

# **Lesson 2: Jericho and Ai**

## **Joshua 5-8**

**4th and 5th Grade Class**

**Jordan Park church of Christ**





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# WALLS OF JERICHO

Joshua 5:13-6:27

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When the people of Israel entered the land of Canaan, Joshua was their leader, a man chosen by God who had commanded ... 'Look, I have set the land before you: Go in and possess it.'





Canaan was a good land flowing with milk and honey. But this beautiful land was filled with the wickedness of the Canaanite people who lived there.





In cities like Jericho, people worshiped evil and magic and sacrificed their children to idols. God said these things were abominations and the people who did them must be driven from the land. That was to be Joshua's task, and it was a tremendous challenge.






But Joshua had God's promise ... 'As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. Be strong and very courageous.' So Joshua, at God's command, led his people to the plains of Jericho.







The great city of Jericho shut its gates when the inhabitants heard the Israelites were approaching. They were afraid of these people and hated their miracle-working God. But instead of changing their ways Jericho prepared to resist. They gathered together their weapons and got ready for war.



Day and night the men of war kept watch from the top of the walls that surrounded the city.





Nearby the city of Jericho, Joshua looked at the walls so tall and thick and strong. He knew no human power could break them down. But Joshua remembered ...





God had said ... 'No one will be able to stand before you all the days of your life.'







And as Joshua looked to the Lord for help, a strange thing happened!



There stood a man with a sword drawn in his hand!





And when Joshua asked ... 'Are you for us, or for our enemies?' The man said 'I am the captain of the army of the Lord. Take your shoes off for the place where you are standing is holy.'





Joshua obeyed with humble worship. And he listened carefully to all the instructions the Lord gave him.





When Joshua returned to camp, he called together his men. These men of Israel had sworn to obey Joshua as they had Moses.





But as they listened to Joshua's orders, the men of Israel realized that obedience would test not only their loyalty to their leader, but their faith in the Lord as well.







Surely no soldiers ever heard orders such as Joshua's men heard from their leader! But the men were encouraged when Joshua told them...



The Lord said the walls of Jericho would fall down flat! And every man would go into straight into the city! So the men of Israel prepared to obey.





Inside the walls of Jericho the alarm suddenly rang out ... 'The Israelites are coming!'







To the walls! To the walls!' they shouted, as every man hurried to his place.



From the top of the wall, Jericho's men of war watched tensely as the Israelites approached. First came armed men, then something that looked very strange in the ranks of an army!







Seven priests were blowing their trumpets continually, and following them ...





... a mysterious object was hidden beneath rich blue coverings. What could it be?



Only the people of Israel knew it was the ark of the Lord and it was there to remind them that the Lord went before them, and victory was in the Lord.





Strange as it seemed, all the Israelites did was to march around the city in a quiet and peaceful way. Not a single word was spoken! The only sounds to be heard were...







... the steady tramp of marching feet ...



... and the endless blast of the priests' trumpets!







The people of Jericho just stood still and watched in amazement as the long column of Israelites disappeared among the hills and returned to their camp.





Jericho's fighting men were troubled . . . and uneasy. What could it mean? Was it a trick of some kind?





On the second day, the Israelites did exactly the same thing as they had done the day before.





The priests carried the ark of the Lord around the city, seven priests always blowing their trumpets before it, and armed men marching in front and the rear.





The Israelites marched once around the city then returned to camp without anyone saying a single word!



Every day for six days the same thing happened, and every day the people of Jericho watched and waited.







Some were still fearful and troubled, remembering the things they had heard about Israel's Almighty God.





But others began to mock. These foolish Israelites marching around and around the strong walls of Jericho, blowing their trumpets and carrying a mysterious box! Anyone could see they'd never get into the city that way!





On the morning of the seventh day, the Israelites marched around the city as before. But then, instead of returning to their camp, they marched around a second time, and then again and again and again! Seven times the Israelites marched around the city.





At the end of the seventh time, every man stopped and faced the walls, completely surrounding the city of Jericho.



And suddenly the trumpets stopped! Every man waited for the Lord's appointed signal!





A long blast of the trumpets! Then Joshua cried ...





'Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!'





And while the people of Jericho looked on,  
not knowing that their end had come ....





... the people of Israel raised a great shout of victory!







And the walls of the city fell down flat!



The Israelites went straight in to attack the city, just as the Lord had said. And they utterly destroyed all the evil that was in the city as God had commanded.



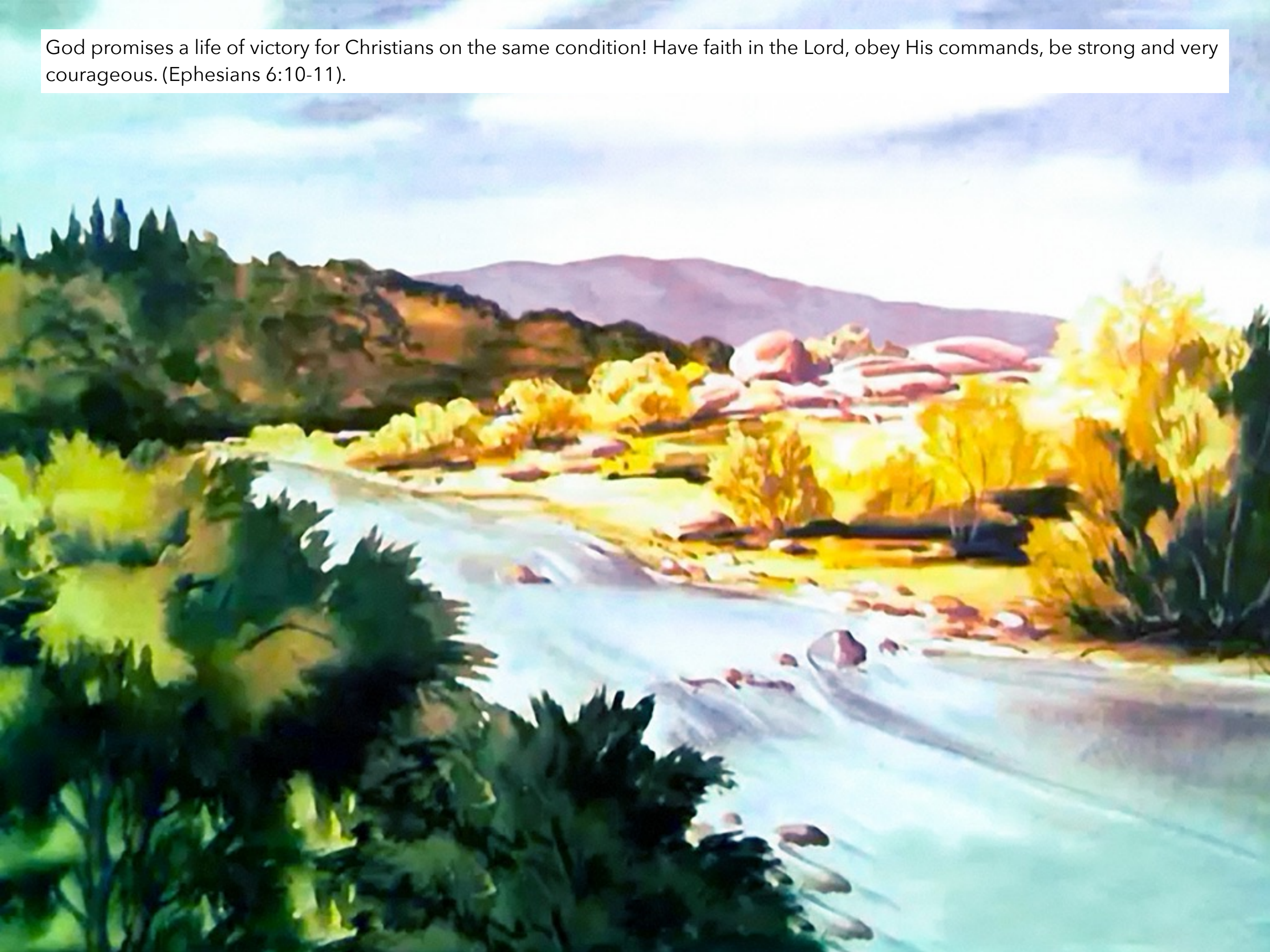




After that time, wherever they went in the Promised land, the Israelites had victory as long as they had faith in the Lord and obeyed His commands.




God promises a life of victory for Christians on the same condition! Have faith in the Lord, obey His commands, be strong and very courageous. (Ephesians 6:10-11).







