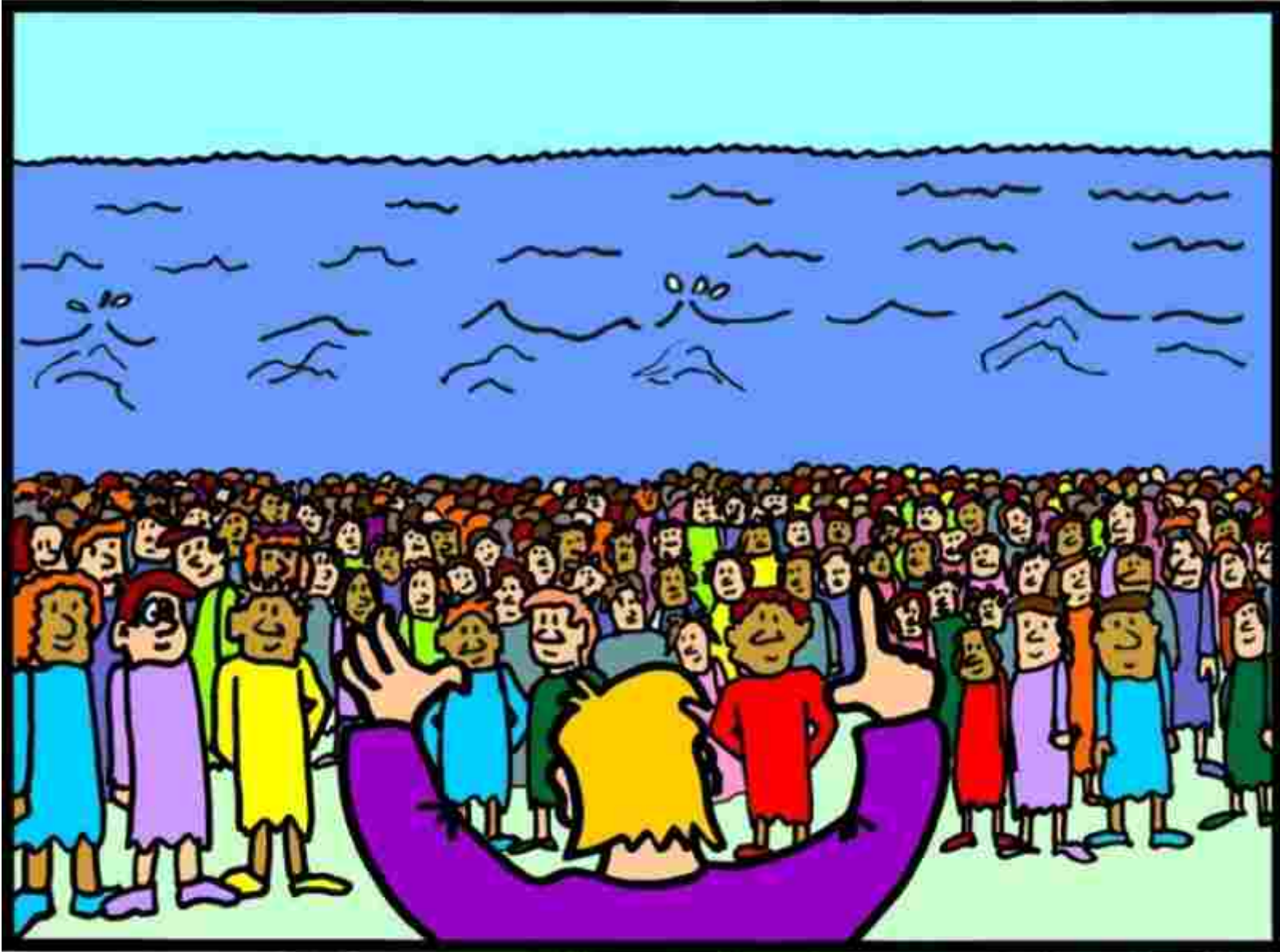


# **A Good Talk Stops a War**

*(Based on Joshua 22)*

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Joshua let the men from the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh return home to the other side of the Jordan River. They took many cows and riches with them. Joshua reminded them to love and obey the Lord.

