

THE
ILLUSTRATED
BIBLE

A Dramatic Reading of God's Story



JEFF ANDERSON AND MIKE MADDOX

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HENDRICKSON
BIBLES

Contents

THE OLD TESTAMENT

The story of creation	3	The story of Jonah	142
The story of Noah	18	The story of Ezekiel	144
The story of Abraham	23	The story of Daniel	147
The story of Isaac	30	The story of Esther	152
The story of Joseph	44	The story of Ezra and Nehemiah	154
The story of Moses	54		
The story of Joshua	75		
The story of Gideon	81		
The story of Samson	84		
The story of Ruth	88		
The story of Job	91		
The story of Samuel	94		
The story of Saul	98		
The story of David	103		
The story of Solomon	116		
The story of Elijah	123		
The fall of Israel and Judah	135		

THE NEW TESTAMENT

The life of Jesus	159
Jesus is born	165
Jesus is baptized and tempted	171
Jesus teaches and heals	176
Jesus goes to Jerusalem	210
Jesus is arrested and put to death	217
Jesus lives again	227
The early church	231
Visions of the future	251

The Illustrated Bible: A Dramatic Reading of God's Story

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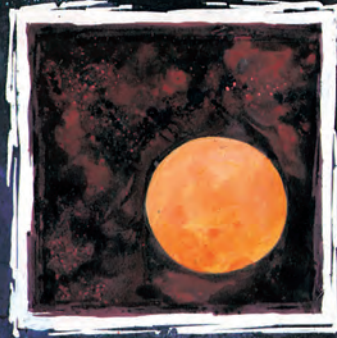
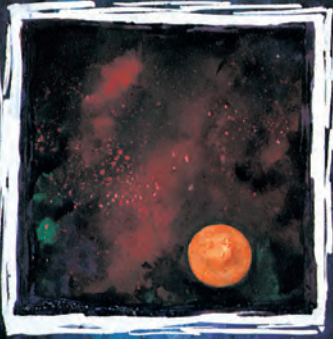
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*IN THE BEGINNING, GOD CREATED
THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.*

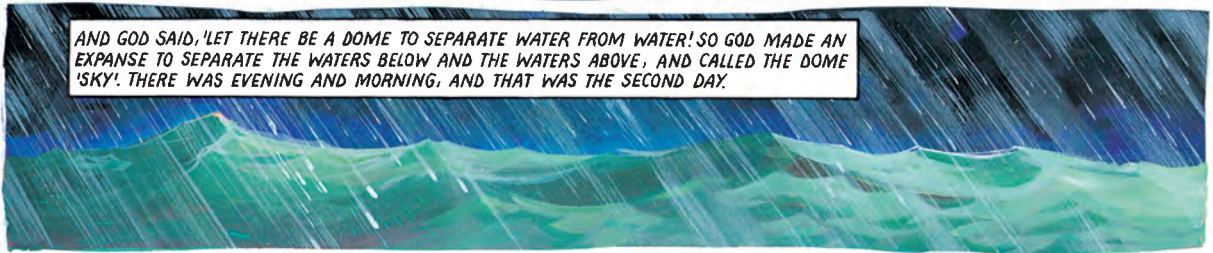
GOD SAID, 'LET
THERE BE LIGHT!

AND THERE WAS LIGHT.

GOD SAW THAT THE LIGHT WAS GOOD, AND
SEPARATED THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS.
GOD CALLED THE LIGHT 'DAY' AND THE
DARKNESS 'NIGHT'. MORNING AND EVENING
WERE CREATED, AND THAT WAS THE FIRST DAY.



AND GOD SAID, 'LET THERE BE A DOME TO SEPARATE WATER FROM WATER! SO GOD MADE AN
EXPANSE TO SEPARATE THE WATERS BELOW AND THE WATERS ABOVE, AND CALLED THE DOME
'SKY'. THERE WAS EVENING AND MORNING, AND THAT WAS THE SECOND DAY.



AND GOD SAID, 'LET THE WATER UNDER THE SKY GATHER TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE AND LET
DRY GROUND APPEAR.' GOD CALLED THE DRY GROUND 'LAND' AND THE WATER 'SEA'.

AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.



THEN GOD SAID, 'LET THE LAND PRODUCE PLANT LIFE: GRASSES, HERBS, SEED-BEARING PLANTS, FRUIT-BEARING TREES, PLANTS OF EVERY KIND.' AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.



THERE WAS EVENING AND MORNING, AND THAT WAS THE THIRD DAY.

AND GOD SAID, 'LET THERE BE LIGHTS IN THE SKY TO SEPARATE DAY FROM NIGHT, AND TO SERVE AS SIGNS MARKING THE SEASONS, DAYS AND YEARS.'

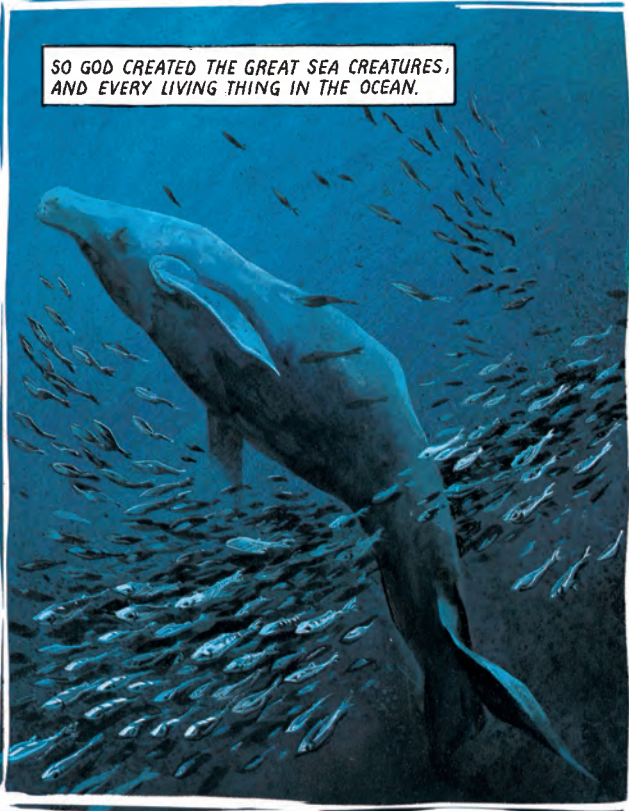
SO GOD MADE TWO GREAT LIGHTS, ONE TO SHINE BY DAY, AND ONE TO SHINE BY NIGHT.

HE ALSO MADE THE STARS.

AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD. THERE WAS EVENING AND MORNING, AND THAT WAS THE FOURTH DAY.



AND GOD SAID, 'LET THE OCEANS TEEM WITH LIFE, AND LET BIRDS FLY IN THE SKIES!'



SO GOD CREATED THE GREAT SEA CREATURES, AND EVERY LIVING THING IN THE OCEAN.

