

THE
EPIC
BIBLE

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The Epic Bible: God's Story from Eden to Eternity

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The Epic Bible is a graphic adaptation of the Holy Bible. It closely follows the biblical text but is not a word-for-word adaptation. In a few places, scenes and conversations are included which can be inferred or imagined from the biblical text and from history.

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THE
EPIC
BIBLE

GOD'S STORY
FROM EDEN TO
ETERNITY



wander
An imprint of
Tyndale House
Publishers

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INTRODUCTION

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S STORY. It is also the story of all humanity, of their actions—both good and evil. The Bible is an important book because it shows us who God is and who he created us to be. Through the Bible, we learn the true story of what God has done for his followers and what his plans are for the world now and in the future.

The Epic Bible is a graphic adaptation of the Bible that attempts to tell the story of the real and true Word of God in serialized art form. Bible references appear at the bottom of each page where there is a direct relation to a Bible verse or story, and the narration and dialogue closely follow the text of the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation. We strongly encourage all our graphic-novel readers to read the complete Bible story for themselves. God has much to teach us!

This adaptation seeks to introduce readers to the major themes and threads of the Bible. The story begins when God creates all things by speaking them into existence, and it follows Adam and Eve's descendants as they struggle with how to repair their broken relationship with their Creator. After this, God calls Abraham and his family to be the people through whom God will save the whole world. In the story of Moses, God's people travel all the way to the land that he promised to give to their ancestors, where God reveals his law to his people to show them how to live in covenant with him.

God brings his people into the Promised Land and establishes Israel as a great nation. But, as forewarned by Moses and the prophets, disaster awaits when the people turn away from and sin against the living God. The people's disobedience and unfaithful rulers lead them into exile in Babylon. Eventually, they return home and rebuild their temple and cities. After all this comes a time of four hundred silent years before the Messiah is revealed to the people of Israel and to the world.

Finally, God comes to earth in human form to save us all, as seen in Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection. The risen Jesus tells his disciples to make more disciples, and as the Holy Spirit empowers the followers of Christ to spread his message across the globe, the church is born. Christ selects the apostle Paul to share the Good News with Gentiles (non-Jews). Letters from Paul and other church leaders teach us how Jesus wants his followers to live. Revelation, the final book of the Bible, reveals that the darkness and turmoil of this sinful world will be interrupted and defeated by the glorious return of Jesus Christ as he sets up his Kingdom that will never end.

We are excited about sharing this story with you in a new way! Our prayer is that God will speak to you powerfully and show you his love and faithfulness in this book.

"THE
GRASS
WITHERS AND
THE FLOWERS
FADE—

BUT THE
WORD OF OUR
GOD ENDURES
FOREVER."





IT'S CALLED "THE GOOD BOOK."

"THE HOLY BOOK."

"THE BOOK OF BOOKS."

"THE BOOK OF GOD."



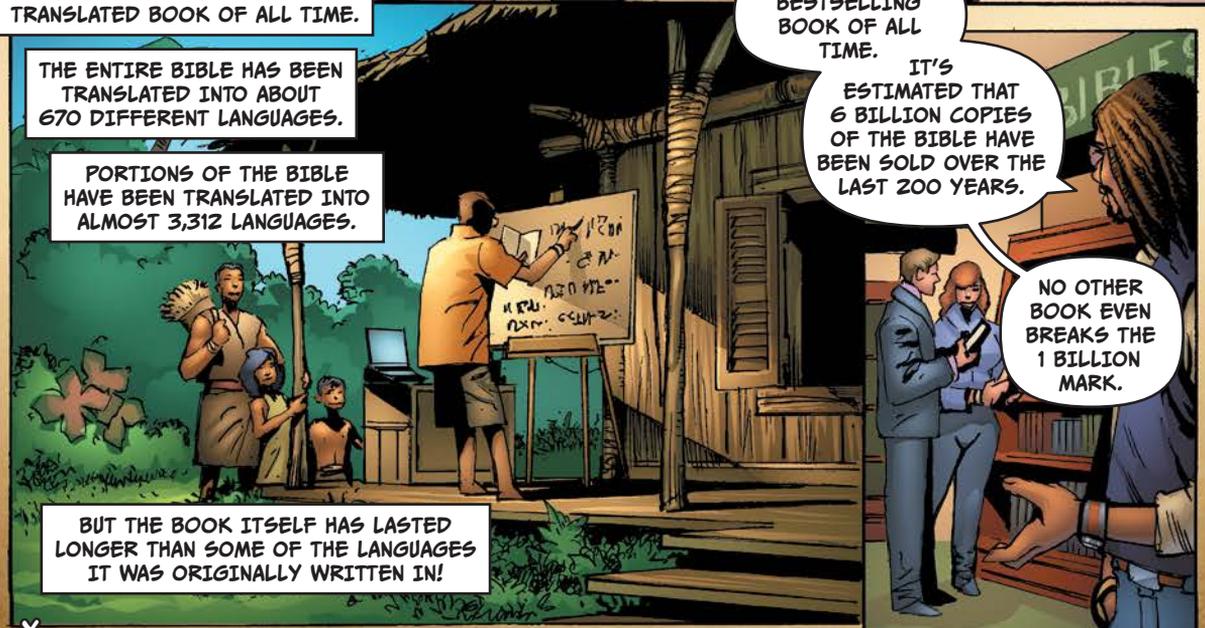
IT'S ONE OF THE OLDEST BOOKS IN THE WORLD.

AND YET THESE NAMES, STILL USED TODAY, SUGGEST THE BIBLE IS SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST AN ANCIENT BOOK.

IT IS THE MOST WIDELY TRANSLATED BOOK OF ALL TIME.

THE ENTIRE BIBLE HAS BEEN TRANSLATED INTO ABOUT 670 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

PORTIONS OF THE BIBLE HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO ALMOST 3,312 LANGUAGES.



IT'S THE BESTSELLING BOOK OF ALL TIME.

IT'S ESTIMATED THAT 6 BILLION COPIES OF THE BIBLE HAVE BEEN SOLD OVER THE LAST 200 YEARS.

BUT THE BOOK ITSELF HAS LASTED LONGER THAN SOME OF THE LANGUAGES IT WAS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN IN!

NO OTHER BOOK EVEN BREAKS THE 1 BILLION MARK.



IT HAS INSPIRED SOME OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST WORKS OF ART—



—MUSIC—

HALLELUJAH!
HALLELUJAH!



—AND LITERATURE.



AND IT STILL INSPIRES ARTISTS AND WRITERS TODAY IN OUR NEWER ART FORMS!



