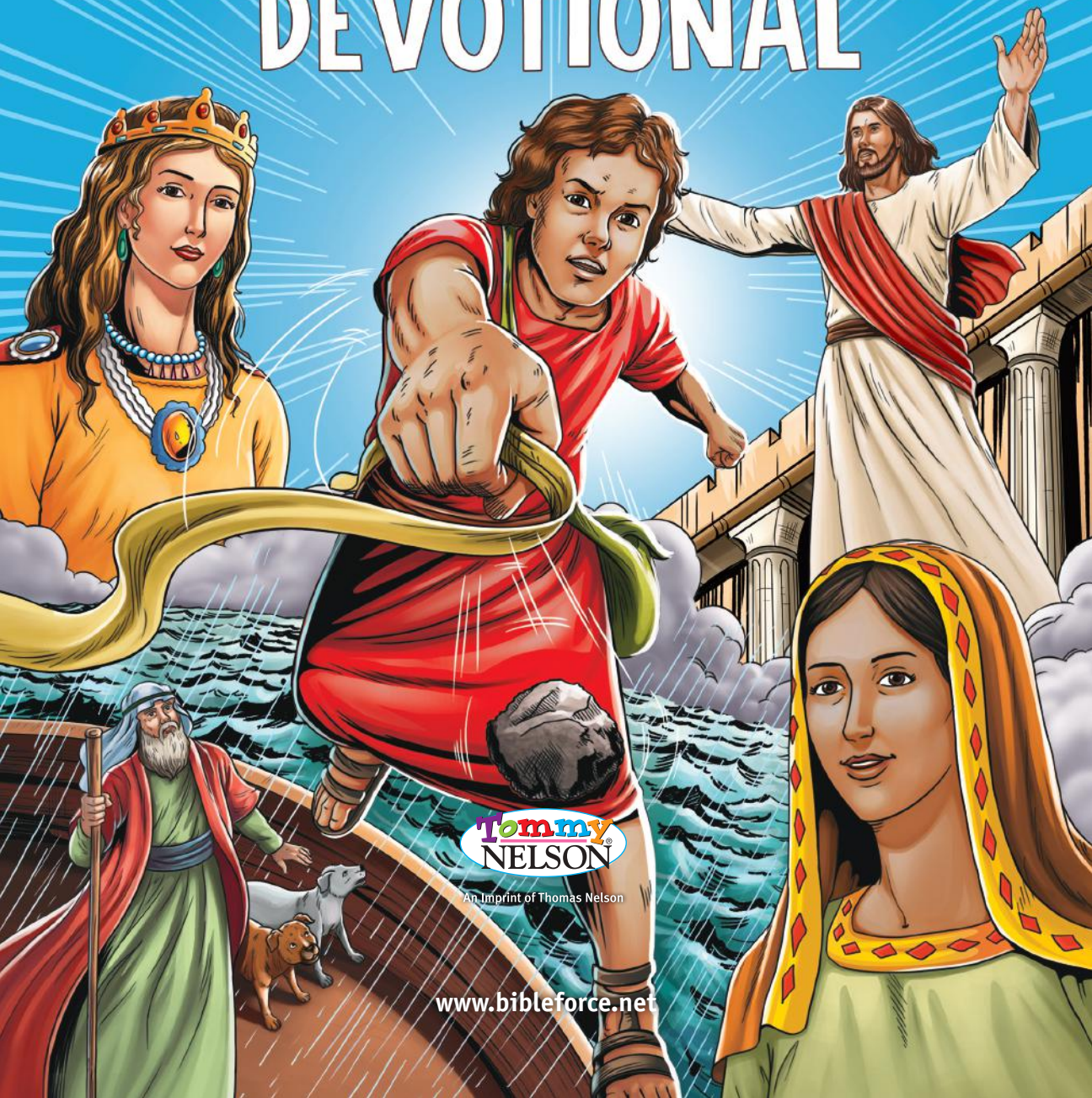


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Believing Anyway

Abraham—The Faithful

LOOK UP IN THE NIGHT SKY.
COUNT THE STARS. JUST AS THE
STARS ARE MANY, SO WILL YOUR
DESCENDANTS BE.

MEANING OF NAME: “FATHER OF MANY PEOPLE”

ALSO KNOWN AS: ABRAM, MEANING “GREAT FATHER”; GOD CHANGED ABRAM’S NAME TO ABRAHAM WHEN HE WAS 99 YEARS OLD

WHERE: CANAAN, ALSO CALLED THE PROMISED LAND; NOW PART OF THE COUNTRIES OF LEBANON, SYRIA, JORDAN, AND ISRAEL

Faith means knowing that something is real even if we do not see it.

—HEBREWS 11:1 ICB

Have you ever had to wait for a promise to be kept? Perhaps you were promised a trip to go sledding or camping, but you had to wait until the weather was right. Even when you know a promised thing is coming, waiting is so hard!

What if you had to wait for years? How hard would it be to keep believing in the promise? When God told Abraham to leave his home, God promised to make his family into a great nation—even though Abraham had no children. Years later, after Abraham and Sarah reached Canaan (the land God sent them to), they were still childless. But God said, “I will give this land to you and all your offspring.” Still later, God told Abraham to count the stars: “Just as the stars are many, so will your descendants be.”

