

Faith Without Favoritism

James 2:1-13
David Feddes





Favoritism's flavors

- Clothes, jewelry, looks
- Class, wealth, influence
- Ability, success, status
- Color, race, neighborhood

Faith without favoritism

My brothers, not in favoritism have
faith in Jesus Christ our Lord of glory.

- We're family in Christ. Act like it!
- A poor, despised peasant's divine
glory outshines worldly status.

My brothers

You are all brothers... The greatest among you will be your servant. (Matt 23:8, 11)

Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.
(Matthew 25:40)

Invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind. (Luke 14:13)

Lord of glory?

- Seen as bastard child of sin
- Time as refugee in foreign land
- Grew up in poor peasant family
- Nothing special to look at
- Not taught by certified teachers
- Hometown viewed as filthy hole

Lord of glory

For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing. (Deuteronomy 10:17-18)

No favoritism

God does not show favoritism.

(Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11)

There is no favoritism with him.

(Ephesians 6:9)

Do nothing out of favoritism.

(1 Timothy 5:21)

Favoritism's flaws

- Wavers between Jesus and world
- Insults God's chosen heirs
- Panders to power of bullies
- Breaks God's royal law of love

Worldly wavering

¹ My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism... ⁴ have you not discriminated [διεκρίθητε wavered, doubted] among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Worldly wavering

Double-minded: torn between Jesus' way and worldly way (1:8; 4:4, 8)

Fails three tests of religion (1:26-27)

- Manage your tongue
- Help the helpless
- Reject worldly ways

Insulting God's heirs

⁵ Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?

⁶ But you have insulted the poor.

Inherit the kingdom

The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.

Blessed are you who are poor, for
yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed
are you who hunger now, for you will
be satisfied. (Luke 4:18; 6:20-21)

Insulting God's heirs

- **God is devoted to them:** he chose the poor and made them his children and heirs of his kingdom.
- **They are devoted to God:** “rich in faith... love him.”
- **You insult them—and God!**

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Pandering to power

Is it not the rich who are exploiting you?
Are they not the ones who are dragging
you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones
who are slandering the noble name of
him to whom you belong?

Pandering to power

- Why flatter and favor snotty snobs who rip you off?
- Why side with bullies who rig the system against you?
- Why admire and envy those who mock and curse Christ?

