

“If only I were king,” thought Absalom, son of King David. Absalom was very proud of his good looks.

He wanted to take his father’s place as king; he got up in the morning and stood on the side of the road, next to the palace door, and asked everyone who came to appear before the king, “What town are you from?” And they would respond, “Your servant is from one of the tribes of Israel.” Absalom would then respond, “Look, your claims are valid and proper, but there is no representative of the king to hear you.” And Absalom would add, “If only I were appointed judge in the land! Then everyone who has a complaint or case could come to me and I would see that they receive justice.”

One day, Absalom asked David’s permission to go to Hebron to worship the Lord and David let him go. But in reality, Absalom didn’t want to go worship. He wanted to build a palace there, because then he would be king of Israel in place of his father.

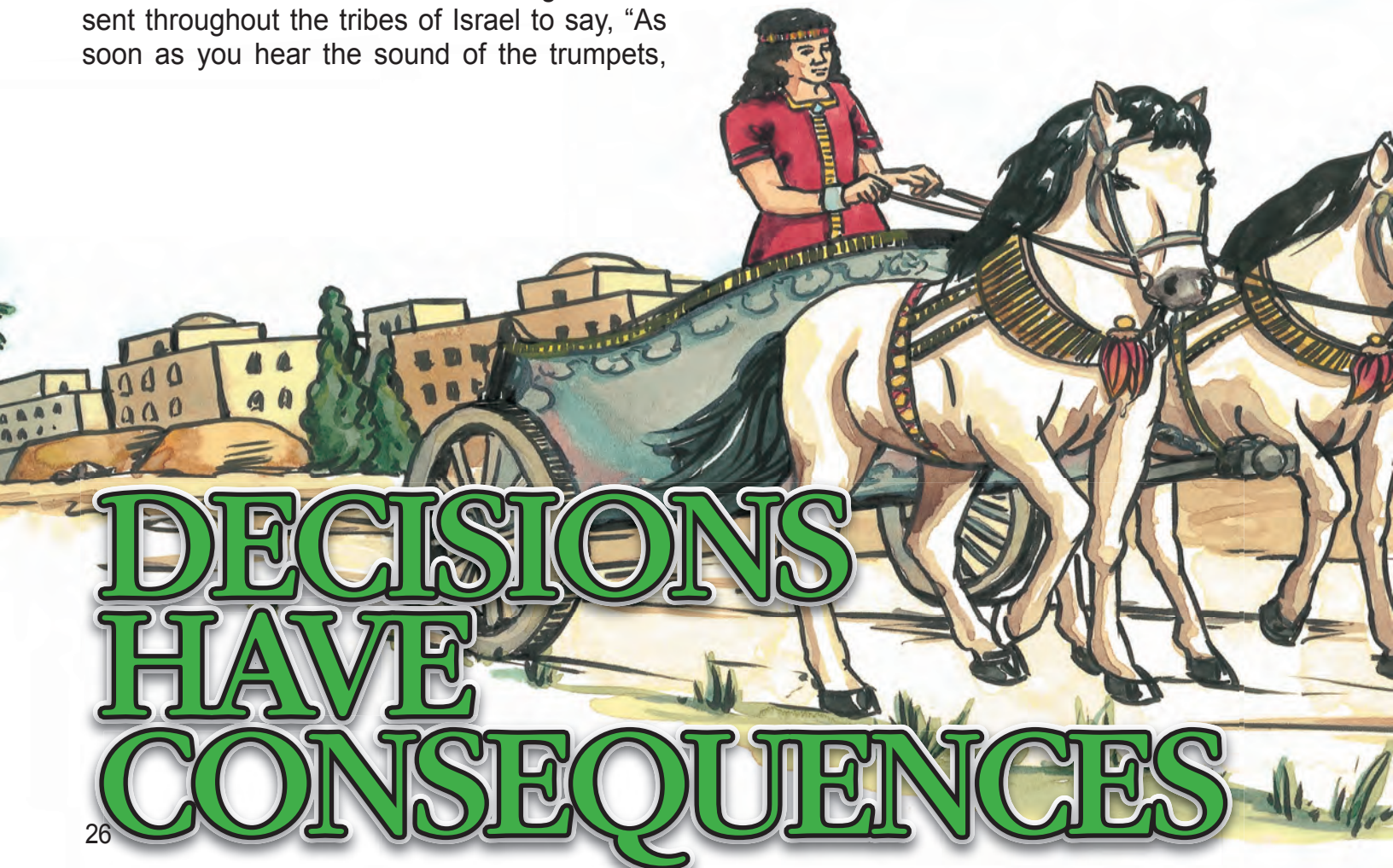
As soon as he left, secret messengers were sent throughout the tribes of Israel to say, “As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpets,

say, ‘Absalom is king in Hebron.’”

Absalom asked Ahithophel, one of David’s counselors, to help him take the throne from his father. One day, a messenger came to David and told him, “The hearts of the people of Israel are with Absalom.” So David said to all his officials who were with him in Jerusalem, “Come! We must flee, or none of us will escape from Absalom. We must leave immediately, or he will move quickly to overtake us and bring ruin on us and put the city to the sword.”

But David continued up the Mount of Olives, weeping as he went. David had been told that Ahithophel was among the conspirators, so he prayed, “Lord, turn Ahithophel’s counsel into foolishness.”

Hushai was one of the loyal counselors of David. David told Hushai to return to Jerusalem and pretend that he was with Absalom. At first, Absalom was suspicious of him, but Hushai said, “Your Majesty, I’ll be your servant. I was your father’s servant in the past, but now I’ll be



**DECISIONS
HAVE
CONSEQUENCES**