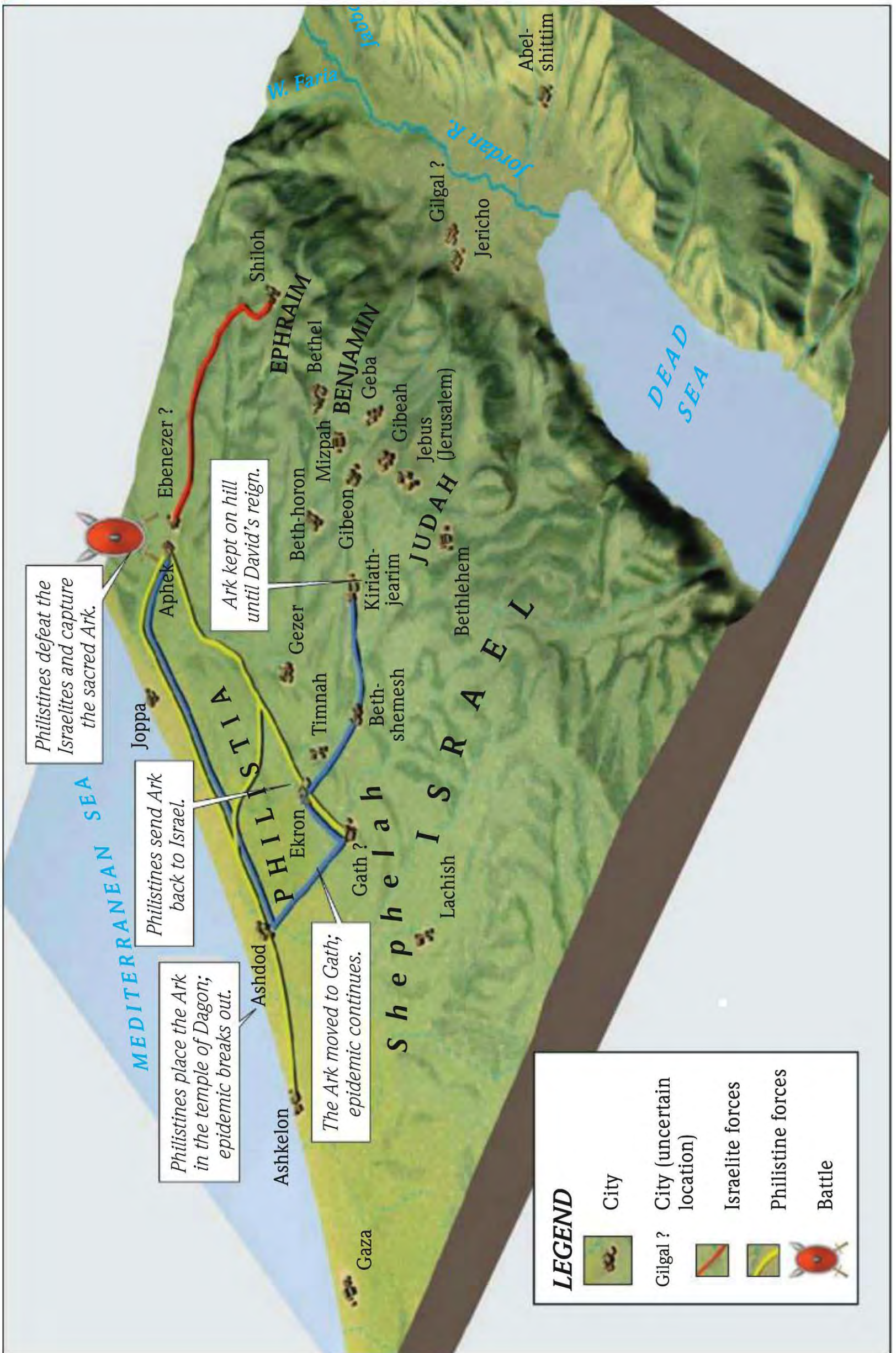


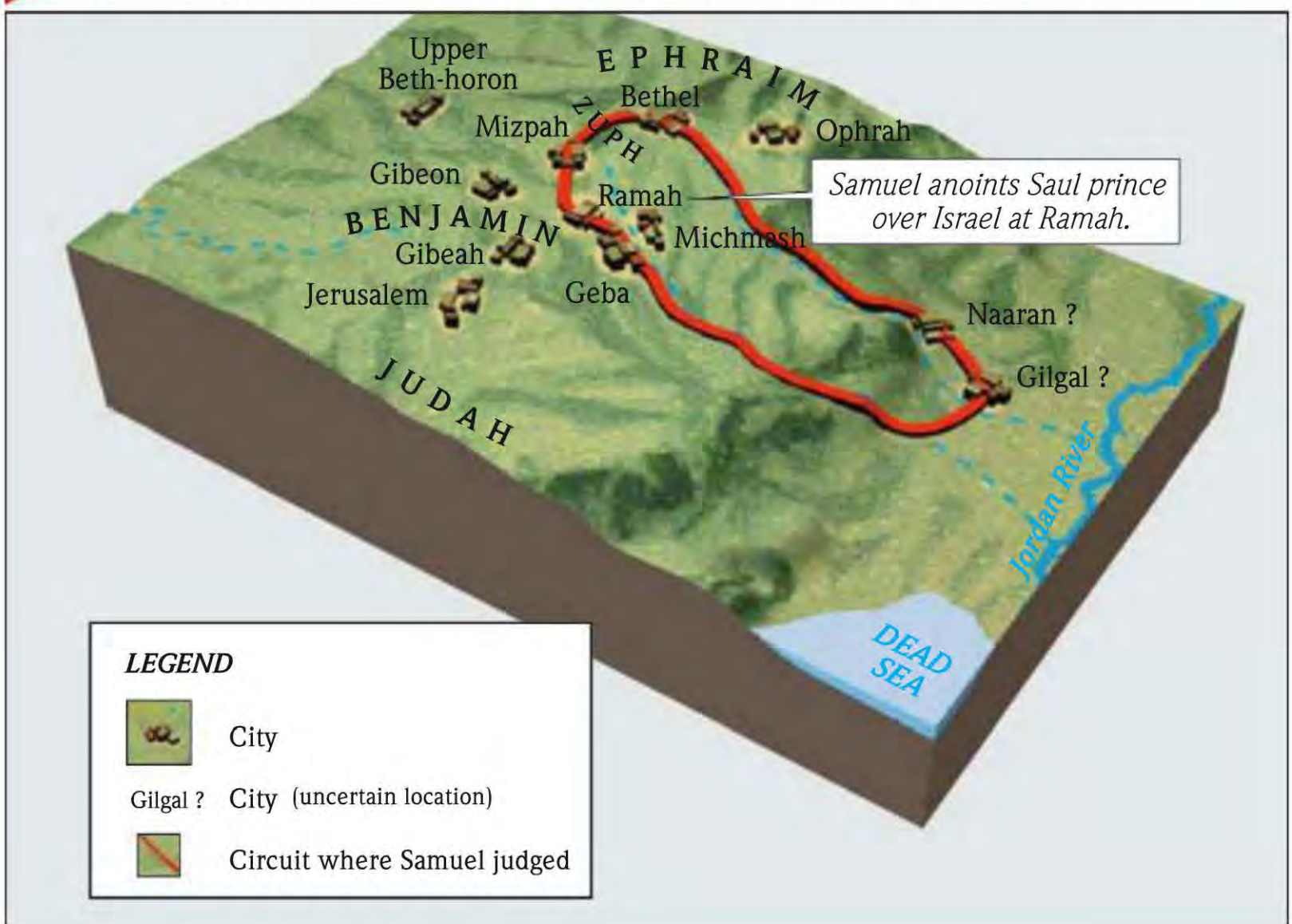
60 THE BATTLE AT EBENEZER



1 Samuel 4:2-3

The Philistines lined up in battle formation against Israel, and as the battle intensified, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who struck down about 4,000 men on the battlefield. When the troops returned to the camp, the elders of Israel asked, "Why did the LORD let us be defeated today by the Philistines? Let's bring the ark of the LORD's covenant from Shiloh. Then it will go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies."

61 MINISTRY OF SAMUEL AND ANOINTING OF SAUL



1 Samuel 7:15-17

Samuel judged Israel throughout his life. Every year he would go on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah and would judge Israel at all these locations. Then he would return to Ramah because his home was there, he judged Israel there, and he had built an altar to the LORD there.

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Saul

Samuel was provoked, but God commanded him to give the people what they asked for, a king of their desire, Saul, son of Kish, a wealthy Benjaminite. A tall, handsome, and humble man, Saul did not seek power and accepted it reluctantly. But, once in command, Saul demonstrated poor judgment and an ultimately fatal lack of spiritual discernment.

Saul made a good beginning by defeating the Philistines with the intervention of young David who killed the Philistine champion Goliath foreshadowing things to come. Almost immediately Saul became suspicious and resentful of David and kept him close by giving David his daughter Michal in marriage and by making David a commander of troops who reported to Saul (1 Sam. 18). Saul was determined to pass the throne to his son Jonathan and neglected the kingdom to pursue David for years, his reign lasting about 40 years.