Abraham didn’t have one child, much less a whole sky’s worth. It seemed impossible, but Abraham believed anyway. He didn’t know how or when, but he had faith that God would keep His promise. And God blessed him for that faith.

The Bible is filled with God’s promises to you. You may not understand how or when God will keep those promises, but believe Him anyway—even when the wait is hard. You’ll see those promises fulfilled. ► **GENESIS 12, 15**

BE A HERO!

It is faith in God that saves us, but if our “faith does nothing, then that faith is dead” (James 2:17 ICB). So show that your faith in God and His love is alive! Without saying a word, how many ways can you show others that God loves them today?

HERO TRAINING Hebrews 11 is often called the “Hall of Faith.” Read this chapter about the many heroes of the faith. Who is your favorite? Dig a little deeper into the Bible and find out more about his or her story and faith.

When the Time Was Right

Joseph—Who Waited for God

EVEN AS HE WAS LOCKED IN PRISON, THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH.

Life is full of all kinds of experiences—from amazing, top-of-the-world experiences to down-in-a-deep-dark-pit experiences. Joseph knew all about both.

You see, Joseph went from favorite son to slave in just one day. But even as a slave in Egypt, Joseph managed to find success. Because God was with him. When he was thrown into prison for something he didn't do, Joseph stayed true to God. Later, when God helped him explain a dream for Pharaoh's cupbearer, Joseph began to hope for a way out of prison. But the cupbearer forgot all about Joseph.

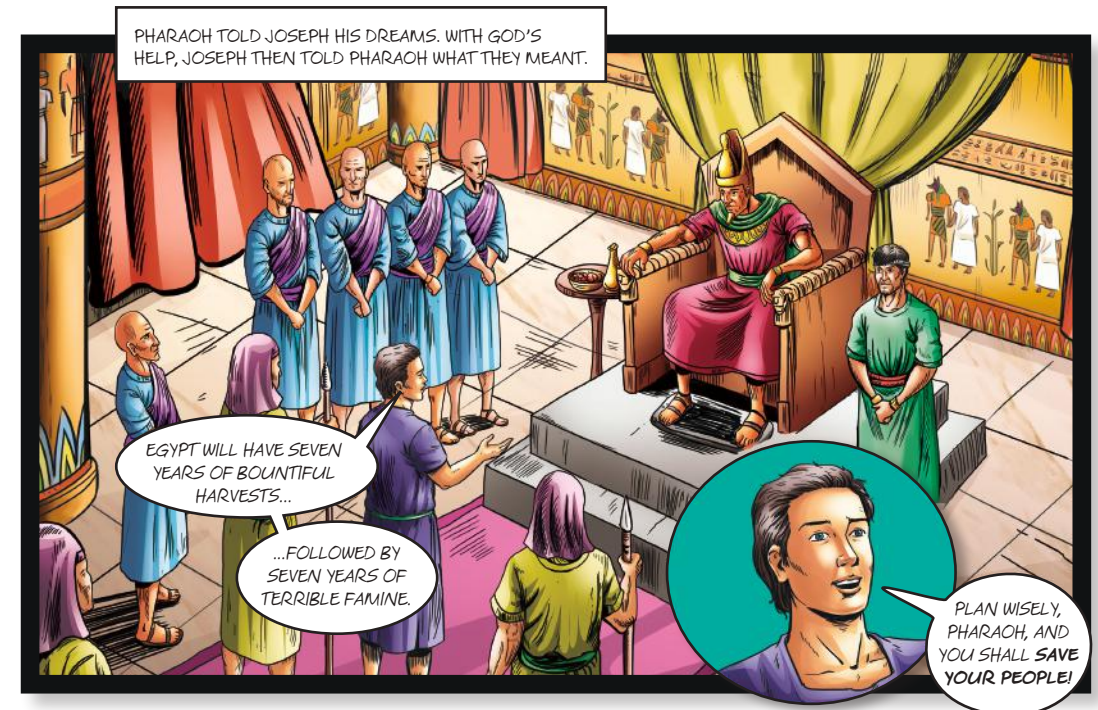
Then, two years later, Pharaoh had a troubling dream. Finally, the cupbearer

AGE: SOLD INTO SLAVERY AT 17; RELEASED FROM PRISON AT 30

JOBS: SHEPHERD, SLAVE, RULER OF EGYPT

Wait for the Lord's help. Be strong and brave and wait for the Lord's help.

—PSALM 27:14 ICB



remembered Joseph. One moment, Joseph was in prison. The next, he was standing before Pharaoh! With God's help, Joseph explained Pharaoh's dream. Pharaoh was so impressed that he made Joseph second in command over Egypt.

For thirteen years, Joseph had been either a slave or a prisoner. He could've tried to run away or escape or fix things himself. But he didn't. Joseph trusted God. He waited for God to rescue him. And when the time was right, that's exactly what God did.