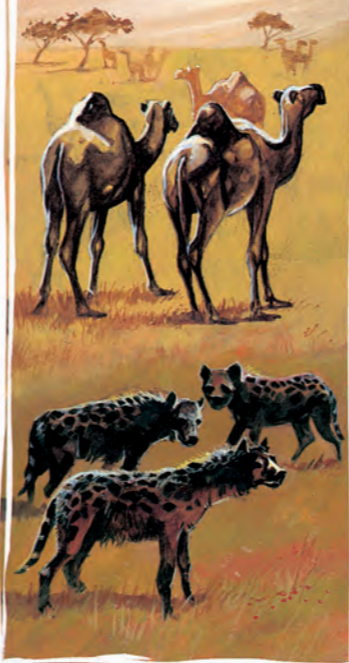


AND GOD WAS PLEASED WITH WHAT HE SAW, AND SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.



GOD BLESSED THEM AND SAID, 'BE FRUITFUL AND INCREASE TO FILL THE SEAS AND SKIES! THERE WAS EVENING AND MORNING, AND THAT WAS THE FIFTH DAY.'

AND GOD SAID, 'LET THE LAND PRODUCE LIVING CREATURES, ALL KINDS OF ANIMALS: CATTLE AND CREATURES OF THE WILD.'



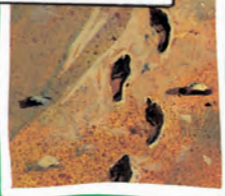
AND IT WAS SO.



GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.



AND GOD SAID, 'LET US MAKE HUMAN BEINGS IN OUR IMAGE TO HAVE CHARGE OVER ALL CREATURES ON THE EARTH, IN THE SKIES AND IN THE OCEANS.'



SO GOD CREATED HUMAN BEINGS IN HIS OWN IMAGE.



MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM.



GOD BLESSED THEM AND SAID, 'BE FRUITFUL AND INCREASE ON THE EARTH. FILL THE EARTH AND TAKE CHARGE OF EVERY LIVING CREATURE.'

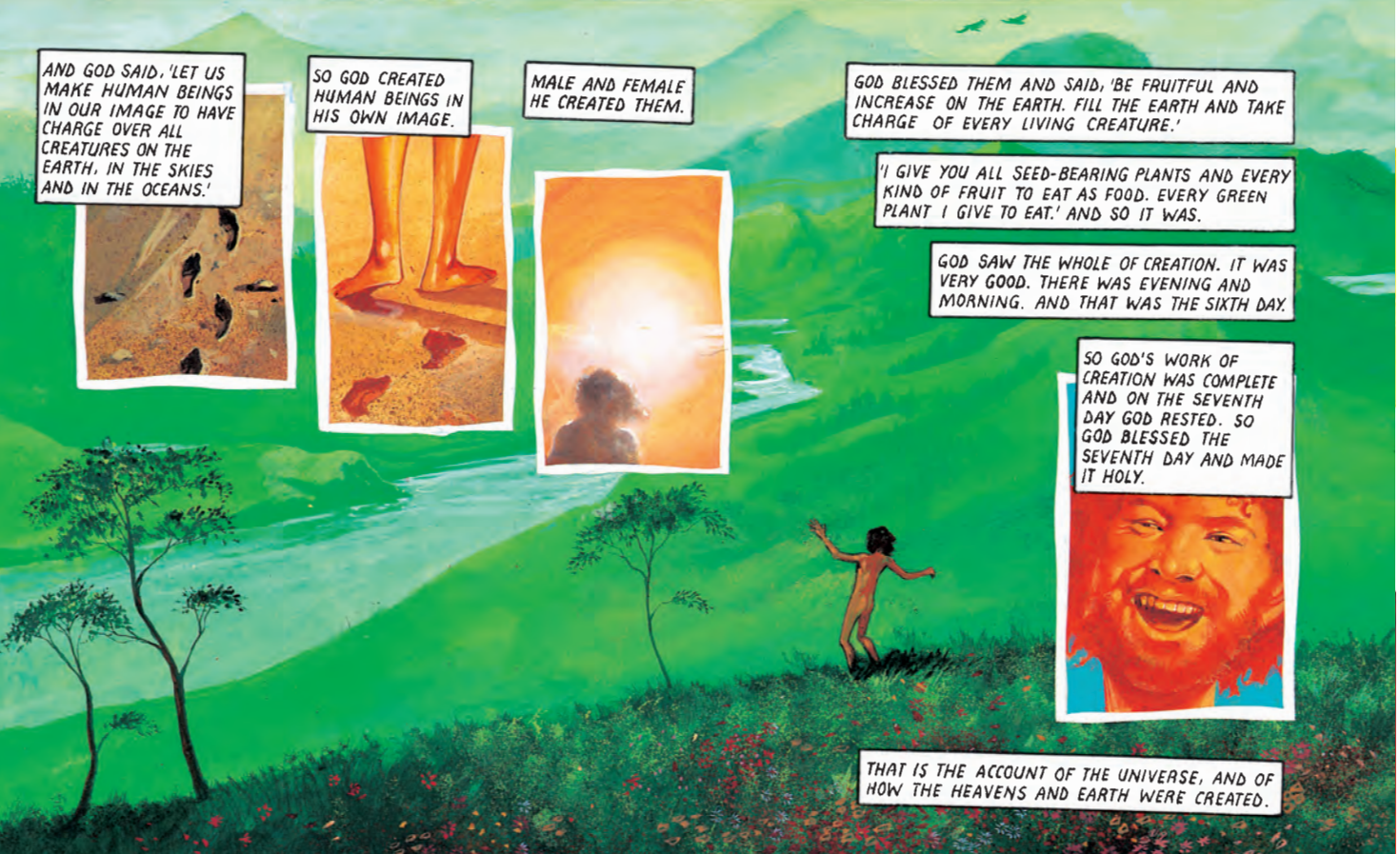
'I GIVE YOU ALL SEED-BEARING PLANTS AND EVERY KIND OF FRUIT TO EAT AS FOOD. EVERY GREEN PLANT I GIVE TO EAT.' AND SO IT WAS.

GOD SAW THE WHOLE OF CREATION. IT WAS VERY GOOD. THERE WAS EVENING AND MORNING. AND THAT WAS THE SIXTH DAY.

SO GOD'S WORK OF CREATION WAS COMPLETE AND ON THE SEVENTH DAY GOD RESTED. SO GOD BLESSED THE SEVENTH DAY AND MADE IT HOLY.



THAT IS THE ACCOUNT OF THE UNIVERSE, AND OF HOW THE HEAVENS AND EARTH WERE CREATED.



WHICH BRINGS US TO NAZARETH, A TOWN IN THE HILL-COUNTRY OF GALILEE, IN THE NORTH OF ISRAEL.

MARY, A YOUNG WOMAN, IS ENGAGED TO BE MARRIED TO JOSEPH, A LOCAL CARPENTER.

UNDER ROMAN OCCUPATION, ISRAEL IS RULED BY A PUPPET KING, CORRUPT, AND DIVORCED FROM THE PEOPLE.

BUT JOSEPH IS A DESCENDANT OF KING DAVID, IN A LINE THAT STRETCHES BACK TO ABRAHAM.