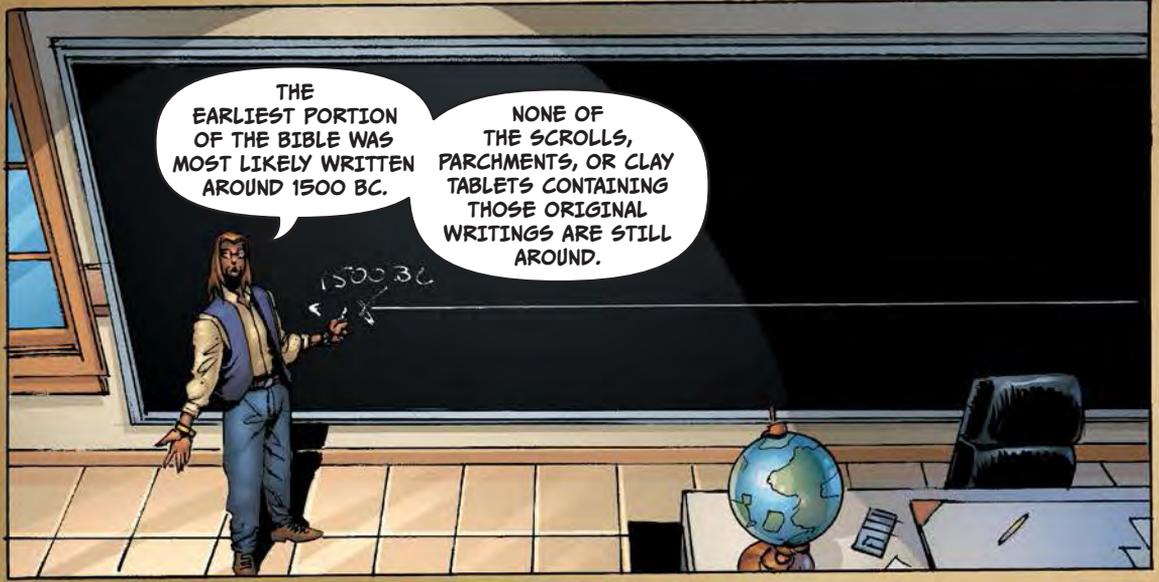
THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE IS, IN MANY WAYS, THE HISTORY OF WESTERN LITERATURE AND LITERACY.

Today



EVERY MAJOR ADVANCEMENT IN THE TRANSMISSION OF INFORMATION HAS BEEN QUICKLY ADOPTED BY PEOPLE INVOLVED WITH THE BIBLE.

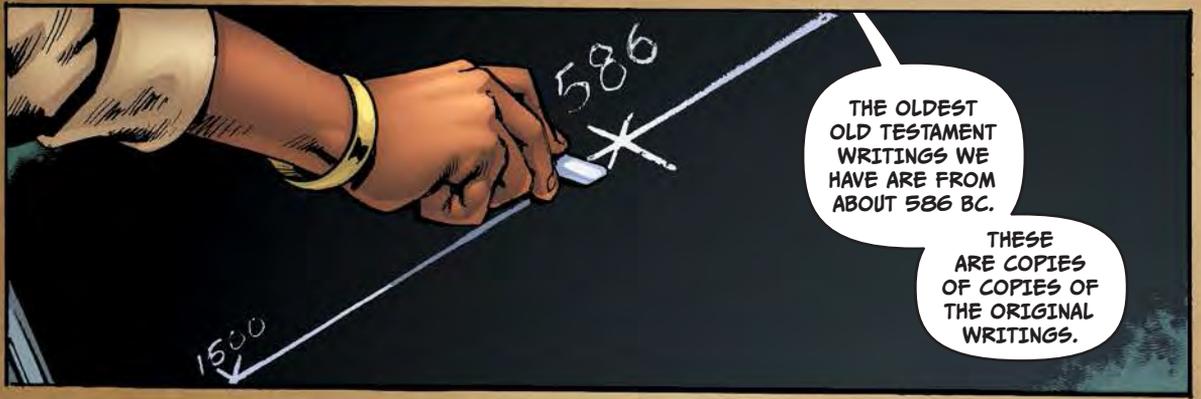
AND A NUMBER OF ADVANCEMENTS WERE DEVELOPED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE BIBLE.



THE EARLIEST PORTION OF THE BIBLE WAS MOST LIKELY WRITTEN AROUND 1500 BC.

NONE OF THE SCROLLS, PARCHMENTS, OR CLAY TABLETS CONTAINING THOSE ORIGINAL WRITINGS ARE STILL AROUND.

1500 BC



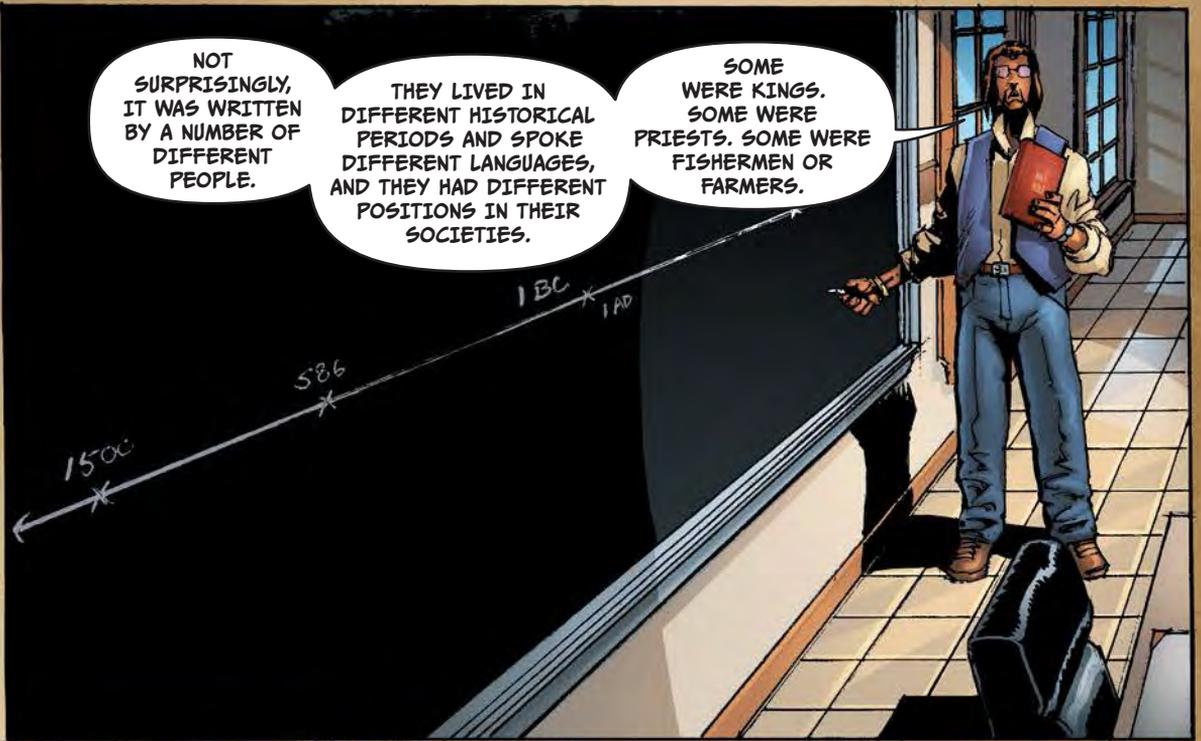
THE OLDEST OLD TESTAMENT WRITINGS WE HAVE ARE FROM ABOUT 586 BC.

THESE ARE COPIES OF COPIES OF THE ORIGINAL WRITINGS.



THE LAST PARTS OF THE BIBLE WERE WRITTEN AROUND AD 100, ABOUT 100 YEARS AFTER THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

IT TOOK OVER 1,500 YEARS TO WRITE THE BIBLE.



NOT SURPRISINGLY, IT WAS WRITTEN BY A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE.

THEY LIVED IN DIFFERENT HISTORICAL PERIODS AND SPOKE DIFFERENT LANGUAGES, AND THEY HAD DIFFERENT POSITIONS IN THEIR SOCIETIES.

SOME WERE KINGS. SOME WERE PRIESTS. SOME WERE FISHERMEN OR FARMERS.



