



Spiritual Lessons from the Life of Moses

Lesson 21-
The 12 spies

Num 13, 14

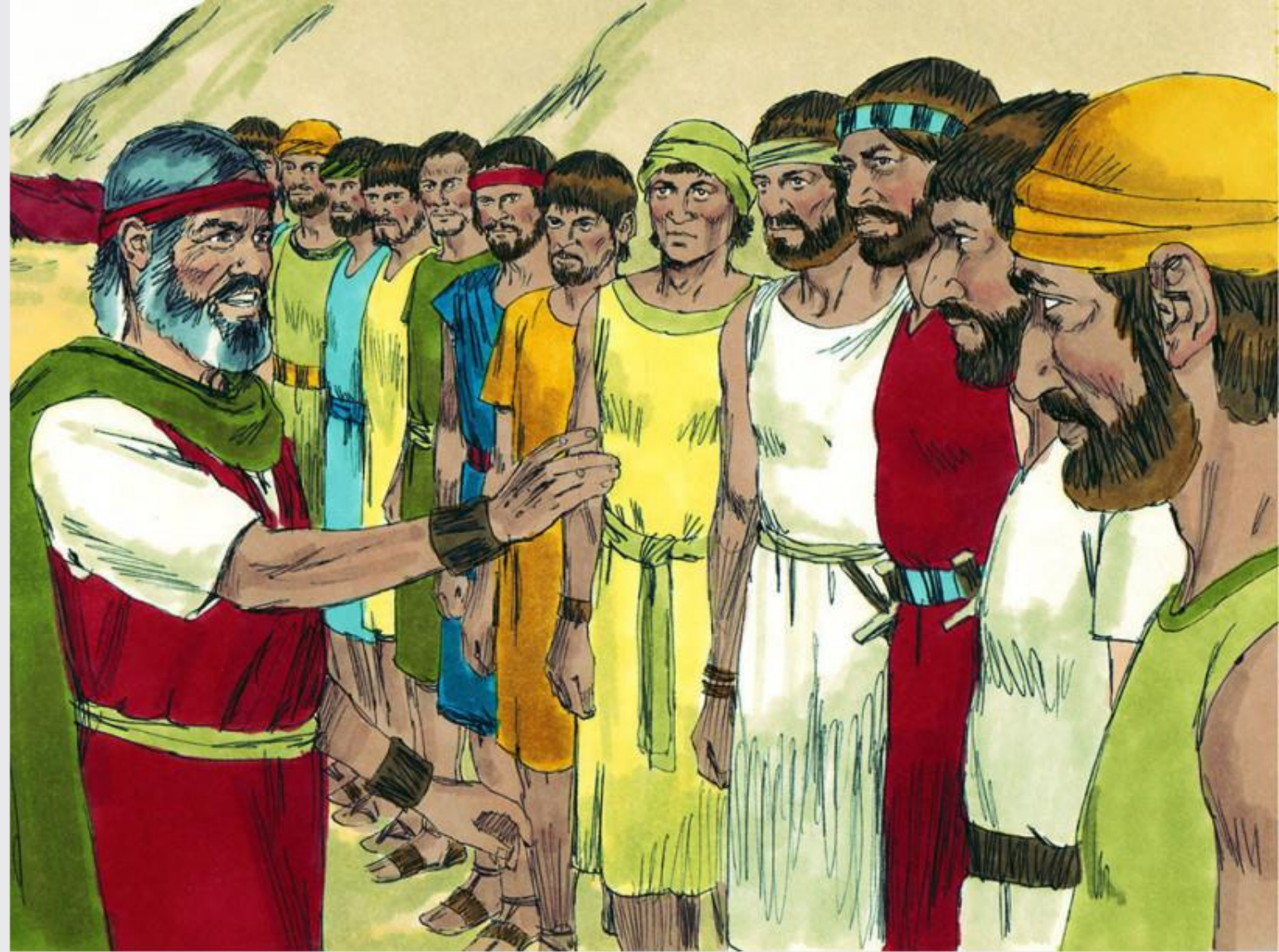
<https://d3h6k4kfl8m9p0.cloudfront.net/stories/PIDbOjryanTSIM9gDRKhQw.jpg>

Map of the Exodus:

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<https://www.thebiblejourney.org/find-people-places-maps/find-maps-diagrams/>

(1) Background: From Hazeroth, the Israelites went to Rithmah (Kadesh Barnea).