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# **ACHAN DISOBEYS AND BRINGS DEFEAT** Joshua 7:1-26

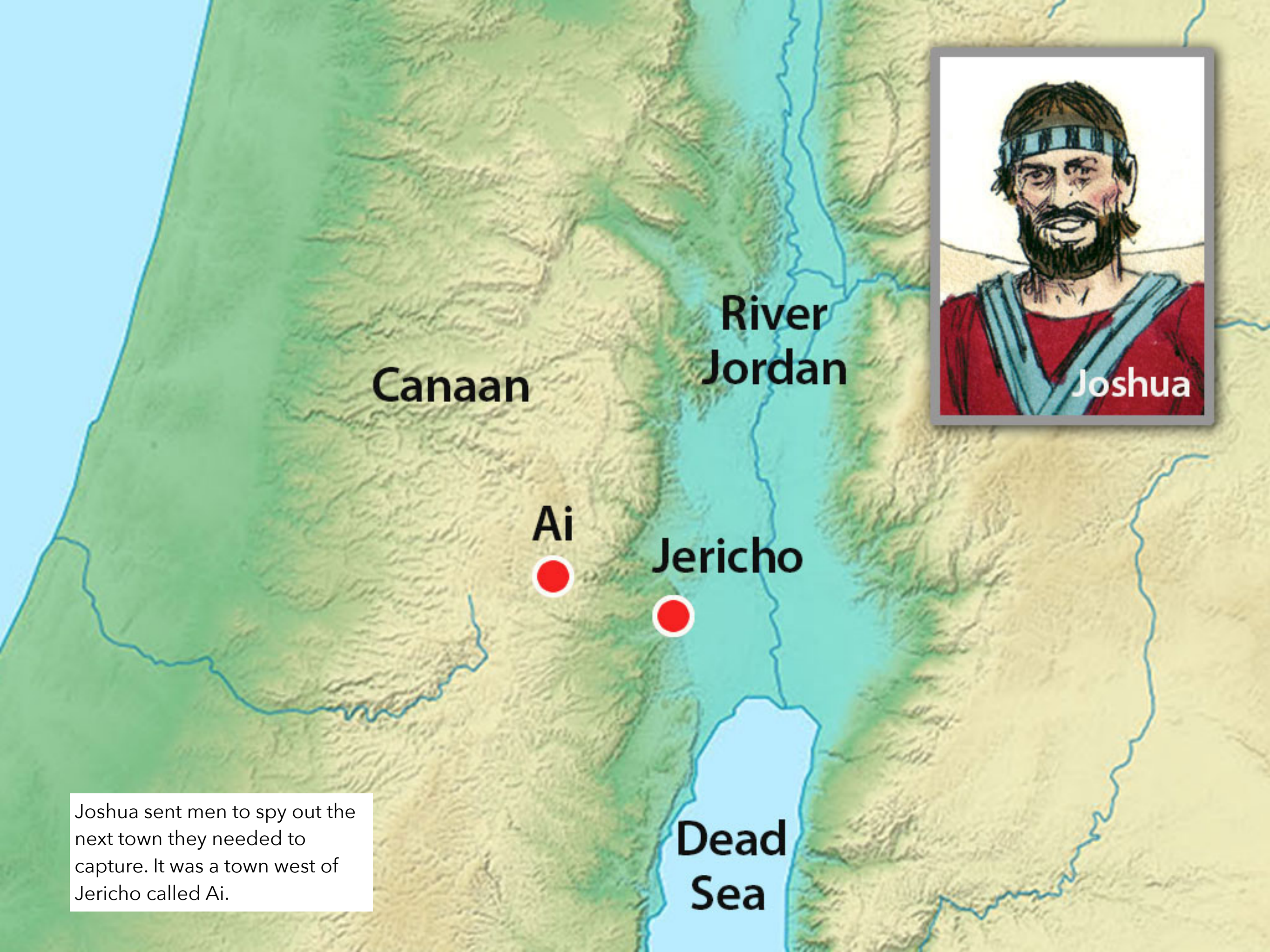
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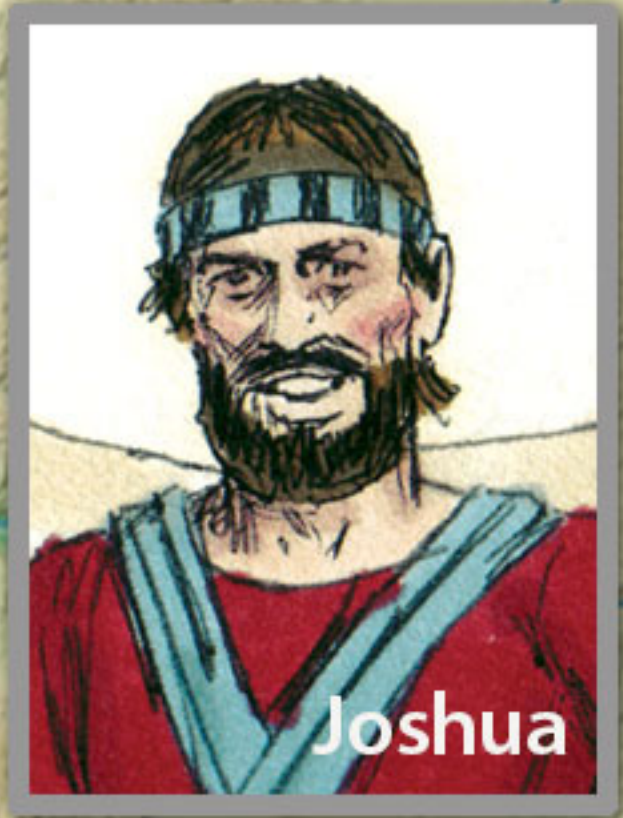
When the Israelites conquered Jericho God gave instructions that no one was to plunder anything or there would be trouble in the camp. Everything made from silver, gold, bronze, or iron was brought to the Lord and put in His treasury. However, unknown to anyone, one man had secretly taken plunder and hidden it.





**Canaan**

**River  
Jordan**



**Joshua**

**Ai**



**Jericho**



**Dead  
Sea**

Joshua sent men to spy out the next town they needed to capture. It was a town west of Jericho called Ai.





When they returned, they told Joshua, 'There's no need for the whole army to capture Ai. There are so few of the enemy, it won't take more than two or three thousand men to attack Ai.'



So Joshua sent around 3,000 men to take the town.



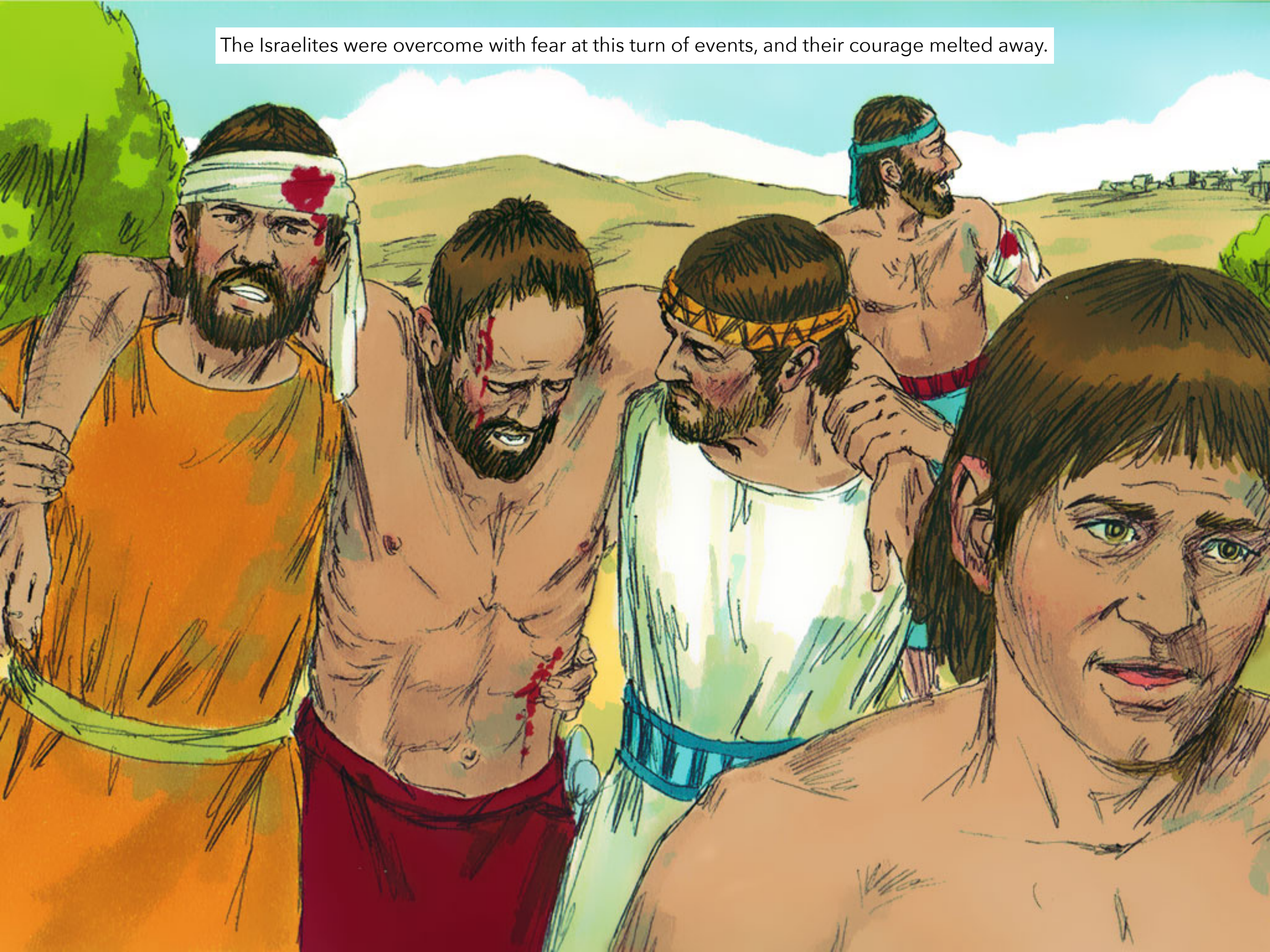


But the men of Ai chased the Israelites from the town gate, killing about thirty-six as they retreated in defeat.