WHAT IS SURPRISING IS THAT A COLLECTION OF WRITINGS COMING FROM SUCH DIVERSITY COULD HAVE SUCH UNITY.



MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WORLDWIDE PUT THEIR FAITH IN THIS BOOK.

THEY BELIEVE ITS PAGES REVEAL THE NATURE OF GOD, THE NATURE OF MAN, AND THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.

OTHERS BELIEVE THIS BOOK IS FULL OF FAIRY TALES AND OLD WIVES' TALES:

MYTHS THAT ONLY FOOLS WOULD BOTHER TO BELIEVE IN.

AND SOME FALL IN BETWEEN. IT'S A GOOD BOOK, WITH SOME GOOD STORIES AND GOOD ADVICE.

MORE THAN A CURIOSITY BUT LESS THAN HOLY SCRIPTURES.

IN DETERMINING THE BIBLE'S HISTORICAL TRUTH, THERE ARE MANY QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED.

THE QUESTION OF THE BIBLE'S SPIRITUAL TRUTH—

FOR EXAMPLE, IF LUKE WAS SO CAREFUL TO MAKE THE HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF HIS BOOKS ACCURATE—

WHETHER IT IS ALL THE INSPIRED WORK OF GOD OR PARTS OF IT ARE HISTORICAL OR NONE OF IT IS TRUE—

FALLS TO THE INDIVIDUAL TO DECIDE.

—WHY WOULD HE RISK LOSING CREDIBILITY BY EXAGGERATING OR LYING ABOUT THE BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS IN HIS BOOKS?

THIS IS A QUESTION THAT ADDRESSES THE HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE, BUT IT CANNOT BE DETERMINED THROUGH ARCHAEOLOGY.



SADLY, CONSIDERING WHAT IS AT STAKE, BOTH THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN THIS BOOK AND THOSE WHO DO NOT OFTEN MAKE THEIR DECISION WITHOUT BOTHERING TO LEARN THE FACTS.



AND THERE ARE A LOT OF FACTS, MANY MORE THAN CAN BE INCLUDED HERE.

THIS ONLY TOUCHES THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG.



BUT THERE IS A PROOF NOT YET ADDRESSED.

THE BIBLE'S OWN PROOF.

ITS WORDS POINT YOU TO SOMETHING— SOMEONE—BEYOND ITS WORDS.



BELIEVING IN THE SUPERNATURAL POWER OF THE WORDS OF THIS BOOK RESULTS IN AN ENCOUNTER WITH GOD.

IT GETS A PERSON CONNECTED TO THE OBJECT OF ITS WITNESS:

THE MESSIAH, JESUS CHRIST.

SO, NOW THAT
YOU HAVE THIS
INFORMATION, THE
QUESTION IS—

WHAT ARE YOU
GOING TO DO
WITH IT?

AND MORE
IMPORTANTLY,
SINCE YOU HAVE
THE BIBLE—

WHAT ARE YOU
GOING TO DO
WITH IT?

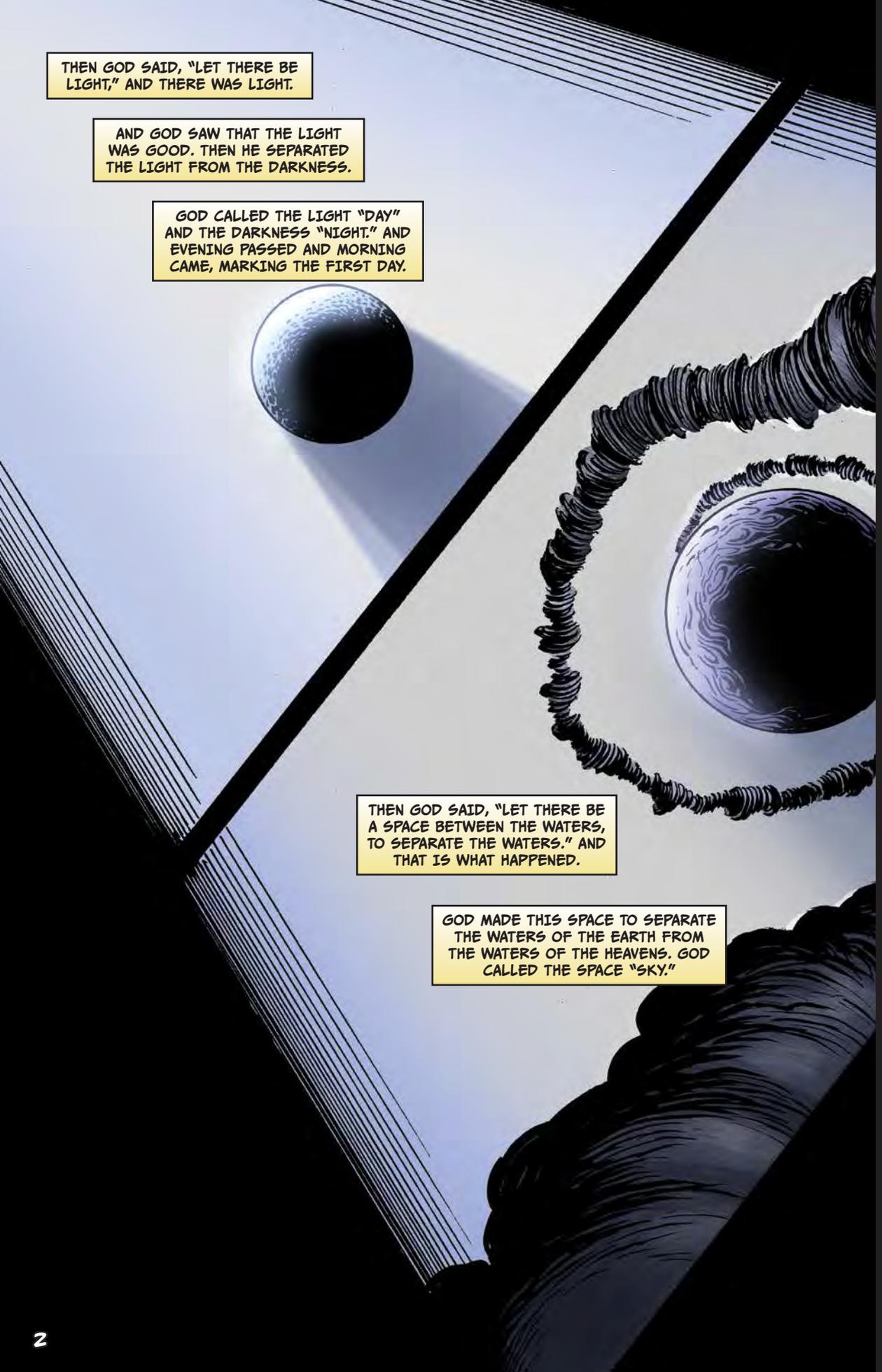


IN THE VERY BEGINNING—
EVEN BEFORE TIME WAS
CREATED—THERE WAS GOD.

GOD EXISTS IN THREE
PERSONS: COEQUAL
AND COETERNAL BUT
ONE IN BEING.

GOD WAS NOT LONELY—HE
COMMUNED WITH HIMSELF
IN HARMONIOUS LOVE.

THEN GOD CREATED THE
HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.



THEN GOD SAID, "LET THERE BE LIGHT," AND THERE WAS LIGHT.

AND GOD SAW THAT THE LIGHT WAS GOOD. THEN HE SEPARATED THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS.

