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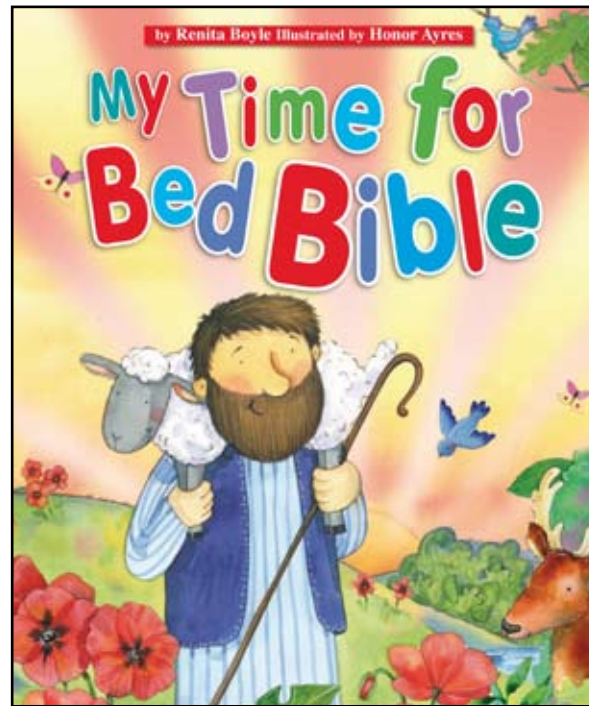
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AUTHOR

Renita Boyle is a remarkable storyteller and not only writes and performs, she trains and teaches. Born in the US, she now lives in Scotland with her clergyman husband and her son, where she can play the bagpipes with her nose!

ILLUSTRATOR

Honor Ayres is a talented young illustrator, whose first book, A Child's Bible, topped 100,000 copies in its first printing. Married with four children, she is actively involved in her church in the south west of England.

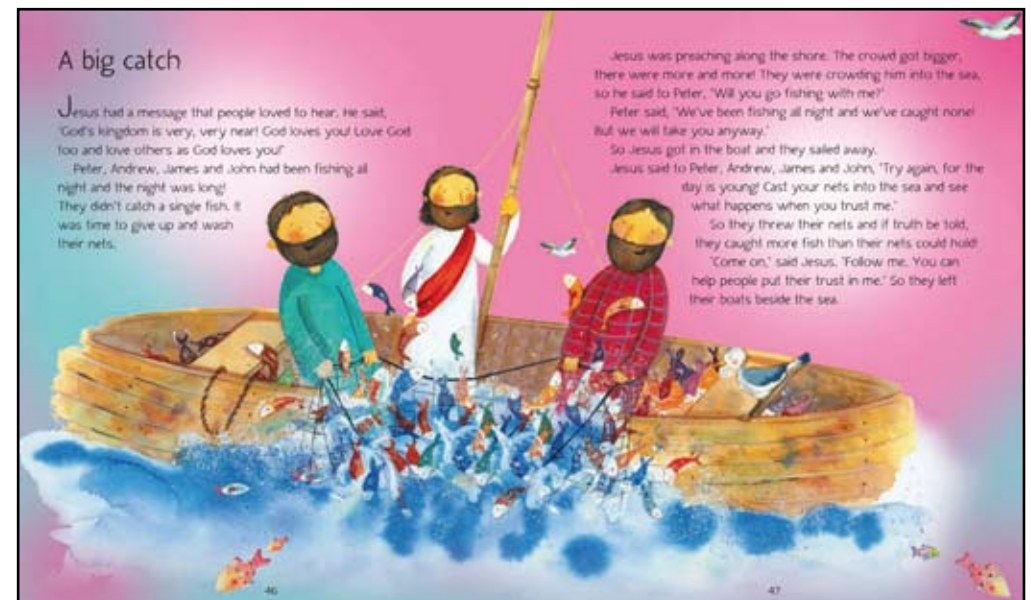
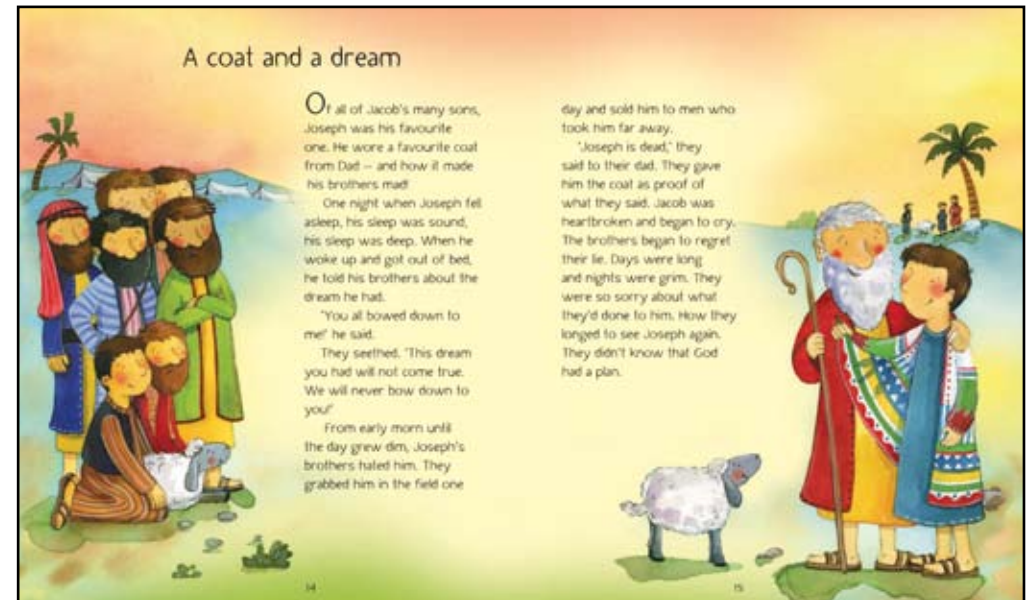


My Time for Bed Bible

It's time for bed and time for a story.
Here is a selection of classic Bible stories, retold
in a rhythmic style by Renita Boyle and
beautifully illustrated by the talented Honor Ayres,
and just right for story time.

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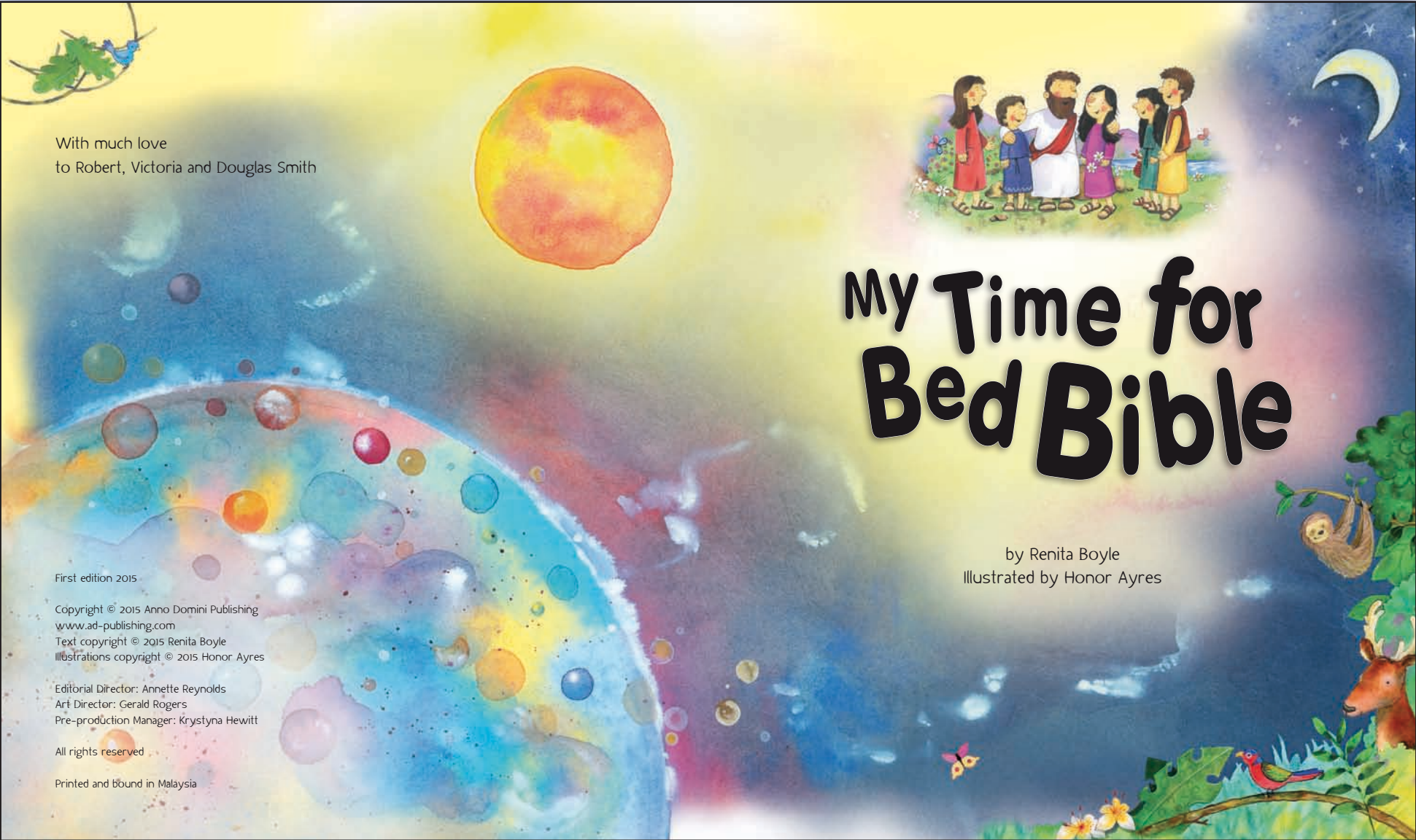
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by Renita Boyle Illustrated by Honor Ayres

My Time for Bed Bible





With much love
to Robert, Victoria and Douglas Smith



My Time for Bed Bible

by Renita Boyle
Illustrated by Honor Ayres

First edition 2015

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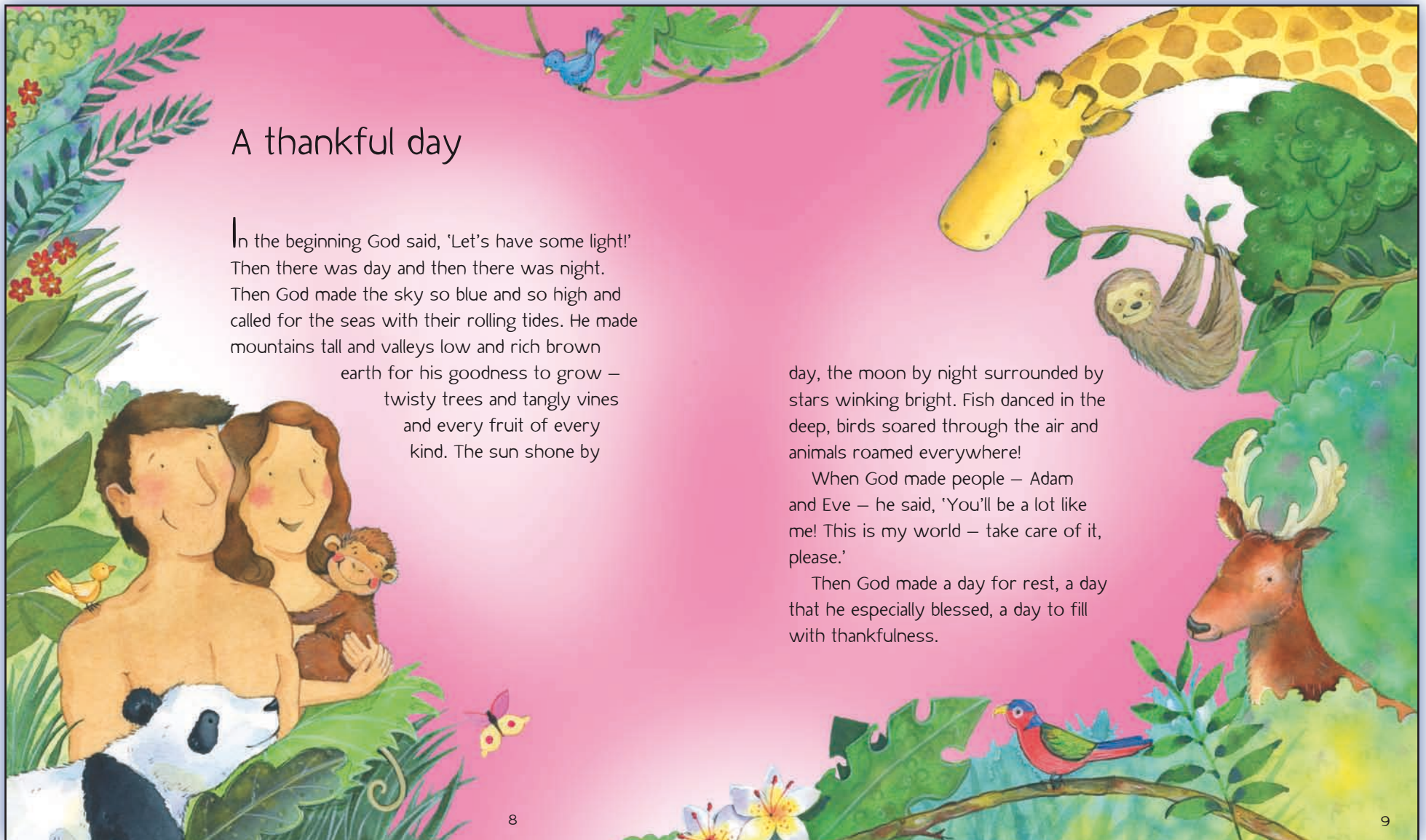
A thankful day

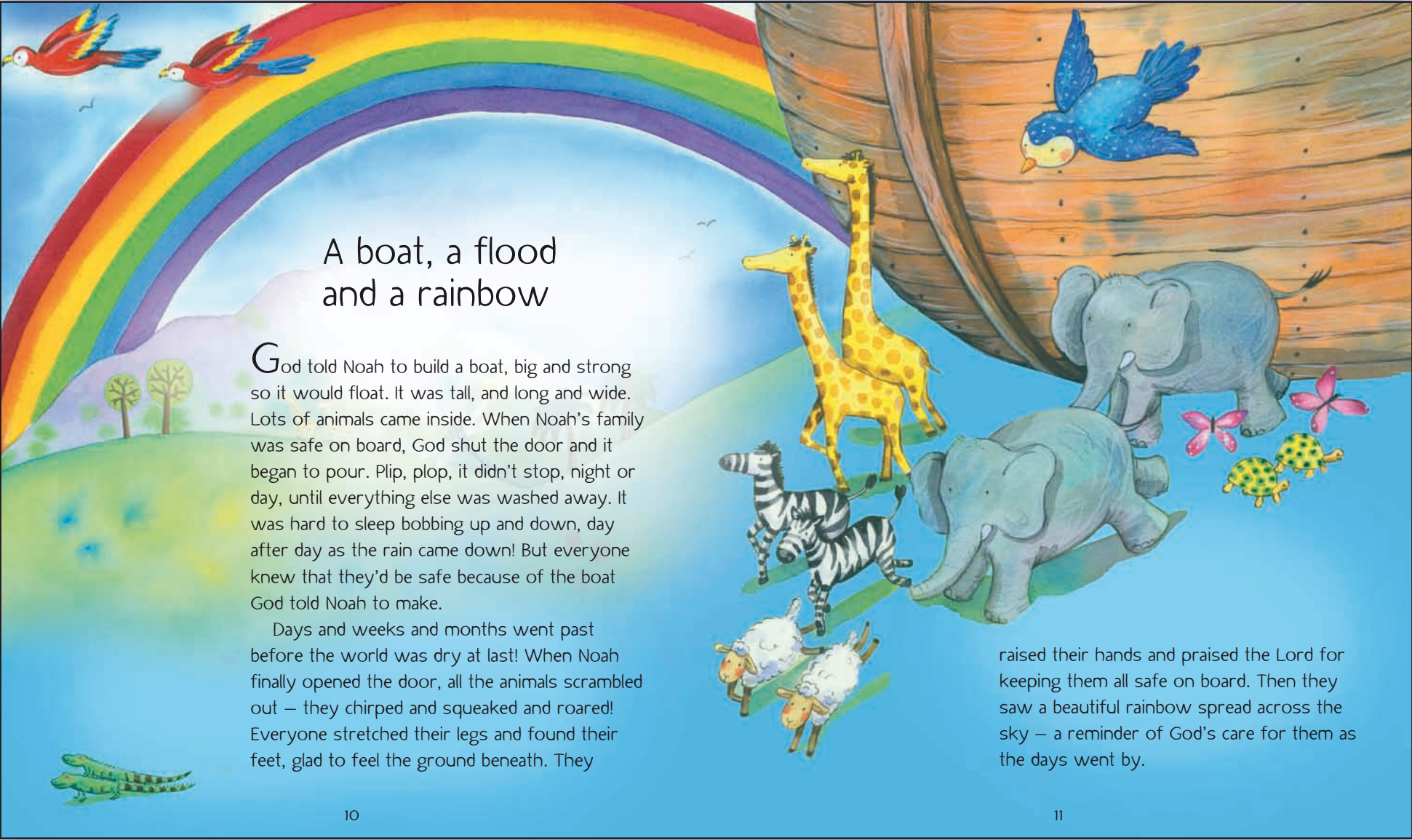
In the beginning God said, 'Let's have some light!' Then there was day and then there was night. Then God made the sky so blue and so high and called for the seas with their rolling tides. He made mountains tall and valleys low and rich brown earth for his goodness to grow – twisty trees and tangly vines and every fruit of every kind. The sun shone by

day, the moon by night surrounded by stars winking bright. Fish danced in the deep, birds soared through the air and animals roamed everywhere!

