

A silhouette of a man, presumably a father, standing in the center and holding the hands of two young children, a girl on the left and a boy on the right. They are standing on a grassy field at sunset or sunrise, with the sun low on the horizon behind them. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds that are illuminated from below, creating a warm, golden glow. The overall mood is peaceful and protective.

GODLY FATHERS

FATHERHOOD

- We learn much in Scripture about practical living from the example of those who have gone before us. This includes the issue of fatherhood.
- While many godly men in the Bible (including Eli, David, Hezekiah and Samuel) failed in some aspects as fathers, there is certainly merit in having a God-fearing father. One only has to look at the example of the ungodly men in Scripture and how it affected their children.
- E.g. The wicked Ahaz (2 Kings 16:3) and Manasseh (2 Kings 21:6) both sacrificed their sons to pagan gods.



ABSENTEE FATHERS

- Ps 78:3-4 (ESV) ... things that we have heard and known, **that our fathers have told us.** We will not hide them from their children, but **tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD,** and his might, and the wonders that he has done.
- But we live in an age when there are many absentee fathers, who have abdicated their role as high priest in the family.



- In the seeming absence of a believing father, Timothy's mother and grandmother had taught him from youth.
 - 2 Tim 1:5 (NIV) I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.
 - 2 Tim 3:15 (NIV) ... and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

ABSENTEE FATHERS



- In 2016 Dr. Hawkes, a leading Australian educator warned that fathers spend 18 seconds a day on average talking to their kids, while kids spend an average of 2 to 5 hours a day online, “so the people raising our sons and daughters are not parents but peers and social networking sites”. *

* [http:// www.heraldsun.com.au/ news](http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news)

ABSENTEE FATHERS

- Hawkes says that the leadership examples and moral codes in society are not worthy of our children: “There are too many absentee parents who are so conscious of producing 2.3 children, 2.3 houses and 2.3 cars that they forget to spend time with them.” ¹
- God instructs fathers to repent of their selfish ways and to spend time with their children. Families are the backbone of a nation and if they disintegrate so does the nation.
 - Malachi 4:6 (NIV) And he will **turn the hearts of fathers to their children** and **the hearts of children to their fathers**, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.
- Unless fathers turn their hearts to their children and the children reciprocate – Malachi says that the land will be struck “with a decree of utter destruction.”

* Ibid.

ORPHANS OF THE LIVING

We think of orphans only
as the little girls and lads,
Who haven't any mothers
and who haven't any dads.

They are grouped with other children
and in groups they're put to bed.
With some stranger paid to listen
while their little prayers are said.

All the grownups look with pity
on such lonely children small,
And declare to be an orphan
is the saddest fate of all.

But sometimes I look about me
and with sorrow hang my head
As I gaze on something sadder
than the orphans of the dead.

ORPHANS OF THE LIVING

For more pitiful and tragic
as the long days come and go,
Are the orphans of the parents
they're not allowed to know.
They're the orphans of the living,
left alone to romp and play,
From their fathers and their mothers
by ambition shut away.

They have fathers who are busy
and so weighted down with cares,
That they haven't time to listen
to a little child's affairs.
They have mothers who imagine,
life could give them, if it would
Something richer, something better
than the joys of motherhood.

ORPHANS OF THE LIVING

So their children learn from strangers,
and by strangers' hands are fed,
And the nurse, for so much money,
nightly tucks them into bed.
Lord, I would not grow so busy
that I cannot drop my task,
To answer every question
which that child of mine may ask.

Let me never serve ambition
here so selfishly, I pray,
That I cannot stop to listen
to the things my children say.
For whatever cares beset them,
let them know I'm standing by.
I don't want to make them orphans
till the day I come to die.

~~ Edgar Albert Guest ~~

A REWARD FROM GOD

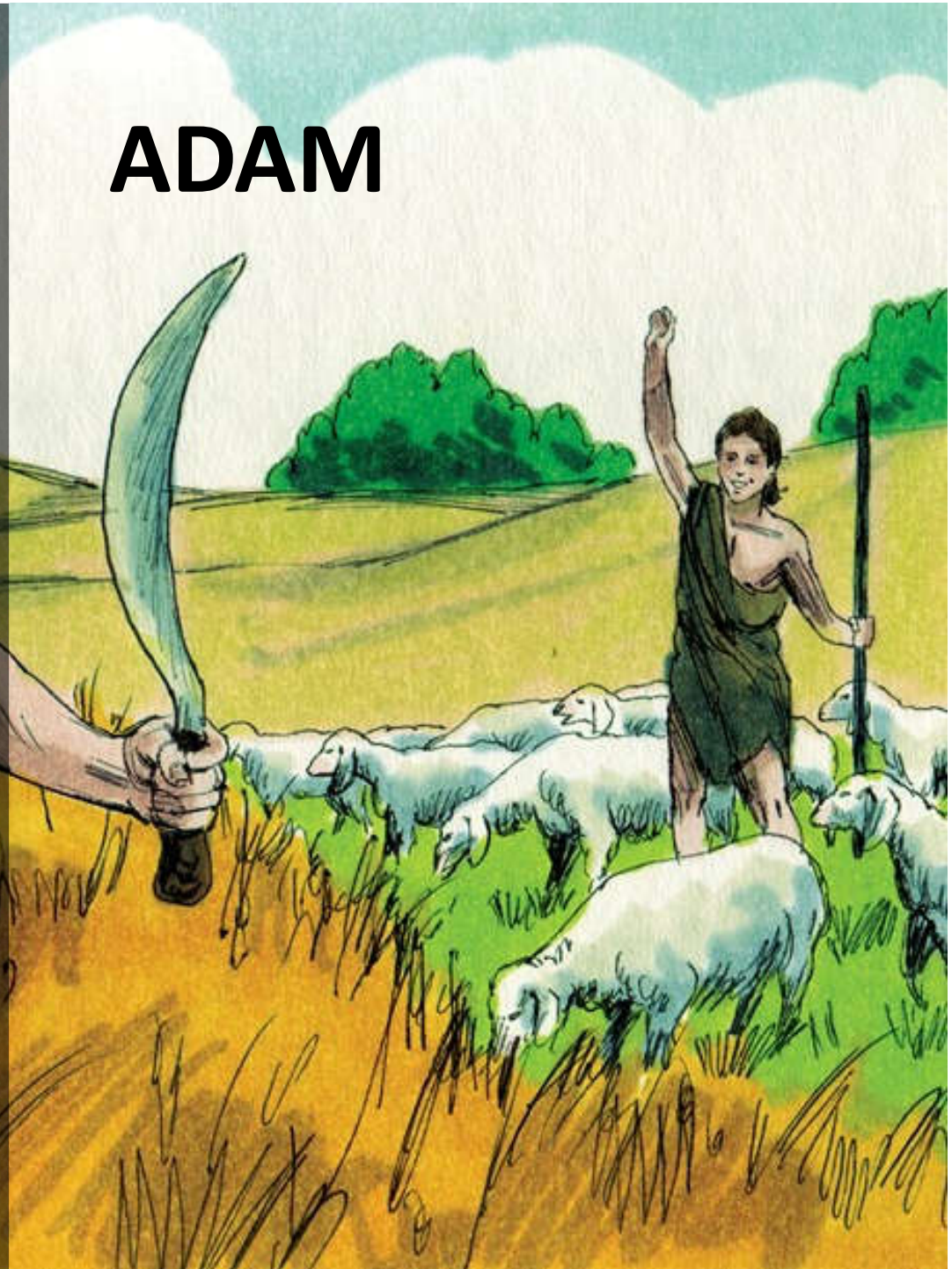
- Children are a gift from God. They are only ours for a time, but ultimately they belong to God. When Esau saw Jacob's children he asked whose they were and Jacob answered that they were "the children God has graciously given your servant." (Gen 33:5)
 - Psalm 127:3 Children are **a heritage from the Lord**, offspring **a reward from him**.
- Our children are precious. They are not only a mother and father's heritage but "a heritage from the Lord".
- They must **not be viewed as an inconvenience**, but as "a reward" from God.