Like Joseph, you'll have some tough days. But don't try to fix everything on your own. Talk to God, trust that He is with you, and honor Him as you wait for His perfect plan. ► GENESIS 40-41

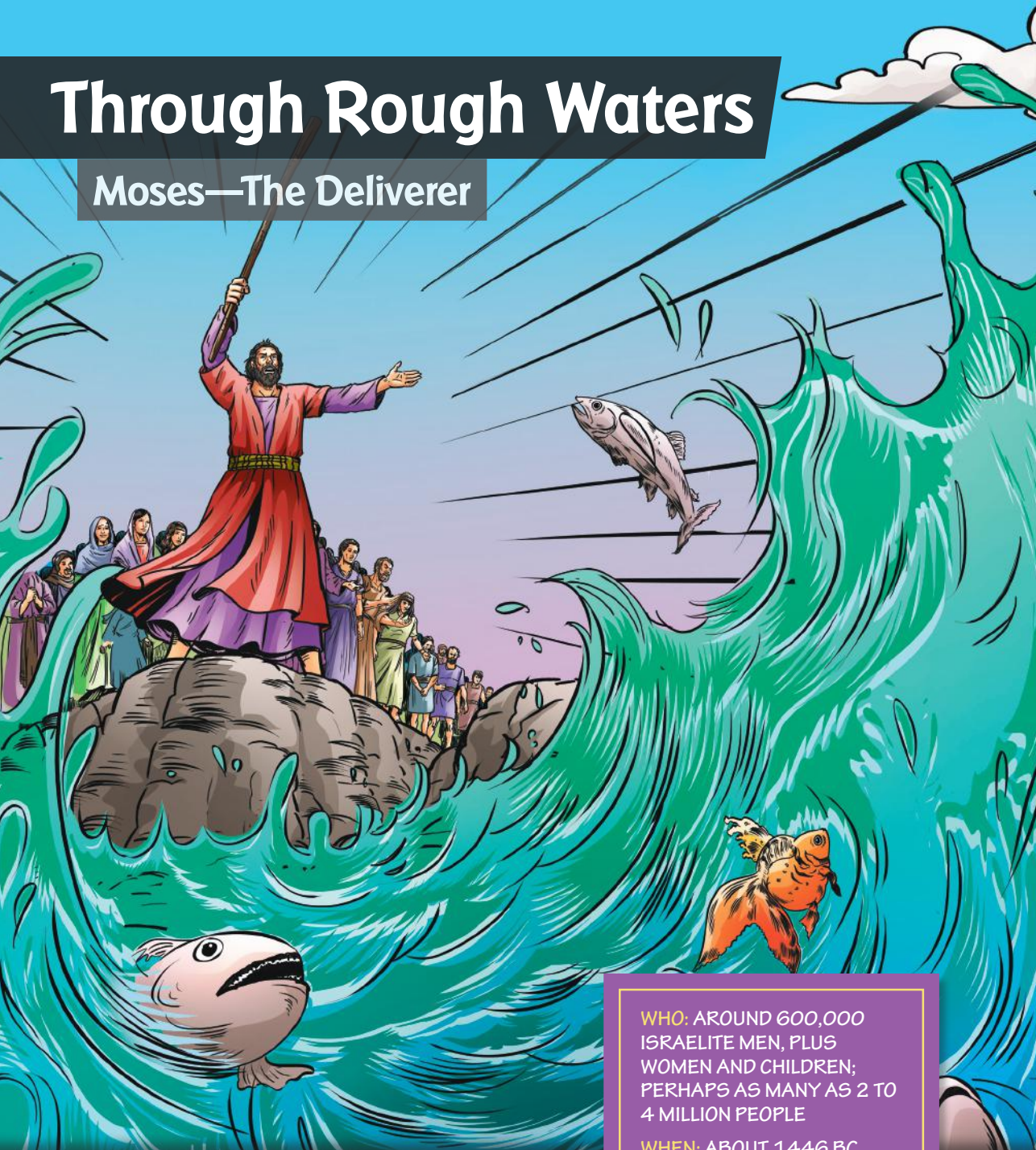
BE A HERO!

Waiting in line isn't usually something we enjoy. But you can make it easier—even fun! If you're with friends or siblings, play "I Spy" or "The Alphabet Game." Or take turns telling silly stories. Whoever makes the others laugh the loudest wins!

HERO TRAINING You just know you're ready to stay home without a babysitter or to bike to the neighborhood store alone, but your mom and dad say you're not quite old enough yet. While you wait, show them how responsible you can be by fixing your own snacks, taking care of pets, and putting your bike away. As your parents see you taking care of little things, they'll be more willing to trust you to do bigger things when the time is right.

Through Rough Waters

Moses—The Deliverer



WHO: AROUND 600,000 ISRAELITE MEN, PLUS WOMEN AND CHILDREN; PERHAPS AS MANY AS 2 TO 4 MILLION PEOPLE

WHEN: ABOUT 1446 BC

KEY WORD

EXODUS: "EXIT" OR "DEPARTURE"

This is what the Lord says. He is the one who made a road through the sea. Even through rough waters he made a path for his people.

—ISAIAH 43:16-18



Imagine you're walking through the mall with your family. You stop to look at a cool toy in a store's window. When you turn back, your family isn't there! Now a big line of people is blocking your way. You feel trapped, and you don't know what to do!

The Israelites knew what it's like to feel trapped. You see, Moses had led them out of Egypt, but Pharaoh decided he didn't want the Israelites to leave Egypt after all. So a big group of Egyptian soldiers chased after them. The Israelites were terrified. In front of them, the rough waters of the Red Sea splashed. Behind, the Egyptians were getting closer by the minute!