When God made people – Adam and Eve – he said, 'You'll be a lot like me! This is my world – take care of it, please.'

Then God made a day for rest, a day that he especially blessed, a day to fill with thankfulness.





A boat, a flood and a rainbow

God told Noah to build a boat, big and strong so it would float. It was tall, and long and wide. Lots of animals came inside. When Noah's family was safe on board, God shut the door and it began to pour. Plip, plop, it didn't stop, night or day, until everything else was washed away. It was hard to sleep bobbing up and down, day after day as the rain came down! But everyone knew that they'd be safe because of the boat God told Noah to make.

Days and weeks and months went past before the world was dry at last! When Noah finally opened the door, all the animals scrambled out – they chirped and squeaked and roared! Everyone stretched their legs and found their feet, glad to feel the ground beneath. They

raised their hands and praised the Lord for keeping them all safe on board. Then they saw a beautiful rainbow spread across the sky – a reminder of God's care for them as the days went by.

A hand to hold

Abraham and Sarah longed for a son, so they prayed to God and asked for one.

God said to Abraham, 'Come outside and look into the starry skies. Can you count each star you see or each grain of sand beneath your feet? Sarah will have a baby boy. He will bring you so much joy. Your family will grow and grow to be more than the sands and the stars that glow.'

They held on to God's promise and looked into the sky, but there was no child to hold as the years went by. Abraham got

older and Sarah did too and they began to doubt that God's promise was true.

Then one day some visitors came to say, 'You'd better get ready, your son's on the way!'

Sarah laughed at what she'd heard. 'I'm too old now! It's quite absurd!'

But God's promises are always true. God always does what he says he'll do. Nine months later, just as foretold, they had a baby's hand to hold. They named him Isaac – it means laughter – and he brought them joy ever after.



A coat and a dream

Of all of Jacob's many sons, Joseph was his favourite one. He wore a favourite coat from Dad – and how it made his brothers mad!

One night when Joseph fell asleep, his sleep was sound, his sleep was deep. When he woke up and got out of bed, he told his brothers about the dream he had.

'You all bowed down to me!' he said.

They seethed. 'This dream you had will not come true. We will never bow down to you!'

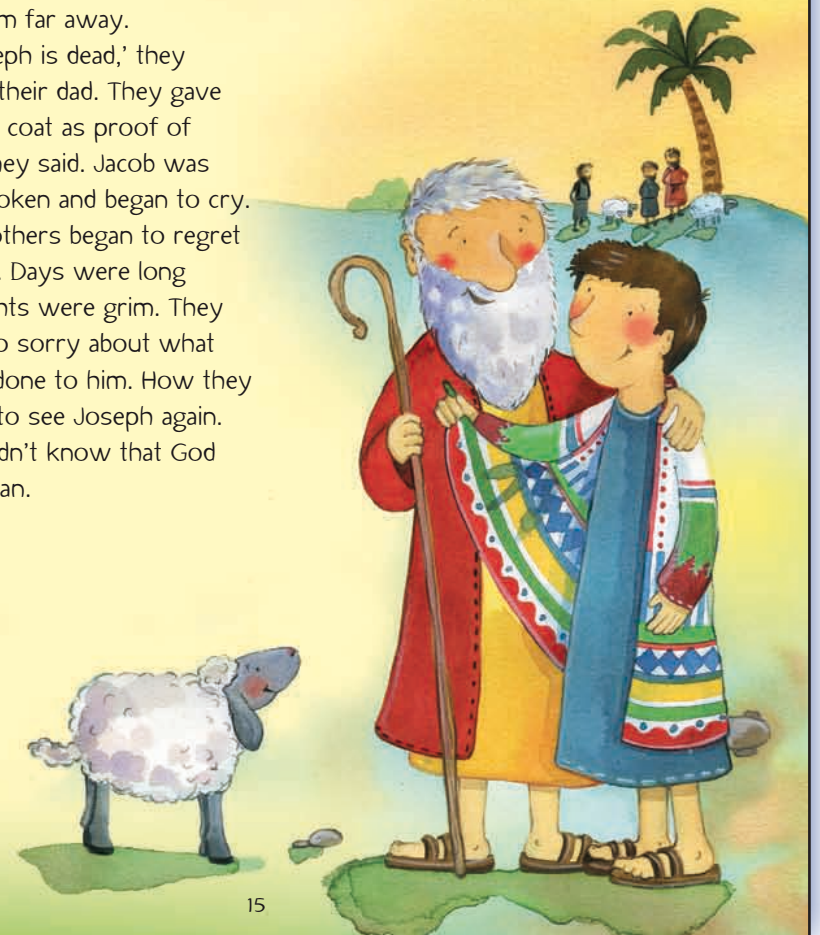
From early morn until the day grew dim, Joseph's brothers hated him. They grabbed him in the field one

day and sold him to men who took him far away.

'Joseph is dead,' they said to their dad. They gave him the coat as proof of what they said. Jacob was heartbroken and began to cry. The brothers began to regret their lie. Days were long and nights were grim. They were so sorry about what they'd done to him. How they longed to see Joseph again. They didn't know that God had a plan.



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A special plan

When Joseph finally fell asleep, his sleep was sound — his sleep was deep. He slaved so hard in this foreign land but he never forgot that God had a plan, nor the dream he'd had so long ago before his life was full of woe.

Even when he was thrown in jail, he knew that God would never fail.

The King of Egypt had dreams too. He called for Joseph, 'Is it true that you can tell what dreams are about? If you help me, I'll let you out!'

That's how Joseph came to know about the crops that wouldn't grow.

'For seven years there will be plenty. Then for seven years we won't have any! You're going to need a plan to feed the people in your land!'

'I understand,' said the king. 'My plan is you! You can tell us what to do!'

So while the crops were very good, Joseph stored up lots of food. When the crops were very bad, he shared from the plenty that they had. Joseph was treated like a king because he was in charge of everything! From early morn until the day grew dim, Joseph trusted God's plan for him.

A dream come true

When Joseph's brothers went to sleep, they didn't sleep sound – they didn't sleep deep. They were so hungry. Their father was too. There was only one thing left to do.

They went to Egypt far away. That's how they came to see Joseph one day. It had been a long time. Now Joseph looked like a king! Joseph knew his brothers, but they didn't know him! They bowed down on their knees.

'We have come to buy some food.'

Can you help us, please?'

Joseph was amazed at this sight. He remembered his dreams. His dreams were right! He filled their sacks with grain. When they needed more, they came back again.

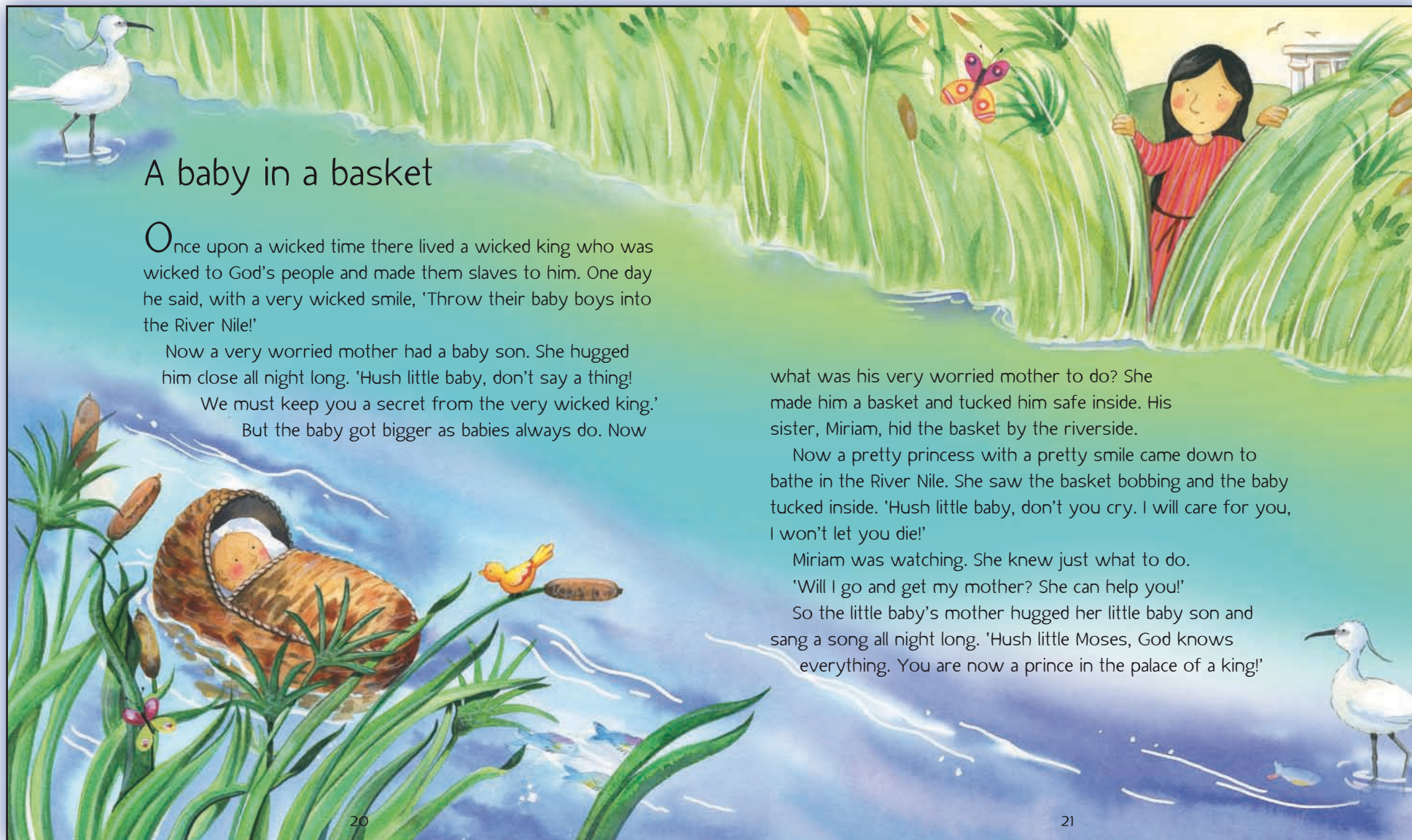
Joseph was joyous! He had to tell!

'It's me – your brother Joseph! I'm alive and well!'

His brothers had been so sorry for so many years. There was lots of laughter and many tears.

Joseph said, 'You hurt me, it's true. But God used it for good. Now I can help you! I choose to be thankful. I choose to forgive. Bring father with you and come here to live!'

From early morn until the day grew dim, Joseph's family were glad God had a plan for them.



A baby in a basket

Once upon a wicked time there lived a wicked king who was wicked to God's people and made them slaves to him. One day he said, with a very wicked smile, 'Throw their baby boys into the River Nile!'

Now a very worried mother had a baby son. She hugged him close all night long. 'Hush little baby, don't say a thing! We must keep you a secret from the very wicked king.' But the baby got bigger as babies always do. Now

what was his very worried mother to do? She made him a basket and tucked him safe inside. His sister, Miriam, hid the basket by the riverside.

Now a pretty princess with a pretty smile came down to bathe in the River Nile. She saw the basket bobbing and the baby tucked inside. 'Hush little baby, don't you cry. I will care for you, I won't let you die!'

Miriam was watching. She knew just what to do.

'Will I go and get my mother? She can help you!'

So the little baby's mother hugged her little baby son and sang a song all night long. 'Hush little Moses, God knows everything. You are now a prince in the palace of a king!'

An amazing rescue

When Moses grew up and became a man, God said, 'Moses, I have a plan! Tell the wicked king of Egypt to let my people go! There will be trouble if he says, "No!"'

There was lots and lots of trouble before the king said, 'Yes'. The people left as quick as could be into the wilderness. God went before them in a cloud by day; and at night, a fiery pillar of light led the way.

The king changed his mind. His soldiers gave chase.

'Trap them by the sea!' he said, 'Don't let them get away!' The people were afraid and cried, 'Will our troubles ever cease?'

Moses said, 'Don't worry. God is with us. Be at peace!'

God told Moses to raise his staff. The Red Sea parted, a path opened wide. They walked quick as could be to the other side! Then Moses lowered his stick and quickly closed the sea and the people praised God for setting them free.

'The Lord is our strength and song,' they sang, 'our salvation all day long!'



A sleepless night

Young Samuel lived in God's house and helped Eli the Priest all day. He learned to love God and serve others, to listen and to pray. One night, as he closed his sleepy eyes and sleep so softly came, he thought he heard old Eli calling out his name.

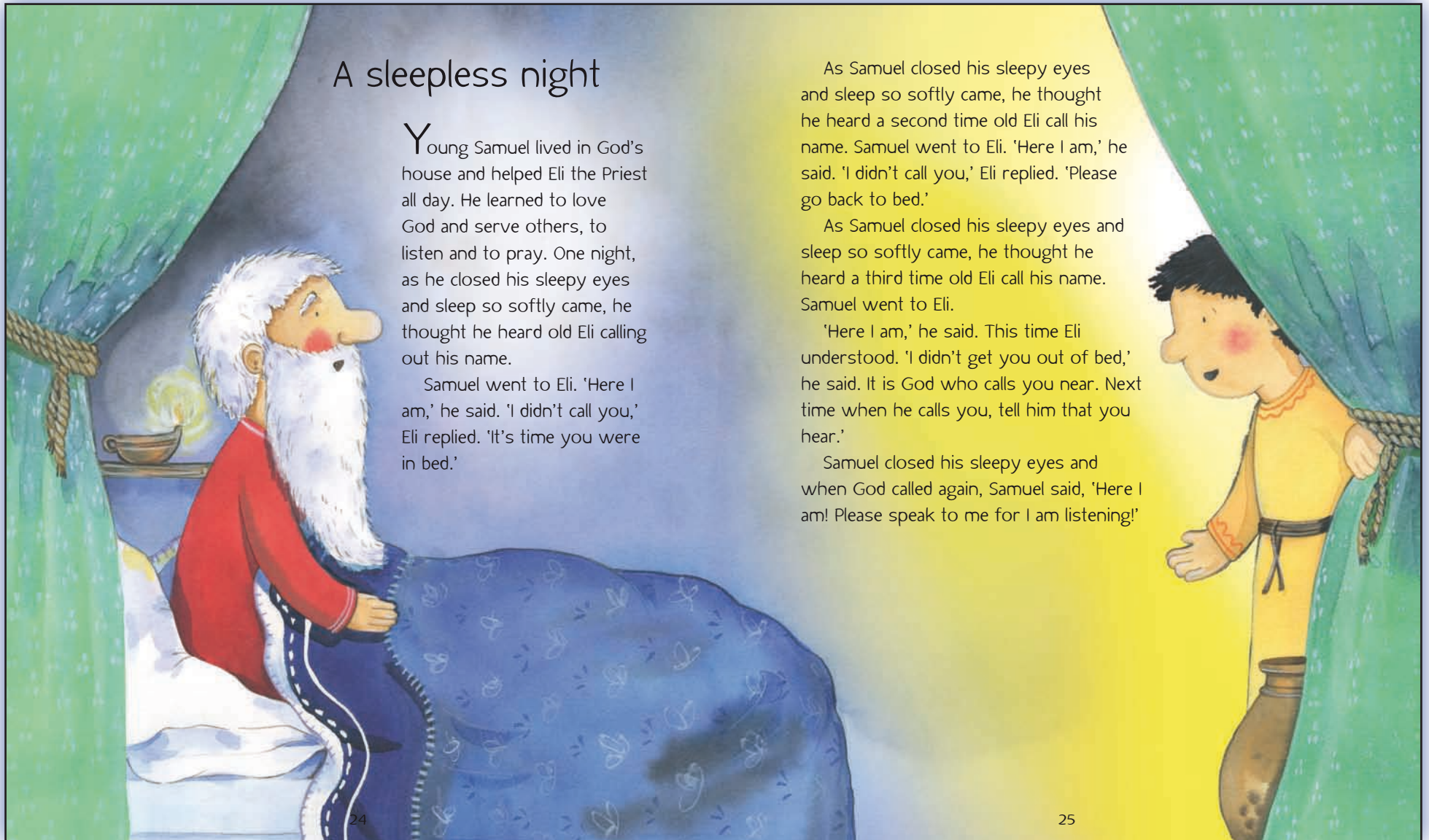
Samuel went to Eli. 'Here I am,' he said. 'I didn't call you,' Eli replied. 'It's time you were in bed.'

