

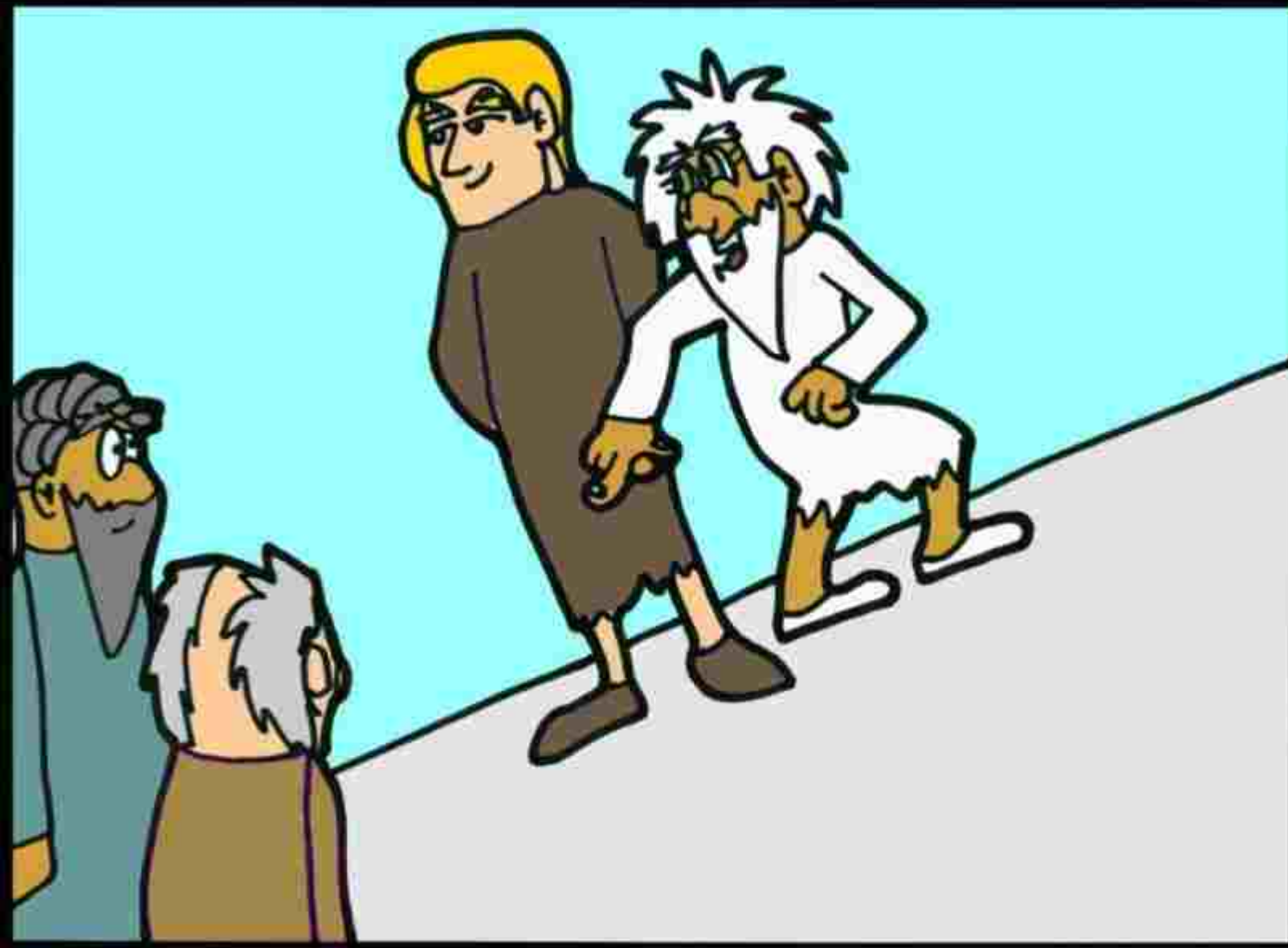
The Golden Calf

(Based on Exodus 24:12-18 and 32:1-35)

