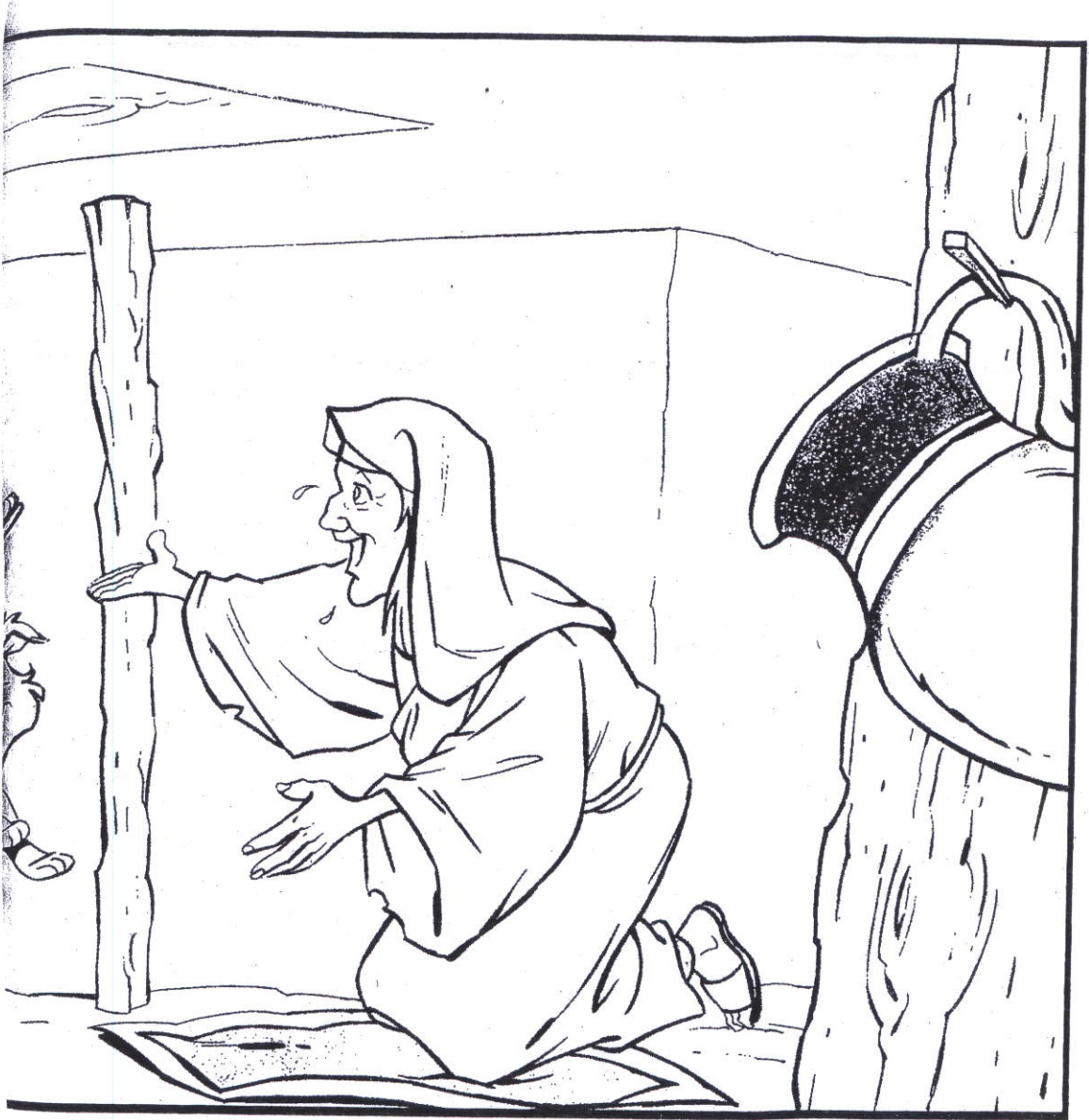
The widow did as Elijah said. He became her houseguest. And she never ran out of flour or oil.



One day the widow's little boy got sick. She took good care of him, but he grew worse and finally stopped breathing.

The woman cried to Elijah, "Why did this happen?"

"Give me your son," Elijah answered.



Elijah carried the boy upstairs to his own room and laid him on the bed. Then he prayed for God to bring the boy back to life. God answered Elijah's prayer. The boy started breathing again—he was well!

When Elijah carried the boy down to his mother, she said, "I know you're a man of God. You speak God's words and they are true."