.....
.....

Not only was Adam the first man, he was also the first human father. In that aspect, he had no human example to follow.

As a man who had tended the garden of Eden, he must have taught his eldest son Cain to help, as we see that he later “worked the soil”. Likewise, Adam had been in charge of the animals in Eden and would have taught his second son Abel how to tend the flocks.

ADAM



WORK IS GOOD

Work is good for children. Not only does it teach them to be grateful for what their parents do all day long, it creates a work ethic in them. Parents need to instil in their children a work ethic that will carry them into adulthood.

Giving your children jobs or chores in the house and getting them to help with housework teaches them to be providers and to contribute to the society they live in, rather than just being a drain on others' resources.





- Adam and Eve appear to have taught their sons (both Abel and Cain) about God and the need to sacrifice to him. Seth also appears to have been a godly son.
- It is important that parents teach their children about the things that please God.

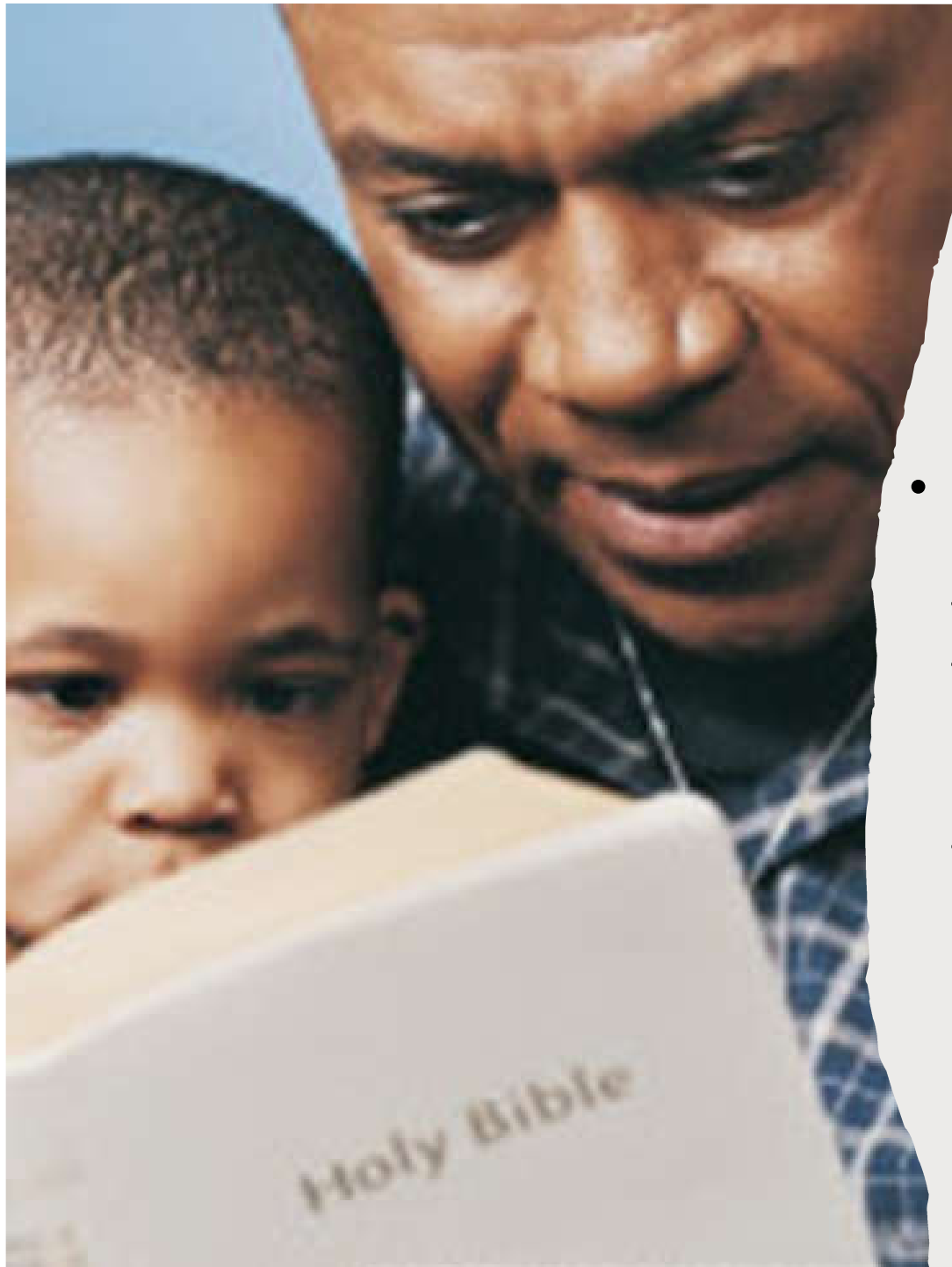


ADAM

- Adam and Eve had formerly led the world into sin and exile from Paradise.
- As a father, Adam would later have to live with the personal tragedy of his son, Abel, being murdered by his other son, Cain. He would then have to contend with Cain being sent away into exile by God.
- As fathers we can learn a lot from Adam about the consequences of our actions on our family and how we ought to live in obedience to God.

SETH & ENOSH

- While Cain's line produced another murderer - Lamech (Gen 4:23), it seems that the knowledge of God was taught to Seth by Adam and Eve, who in turn passed it on to his son Enosh.
- Gen 4:25-26 (NIV) ... she (Eve) gave birth to a son and named him Seth, saying, "God has granted me another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him." Seth also had a son, and he named him Enosh. **At that time men began to call on the name of the LORD.**



A HIGH PRIEST

- We should be training our children in the way they ought to live. There is no better training tool for this than Scripture. Fathers should be reading to their children daily from the Bible.
- 2 Tim 3:16-17 (NIV) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

A HIGH PRIEST

- Deut 6:6-9 (ESV) And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- We are instructed to teach their children the commands of the Lord:
 - **when you sit in your house:** at mealtimes or family gathering
 - **when you walk by the way:** when you go out with them
 - **when you lie down:** before you go to bed
 - **when you rise:** first thing in the morning