As Samuel closed his sleepy eyes and sleep so softly came, he thought he heard a second time old Eli call his name. Samuel went to Eli. 'Here I am,' he said. 'I didn't call you,' Eli replied. 'Please go back to bed.'

As Samuel closed his sleepy eyes and sleep so softly came, he thought he heard a third time old Eli call his name. Samuel went to Eli.

'Here I am,' he said. This time Eli understood. 'I didn't get you out of bed,' he said. It is God who calls you near. Next time when he calls you, tell him that you hear.'

Samuel closed his sleepy eyes and when God called again, Samuel said, 'Here I am! Please speak to me for I am listening!'





A future king

God said, 'It's time to choose a new king! Jesse has many sons in Bethlehem. The king I choose is one of them.' So he sent Samuel to look for him.

Jesse gathered his sons together and they stood before Samuel one after the other. When Samuel saw the eldest son, God said, 'He looks like a king, but he's not the one.' When Samuel saw the second son, God said, 'He looks like a king, but he's not the one.' When Samuel saw the third son, God said, 'He looks like a king, but he's not the one.' After seven of Jesse's sons stood before him, God said to Samuel, 'They will not be the king.'



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Samuel began to wonder what was wrong until Jesse said, 'I have one more son, though he's very young.'

When Samuel saw this youngest son, God said, 'Samuel! He is the one! He may not look much like a king, but he loves me more than anything.'

So Samuel poured oil on David's head.

'David will be king!' his brothers said.



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A mighty God

Goliath was the mightiest, frightiest giant that God's army had ever seen. He wore giant armour, held a giant sword, had a giant voice and a giant streak of mean.

Every day he shouted, 'I'm the biggest giant you ever did see. None of you is brave enough to come and fight me.'

Now David was a shepherd boy. He was young and small but that didn't matter to him at all.

'Will no one fight?' he asked the soldiers. 'Are you all asleep? God saved me from bears when I looked after sheep. Goliath may be mighty, but God is mightier still. If no one else will fight Goliath, I surely will!'

The king's sword was too heavy
and his armour too big
so David went out with

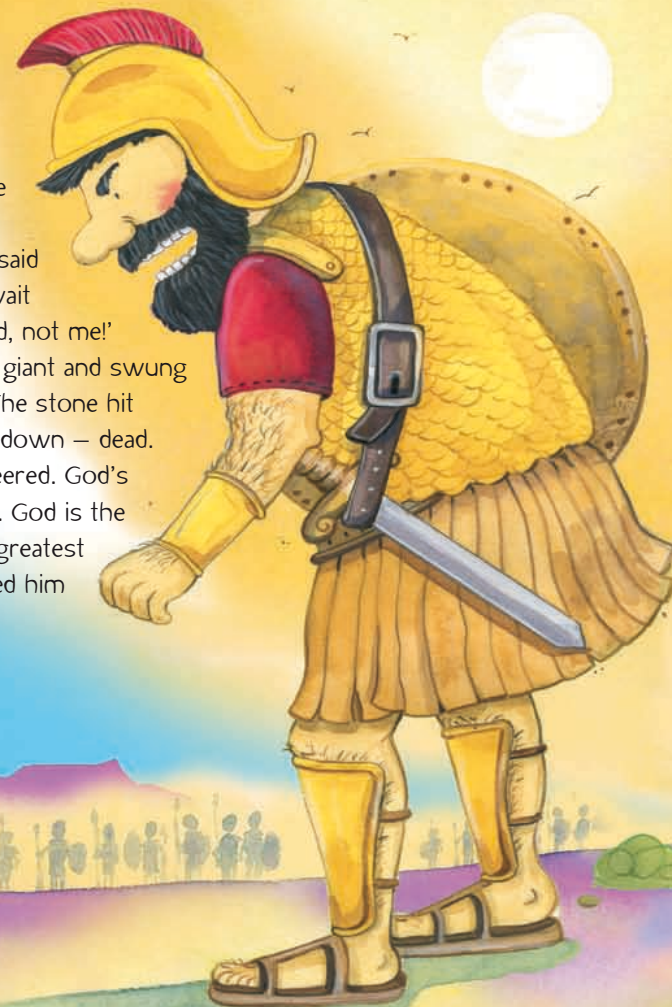
his shepherd's
sling.

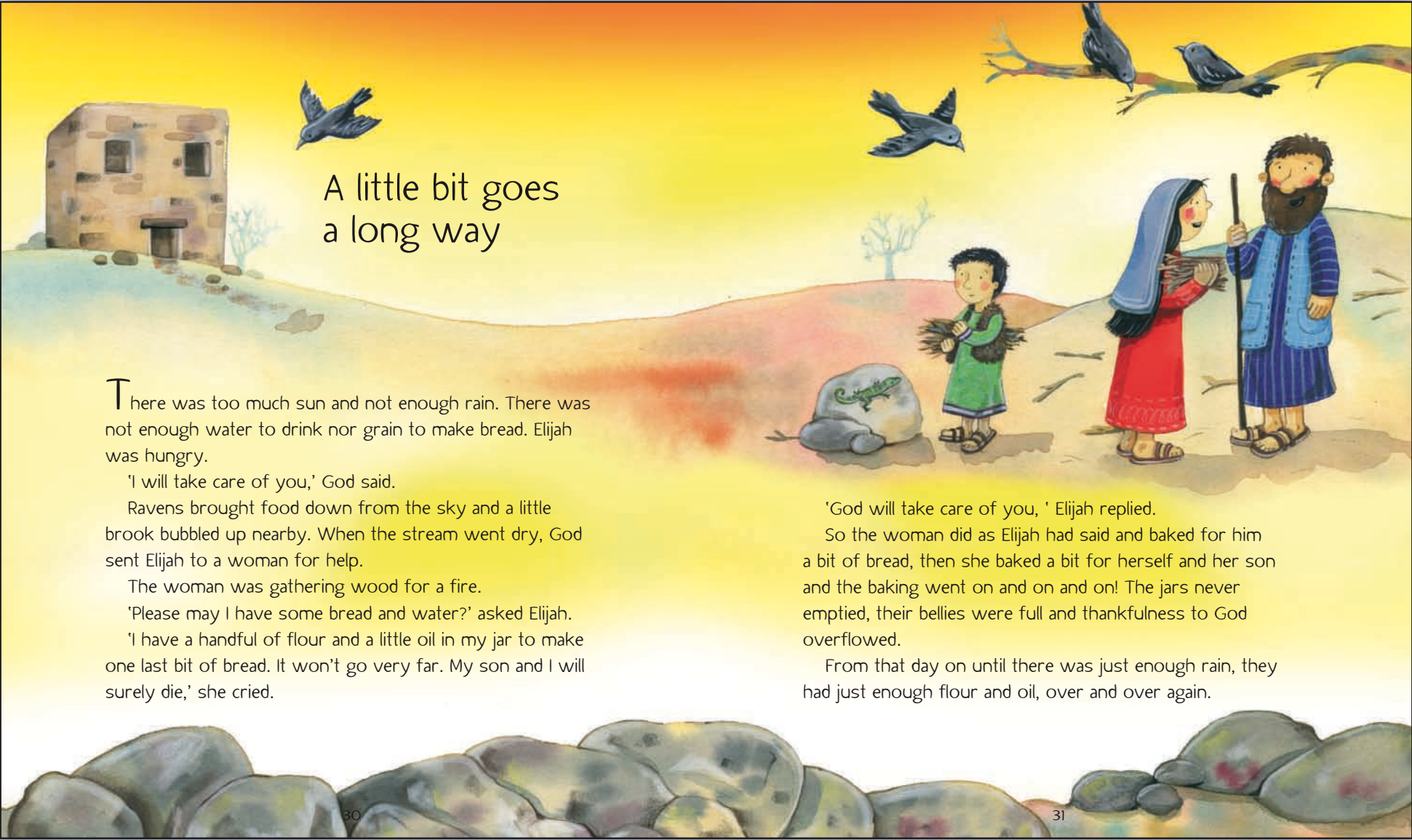
'You can't beat
Goliath with that
silly thing,' said the
king.

'God will help,' said
David. 'Just you wait
and see. Trust God, not me!'

David faced the giant and swung
his sling around. The stone hit
Goliath and he fell down – dead.

God's army cheered. God's
enemies ran away. God is the
mightiest and the greatest
– and David trusted him
that day.





A little bit goes a long way

There was too much sun and not enough rain. There was not enough water to drink nor grain to make bread. Elijah was hungry.

'I will take care of you,' God said.

Ravens brought food down from the sky and a little brook bubbled up nearby. When the stream went dry, God sent Elijah to a woman for help.

The woman was gathering wood for a fire.

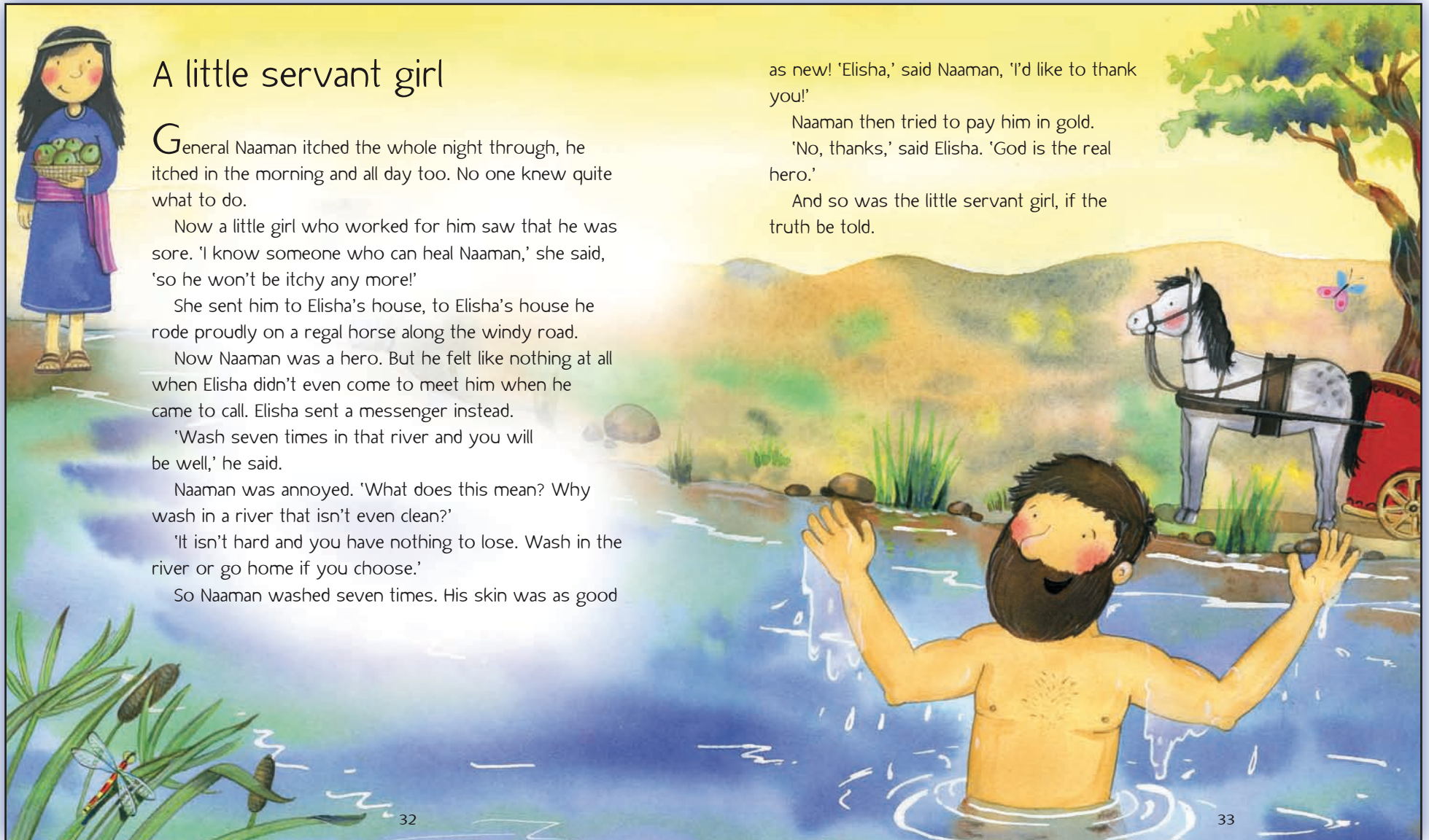
'Please may I have some bread and water?' asked Elijah.

'I have a handful of flour and a little oil in my jar to make one last bit of bread. It won't go very far. My son and I will surely die,' she cried.

'God will take care of you,' Elijah replied.

So the woman did as Elijah had said and baked for him a bit of bread, then she baked a bit for herself and her son and the baking went on and on and on! The jars never emptied, their bellies were full and thankfulness to God overflowed.

From that day on until there was just enough rain, they had just enough flour and oil, over and over again.



A little servant girl

General Naaman itched the whole night through, he itched in the morning and all day too. No one knew quite what to do.

Now a little girl who worked for him saw that he was sore. 'I know someone who can heal Naaman,' she said, 'so he won't be itchy any more!'

She sent him to Elisha's house, to Elisha's house he rode proudly on a regal horse along the windy road.

Now Naaman was a hero. But he felt like nothing at all when Elisha didn't even come to meet him when he came to call. Elisha sent a messenger instead.

'Wash seven times in that river and you will be well,' he said.

Naaman was annoyed. 'What does this mean? Why wash in a river that isn't even clean?'

'It isn't hard and you have nothing to lose. Wash in the river or go home if you choose.'

So Naaman washed seven times. His skin was as good

as new! 'Elisha,' said Naaman, 'I'd like to thank you!'

Naaman then tried to pay him in gold.

'No, thanks,' said Elisha. 'God is the real hero.'

And so was the little servant girl, if the truth be told.

A prayer from the deep

When the people of Nineveh didn't listen to what God had to say, God told Jonah to go and tell them to obey. Jonah hopped on a boat and ran far, far away.

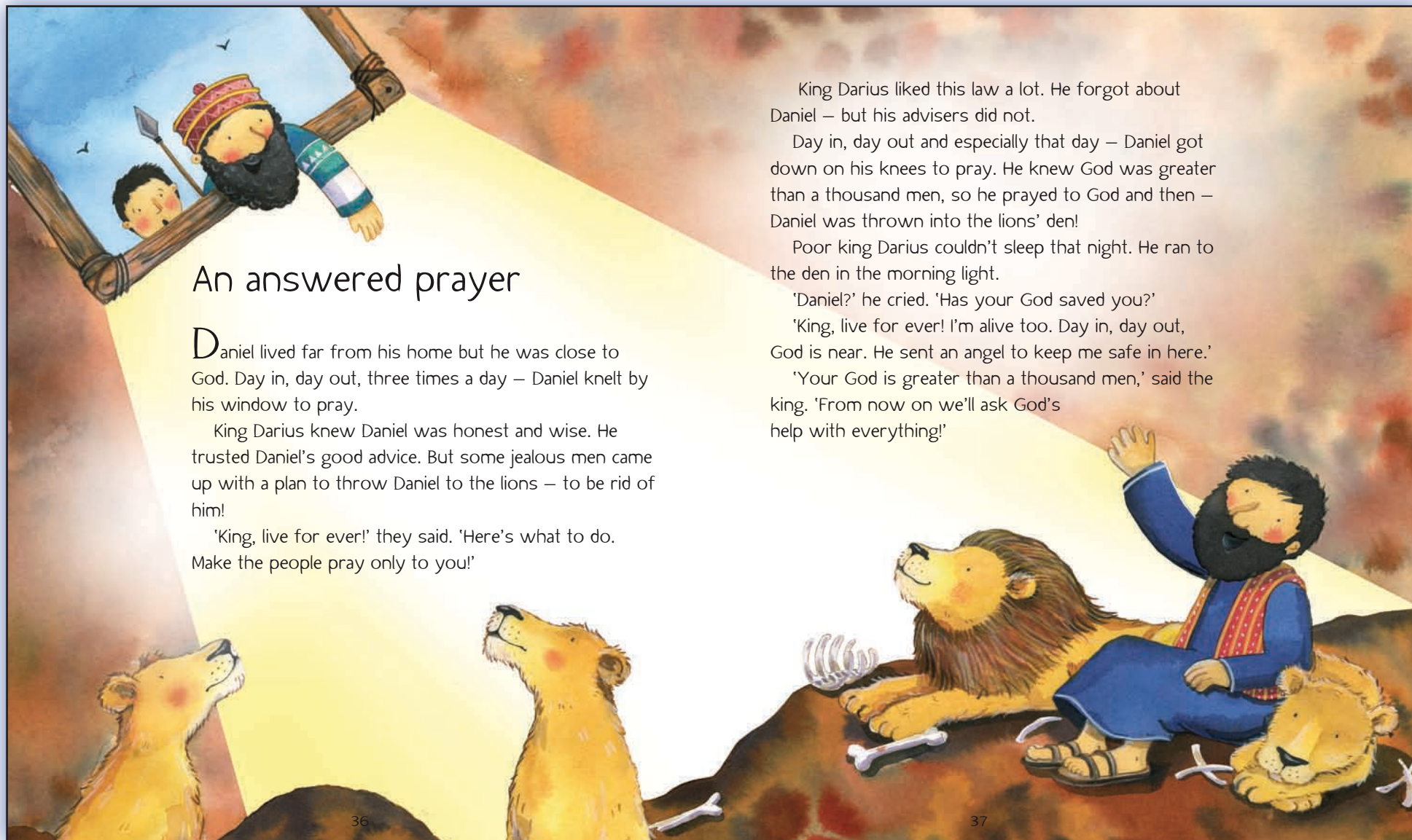
When Jonah didn't listen to what God had to say he found himself in a great big fish with lots of time to pray.

