


Lesson 1: Entry into Canaan, Spies and Rahab Joshua 1-4

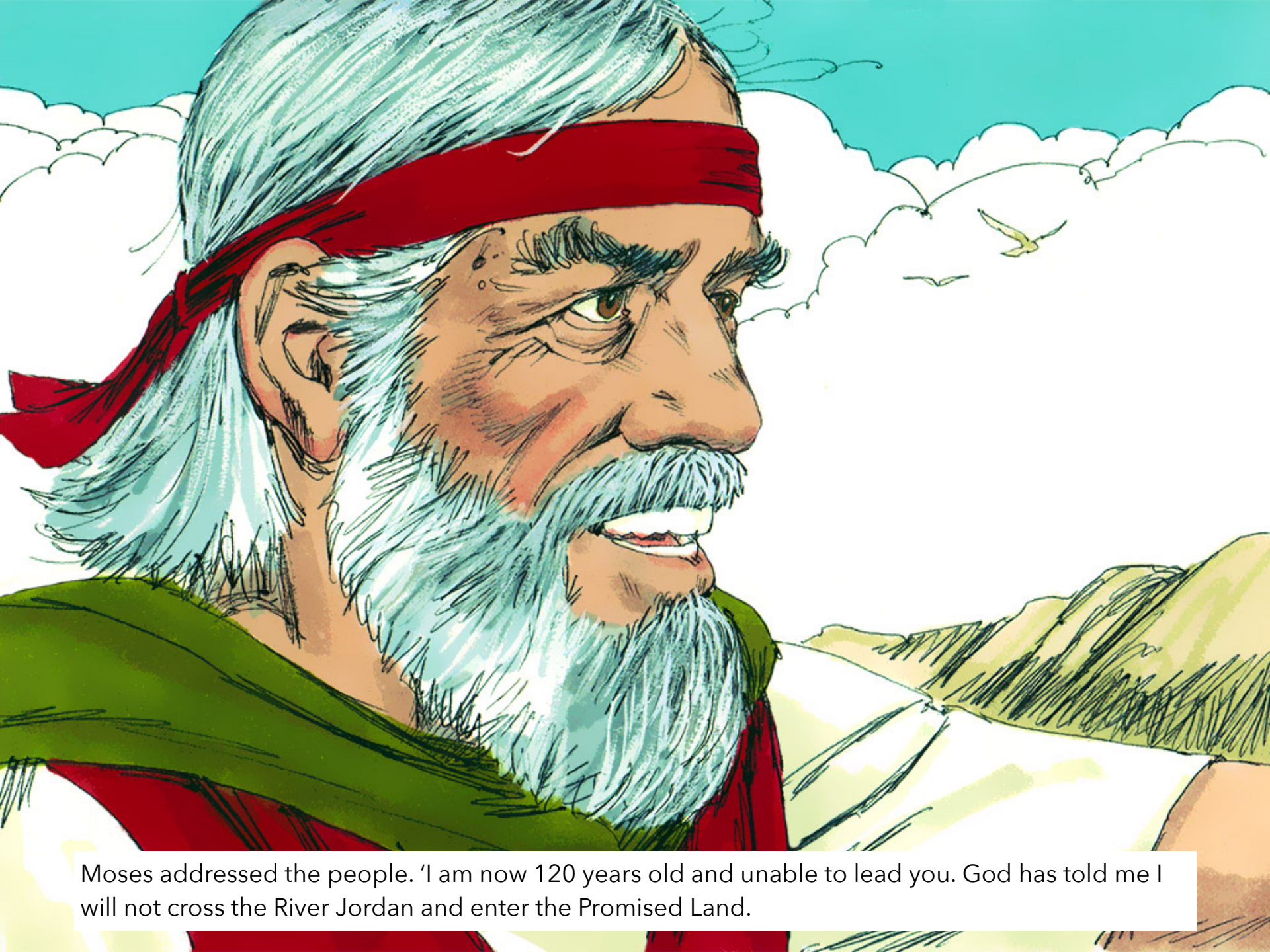
4th and 5th Grade Class

Jordan Park church of Christ

An illustration depicting the biblical scene of Moses' death and Joshua's appointment. On the left, an elderly Moses with a long white beard and hair, wearing a red tunic and a green cloak, points upwards with his right hand. On the right, a younger, muscular Joshua with a beard and a blue headband, wearing a red tunic with a blue sash, holds a wooden staff and a sword. They are surrounded by a crowd of people, with the backs of several heads visible in the foreground. A large red circle is in the background behind the figures.

Deuteronomy 31-34, Joshua 1:1-9

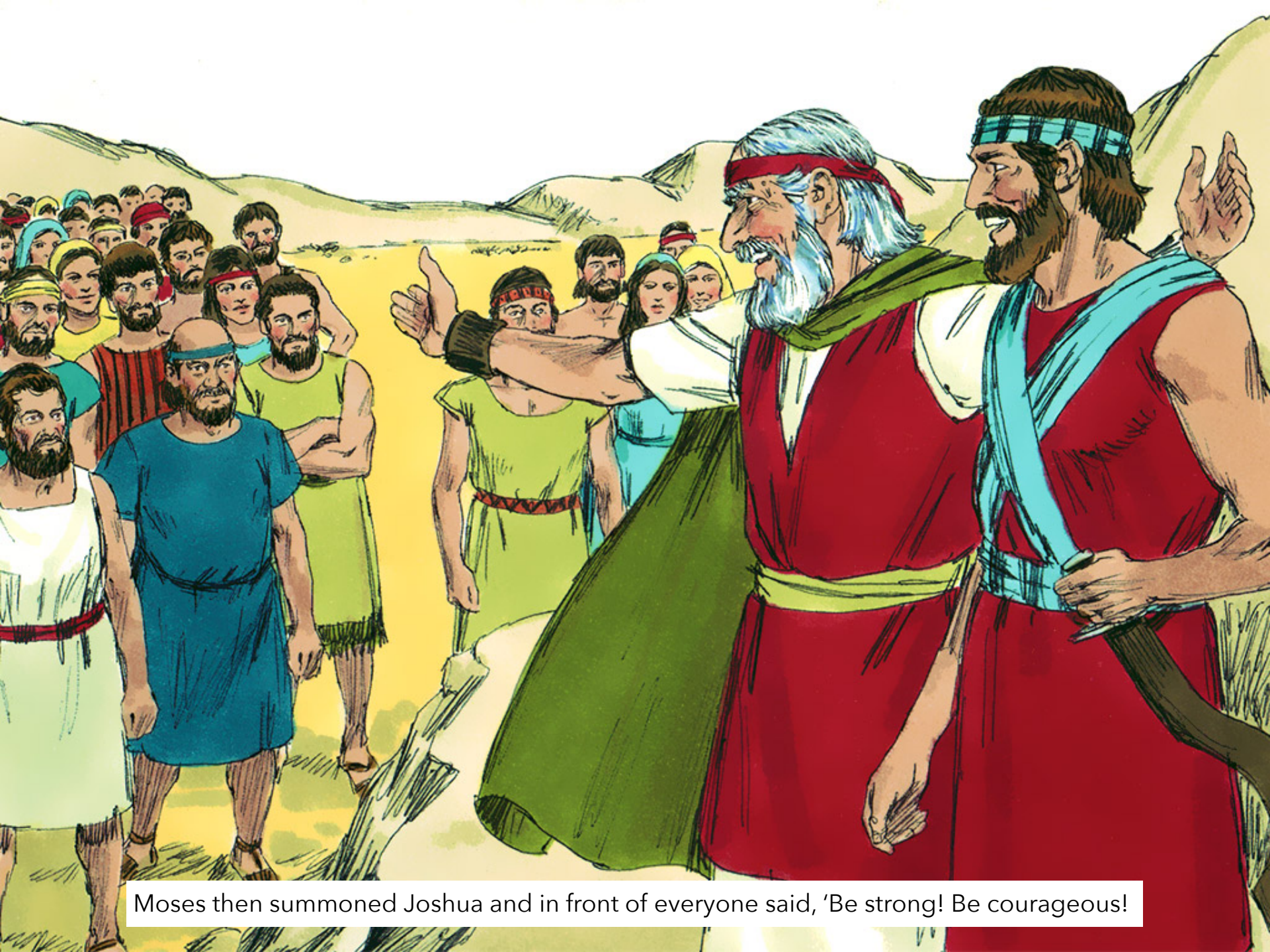
MOSES DIES AND JOSHUA BECOMES LEADER



Moses addressed the people. 'I am now 120 years old and unable to lead you. God has told me I will not cross the River Jordan and enter the Promised Land.'



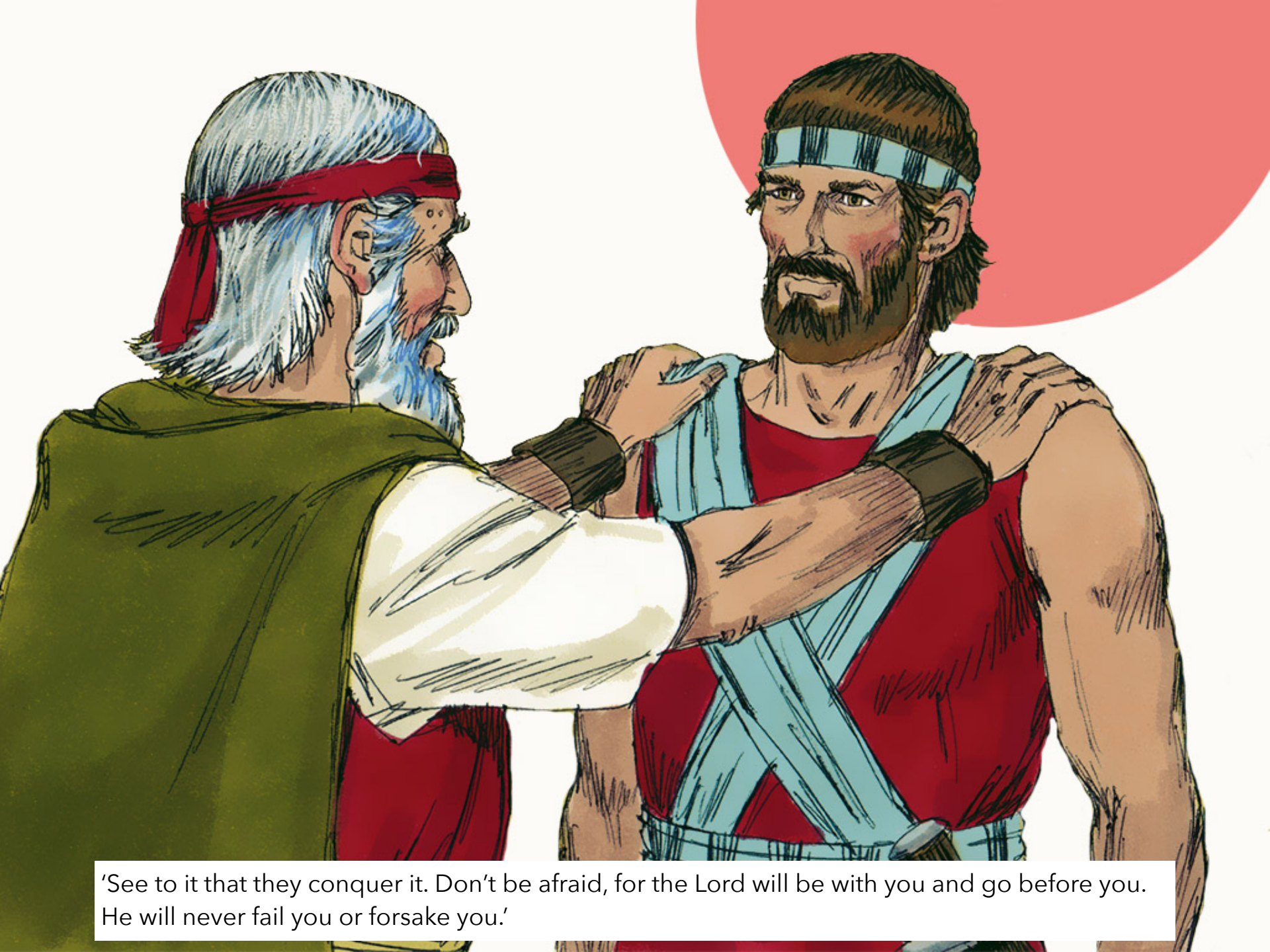
'But the Lord will lead you to overcome the nations living in the Promised Land. Be strong! Be courageous! Do not be afraid! For the Lord your God will be with you. He will not fail or let you down.'