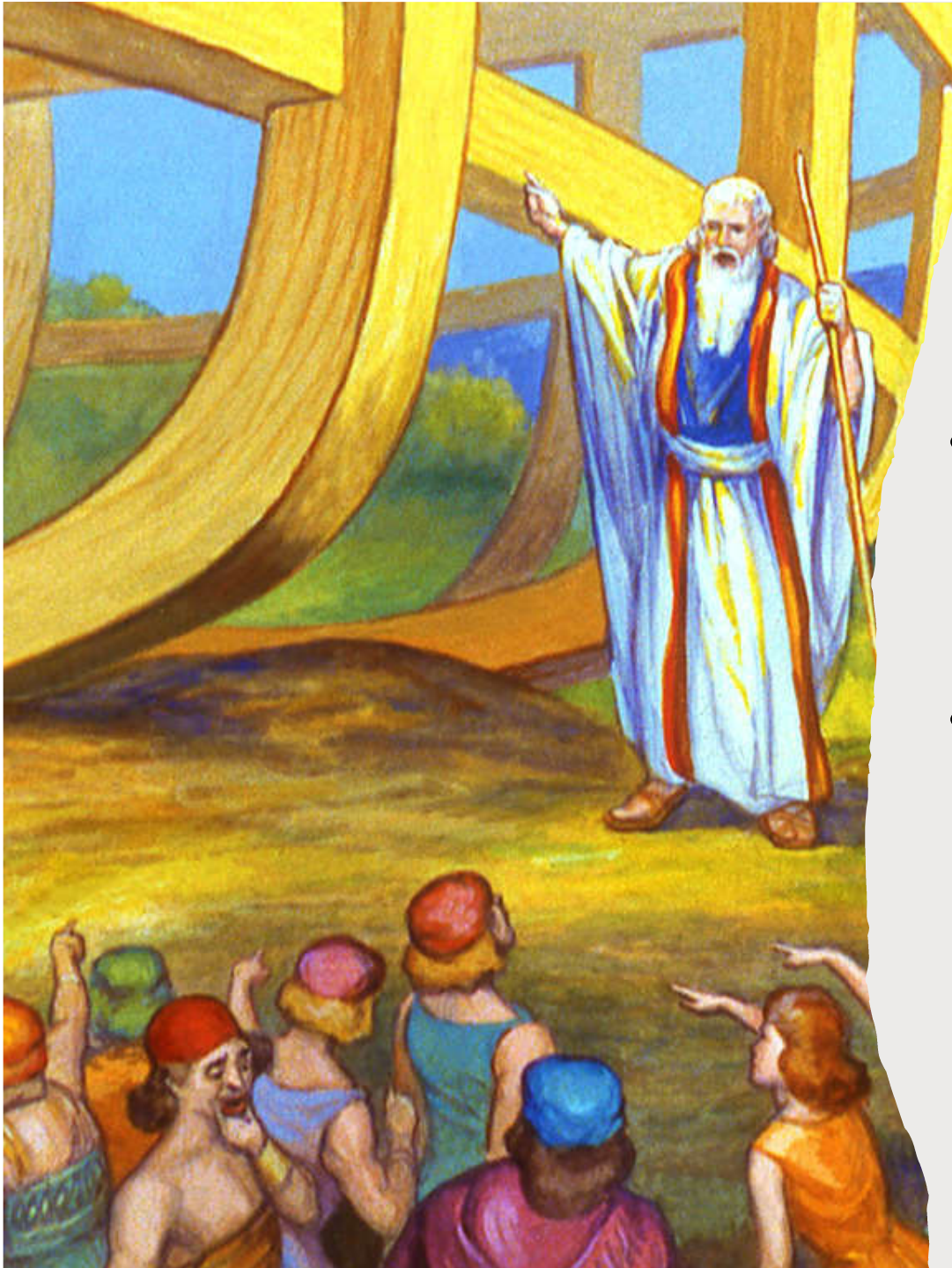
A HIGH PRIEST

- The Word of God should be on the “doorposts” of the house or on “your gates” i.e., displayed visibly in our houses or by the shows we watch, books or magazines we read, or music we play or listen to.
- Fathers should be the “high priest” of their home. He is the spiritual leader and the spiritual head of the family. We see in Scripture that God holds fathers accountable for their children.
- A father’s first responsibility is to acquaint his children with Scripture. The means and methods that fathers may use to teach God’s truth will vary. As the father is faithful in role modelling, what children learn about God will put them in good standing throughout their earthly lives, no matter what they do or where they go. *

* [https:// www.gotquestions.org/ fathers-Christian.html](https://www.gotquestions.org/fathers-Christian.html)

A HIGH PRIEST

- A father instructs his children in the ways of God. God said of Abraham:
 - “For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him.” (Gen 18:19)
- We are commanded to teach both our children and grand-children.
 - Deut 4:9 Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.



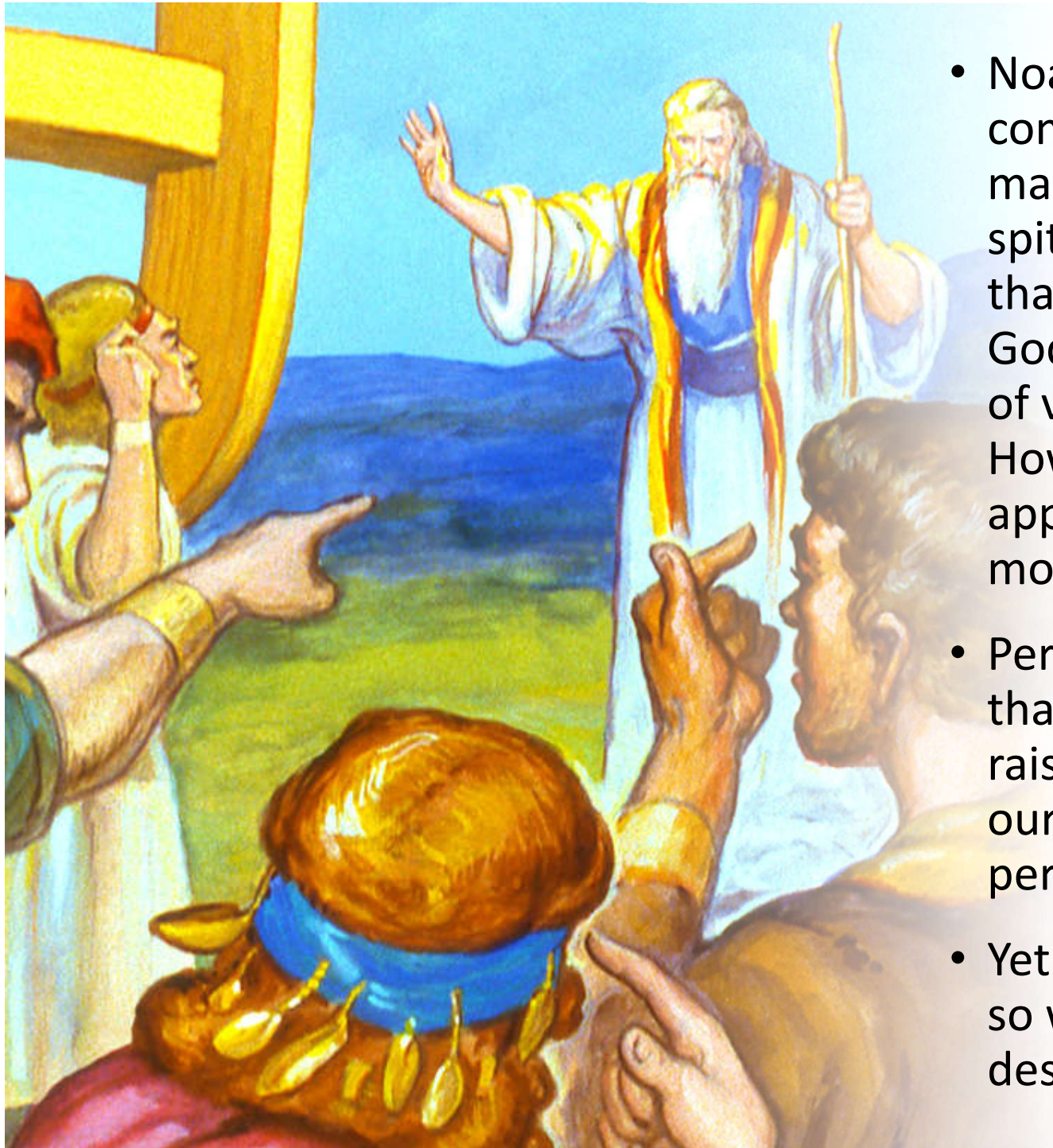
NOAH

- At first, Noah appears to have been the most unsuccessful preacher ever – he seemingly had no converts!
- Yet in a wicked world that was unresponsive to his preaching, his family responded to his message and served God. Unlike many of the righteous men in the Bible, whose children didn't follow their example, in this aspect Noah stands out.