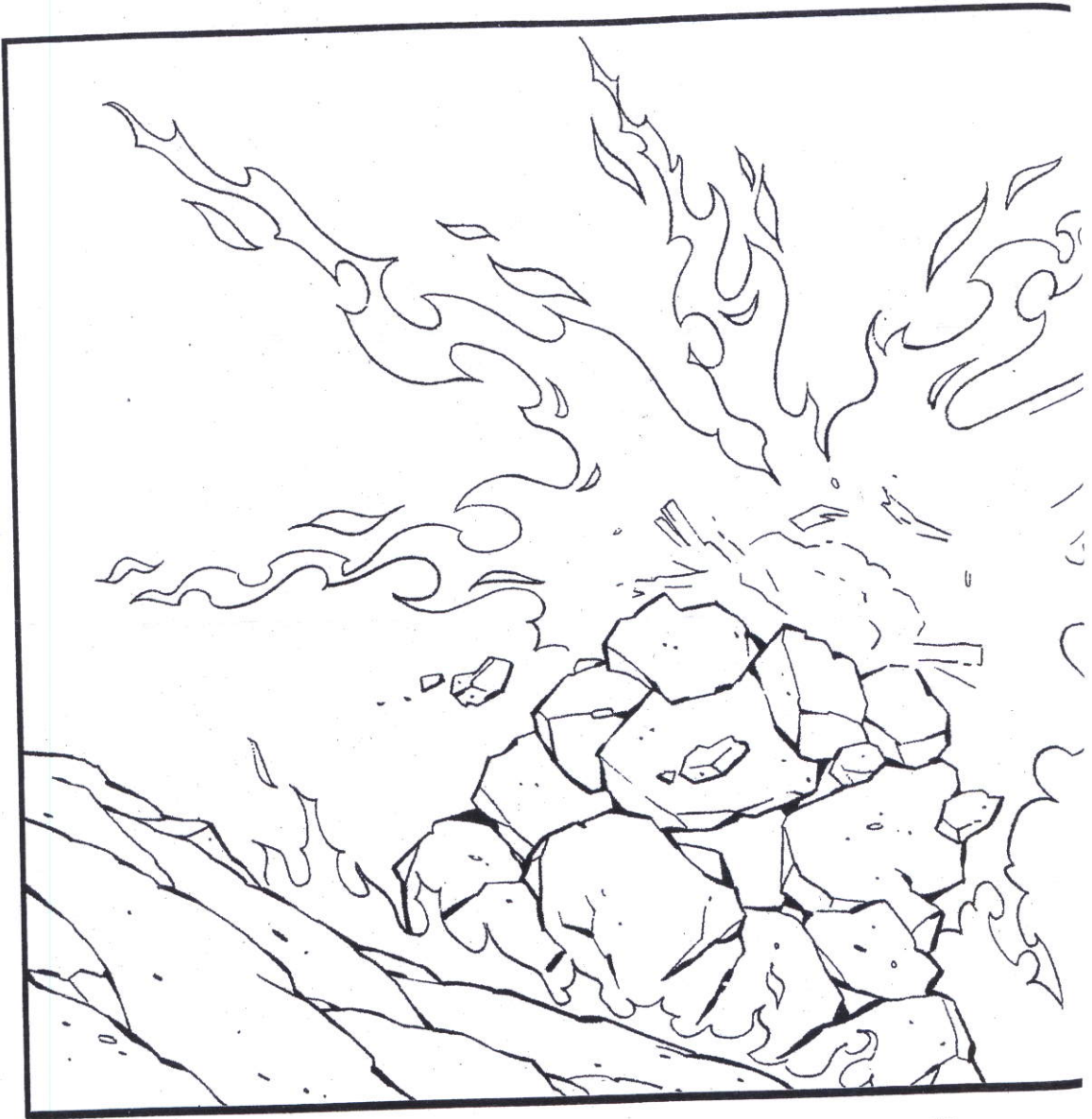
Three years passed without any rain, just as Elijah had said. God sent Elijah to see King Ahab.

"Is that you, you troublemaker?" Ahab shouted.

"You're the one who's made trouble for Israel by worshiping Baal. Now gather your priests of Baal and have them meet me on Mount Carmel," Elijah answered.



It was a showdown. There were 450 prophets of Baal against one Elijah. They prepared meat offerings and laid them on altars. The prophets of Baal would pray for fire to burn up the meat. And Elijah would ask God for fire. Everyone agreed that the one who answered with fire was the true God.