Moses then summoned Joshua and in front of everyone said, 'Be strong! Be courageous!



'For you will lead these people into the Promised Land.'



'See to it that they conquer it. Don't be afraid, for the Lord will be with you and go before you. He will never fail you or forsake you.'



Moses then wrote out the laws he had given the people and gave them to the priests to look after. He told them to read them to everyone every seven years when they gathered at the festival of tabernacles.



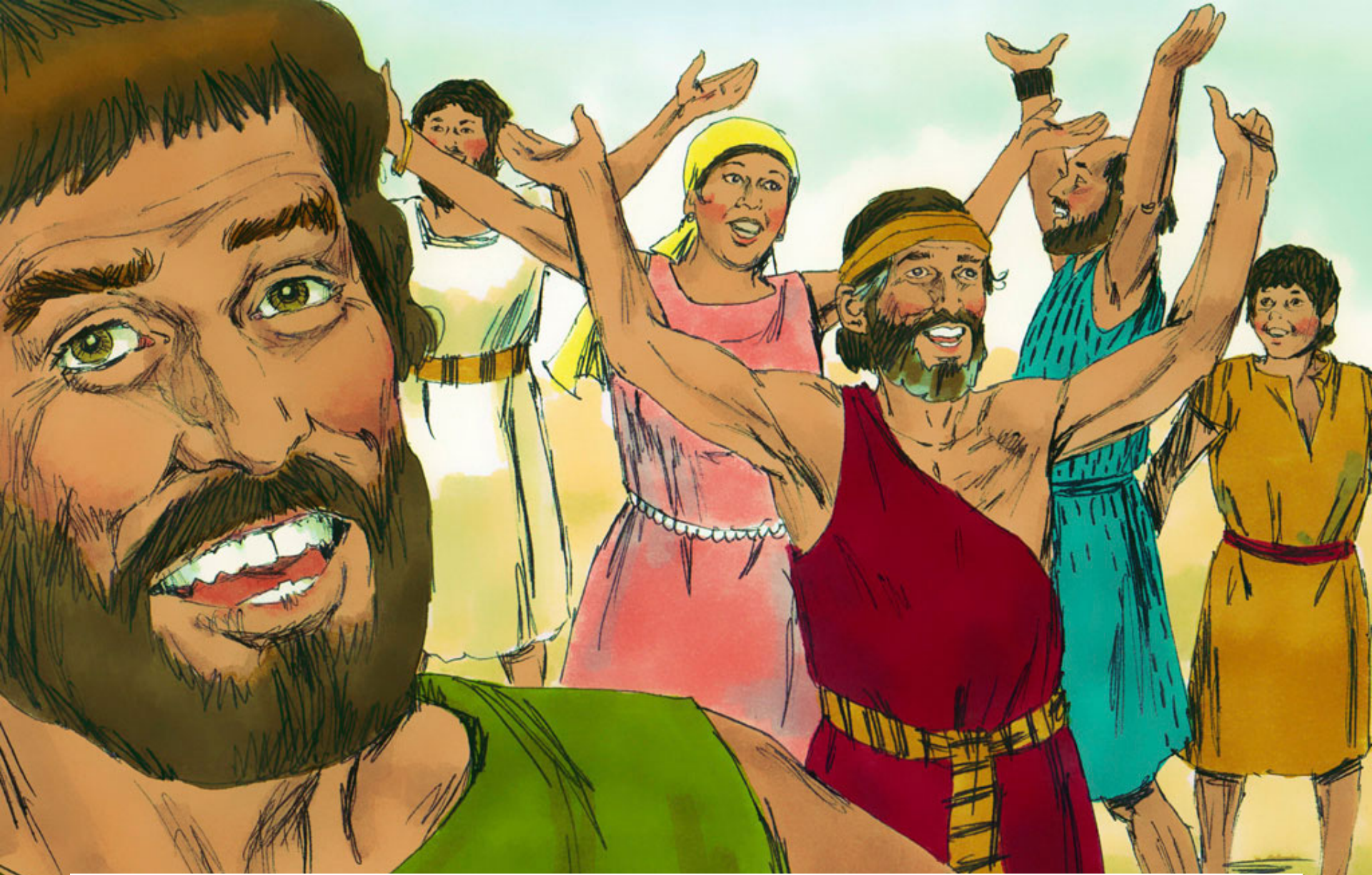
Moses called everyone together to hear God's laws read aloud. He urged them to do what God wanted and obey Him with reverence.



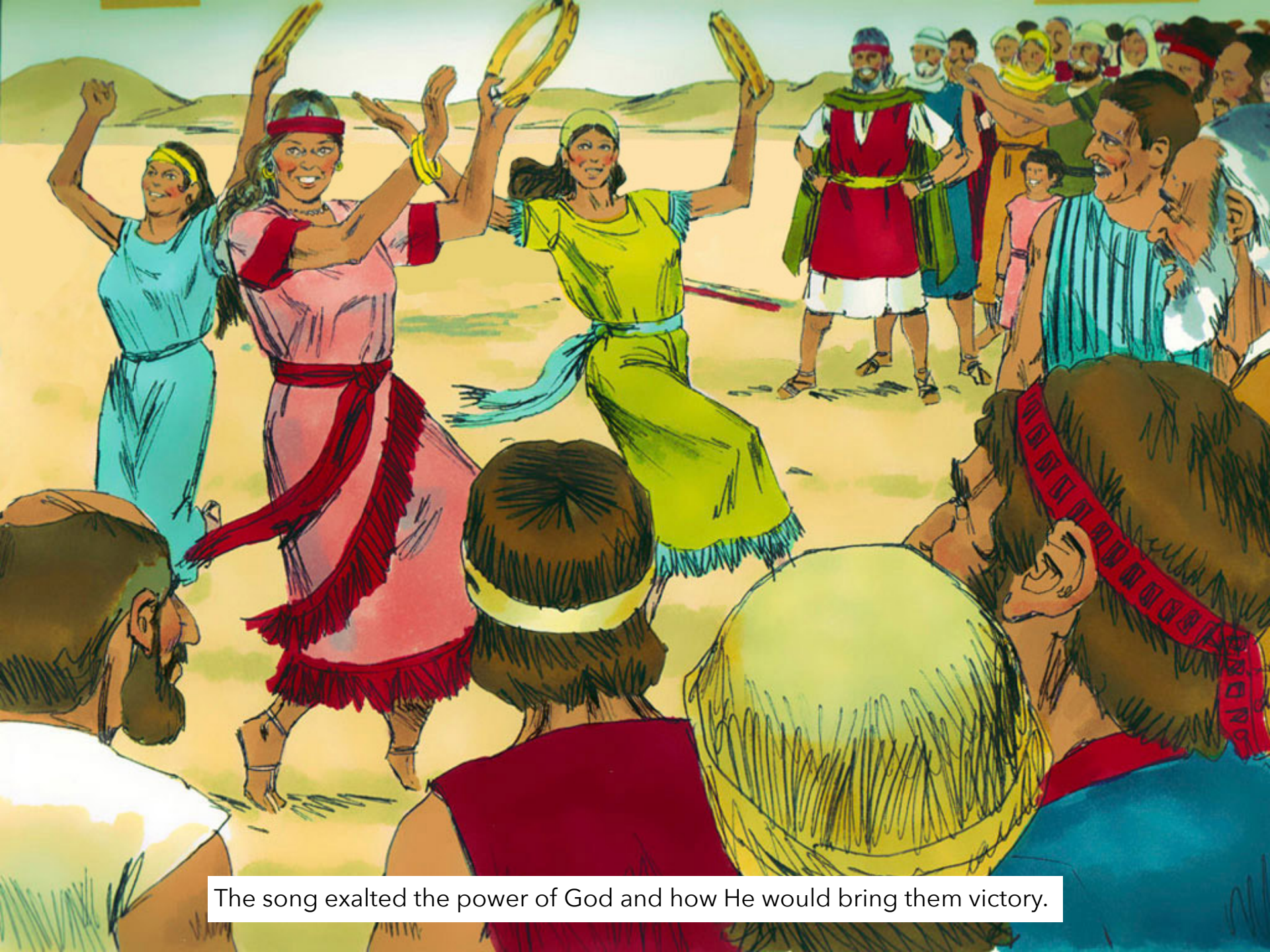
God then summoned Moses and Joshua to meet Him in the tabernacle. He appeared to them both in a great cloud at the tabernacle entrance.

God told Moses that he would die. He also revealed that once the people of Israel had conquered the Promised Land they would disobey Him and worship foreign gods. So, God then asked Moses to write down the words of a song which would remind them of the foolishness of disobedience and its consequences. Moses wrote down the lyrics of the song and then recited it to the people to learn.





The words of this song are recorded in Deuteronomy chapter 32. Not only did it warn them of the difficulties they would face if they acted stupidly and disobeyed God but it reminded them of God's love and forgiveness if they returned to Him.



The song exalted the power of God and how He would bring them victory.



That same day the Lord told Moses, 'Go to Mount Nebo in the land of Moab across from Jericho. Look out across the land of Promised Land of Canaan.'

After you see the land, you must die. That is because you rebelled against my instructions to order water to come out of the rock at the springs of Meribah- kadesh. You will see the land I am giving the people of Israel, but you will not enter it.' (Numbers 27:12- 14).