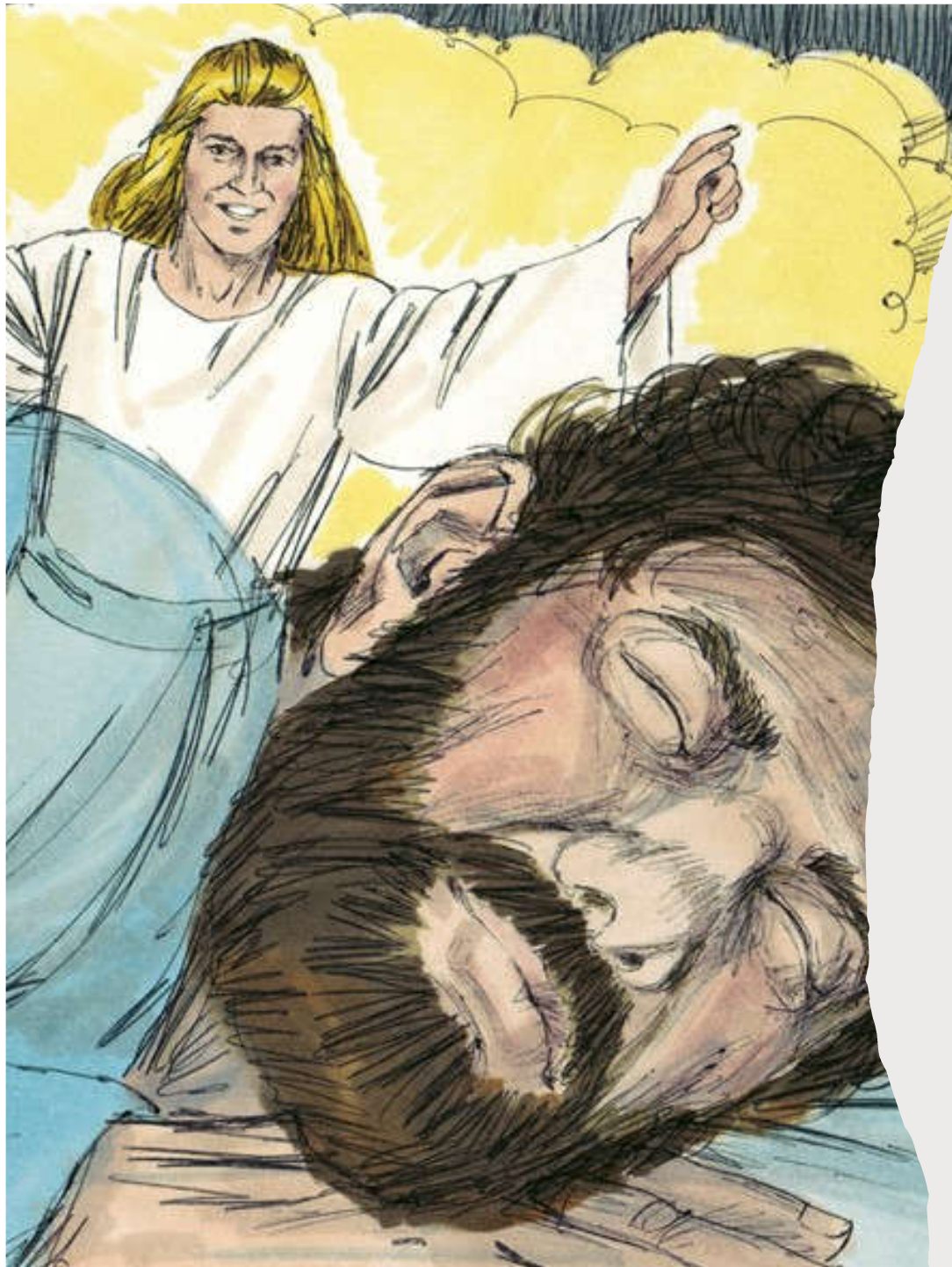
NOAH

- Noah faithfully followed his convictions. Despite opposition and ridicule, he bravely carried out the work God assigned to him, assisted by his sons who learnt from his godly example.





- Noah can also be commended out as a man who served God in spite of living in a world that “was corrupt in God’s sight and was full of violence” (Gen 6:11). How relevant and applicable this is to our modern world.
- Perhaps you may think that it is impossible to raise godly children in our current godless and permissive society.
- Yet Noah did in a world so wicked that God destroyed it.