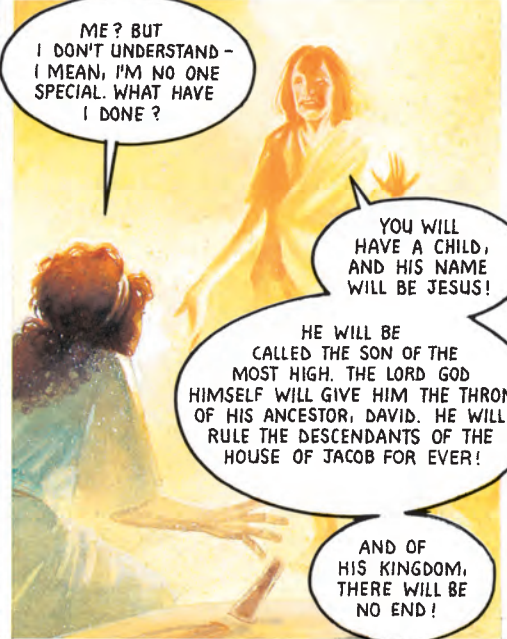
HERE, THROUGH THE LIVES OF ORDINARY PEOPLE, AMIDST THE UNREMARKABLE AND THE MUNDANE, GOD FINALLY BRINGS HIS PLAN TO FRUITION.

SOMETHING WONDERFUL IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN...



REJOICE, MARY, FOR GOD IS WITH YOU! BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN! OF ALL THE WOMEN ON EARTH, YOU HAVE FOUND FAVOUR WITH GOD!

BE AT PEACE, AND HAVE NO FEAR!



ME? BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND - I MEAN, I'M NO ONE SPECIAL. WHAT HAVE I DONE?

YOU WILL HAVE A CHILD, AND HIS NAME WILL BE JESUS!

HE WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF THE MOST HIGH. THE LORD GOD HIMSELF WILL GIVE HIM THE THRONE OF HIS ANCESTOR, DAVID. HE WILL RULE THE DESCENDANTS OF THE HOUSE OF JACOB FOR EVER!

AND OF HIS KINGDOM, THERE WILL BE NO END!



BUT HOW? I'M NOT PREGNANT; I'M NOT EVEN MARRIED, I- I'M STILL A VIRGIN!

THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL REST UPON YOU, AND THE POWER OF GOD WILL OVERSHADOW YOU. IN THIS WAY YOUR CHILD WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF GOD.

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GOD! YOUR OWN RELATIVE, ELIZABETH - CHILDLESS AND PAST CHILD-BEARING - IS NOW SIX MONTHS PREGNANT. NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE, MARY! NOTHING!



STIRRED BY THE ANGEL'S WORDS, MARY MADE HER WAY SOUTH TO THE HILLS OF JUDEA, TO VISIT HER COUSIN ELIZABETH. PERHAPS SHE COULD ANSWER SOME OF MARY'S QUESTIONS.

BUT ELIZABETH'S GREETING TOOK HER ABACK...

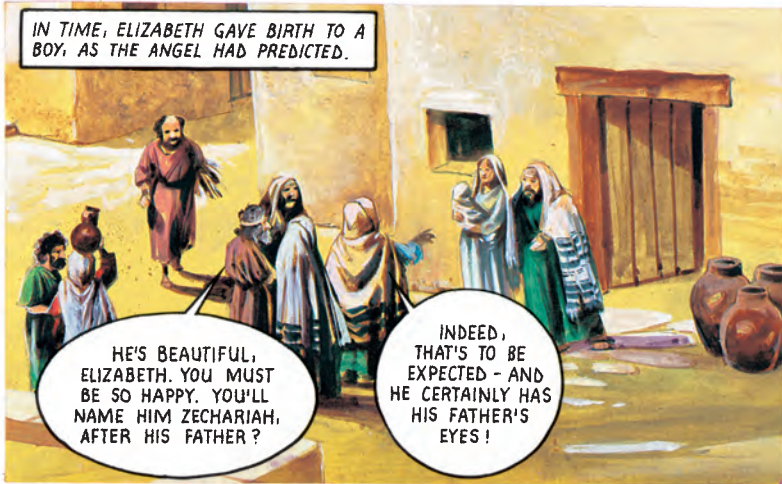
MARY! GOD'S BLESSING IS ON YOU ABOVE ALL WOMEN ON EARTH, AND BLESSED IS THE CHILD YOU WILL BEAR!

AS SOON AS I HEARD YOUR VOICE, THE CHILD IN MY WOMB LEAPED FOR JOY!!



MY SPIRIT AND MY SOUL REJOICE IN GOD. FROM THIS DAY ON, ALL PEOPLE WILL COUNT ME HAPPY, BECAUSE OF WHAT GOD HAS DONE. HE HAS KEPT HIS PROMISE TO COME TO HIS PEOPLE'S AID.

MARY STAYED THREE MONTHS WITH HER COUSIN, AND THEN RETURNED HOME.



IN TIME, ELIZABETH GAVE BIRTH TO A BOY, AS THE ANGEL HAD PREDICTED.

HE'S BEAUTIFUL, ELIZABETH. YOU MUST BE SO HAPPY. YOU'LL NAME HIM ZECHARIAH, AFTER HIS FATHER'S NAME?

INDEED, THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED - AND HE CERTAINLY HAS HIS FATHER'S EYES!



THE CHILD IS GOD'S SPECIAL GIFT TO US - AND WE'RE GOING TO CALL HIM JOHN.

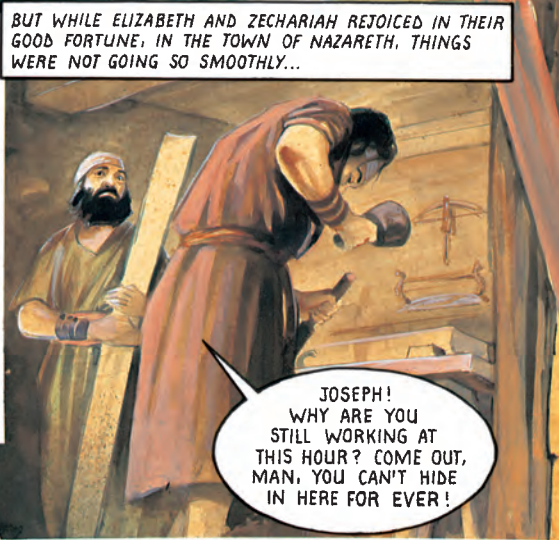


AREN'T WE, DEAR?

JOHN.



ZECHARIAH MADE HIS AGREEMENT CLEAR - AND WITH THAT, HE BEGAN TO SPEAK AGAIN!