Canaan

Jordan valley

Jericho

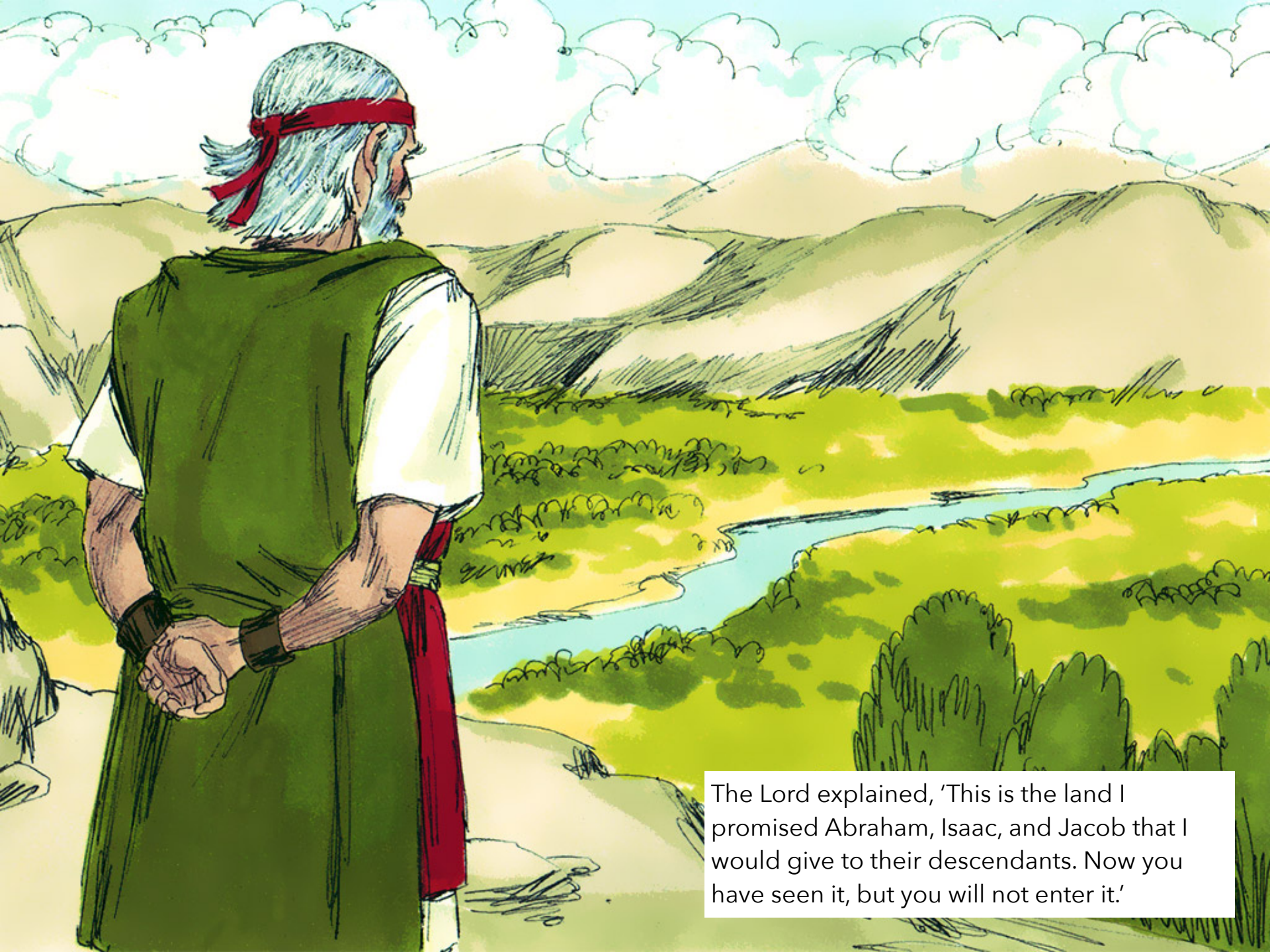
Mount Nebo

Moab

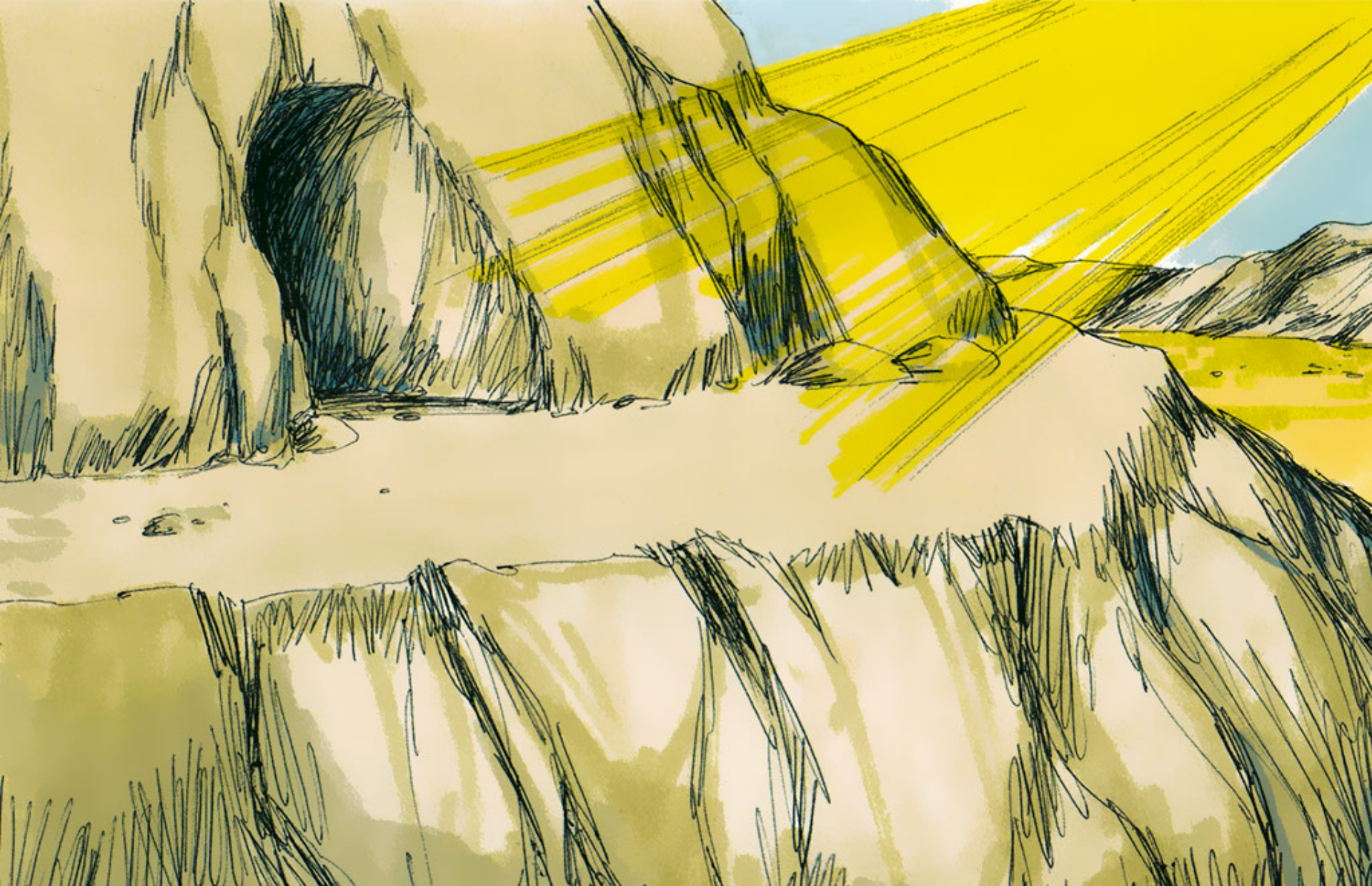
Dead Sea

Moses climbed from the plains of Moab to Pisgah Peak in Mount Nebo, across from Jericho. God pointed out to Moses places in the Promised Land including the Jordan Valley and Jericho.

0 10 miles
0 10 km



The Lord explained, 'This is the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. Now you have seen it, but you will not enter it.'



So Moses died in the land of Moab as the Lord had said. The Lord buried him in a valley near Beth-peor in Moab, but no one knows the exact place. Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyesight was perfect and he was as strong as a young man.

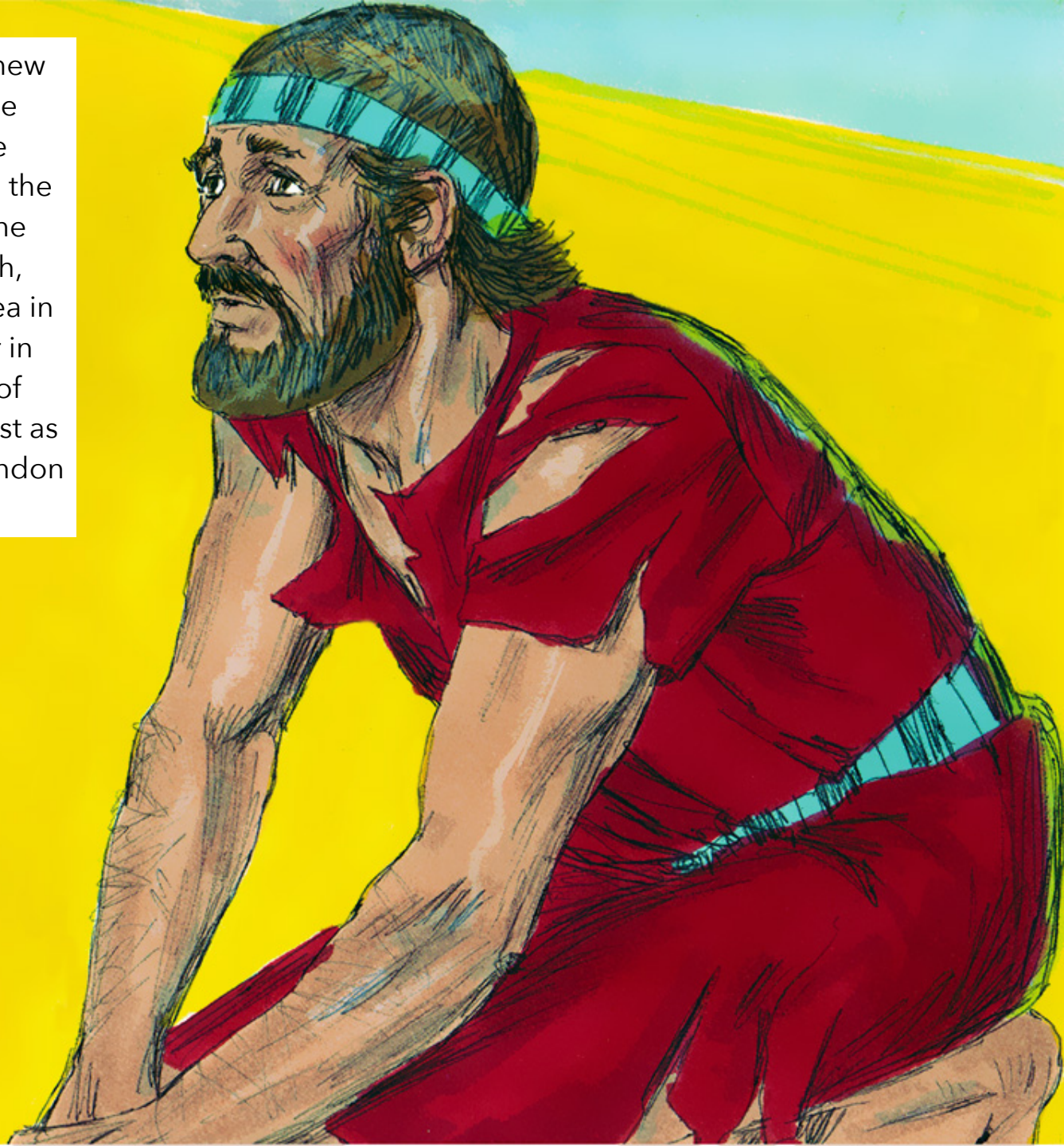
The people of Israel mourned for Moses for thirty days on the plains of Moab. There has never been another prophet like Moses, for the Lord talked to him face to face.



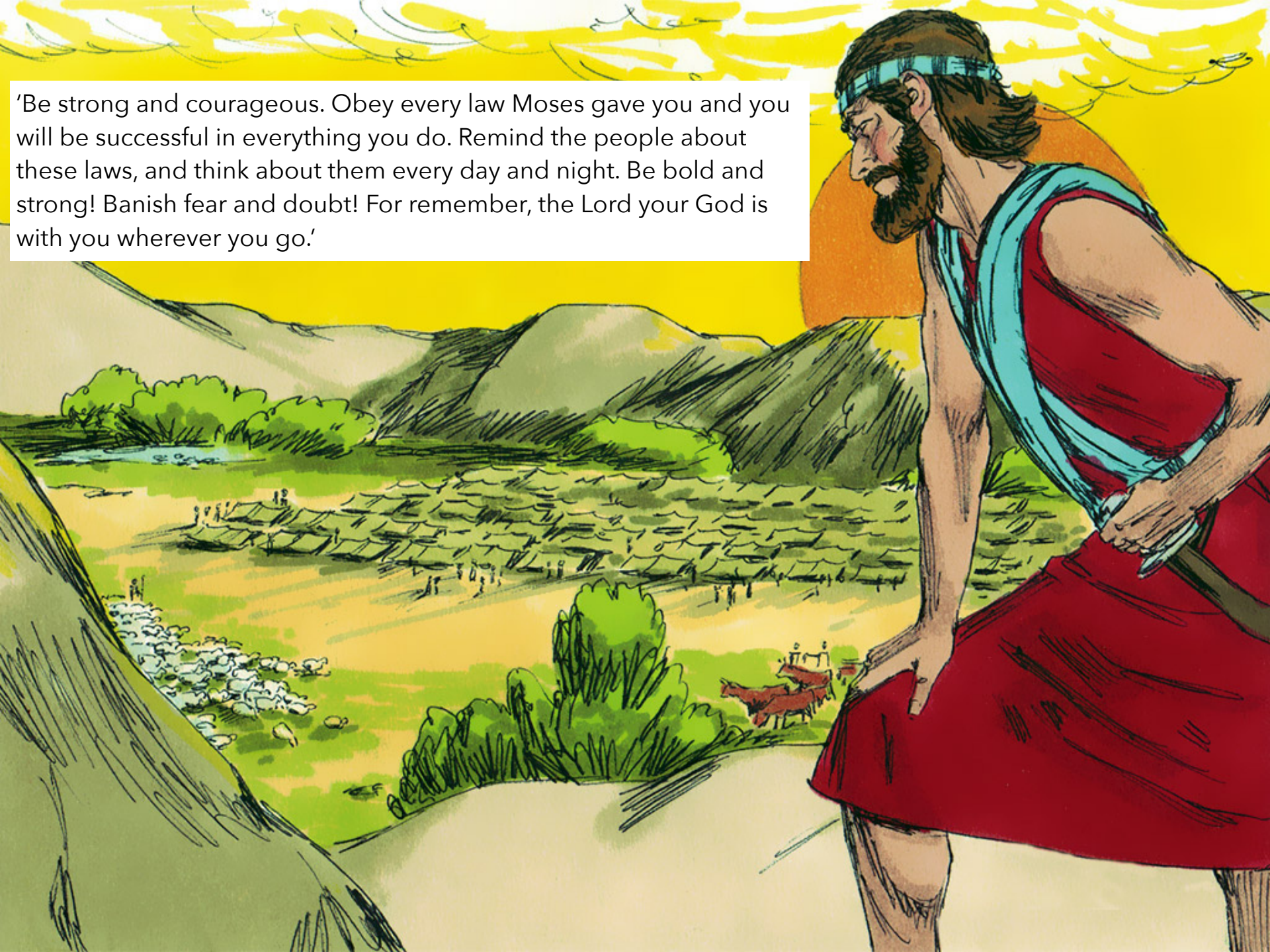
Joshua was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him. He was now their leader and the people of Israel obeyed him and the Lord.