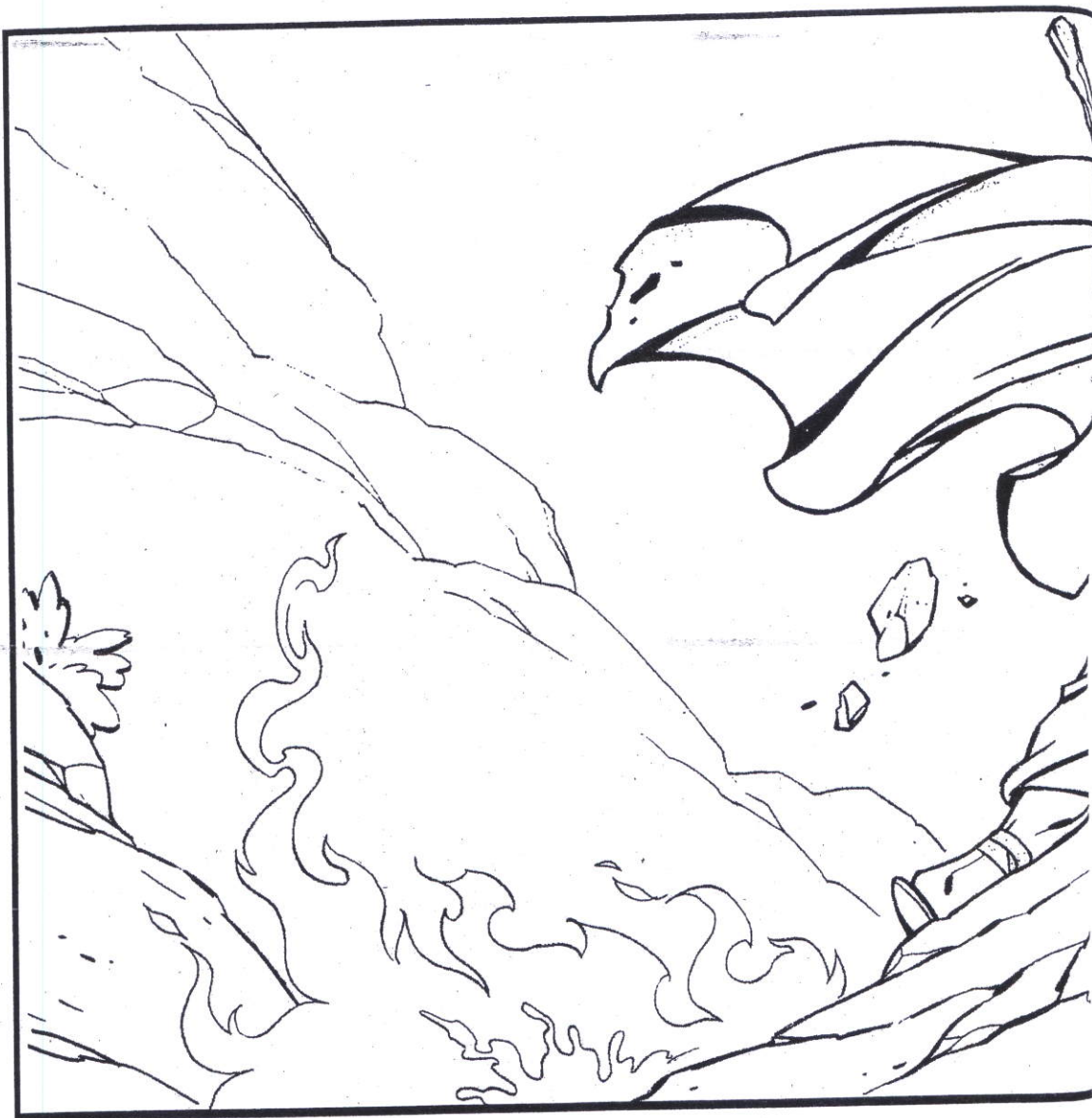
The prophets of Baal called on their fake god from morning to noon. They danced around the altar and even cut themselves with swords and spears. Elijah taunted them. "Shout louder. Maybe your fake god is taking a nap." The prophets of Baal kept it up until evening, but no fire came.



Then Elijah called all the people to him. He rebuilt the broken altar of the Lord. Then he had helpers dump water over the wood and the sacrifice.

Finally Elijah prayed, "Oh God, show that you are the only true God. Turn the hearts of the people back to you."

Fire fell from heaven. "The Lord, he is God!" the people shouted.