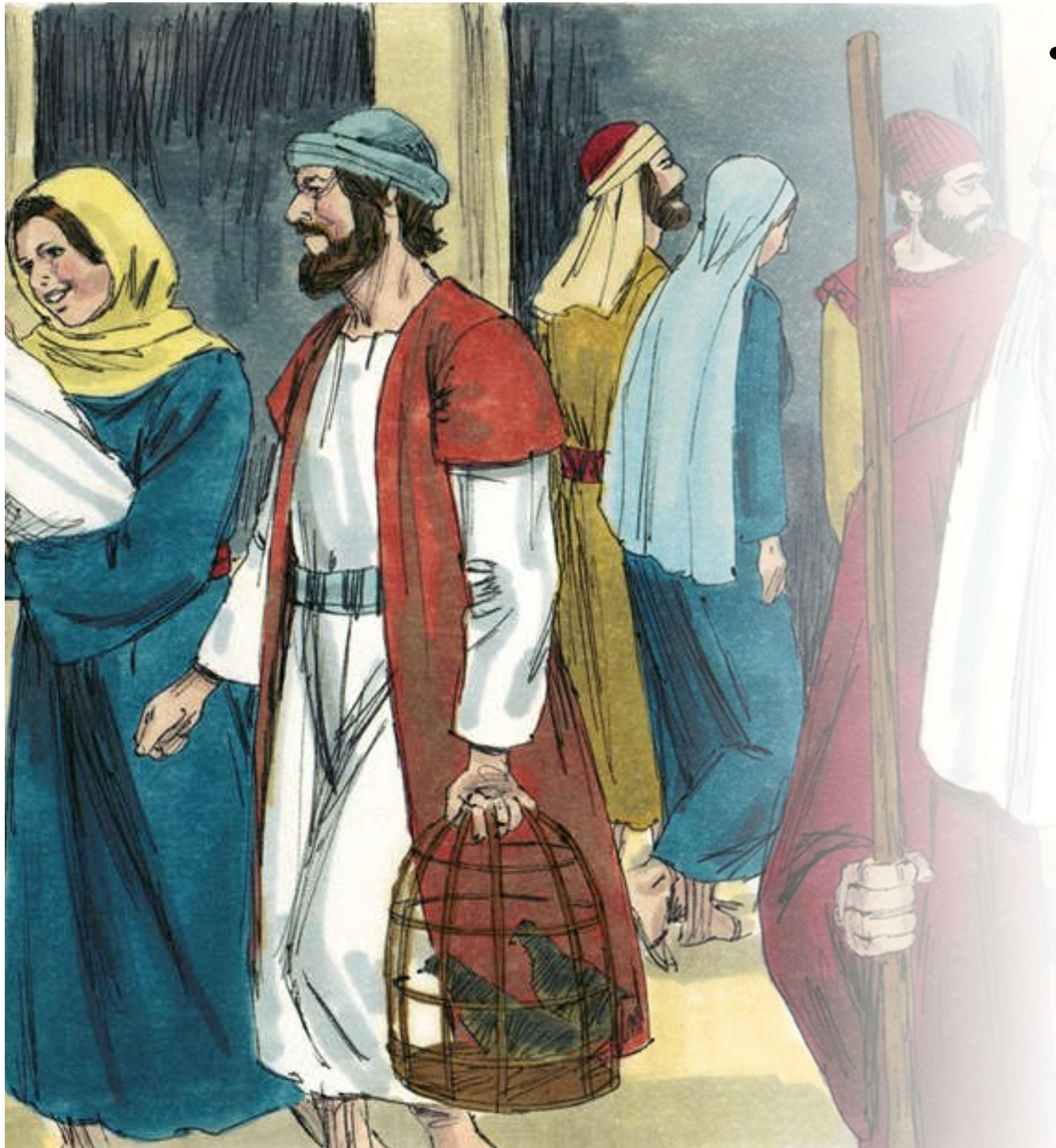


JOSEPH

- Probably one of the most underrated fathers in Scripture must be Joseph, the stepfather of Jesus.
- Matthew calls him “a righteous man” (Matt 1:19). On numerous occasions God gave him direction by means of dreams and he always obeyed God’s instruction.

- He protected his wife Mary and his child from scandal (Luke 1:19) and this also may have motivated him to later relocate to Nazareth, besides the threat from Herod.
- When his son's life was in danger he had moved to another country (Egypt) to protect his son and wife (Luke 2:14-15).

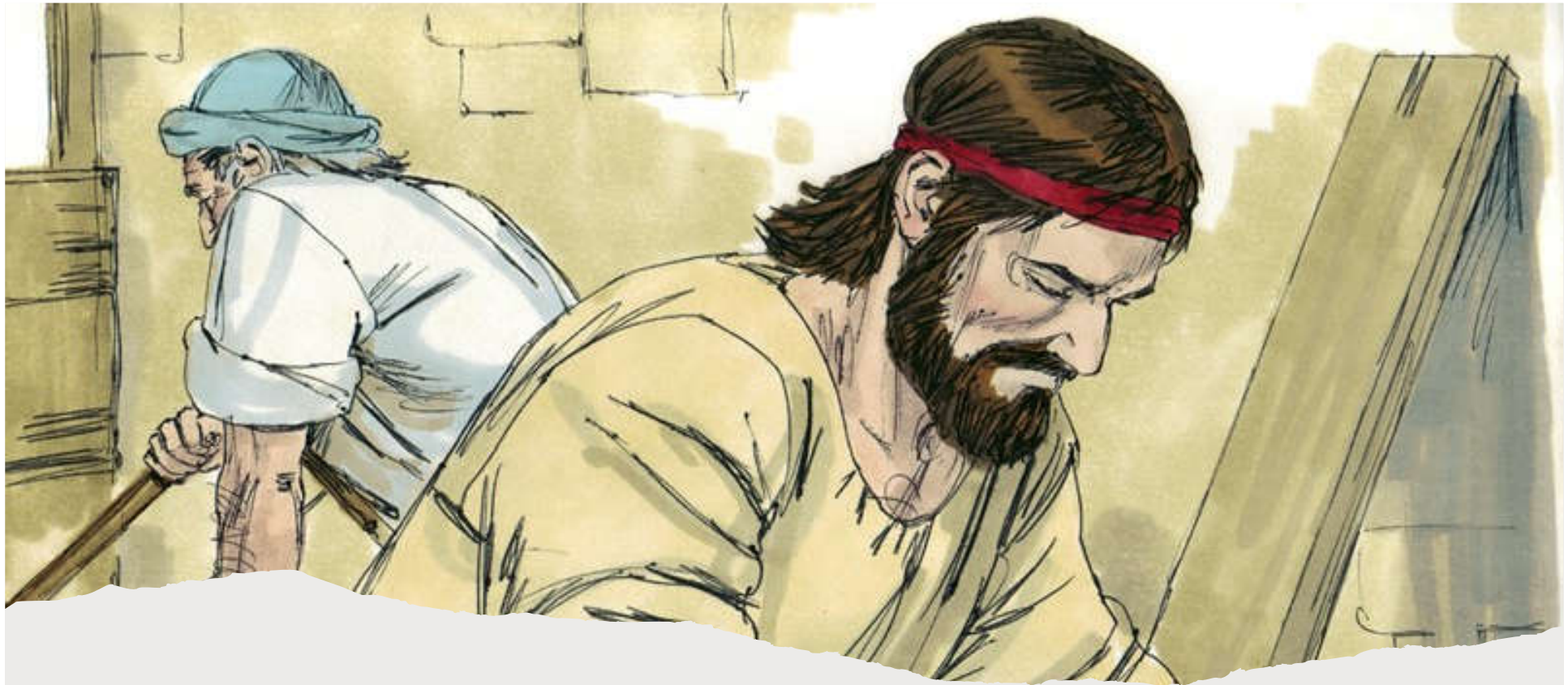




- Joseph set a godly example. He did everything required by the Law in terms of the consecration of the firstborn child.
- Luke 2:39 (NIV)
When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.



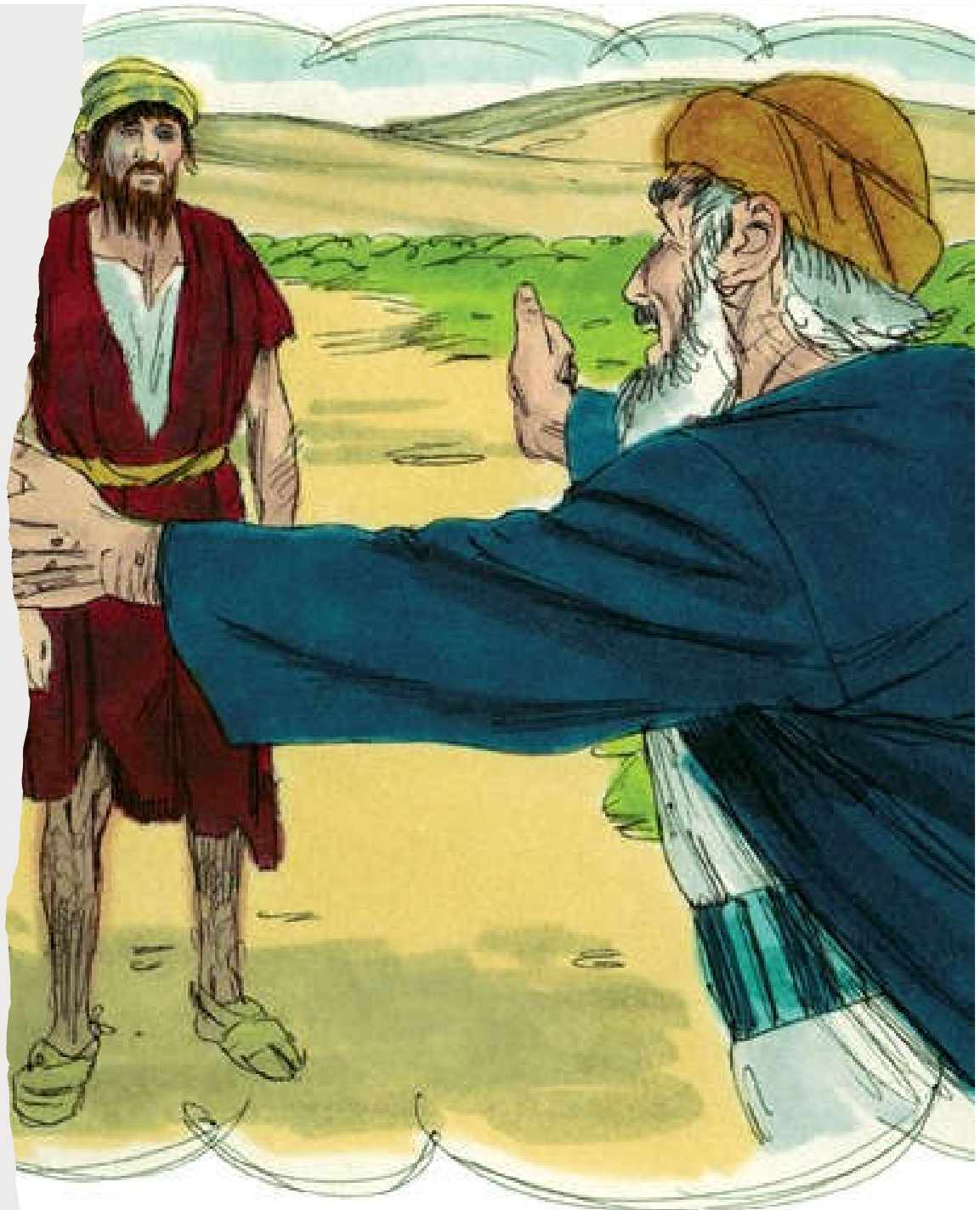
- He was concerned about his son's safety. When the 12-year old Jesus went missing in Jerusalem, on finding Jesus, Mary says "Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." (Luke 2:48)
- Joseph would have seen to Jesus' education and needs as he was growing up. He and Mary would have maintained discipline in their home because the boy Jesus "was obedient to them" (Luke 2:51).