The Israelites were overcome with fear at this turn of events, and their courage melted away.





Joshua and the elders of Israel tore their clothing in dismay, threw dust on their heads, and bowed face down before the Ark of the Lord until evening.





Then Joshua cried out, 'Oh, Sovereign Lord, why did you let the Amorites kill us? When the Canaanites and others hear about our defeat, they will surround us and destroy us forever. And then what will happen to the honor of your great name?'



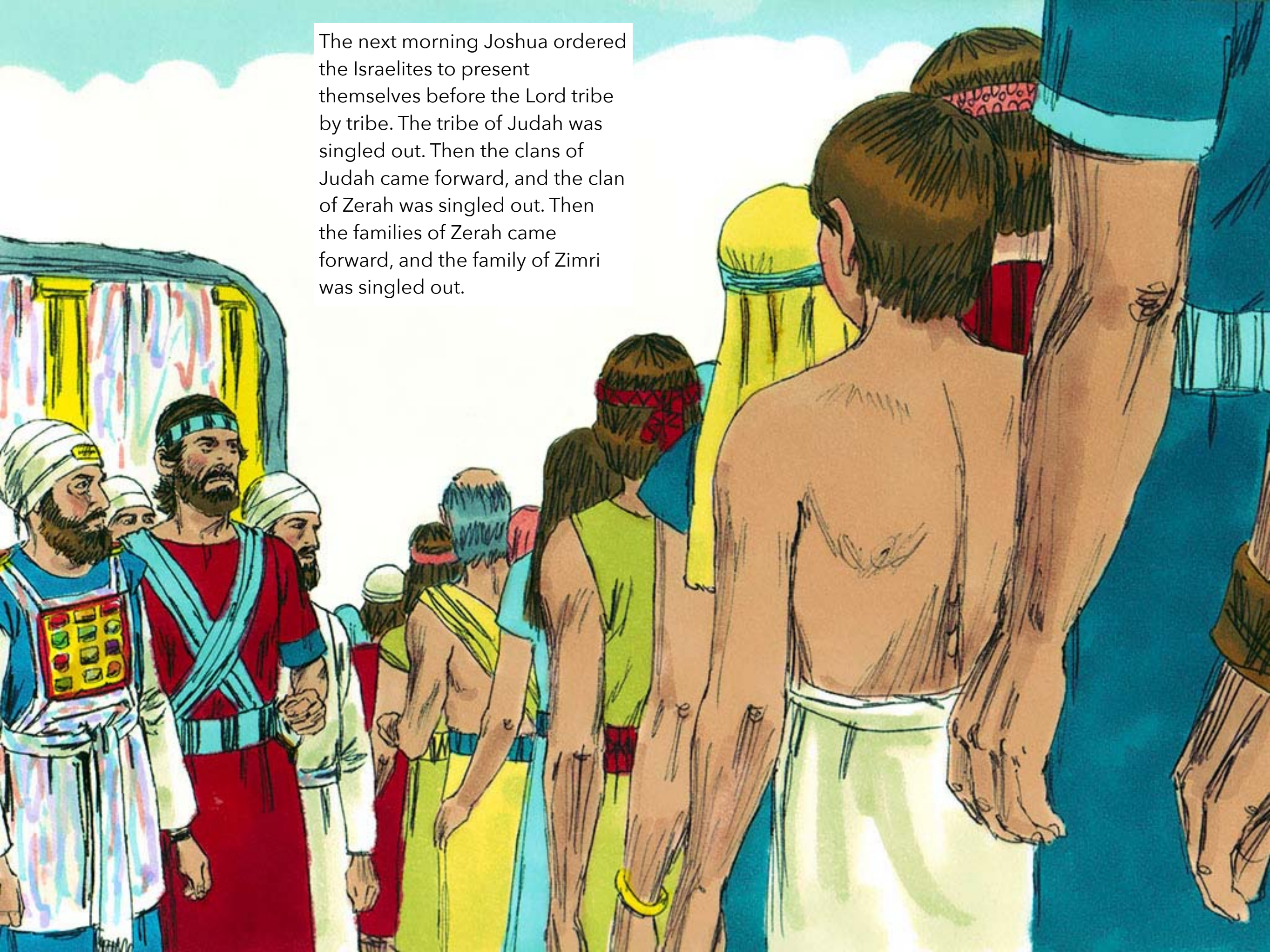


The Lord replied, 'Get up! Why are you lying on your face like this? Israel has sinned and stolen some of the things that I commanded must be set apart for me. They have not only stolen things and lied about it but hidden the plunder among their own belongings. You will never defeat your enemies until you remove these things from among you.'

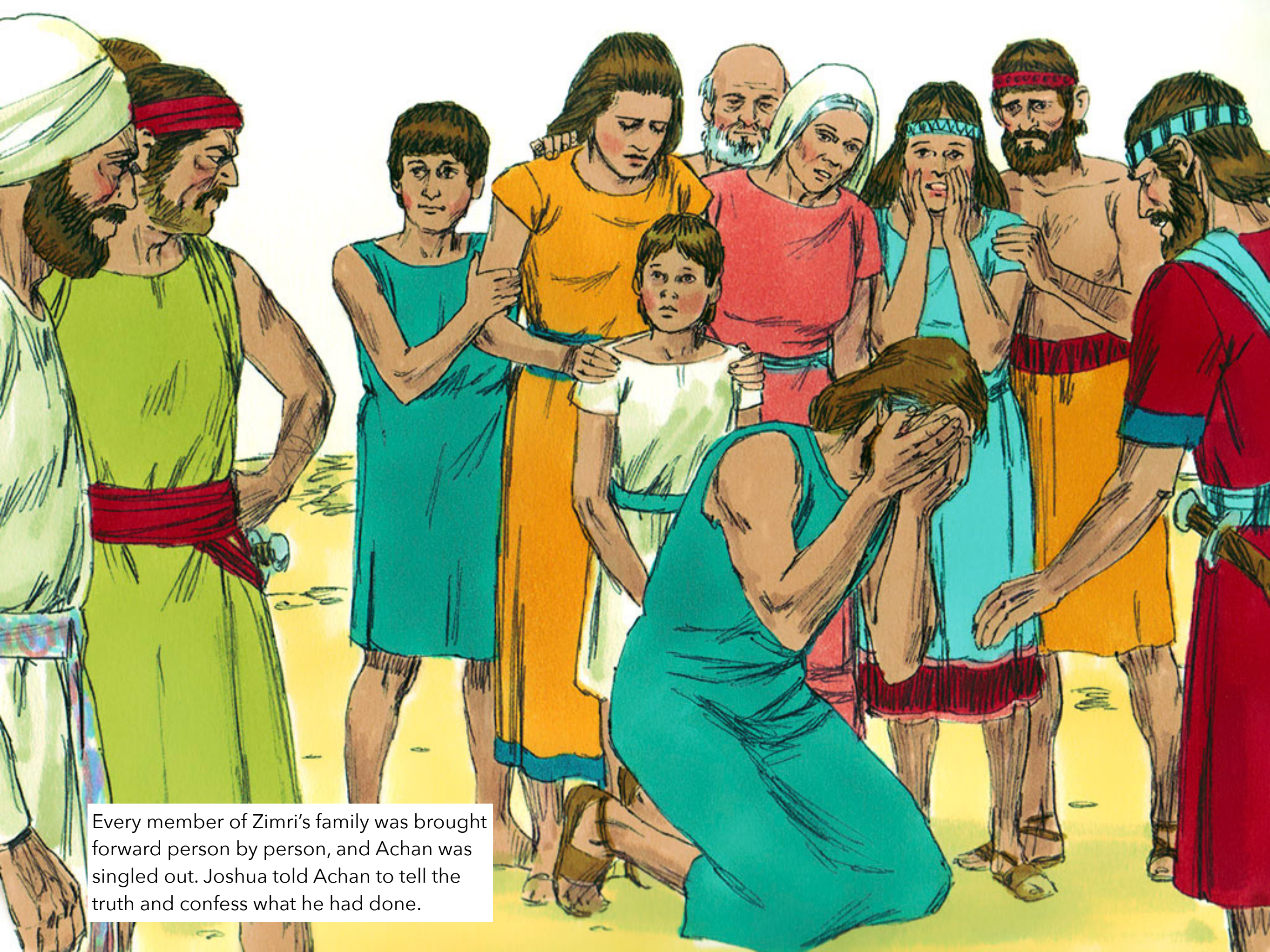




The next morning Joshua ordered the Israelites to present themselves before the Lord tribe by tribe. The tribe of Judah was singled out. Then the clans of Judah came forward, and the clan of Zerah was singled out. Then the families of Zerah came forward, and the family of Zimri was singled out.