Favoritism's flaws

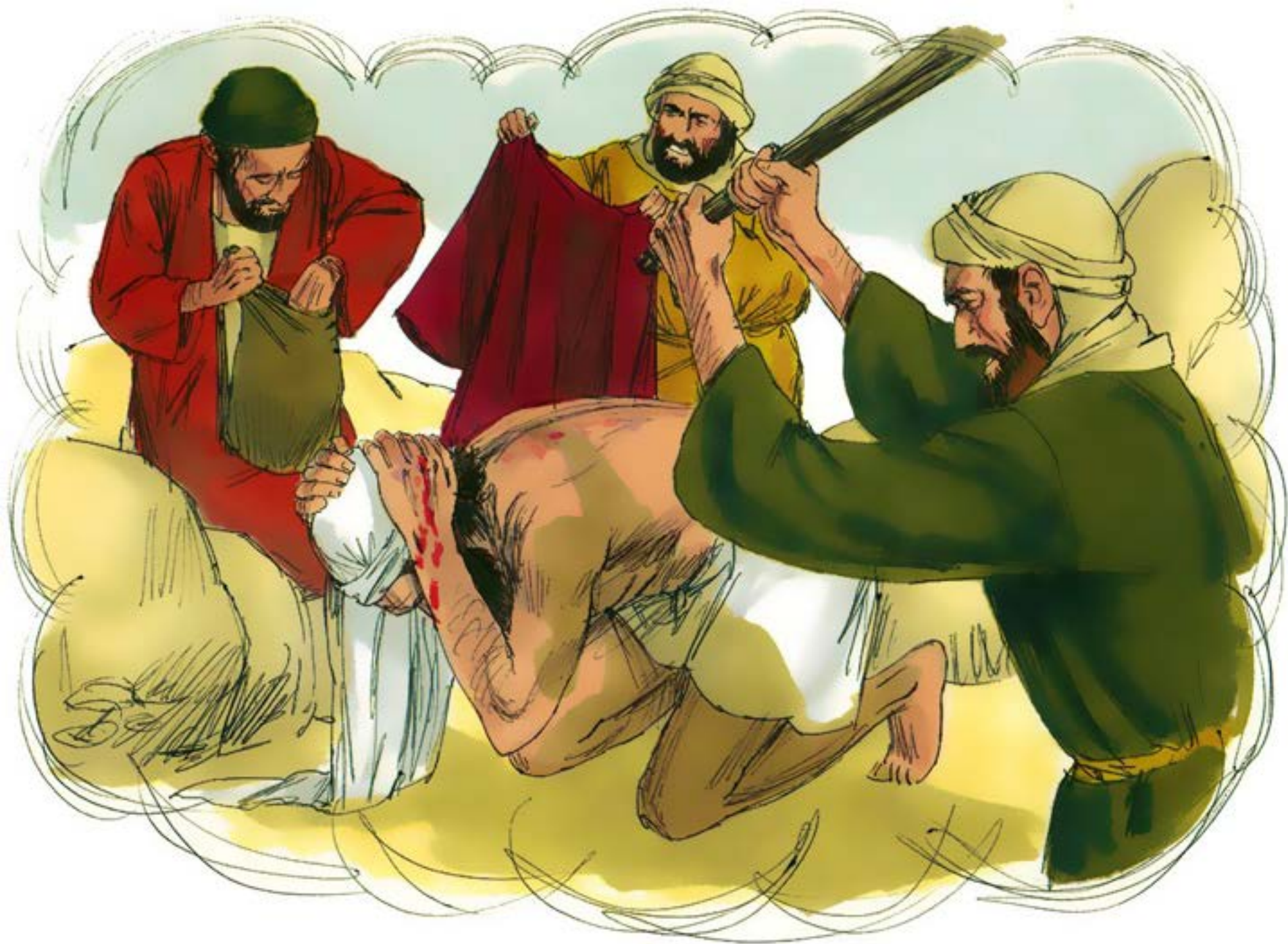
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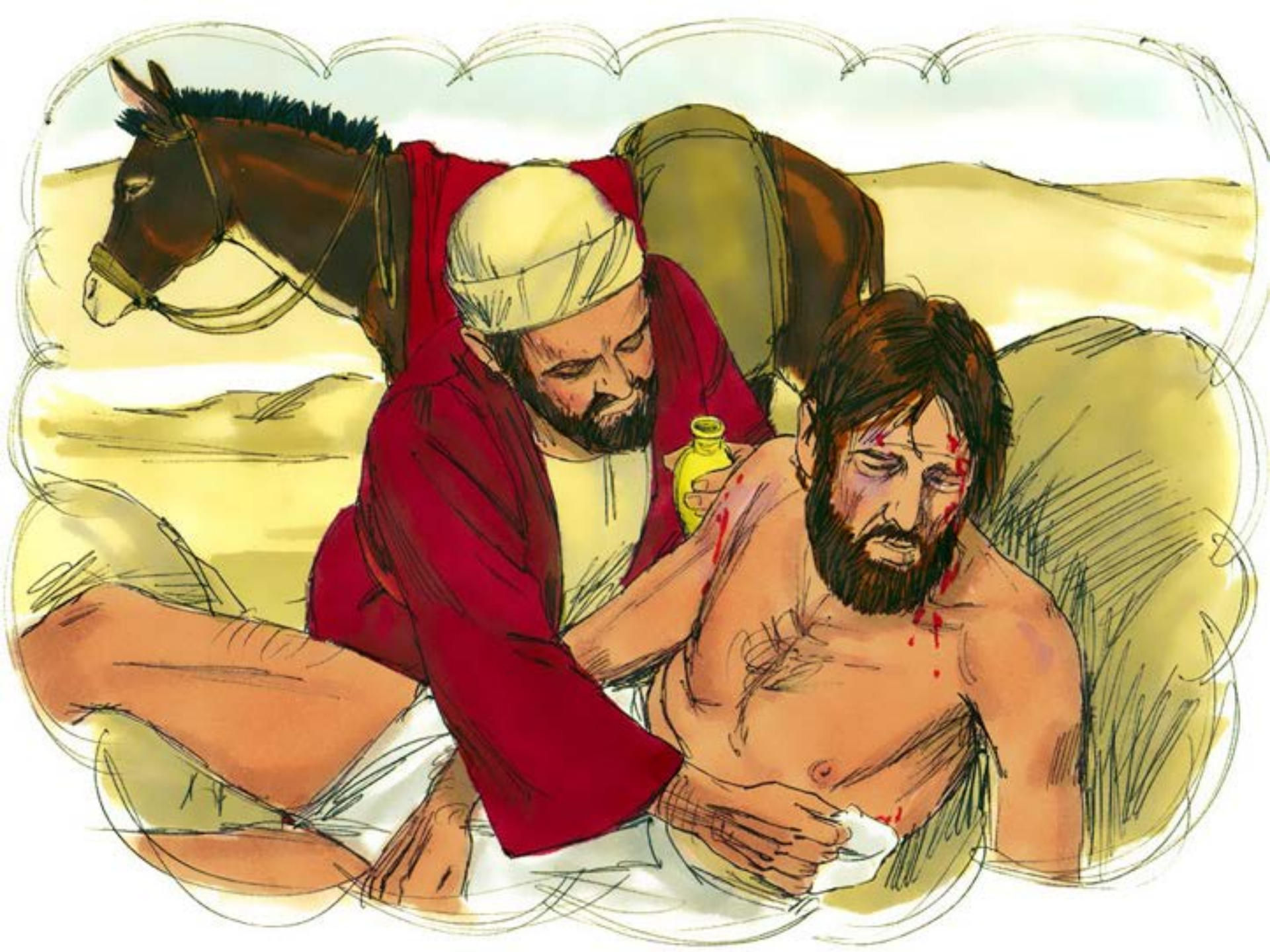
Breaking God's law