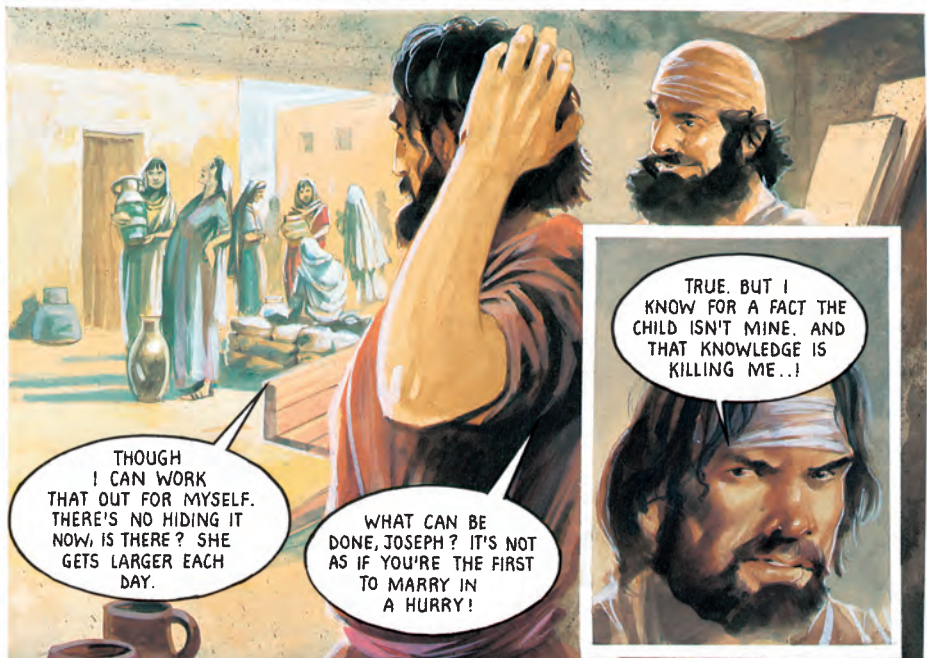
BUT WHILE ELIZABETH AND ZECHARIAH REJOICED IN THEIR GOOD FORTUNE, IN THE TOWN OF NAZARETH, THINGS WERE NOT GOING SO SMOOTHLY...

JOSEPH! WHY ARE YOU STILL WORKING AT THIS HOUR? COME OUT, MAN, YOU CAN'T HIDE IN HERE FOR EVER!



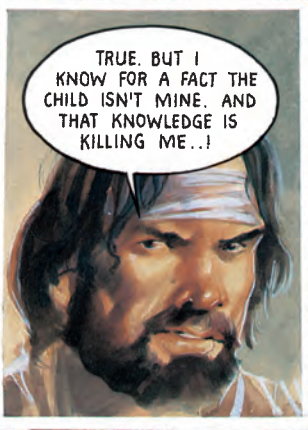
I'M NOT HIDING! I HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE!

I JUST WANTED TO GET THE JOB FINISHED ON TIME, THAT'S ALL. WHY? WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING?



THOUGH I CAN WORK THAT OUT FOR MYSELF. THERE'S NO HIDING IT NOW, IS THERE? SHE GETS LARGER EACH DAY.

WHAT CAN BE DONE, JOSEPH? IT'S NOT AS IF YOU'RE THE FIRST TO MARRY IN A HURRY!



TRUE. BUT I KNOW FOR A FACT THE CHILD ISN'T MINE. AND THAT KNOWLEDGE IS KILLING ME..!

UNDER JEWISH LAW AN ENGAGEMENT WAS AS BINDING AS MARRIAGE, AND JOSEPH COULD HAVE PUBLICLY HUMILIATED MARY, EVEN ACCUSING HER OF ADULTERY!

BUT JOSEPH WAS A GOOD MAN. SO INSTEAD, HE DECIDED TO BREAK THE CONTRACT PRIVATELY. A QUIET DIVORCE SEEMED BEST.



ONLY THEN, AFTER THE DECISION WHICH SHOWED HIS GENTLENESS, DID GOD LET JOSEPH IN ON HIS PLAN. AN ANGEL CAME TO JOSEPH IN HIS SLEEP...

GREETINGS JOSEPH, SON OF DAVID. DO NOT BE AFRAID TO TAKE MARY AS YOUR WIFE.

BUT SHE IS ALREADY PREGNANT!

- AND SHE WILL HAVE A SON. YOU WILL CALL HIM **JESUS**, FOR HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS. IT IS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT MARY HAS CONCEIVED.

DO NOT BE AFRAID TO TAKE HER AS YOUR WIFE, SON OF DAVID.



THE PROPHET ISAIAH, HUNDREDS OF YEARS BEFORE HAD SAID THAT A VIRGIN WOULD BEAR A CHILD, WHO WOULD BE CALLED **IMMANUEL**. 'GOD WITH US'!



AND AS THE ANGEL LEFT, JOSEPH KNEW THESE WORDS TO BE TRUE.

AND SO HE MARRIED MARY.



JOSEPH TOOK MARY HOME, BUT HE DID NOT SLEEP WITH HIS WIFE UNTIL AFTER HER SON WAS BORN.



THEY BOTH KNEW THAT THIS CHILD WAS SPECIAL...

IN THOSE DAYS, THE ROMAN EMPEROR CAESAR AUGUSTUS ISSUED A DECREE: A CENSUS WAS TO BE TAKEN THROUGHOUT THE EMPIRE, EACH PERSON GOING TO HIS HOME TOWN TO BE REGISTERED.

AND SO JOSEPH TOOK HIS YOUNG WIFE, AND TOGETHER THEY MADE THEIR WAY SOUTH TO THE PLACE WHERE JOSEPH MUST REGISTER; THE TOWN WHERE RUTH HAD MARRIED BOAZ, THE BIRTHPLACE OF KING DAVID...



THE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM.

THEIRS WASN'T THE FIRST WEDDING WHERE THE BRIDE WAS OBVIOUSLY PREGNANT, NOR WAS IT THE LAST. BUT JOSEPH TRUSTED THE WORDS OF THE ANGEL, AND TURNED A DEAF EAR TO THE GOSSIPERS.

ISRAEL BRISTLED WITH ANGER, RIPE FOR REBELLION UNDER ROMAN RULE.

MANY WAITED FOR THE MESSIAH WHO WOULD RESCUE THEM, RESTORE THEIR FORTUNES, DRIVE THE ROMANS FROM THE LAND.

IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT MARY AND JOSEPH LIVED THEIR LIVES.



PLEASE! WE DESPERATELY NEED A ROOM. WE'VE TRIED EVERYWHERE...

SORRY SIR, WE'RE FULLY BOOKED, HAVE BEEN FOR WEEKS. HERE FOR THE CENSUS, ARE WE? WELL, DON'T BLAME ME, BLAME THE ROMANS! IT'S THEIR IDEA!



PLEASE - MY WIFE... THE BABY'S DUE ANY DAY NOW. THERE MUST BE **SOMEWHERE** WE COULD STAY.

IT'S NOT MUCH, I KNOW, BUT IT'S WARM AND DRY, AND MORE TO THE POINT, IT'S ALL I HAVE LEFT.

WE'LL TAKE IT.

BUT SURELY THERE MUST BE -

WE'LL TAKE IT, JOSEPH! I DON'T THINK I CAN WAIT MUCH LONGER! THE BABY'S COMING!

WE'LL TAKE IT!



800 YEARS BEFORE, THE PROPHET MICAH WROTE THESE WORDS: 'FROM YOU, BETHLEHEM, SMALL AS YOU ARE, WILL COME A RULER FOR ISRAEL, WHOSE FAMILY LINE GOES BACK TO ANCIENT TIMES. HE WILL RULE WITH THE STRENGTH THAT COMES FROM GOD... AND HE WILL BRING PEACE.'