God told Joshua, 'You are the new leader of Israel. Lead my people across the Jordan River into the Promised Land. It extends from the Negeb Desert in the south to the Lebanon mountains in the north, and from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Euphrates River in the east, including all the land of the Hittites. I will be with you just as I was with Moses. I will not abandon you or fail to help you.'



'Be strong and courageous. Obey every law Moses gave you and you will be successful in everything you do. Remind the people about these laws, and think about them every day and night. Be bold and strong! Banish fear and doubt! For remember, the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.'





Joshua 2:1-24

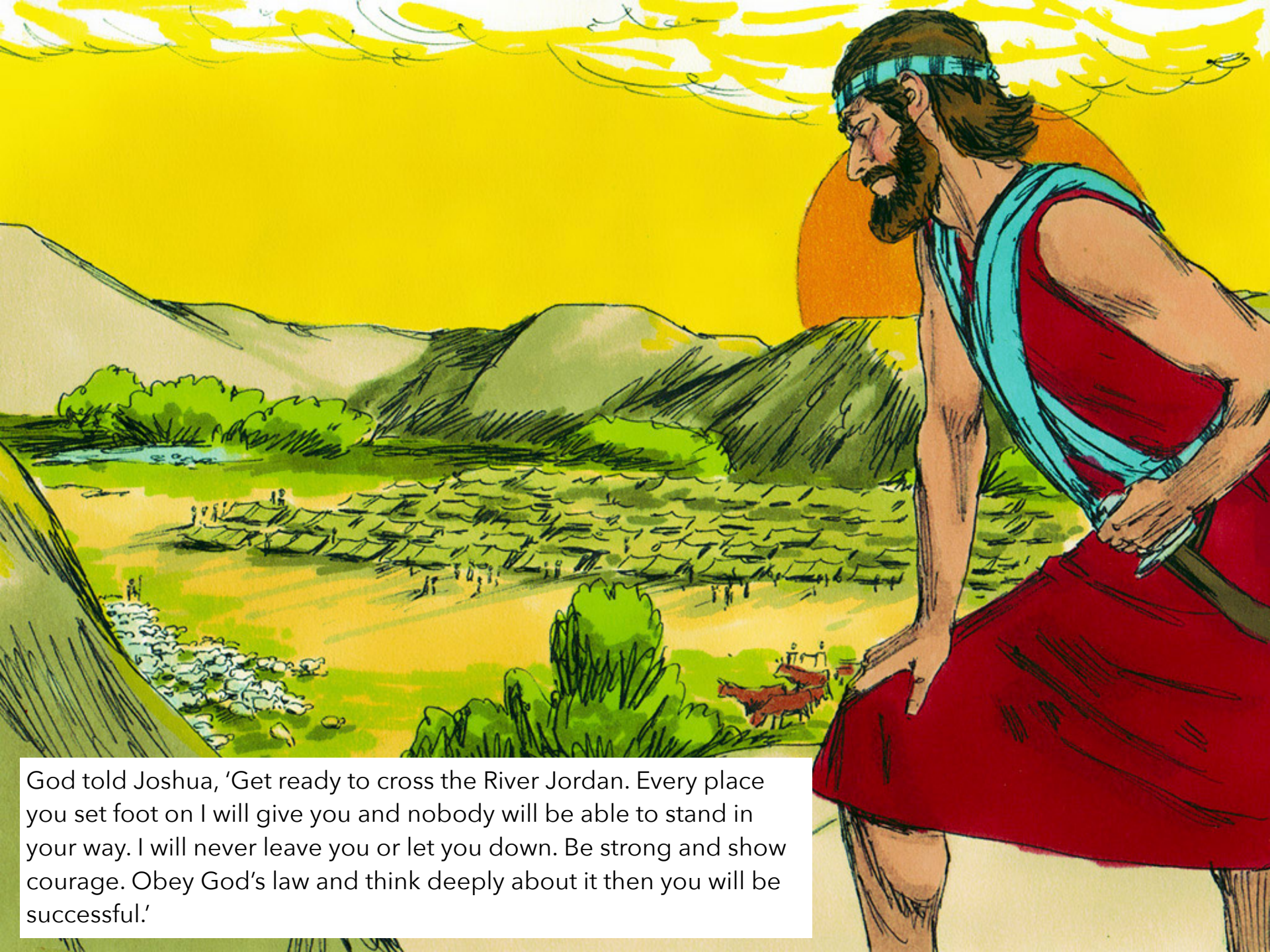
THE SPIES AND RAHAB



(Deuteronomy 31) God told Moses that he would not lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. Moses called everyone together and gave instructions to his successor Joshua. 'Be strong and courageous for you are to lead these people into the land the Lord has promised to them. The Lord goes before you and will never leave or forsake you. Don't be afraid or become discouraged.'

After Moses died, Joshua and the people camped at Abel-Shittim on the east bank of the River Jordan.



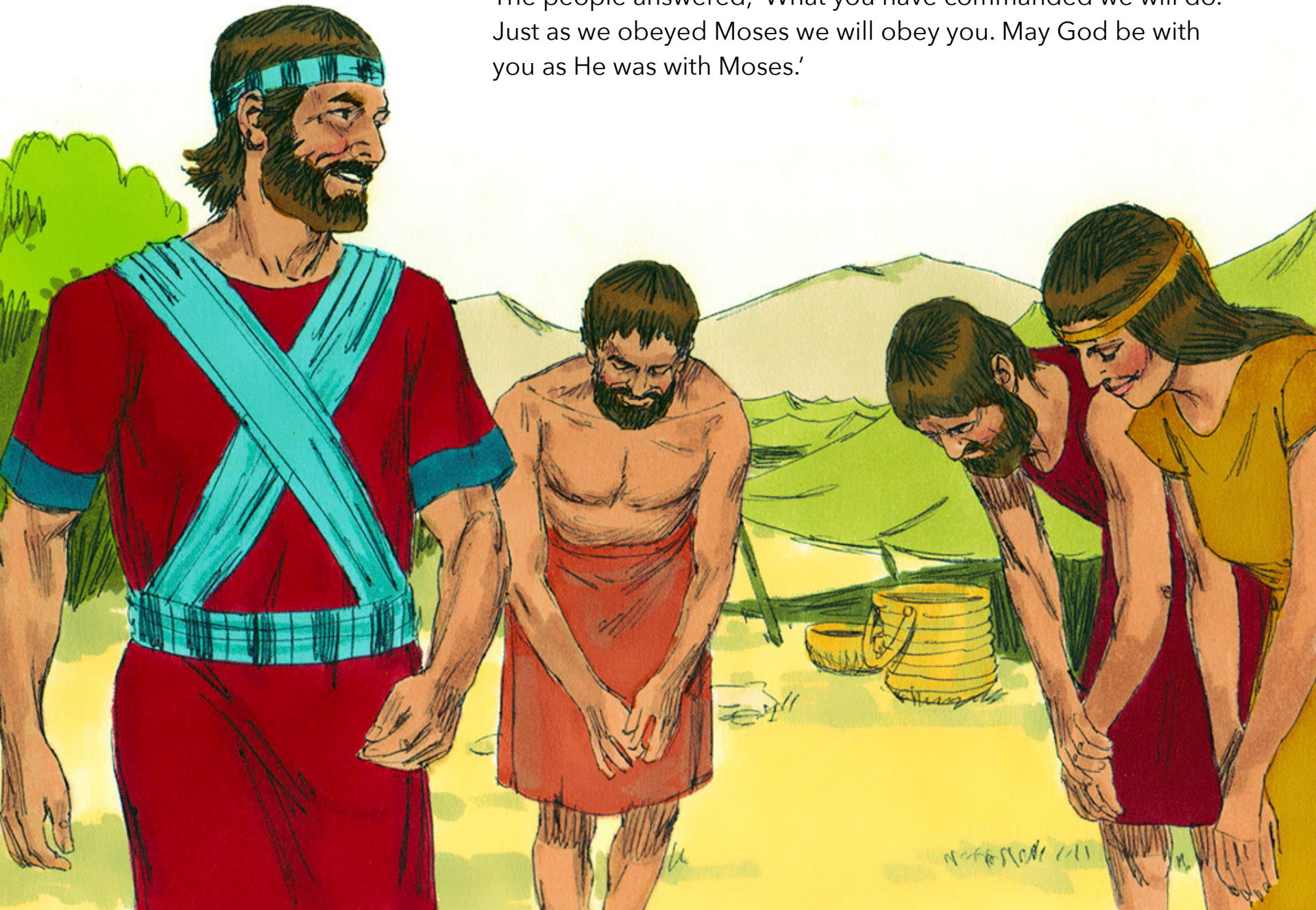


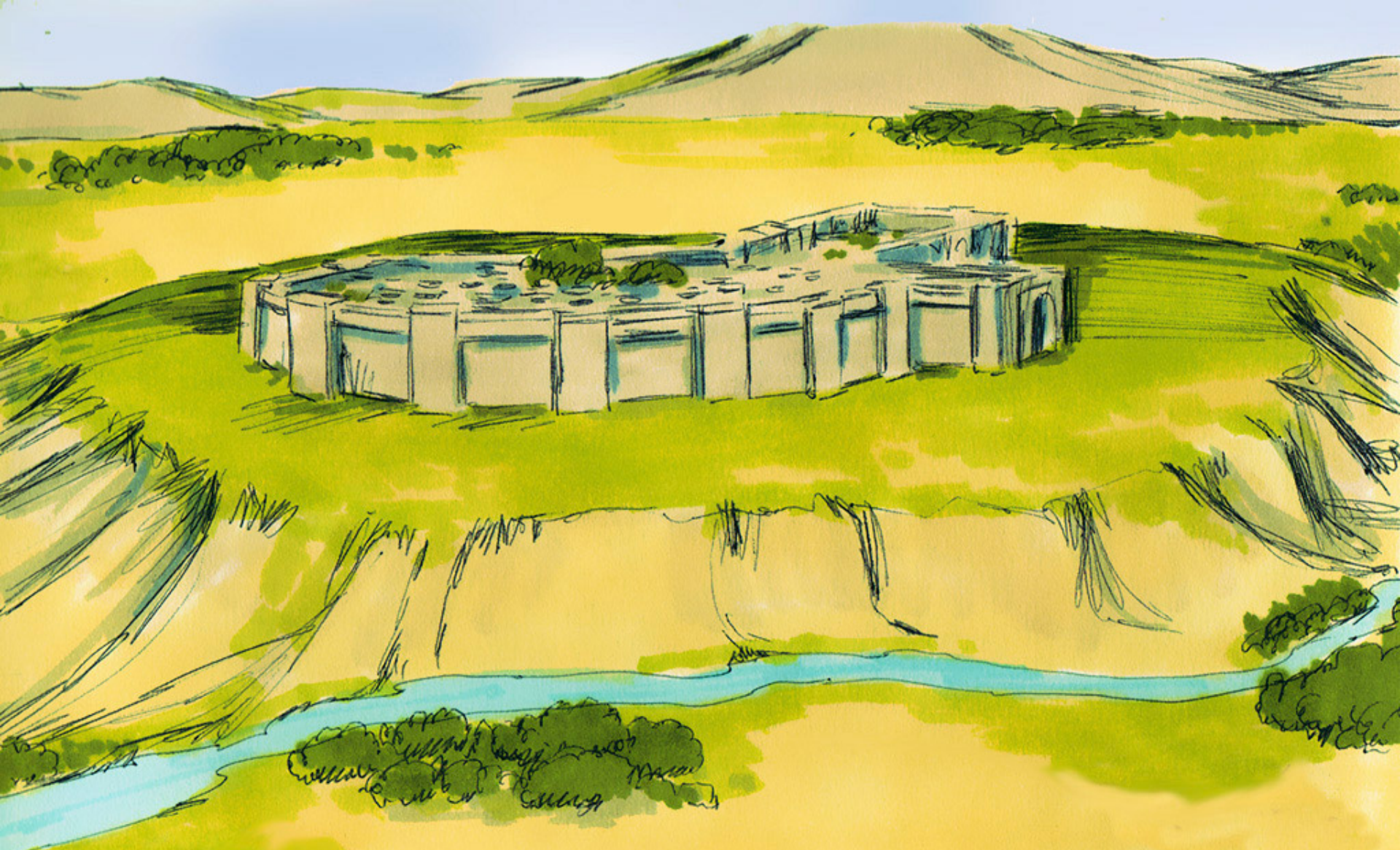
God told Joshua, 'Get ready to cross the River Jordan. Every place you set foot on I will give you and nobody will be able to stand in your way. I will never leave you or let you down. Be strong and show courage. Obey God's law and think deeply about it then you will be successful.'