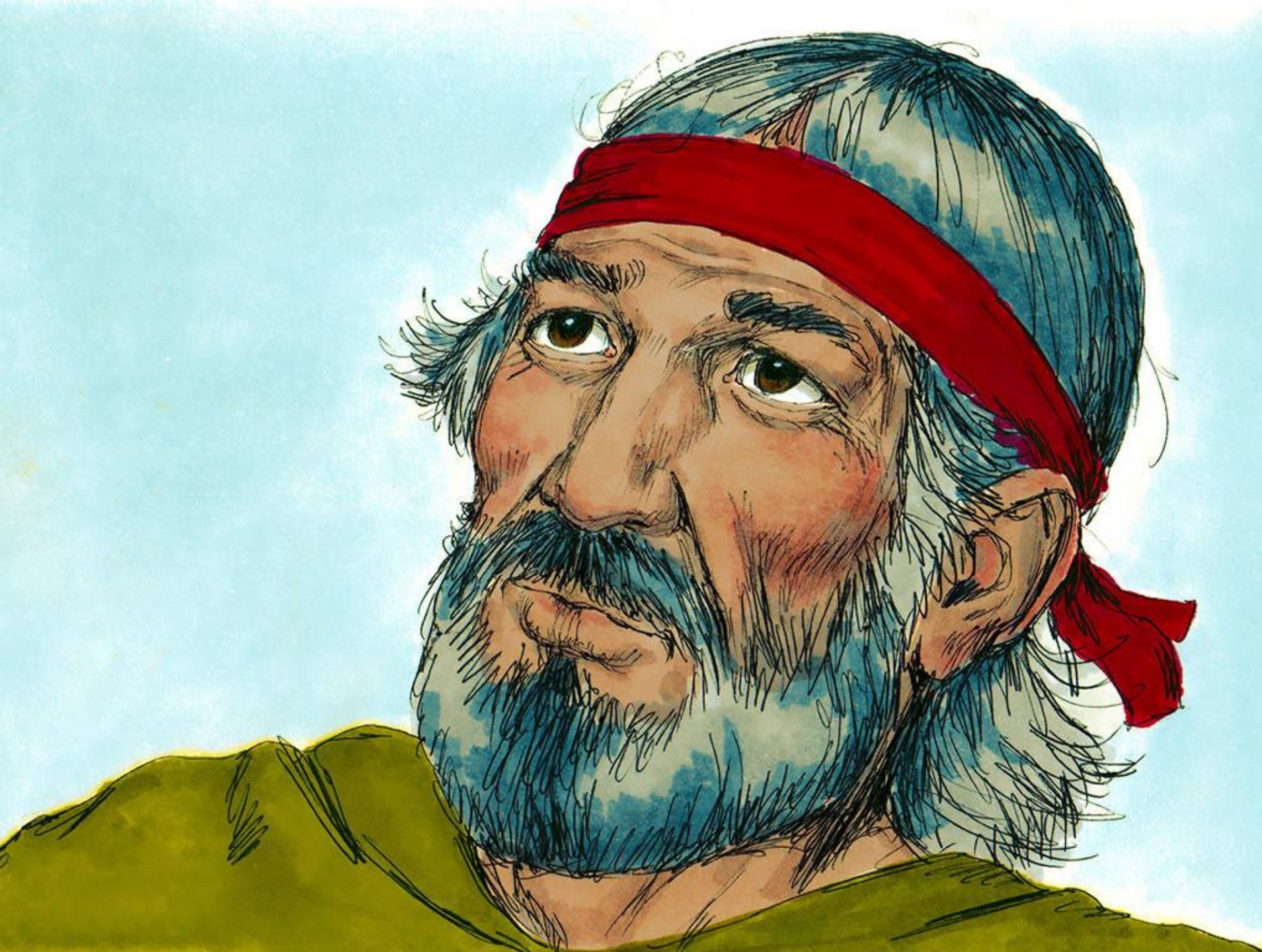


Twelve spies sent into Canaan

Numbers 13:1-14:45



After leaving Egypt, the freed Hebrew slaves moved through the wilderness on their way to the land God had promised them. As they approached Canaan, they stopped in the wilderness of Zin at a place called Kadesh Barnea.



Num 13: 2

The Lord told Moses to select a leader from each of the 12 tribes to go and spy out the land ahead.

It was the idea of the Israelites to send the 12 spies. Read Deut 1:19-23.



Num 13: 4

Moses chose a leader from each tribe. (Their names were Shammua, Shaphat, Caleb, Igal, Joshua, Palti, Gaddiel, Gaddi, Ammiel, Sethur, Nahbi and Geuel).



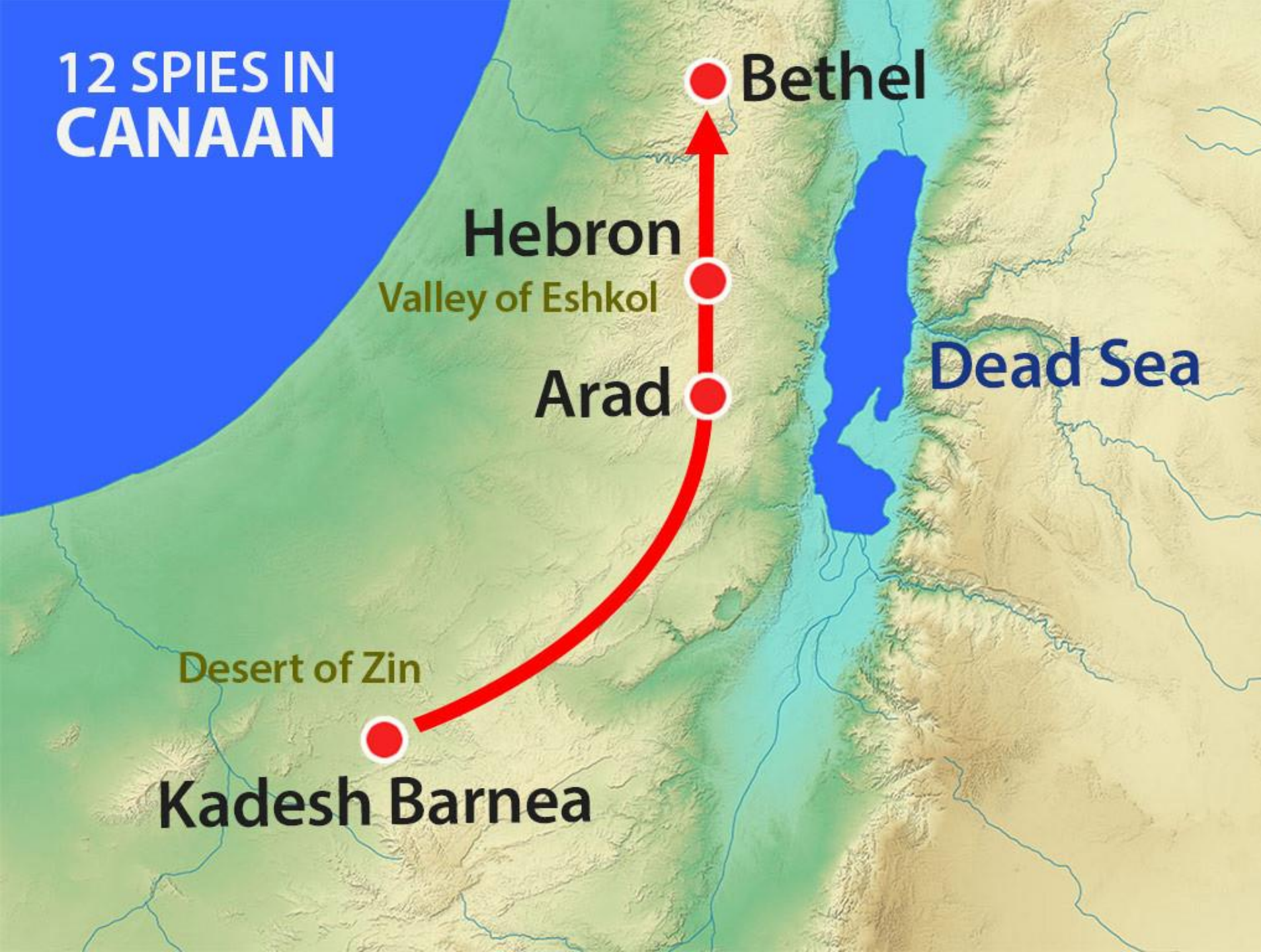
Num 13: 17-20

Moses told them to find out:

- whether the people in Canaan were strong or weak?
- few or many in their towns?
- were the cities fortified?
- Was the soil fertile or poor?

Moses also asked them to bring back some fruit from the land.