The people chased and killed the prophets of Baal. Queen Jezebel was furious! She was determined to kill Elijah. Exhausted and scared, Elijah ran away.

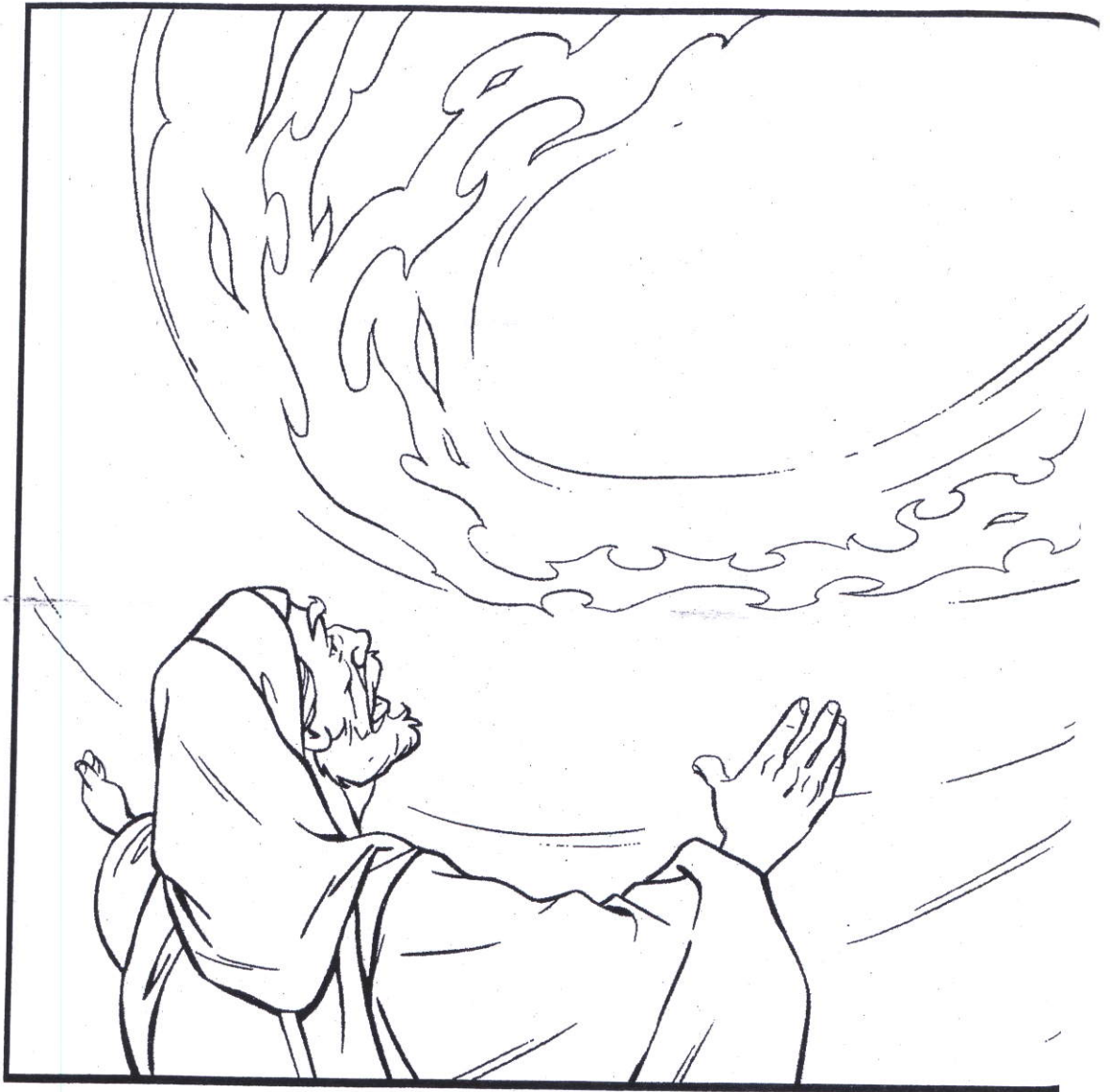
God sent an angel to Elijah with food and water. Then he traveled forty days and nights to Mount Horeb. He climbed into a cave and spent the night there.

God asked Elijah, "What are you doing here?"