TONIGHT, THOSE WORDS WOULD COME TRUE. THE GREATEST KING THE WORLD WOULD EVER SEE, CAME AT LAST FOR A PEOPLE WHO HAD CRIED OUT FOR HIM FOR CENTURIES.

BUT NOT IN TRIUMPH AT THE HEAD OF A MIGHTY ARMY, BANNERS IN THE WIND, SHIELDS HELD HIGH.

THE SON OF GOD. THE NEW ADAM. KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

HE CAME INTO THE WORLD A HELPLESS BABY, BORN IN A CATTLE-SHED.



IN THE HILLS ABOVE THE TOWN, A GROUP OF SHEPHERDS WATCHED OVER THEIR SHEEP AS THEIR FOREFATHERS HAD DONE FOR GENERATIONS.



AND AS THEY SAT AROUND THEIR CAMPFIRE THAT NIGHT, THE MOST AMAZING THING HAPPENED...

AN ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED, AND GOD'S GLORY SHONE ABOUT THEM. THEY WERE TERRIFIED! BUT THE ANGEL SAID -



DO NOT BE AFRAID! I BRING WONDERFUL NEWS! TODAY IN THE TOWN OF DAVID YOUR SAVIOR IS BORN: CHRIST, THE MESSIAH! YOU WILL FIND A BABY WRAPPED IN CLOTHS AND LYING IN A MANGER. THEN YOU WILL KNOW!

AND SUDDENLY A GREAT COMPANY OF THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN APPEARED, SINGING PRAISE TO GOD:

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN! AND PEACE ON EARTH TO ALL WHO PLEASE HIM.





DID YOU SEE THAT?! DID YOU **SEE** IT?! THOSE WERE ANGELS! THIS IS **UNBELIEVABLE!**

COME ON! THIS WAY!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE SHEEP?

FORGET THE SHEEP! WE'VE GOT TO SEE THIS! WE'VE JUST **GOT** TO!!



YOU GOT A BABY IN HERE, THEN?

A BABY? ER... YES, BUT WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH YOU?

THERE WERE THESE ANGELS! HUNDREDS OF THEM!

AND LIGHTS! AND SINGING! IT WAS INCREDIBLE!



OH! DID WE WAKE HIM?

I KNOW IT SOUNDS ODD, BUT CAN WE HAVE A LOOK AT HIM? PLEASE?

IT'S ALL RIGHT, HE'S JUST GONE OFF TO SLEEP.

BUT THE WONDERS SURROUNDING THE CHILD'S BIRTH WERE FAR FROM OVER, FOR WHEN THEY TOOK THE CHILD TO THE TEMPLE, AS WAS THE JEWISH CUSTOM...

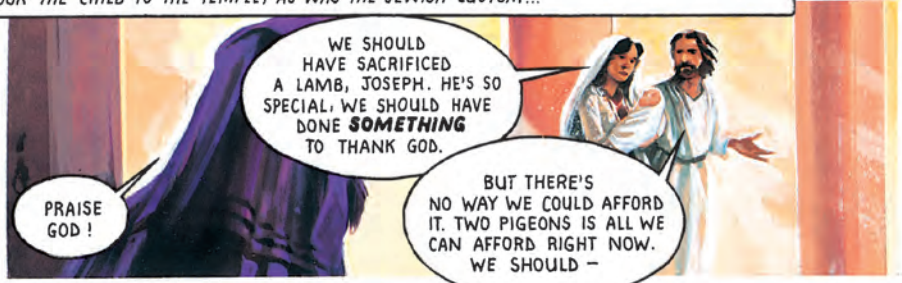


HE'S BEAUTIFUL.

THERE WERE ANGELS, HUNDREDS OF THEM, ALL SINGING AND SHINING IN THE DARKNESS. THEY SAID THERE WOULD BE A BABY IN A MANGER, AND LOOK! HERE HE IS!

THEY SAID, 'THIS IS THE ONE YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR - THE CHRIST, OUR SAVIOR'!

I THINK THIS IS **HIM**. I REALLY THINK IT IS!



WE SHOULD HAVE SACRIFICED A LAMB, JOSEPH. HE'S SO SPECIAL; WE SHOULD HAVE DONE **SOMETHING** TO THANK GOD.

PRAISE GOD!

BUT THERE'S NO WAY WE COULD AFFORD IT. TWO PIGEONS IS ALL WE CAN AFFORD RIGHT NOW. WE SHOULD -



A MAN CALLED SIMEON, RIGHTEOUS AND DEVOUT, HAD BEEN TOLD BY GOD THAT HE WOULD NOT DIE UNTIL HE HAD SEEN THE MESSIAH. AS SOON AS HE SAW JESUS, HE CRIED ALOUD -

NOW I CAN DIE IN PEACE!

I BEG YOUR PARDON?

WITH MY OWN EYES I HAVE **SEEN** SALVATION! A GREAT **LIGHT** TO SHINE A WAY FOR THE GENTILES, AND BRING GLORY TO **ISRAEL**, GOD'S OWN PEOPLE!

THIS CHILD IS A SIGN FROM GOD, THOUGH MANY PEOPLE WILL SPEAK AGAINST HIM AND SORROW, LIKE A SHARP SWORD, WILL PIERCE YOUR OWN HEART.

MARY REMEMBERED ALL THIS, HOLDING THE WORDS IN HER HEART.



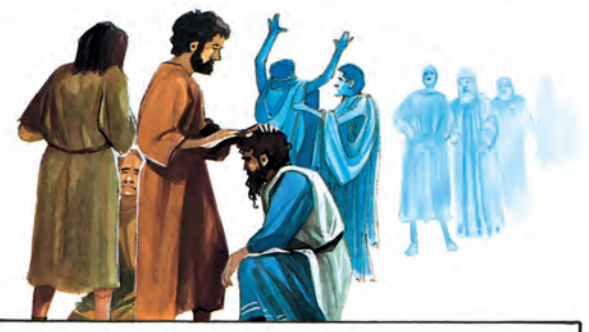
I WAS ONE WHO SHOUTED FOR JESUS' DEATH. AND YET I **KNOW** THIS MAN IS TELLING THE TRUTH.

BUT HOW CAN WE EVER PUT THINGS RIGHT AGAIN?

REPENT.
APOLOGIZE TO GOD,
AND BE **BAPTIZED** IN
THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST
AS A SIGN OF GOD'S
FORGIVENESS.

AND SO IT BEGAN...

ABOUT 3,000 PEOPLE WERE BAPTIZED ON THAT ONE DAY ALONE. JOINING THE APOSTLES IN THEIR LIFE OF PRAYER, BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER, THEY OPENED THEIR HOMES TO EACH OTHER.



ORDINARY MEN AND WOMEN, COMPLETE STRANGERS, SOLD THEIR POSSESSIONS TO HELP OTHERS IN NEED. EVERY DAY, GOD ADDED MORE TO THEIR NUMBER.

ONE DAY, PETER AND JOHN WENT UP TO THE TEMPLE TO PRAY, AS WAS USUAL.

ANY SPARE CHANGE? CRIPPLED FROM BIRTH, ANY SPARE CHANGE?