'In my distress I called out and asked help from the Lord. He sent a fish to swallow me when I was thrown overboard. If God hadn't sent this fish, I surely would have drowned. The sea was swirling all around, but now I'm safe and sound.

'When I felt my life was over, far from God's love and care, I looked to God and prayed to him and found he'd always been there. I will remember God's love for me and shout God's praises thankfully.

'I vowed to live for God and listen to what he has to say. I make this vow again today. I will keep my word – salvation comes from the Lord.'

When the fish listened to what God had to say, it spat Jonah out on the beach at Nineveh. Jonah told them to listen to God and they all obeyed.



An answered prayer

Daniel lived far from his home but he was close to God. Day in, day out, three times a day – Daniel knelt by his window to pray.

King Darius knew Daniel was honest and wise. He trusted Daniel's good advice. But some jealous men came up with a plan to throw Daniel to the lions – to be rid of him!

'King, live for ever!' they said. 'Here's what to do. Make the people pray only to you!'

King Darius liked this law a lot. He forgot about Daniel – but his advisers did not.

Day in, day out and especially that day – Daniel got down on his knees to pray. He knew God was greater than a thousand men, so he prayed to God and then – Daniel was thrown into the lions' den!

Poor king Darius couldn't sleep that night. He ran to the den in the morning light.

'Daniel?' he cried. 'Has your God saved you?'

'King, live for ever! I'm alive too. Day in, day out, God is near. He sent an angel to keep me safe in here.'

'Your God is greater than a thousand men,' said the king. 'From now on we'll ask God's help with everything!'

A lullaby in Bethlehem

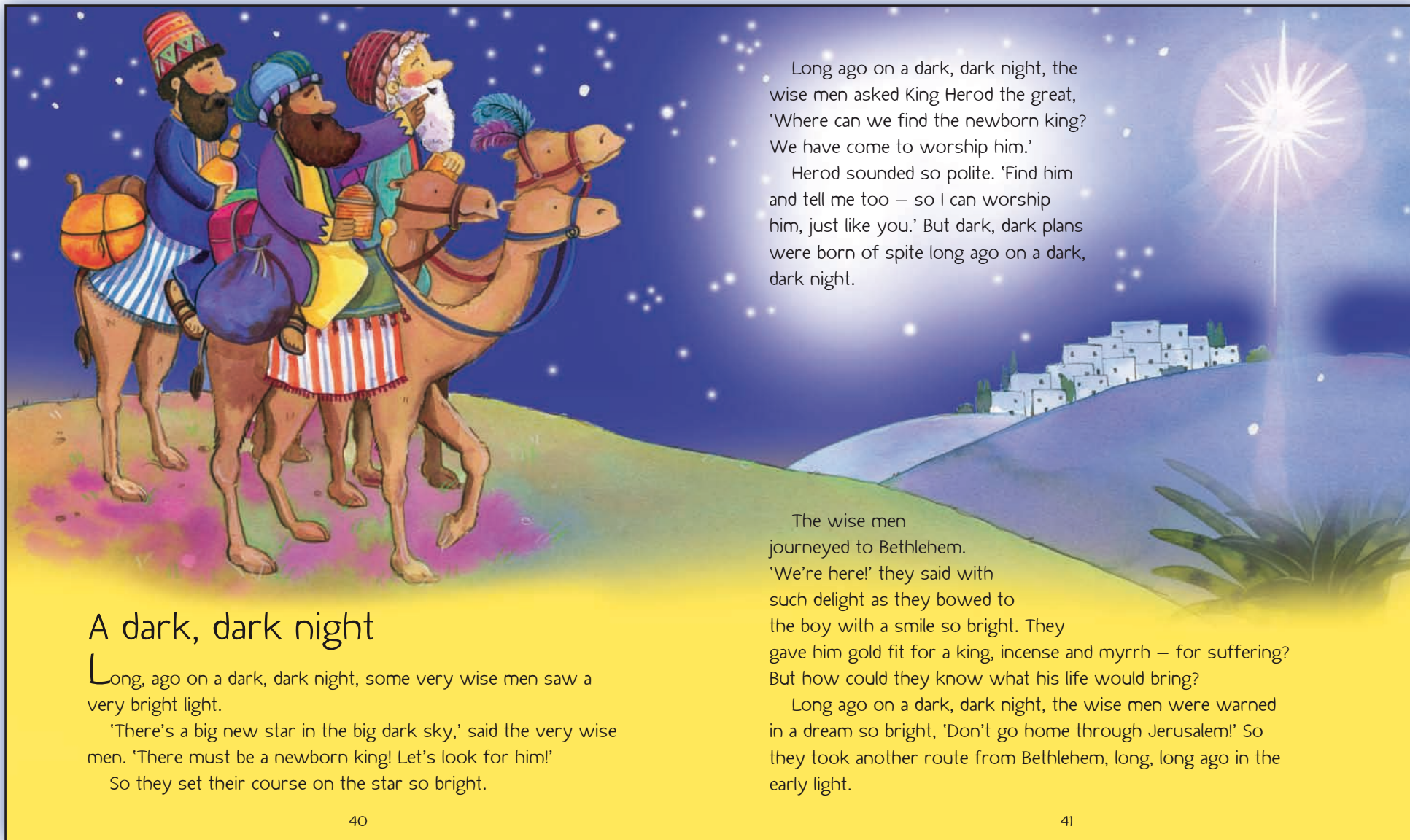
Clippity cloppity, clippity clop – Mary rode on a donkey that didn't stop until it got to Bethlehem – busy, bustly Bethlehem. Joseph tried to find them a place to stay, but all the inns were full that day. So Jesus was born in a starlit barn. Mary wrapped him

in a blanket to keep him warm. Joseph tucked him into a bed of straw and everyone was filled with awe.

When the Saviour of the world began to cry, angels sang the whole earth a lullaby.

'Peace on earth, good news we bring! Glory to the newborn king!'

Shepherds came from starry hills to see the promise of God fulfilled. God is with us, Jesus saves! It is a night to cherish the gift God gave.



A dark, dark night

Long ago on a dark, dark night, some very wise men saw a very bright light.

'There's a big new star in the big dark sky,' said the very wise men. 'There must be a newborn king! Let's look for him!'

So they set their course on the star so bright.

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Long ago on a dark, dark night, the wise men asked King Herod the great, 'Where can we find the newborn king? We have come to worship him.'

Herod sounded so polite. 'Find him and tell me too – so I can worship him, just like you.' But dark, dark plans were born of spite long ago on a dark, dark night.

The wise men journeyed to Bethlehem. 'We're here!' they said with such delight as they bowed to the boy with a smile so bright. They gave him gold fit for a king, incense and myrrh – for suffering? But how could they know what his life would bring?

Long ago on a dark, dark night, the wise men were warned in a dream so bright, 'Don't go home through Jerusalem!' So they took another route from Bethlehem, long, long ago in the early light.

41

A happy ending

When Jesus was twelve, his parents said to him, 'We're going on a journey to Jerusalem. It's a special time of year. We're going to thank God for his love and care.'

Everyone went together, friends joined along the way. The journey was long and took many days.

Jesus loved the temple. He felt that God was near. He spent hours talking with the teachers who were there.



42

When it was time to travel back, his parents didn't know that Jesus wasn't with the crowd along the road.

'Where is Jesus?' Mary cried – more worried than words can say. She and Joseph searched for him for three long worried days.

They found him in the temple. He'd been there day and night. 'We're so happy to see you! You gave us such a fright!'

He was sorry that he'd worried them and gone off on his own.

'I thought you'd know that I was here where I feel most at home.'

'We are amazed,' the teachers said, 'by all that we've heard. How can one so young know so much about God's word?'

So Jesus went back home again and continued to grow – and become much wiser than anyone could know.



43

A special baptism

John was preaching loud and clear.
'God's promised one will soon be here! Love God! Live God's way! Come and be baptized today!' So people came down to the river, down to the river they came; people came down to the river to show that they wanted to change!

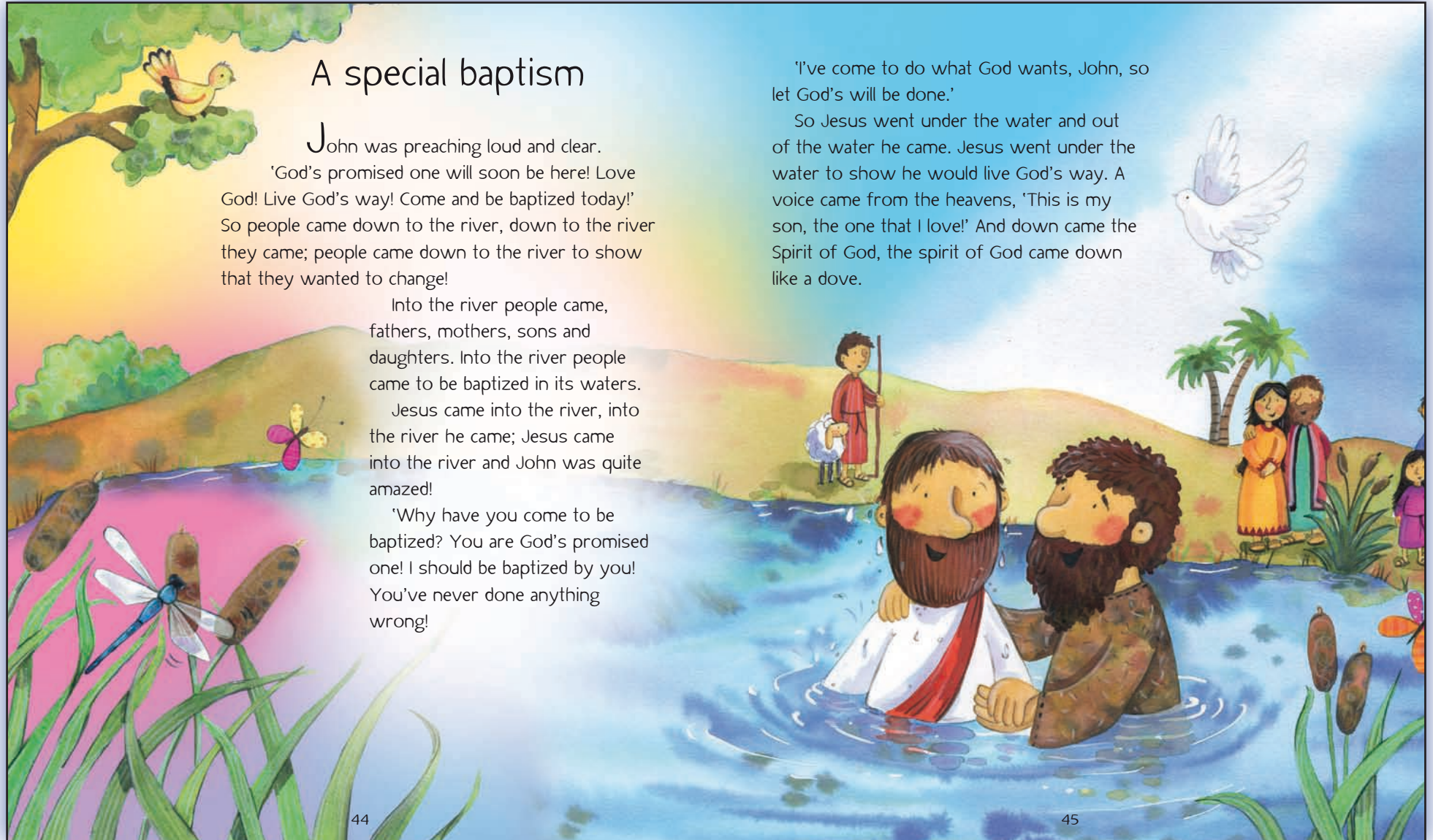
Into the river people came, fathers, mothers, sons and daughters. Into the river people came to be baptized in its waters.

Jesus came into the river, into the river he came; Jesus came into the river and John was quite amazed!

'Why have you come to be baptized? You are God's promised one! I should be baptized by you! You've never done anything wrong!'

'I've come to do what God wants, John, so let God's will be done.'

So Jesus went under the water and out of the water he came. Jesus went under the water to show he would live God's way. A voice came from the heavens, 'This is my son, the one that I love!' And down came the Spirit of God, the spirit of God came down like a dove.



A big catch

Jesus had a message that people loved to hear. He said, 'God's kingdom is very, very near! God loves you! Love God too and love others as God loves you!'

Peter, Andrew, James and John had been fishing all night and the night was long! They didn't catch a single fish. It was time to give up and wash their nets.

Jesus was preaching along the shore. The crowd got bigger, there were more and more! They were crowding him into the sea, so he said to Peter, 'Will you go fishing with me?'

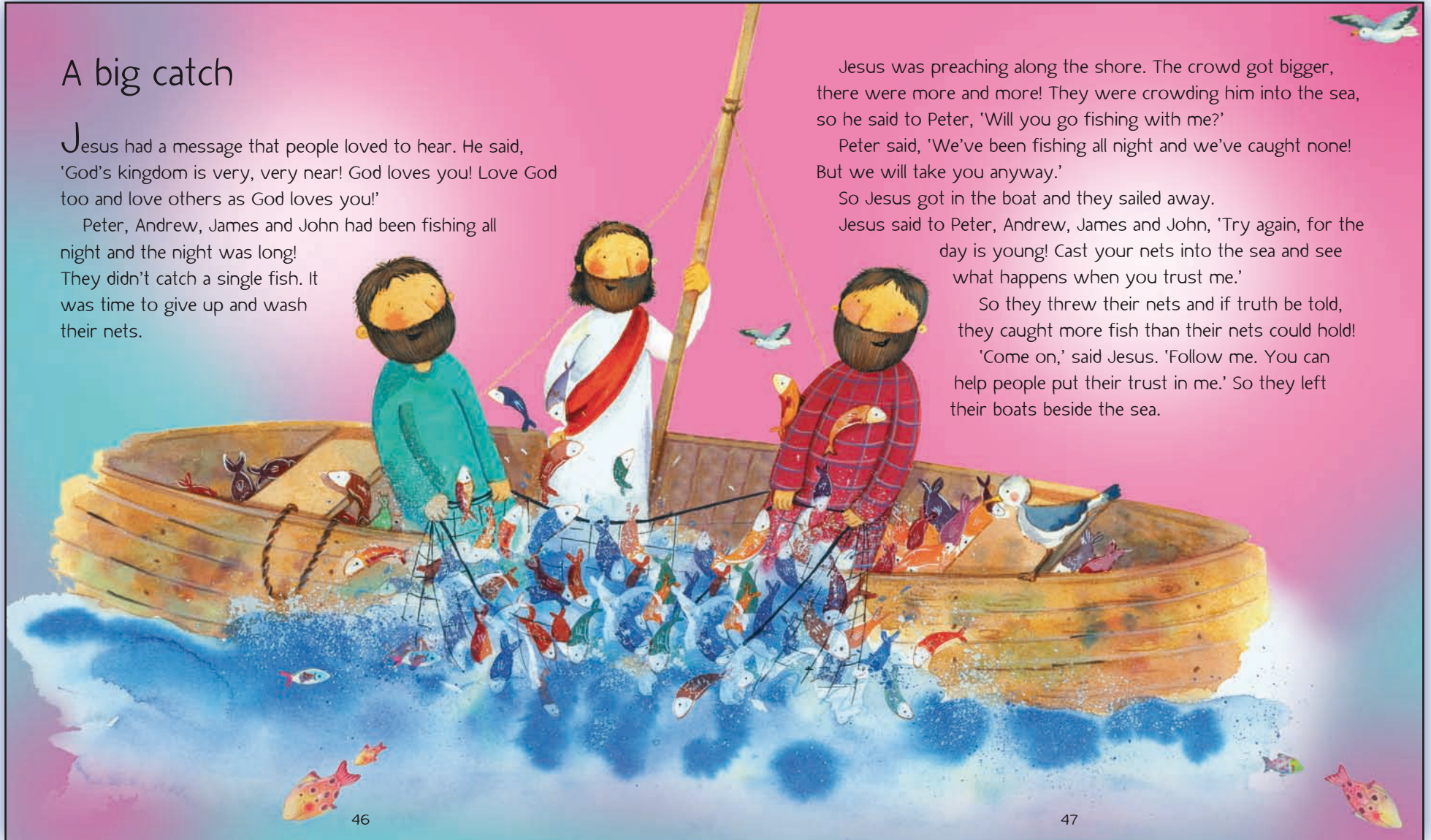
Peter said, 'We've been fishing all night and we've caught none! But we will take you anyway.'