12 SPIES IN CANAAN



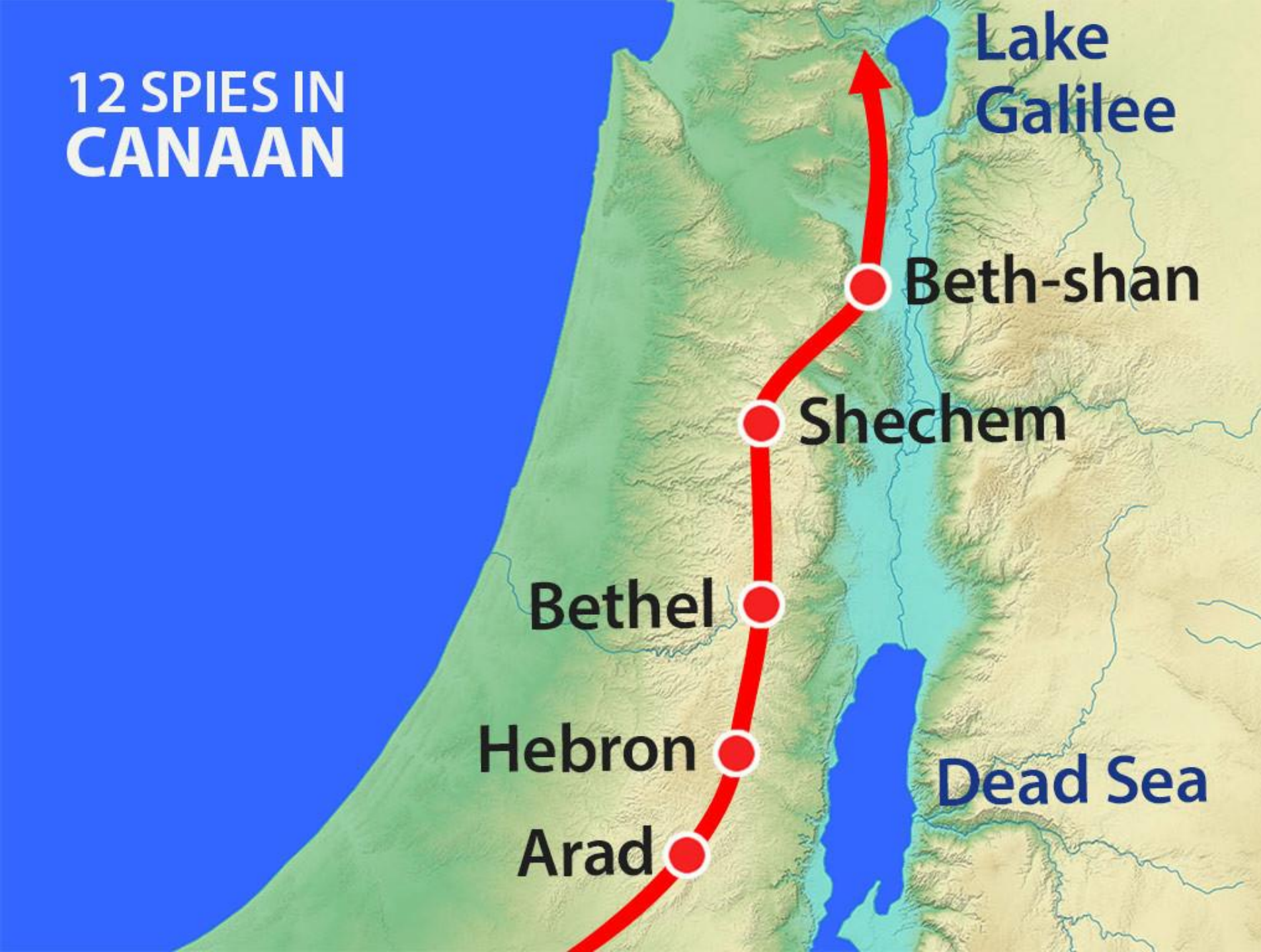
Num 13:21-22

The twelve spies set out from Kadesh Barnea through the Negev desert, where the Amalekites lived, then up into the hill country.



They saw very tall and strong people who were descendants of Anak.

12 SPIES IN CANAAN



They moved north through the hill country where the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites lived and then around the River Jordan and Lake Galilee where they saw Canaanites.



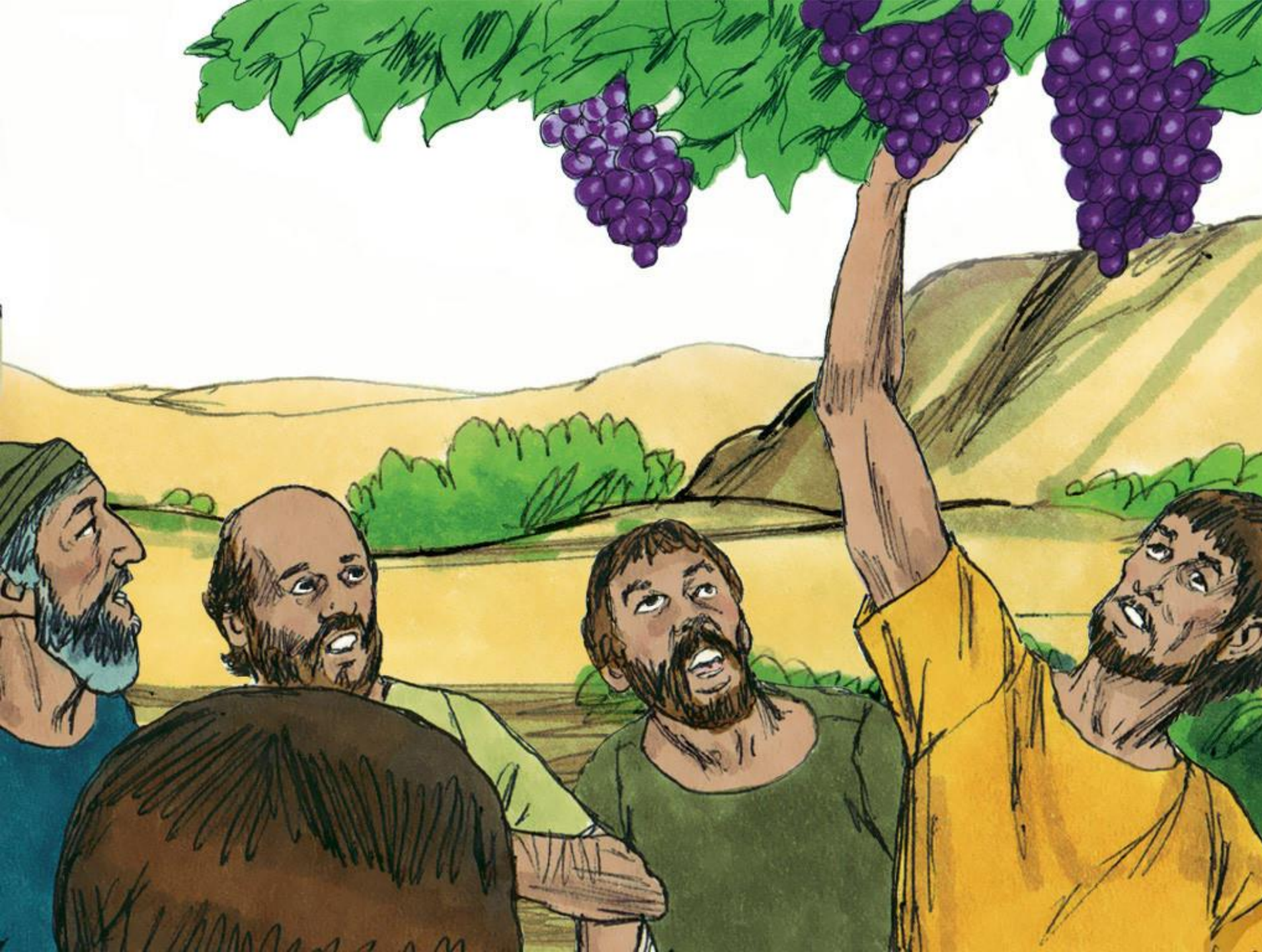
The towns and cities were large and well fortified.