I HAVE NO SILVER ~~OR~~ GOLD. BUT WHAT I ~~DO~~ HAVE, I'LL GLADLY GIVE YOU - AND IT'S THIS:

IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OF NAZARETH, GET UP AND **WALK**.

I CAN WALK. I CAN **WALK!** FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY **LIFE!** LOOK, I'M **WALKING!**

WHY DO YOU STARE AS IF IT'S **US** WHO'VE MADE THIS MAN WALK? THE GOD OF **ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB**, THE GOD OF OUR **FATHERS** DID IT, NOT **US!**

MOSES SAID GOD WOULD SEND US ONE FROM OUR OWN PEOPLE, AND HE HAS - **JESUS**. HE DIED BUT LIVES AGAIN AND YOU NEED TO **LISTEN** TO HIM. THROUGH HIM **ALL** PEOPLE ON EARTH WILL BE BLESSED BY GOD!

GUARDS? HAVE THESE BLASPHEMERS THROWN IN JAIL.

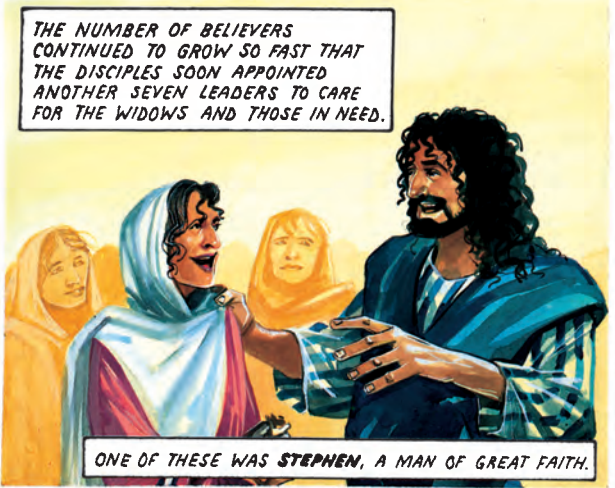


THESE ARE DANGEROUS LIES. THIS BLASPHEMY MUST BE STOPPED.

WE CANNOT KEEP QUIET ABOUT THIS AND OBEY GOD.

JOHN IS RIGHT! WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TELL THE TRUTH!

EVEN THE PRIESTS COULD NOT DENY THAT A MIRACLE HAD OCCURRED, SO PETER AND JOHN WERE RELEASED, FOR THE TIME BEING AT LEAST...



THE NUMBER OF BELIEVERS CONTINUED TO GROW SO FAST THAT THE DISCIPLES SOON APPOINTED ANOTHER SEVEN LEADERS TO CARE FOR THE WIDOWS AND THOSE IN NEED.

ONE OF THESE WAS STEPHEN, A MAN OF GREAT FAITH.



STEPHEN, IT'S ONE THING TO GO AROUND DISTRIBUTING FOOD, BUT THESE MEN SAY YOU ARE GUILTY OF BLASPHEMY. IS THIS TRUE?

THROUGHOUT HISTORY, WE HAVE IGNORED GOD'S MESSENGERS. WE HAVE MURDERED THOSE WHO PREDICTED THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH, AND NOW WE HAVE KILLED HIM AS WELL!



I TELL YOU, I CAN SEE HEAVEN FROM HERE! AND I SEE JESUS STANDING AT GOD'S RIGHT HAND!



ENOUGH!! WILL THIS BLASPHEMY NEVER END!?

TAKE HIM! STONE HIM! HAVE HIM STONED TO DEATH!

DO NOT HOLD THIS CRIME AGAINST THEM. LORD JESUS RECEIVE MY SPIRIT.

HE'S DEAD.



GOOD. IT'S WHAT HE DESERVES.

MANY PERSECUTED THE NEW BELIEVERS, BUT THE MOST RUTHLESS WAS A MAN CALLED SAUL, FROM TARSUS.

SEARCHING JERUSALEM HOUSE TO HOUSE, SAUL HAD THE BELIEVERS DRAGGED THROUGH THE STREETS TO PRISON, AND ALTHOUGH THE JAILS WERE SOON FULL, SAUL WAS STILL NOT SATISFIED.

WITH THE RULING COUNCIL'S PERMISSION, HE SET OFF TO NEIGHBOURING **DAMASCUS**, TO ARREST THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS LIVING THERE.



THE JOURNEY WAS TO BE THE MOST IMPORTANT OF HIS LIFE.



HURRY IT UP. THE LONGER WE DELAY, THE MORE CHANCE BLASPHEMY HAS TO BREED. **FASTER!**



SAUL!

SAUL, WHY DO YOU PERSECUTE ME?



WHO ARE YOU, LORD?

I AM **JESUS!** YOU ARE PERSECUTING ME, SAUL, BY ATTACKING MY FOLLOWERS!

GET UP AND GO TO THE CITY. I WILL **TELL YOU THERE** WHAT YOU MUST DO!



WHERE DID THAT VOICE COME FROM?

I, I CAN'T... WHAT... I... SOMEONE TAKE MY HAND. **I'M BLIND!**



SAUL SAT ON HIS OWN, IN DARKNESS, FOR THREE DAYS, REFUSING FOOD AND DRINK.

EVERYTHING HE HAD HELD TO BE TRUE, HIS WHOLE LIFE LONG, HAD BEEN SHATTERED. JESUS WAS ALIVE, AND SPEAKING WITH THE VOICE OF GOD.

IN ATTACKING THE DISCIPLES, SAUL HAD ATTACKED... GOD?



THERE LIVED IN DAMASCUS A MAN CALLED **ANANIAS**, AND GOD TOLD HIM TO FIND SAUL AND HEAL HIM.

ANANIAS WAS NOT **STUPID**. HE KNEW OF SAUL'S REPUTATION, AND WHY HE HAD COME TO DAMASCUS IN THE FIRST PLACE. BUT HE WENT ANYWAY.

GOD HAD CHOSEN SAUL, OF ALL PEOPLE, TO CARRY THE MESSAGE OF JESUS TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, AND ANANIAS HAD THE JOB OF BREAKING THE NEWS TO HIM.



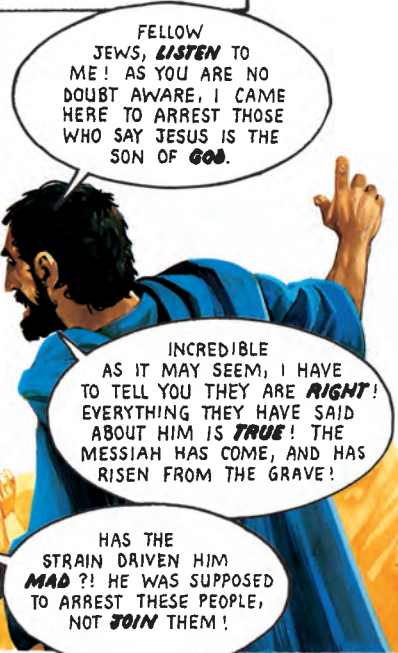
BROTHER SAUL, THE LORD **JESUS**, WHO YOU HAVE NOW MET, HAS SENT ME SO YOU MIGHT **SEE** AGAIN, AND BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I REALLY **DO** HOPE THIS ISN'T A TRAP!