Joshua ordered those in charge of the people, 'Go through the camp and tell everyone to pack up and get ready to move. In three days' time we will cross the River Jordan and take over the land God has promised to us.'

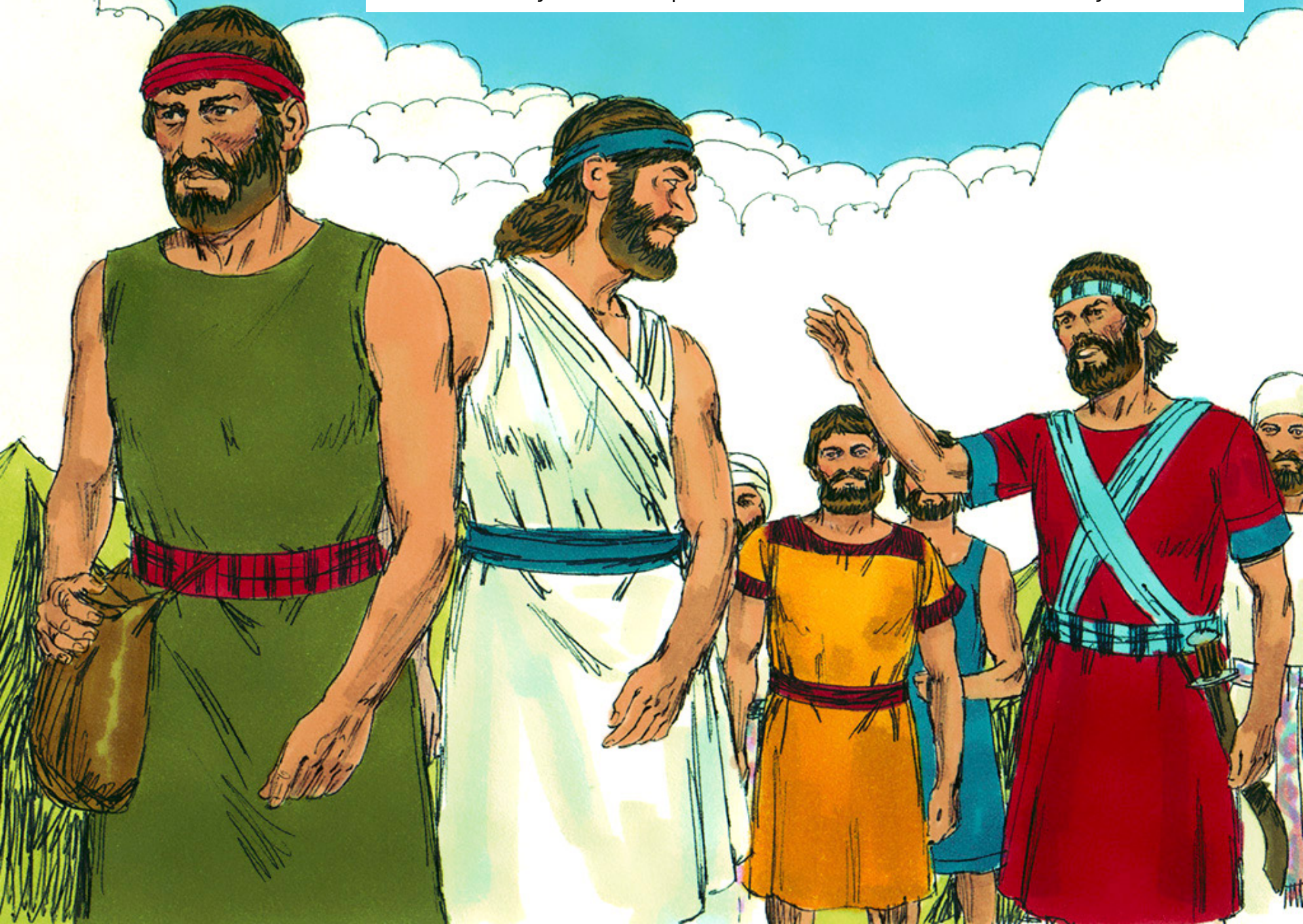
The people answered, 'What you have commanded we will do. Just as we obeyed Moses we will obey you. May God be with you as He was with Moses.'





Ahead of them, just 12 (20km) miles away, on the other side of the River Jordan, was the walled city of Jericho.

Joshua secretly sent two spies to check out the land and the city of Jericho.



They entered Jericho and made for the house of Rahab, (a local prostitute) who often took strangers and visitors into her home.





However the spies had been spotted. The King of Jericho was warned, 'There are Israelite spies in the city.' The king gave orders for soldiers to go to Rahab's house and arrest them.



Rahab, however, sensing her visitors were in danger, took them up to the roof and hid them.



When the soldiers arrived she did not betray them. 'There were two men here but I did not know who they were,' she explained, 'at dusk before the city gate was closed they left and I don't know where they are heading.'

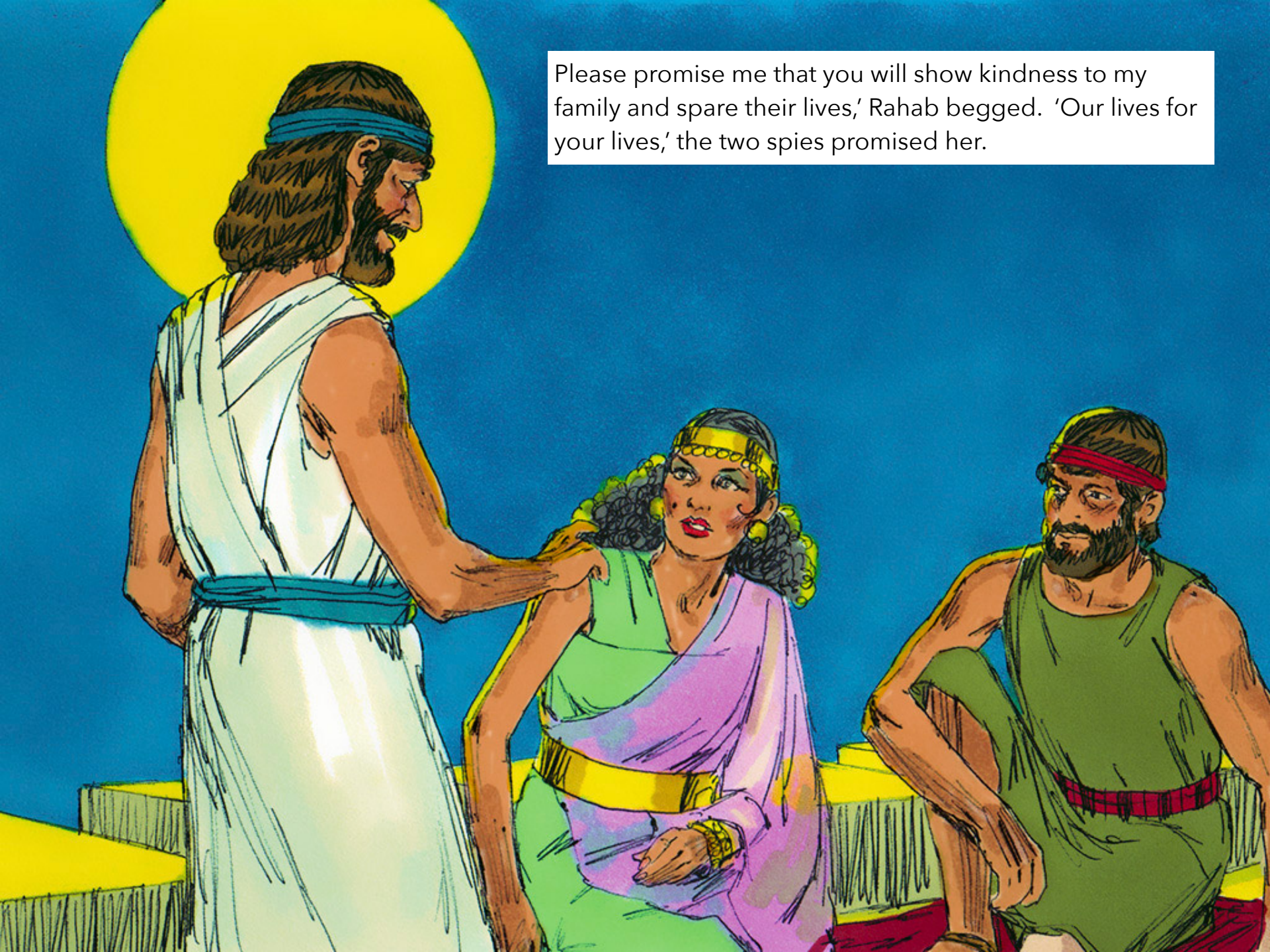
The soldiers rushed off out of the city and down the road towards the River Jordan searching for the two spies.



Rahab went up onto the roof and spoke to the spies. 'I know the Lord has given you this land and everyone here is very afraid. We have heard how God opened up the Red Sea to let you escape out of Egypt and our hearts are melting with fear.'



Please promise me that you will show kindness to my family and spare their lives,' Rahab begged. 'Our lives for your lives,' the two spies promised her.





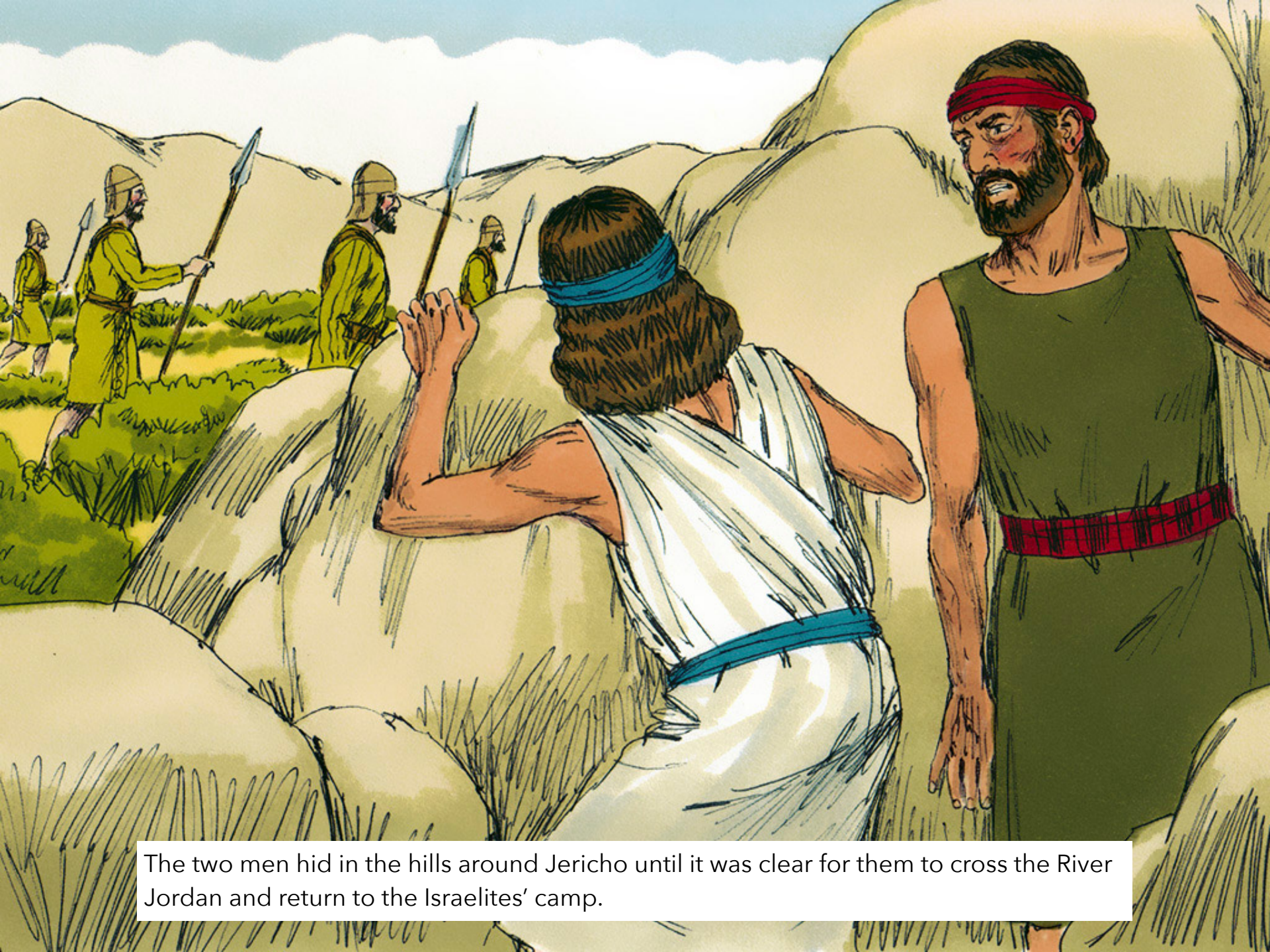
Rahab's house had a window in the city wall. That night she let them down a rope to make their escape. 'Go and hide in the hills for three days and when they have given up searching for you, you'll be able to cross the River Jordan.'