12 SPIES IN CANAAN



Num 13:21

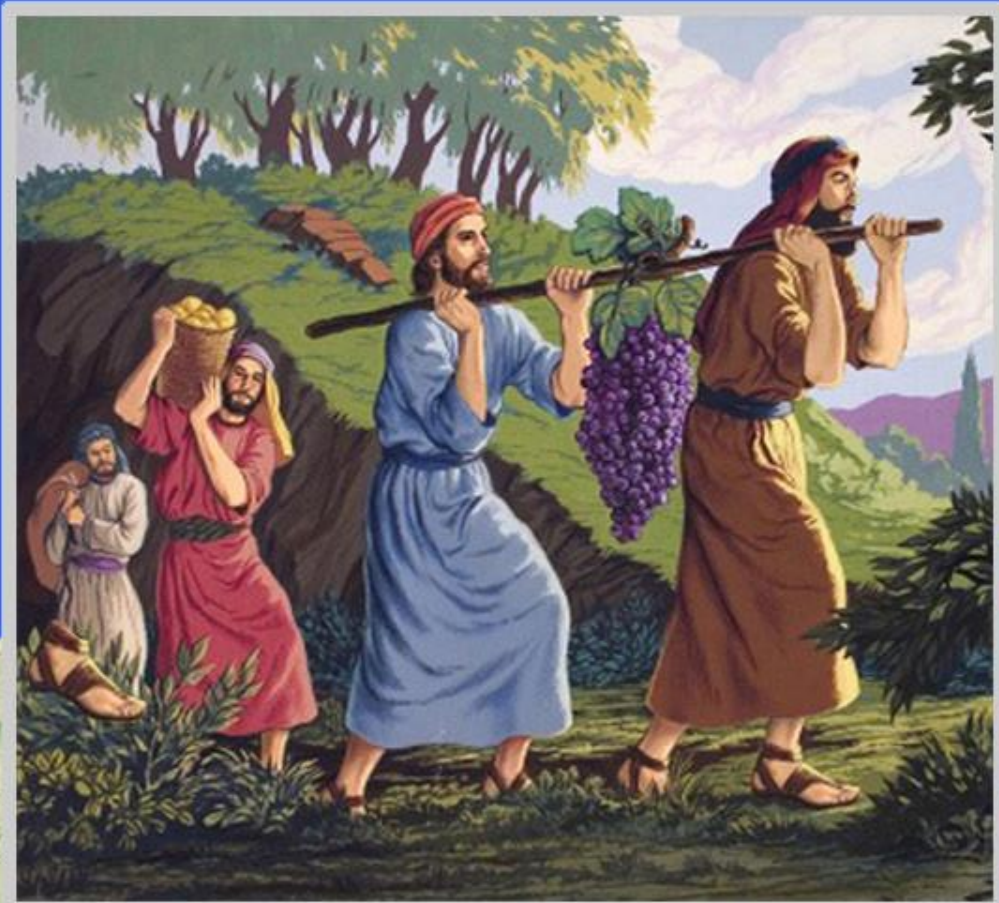
They went as far north as Rehob before turning back and retracing their steps.



Num 13: 23

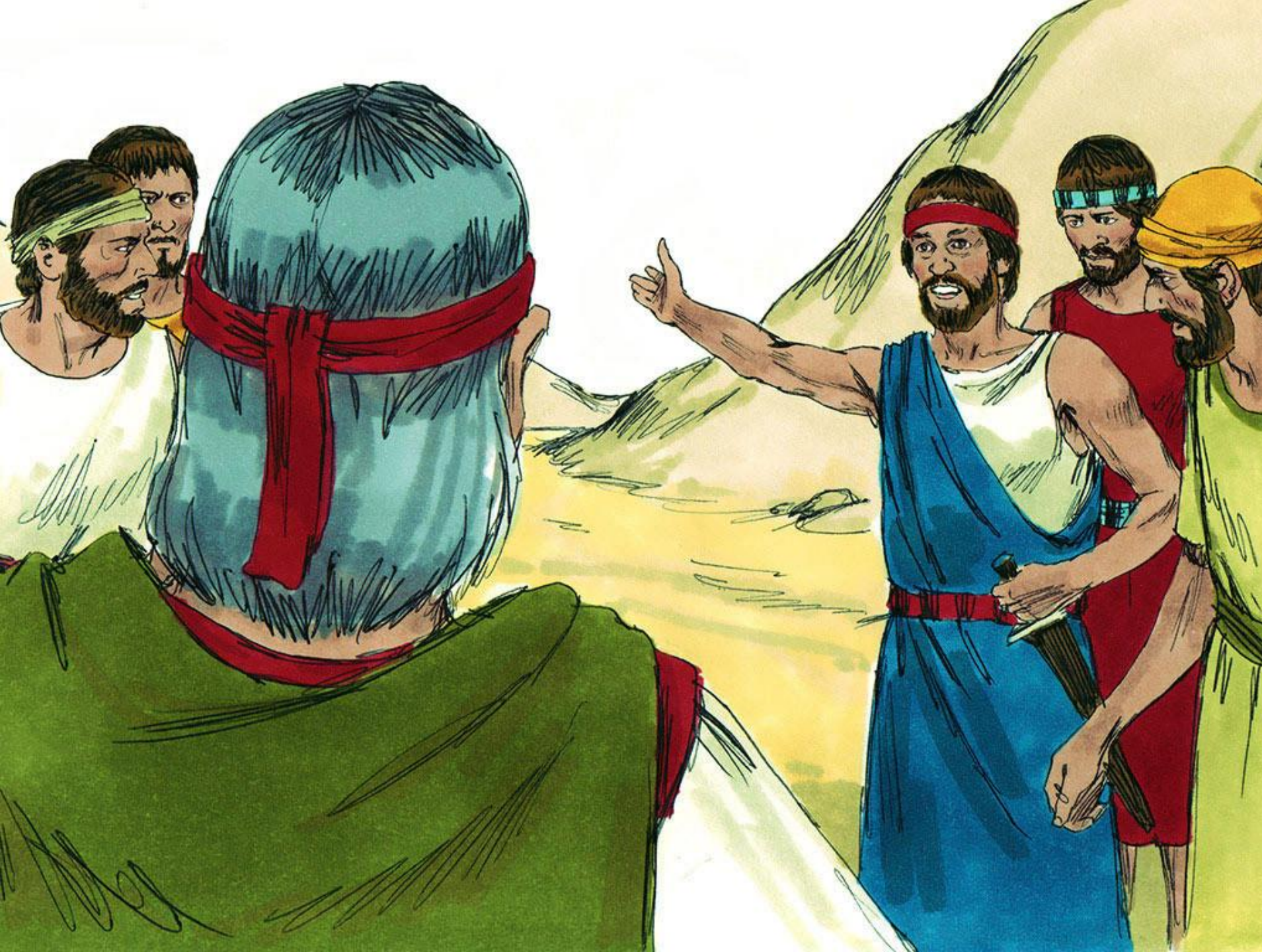
When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes.