The Israelites didn't know how things would be okay. But God had a plan to save them. God told Moses to lift his walking stick over the Red Sea. Moses obeyed, and the rough waters split apart! The Israelites walked across the sea on dry land. They were safe.

So when you feel trapped and aren't sure what to do, ask God for help. He'll get you through the rough waters and will guide you to safety. ► **EXODUS 12-14**

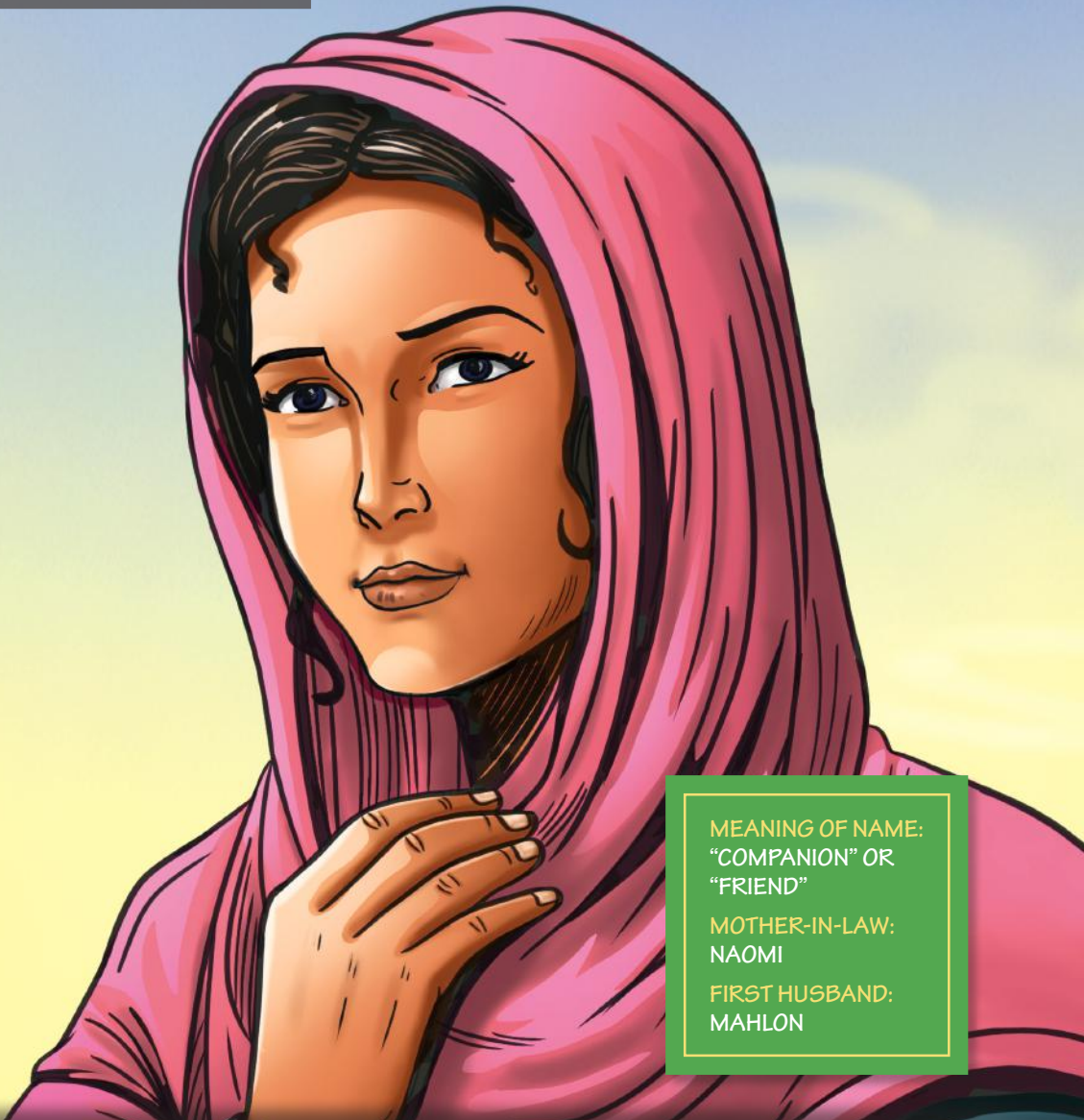
BE A HERO!

What are some ways you could lead someone to safety? Maybe you could help a younger student at school find his classroom. Or you could teach your younger sister to look both ways before crossing the street. Share your ideas with your family, and make a plan to lead someone to safety this week!

HERO TRAINING Did you know that going through hard times can be good for you? It builds your faith muscles as it teaches you to rely on God. Memorize James 1:2-4, and the next time you face something difficult, say these verses out loud—and trust that God will take care of you!

Wherever You Go

Ruth—The Loyal



MEANING OF NAME:
“COMPANION” OR
“FRIEND”

MOTHER-IN-LAW:
NAOMI

FIRST HUSBAND:
MAHLON

Ruth said, “Don’t ask me to leave you! Don’t beg me not to follow you! Every place you go, I will go. Every place you live, I will live. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God.”