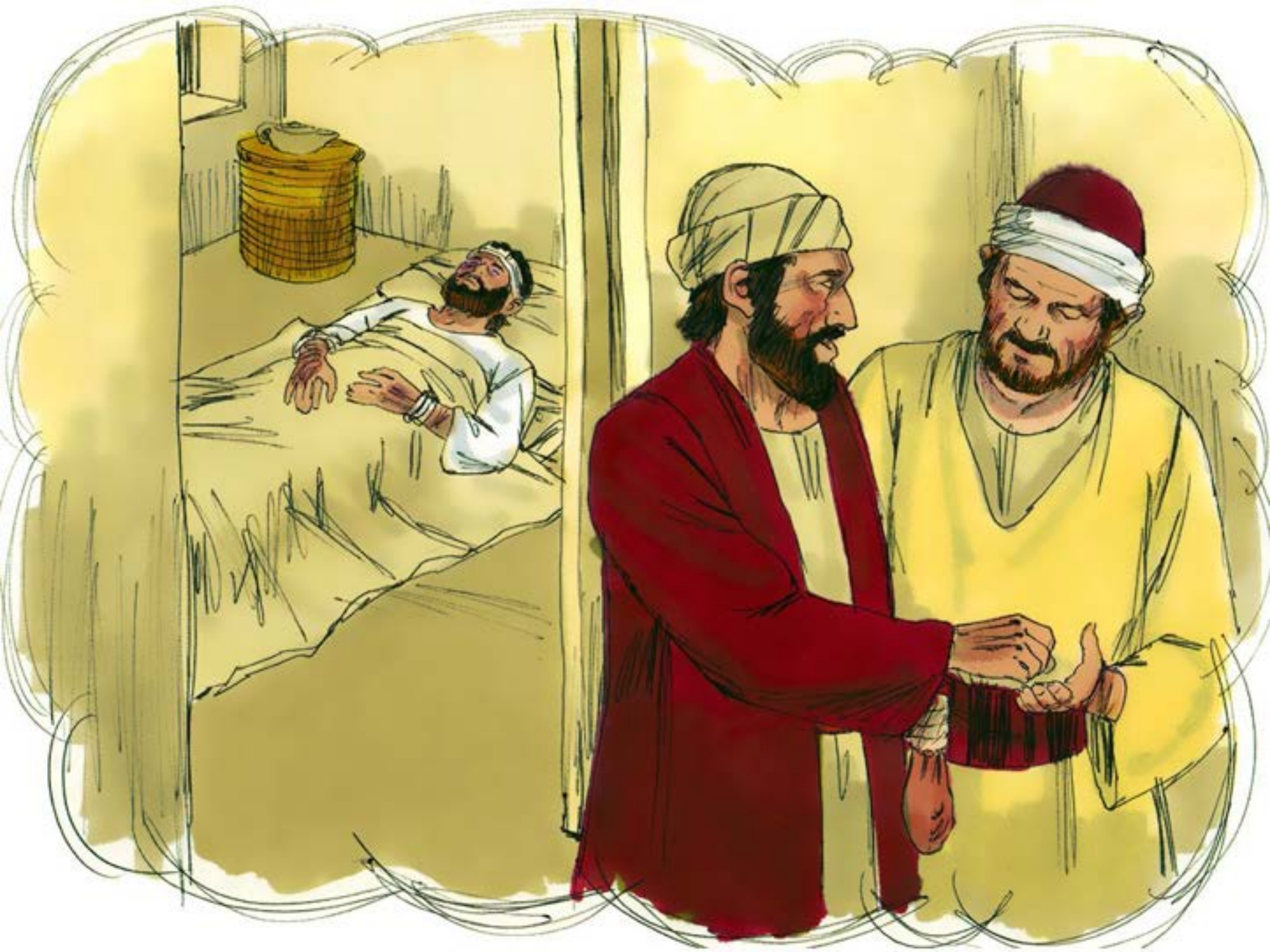
⁸ If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. ⁹ But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