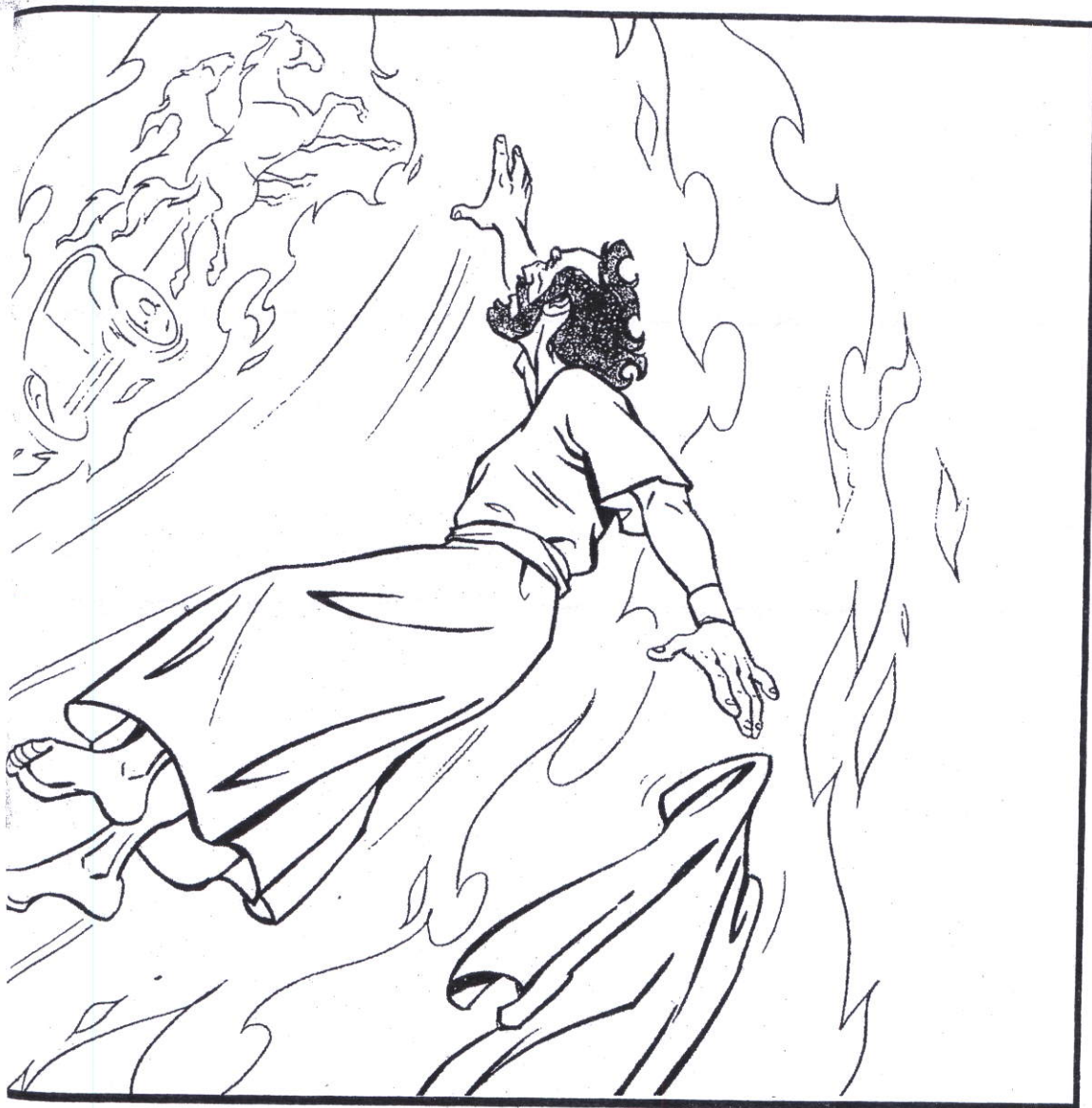
"I have worked hard for you, Lord," Elijah answered. "They've killed all your other prophets, and now they want to kill me. I'm the only one left who serves you."

God told Elijah to stand on the mountainside. A mighty wind blew and shattered the rocks. Then an earthquake shook the mountain. Then fire roared through. Then God comforted Elijah with a gentle whisper and promised him a helper.



Elijah left the mountain and found the helper God promised. His name was Elisha. Elisha left his family and followed Elijah and learned from him.

Finally the time came for Elijah to go to heaven. The two men were walking and talking together when suddenly a chariot and horses of fire appeared.



They took Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind as Elisha watched in wonder.

Immediately Elisha began to do great miracles and lead the people toward God. Elisha's fame spread far and wide. People everywhere knew there was a great man of God in Israel.