MY **EYES**. I CAN **SEE** YOU. THANK YOU, MY... FRIEND.

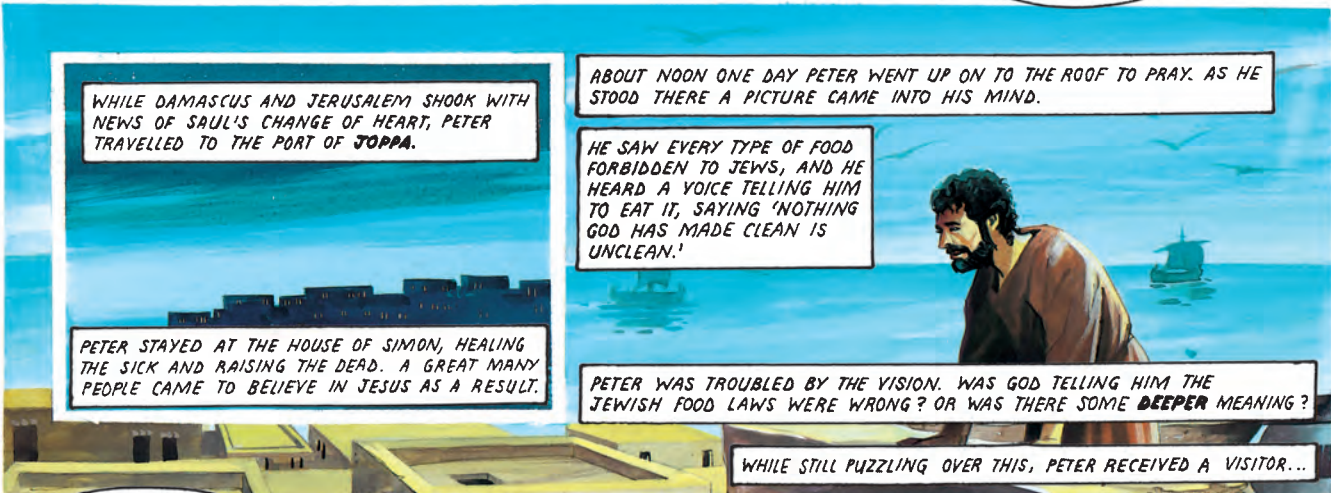
FROM THAT DAY ON SAUL BECAME A FANATICAL FOLLOWER OF **JESUS**. HIS NEXT STOP WAS THE LOCAL SYNAGOGUE...



FELLOW JEWS, **LISTEN** TO ME! AS YOU ARE NO DOUBT AWARE, I CAME HERE TO ARREST THOSE WHO SAY **JESUS** IS THE SON OF **GOD**.

INCREDIBLE AS IT MAY SEEM, I HAVE TO TELL YOU THEY ARE **RIGHT**! EVERYTHING THEY HAVE SAID ABOUT HIM IS **TRUE**! THE MESSIAH HAS COME, AND HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE!

HAS THE STRAIN DRIVEN HIM **MAD**?! HE WAS SUPPOSED TO ARREST THESE PEOPLE, NOT **JOIN** THEM!



WHILE DAMASCUS AND JERUSALEM SHOOK WITH NEWS OF SAUL'S CHANGE OF HEART, PETER TRAVELLED TO THE PORT OF **JOPPA**.

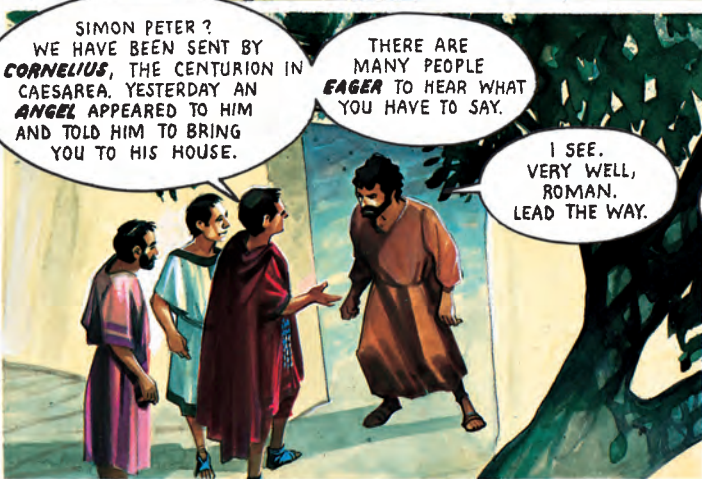
ABOUT NOON ONE DAY PETER WENT UP ON TO THE ROOF TO PRAY. AS HE STOOD THERE A PICTURE CAME INTO HIS MIND.

HE SAW EVERY TYPE OF FOOD FORBIDDEN TO JEWS, AND HE HEARD A VOICE TELLING HIM TO EAT IT, SAYING 'NOTHING GOD HAS MADE CLEAN IS UNCLEAN.'

PETER STAYED AT THE HOUSE OF SIMON, HEALING THE SICK AND RAISING THE DEAD. A GREAT MANY PEOPLE CAME TO BELIEVE IN **JESUS** AS A RESULT.

PETER WAS TROUBLED BY THE VISION. WAS GOD TELLING HIM THE JEWISH FOOD LAWS WERE WRONG? OR WAS THERE SOME **DEEPER** MEANING?

WHILE STILL PUZZLING OVER THIS, PETER RECEIVED A VISITOR...



SIMON PETER? WE HAVE BEEN SENT BY **CORNELIUS**, THE CENTURION IN CAESAREA. YESTERDAY AN **ANGEL** APPEARED TO HIM AND TOLD HIM TO BRING YOU TO HIS HOUSE.

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE **EAGER** TO HEAR WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY.

I SEE. VERY WELL, ROMAN. LEAD THE WAY.