- The Bible calls Joseph a carpenter (Matt 13:55) but Jesus is also called the carpenter (Mark 6:3). So Joseph taught his son the carpentry trade and thus the value of earning a living by hard work to provide for your family. *
- Jesus spoke of his heavenly Father providing for his children in their needs for food and clothing (Matt 6:25-26).

* Scripture implies that after the death of Joseph, Jesus was supporting his mother, as on the cross he committed her to the care of John (John 19:26).

- Often Jesus used the father-son analogy as a positive teaching example. He noted that earthly fathers, despite being sinful, loved to bless their children with good gifts and grant their requests (Matt 7:9-10).
- He used the love of an earthly father for a wayward son as an example of God's love for the sinner in his parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15).



DISCIPLINE

- It seems we have a lot of examples of godly men who were not particularly good fathers. Rather than disciplining and correcting their children, many of them were too lenient and ended up spoiling their children.
- It is a tricky balance that fathers have to achieve. Paul cautions that going to the other extreme of being an extreme disciplinarian is also unwise.
 - Eph 6:4 (NIV) Fathers, **do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.**

DISCIPLINE

- The negative part of this verse indicates that a father is not to foster negativity in his children by severity, injustice, partiality, or unreasonable exercise of authority. Harsh, unreasonable conduct towards a child will only serve to nurture evil in the heart. The word “provoke” means “to irritate, exasperate, rub the wrong way, or incite.” This is done by a wrong spirit and wrong methods—severity, unreasonableness, sternness, harshness, cruel demands, needless restrictions, and selfish insistence upon dictatorial authority. Such provocation will produce adverse reactions, deadening children’s affection, reducing their desire for holiness, and making them feel that they cannot possibly please their parents. A wise parent seeks to make obedience desirable and attainable by love and gentleness. →

DISCIPLINE

← The positive part of Ephesians 6:4 is expressed in a comprehensive direction—educate them, bring them up, develop their conduct in all of life by the instruction and admonition of the Lord. This is the whole process of educating and discipline. The word “admonition” carries the idea of reminding the child of faults (constructively) and duties (responsibilities). *

- Discipline is a sign of sonship and an indication of love on the parents’ part. Lack of discipline shows indifference.
 - Heb 12:7-8 (NIV) Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.

* [https:// www.gotquestions.org/ fathers-Christian.html](https://www.gotquestions.org/fathers-Christian.html)

- Fair consistent discipline, despite being painful, trains the child to live in righteousness and peace and it results in respect for the parents.
- Heb 12:9-11 (NIV) Moreover, we have all had **human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it**. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but **painful**. Later on, however, **it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace** for those who have been **trained** by it.

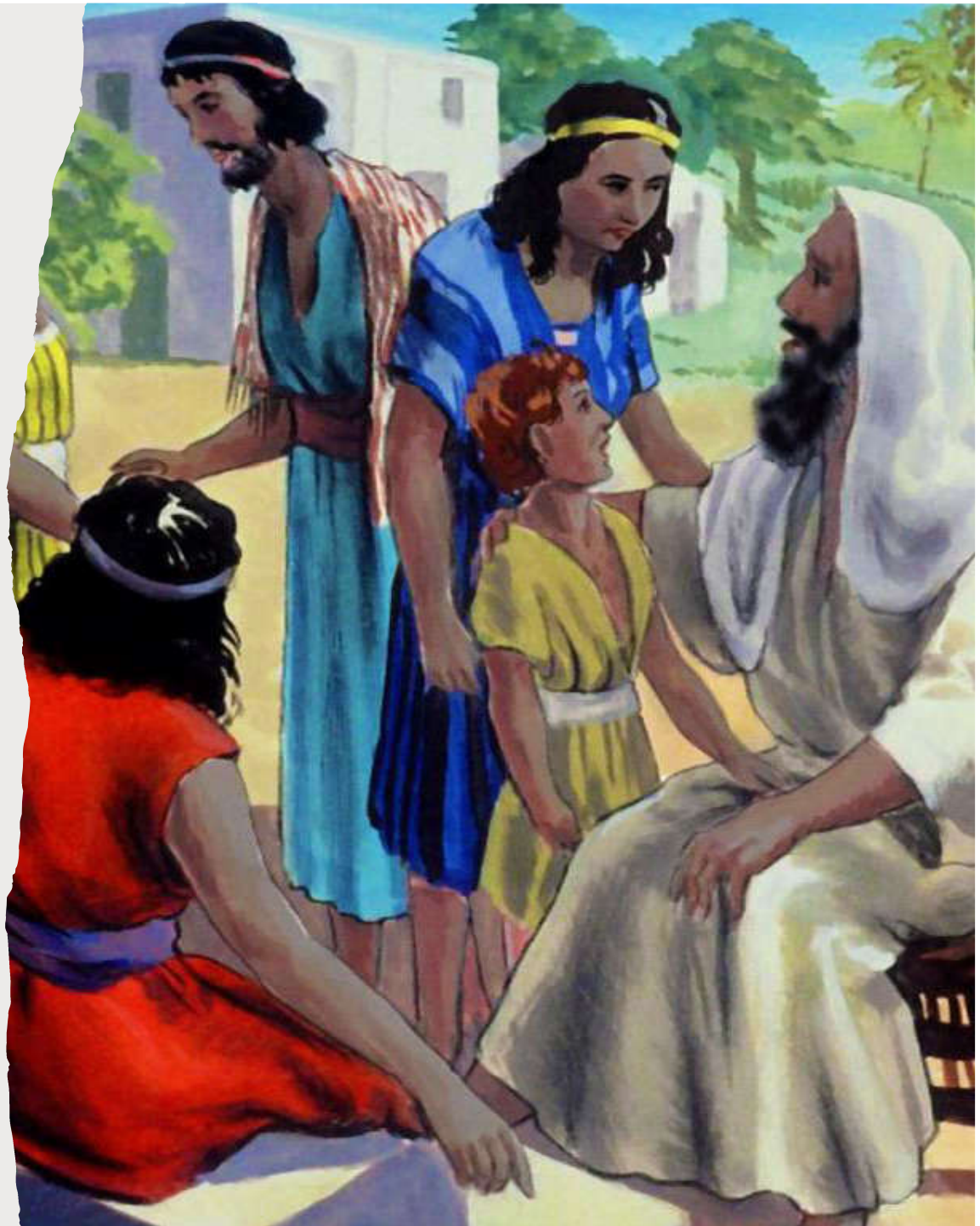
EXAMPLE

- Children imitate the actions of their parents.
 - Eph 5:1 (NASB)
Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children
- So the best way to lead is by example. Don't tell children, "Do as I say, don't do as I do". Paul said, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." (1 Cor 11:1, NIV)



JOB

- Job was “blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1), but he also was a good father.
- He was involved with his children socially when they had their regular feasts.