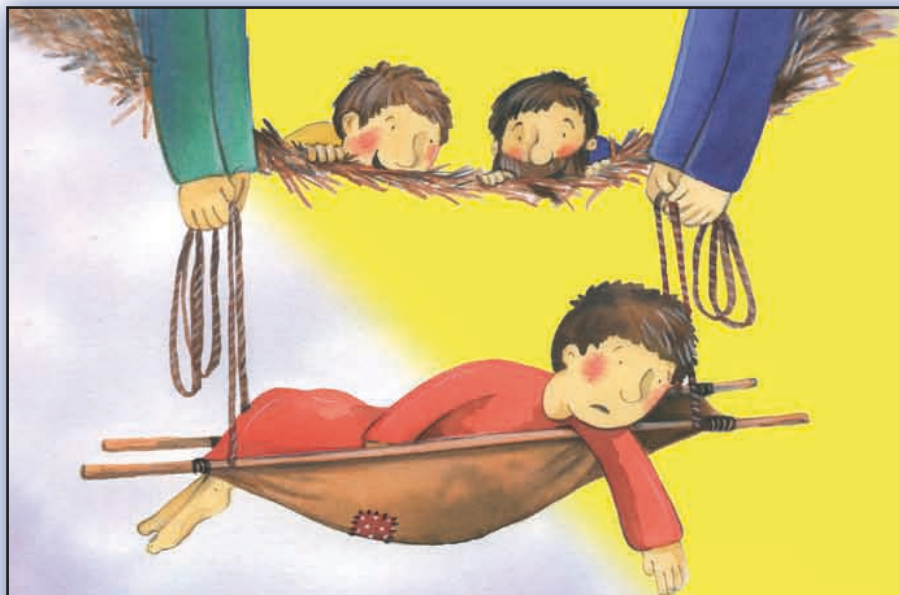
So Jesus got in the boat and they sailed away.

Jesus said to Peter, Andrew, James and John, 'Try again, for the day is young! Cast your nets into the sea and see what happens when you trust me.'

So they threw their nets and if truth be told, they caught more fish than their nets could hold!

'Come on,' said Jesus. 'Follow me. You can help people put their trust in me.' So they left their boats beside the sea.





A few good friends

There was once a man on a mat. The man on the mat just sat. He couldn't stand or walk or crawl. In fact, he couldn't move at all and that might have been the end of that... But four good friends came around. They said, 'Jesus is here in our town!' He's giving a talk! He can help you to walk!' And they lifted the mat off the ground.

The man had a happy ride. But there was standing room only outside! His heart filled with gloom.

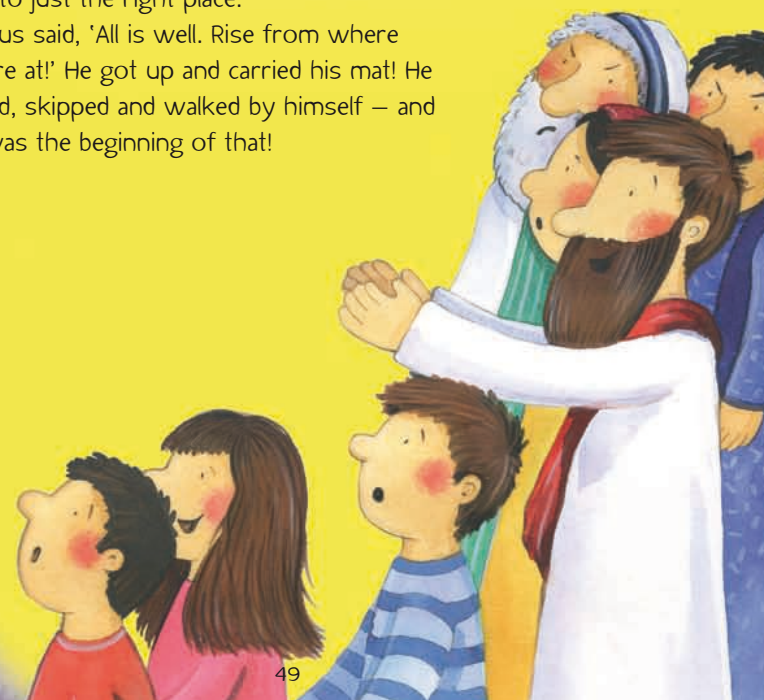
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'Look! There's no room! How will we ever get inside?'

The friends carried the man on his mat. They climbed on to the roof that was flat. They made it their goal to dig a big hole and lower him to where Jesus was at.

Jesus looked at the man, amazed. Then he looked up at each friend's face. He saw faith in their eyes of a very large size and said, 'You've come to just the right place.'

Jesus said, 'All is well. Rise from where you are at!' He got up and carried his mat! He jumped, skipped and walked by himself – and that was the beginning of that!



49



God is good

It was a lovely day on the hillside. Birds were singing and the sky was blue. The flowers were blooming but people were worrying – as people often do.

'Don't worry about what you will eat or drink or wear,' said Jesus. 'Just look at the birds in the air. They don't sow seeds so they can eat food. God takes care of them. God is good.'

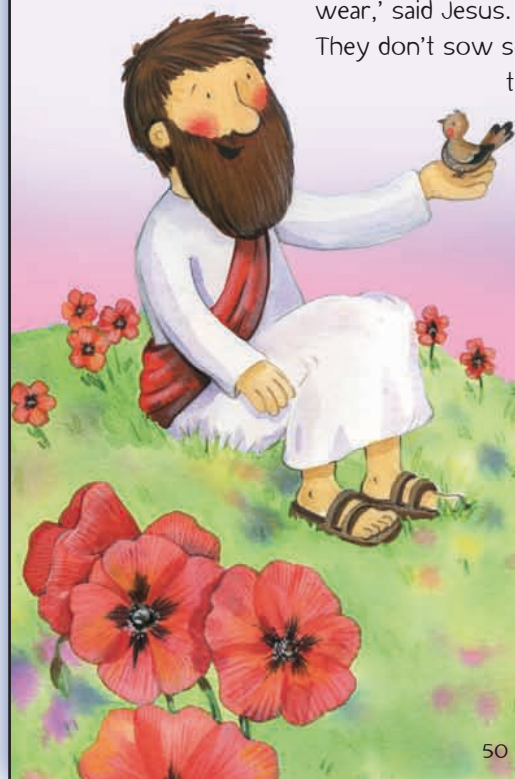
'Will worrying make you stronger or help you live longer? Look at the flowers that grow. They don't sew

clothes so they will look good. God makes them beautiful. God is good.

'God loves you even more than the flowers and birds. There's more to life than fashion and food. God will take care of you. God is good.'

'If you look for something, you will find it. If you knock on a door, someone answers it. If you ask your parents for bread, do they give you a rock instead? Ask God for what you need and you will receive it. God is good. Do you believe it?'

'Don't put your trust in the things that you own. Things are easily lost or stolen or worn. Trust in God. You'll have treasure in heaven. Thank God who is good for all you are given. Worrying doesn't change a thing. Trust in God for everything.'



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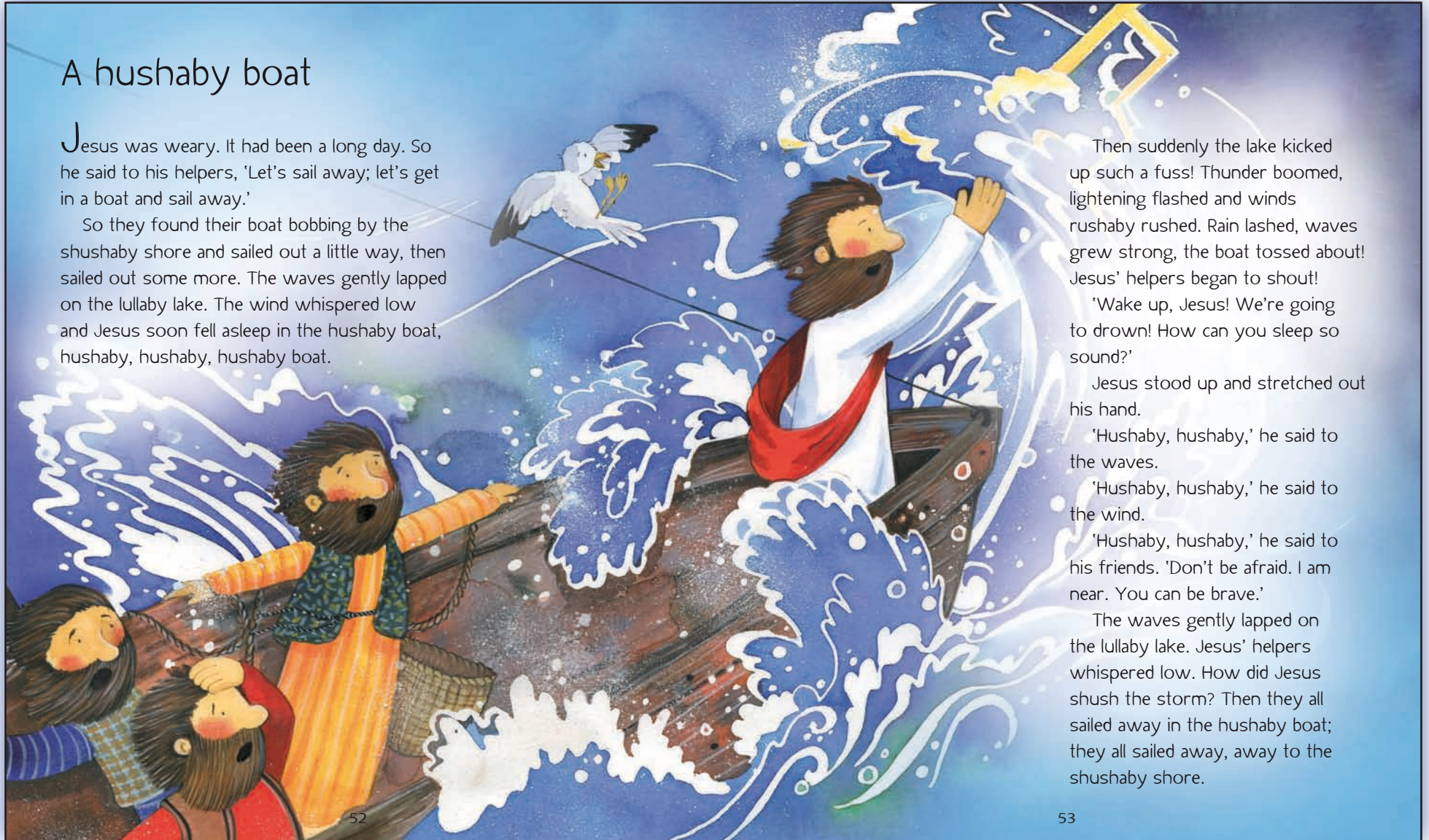


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A hushaby boat

Jesus was weary. It had been a long day. So he said to his helpers, 'Let's sail away; let's get in a boat and sail away.'

So they found their boat bobbing by the shushaby shore and sailed out a little way, then sailed out some more. The waves gently lapped on the lullaby lake. The wind whispered low and Jesus soon fell asleep in the hushaby boat, hushaby, hushaby, hushaby boat.



Then suddenly the lake kicked up such a fuss! Thunder boomed, lightening flashed and winds rushaby rushed. Rain lashed, waves grew strong, the boat tossed about! Jesus' helpers began to shout!

'Wake up, Jesus! We're going to drown! How can you sleep so sound?'

Jesus stood up and stretched out his hand.

'Hushaby, hushaby,' he said to the waves.

'Hushaby, hushaby,' he said to the wind.

'Hushaby, hushaby,' he said to his friends. 'Don't be afraid. I am near. You can be brave.'

The waves gently lapped on the lullaby lake. Jesus' helpers whispered low. How did Jesus shush the storm? Then they all sailed away in the hushaby boat; they all sailed away, away to the shushaby shore.

Caring and sharing

'Let's go see Jesus!' a little boy said. So his mum packed lunch – a few fish and five bits of bread. Off they went with a skip and a song to spend time with Jesus all that day long.

More than five thousand others had gathered there too, to listen to Jesus and see what he'd do! He healed those who were sick or blind or lame and talked about how to love God till sunset came. Everyone

was hungry, but no one would leave, so Jesus said to his helpers, 'Let's give them something to eat.'

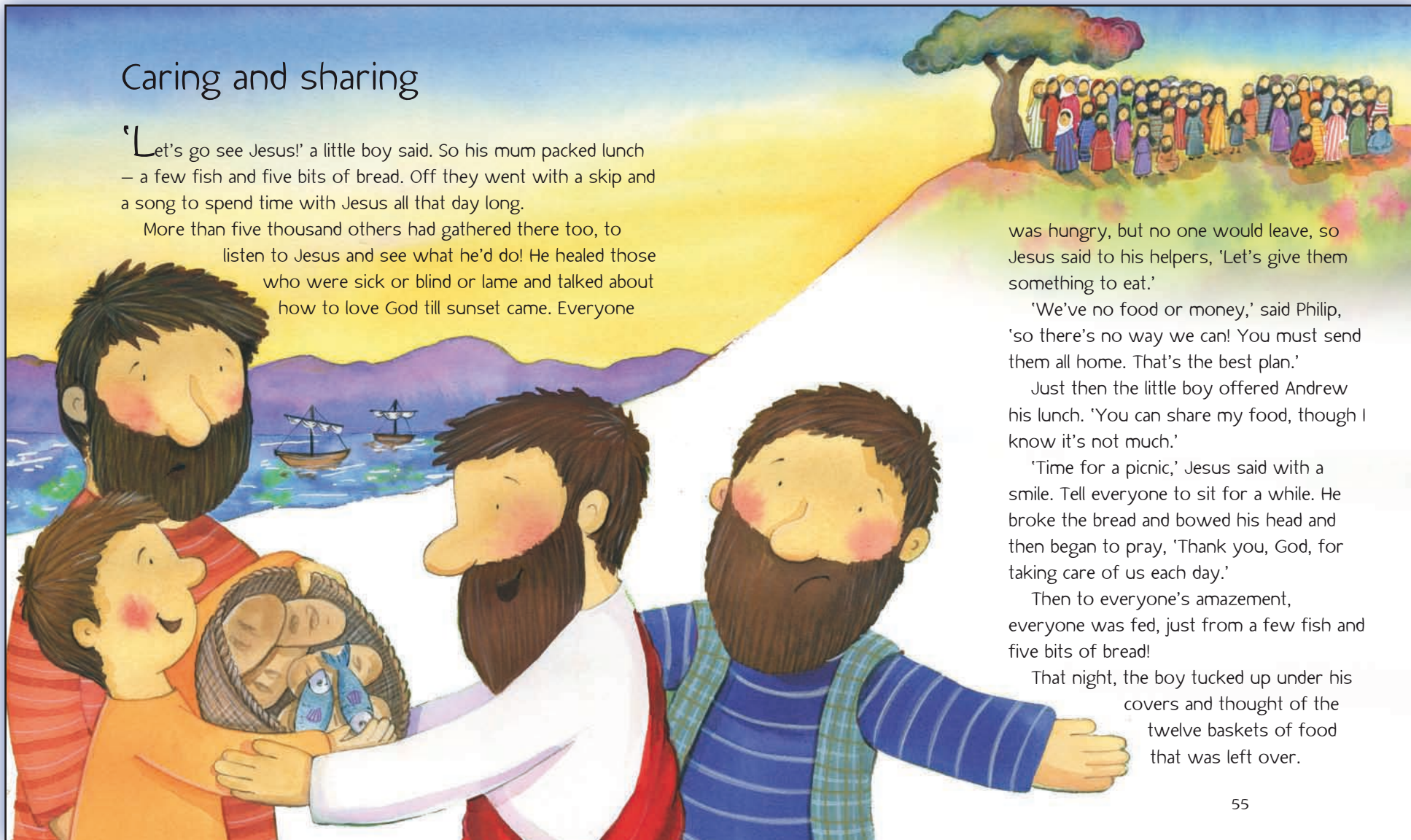
'We've no food or money,' said Philip, 'so there's no way we can! You must send them all home. That's the best plan.'