—RUTH 1:16 ICB

Loyal is a word you probably don’t hear often. But when you think about what *loyal* means—to be faithful, to stick with someone no matter what—it’s easy to see why it’s so important. After all, how great is it to know that you have someone you can *always* count on?

Ruth was loyal to Naomi, especially when times got tough. Years earlier, Naomi, her husband, and their two sons had moved from Israel to Moab to escape a terrible famine. But things were not easy for the family in Moab either. First, Naomi’s husband died. Then her sons died. Naomi was alone in a foreign country with only her sons’ Moabite wives, Ruth and Orpah, to help her.

Naomi decided to return home to Israel. She urged her daughters-in-law to return to their own families. Orpah did, but Ruth refused. Naomi was Ruth’s family now. Ruth knew life in Israel would be hard (Israelites and Moabites were enemies). But her loyalty to Naomi was greater than her fears. She would not leave Naomi alone.

A loyal person is one of this world’s greatest treasures. And loyalty is a treasure that grows even richer when you give it away. Seek loyal friends, and be a loyal friend in return.

► RUTH 1



BE A HERO!

Heroes don't leave friends to face hard times alone. Sometimes you can help fix a problem; sometimes you can't. But you can be there. Share hugs, listen, visit. Just be there. It's more important than you might think.

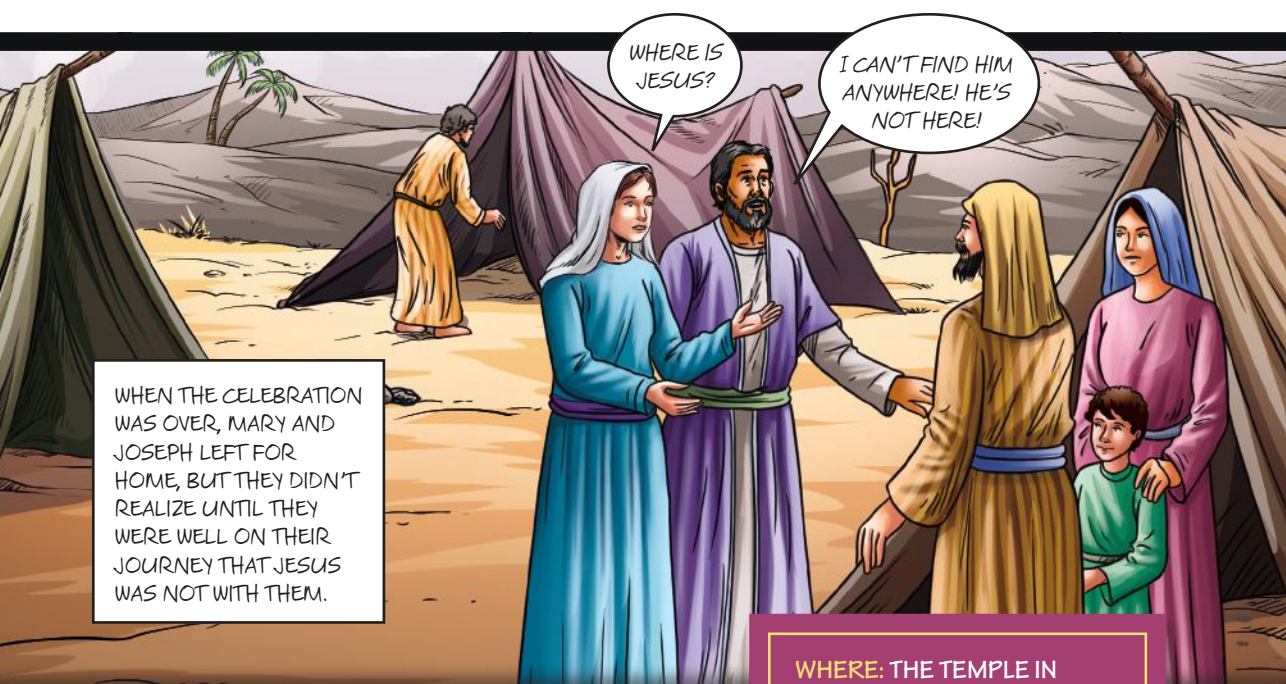
HERO TRAINING God rewarded Ruth's love and loyalty by making her part of Jesus' family tree. Read Matthew 1 and find the four women who were ancestors of Jesus. What made each of them so special that they were listed in Jesus' family tree?

In His Father's House

Jesus—The Student

Have you ever gotten separated from your parents? Perhaps you were at the park or in a store. You weren't really worried because you knew *exactly* where you were and what you were doing. But your parents didn't know those things, and they were worried sick!

Just that sort of thing happened to Jesus and His earthly parents, Mary and Joseph. When Jesus was twelve years old, they all went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, just as they did every year. When the celebration was over, Mary and Joseph left for home, along with a big group of friends and relatives. They didn't realize Jesus wasn't with their group until they were well on their way.