The men had agreed that Rahab would tie a scarlet cord in her window to signal her house. They told her to make sure her family stayed inside the house when the Israelites attacked. Then they would keep their promise to spare their lives.

Rahab tied the scarlet in the window as agreed.

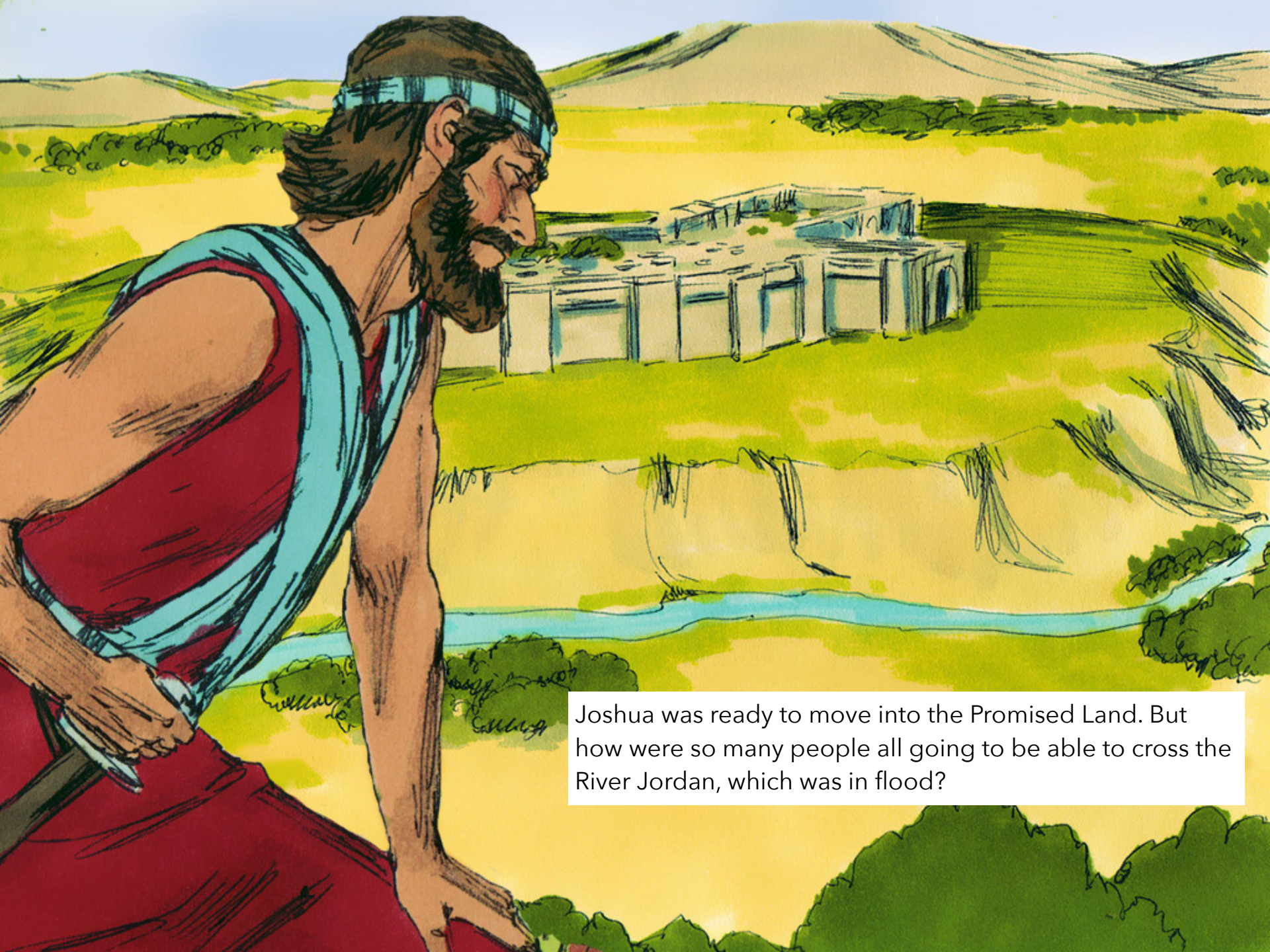




The two men hid in the hills around Jericho until it was clear for them to cross the River Jordan and return to the Israelites' camp.



They reported to Joshua, 'The Lord really has given us the whole of this land. The people there are melting in fear because of us.'



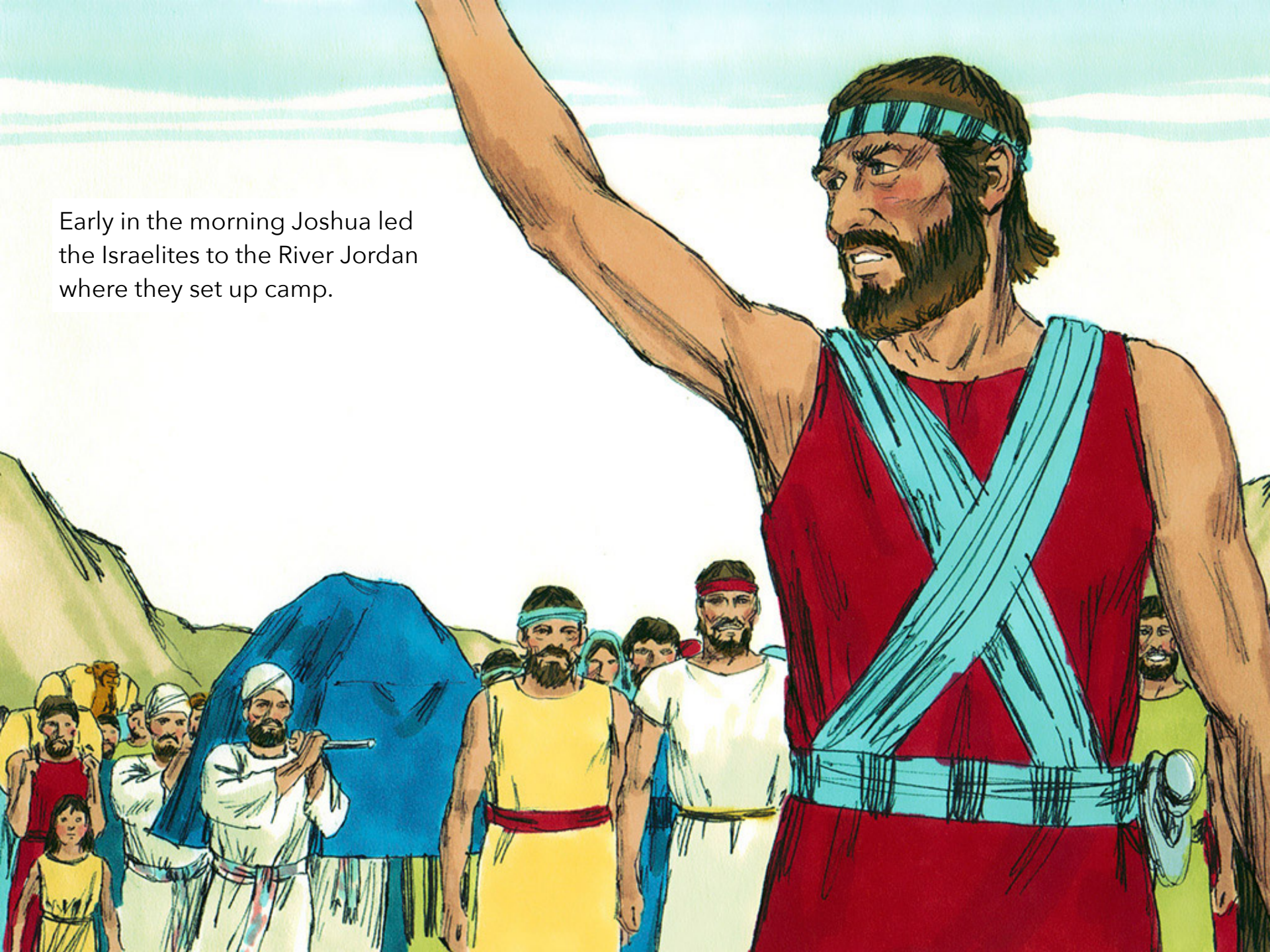
Joshua was ready to move into the Promised Land. But how were so many people all going to be able to cross the River Jordan, which was in flood?



Joshua 3 v 1 - 4 v 24

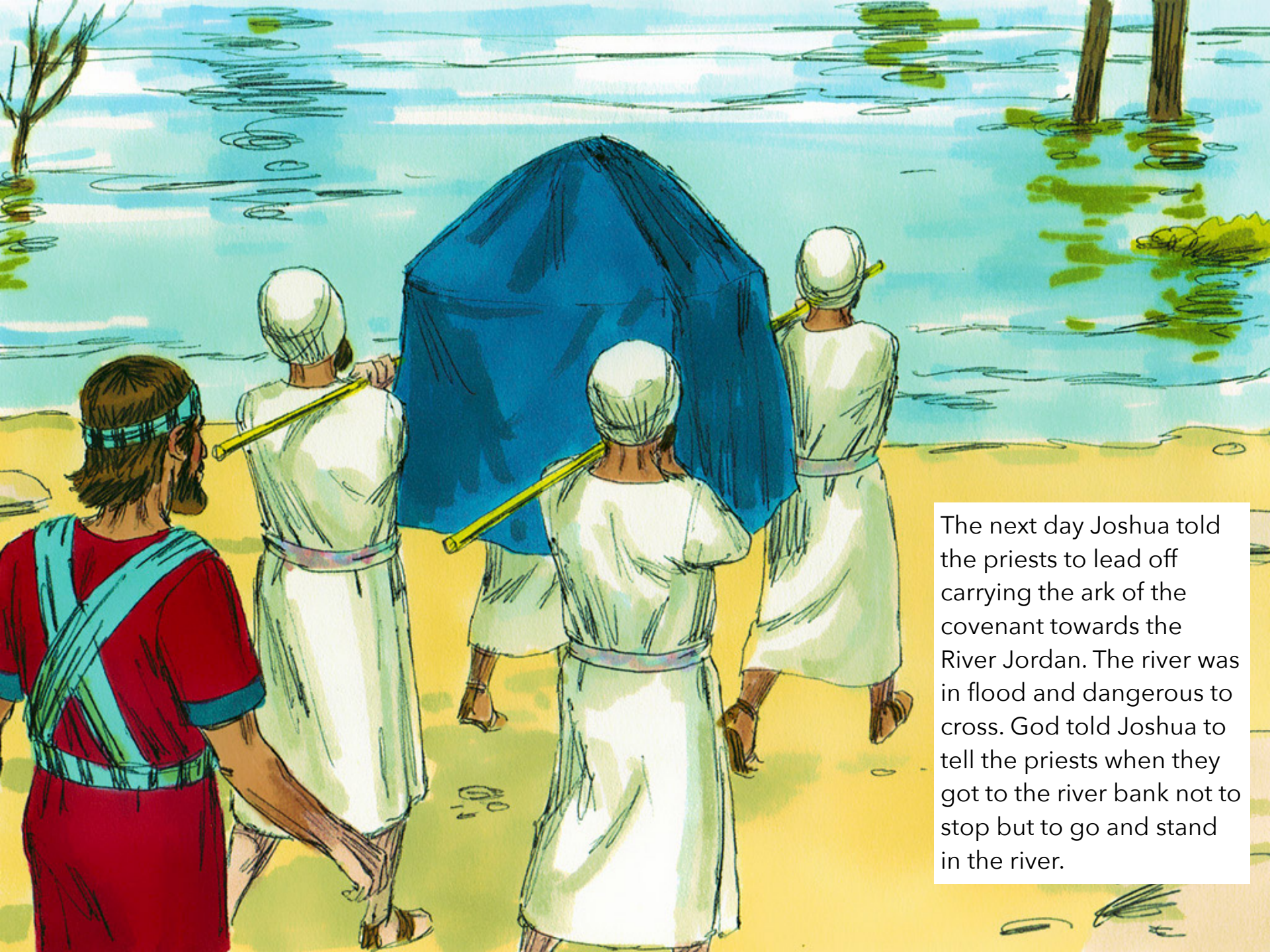
CROSSING THE JORDAN

Early in the morning Joshua led the Israelites to the River Jordan where they set up camp.