Just then the little boy offered Andrew his lunch. 'You can share my food, though I know it's not much.'

'Time for a picnic,' Jesus said with a smile. Tell everyone to sit for a while. He broke the bread and bowed his head and then began to pray, 'Thank you, God, for taking care of us each day.'

Then to everyone's amazement, everyone was fed, just from a few fish and five bits of bread!

That night, the boy tucked up under his covers and thought of the twelve baskets of food that was left over.



The soldier who believed

One day, an officer from the Roman army rushed up to Jesus.

'Please help!' the officer begged. 'My servant is in pain and can't move his legs! I know that you have the power to heal.'

Jesus could see that his faith was real.

'I will come right now and make your servant well.'

'You don't need to come,' the officer said. 'You can make him better without going to his bedside. I tell my soldiers what to do and they obey. You can command sickness to go away. Just say the word.'

Jesus was amazed by what he heard.

'I have never found so much faith in anyone! Not even among God's people in Israel! Go home. Your servant will be well.'

And because Jesus said so, he was.



A good neighbour

Jesus said, 'Love your neighbour.'

'Who is my neighbour?' asked a man. So Jesus told a story to help him understand.

Once upon a journey to a town far away, a man set out on a dangerous road and met robbers on the way. They jumped up from their hiding place and hit him on the head, took everything he had and left him there half dead.

A little while later a priest passed by that way. He heard a cry but didn't stop. He said, 'I'm far too busy today.'

A temple helper saw the man lying on the

ground. 'Oohhh,' he said, 'that man's a mess!' Then he walked around.

When the man's enemy saw him lying there, beaten and half dead, he said, 'What can I do to help?' and put a bandage on his head. He carried the man on his donkey down into the town and cared for the man himself till better care could be found. And all the while the man was ill his former enemy paid the bill until he was completely well.

Now Jesus asked a question.

'Who was the good neighbour and what did he do?

Now go, and try to be a good neighbour too.'

A caring shepherd



Jesus taught people how to love God each and every day. But not everybody liked what Jesus had to say.

Some people said, 'He makes friends with folks who aren't like us; folks who do wrong things!' And they began to make a fuss.

So Jesus told a story.



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'If a shepherd has a lot of sheep and one sheep leaps away, he leaves the lot safe on the spot for the one that got away. He will look here and there and everywhere; he will walk and climb and run. Day or night he will never stop until he finds that one. He brings the sheep home safe and sound and leaps for joy that his sheep is found.'

'Heaven has a happy day,' said Jesus, 'when anyone chooses to live God's way.'

'I am the Good Shepherd,' Jesus said. 'I know my sheep by name. No matter where they wander, I love them just the same. I will give my life to save them, no matter what the cost.'

Now, wouldn't you like a friend like that if you were feeling lost?



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Ten Men Well Again

Ten men wanted to be well again. They saw Jesus passing by. 'Jesus, help us, please!' they cried.

Their faces were full of scars and their skin was rough and sore. They couldn't live with their families any more. Jesus felt their pain.

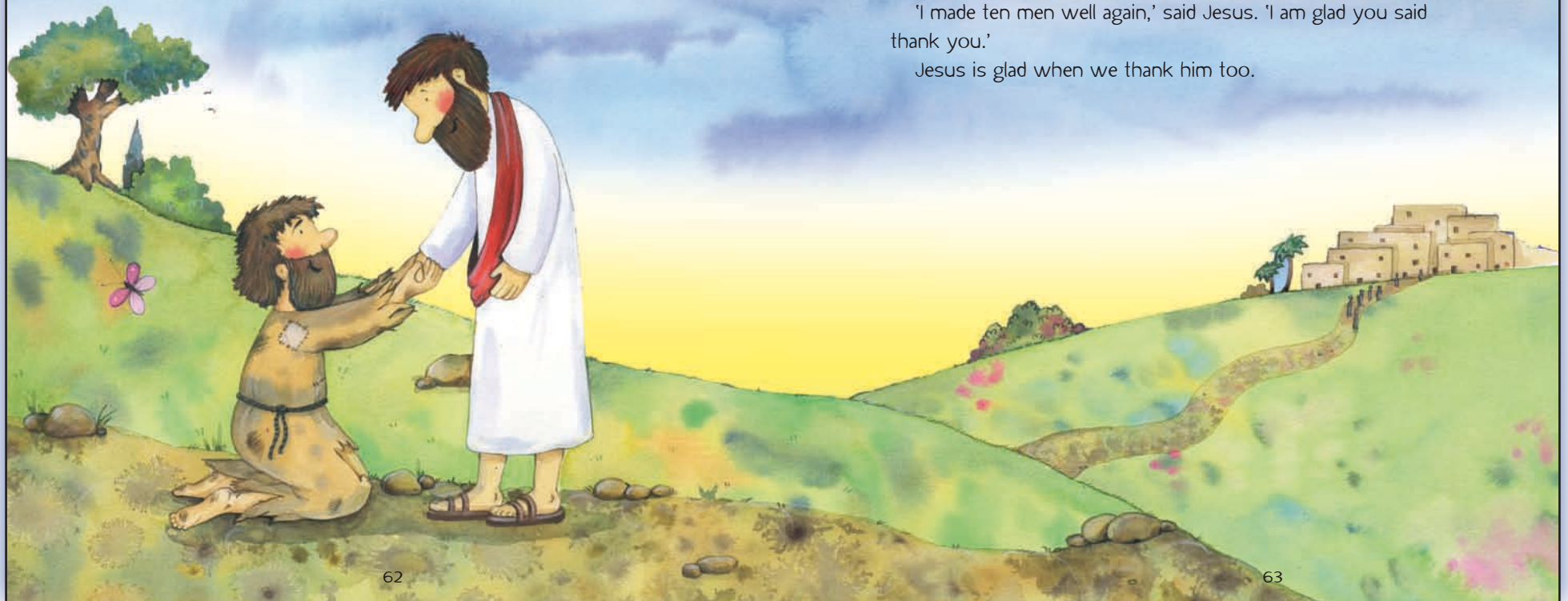
'Go and show the priest your skin,' said Jesus. 'You will all be well and can go home again.'

As the ten men began to go, their skin got better! They ran off happily. Only one man ran back to thank Jesus for healing his disease. He praised God and fell down on his knees.

'Thank you, Jesus,' he said.

'I made ten men well again,' said Jesus. 'I am glad you said thank you.'

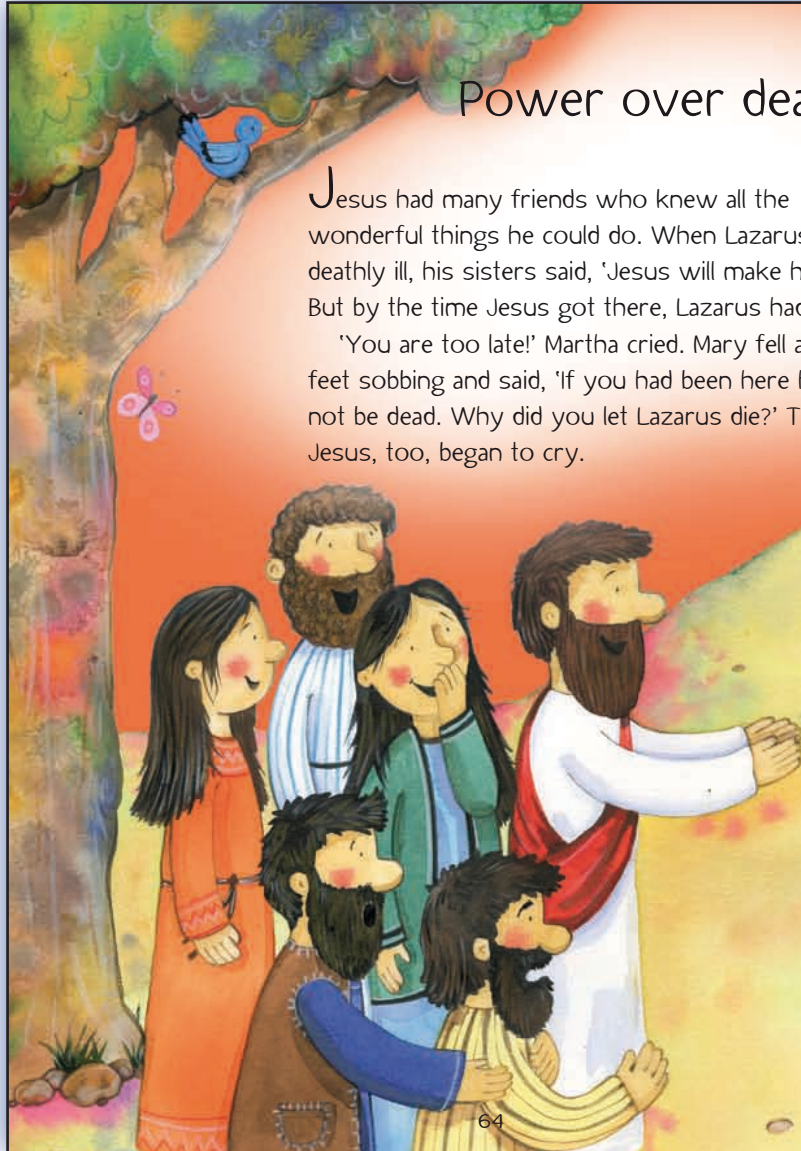
Jesus is glad when we thank him too.



Power over death

Jesus had many friends who knew all the wonderful things he could do. When Lazarus became deathly ill, his sisters said, 'Jesus will make him well!' But by the time Jesus got there, Lazarus had died.

'You are too late!' Martha cried. Mary fell at his feet sobbing and said, 'If you had been here he would not be dead. Why did you let Lazarus die?' Then Jesus, too, began to cry.



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Many people were crying around the cave where the body lay in its grave. Then Jesus said, 'Roll the stone away.'

Martha was surprised, 'The body will smell! He's been four days dead!'

'Martha,' said Jesus, 'put your trust in me. I have power over death. You'll see.'

Jesus looked up and began to pray, 'Father, let everyone see your glory today!' Then Jesus gave a shout, 'Lazarus, come on out!'

And out Lazarus came as quickly as Jesus had said his name! Lazarus was alive! He was no longer dead! Everyone was happy!

'Jesus is truly God's son,' they said.



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An honest prayer

Jesus told this story to some people who thought they were better than others.



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Two men went to the temple to pray. One man thought he was better than the other. He stood up proud and prayed out loud.

'Thank you God. I am so good. I always do the things I should. I give my money. I keep the rules. I spend my time in prayer. I'm not like that man kneeling over there.'

The other man knew he wasn't always good. He didn't always do the things he should. He hung his head and sadly said, 'Forgive me, God, for the things I've done. I know that I'm the guilty one.'



Which prayer do you think God answered?
'If you pray for show, God will know,' Jesus said.
'If you pray from your heart, God will hear.'

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A warm welcome

Ring-a-ring-a-roses, some children went out to play,
when what do you suppose they saw? Jesus was coming
their way!

'Can we go and see him?' they asked their mothers
standing near. 'Yes! Why don't we all go?'

'Hooray!' the children cheered.

Jesus' friends heard them coming happily along the way.

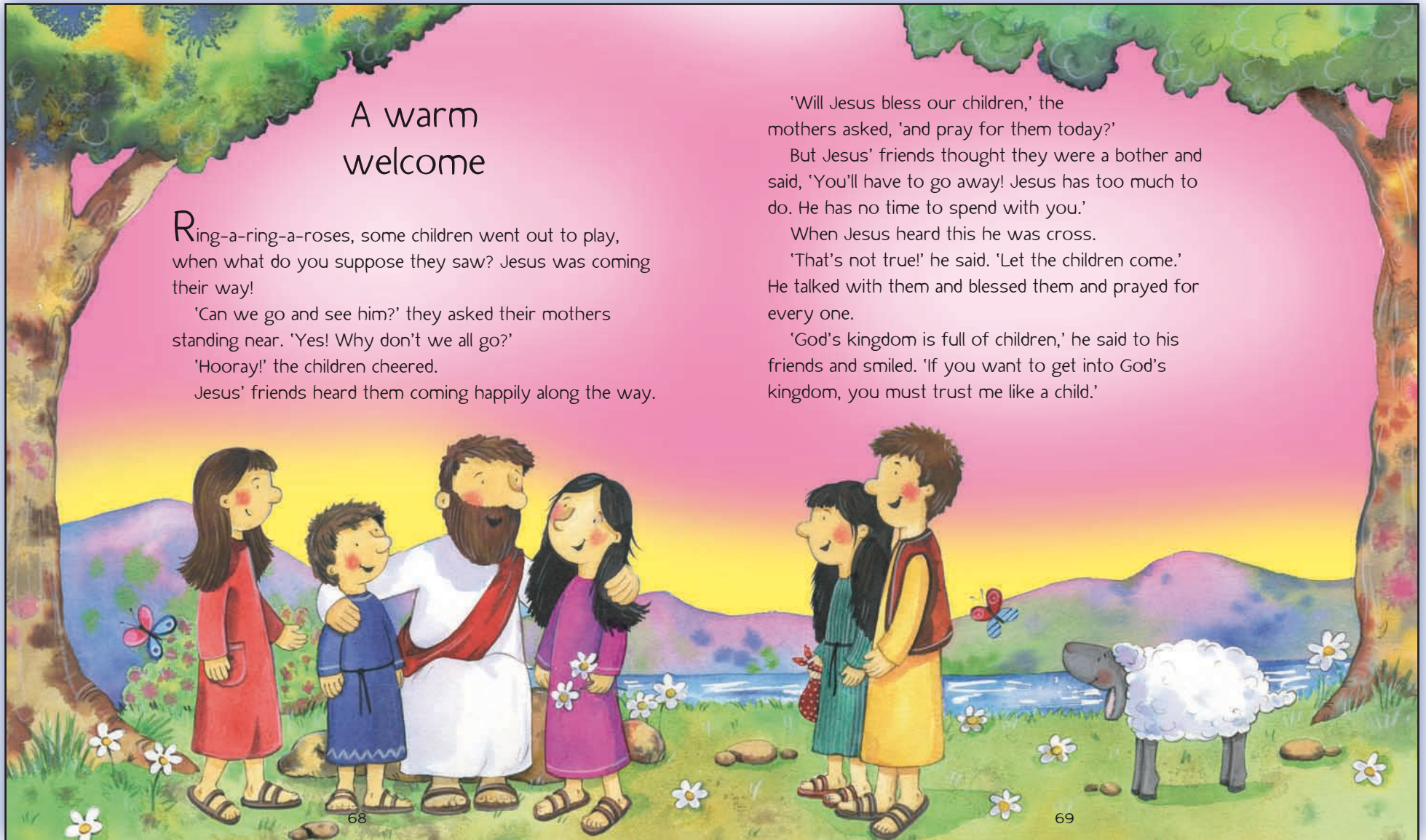
'Will Jesus bless our children,' the
mothers asked, 'and pray for them today?'

But Jesus' friends thought they were a bother and
said, 'You'll have to go away! Jesus has too much to
do. He has no time to spend with you.'

When Jesus heard this he was cross.

'That's not true!' he said. 'Let the children come.'
He talked with them and blessed them and prayed for
every one.

'God's kingdom is full of children,' he said to his
friends and smiled. 'If you want to get into God's
kingdom, you must trust me like a child.'



A change of heart

A man had a vineyard and lots of work to do. He also had two strong sons, so he asked for their help too.

'Will you come and help me?' he said to his oldest son. 'The harvest is ready and there's lots of work to be done.'

'Find someone else to do it, Dad,' the son was quick to say. But just as quick, he was sorry and went out and worked all day.

When the youngest son was asked to help, he said, 'Sure Dad! I'll be right there!' But no one saw him all day long. He never did appear.

