

13.02 Joshua Meets God (Joshua 1:1–18) (Note: The lesson on Rahab in Joshua 2 is to be taught before this lesson.)*

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows.

[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- “Joshua” Flash-a-Cards by A Beka Book, Pensacola, FL, 1985, and/or pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional needed materials.
- A small chalk board and chalk, white board and dry-erase marker, or paper and pencil for each student. Prepare by drawing 3 columns. At the top of the first column, write *Moses*; the second, *God*; the third, *eastern* (for eastern tribes), or use my prepared copy found below.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Tips and terms are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *to possess*: to own or to have
- *to meditate*: to think about something seriously for a period of time

Scripture: (ESV)

Joshua 1:1 After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ assistant, 2 “Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. 3 Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. 4 From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. 5 No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.

6 “Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. 7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

10 And Joshua commanded the officers of the people, 11 “Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.’”

12 And to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh Joshua said, 13 “Remember the word that Moses the servant of the Lord commanded you, saying, ‘The Lord your God is providing you a place of rest and will give you this land.’ 14 Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all the men of valor among you shall pass over armed before your brothers and shall help them, 15 until the Lord gives rest to your brothers as he has to you, and they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess it, the land that Moses the servant of the Lord gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise.”

16 And they answered Joshua, “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. 17 Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. Only may the Lord your God be with you, as he was with Moses! 18 Whoever rebels against your commandment and disobeys your words, whatever

you command him, shall be put to death. Only be strong and courageous.”

Introduction/Review:

[Give each student a chalkboard and chalk, a white board and dry-erase marker, or a paper and pencil. Demonstrate how to make tally marks: | || ||| |||| |||||. Tell students to listen carefully and count the number of times they hear the words, “*be strong and courageous*” and “*do not be afraid*” in the review and in the story. When they hear these words, they should make a tally mark under the person who said them. The words are in bold in the text to help the teacher recognize and emphasize them. They occur eight times: twice by Moses, five times by God, and once by the eastern tribes.]

We are now studying the book of Joshua. Who was Joshua? When he came out of Egypt, he was a forty-year-old man. Soon after leaving Egypt, Joshua led God’s people in battle against the Amalekites, who had attacked the feeble of Israel. Being Moses’ assistant, Joshua accompanied Moses when he received the law from God on Mount Sinai. Best of all, he was a faithful spy who, forty years before today’s story, had believed that God could defeat the giants of the promised land.

When Moses, the great leader of Israel, was about to die, God told him that He had chosen faithful Joshua to become Israel’s new leader. Moses, in turn, called Joshua and said to him in the presence of all the people, “**Be strong and courageous**, for you must go with this people into the land that the Lord swore to give to them, and you must divide the land among them as their inheritance. The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. **Do not be afraid**; do not be discouraged.” (Did you mark two tallies under *Moses*?)

Then, on the day Moses officially transferred his authority to Joshua, God Himself appeared in a cloud at the tabernacle. His words to Joshua were, “**Be strong and courageous**, for you will bring the Israelites into the land I promised them, and I Myself will be with you.” What a wonderful promise and encouragement to Joshua from God Himself!

Two and one-half tribes—Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh—had decided they would just as soon live on this eastern side of Jordan [locate on map found below]. Moses had agreed to this decision only if the soldiers from these tribes went to fight for the other tribes and their land on the west side of Jordan.

“That’s fine with us,” said the two and a half tribes, and they promised to fight for their brothers.

At about this time that Moses climbed his last mountain, Mount Nebo. From ✓the summit God showed him all the beautiful, bountiful Promised Land. There on Mount Nebo Moses died, and God buried him.

Now the time had come for the people to enter the land of Canaan. However, before they could do this, Joshua wanted two spies to check out the land, especially the city of Jericho. These spies learned the Canaanites were terrified of Israel. They also promised to protect Rahab, the woman who helped them in Jericho.

Story:

God’s reassuring words

In spite of God’s promise to be with him, ✓I imagine Joshua felt quite alone without Moses, the man upon whom all Israel had come to depend. God wonderfully reassured Joshua by appearing to him and saying, “Moses my servant is dead. Now it’s time to go over this Jordan into the land that I am giving to them. Every place that the sole of your feet will walk on I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. All the land from [locate these places] this wilderness [by Shittim] to the River Euphrates [northeast; not on the map below], all the land to the Great Sea (the Mediterranean Sea) in the west shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you.”