12 SPIES IN CANAAN



Num 13: 23

Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs.



Num 13: 26-30

After 40 days, they returned to their camp. They reported, 'The land does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are large and fortified.'

But, one of the spies, Caleb, said, 'We should go up and take the land, for we can certainly do it.'



Num 13: 31-33

Ten of the spies disagreed: 'We can't attack these people, they are stronger than us. All the people we saw are huge. Compared to them we seemed like grasshoppers.'



Num 14: 1-4

That night the Israelites grumbled and wept. They complained to Moses and Aaron, 'Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to die in battle? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder.'

They started planning to choose another leader and go back to Egypt.'

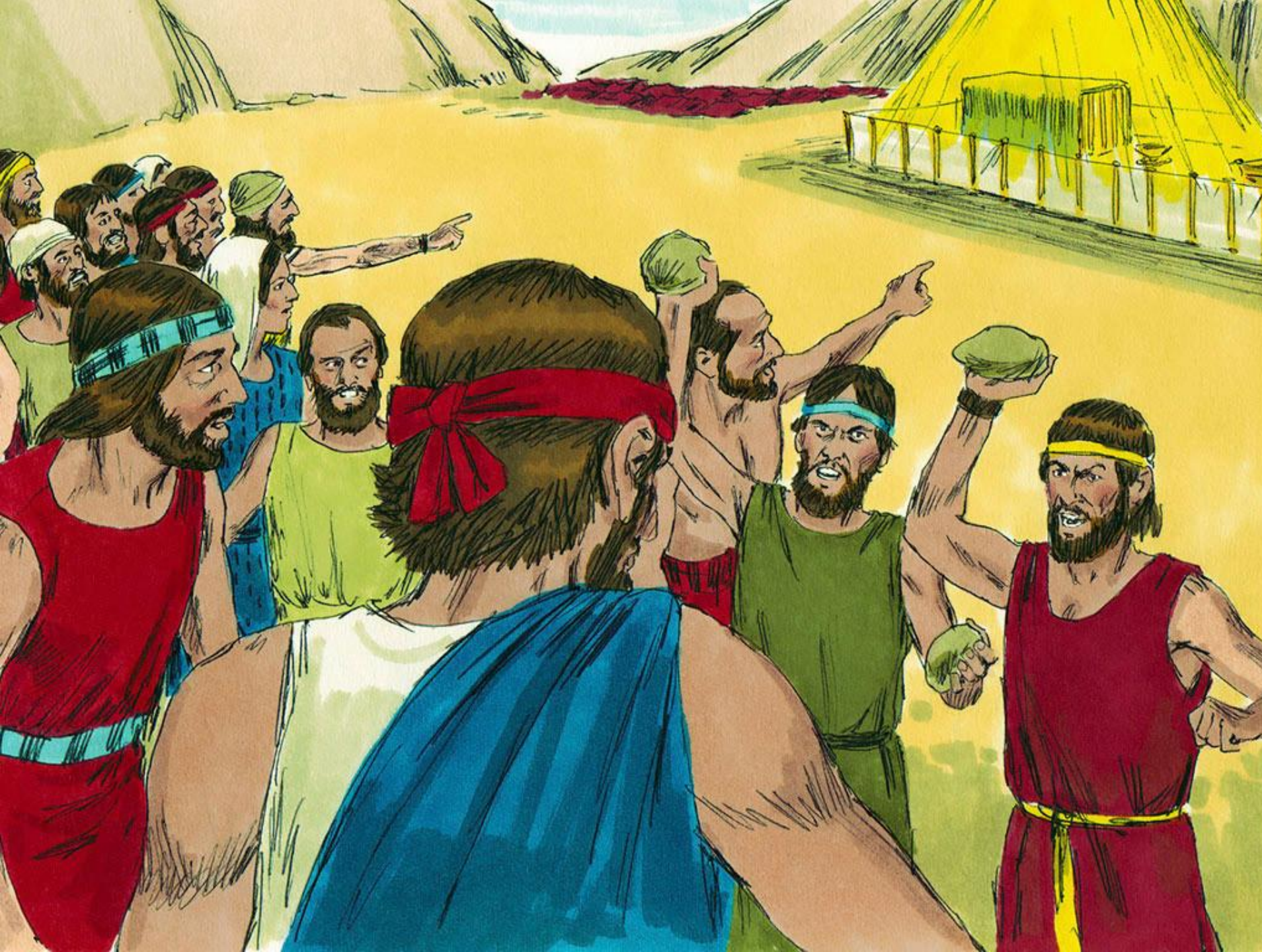
Read also Deut 1:26-33.