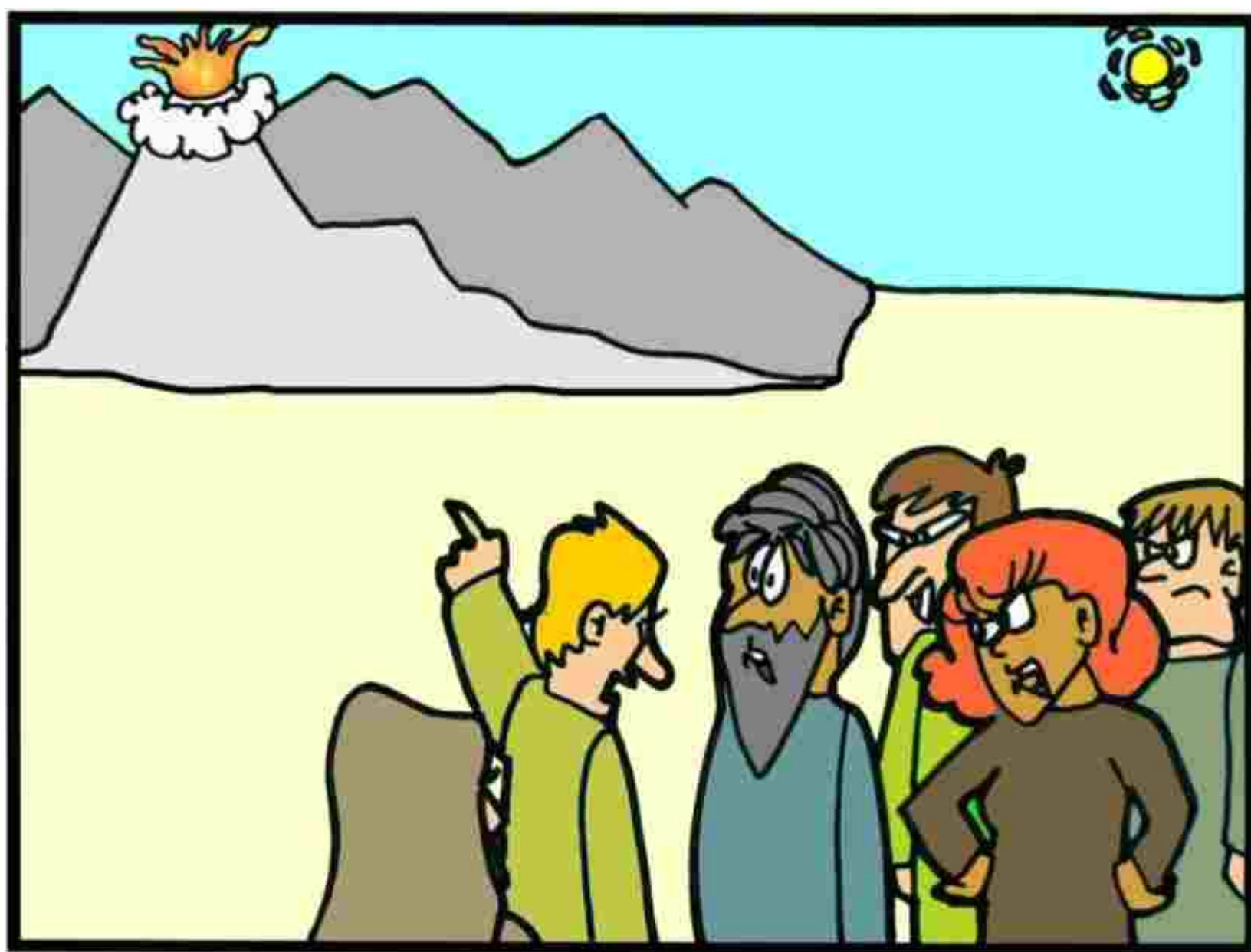
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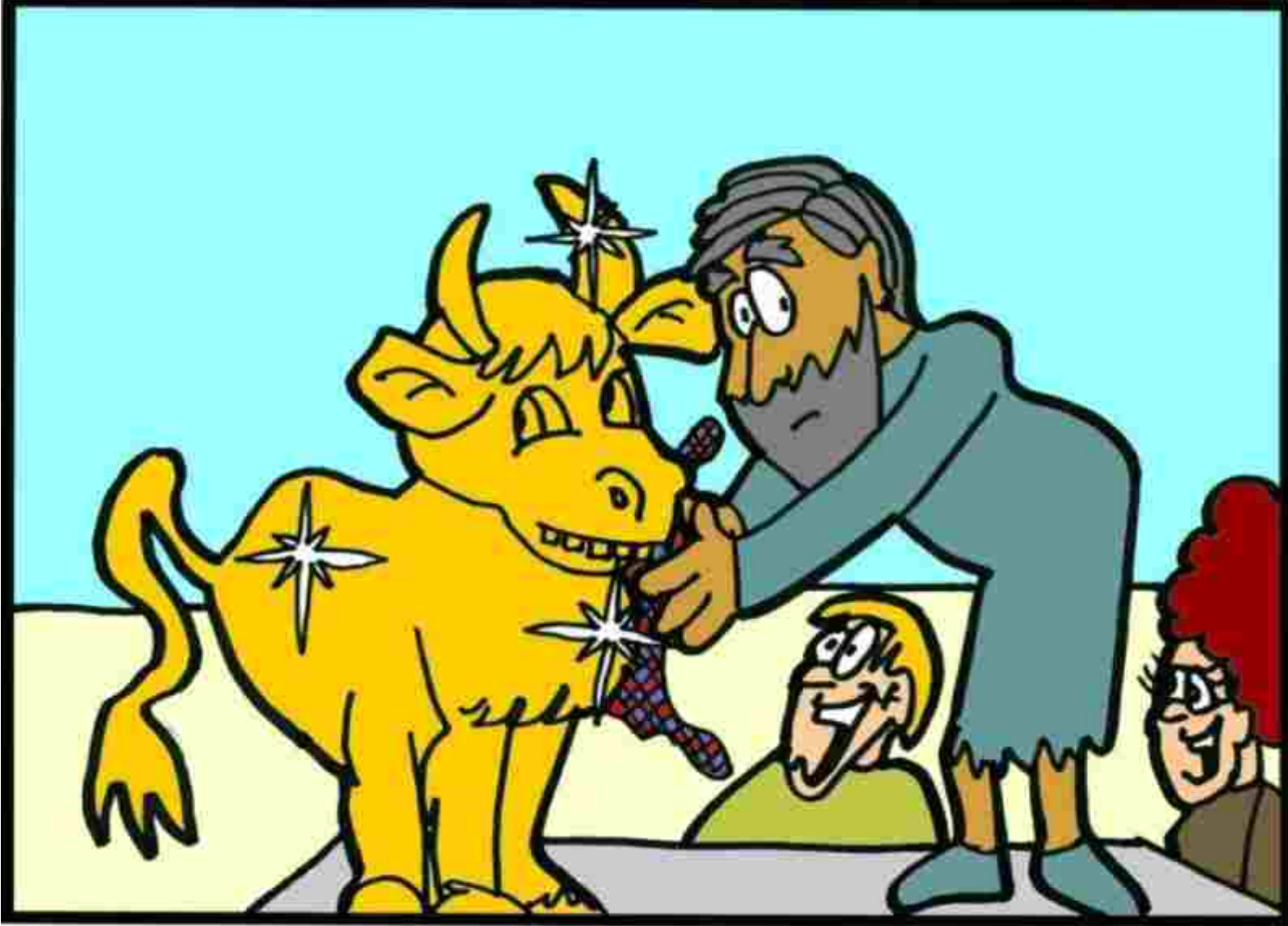
God called Moses, Aaron and seventy of the older leaders up the mountain. They saw God and they ate and drank. Then God told Moses to climb higher so that God could give to him stone slabs with the law and commandments for the people.