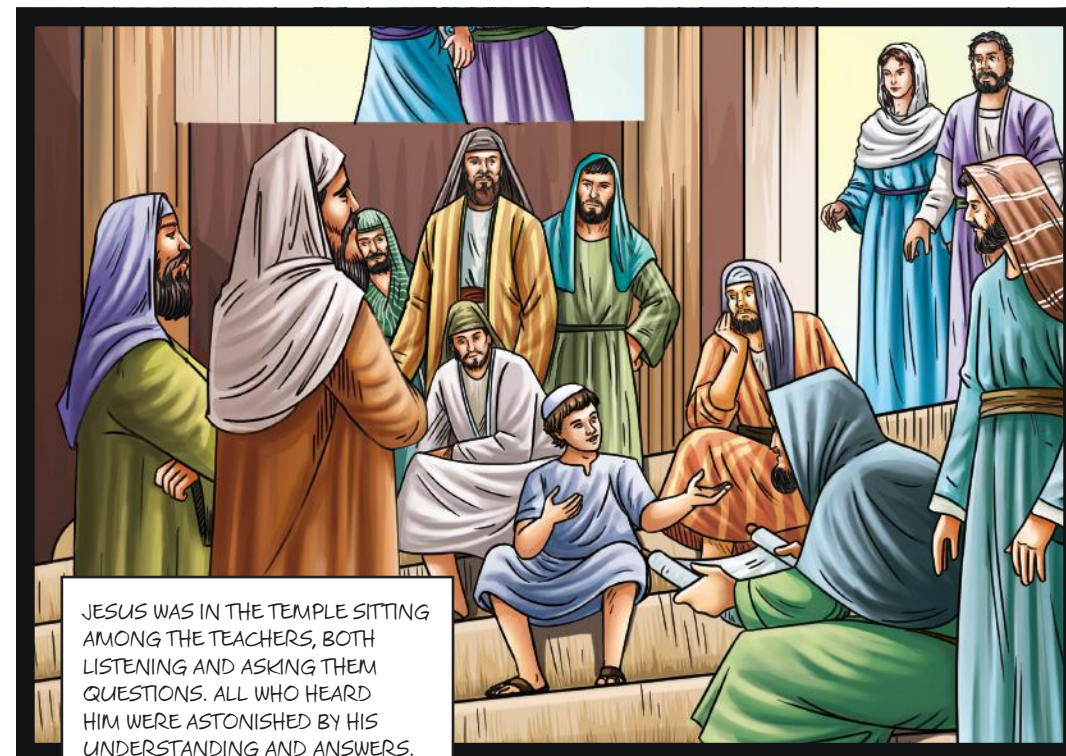
Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.

—LUKE 2:52 NLT

WHERE: THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM

WHEN: AFTER THE PASSOVER CELEBRATION

AGE: TWELVE YEARS OLD



After three terrifying days of searching through Jerusalem, they found Him. Where? In the temple courts, sitting with the teachers, listening, and asking questions. Mary and Joseph were amazed to find Him there, but they were also still upset. "Why have you done this?" Mary scolded. "Your father and I were worried." But Jesus simply said, "Why were you searching? Didn't you know I would be in My Father's house?"

Jesus wasn't lost, and He wasn't worried. He was right where He needed to be—learning about God. Take time to learn from those around you who know God. Listen and ask questions. Just be sure your parents know where you are! ► **LUKE 2**

BE A HERO!

Be like Jesus and ask questions. Keep a journal of questions, and every now and then, sit down with your Bible teacher, your preacher, or someone else who knows a lot about God. Ask your questions and listen to the answers. Then ask more questions! Heroes know there's always something new to learn about God.

HERO TRAINING Jesus is not the only person the Bible says grew in "wisdom" and "stature" and "in favor with God." Look up Luke 1:80 and 1 Samuel 2:26 to find out who else these words describe. And check out the good news in Psalm 32:8. God will help you grow too!

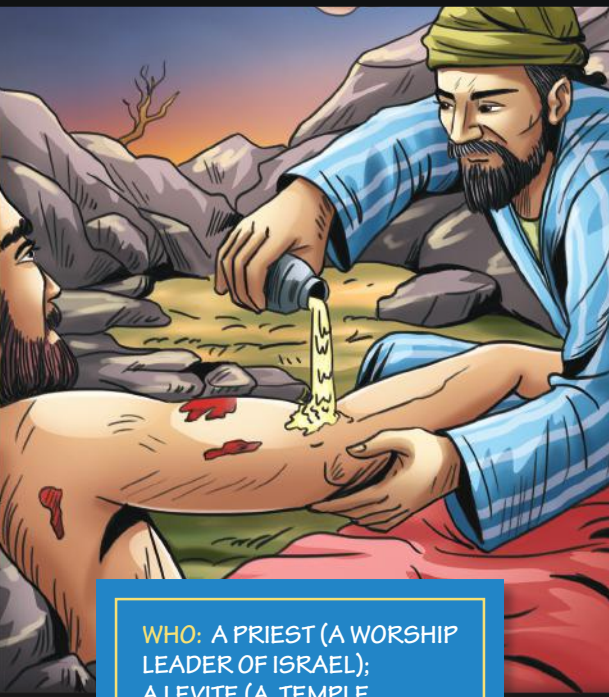
To the Rescue!

The Good Samaritan—An Unexpected Hero

Have you ever tried to get out of something you didn't want to do? Maybe it was your turn to take out the trash. You know that means all the trash—from the kitchen, the bedrooms, the office. But you still ask your parents *which* trash. Because you don't want to do any more work than you have to.