Num 14: 4-9

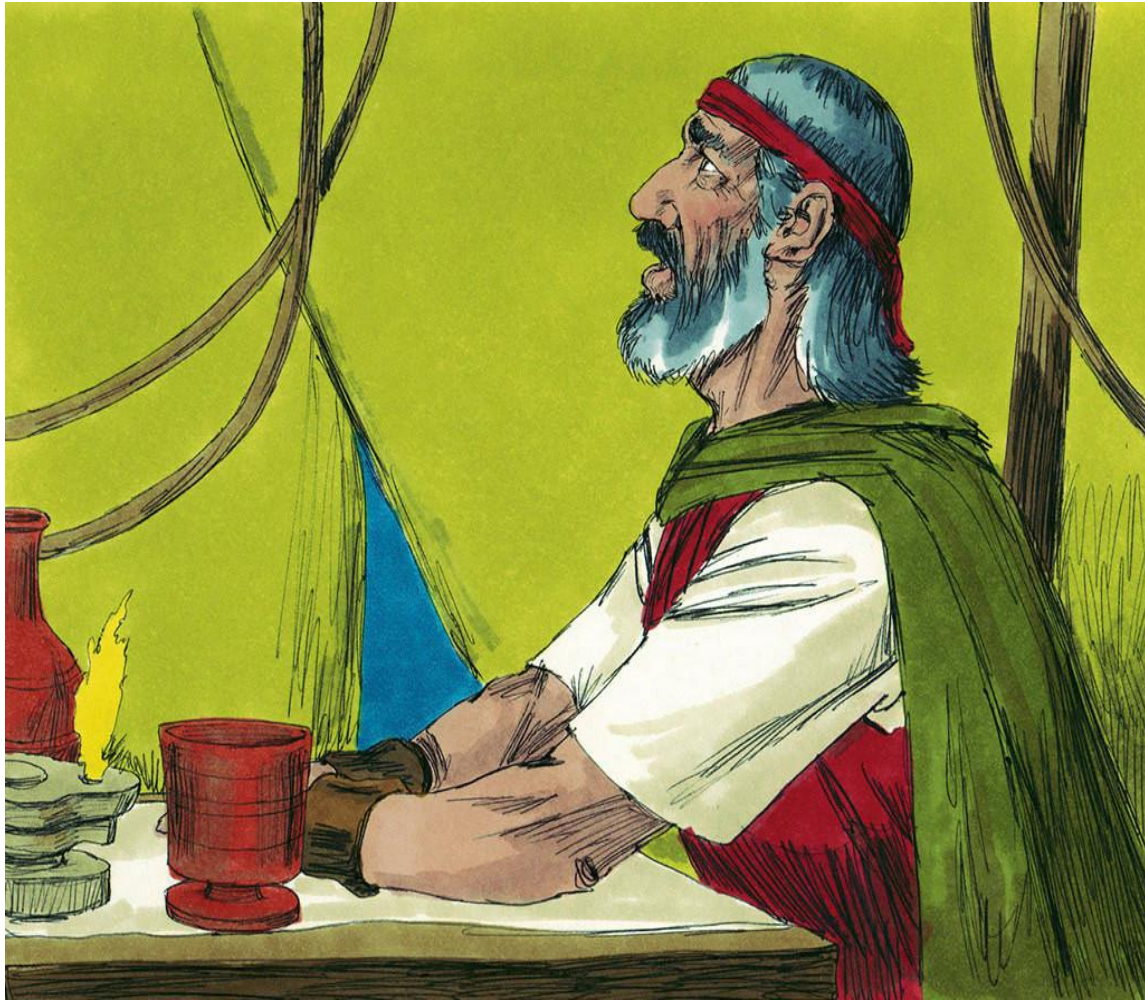
Moses and Aaron fell face down in front of everyone. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, stood up and said, 'The land we explored is exceedingly good. The Lord will lead us into that land flowing with milk and honey, and give it to us.'

Don't rebel against God or be afraid. The Lord is with us not them.



Num 14: 10

Just as those listening were muttering about stoning Joshua and Caleb, the glory of the Lord appeared at the Tent of Meeting.



Num 14: 11-12

The Lord told Moses, 'How long will these people refuse to believe in me, in spite of all the miracles I have performed among them?

I will strike them down with a plague and destroy them, but I will make you into a stronger nation.'

Num 14:13-20

Moses interceded for the Israelites and God relented to destroy them.