These were wonderful assurances, but God was not finished. (Be ready to tally more marks for what God said.) He said, “**Be strong and courageous**, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to

their fathers to give them. Only **be strong and very courageous**, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left so that you may have good success wherever you go.”

The Law of God

What was the thing that God said was important—so important that obedience to it would bring good success? [All the law that Moses commanded.] How could Joshua do what was written in the law? How could he remember the law so that he would have good success? God told Joshua what to do. Listen. “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it.”

How did God say Joshua would remember the law? [By keeping it in his mouth—speaking of it often; by meditating on it day and night.] That sounds like good advice. We should do the same—speak of God’s Word and meditate on it.

What did God promise to Joshua if he would speak of and meditate on the Book of the Law? He said to Joshua, “For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.” This continuing in God’s Word is still God’s formula for a successful life.

One more time God warned and reassured Joshua: “Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid**, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” (Are you still tallying? Did you count two tallies in this sentence?)

Why should Joshua not be afraid? Because “the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” This promise is true for the believer in Jesus Christ, for He sent His Holy Spirit to live in His own.

Preparation for conquest

That was the end of Joshua’s conversation with God. Now it was time to prepare in earnest for conquest. So Joshua commanded the officers of the people, “Pass through the camp and command the people: ‘Prepare your provisions, for within three days we will cross over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving to you.’” Three days!?! They were within three days of entering the land God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ✓about four hundred fifty years earlier!

Helpful soldiers

Then Joshua verified with those two and one-half tribes that had settled east of Jordan that they would indeed fulfill their promise to help the other nine and one-half tribes conquer their land. Joshua said, “Your wives, your little ones, and your livestock shall remain in the land that Moses gave you beyond the Jordan, but all your soldiers shall go with your brothers and shall help them until they also take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving them. Afterward you shall return to the land you possess.”

“That’s right,” answered the men of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh. “All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you. In fact, anyone who rebels against your command and does not obey your words in all that you command him, shall be put to death. Only may the Lord your God be with you, as he was with Moses! We will not rebel against your commandment and disobey your words. Only **be strong and courageous.**”

How impressive! These men fully intended to keep their side of the bargain and in that intention to follow Joshua, their new leader.

Thus, we see some of the people committed to follow Joshua’s leadership. How would the Lord cause Israel to recognize Joshua’s leadership as they had Moses’ leadership? Would God use something as fantastic as the Red Sea crossing to show His people that He was with Joshua as He had been with Moses? We will see.

Tallies

That’s the end of today’s story. Excitement is building. Faith in God’s promise—to be with Joshua and all

the people—will be tested as Israel faces many and great enemies. They will need to be full of courage.

So, how many times did you tally Moses' stating "be strong and courageous"? You should have two tallies for Moses. How many times did the eastern tribes say, "Be strong and courageous"? Once. How about God? How many times did He say, "Be strong and courageous"? You should have tallied five marks. That's eight times in all that Joshua was encouraged to be strong and courageous. It's good advice for us too.

*This story of Joshua's meeting God does not seem to be the first one chronologically in the book of Joshua even though it appears in Joshua 1. The basis for this statement is Joshua's words to the soldiers that they would cross the Jordan in three days. However, the spies in Joshua 2 were gone at least three or four days *before* reporting to Joshua. John Gill explains in his commentary found at <https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/joshua-1-11.html>.

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:
"No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life" (Joshua 1:5). This promise to Joshua is fulfilled in Christ, "who made an end of sin, destroyed the devil, spoiled principalities and powers, abolished death, and overcame the world" (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/joshua-1-5.html>).
- People appreciate a strong leader. May we be good followers, first, of God, and, then, of our leaders (pastors and government officials) as they follow God.

Activities:

- Play dough: sandals; soles of sandals; feet; a strong, flexed arm
- Snack: "Be courageous" and eat hot Cheetos®.
- Have students think of situations in which they need to remember to "be strong and very courageous." Examples: being afraid of the dark, of thunder storms, of possible persecution, of a bully, of the unknown future. When a student states one of these fearful things, the other students should say, "Be strong and very courageous!"
- Set up arm-wrestling contests. Remind students that God's admonition to be strong was more about courage and a trust in God than it was to be strong physically.
- Review questions: (Game: Print on colored paper, back with paper towel, and cut out the footprints found below. For each correct answer, students place a footprint in a pocket chart or on a flannel board.)
 1. Fill in the blank. God said, "Every place that the _____ of your foot will tread upon I have given to you." [Sole; explain that this verse is the reason students will place footprints on the board.]
 2. What phrase was repeated at least eight times in today's lesson? Hint: It starts with the word *be*. [Be strong and courageous.]
 3. What was to be the guide for Joshua so that he would be successful? [The Book of the Law.]
 4. What did God tell Joshua to do with the Book of the Law? [Not to let it depart from his mouth; to meditate on it day and night.]
 5. When Joshua talked with his officers, how long did he say it would before they crossed Jordan? [Three days.]
 6. Who would be giving the land to Israel? [God.]
 7. To which tribes did Joshua speak specifically about their promise to fight in Canaan? [Two and one-half tribes settling east of Jordan: Reuben, Gad, one-half Manasseh.]
 8. What did the two and one-half tribes answer Joshua? ["All that you have commanded us we will do, and wherever you send us we will go. Just as we obeyed Moses, we will obey you. Only be strong

and courageous.”]

Memory Verse[s]: (KJV)

- Joshua 1:8: “This Book of the Law shall not depart from thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein. For then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”
- Or Joshua 1:5, 7–9; 24:14, 15, 20, 24–26 (KJV), working one section at a time throughout the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth and using the song, “Keeping Covenant,” found in the lesson about Rahab (#13.01) and on the “Songs” page at teachingthebibleto kids.org.

Handwork:

- On stiff colored paper, trace each student’s foot. Students will cut out these soles and glue the verse, Joshua 1:3, on it. Copies of this verse are found below.