Love, not favoritism

Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly... love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD. (Leviticus 19:15, 18)







Lawbreaker

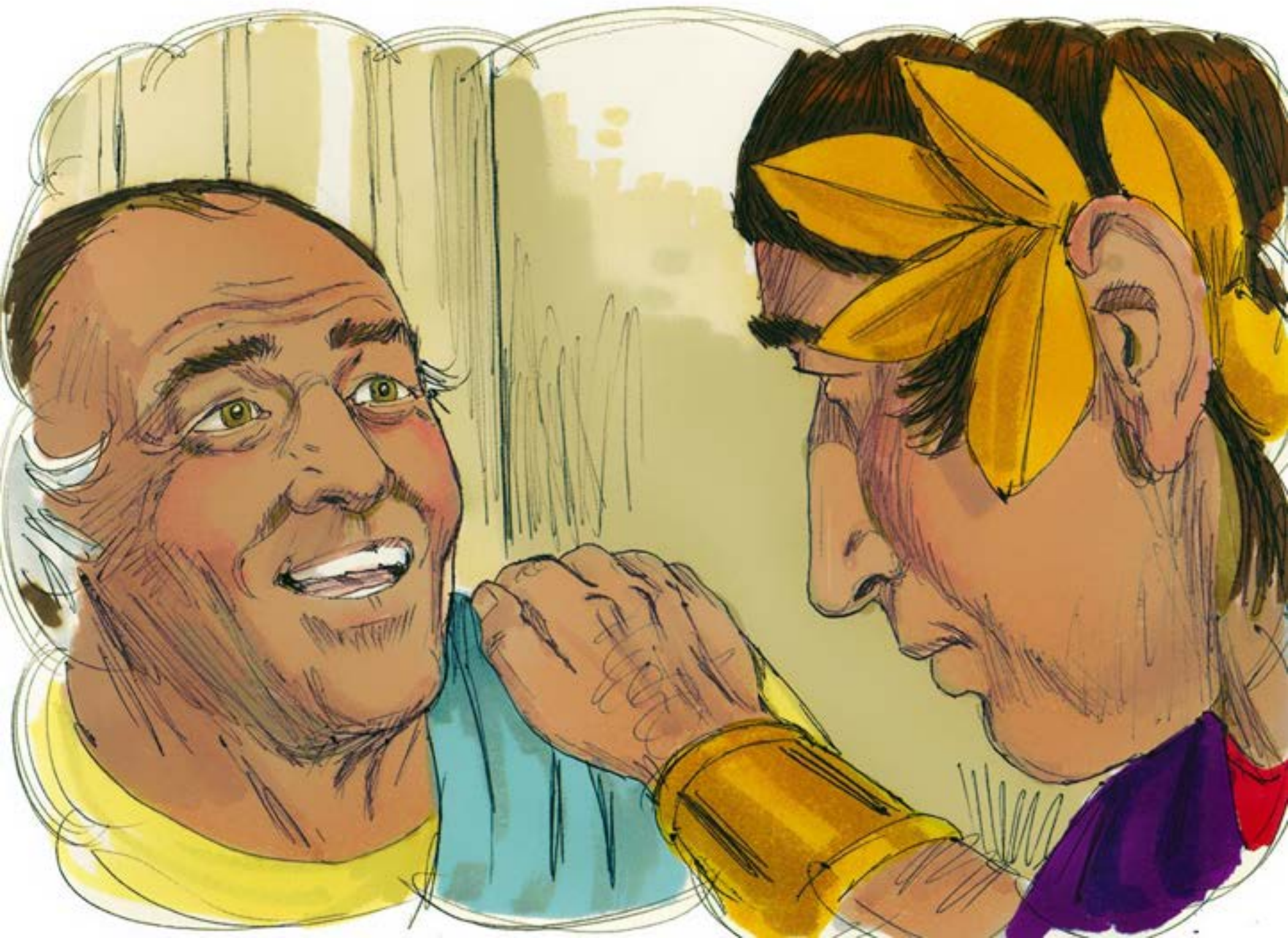
¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

Mercy or judgment?