"Wait here for us until we come back," said Moses to Aaron and the leaders. Moses and Joshua climbed higher. The glory of God came down and it looked like fire on the mountaintop. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and nights.



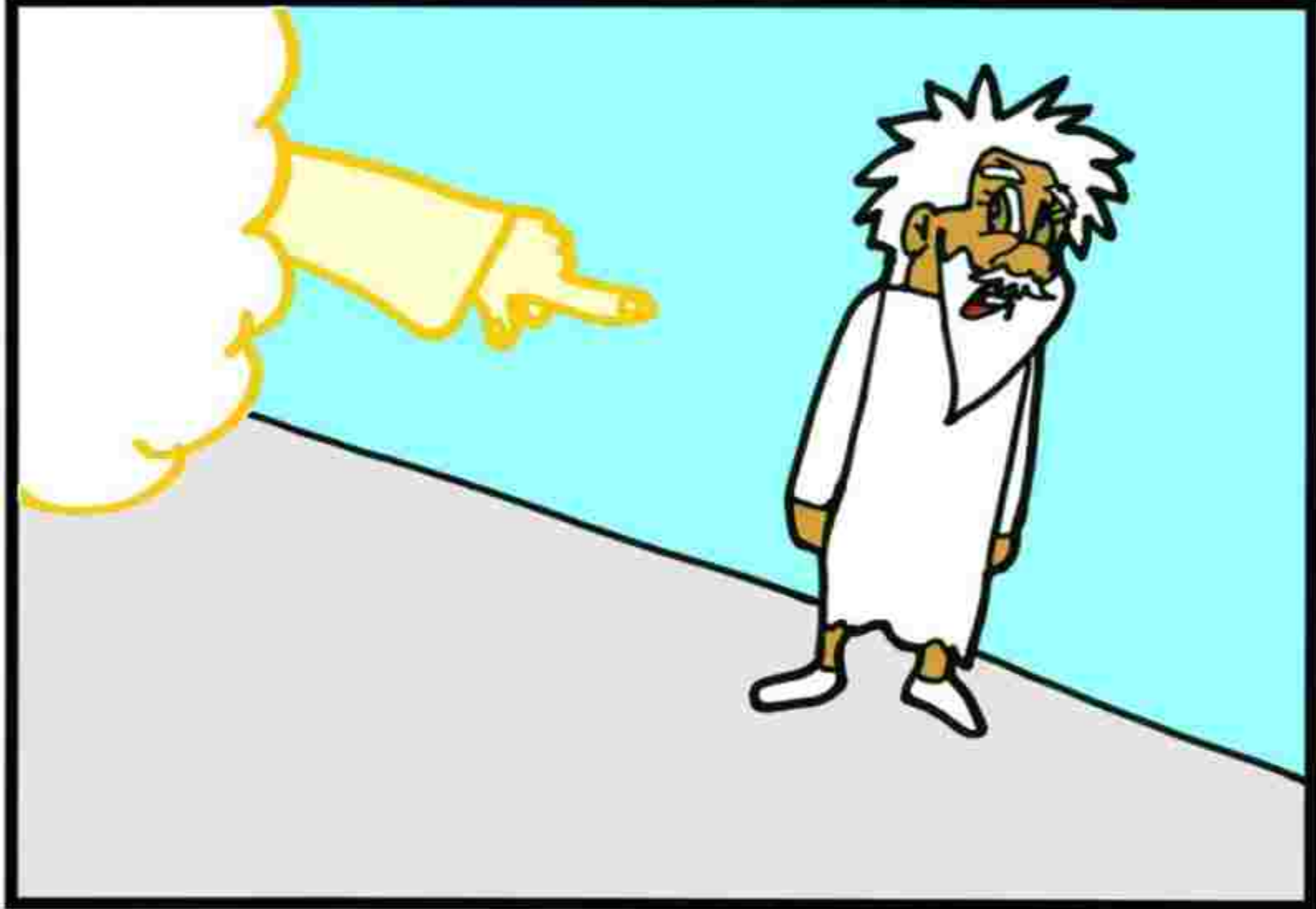
Now when the people of Israel saw that Moses was taking a long time to come down, they said to Aaron, "Make us gods that can go ahead of us because we don't know what happened to Moses."