Jesus asked those who were listening, 'Which son obeyed his father best? The son who said he wouldn't help but did, or the one who didn't mean his yes?'

Jesus told this story so that we would know it's true: what we do is more important than what we say we'll do.



The small man in the tree

Lots of people crowded around Jesus. Everyone wanted to see him and hear what he had to say. Zacchaeus wanted to see him too. But no matter how hard he tried — he couldn't see over and he couldn't see through. He was just too small.

'I can't see Jesus at all,' said Zacchaeus. 'But I can see a tree.'

So he climbed up to get a good view. Jesus got a good view too.

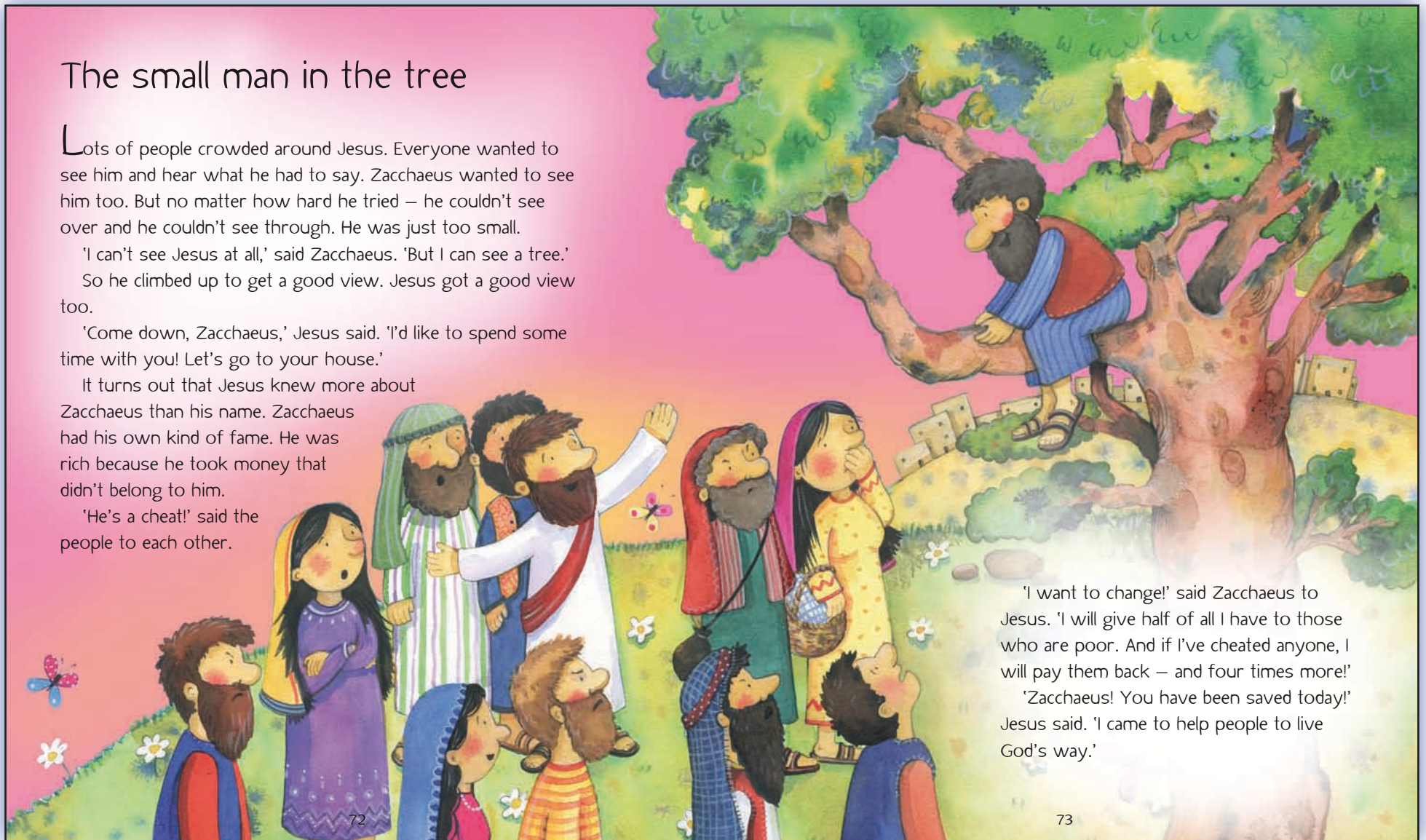
'Come down, Zacchaeus,' Jesus said. 'I'd like to spend some time with you! Let's go to your house.'

It turns out that Jesus knew more about Zacchaeus than his name. Zacchaeus had his own kind of fame. He was rich because he took money that didn't belong to him.

'He's a cheat!' said the people to each other.

'I want to change!' said Zacchaeus to Jesus. 'I will give half of all I have to those who are poor. And if I've cheated anyone, I will pay them back — and four times more!'

'Zacchaeus! You have been saved today!' Jesus said. 'I came to help people to live God's way.'



Time to celebrate

Jesus and his friends were walking to Jerusalem. When they were almost there, Jesus said, 'There is a donkey in the next town. No one has ever ridden it. Find it and bring it here.'

Now the donkey didn't buck when Jesus sat on his back. It didn't kick or bray – not even when the crowd scattered coats along the way.

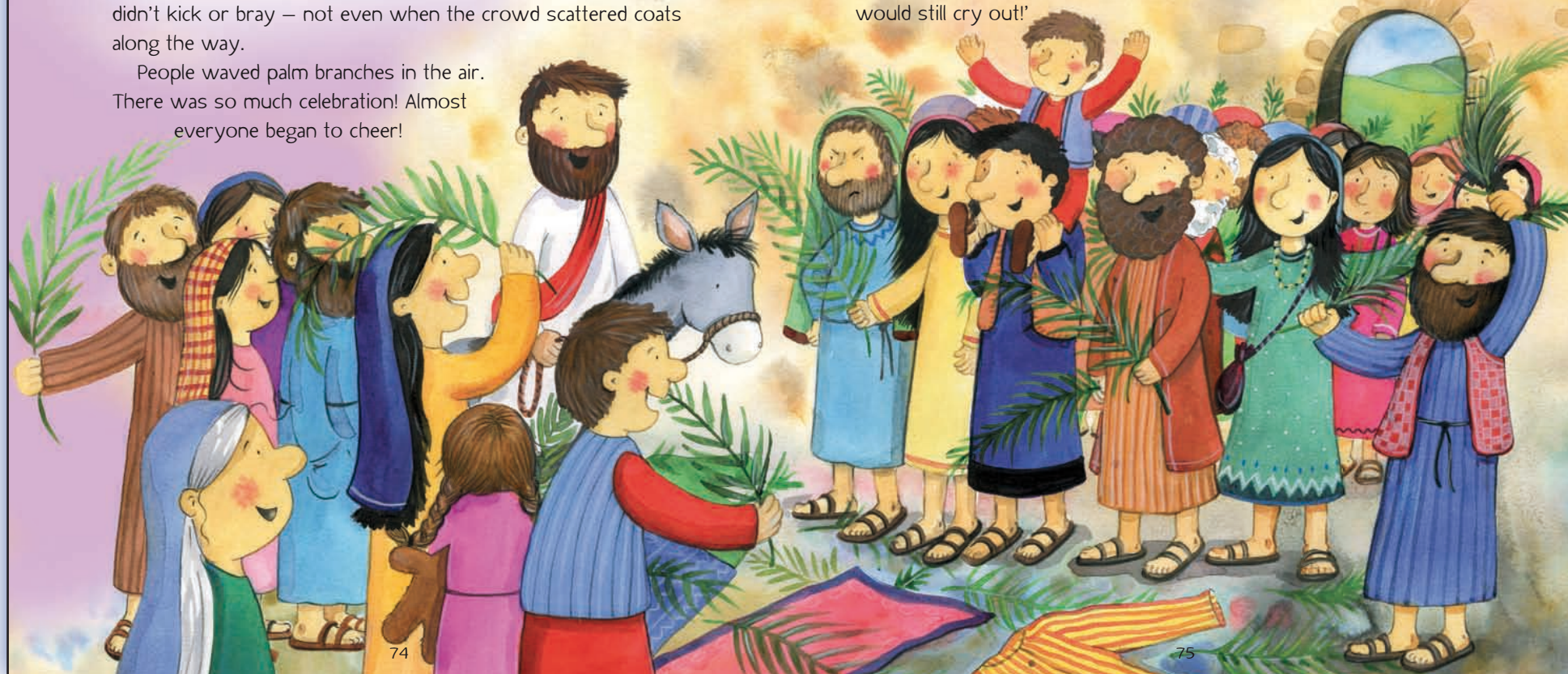
People waved palm branches in the air. There was so much celebration! Almost everyone began to cheer!

'The King is coming! King Jesus is here!'

Some people were not so happy. They didn't like what Jesus did or said. They were angry. They didn't believe that Jesus was the one God sent.

'Stop them cheering!' they said to Jesus. 'What's this nonsense all about?'

'I could keep them quiet,' Jesus smiled, 'but the stones would still cry out!'



A dirty dusty day

It had been a dusty day. It would soon be time to eat. Jesus and his friends had dirty dusty feet. Jesus filled a bowl with water and began to wash each one. Then he dried them with a towel as a servant would have done.

'I can't let you wash my feet, Lord!' Peter said. 'That's not your job to do!'

'Everyone is a servant in my kingdom,' said Jesus. 'You must let me serve you too.'

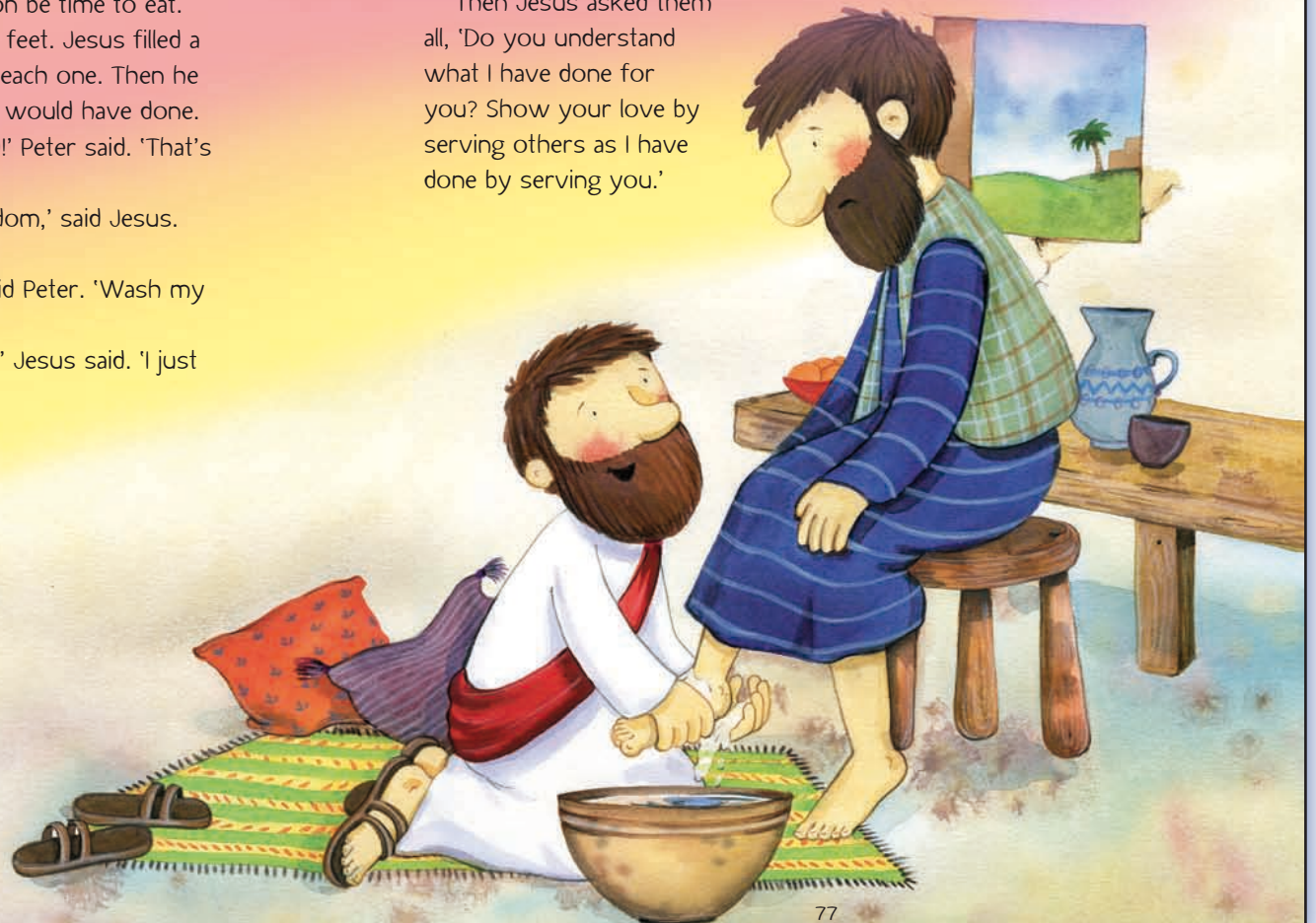
'Don't just wash my feet then!' said Peter. 'Wash my hands and my head!'

'Oh Peter, the rest of you is clean!' Jesus said. 'I just need to wash your feet, my friend.'

Then Jesus asked them all, 'Do you understand what I have done for you? Show your love by serving others as I have done by serving you.'



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A special supper party

Jesus was eating with his friends. But he was thinking about his enemies.

'Some people hate me,' Jesus said. 'They don't believe God sent me. They want to kill me.'

'We won't let that happen!' said Jesus' friends.

'It already is,' said Jesus. 'One of you has even promised to help them find me.'

They were shocked! They wondered who it might be. Judas slipped out of the door quietly.

Jesus took some bread and broke it. He thanked God and gave it to them. 'This is what will happen to my body,' he said. 'It will be broken for you.' Then he poured some red wine. He thanked God for it and gave it to them. 'This is what is going to happen to my blood,' he said. 'It will pour out for you. I am going to die, just as it was written, so that people can be forgiven. But I am also going to live again and go home to God in Heaven. One day, you will come too. Every time you eat together, this is what to do,' said Jesus. 'Remember that I love you and have given my life for you.'



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A sad night in the garden

It was dark outside but Jesus felt dark inside. He needed help to be brave. He asked his friends to go into the garden with him and pray.

Jesus told them, 'You will all deny me or desert me before the night is through.'

'Not me!' said Peter. 'It can't be true!'

'Yes,' said Jesus, 'even you. The rooster will crow twice at dawn. You will say that you don't know me three times by then.'

'I will never deny your name!' said Peter. 'I would die first!' And all the others said the same.

Jesus' friends fell asleep. Jesus prayed all night long.

'I am your son,' he said to his Father God. 'I will do what must be done.'

Light flooded the garden. A crowd came with torches, swords and clubs. Judas came with a kiss.

'Friend,' said Jesus. 'Will you betray me like this?'

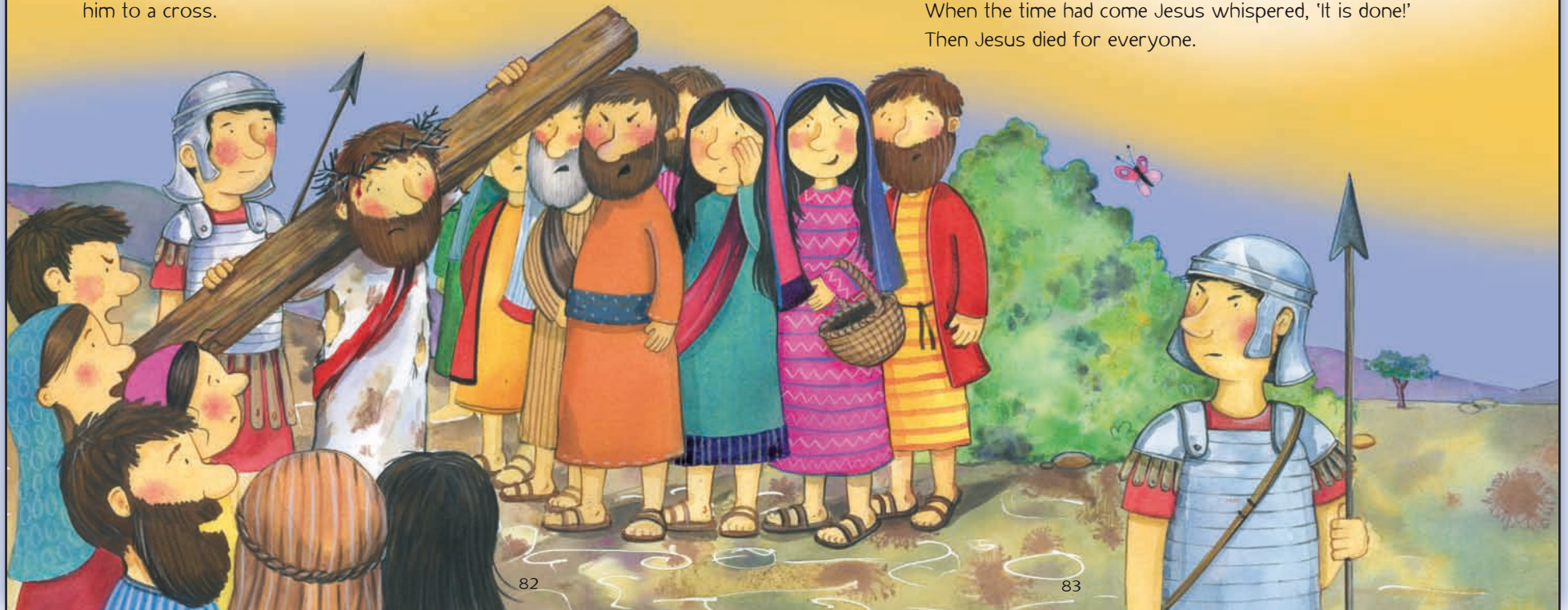
Most of Jesus' friends ran away. But Peter pulled out a sword.