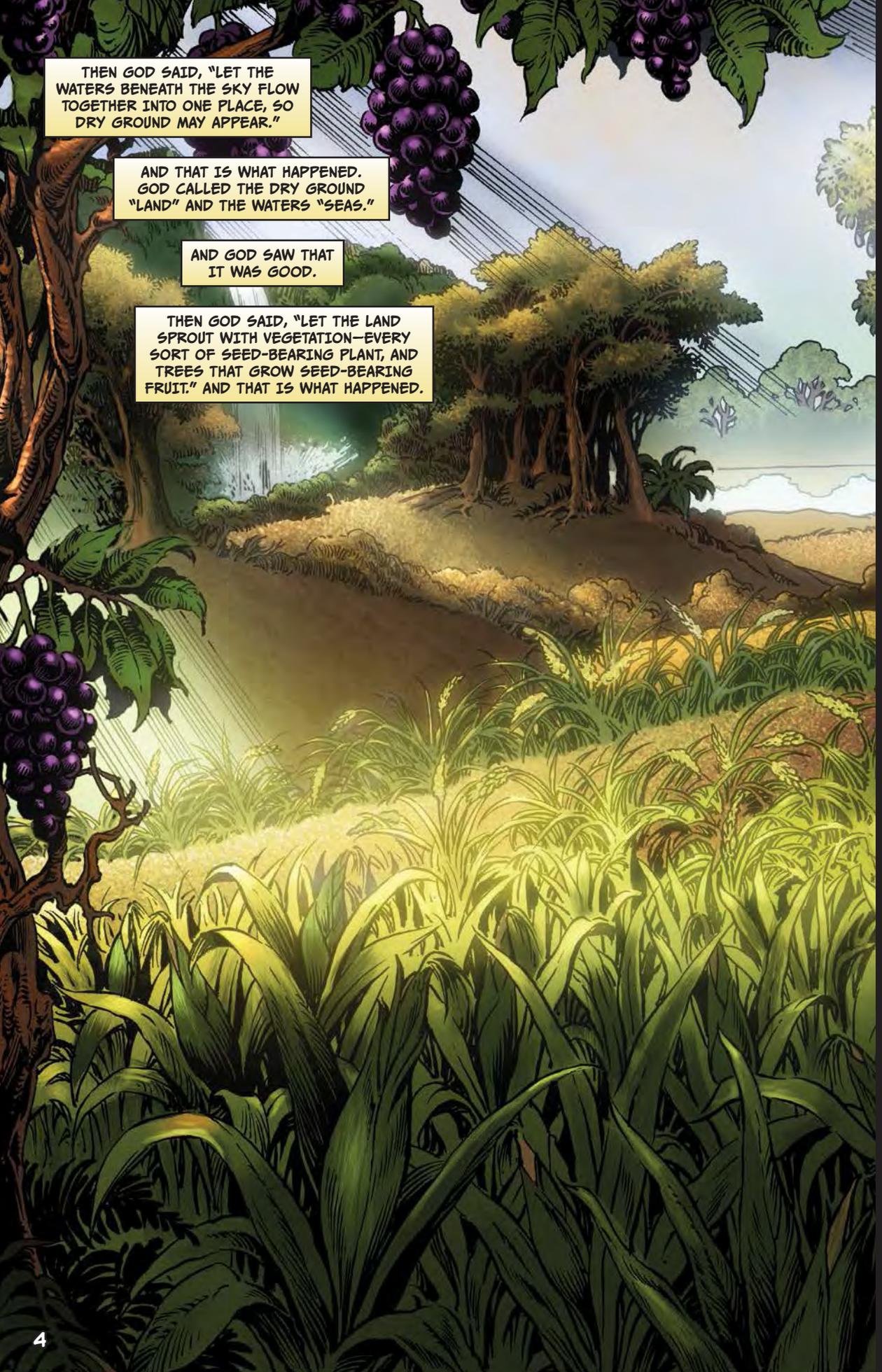
GOD CALLED THE LIGHT "DAY" AND THE DARKNESS "NIGHT." AND EVENING PASSED AND MORNING CAME, MARKING THE FIRST DAY.

THEN GOD SAID, "LET THERE BE A SPACE BETWEEN THE WATERS, TO SEPARATE THE WATERS." AND THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED.

GOD MADE THIS SPACE TO SEPARATE THE WATERS OF THE EARTH FROM THE WATERS OF THE HEAVENS. GOD CALLED THE SPACE "SKY."



AND EVENING PASSED AND
MORNING CAME, MARKING
THE SECOND DAY.



THEN GOD SAID, "LET THE WATERS BENEATH THE SKY FLOW TOGETHER INTO ONE PLACE, SO DRY GROUND MAY APPEAR."

AND THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED. GOD CALLED THE DRY GROUND "LAND" AND THE WATERS "SEAS."

AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

THEN GOD SAID, "LET THE LAND SPROUT WITH VEGETATION—EVERY SORT OF SEED-BEARING PLANT, AND TREES THAT GROW SEED-BEARING FRUIT." AND THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED.



THE LAND PRODUCED VEGETATION—ALL SORTS OF SEED-BEARING PLANTS, AND TREES WITH SEED-BEARING FRUIT. THEIR SEEDS PRODUCED PLANTS AND TREES OF THE SAME KIND.

AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

AND EVENING PASSED AND MORNING CAME, MARKING THE THIRD DAY.



ON DAY FOUR OF CREATION GOD
CREATED THE SUN, THE MOON,
AND THE STARS—A VAST UNIVERSE.

GOD SAID, "LET LIGHTS APPEAR
IN THE SKY TO SEPARATE THE DAY
FROM THE NIGHT. LET THEM BE SIGNS
TO MARK THE SEASONS, DAYS, AND
YEARS. LET THESE LIGHTS IN THE
SKY SHINE DOWN ON THE EARTH."

AND THAT IS WHAT HAPPENED. GOD MADE TWO
GREAT LIGHTS—THE LARGER ONE TO GOVERN
THE DAY, AND THE SMALLER ONE TO GOVERN
THE NIGHT. HE ALSO MADE THE STARS.

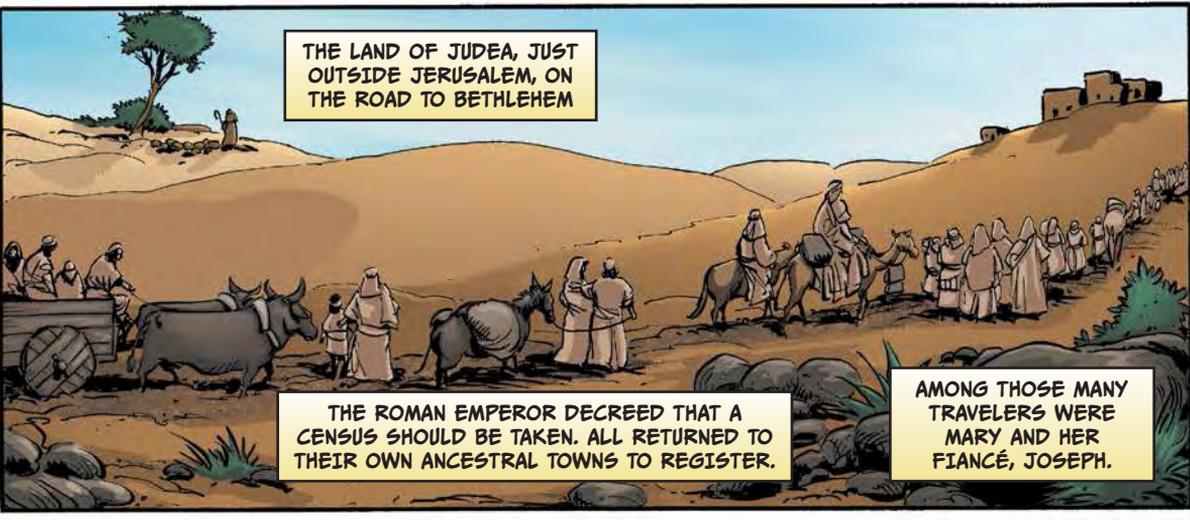


GOD SET THESE LIGHTS IN THE SKY TO LIGHT THE EARTH, TO GOVERN THE DAY AND NIGHT, AND TO SEPARATE THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS.

AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD.

AND EVENING PASSED AND MORNING CAME, MARKING THE FOURTH DAY.

THE LAND OF JUDEA, JUST OUTSIDE JERUSALEM, ON THE ROAD TO BETHLEHEM



THE ROMAN EMPEROR DECREED THAT A CENSUS SHOULD BE TAKEN. ALL RETURNED TO THEIR OWN ANCESTRAL TOWNS TO REGISTER.

AMONG THOSE MANY TRAVELERS WERE MARY AND HER FIANCÉ, JOSEPH.



THEIR DESTINATION WAS BETHLEHEM, 80 MILES TO THE SOUTH OF THEIR HOME IN NAZARETH.

MARY, LET'S STOP. JUST FOR A MOMENT.

I'M FINE, JOSEPH.

WE WANT TO MAKE GOOD TIME.



NORMALLY, THE JOURNEY WOULD TAKE JUST FOUR OR FIVE DAYS, BUT MARY WAS EXPECTING A CHILD.

BETHLEHEM ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE. IT'LL STILL BE THERE WHEN WE ARRIVE.

YES, AND ALL THESE PEOPLE WILL ALSO BE THERE WHEN WE ARRIVE!



DON'T WORRY. I HAVE RELATIVES THERE.

WE'LL STAY IN AN INN UNTIL WE CAN TRACK THEM DOWN. EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.



AS SHE HAD DONE MANY TIMES OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, MARY FOUND HERSELF REFLECTING ON WHAT HAD BROUGHT HER TO THIS MOMENT.

I KNOW, JOSEPH. I KNOW.

AS A YOUNG WOMAN IN THE SMALL VILLAGE OF NAZARETH, SHE EXPECTED AN UNEVENTFUL AND TRADITIONAL LIFE.



SHE AND HER FIANCÉ, JOSEPH, WERE ENGAGED, MEANING THEY HAD BEEN BOUND TOGETHER IN A MARRIAGE CONTRACT.

BUT THEY STILL LIVED APART FROM EACH OTHER, WITH THEIR OWN FAMILIES.

FOLLOWING TRADITION, THEY WERE WAITING ABOUT A YEAR BEFORE THEY LIVED TOGETHER AS HUSBAND AND WIFE.



THEN THERE WOULD BE A SECOND, EVEN BIGGER CEREMONY.

AND JOSEPH WOULD TAKE MARY HOME WITH HIM AS HIS WIFE.

MARY!
I SAW JOSEPH WORKING ON YOUR NEW HOME YESTERDAY!

YOUR PARENTS WERE WISE TO MARRY YOU TO A CARPENTER!

HE'S A GOOD MAN!

THAT HE IS!



THEIR LIFE TOGETHER WOULD BEGIN.



MARY KNEW THAT JOSEPH, A HARD WORKER AND GODLY MAN, WOULD MAKE A WONDERFUL HUSBAND AND FATHER.

THEY PLANNED TO LIVE IN THE HOUSE JOSEPH BUILT NEAR HIS FAMILY'S NAZARETH HOME, FILL IT WITH CHILDREN, AND GROW OLD TOGETHER.



BUT THOSE WERE THE PLANS OF A YOUNG MAN AND WOMAN, AND THOSE PLANS WERE ABOUT TO CHANGE DRAMATICALLY.

GREETINGS, FAVORED WOMAN!





WHAT ...
WHAT DO
YOU WANT?

DON'T
BE AFRAID,
MARY!

FOR YOU
HAVE FOUND
FAVOR WITH
GOD!

YOU WILL
CONCEIVE AND
GIVE BIRTH TO
A SON.

AND
YOU WILL
NAME HIM
JESUS.



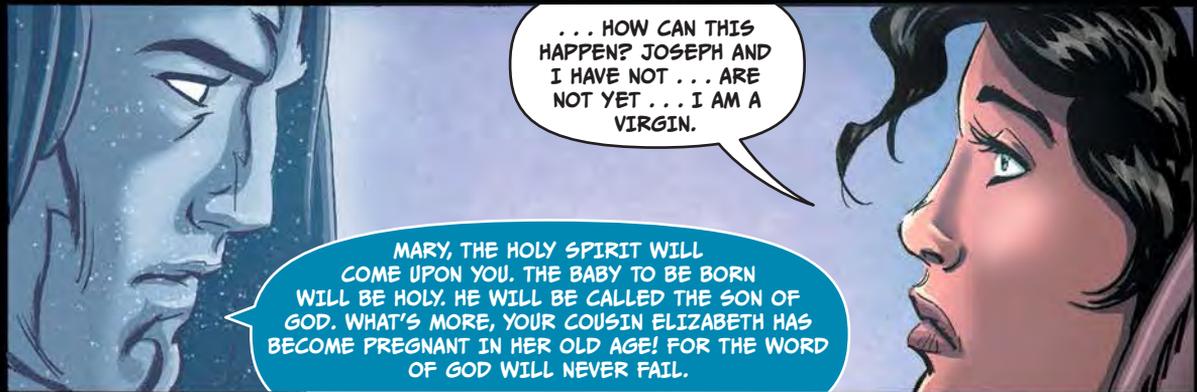
YES.
YOU.

ME?



HE WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF THE MOST HIGH. THE LORD GOD WILL GIVE HIM THE THRONE OF HIS ANCESTOR DAVID. AND HE WILL REIGN OVER ISRAEL; HIS KINGDOM WILL NEVER END!

BUT ...



... HOW CAN THIS HAPPEN? JOSEPH AND I HAVE NOT ... ARE NOT YET ... I AM A VIRGIN.

MARY, THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL COME UPON YOU. THE BABY TO BE BORN WILL BE HOLY. HE WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF GOD. WHAT'S MORE, YOUR COUSIN ELIZABETH HAS BECOME PREGNANT IN HER OLD AGE! FOR THE WORD OF GOD WILL NEVER FAIL.