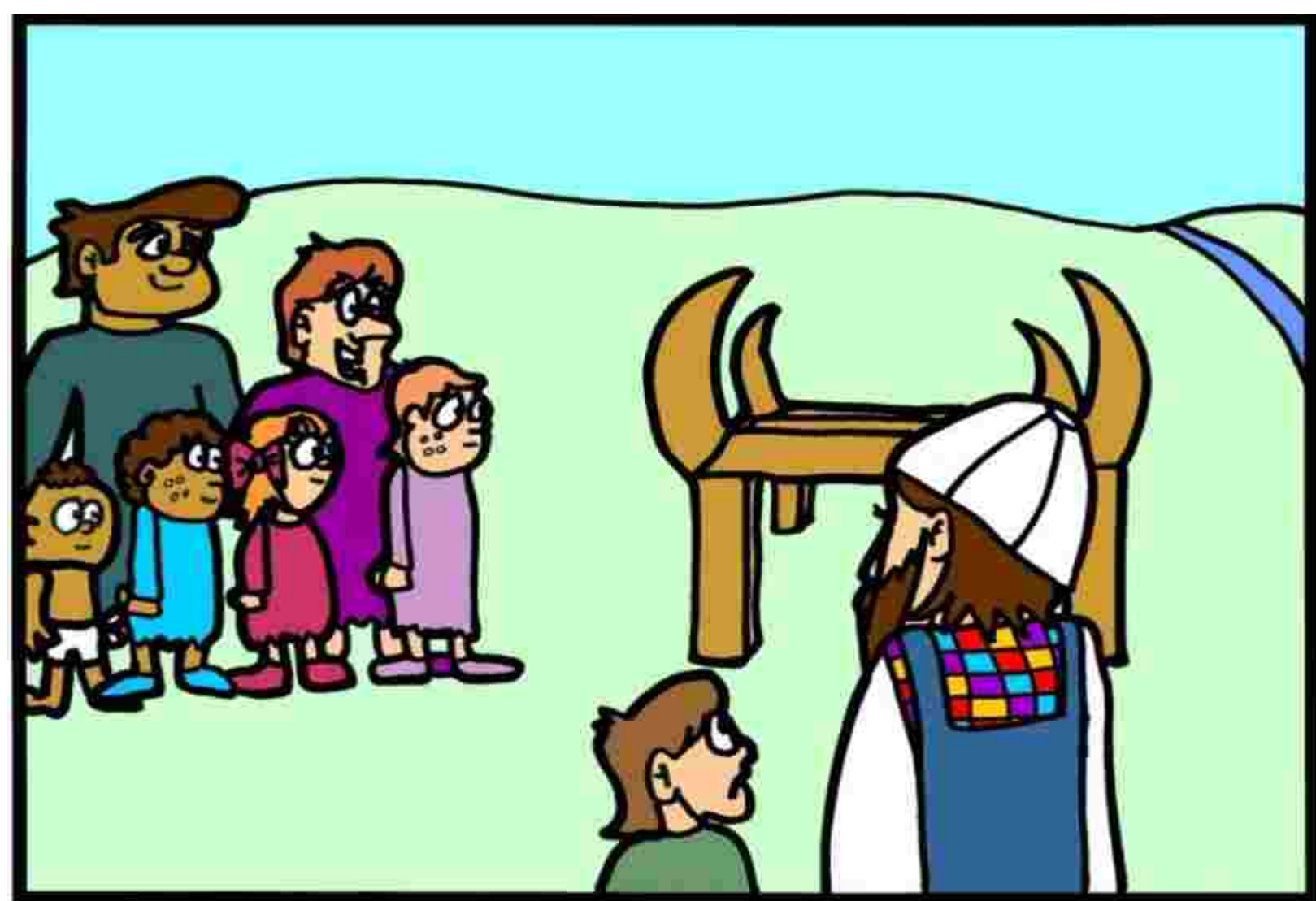


When these men crossed the river, they built a very big altar, just like the one at God's tabernacle. Now God's tabernacle was the place to give sacrifices and the people of Israel thought these men were rebelling against God's command by building their own altar.





The people of Israel were so upset about this altar that they planned to go and fight against their own people. But before they did this, they decided to send Phinehas (Aaron's grandson), and some leaders to talk to them. "Why did you build this altar? Are you turning away from God?" they asked.



“We did not make this altar to make burnt offerings!” Answered the people on the other side of the river. “We made this altar as a reminder to your children and to our children that we also belong to the people of Israel even though we live on this side of the river.



Someday the people on your side of the river might say that we don't belong to God's people because there is a river between us. They might try to stop us from going to God's tabernacle. We will be able to point them to this altar and remind them of the truth.”





The people of Israel were happy with that answer and they praised God that the tribes on the other side of the river were following God after all. They did not really want to fight against their own people.



Lord, help me to remember that many fights can be avoided by having a heart to heart talk.