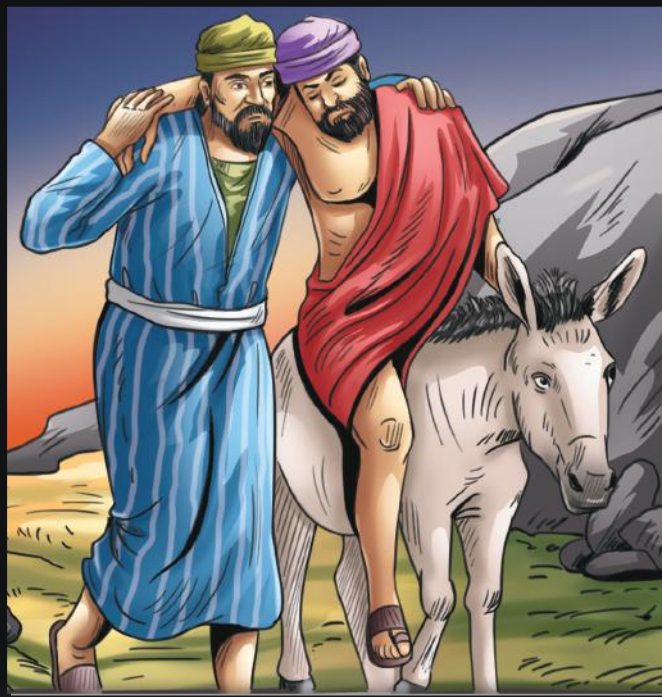
That's exactly what a teacher of the law was doing when He asked Jesus who his neighbor was. You see, Jesus had just told him to love his neighbor as himself. But there were some people this man didn't really want to love. So he asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?"

Jesus answered him by telling a parable: "A man was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho.



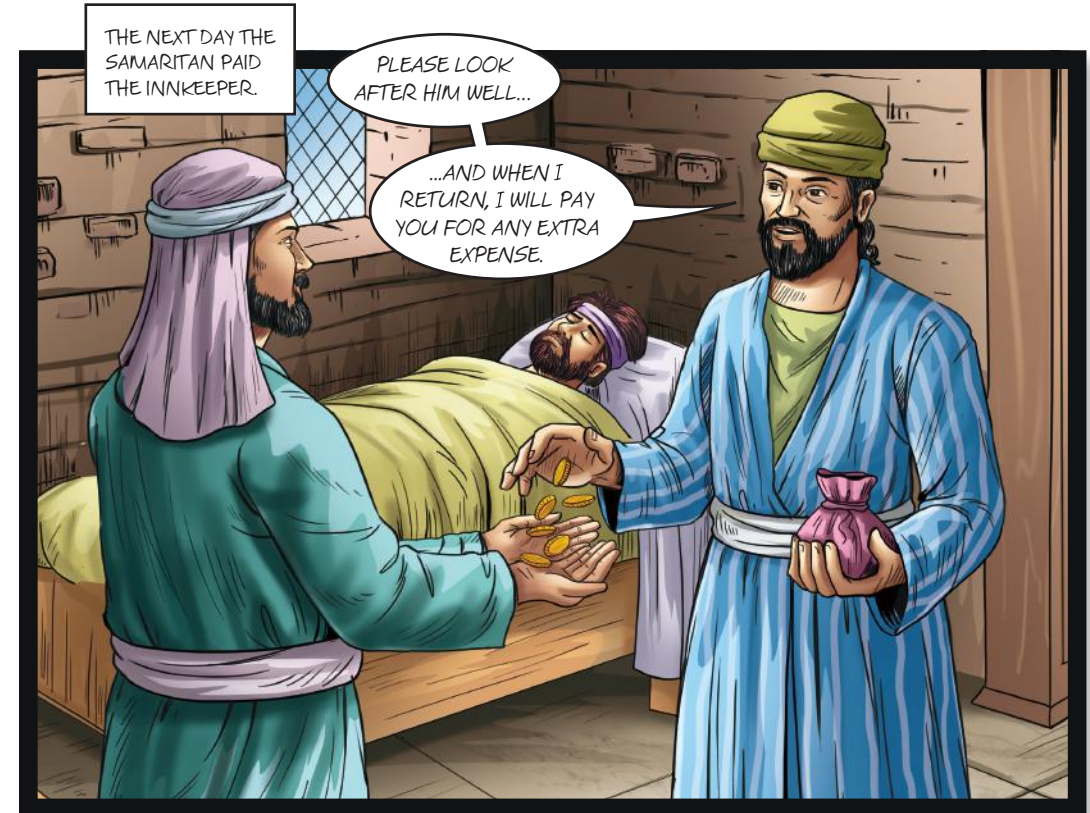
WHO: A PRIEST (A WORSHIP LEADER OF ISRAEL); A LEVITE (A TEMPLE WORKER); A SAMARITAN

WHERE: ON THE ROAD FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICO



You will hear a voice behind you. It will say, "This is the right way. You should go this way."