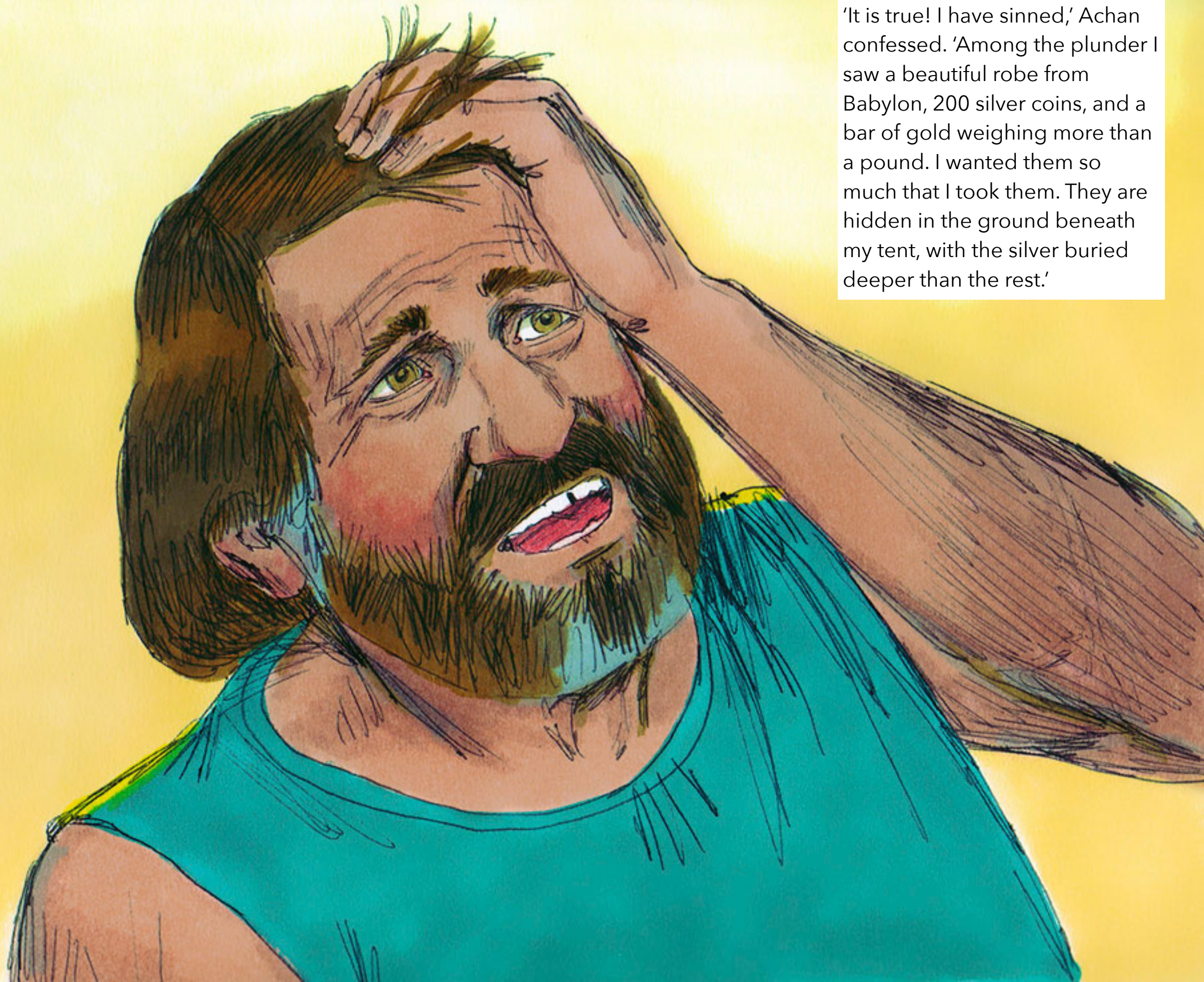






Every member of Zimri's family was brought forward person by person, and Achan was singled out. Joshua told Achan to tell the truth and confess what he had done.

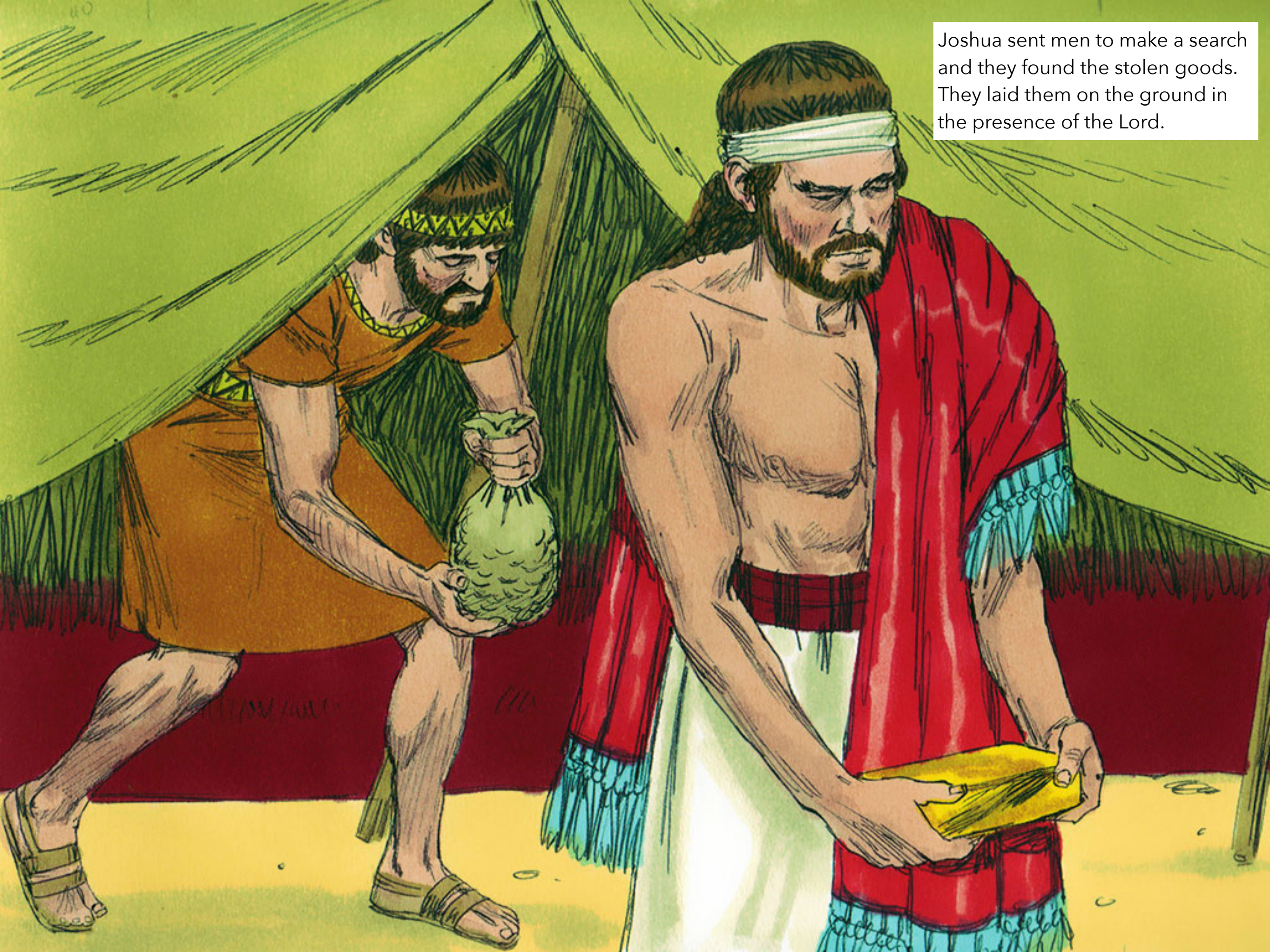




'It is true! I have sinned,' Achan confessed. 'Among the plunder I saw a beautiful robe from Babylon, 200 silver coins, and a bar of gold weighing more than a pound. I wanted them so much that I took them. They are hidden in the ground beneath my tent, with the silver buried deeper than the rest.'