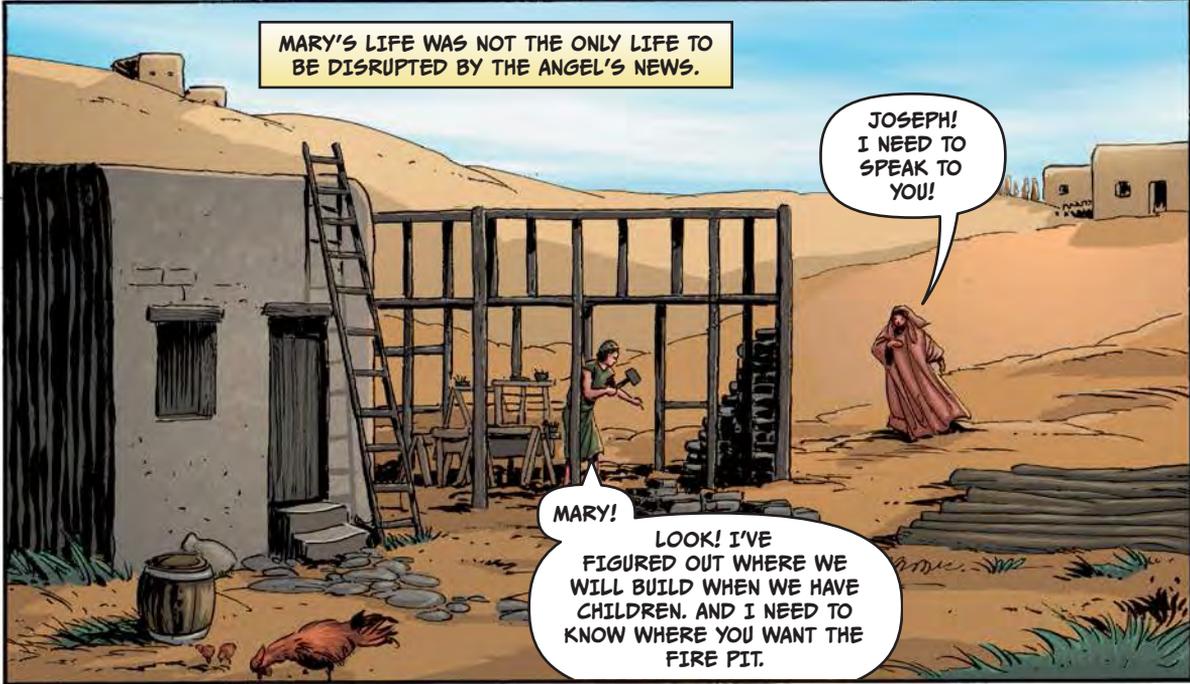


I ...



I AM THE LORD'S SERVANT.

MARY'S LIFE WAS NOT THE ONLY LIFE TO BE DISRUPTED BY THE ANGEL'S NEWS.



JOSEPH!
I NEED TO
SPEAK TO
YOU!

MARY!
LOOK! I'VE
FIGURED OUT WHERE WE
WILL BUILD WHEN WE HAVE
CHILDREN. AND I NEED TO
KNOW WHERE YOU WANT THE
FIRE PIT.



WHAT'S
WRONG,
MARY?

DON'T
WORRY, I'LL
HAVE THIS PLACE
PREPARED IN TIME
FOR OUR MARRIAGE
CEREMONY!



JOSEPH,
I'M NOT
WORRIED ABOUT
THAT . . . I HAVE
SOMETHING
IMPORTANT TO
TELL YOU.



AND SO JOSEPH
LISTENED AS SHE
TOLD HIM EVERYTHING.

... AND I
CARRY THE BABY
NOW, JOSEPH.



YOU
EXPECT ME
TO BELIEVE
THIS?



I HAVE SPENT SO
MUCH TIME AND EFFORT
BUILDING THIS HOUSE
FOR YOU AND FOR OUR
CHILDREN . . . GET OUT
OF HERE, MARY.

PLEASE.





FIFTY DAYS AFTER JESUS
ROSE FROM THE DEAD . . .

ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST ALL
THE BELIEVERS WERE MEETING
TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE.

SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A SOUND FROM
HEAVEN, AND IT FILLED THE HOUSE
WHERE THEY WERE SITTING. THEN,
WHAT LOOKED LIKE FLAMES APPEARED
AND SETTLED ON EACH OF THEM.

DEVOUT JEWS FROM EVERY
NATION CAME RUNNING WHEN
THEY HEARD THE NOISE.



I HEAR
HIM PROCLAIMING
SALVATION THROUGH
THIS MAN, JESUS—IN MY
LANGUAGE, MEDIAN.

AND
I HEAR
PHRYGIAN—HE'S
TELLING HOW GOD
CAN FORGIVE MY
SIN.

I AM
HEARING OF THE
WONDERS OF GOD
IN MY ELAMITE
TONGUE!



EVERYONE PRESENT WAS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEGAN SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGES.



THEY'RE JUST DRUNK, THAT'S ALL!

YES— THEY HAVE HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK AT THEIR FESTIVAL.

THEN PETER STEPPED FORWARD WITH THE 11 OTHER APOSTLES AND SHOUTED TO THE CROWD.

THESE PEOPLE ARE NOT DRUNK. NINE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING IS MUCH TOO EARLY FOR THAT. WHAT YOU SEE WAS PREDICTED LONG AGO BY THE PROPHET JOEL: "IN THE LAST DAYS . . . I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT UPON ALL PEOPLE."



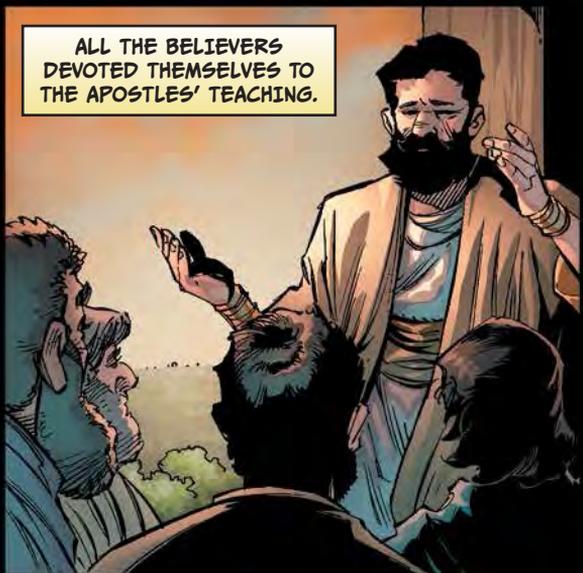
YOUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS WILL PROPHECY. YOUR YOUNG MEN WILL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN WILL DREAM DREAMS. EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, GOD PUBLICLY ENDORSED JESUS, BUT YOU NAILED HIM TO A CROSS AND KILLED HIM. GOD RAISED JESUS FROM THE DEAD, AND WE ARE ALL WITNESSES OF THIS.

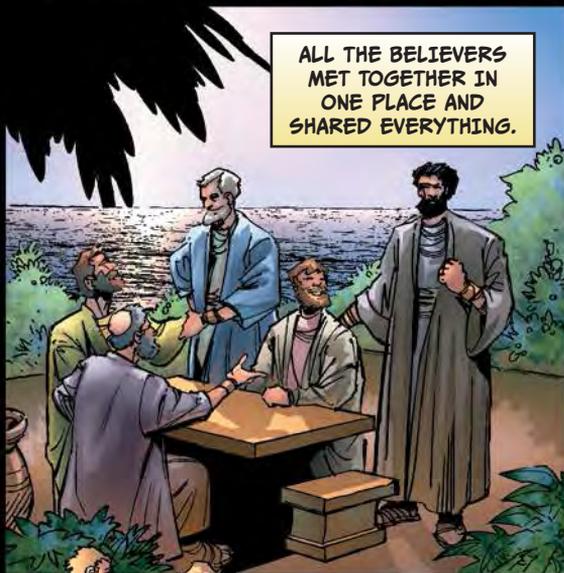
EACH OF YOU MUST REPENT OF YOUR SINS. BE BAPTIZED AND RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.