'Put it down,' said Jesus calmly. 'Angels could save me if I called. But who would save you then? I am the Lord.'

A dark day

Jesus did not hate those who hated him. He did not hate those who told lies about him. He did not hate those who ordered him to die. He did not hate those who beat him until he bled or pushed a thorny crown on to his head. He did not hate the soldiers who led him to the place where he would be killed. He did not hate them when they nailed him to a cross.

He did not hate the people who stood there on the hill.
'If you are the one God sent, come down from the cross,' they jeered. 'You can't even save yourself. How can you save us?'
Jesus did not hate his enemies. He loved them instead.
'Father, forgive them,' he said.
Many who loved Jesus were also there. They watched and wept and waited. It took long hours for Jesus to die. The sky went dark.
'My God, my God,' Jesus cried, 'why have you left me all alone?'
When the time had come Jesus whispered, 'It is done!'
Then Jesus died for everyone.



An empty tomb

Mary was sad. She walked to Jesus' tomb in the dim light of dawn. But the stone was rolled away! The tomb was empty! Jesus was gone! She ran straightaway to tell Peter and John.

'Someone has taken Jesus' body!' she cried.

Peter and John couldn't believe it. They ran to the tomb, side by side. The only thing they found were the grave clothes Jesus had been buried in.

Mary stood crying all alone when they had gone. When she looked into the tomb again, there were two angels where Jesus' body should have been.

'Why are you crying?' the angels asked.

'I can't find Jesus!' Mary said through her tears. Then she thought she saw the gardener standing near. 'Did you take Jesus?' she asked him. 'Please tell me where?'

'Mary,' said the man.

Mary stopped and stared for she knew him then. It was Jesus! Jesus was alive again!

'Go and tell the others that I am alive,' Jesus said.

Mary could hardly believe it! It was such a surprise! She ran and told Jesus' friends, 'Jesus is alive — and I have seen him with my own eyes!'

A special visitor

Jesus' friends were afraid. They met behind locked doors. Suddenly Jesus appeared and said, 'Peace be yours.'

They thought he was a ghost!

Jesus showed them his hands, his feet, his side. Then they ate together.

'It's true! It's you!' they cried.

'Just as the Father sent me,' he said, 'I am sending you. The Holy Spirit will come. He will help you do what I would do.'

Now Thomas wasn't there when Jesus appeared.

'Thomas!' they said. 'We have seen the Lord!'

'I will not believe,' said Thomas, 'unless I touch his wounds for myself.'

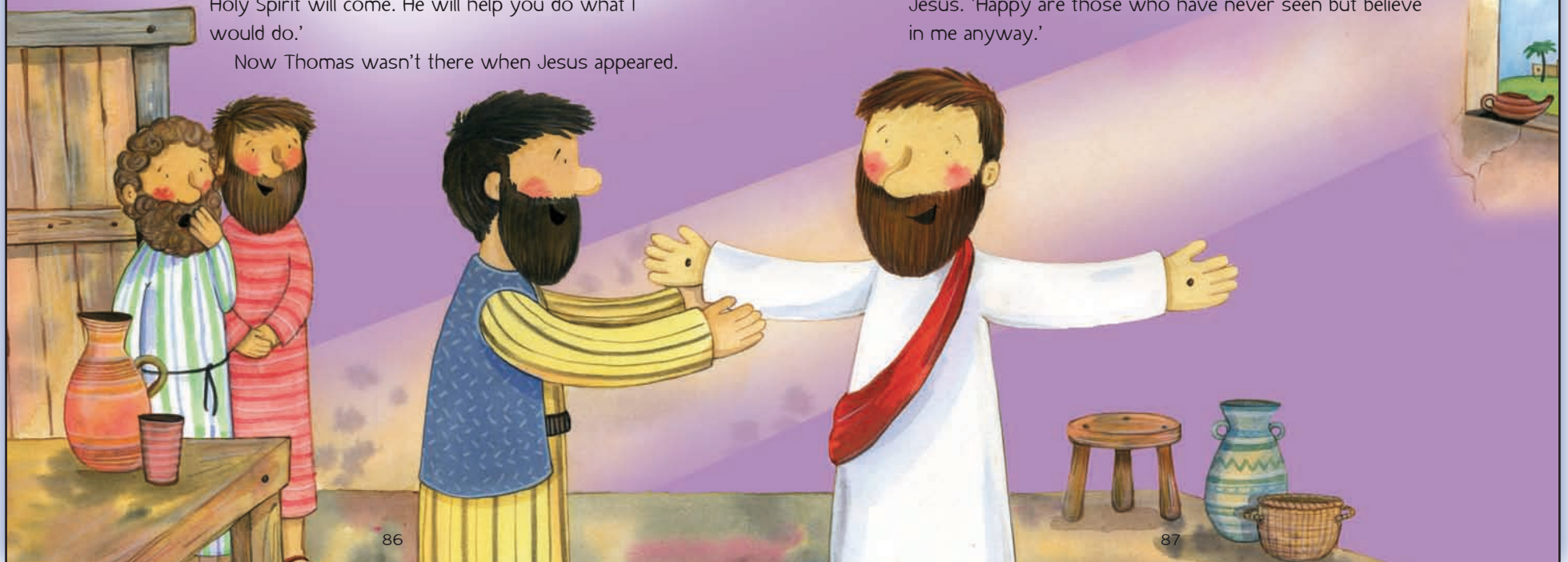
A week later, Jesus' friends were together as before. Suddenly Jesus was there again and said, 'Peace be yours.'

Then he said to Thomas, 'Touch my hands and side. Have faith and believe — be satisfied.'

Thomas didn't need to touch him!

'My Lord and God,' was all that he could say.

'You believe in me because you have seen me,' said Jesus. 'Happy are those who have never seen but believe in me anyway.'



A journey to Emmaus

Three days after Jesus died, two friends walked on the road to Emmaus, cried on the road to Emmaus. Three days after Jesus died they met a man on the road to Emmaus.

'What are you talking about?' he asked.

They told him how Jesus was born and died, and on a cross was crucified.

'We have heard the stone was rolled away and the body is gone from where it lay and that angels sang, "He is risen!" But how can Jesus be alive?'

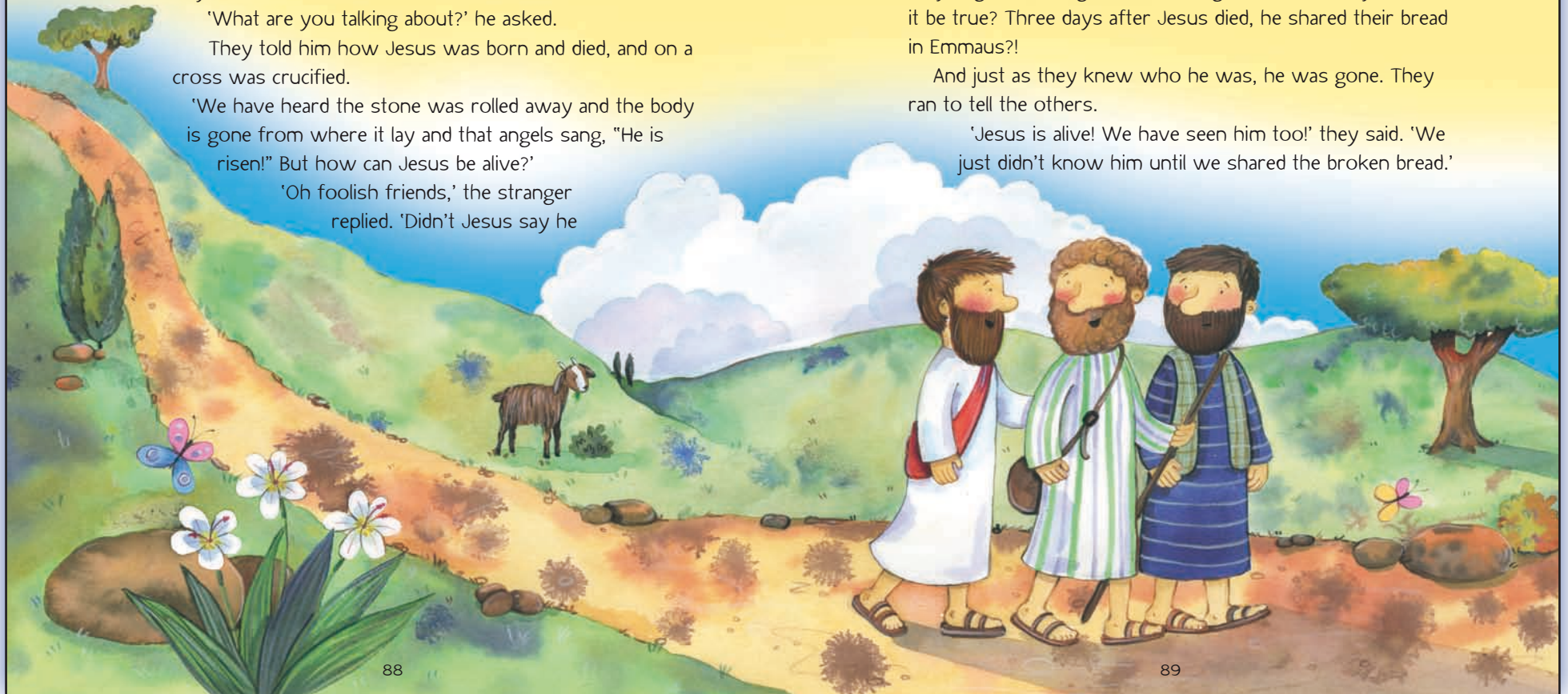
'Oh foolish friends,' the stranger replied. 'Didn't Jesus say he

would suffer, then rise in glory? Why do you now doubt this story?'

They got to Emmaus at evening time and invited the stranger to stay and dine. He sat with them in Emmaus, blessed their bread as Jesus had and shared it. It was then they began to recognize something familiar in his eyes. Could it be true? Three days after Jesus died, he shared their bread in Emmaus?!

And just as they knew who he was, he was gone. They ran to tell the others.

'Jesus is alive! We have seen him too!' they said. 'We just didn't know him until we shared the broken bread.'



A trip home

Jesus met with his friends often. They spent time walking and talking and eating together. They were happy that Jesus was alive! They felt brave having him near. But now it was time for Jesus to go home to heaven. They met together one last time.

'God has given me power over earth and heaven,' Jesus said. 'It's your job to tell everyone everywhere the good news. Everyone can be my friend. All can be forgiven.'

'Teach people to believe in me and to live God's way. Whenever you worry or wonder, remember I'm with you always. You must wait now in Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit

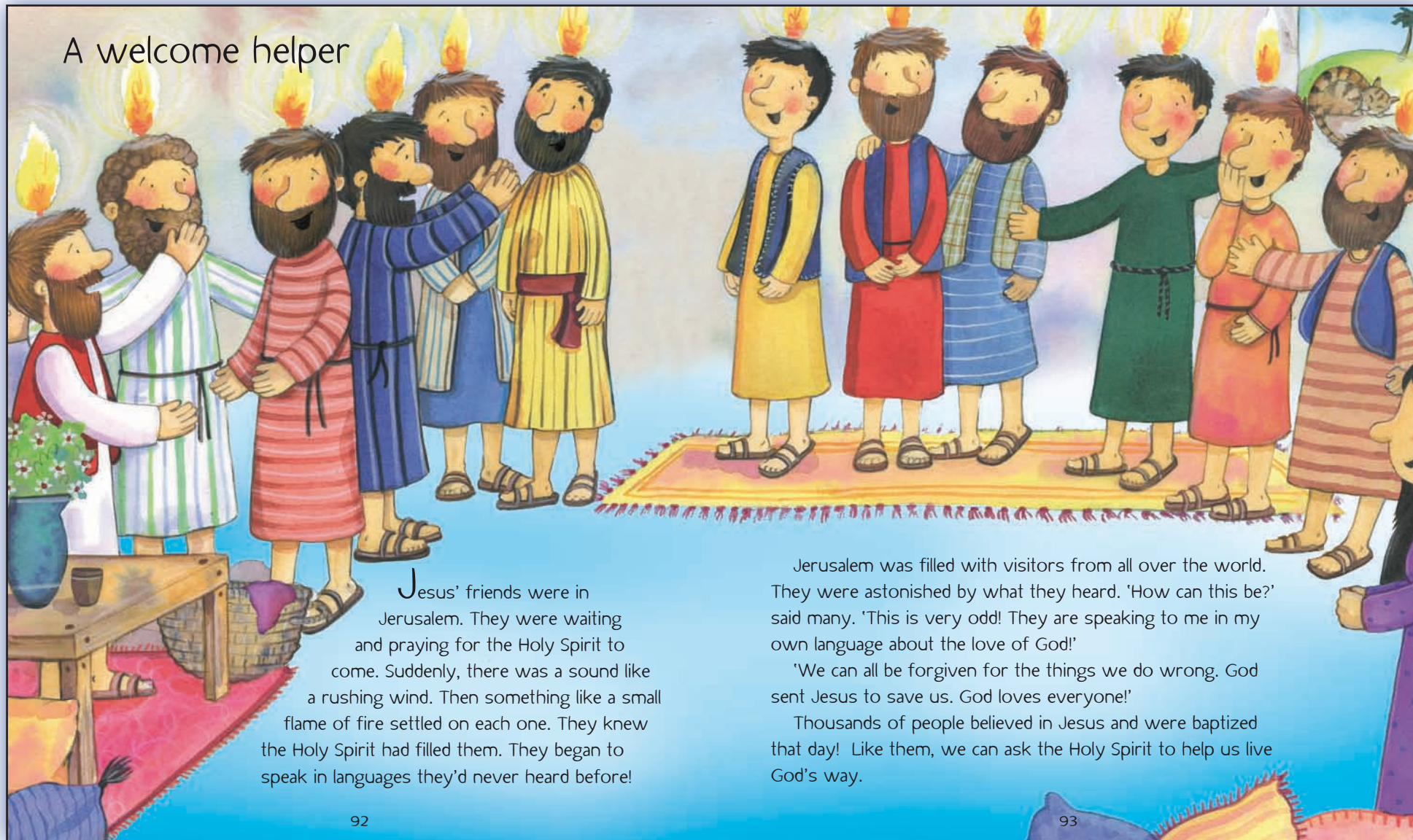
will come. He will give you all the power you need to do what must be done.'

Then Jesus went into heaven. He was surrounded by clouds. His friends couldn't stop looking at where he disappeared. They didn't know what to do or say!

Then two angels appeared. 'Why are you standing here looking sad?' they asked. 'He'll be back again someday.'



A welcome helper



Jesus' friends were in Jerusalem. They were waiting and praying for the Holy Spirit to come. Suddenly, there was a sound like a rushing wind. Then something like a small flame of fire settled on each one. They knew the Holy Spirit had filled them. They began to speak in languages they'd never heard before!

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Jerusalem was filled with visitors from all over the world. They were astonished by what they heard. 'How can this be?' said many. 'This is very odd! They are speaking to me in my own language about the love of God!'

'We can all be forgiven for the things we do wrong. God sent Jesus to save us. God loves everyone!'

Thousands of people believed in Jesus and were baptized that day! Like them, we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us live God's way.

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by Renita Boyle Illustrated by Honor Ayres

My Time for Bed Bible



MY TIME FOR BED BIBLE

by Renita Boyle and Honor Ayres

AD

It's time for bed
and time for a story.
Here is a selection of
classic Bible stories,
written by the rhythmic author,
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