Joshua sent men to make a search and they found the stolen goods. They laid them on the ground in the presence of the Lord.



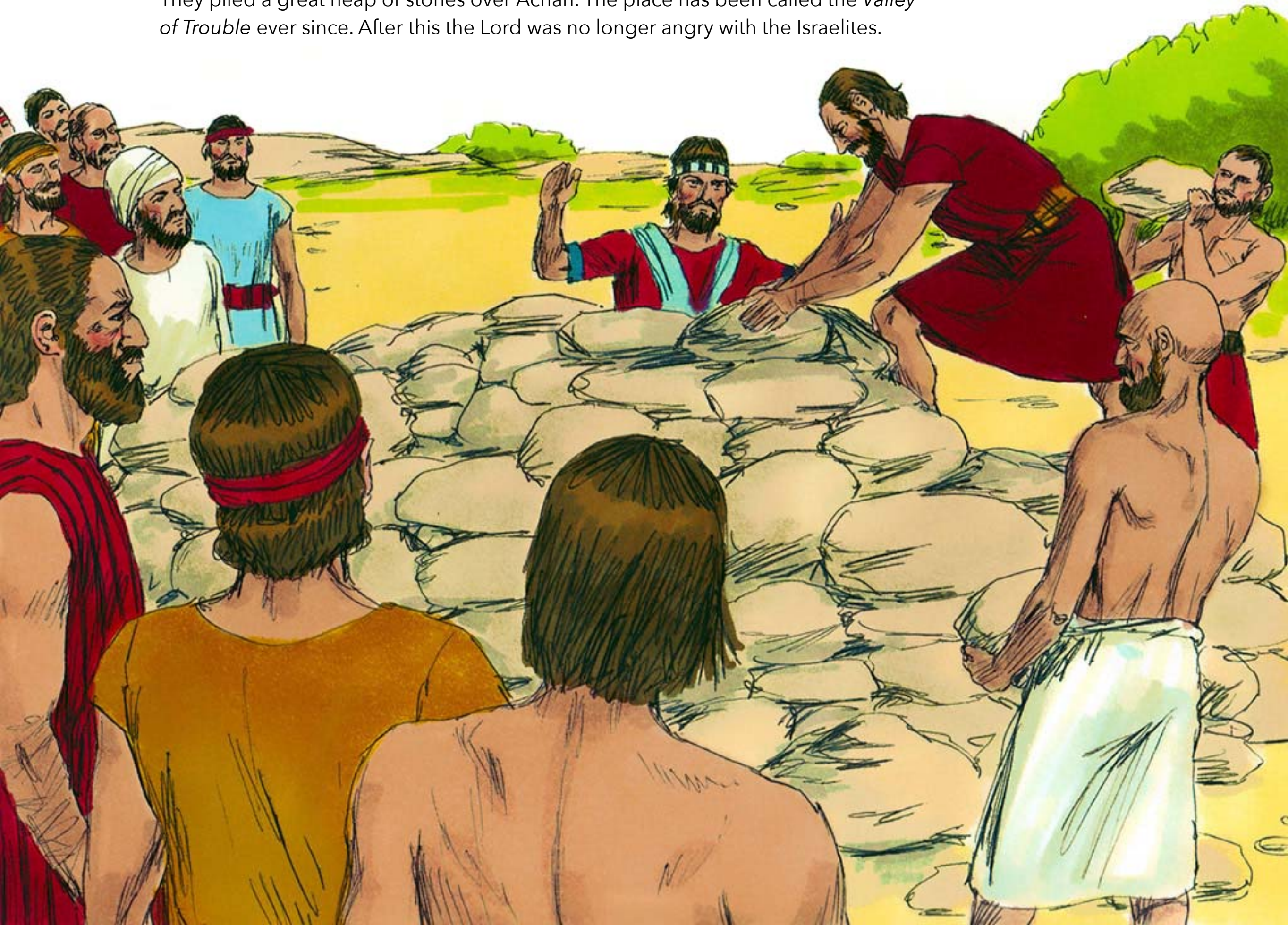


Joshua and the Israelites took Achan, the silver, the robe, the bar of gold, his sons, daughters, cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats, tent, and everything he had. They brought them to the valley of Achor where they stoned them to death.





They piled a great heap of stones over Achan. The place has been called the *Valley of Trouble* ever since. After this the Lord was no longer angry with the Israelites.



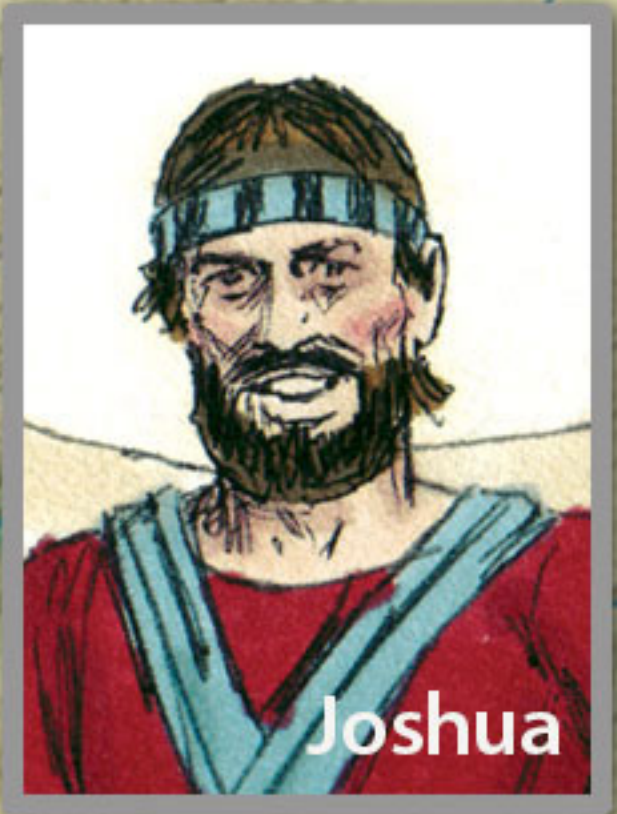
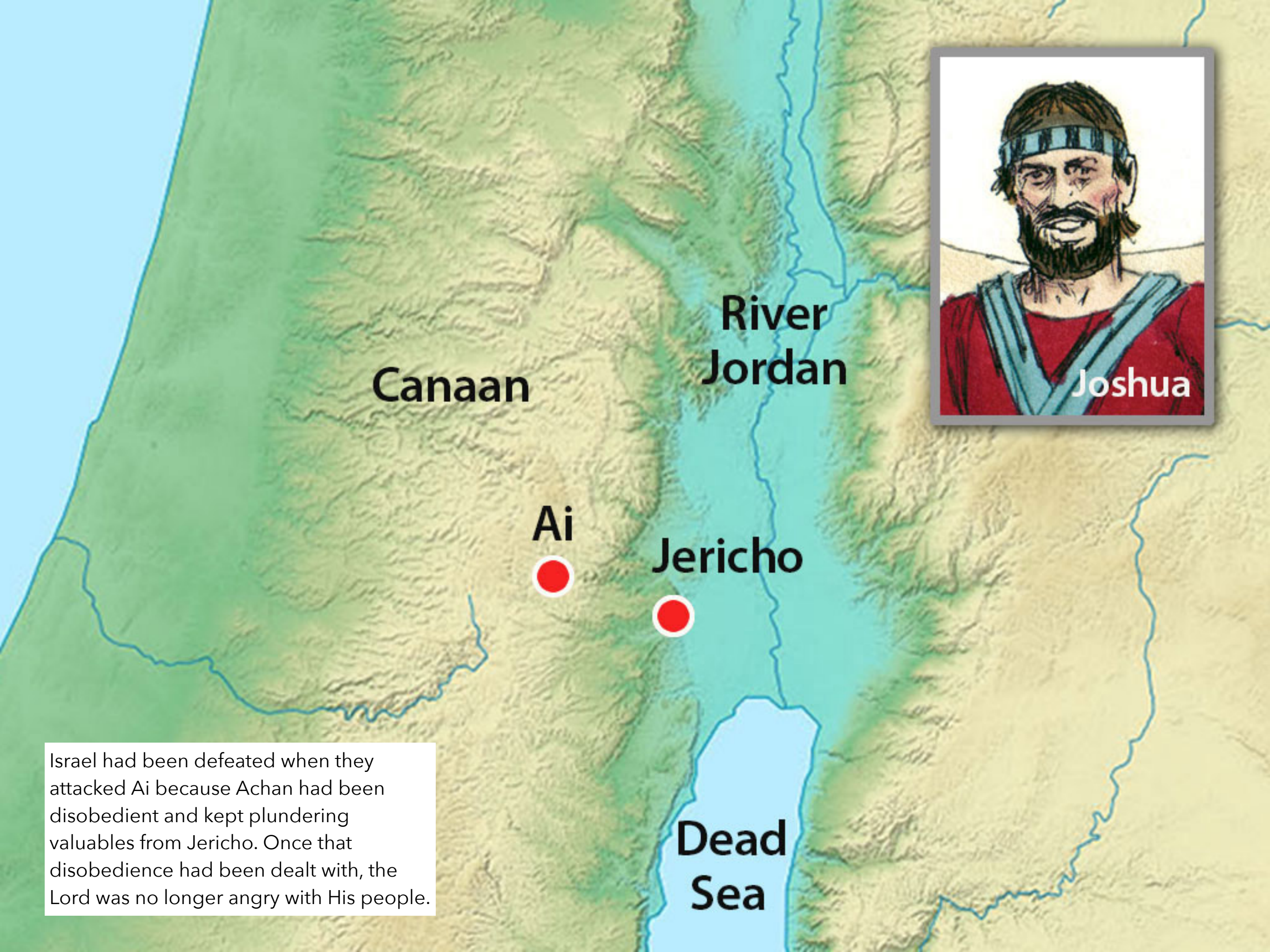