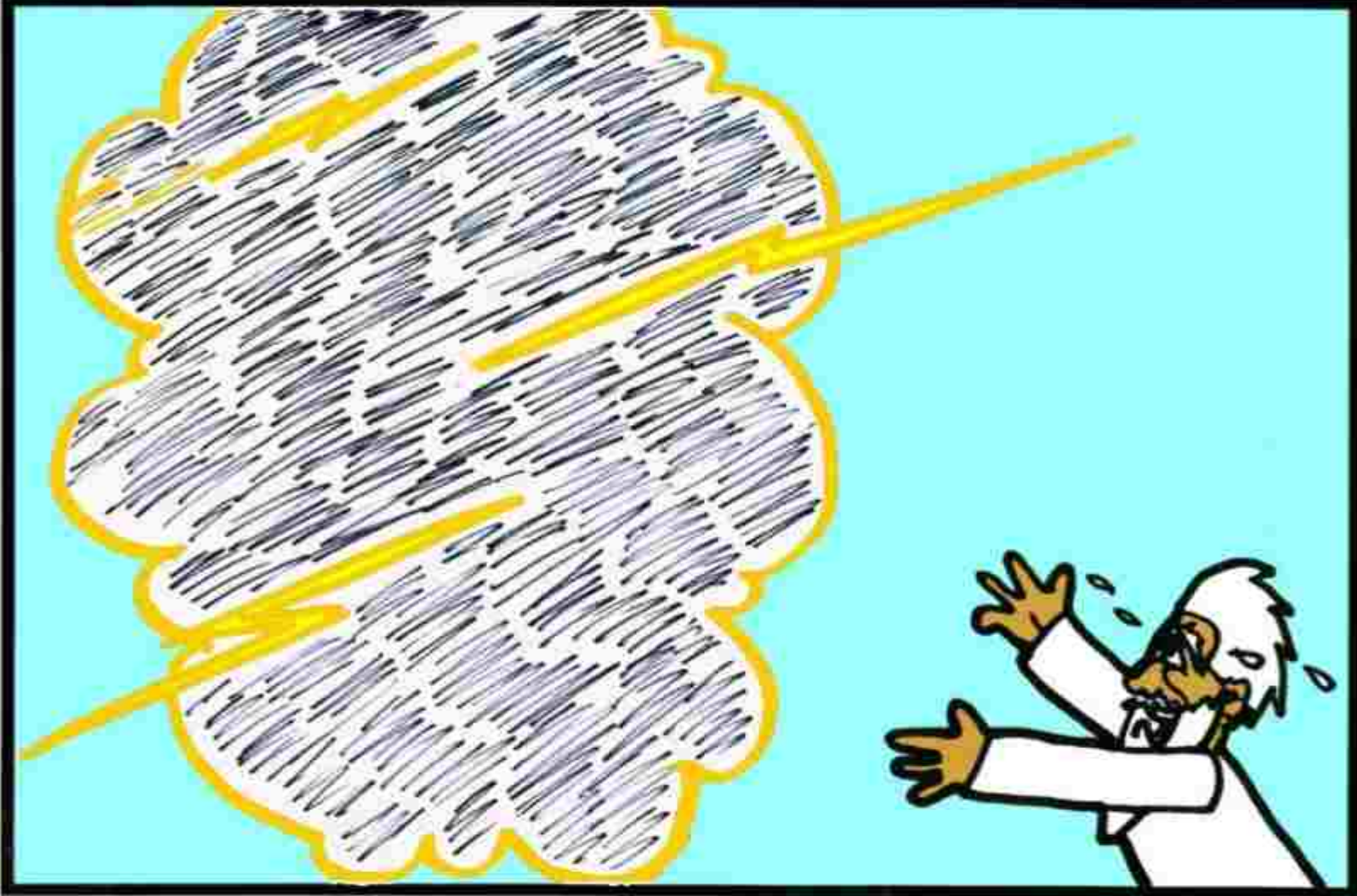
The people brought their gold earrings to Aaron because this is what he said to do. Aaron melted the gold and formed it into a calf statue. "This is your god that brought you out of Egypt," they said. Aaron made an altar and announced a feast for the next day.