- But he also regularly prayed and interceded for his children regularly.
- Job 1:5 (NIV) When a period of feasting had run its course, Job would send and have them purified. Early in the morning he would sacrifice a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, “Perhaps my children have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.” This was Job’s regular custom.



- Job also treated his daughters and his sons equally. Remember that Job was the oldest book in the Bible. Yet in what was extremely uncommon in those days, he granted his three daughters an inheritance along with his sons. Rather unusually as well, only his daughters names are mentioned, not his sons.

- Job 42:13-15 (NIV) And he also had seven sons and three daughters. The first daughter he named Jemimah, the second Keziah and the third Keren-Happuch. Nowhere in all the land were there found women as beautiful as Job's daughters, and their father granted them an inheritance along with their brothers.

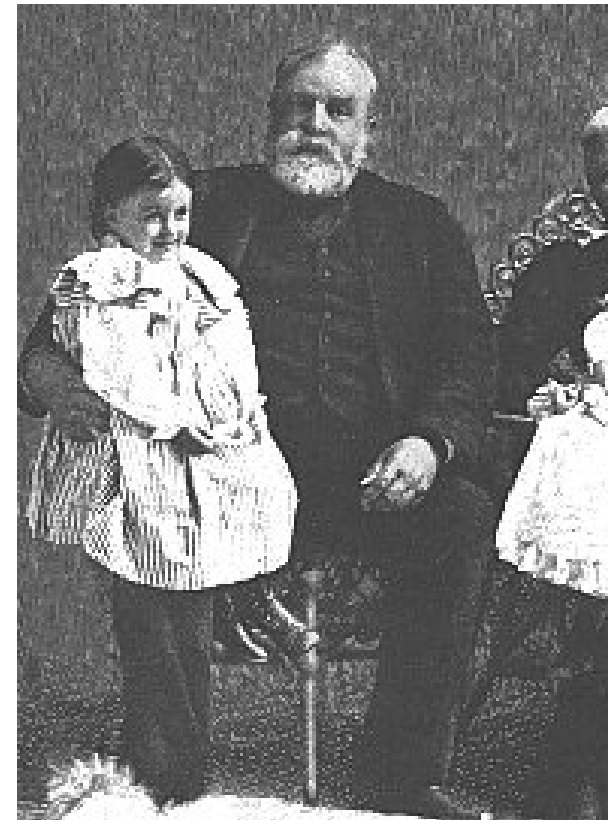


D. L. MOODY

- One of the anecdotes Moody shared is this story regarding his daughter Emma-

I remember one time my little girl was teasing her mother to get her a muff (*a handwarmer*), and so one day her mother brought a muff home, and, although it was storming, she very naturally wanted to go out in order to try her new muff. So she tried to get me to go out with her. *

* [https:// moodycenter.org/ articles/ fathers-protection-stories-d-l-moody/](https://moodycenter.org/articles/fathers-protection-stories-d-l-moody/)



D.L. MOODY AND A
GRANDDAUGHTER

D. L. MOODY

- I went out with her, and I said, “Emma, better let me take your hand.” She wanted to keep her hands in her muff, and so she refused to take my hand. Well, by and by she came to an icy place, her little feet slipped, and down she went.
- When I helped her up she said, “Papa, you may give me your little finger.”
- “No, my daughter, just take my hand.”
“No, no, papa, give me your little finger.”

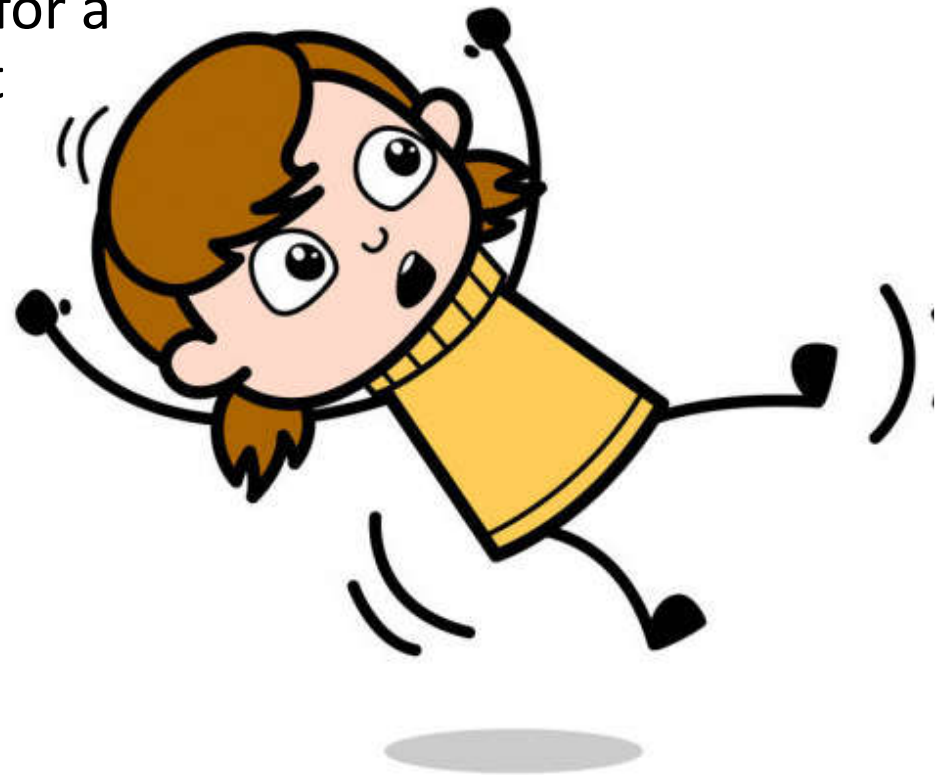
* Ibid.



D. L. MOODY

- Well, I gave my finger to her, and for a little way she got along nicely, but pretty soon we came to another icy place, and again she fell. This time she hurt herself a little, and she said, “Papa, give me your hand,” and I gave her my hand, and closed my fingers about her wrist, and held her up so that she could not fall. Just so **God is our keeper. He is wiser than we.** *

* Ibid.