# JOSHUA: THE SECOND ATTACK ON AI

Joshua 8:1-35





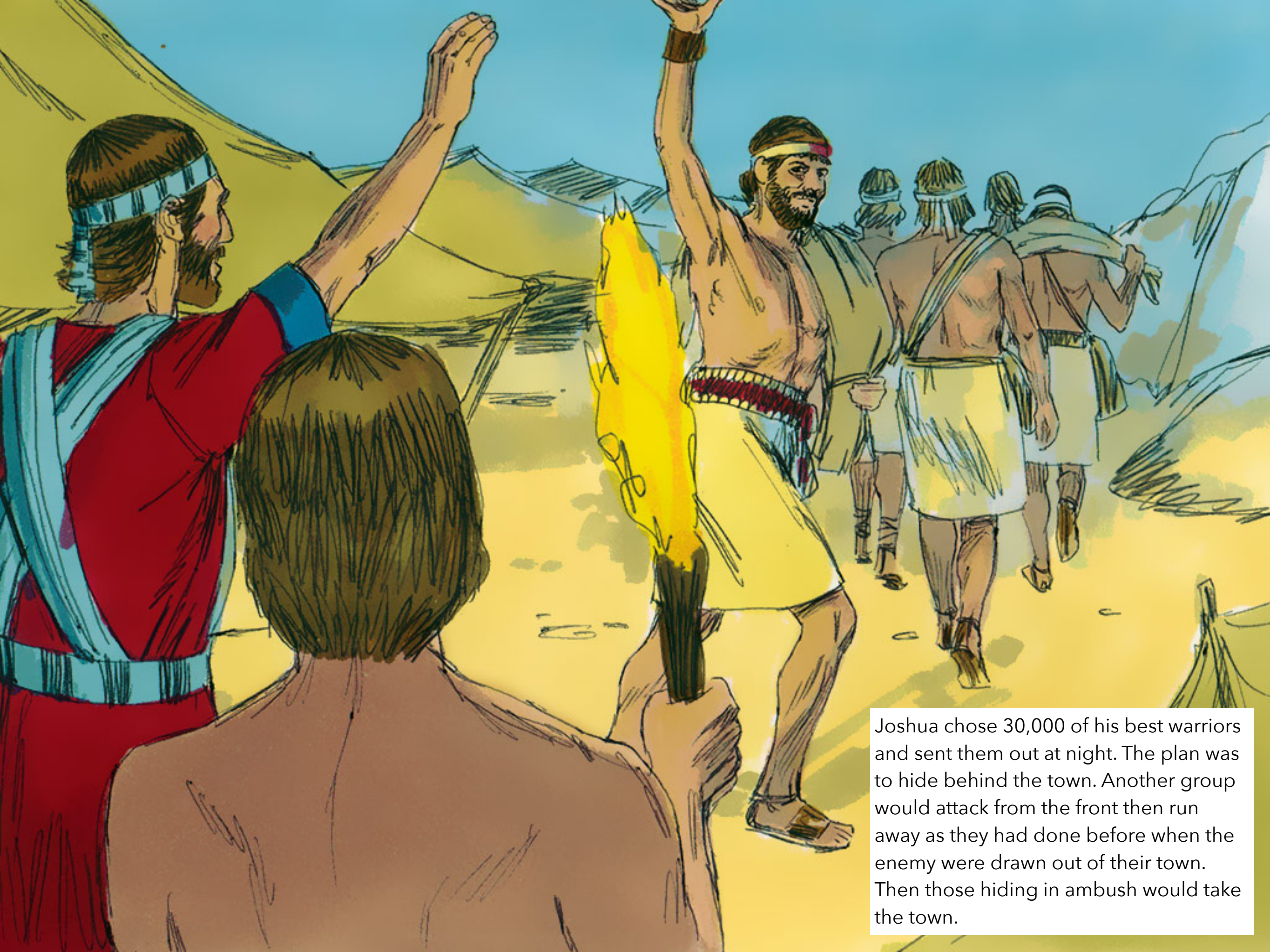
Israel had been defeated when they attacked Ai because Achan had been disobedient and kept plundering valuables from Jericho. Once that disobedience had been dealt with, the Lord was no longer angry with His people.





The Lord said to Joshua, 'Do not be afraid. Take all your fighting men and attack Ai. You will destroy them as you destroyed Jericho and its king. This time you may keep the plunder and the livestock for yourselves. Set an ambush behind the town.'

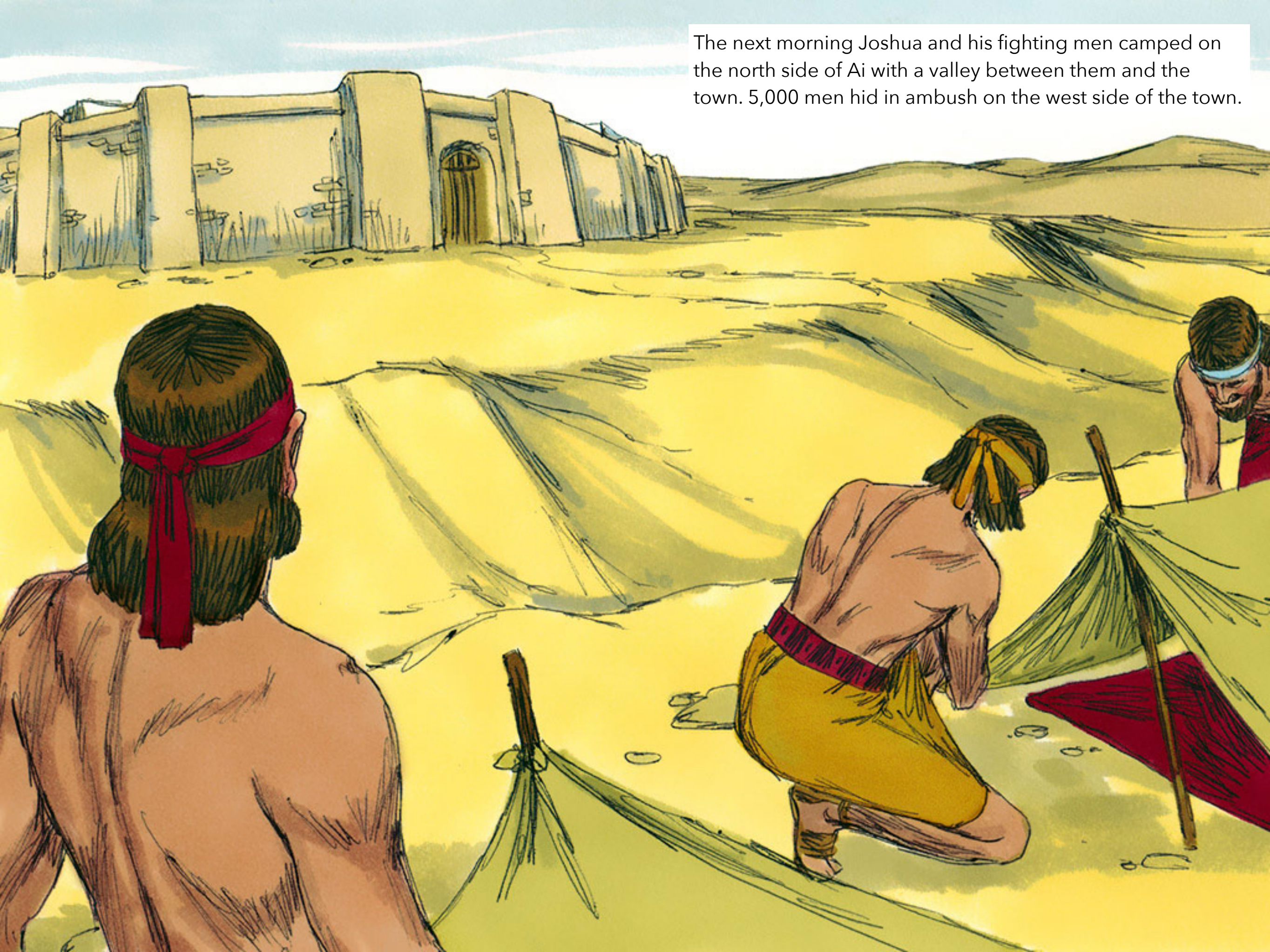




Joshua chose 30,000 of his best warriors and sent them out at night. The plan was to hide behind the town. Another group would attack from the front then run away as they had done before when the enemy were drawn out of their town. Then those hiding in ambush would take the town.