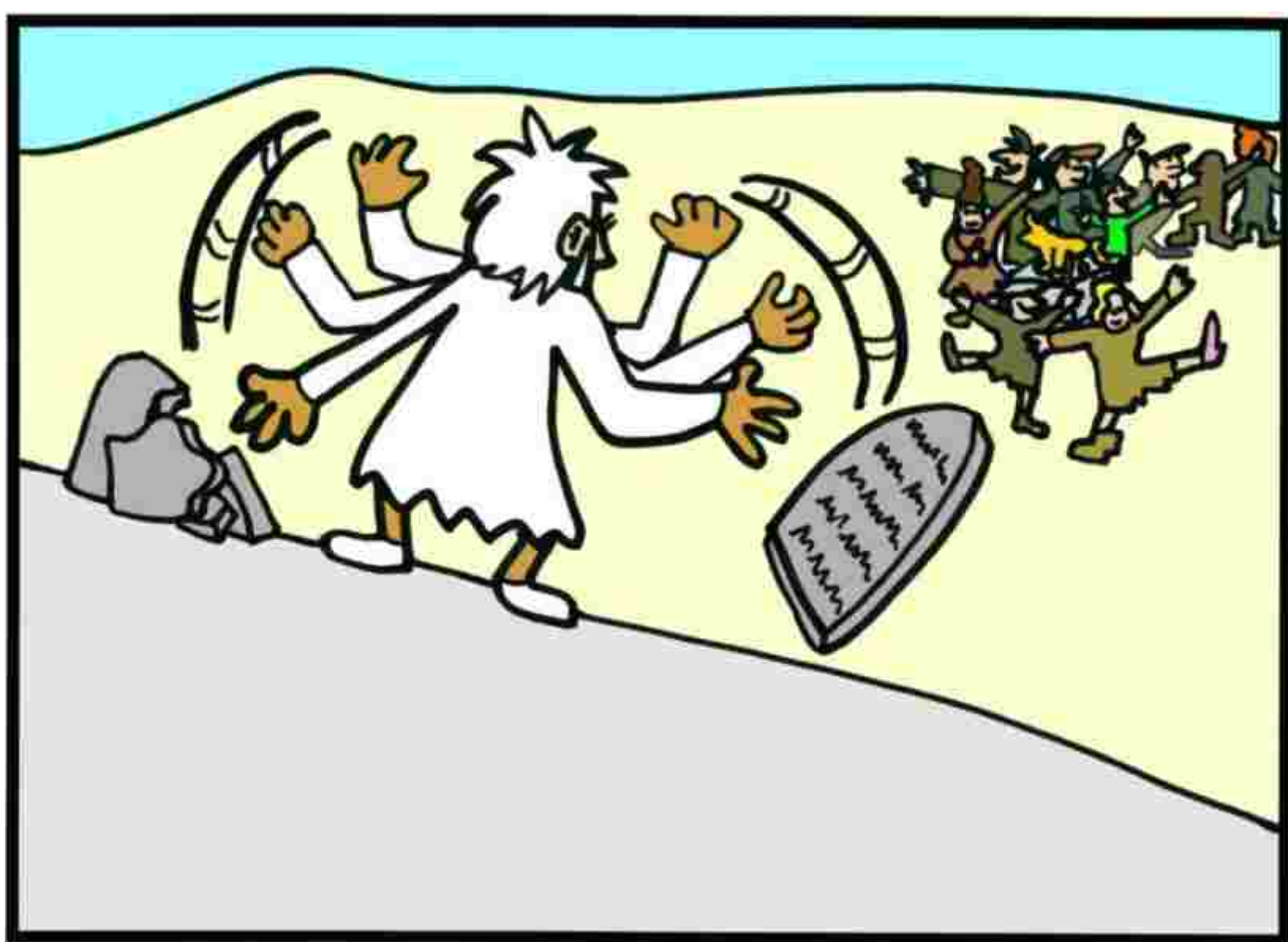
Early the next day they offered burnt offerings to the calf statue. Then they ate and drank and had a wild party around the golden calf.



"Moses, go back down," said God. "Your people have made a calf statue. They say that this calf god is the one who brought them out of Egypt and they are worshipping it! It sure didn't take long for them to leave the good path and go down the bad path!"



The Lord was so angry that he wanted to kill them all, but Moses prayed for the people. "Lord, the Egyptians will say that you brought them here to kill them! Turn off your anger and change your mind. Remember your promise to Abraham. So the Lord did not kill them.



When Moses got to the bottom of the mountain he saw the golden calf and the people dancing around it. He became so angry that he threw down the slabs of stone that God had prepared with the commandments, and they broke into little pieces.



Moses asked Aaron why he made the calf. "Don't be mad at me!" answered Aaron. "You know these people, how they always want to do bad things! I threw their gold earrings into the fire and out came this calf." Aaron had let them be shameful in front of their enemies.



Moses burned the golden calf in the fire, ground it into dust and threw it into the water supply. "Now drink it!" he ordered the people.



That day many idol worshippers died. Moses prayed, "Lord, please forgive these people, if not, erase my name out of your book you have written." "I will erase the names of the people that did this bad thing, out of my book," answered the Lord.



Lord, help me to always be loyal to you and if my friends decide to do something foolish help me to be strong and do the right thing.