to meditate

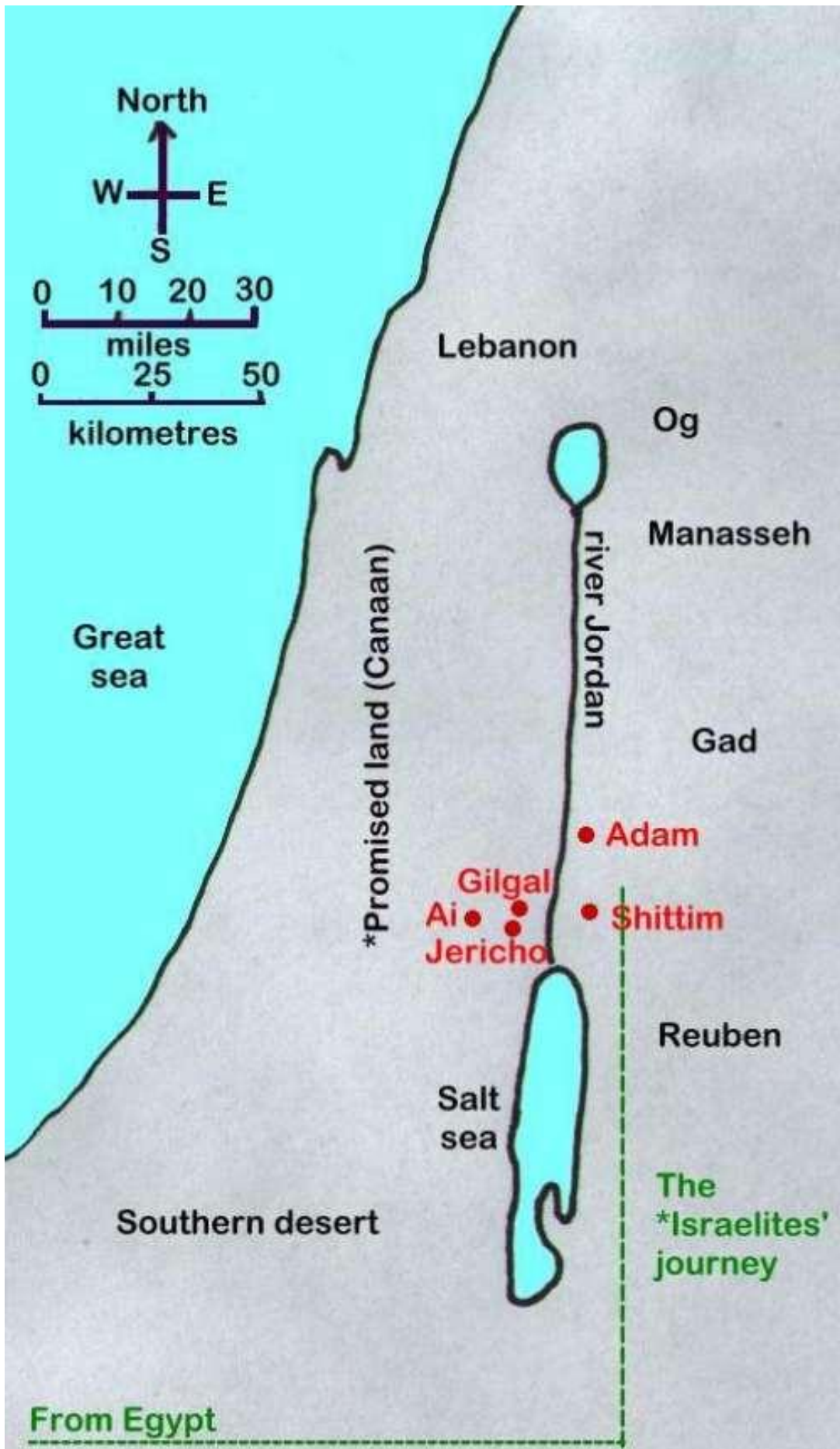
to possess

**BE STRONG AND
VERY
COURAGEOUS!
DO NOT BE
AFRAID!**

MOSES

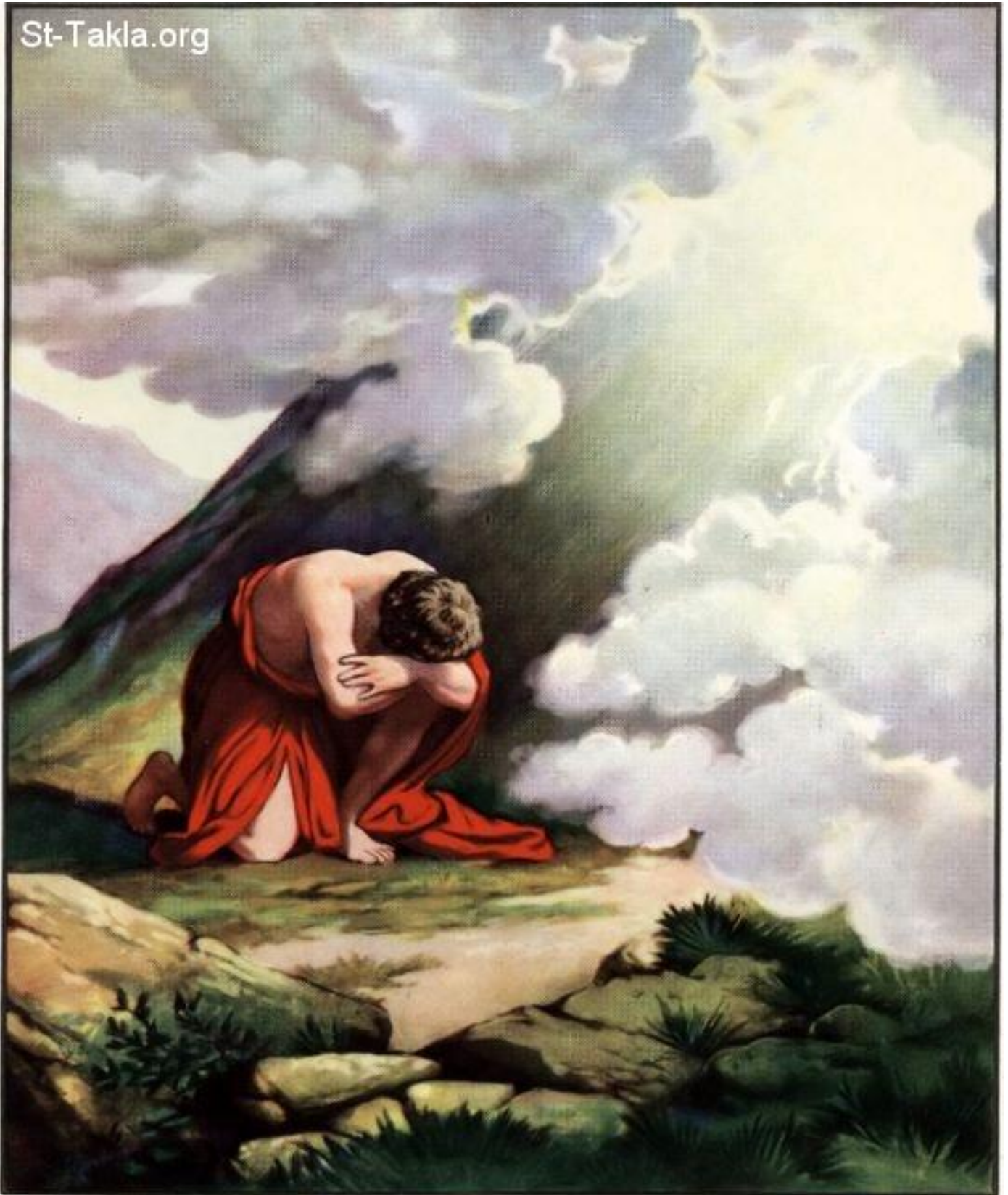
GOD

EASTERN TRIBES