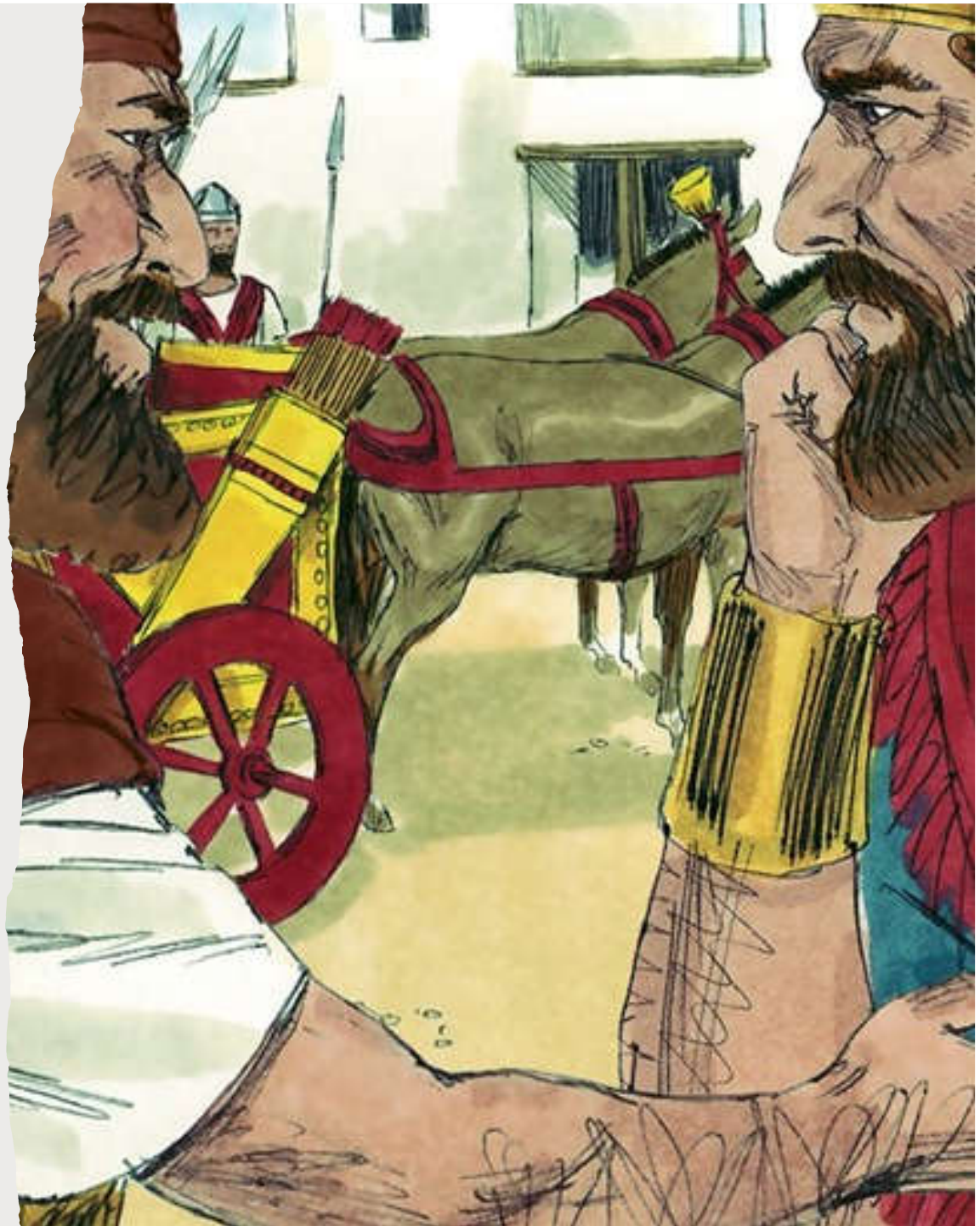
GOD OUR KEEPER

- I know many who struggle with the idea of God as Father. Their own parents have greatly wronged them, and God as Father does not strike a trustworthy image. However, that is the beauty of our broken human lives- God was sent to redeem what the world has broken, and part of that starts with Him as a good Father. He is there to heal the pain and fill the voids of what was lost. *
- One of the ultimate blessings of God as Father is that He is wiser. Our earthly perspective limits us, and we often get stuck on the “Why would God do this?” Yet there is peace in that God is wiser than us and works in ways we do not understand. A God who shares our IQ would not be much of God. Let us turn our questions from “Why, God?” to “What are You doing?” and seek to draw near to Him, even in the storms. *

* Moody Centre, 7 Sept 2017

JONADAB

- Jonadab was a good father in the Bible, but chances are you've probably never heard of him.
- Although he was not an Israelite, he supported the righteous Jehu in the elimination of the house of Ahab and in suppression of Baal worship throughout Samaria. (2 Kings 10:15-16)



- Jonadab was a father whose children respected and obeyed him even generations after he was gone. Not many fathers command and obtain such respect today.

- Jonadab instructed his children never to drink wine and, not only did they obey him, they passed his command on to the future generations.

— Jer 35:5-8 (NIV) Then I set bowls full of wine and some cups before the men of the Recabite family and said to them, “Drink some wine.” But they replied, “We do not drink wine, because our forefather Jonadab... gave us this command: ‘Neither you nor your descendants must ever drink wine... We have obeyed everything our forefather Jonadab... commanded us. Neither we nor our wives nor our sons and daughters have ever drunk wine...’”



JONADAB

- Jeremiah used their obedience to reprove the people of Judah.
- Jer 35:13-15 (NIV) ... “Will you not learn a lesson and obey my words?” declares the LORD. “Jonadab son of Recab ordered his sons not to drink wine and this command has been kept. To this day they do not drink wine, because they obey their forefather’s command. But I have spoken to you again and again, yet you have not obeyed me. Again and again I sent all my servants the prophets to you. They said, ‘Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and reform your actions; do not follow other gods to serve them. Then you will live in the land I have given to you and your fathers.’ But you have not paid attention or listened to me.”

A GODLY HERITAGE

- God blessed these people, who had treated the words of their forefather as an eternal covenant, with the promise that they would always have a godly lineage.

- Jer 35:18-19 (NIV) Then Jeremiah said to the family of the Recabites, "... 'You have obeyed the command of your forefather Jonadab and have followed all his instructions and have done everything he ordered.' Therefore, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: 'Jonadab son of Recab will never fail to have a man to serve me.'"





DIRECTION

- Fathers give direction to their children.
 - Psalm 127:4 (NIV) **Like arrows** in the hands of a warrior **are children** born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.
- The course of an arrow is determined by the archer. Likewise, a father and mother give their children direction to guide them in the decisions and life choices they make. Once the arrow has left the bow, we no longer have any control over it and ultimately other things (like the wind) might affect where the arrow falls.



DIRECTION

- But we have to at least aim for a godly target and point them in the right direction.
- Likewise eventually as our children get older we will have to relinquish control. But we need to make sure that we have set them on a godly course to start off with.
- Often the arrow misses the target because it wasn't aimed correctly in the first place.

DIRECTION

- Prov 22:6
(**NASB**) Train up
a child in the
way he should
go, Even when
he is old he will
not depart from
it.
- **NIV:** Start
children off on
the way they
should go, and
even when they
are old they will
not turn from it.



A GODLY HERITAGE

- Like Jonadab, the best inheritance you can leave your children is a godly heritage.
 - Prov 20:7 (ESV) The righteous who walks in his integrity—
blessed are his children after him!
 - Ps 37:18 (ESV) The LORD knows the days of the blameless, and
their heritage will remain forever
 - Isa 38:19 (ESV) The living, the living, he thanks you, as I do this
day; the father makes known to the children your faithfulness.
- John writes of his spiritual children:
 - 3 John 1:4 (ESV) I have no greater joy than to hear that my
children are walking in the truth.

LEGACY - Nichole Nordeman

I want to leave a legacy,
How will they remember me?
Did I choose to love?
Did I point to you enough
to make a mark on things?
I want to leave an offering
A child of mercy and grace
who blessed your name
unapologetically
And leave that kind of legacy.

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Gavin Paynter

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