—ISAIAH 30:21 ICB



Suddenly, a group of robbers attacked him. They beat him, stole his clothes, and left him to die. A priest saw the hurt traveler but didn't stop. A Levite also saw him and kept walking. But a Samaritan (who was hated by the Jews) did stop. That wasn't all, either. He bandaged the man's wounds, put him on his own donkey, and took him to an inn, where he paid the innkeeper to look after him."

Then Jesus asked, "Which of these three men was a good neighbor?" Of course, it was the Samaritan!

Even though the priest and Levite were supposed to be God's workers, it was the Samaritan who went way out of his way to help. When you see someone in need, don't ignore them or wish them good luck—go out of your way to help! ► **LUKE 10**

BE A HERO!

Acts 10:38 tells us that Jesus went about doing good things everywhere He went. Here's a hero's challenge: Be like Jesus. Whether it's at school, in the park, or simply at the dinner table, do something good everywhere you go!

HERO TRAINING Read James 2:14–17. Why do you think faith without works (that is, saying you love God, but not helping His people) is dead faith?

A Gift to Give

Tabitha—The Giver

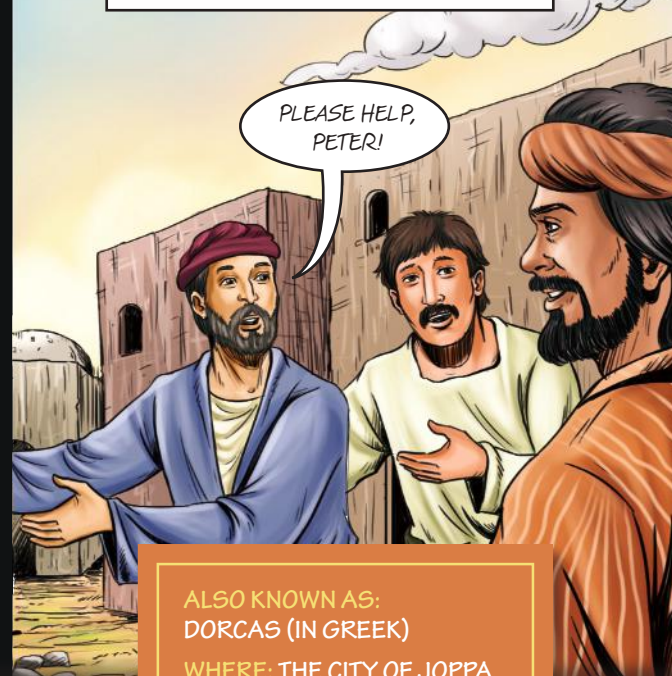
What are you good at? Some people have a gift for writing or fixing things. Others have a gift for encouraging or making peace. Whatever your gift, God wants you to use it. Not just for yourself but also to help others.

Tabitha had a gift. She was good at giving, and she used her gift to help the poor. In Joppa, she was well-known for all the good she did.

IN JOPPA THERE LIVED A GOOD WOMAN NAMED TABITHA, WHO WAS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS. SHE LOVED TO HELP PEOPLE AND GIVE MONEY TO THOSE IN NEED, AND SHE MADE CLOTHES FOR THE POOR.



BUT SADLY TABITHA BECAME ILL AND DIED. WHEN HER FRIENDS LEARNED THAT PETER WAS PREACHING NEARBY, THEY BEGGED HIM TO COME AND HELP.



ALSO KNOWN AS:
DORCAS (IN GREEK)

WHERE: THE CITY OF JOPPA,
IN ISRAEL

KNOWN FOR: ALWAYS DOING
GOOD AND HELPING THE
POOR

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

—1 PETER 4:10 NLT



But one day, Tabitha became sick and died. The people heard that Peter was in a nearby town, and they sent word for him to come. When he arrived, Peter was taken upstairs to the room where Tabitha lay. Crowding around Peter, the widows cried and showed him the clothes Tabitha had made for them.

Peter sent everyone out, then he got down on his knees and prayed. Then, turning to the dead woman, Peter said, "Tabitha, stand up!" She opened her eyes and sat up! Peter called for the others to come and see. Many people believed in Jesus because of this miracle.

Tabitha had a gift for giving. Peter had a gift for healing by the Holy Spirit's power. Both of them were willing to use their gifts. And both changed many lives by doing so. No gift is bigger or greater than any other. All are given by God. Use your gift to serve God today. ► ACTS 9

BE A HERO!

You have a gift from God—everyone does. You just need to discover it. Begin by listing the things you're good at and how you might use those talents to serve God. Good at math? Be a tutor and share Jesus at the same time. Good at encouraging? Send a card or message to someone who is going through a struggle.

HERO TRAINING It's easy to look at the gift someone else has and think that it's better than your gift. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4–11. Does everyone have a gift? Is any one gift better than another? Who is the Giver of all these gifts?

Marketing & PR

- Digital paid media campaign, including BibleGateway and more
- High-impact book trailer for sharability
- Creation of BibleForce social media assets to engage consumers
- Secure endorsements from key influencers who will promote with their constituents
- Church mailing to seed word-of-mouth recommendations
- Christian print publicity campaign
- Online publicity campaign

Key Selling Points

- Ultrapopular graphic novel–style format
- Wide appeal for boys and girls
- Stunning comic-style action art with 100 devotions
- Includes takeaways kids can apply to their lives