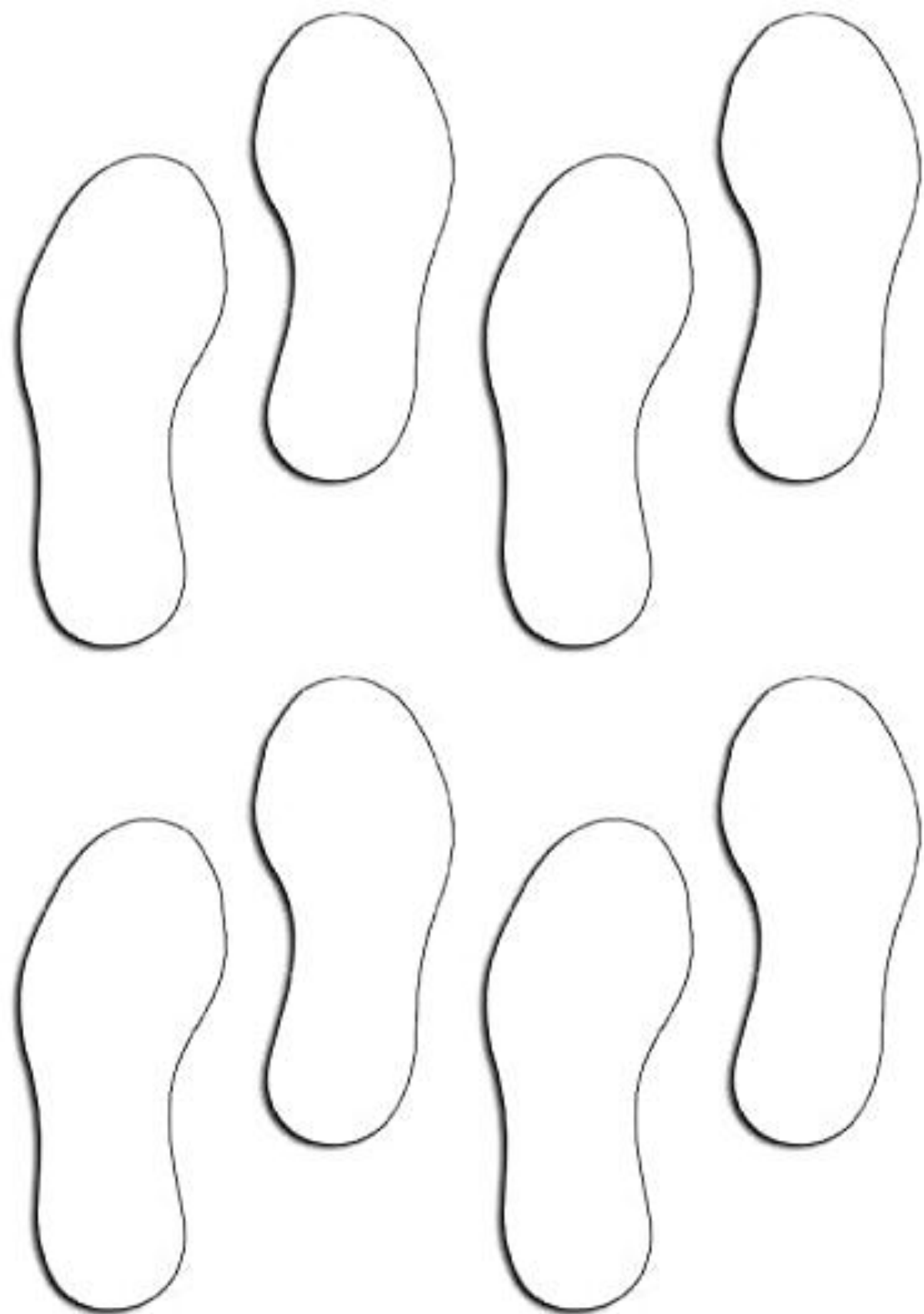




<https://bibleprophecyfortoday.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/promised-land.jpg>







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