THOSE WHO BELIEVED
WHAT PETER SAID
WERE BAPTIZED
AND ADDED TO THE
CHURCH THAT DAY—
ABOUT 3,000 IN ALL.



ALL THE BELIEVERS
DEVOTED THEMSELVES TO
THE APOSTLES' TEACHING.



ALL THE BELIEVERS
MET TOGETHER IN
ONE PLACE AND
SHARED EVERYTHING.



THEY SOLD THEIR PROPERTY AND
POSSESSIONS AND SHARED THE
MONEY WITH THOSE IN NEED.



EACH DAY THE LORD ADDED
TO THEIR FELLOWSHIP.

EVEN MANY OF THE TEMPLE PRIESTS BELIEVED THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

THE MOVEMENT OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW JESUS WAS GROWING.

ALARMED, THE MEMBERS OF THE SANHEDRIN, THE RULING COUNCIL, ASSEMBLED TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO.

THE HIGH PRIEST INVITED A PASSIONATE MAN WHO WOULD BECOME, AGAINST ALL ODDS, AN APOSTLE.

WE HAVE REACHED A POINT OF CRISIS!

ARRESTING AND FLOGGING THOSE SO-CALLED APOSTLES, PETER AND JOHN, ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING.

DESPITE OUR WARNINGS THEY CONTINUE TO PREACH THE HERESY.

THEY SAID, "WE MUST OBEY GOD RATHER THAN ANY HUMAN AUTHORITY."

THEY ACT AS THOUGH WE WERE GOD'S ENEMIES!

THEY DENY OUR AUTHORITY IN FRONT OF THE PEOPLE!

THE CRISIS GROWS WORSE EVERY DAY. I HAVE APPOINTED SAUL OF TARSUS TO COMBAT THIS PROBLEM AND HAVE INVITED HIM TO SPEAK TO THE COUNCIL.

JERUSALEM IS PLAGUED BY THE FOLLOWERS OF THE FALSE MESSIAH, JESUS.

THEY ENTER OUR SYNAGOGUES AND HOMES, POISONING THE MINDS OF OUR PEOPLE.

MY REVERED ELDERS, SONS OF ABRAHAM!

POISONING THEIR MINDS?

SINCE WE ARE SURROUNDED BY SUCH A HUGE CROWD OF WITNESSES TO THE LIFE OF FAITH, LET US STRIP OFF EVERY WEIGHT THAT SLOWS US DOWN, ESPECIALLY THE SIN THAT SO EASILY TRIPS US UP.



WE DO THIS BY KEEPING OUR EYES ON JESUS.



BECAUSE OF THE JOY AWAITING HIM, HE ENDURED THE CROSS, DISREGARDING ITS SHAME. NOW HE IS SEATED IN THE PLACE OF HONOR BESIDE GOD'S THRONE. THINK OF ALL THE HOSTILITY HE ENDURED FROM SINFUL PEOPLE.

AS YOU ENDURE THIS DIVINE DISCIPLINE, REMEMBER THAT GOD IS TREATING YOU AS HIS OWN CHILDREN. WHO EVER HEARD OF A CHILD WHO IS NEVER DISCIPLINED BY ITS FATHER?

GOD'S DISCIPLINE IS ALWAYS GOOD FOR US, SO THAT WE MIGHT SHARE IN HIS HOLINESS.



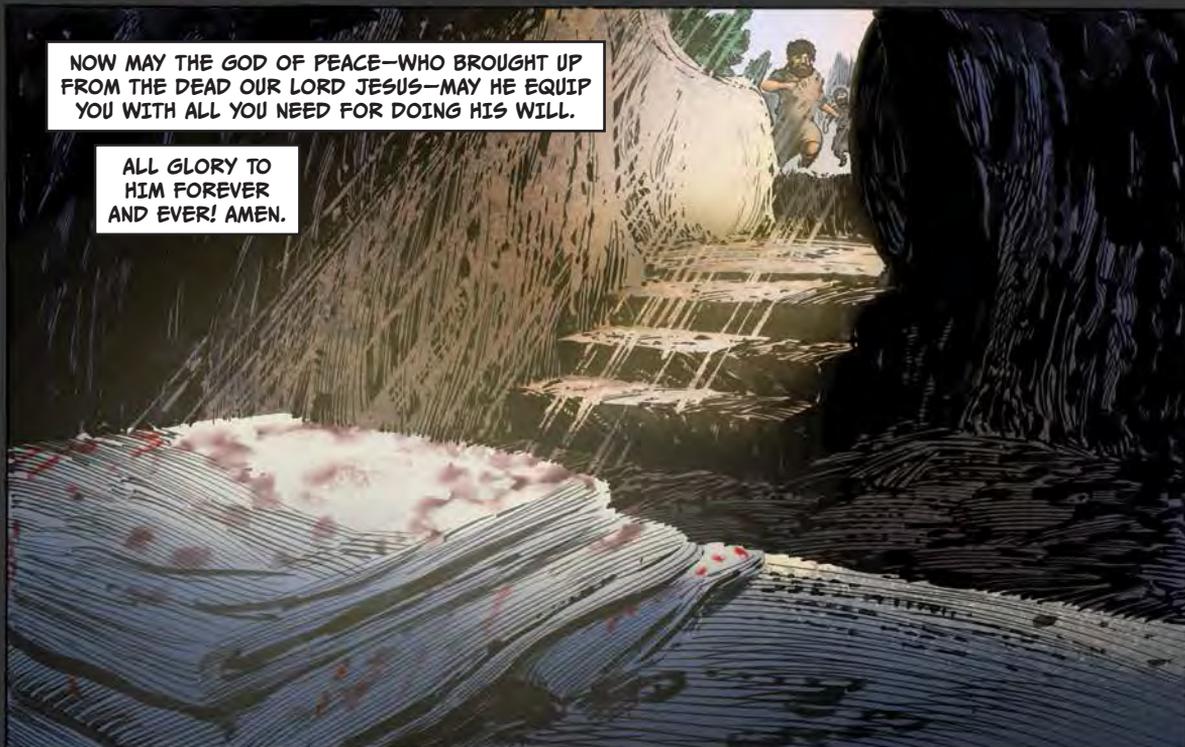
LOOK AFTER EACH OTHER SO THAT NONE OF YOU FAILS TO RECEIVE THE GRACE OF GOD. WATCH OUT THAT NO POISONOUS ROOT OF BITTERNESS GROWS UP TO TROUBLE YOU.



MAKE SURE THAT NO ONE IS LIKE ESAU, WHO TRADED HIS BIRTHRIGHT FOR A SINGLE MEAL.

NOW MAY THE GOD OF PEACE—WHO BROUGHT UP FROM THE DEAD OUR LORD JESUS—MAY HE EQUIP YOU WITH ALL YOU NEED FOR DOING HIS WILL.

ALL GLORY TO HIM FOREVER AND EVER! AMEN.





IN AD 64 THE CITY ROME BURNED IN A GREAT FIRE—MANY ROMANS BELIEVED IT WAS INSTIGATED BY NERO IN HIS DESIRE TO BUILD NEW BUILDINGS.

MANY ROMANS HAD BEEN KILLED AND MANY WERE HOMELESS.

NERO LOOKED TO REDIRECT THE ANGER OF HIS PEOPLE . . .