The next morning Joshua and his fighting men camped on the north side of Ai with a valley between them and the town. 5,000 men hid in ambush on the west side of the town.





When the king of Ai saw the Israelites across the valley, he and all his army hurried out early in the morning and attacked them. He didn't realize that an ambush had been set.





All the men in Ai and the nearby town of Bethel charged towards the Israelites, leaving Ai undefended.







Joshua and the Israelite army fled toward the wilderness as though they were badly beaten.





Then the Lord told Joshua, 'Point the spear in your hand toward Ai, for I will hand the town over to you.' Joshua obeyed.





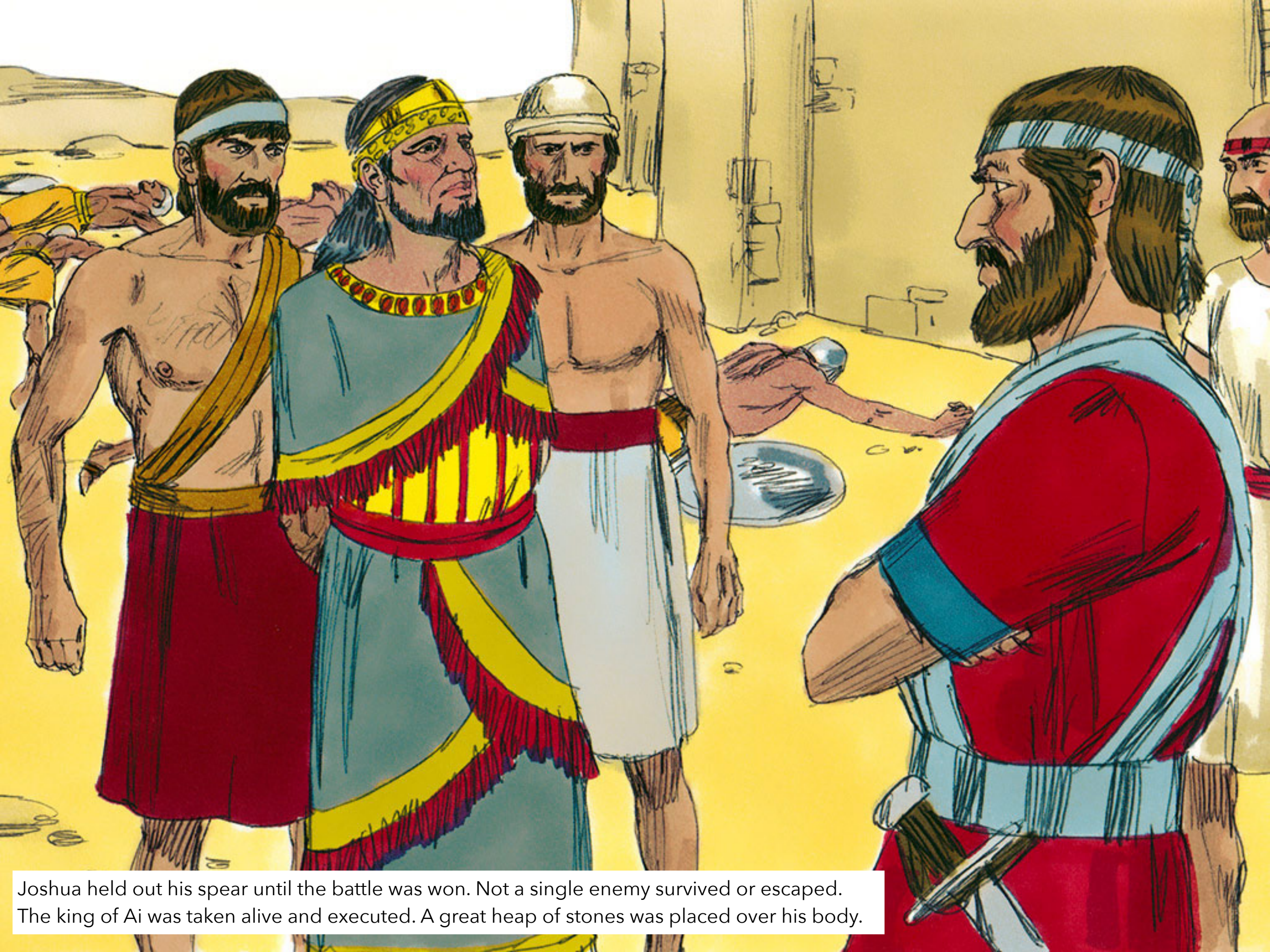
The men waiting in ambush poured into the town, captured it and set it on fire.





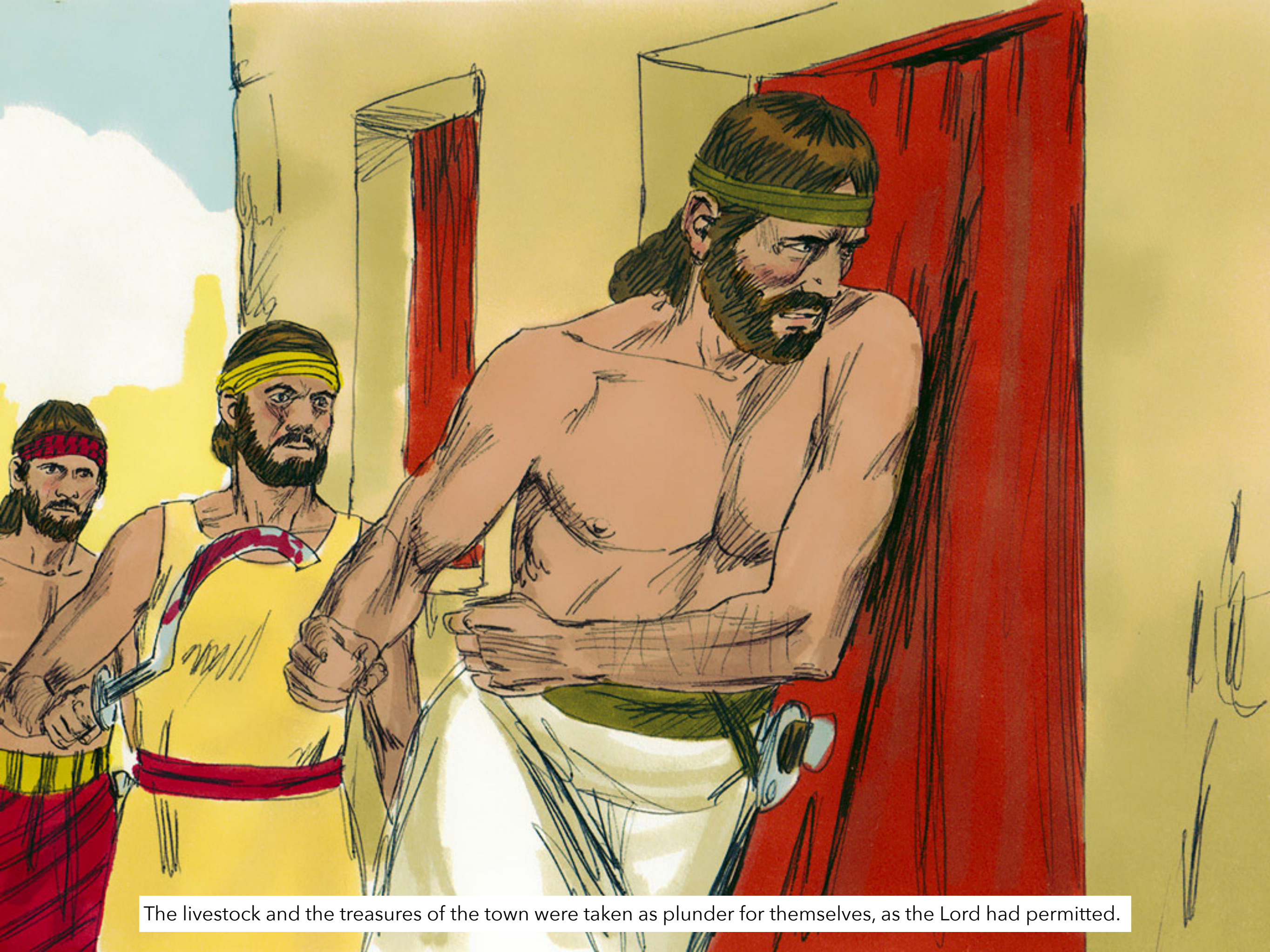
The men of Ai saw smoke from the town filling the sky. The Israelites who had fled in the direction of the wilderness now turned on their pursuers. Those who had captured Ai poured out of the town to attack the enemy from the rear.