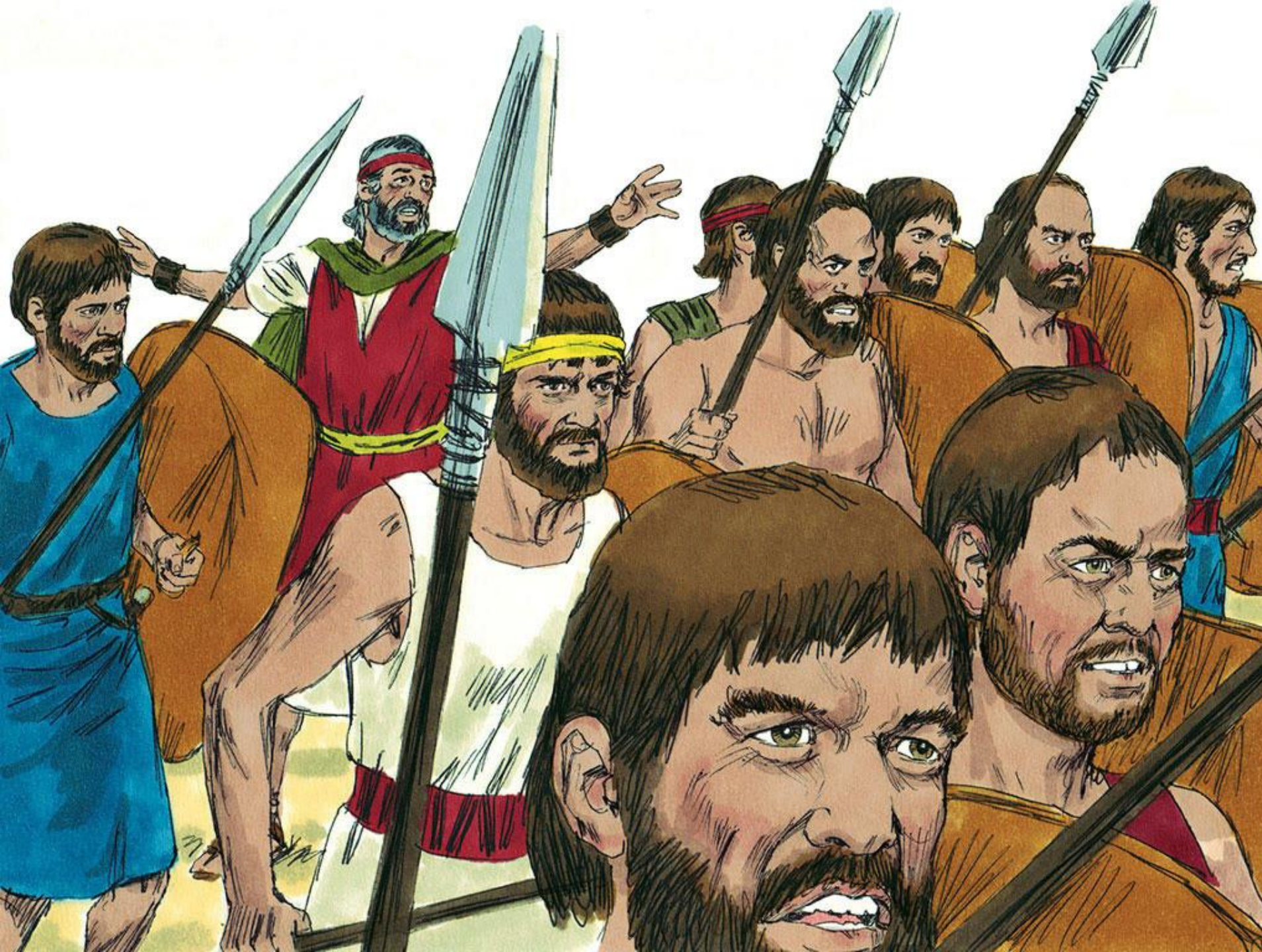
Num 14: 29-34

God told Moses He would punish their rebellion by keeping them in the wilderness for 40 years, one year for each day the spies had been in Canaan.



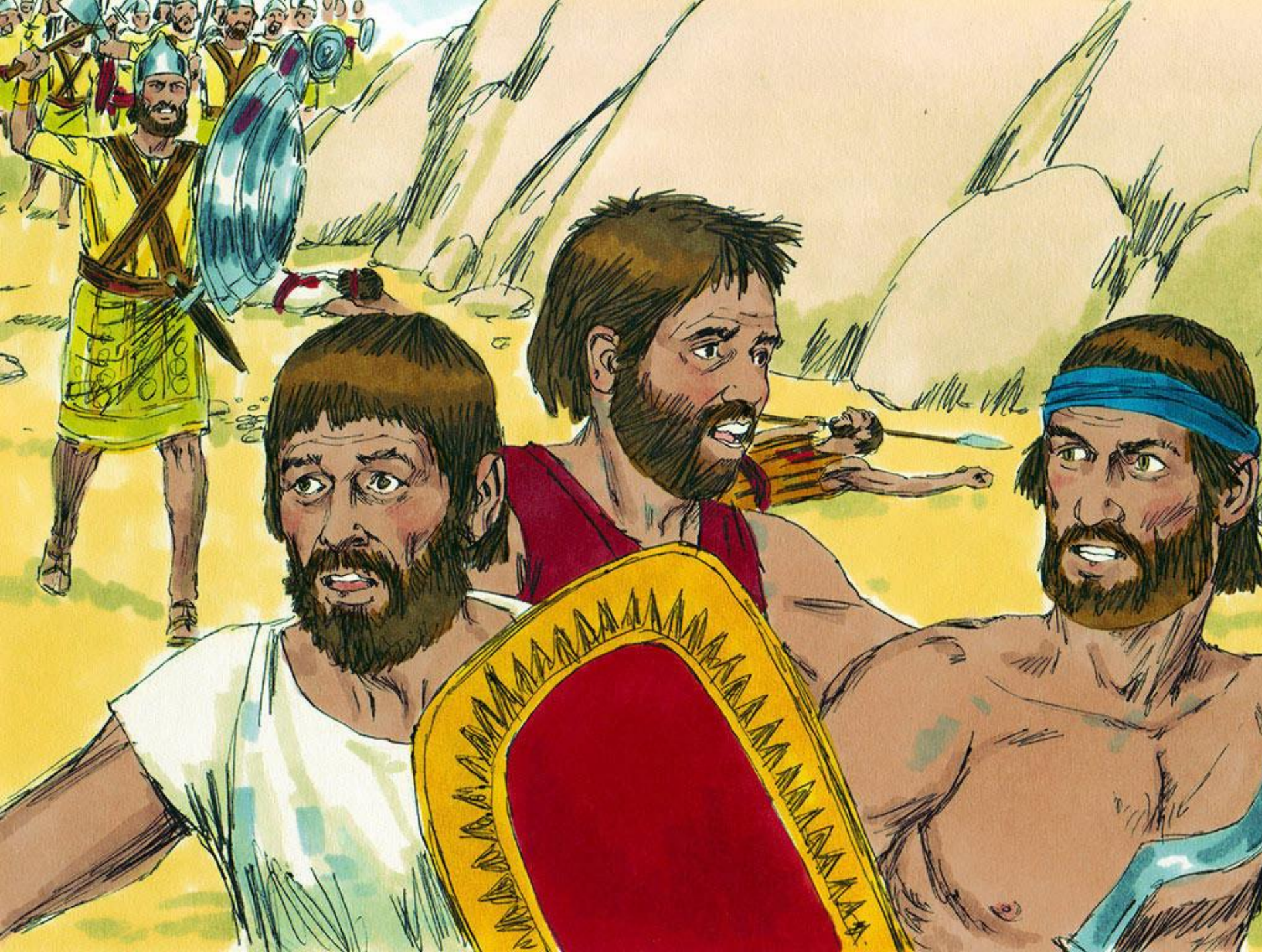
Num 14: 36-38

The ten spies who brought a bad report died of a plague. Only Joshua and Caleb survived - the spies who trusted in God to keep His promises and give them the land.



Num 14: 39-45

The rebellious people then changed their minds and decided to attack the Amalekites just north of their camp. Moses said, 'Why are you disobeying the Lord's command? This will not succeed!' But they went ahead.