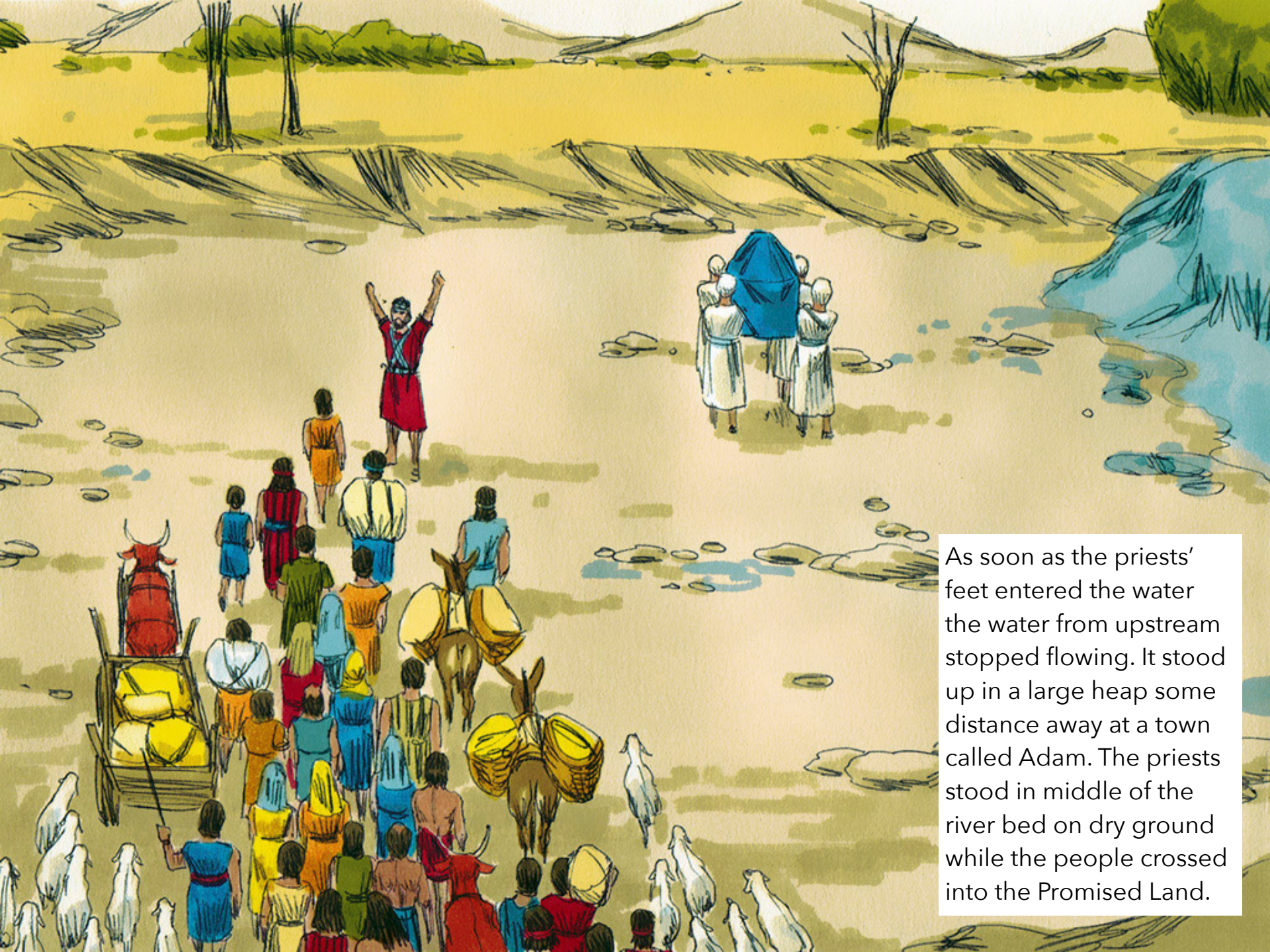




After three days the officers gave orders, 'When you see the ark of the covenant being carried by the priests you are to follow it at a distance.' Joshua told everyone to get their lives right with God for the next day they would see Him do amazing things.

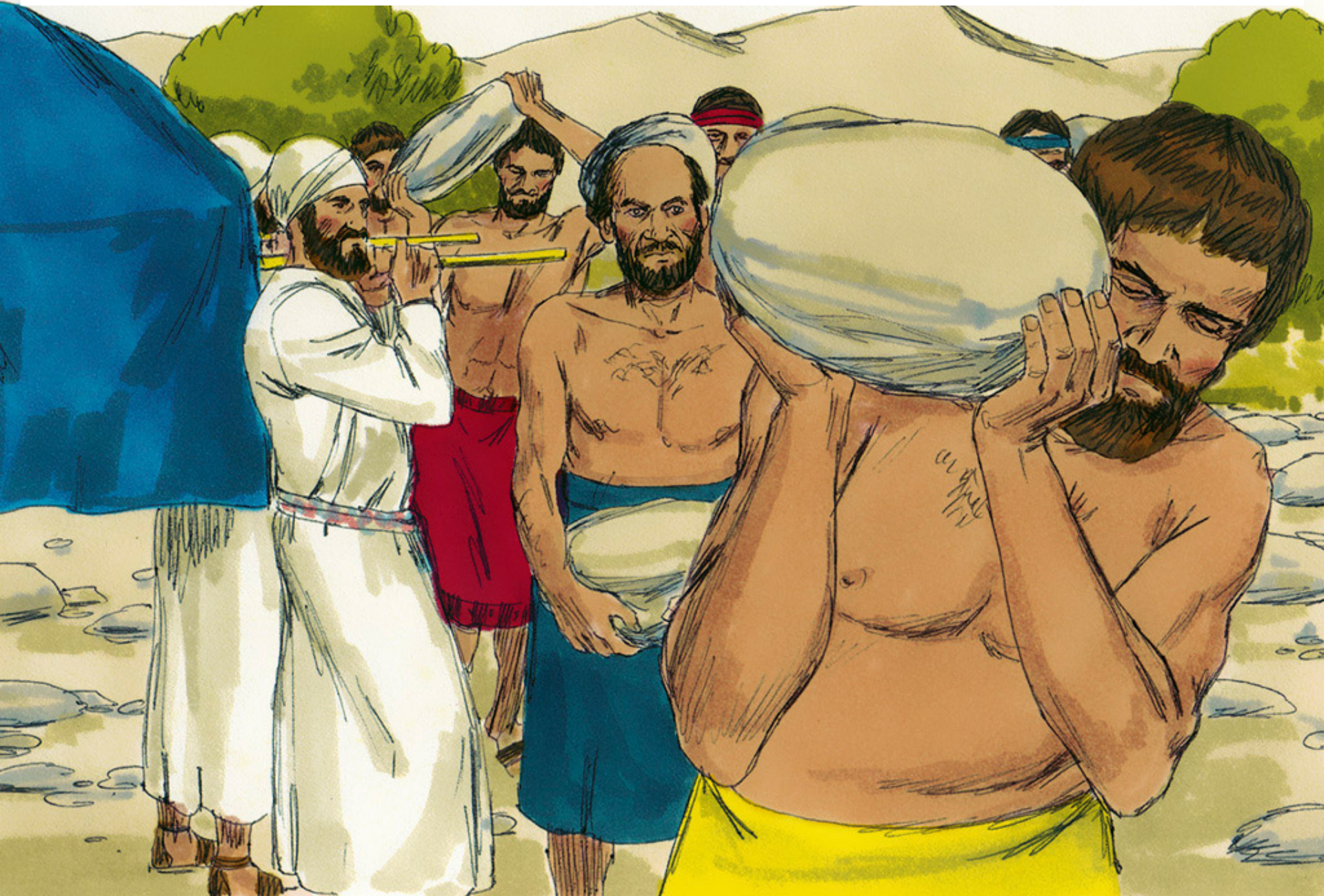


The next day Joshua told the priests to lead off carrying the ark of the covenant towards the River Jordan. The river was in flood and dangerous to cross. God told Joshua to tell the priests when they got to the river bank not to stop but to go and stand in the river.



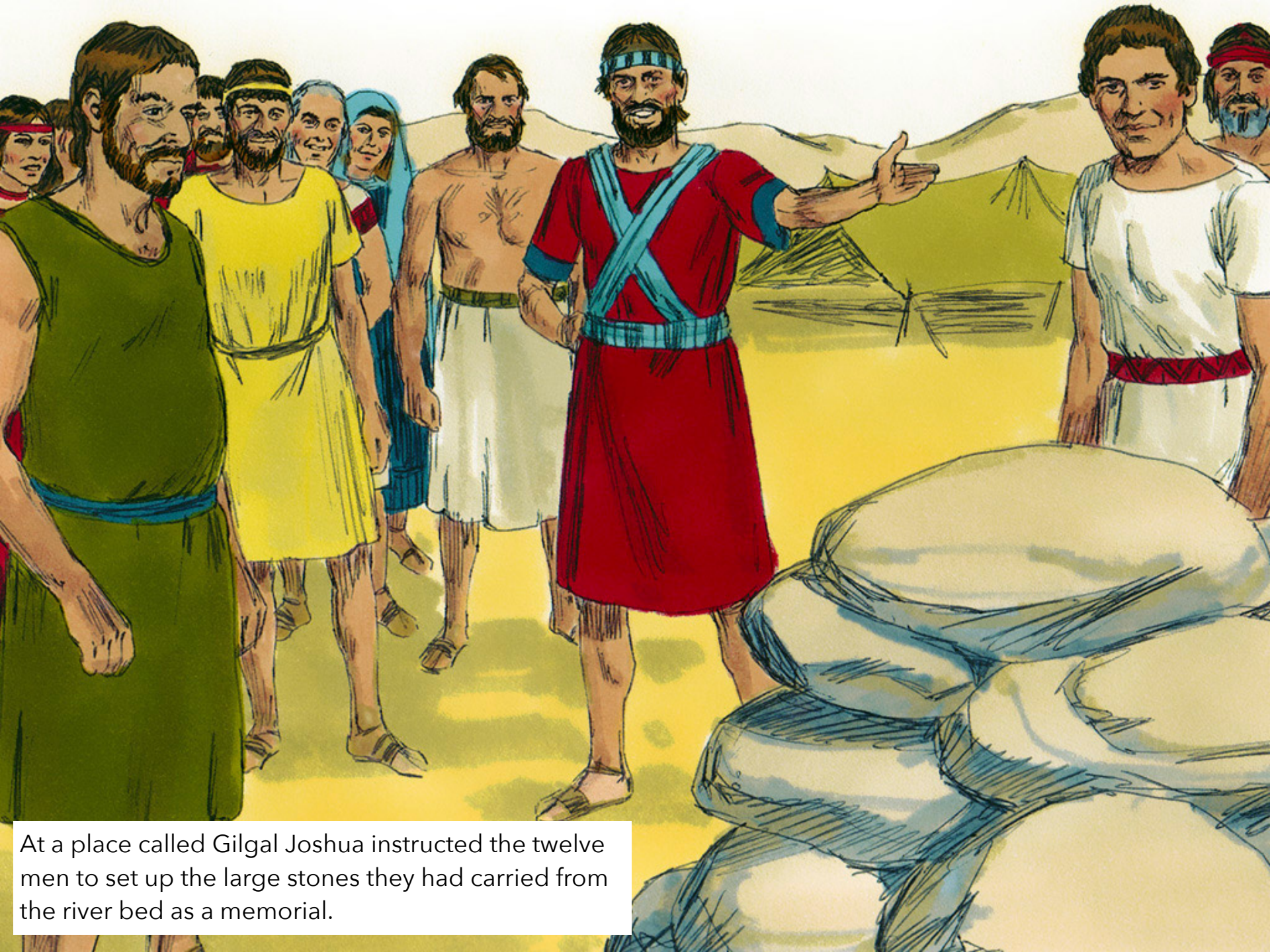
As soon as the priests' feet entered the water the water from upstream stopped flowing. It stood up in a large heap some distance away at a town called Adam. The priests stood in middle of the river bed on dry ground while the people crossed into the Promised Land.