Joshua held out his spear until the battle was won. Not a single enemy survived or escaped. The king of Ai was taken alive and executed. A great heap of stones was placed over his body.

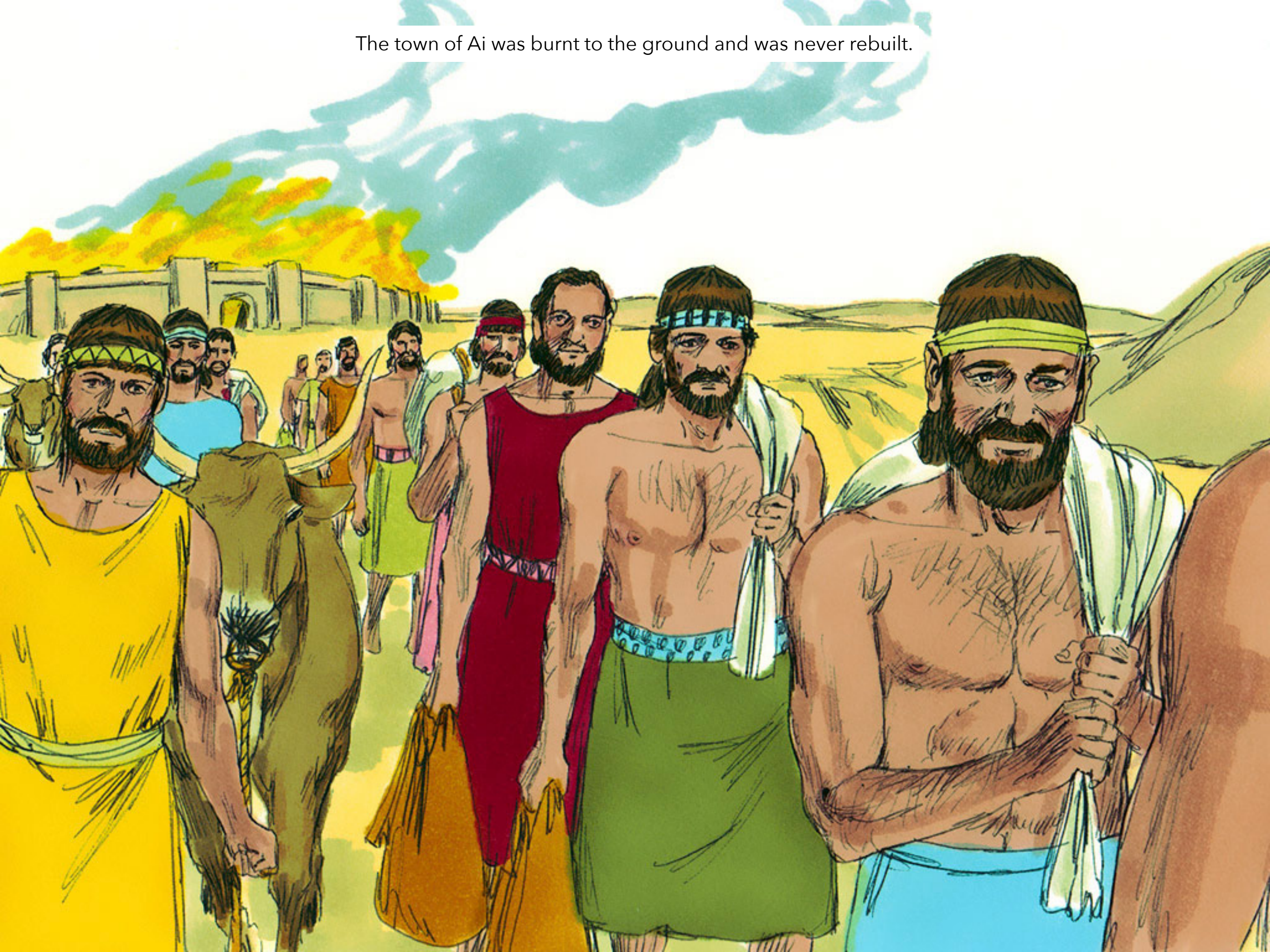




The livestock and the treasures of the town were taken as plunder for themselves, as the Lord had permitted.



The town of Ai was burnt to the ground and was never rebuilt.

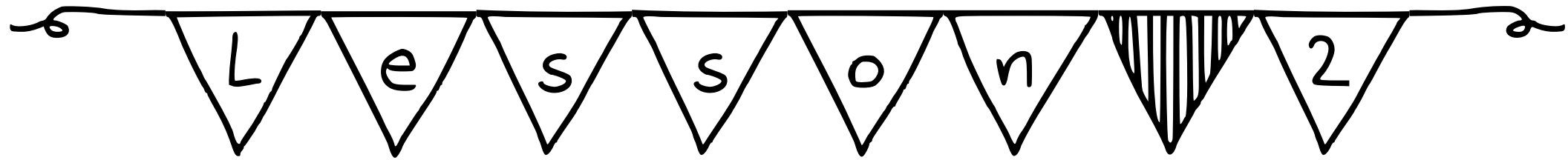






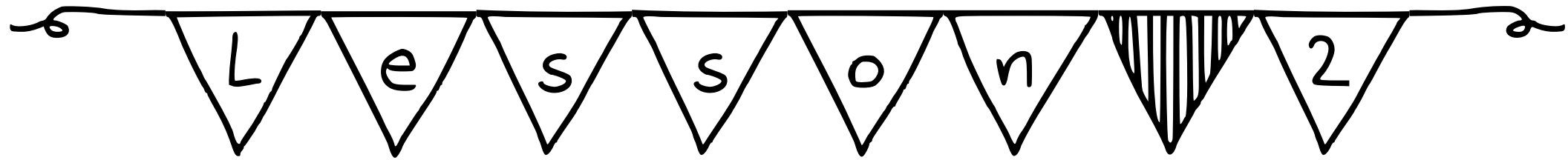
Joshua built an altar to the Lord on Mount Ebal. The Israelites were assembled into two groups, one in front of Mount Gerizim, the other in front of Mount Ebal. Joshua then read to them every command that Moses had been given by God.





Obey God and we will have victory.  
Without God we will always lose.

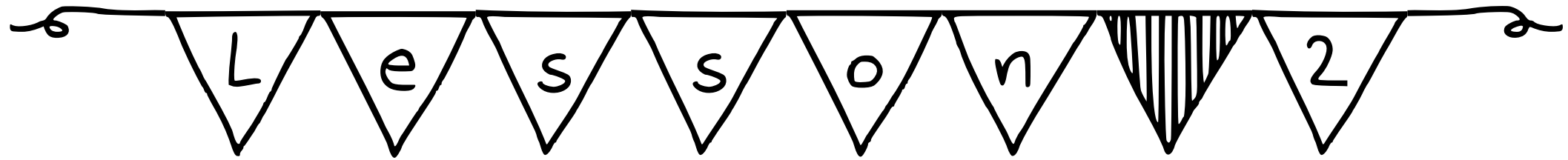




God shows us that Joshua is to be respected just like Moses was. The Israelites were directed to obey Joshua.

We too should respect those with authority over us. Who do you have in your lives that have authority over you? How can you show respect to them? Why do you think this is important?

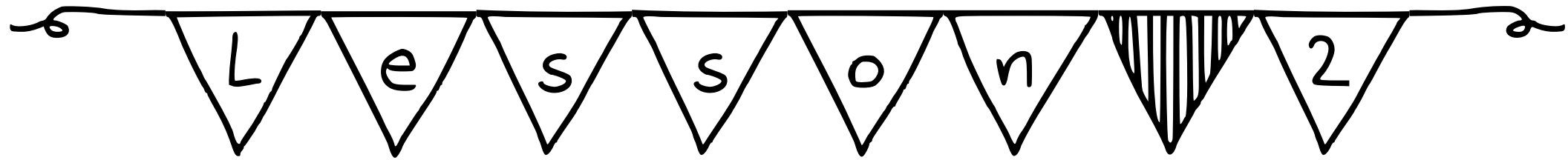




Joshua was a general of the army and a leader of a nation. Yet he still humbled himself before God.

What qualities make a good leader? Do you know of a leader you admire? What qualities make them special?





Why did Joshua kill all of those people, even the children?

1. God told him to.
2. God knew these people were wicked.
3. They worshipped idols and would “rub off” on the Israelites.
4. God knew the Israelites would intermarry with them.
5. They committed fornication and offered children as sacrifices in idol worship.
6. God had a right to judge the nations.

Deut. 7:1-5, Lev. 18:24-25, Deut. 12:31