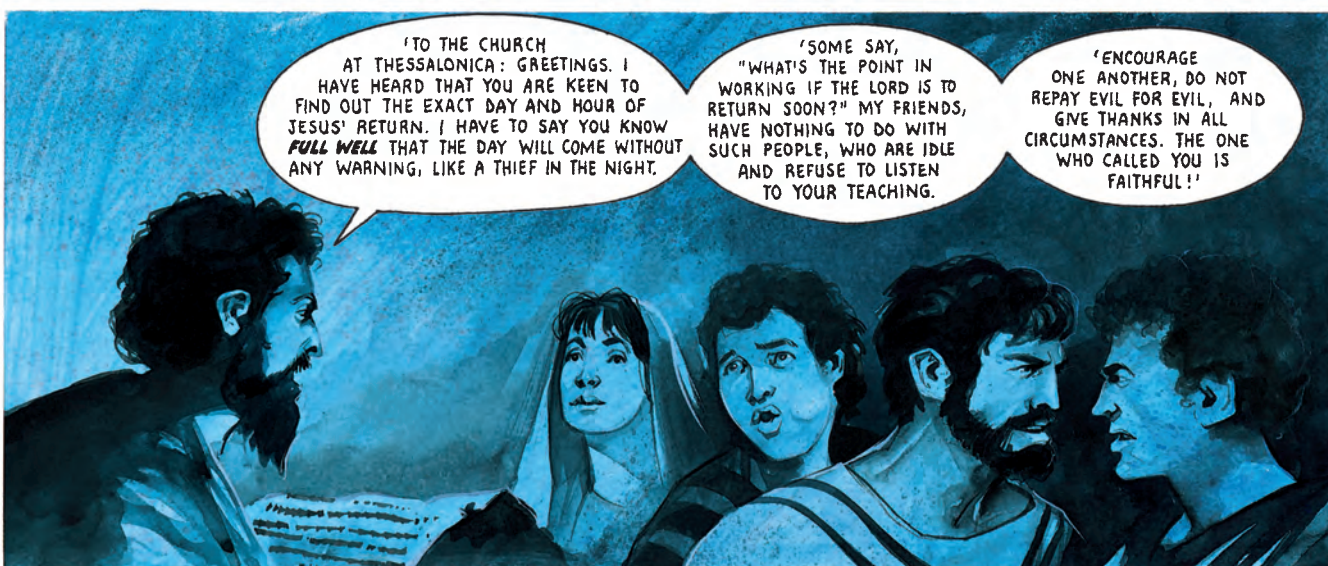
PLEASE, PLEASE, **STAND UP**. I'M ONLY A **MAN**, THERE'S REALLY NO NEED TO **KNEEL**! NOW THEN, WHAT IS IT YOU WISHED TO SEE ME ABOUT?

SIR, THANK YOU FOR COMING, I -



'TO THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS: GRACE AND PEACE TO YOU ALL. BE IMITATORS OF GOD, AND LIVE IN LOVE AS CHRIST LOVED US. SOLVE YOUR ARGUMENTS WITH EACH OTHER QUICKLY, AND DO NOT LET THEM FESTER. DO NOT LET THE SUN GO DOWN ON YOUR ANGER.

'DEFEND YOURSELVES WITH THE FULL ARMOUR OF GOD, FOR WE DON'T FIGHT AGAINST WORLDLY POWERS, BUT SPIRITUAL ONES. WEAR THE ARMOUR OF TRUTH, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND THE GOSPEL, AND USE THE SHIELD OF FAITH AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT TO DESTROY THE LIES OF THE EVIL ONE. BE STRONG IN THE LORD!'



'TO THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA: GREETINGS. I HAVE HEARD THAT YOU ARE KEEN TO FIND OUT THE EXACT DAY AND HOUR OF JESUS' RETURN. I HAVE TO SAY YOU KNOW **FULL WELL** THAT THE DAY WILL COME WITHOUT ANY WARNING, LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT.

'SOME SAY, "WHAT'S THE POINT IN WORKING IF THE LORD IS TO RETURN SOON?" MY FRIENDS, HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH SUCH PEOPLE, WHO ARE IDLE AND REFUSE TO LISTEN TO YOUR TEACHING.

'ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER, DO NOT REPAY EVIL FOR EVIL, AND GIVE THANKS IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES. THE ONE WHO CALLED YOU IS FAITHFUL!'



'TO THE CHURCH IN PHILIPPI: I THANK GOD EVERY TIME I THINK OF YOU, BECAUSE OF THE WAY YOU ACCEPTED THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST FROM THE FIRST MOMENT YOU HEARD IT. I AM SURE THAT HE WHO STARTED SUCH A GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL SEE IT THROUGH TO THE END.

'WE ARE ALL OF US LIKE RUNNERS IN A RACE - WE MUST PRESS ON AND KEEP OUR EYES SET ON THE PRIZE THAT JESUS HAS WAITING FOR US.

'REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS. AGAIN I SAY IT, **REJOICE!** AND THE PEACE OF GOD WHICH PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING WILL GUARD YOUR HEARTS.'

PAUL WAS GREEK-EDUCATED, JEWISH BY BIRTH, AND A ROMAN CITIZEN INTO THE BARGAIN. THERE WAS NO ONE AS QUALIFIED TO CARRY GOD'S MESSAGE THROUGHOUT THE ROMAN WORLD.

FROM MOUTH TO MOUTH, HEART TO HEART, THE NAME OF JESUS SPREAD ALONG THE ARROW-STRAIGHT ROADS OF THE EMPIRE.



INDEED, IT WAS **BECAUSE** OF THE CLOSELY KNIT EMPIRE THAT THE MESSAGE SPREAD SO FAST.

OF THE FINAL END OF THE DISCIPLES, NO **OFFICIAL** RECORDS SURVIVE THOSE DARK DAYS. SOME LEGENDS SAY THAT THOMAS MADE IT AS FAR AS **INDIA**, AND PAUL TO **SPAIN**, ONLY TO BE EVENTUALLY BEHEADED BY THE ROMANS.

PETER WAS ALSO CAPTURED. DYING ON A ROMAN CROSS, HIS LAST REQUEST WAS THAT HE BE CRUCIFIED UPSIDE DOWN, CONSIDERING HIMSELF **UNWORTHY** OF EVEN THE SAME DEATH AS HIS BELOVED JESUS.



OF THE MEN WHO HAD KNOWN JESUS IN HIS TIME ON EARTH, **ONE** STILL LIVED - A **PRISONER** IN THE WORK CAMP ON THE ISLAND OF **PATMOS**.



HIS NAME WAS **JOHN**. AND IT IS FROM HIM THAT THE LAST STORY OF THEM ALL COMES. FOR JUST AS ADAM SAW THE WORLD WHEN IT WAS NEW, SO GOD ALLOWED JOHN TO SEE IT AT ITS **END**.

BUT THE ROMANS WERE AS CRUEL AS THEY WERE CIVILIZED. THEIR CREATIVE MINDS TURNING TO TORTURE AS READILY AS TO ENGINEERING OR PHILOSOPHY.



THE EMPEROR **NERO**, SEEKING SCAPEGOATS FOR THE GREAT FIRE OF ROME, HURLED THE BLAME SQUARELY AT THE FEET OF THE CHRISTIANS.



MANY MET THEIR DEATHS IN THE ARENA, SOME EATEN ALIVE BY WILD ANIMALS, SOME SLAUGHTERED BY GLADIATORS.

THE ROMANS TOOK SUCH DELIGHT IN WATCHING AGONIZING, HUMILIATING DEATHS THAT BEING THROWN TO THE LIONS WAS FAR FROM THE **WORST** DEATH POSSIBLE.

IN **70AD**, SOME JEWS - NOT BELIEVING THE MESSIAH HAD BEEN AND GONE - GREW TIRED OF WAITING AND ROSE UP IN ARMS AGAINST THE ROMAN OCCUPIERS.



HALF-TRAINED ZEALOTS WERE NO THREAT TO THE MOST DISCIPLINED, WELL-TRAINED FIGHTING MEN THE WORLD HAD SEEN. THE BATTLE QUICKLY BECAME A **MASSACRE**.

IN THE ENSUING CHAOS, THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM WAS DESTROYED, AS HAD BEEN PREDICTED. IT REMAINS A RUIN TO THIS DAY.