Joshua had given orders for twelve men, one from each tribe, to be chosen. He told these men to gather a large stone each from the dry river bed and carry it to the place where they would set up camp for the night.

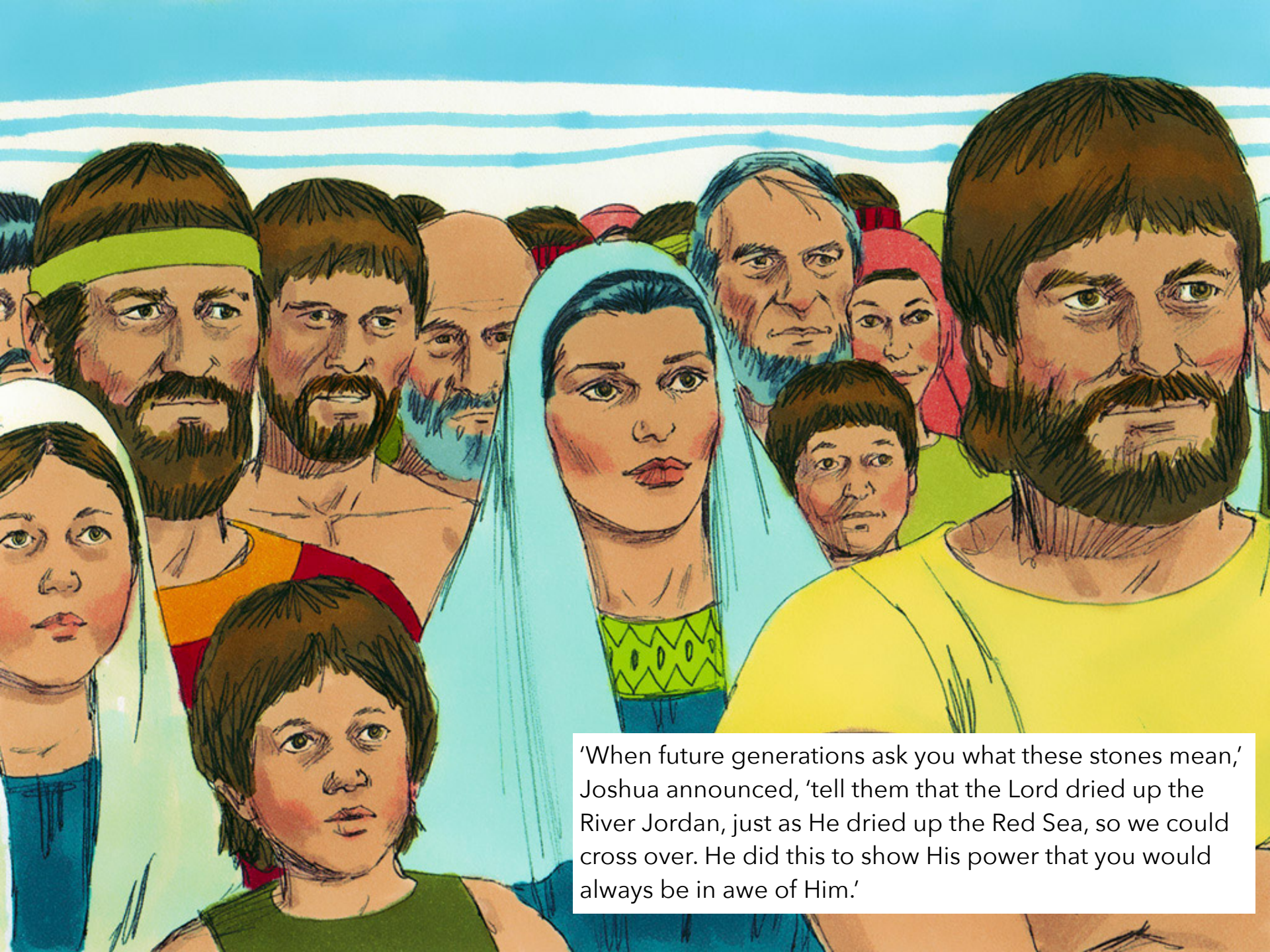




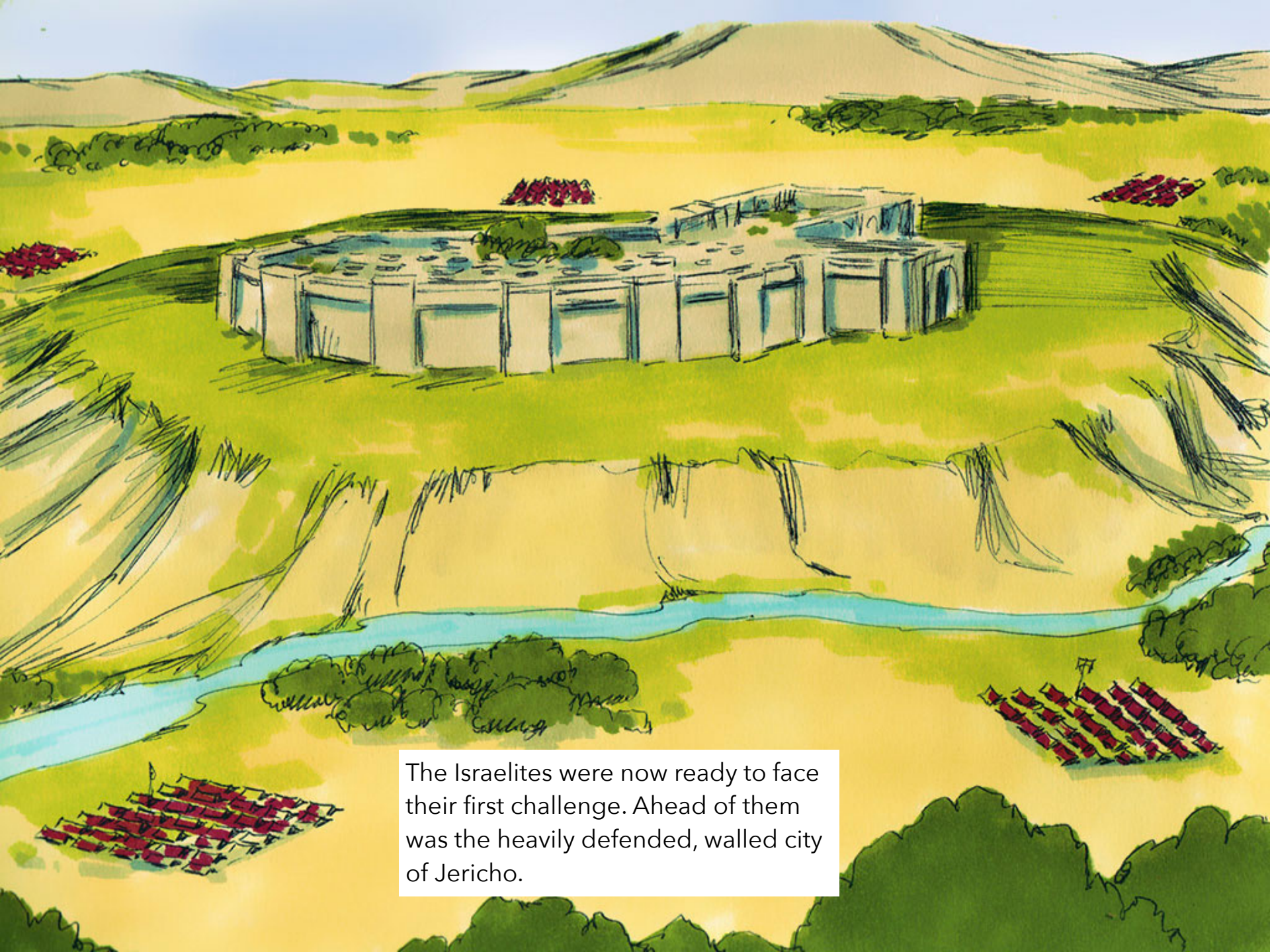
About 40,000 people armed for battle hurried across the River Jordan then stood on the far bank and watched. God instructed Joshua, 'Command the priests to come out of the water. No sooner had they done so than the waters flooded downstream again.'



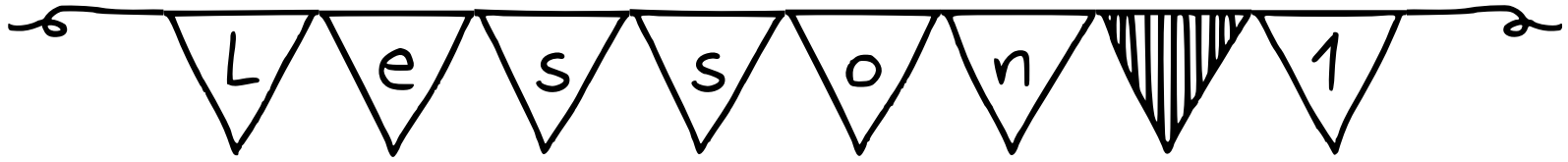
At a place called Gilgal Joshua instructed the twelve men to set up the large stones they had carried from the river bed as a memorial.



'When future generations ask you what these stones mean,' Joshua announced, 'tell them that the Lord dried up the River Jordan, just as He dried up the Red Sea, so we could cross over. He did this to show His power that you would always be in awe of Him.'



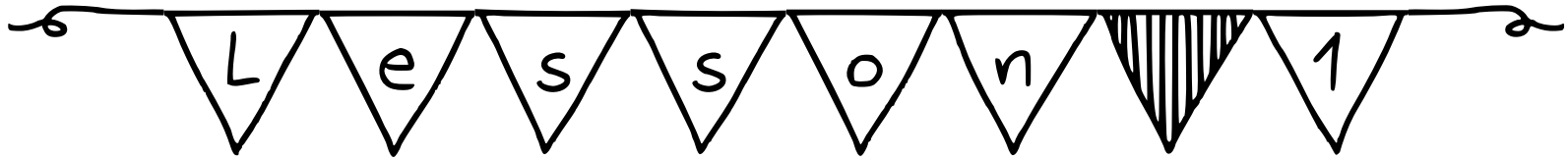
The Israelites were now ready to face their first challenge. Ahead of them was the heavily defended, walled city of Jericho.



God uses all types of people
in his plans, even the most unlikely.

Rahab was one of the least likely person that God could have chosen to execute His plan. He could have chosen a city leader or someone important to the city yet he chose a prostitute that most people would look down on.

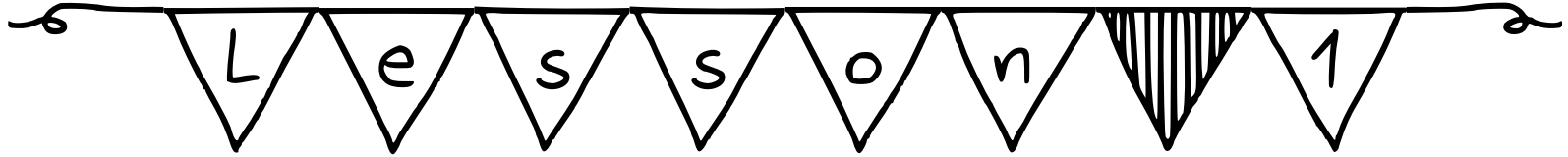
Throughout the Bible, God chooses people He wants instead of the “obvious” choice. The best example of this is Jesus and his unconventional background and humble life.



God keeps his promises no matter how long it takes.

God promised the people of Israel the land promised to them. It would have been easier for God to say “forget it!” after the people complained, disobeyed and generally made it difficult over and over again. But God made a promise and He is willing to wait to make things how He wants them in His own time.

This is the same for us. Sometimes we ask God for things and the answer is yes or no. But other times the answer is “not now” which might not make sense to us but of course God knows the plan for our lives so much more than we do. Even when we think we know better.



Memorials were important to God.

God instructs Joshua who tells the children of Israel exactly how to make a memorial to God with stones from the riverbed.

Today we have a memorial from God in the form of the Lord's Supper. This is also directed from God with specific instructions on how God wants this to be done.