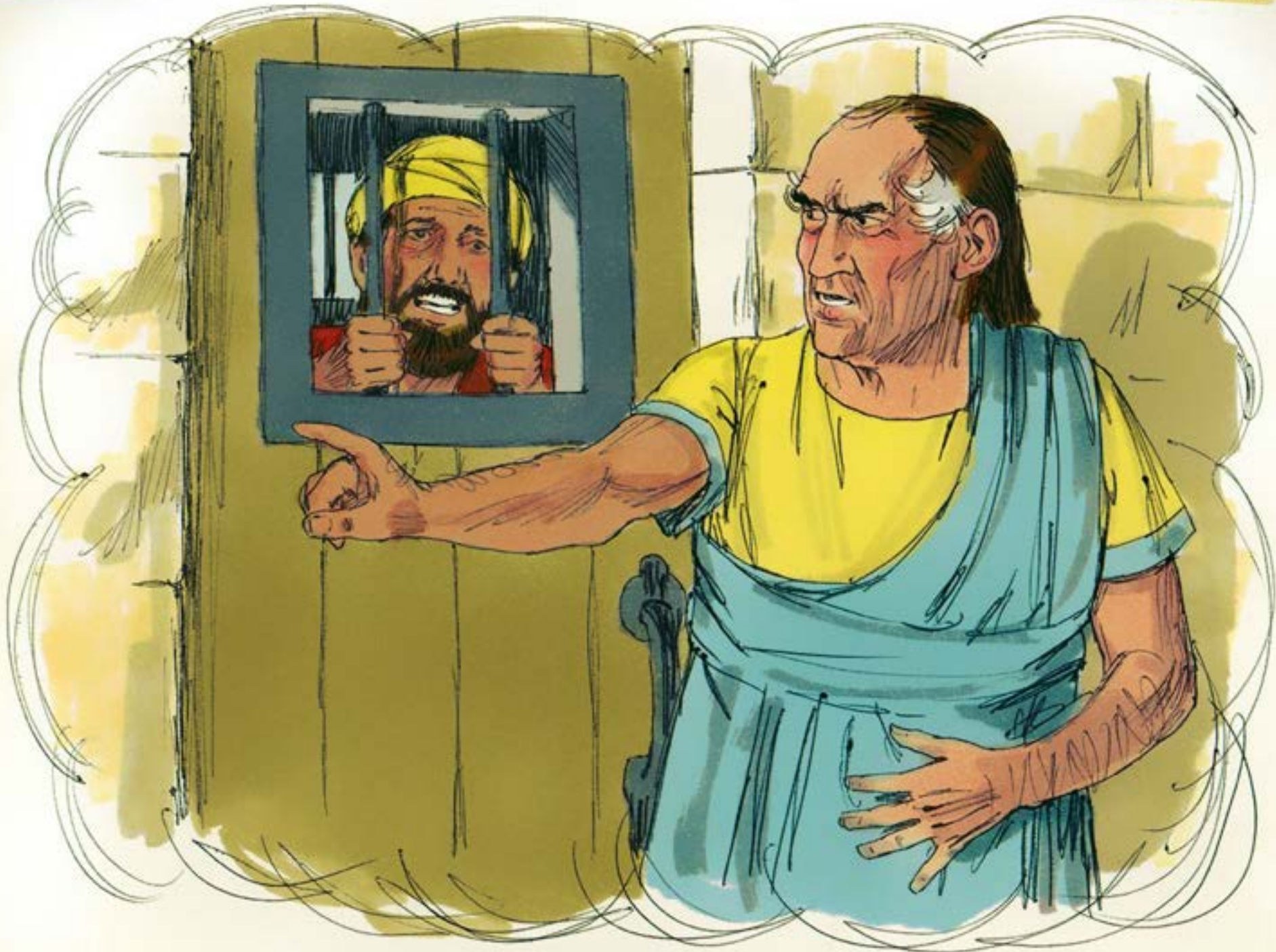
¹² Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, ¹³ because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful.

Mercy triumphs over judgment!











Law of mercy

The LORD Almighty says: “Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.” (Zechariah 7:9)

But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. (Matt 23:23)

Mercy triumphs!

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Liberating law of love

- Birth through the word of truth (1:18)
- Implanted word can save you (1:21)
- Perfect law that gives freedom (1:25)
- Royal law found in Scripture (2:8)
- Law that gives freedom (2:12)

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