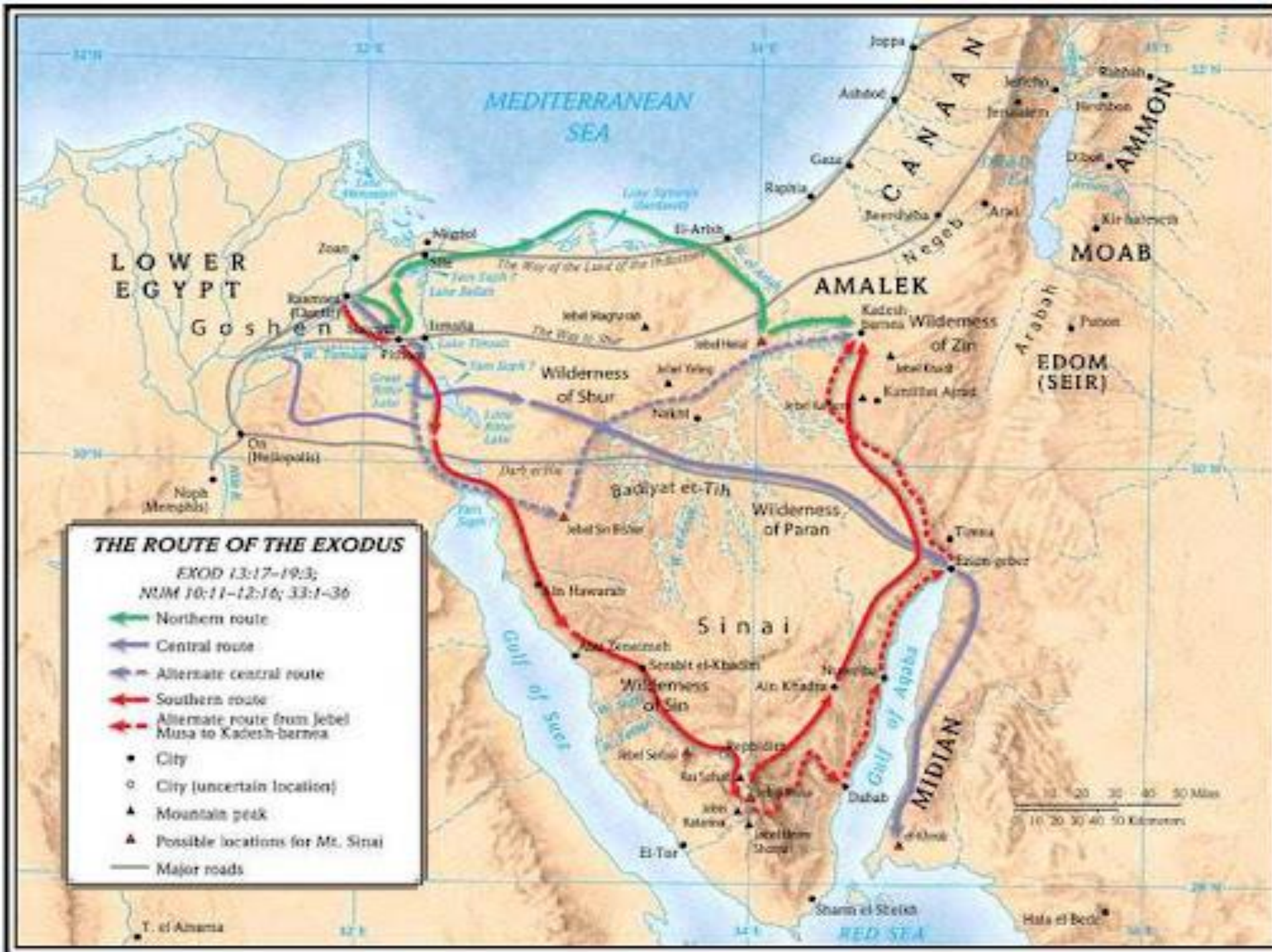


Num 14: 45

The Amalekites, helped by the Canaanites from the hill country, came down and attacked them and beat them into a swift retreat.

The Israelites attacked the Amalekites

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Num 14:32-35

For the next forty years the Israelites wandered around in the wilderness. All those who rebelled against God died.

A new generation grew up willing to trust God and take the land God had promised to them – under the leadership of Joshua, supported by Caleb.

Map of the Exodus:

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The 40 years wandering is indicated by the red route in the map.

Further reading: Deut 1:19-46

The rebellion of the Israelites against God led to their wandering for 40 years and the death of that generation of Israelites who rebelled against God.

The Israelites were not permitted to enter Canaan.

(2) Spiritual Lessons:

	Disobedience of the 10 spies and the Israelites	God's punishment	Comment
1.	(1) The Israelites grumbled and complained and wanted to go back to Egypt for fear of the Canaanites. (Num 14:1-3)	(1) The Israelites who came out of Egypt wandered for 40 years in the wilderness and died there. (Num 14:32-35)	(1) It was <u>God's will for the Israelites to return to Canaan. Deut 1:19-21</u> . But they were fearful. (2) The Israelites <u>did not believe</u> that God would protect them against the Canaanites. (Psalm 106:24-26)

Comment

2. (3) The Israelites have witnessed God's mighty power:

- 10 plagues
- Crossing of the Red Sea
- Destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea
- Giving of the 10 commandments in Mt Sinai
- Seeing God's punishment for worshipping the golden calf.
- They see God's presence with them in the Ark of the Covenant, the pillar of cloud and pillar of fire.
- Etc...

Yet, they did not believe in God's Word. (Deut 1:30-32)

- God destroyed that generation of Israelite unbelievers. (Num 14:28-30).

	Comment
3.	(2) Sometimes we know it is <u>God's will</u> for us to undertake a task, yet we are still fearful and of little in faith. We should overcome this fear if we know it is God's will.

(2) Spiritual Lessons:

	Disobedience of the 10 spies and the Israelites	God's punishment	Comment
4.			(3) Different ways to overcome fear and anxieties: (a) Remembering verses of God's assurance, eg Psalm 23 (b) Prayer (c) Remembering past deliverances

How do we know God's will?

- (a) Reading the bible – Obey all of God's commandments, do the right thing, turn away from evil
- (b) Prayer – Seek God's will in a specific matter
- (c) Holy Spirit – Listen to our conscience guided by the Spirit
- (d) Godly counsel – Consult pastor, mature Christians
- (e) Events and circumstances – Guided by push and pull factors

	Disobedience of the 10 spies and the Israelites	God's punishment	Comment
5.	(1) 'They are stronger than we are'. The 10 spies spread a bad report of the land they had spied on. (Num 13:31, 32)	(2) The 10 spies who spread the bad report were struck down by a plague. (Num 14:37)	How to overcome disobedience and disbelief: trust God's will, not our own will, reasoning and wisdom, Proverbs 3:5,6.

	Disobedience of the 10 spies and the Israelites	God's punishment	Comment
6.	<p>(3) Started choosing a leader to bring them back to Egypt. (Num 14:4)</p> <p>(4) Israelites wanted to kill Caleb and Joshua. (Num 14:10)</p>		<p>How to overcome disobedience and disbelief: trust God's will, not our own will, reasoning and wisdom. Proverbs 3:5,6.</p>

	Disobedience of the 10 spies and the Israelites	God's punishment	Comment
7.	(5) When the Israelites realised God's anger and punishment with them, they changed their minds to claim God's promise of Canaan by attacking the Amalekites in the north.	<p>The claiming of God's promise of Canaan by attacking of the Amalekites was too late. God was no longer with them because of their sin. With their stubbornness, the Israelites attacked the Amalekites and were defeated.</p> <p>(Num 14:41-45)</p>	<p>When God is not with us due to our sin, we will suffer adverse consequences.</p> <p>Be guided by God each step of the way.</p>