SPREAD THE WORD THE CHRISTIANS DID IT—AFTER ALL, THEY TEACH THAT THE WORLD WILL END BY FIRE.

. . . WHICH SET OFF A LONG WAVE OF PERSECUTION AGAINST CHRIST FOLLOWERS.



THE APOSTLE PETER SENT THIS LETTER TO THE SCATTERED CHRISTIANS TO SHARE HOW CHRIST FOLLOWERS ARE TO DEAL WITH ANIMOSITY AND LIVE IN THE WORLD.

I AM WRITING THIS LETTER TO GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE WHO ARE LIVING AS FOREIGNERS IN THE PROVINCES OF PONTUS, GALATIA, CAPPADOCIA, ASIA, AND BITHYNIA.



THERE IS WONDERFUL JOY AHEAD, EVEN THOUGH YOU MUST ENDURE MANY TRIALS FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

THESE TRIALS WILL SHOW THAT YOUR FAITH IS GENUINE—THOUGH YOUR FAITH IS FAR MORE PRECIOUS THAN MERE GOLD.



THE REWARD FOR TRUSTING JESUS WILL BE THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS.

THIS SALVATION WAS SOMETHING EVEN THE PROPHETS WANTED TO KNOW MORE ABOUT.

GET RID OF ALL
EVIL BEHAVIOR.

BE DONE WITH ALL
DECEIT, HYPOCRISY,
JEALOUSY, AND ALL
UNKIND SPEECH.

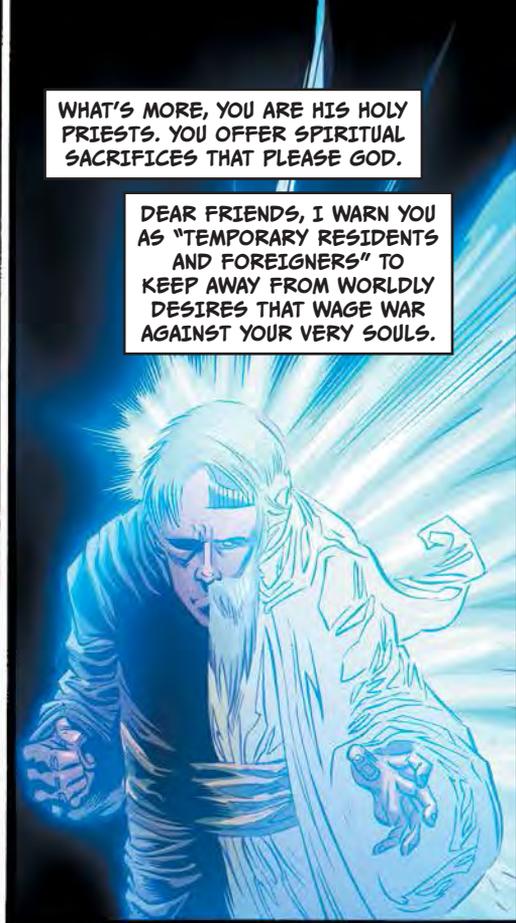


YOU ARE COMING TO
CHRIST, WHO IS THE
LIVING CORNERSTONE
OF GOD'S TEMPLE.

YOU ARE LIVING
STONES THAT GOD IS
BUILDING INTO HIS
SPIRITUAL TEMPLE.

WHAT'S MORE, YOU ARE HIS HOLY
PRIESTS. YOU OFFER SPIRITUAL
SACRIFICES THAT PLEASE GOD.

DEAR FRIENDS, I WARN YOU
AS "TEMPORARY RESIDENTS
AND FOREIGNERS" TO
KEEP AWAY FROM WORLDLY
DESIRES THAT WAGE WAR
AGAINST YOUR VERY SOULS.



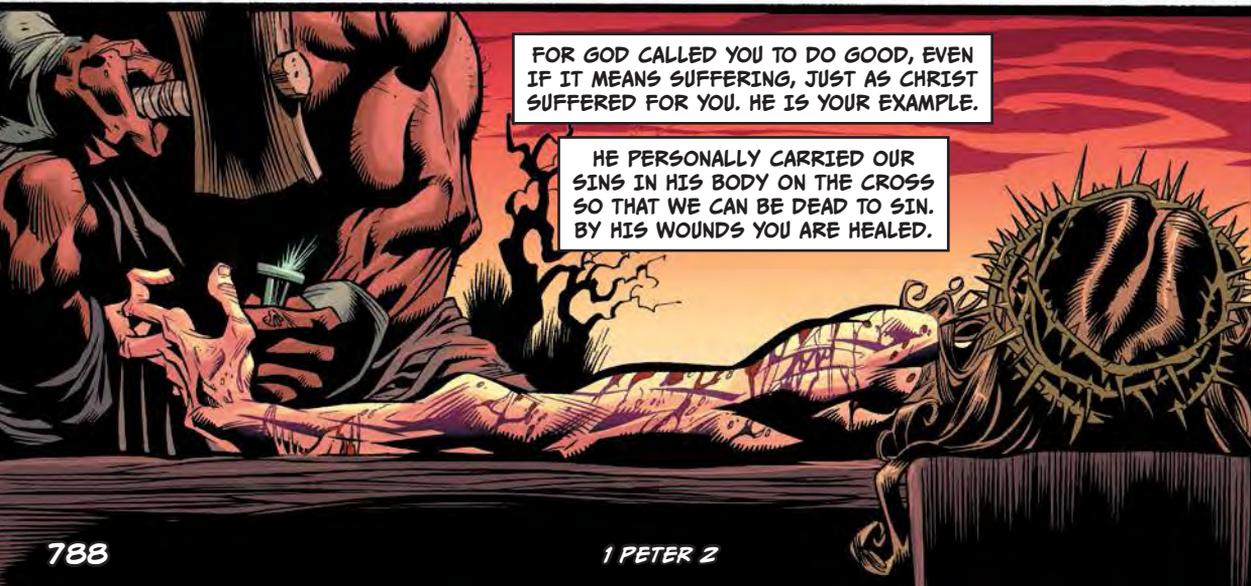
EVEN IF THEY ACCUSE YOU OF
DOING WRONG, THEY WILL SEE
YOUR HONORABLE BEHAVIOR.

RESPECT EVERYONE, AND LOVE
THE FAMILY OF BELIEVERS. FEAR
GOD, AND RESPECT THE KING.



FOR GOD CALLED YOU TO DO GOOD, EVEN
IF IT MEANS SUFFERING, JUST AS CHRIST
SUFFERED FOR YOU. HE IS YOUR EXAMPLE.

HE PERSONALLY CARRIED OUR
SINS IN HIS BODY ON THE CROSS
SO THAT WE CAN BE DEAD TO SIN.
BY HIS WOUNDS YOU ARE HEALED.



SINCE CHRIST SUFFERED PHYSICAL PAIN, YOU MUST ARM YOURSELVES WITH THE SAME ATTITUDE HE HAD, AND BE READY TO SUFFER, TOO.

YOU HAVE HAD ENOUGH IN THE PAST OF THE EVIL THINGS THAT GODLESS PEOPLE ENJOY—THEIR IMMORALITY AND LUST.

WHACK!

YOUR FORMER FRIENDS ARE SURPRISED WHEN YOU NO LONGER PLUNGE INTO THE FLOOD OF WILD AND DESTRUCTIVE THINGS THEY DO. SO THEY SLANDER YOU.

THE END OF THE WORLD IS COMING SOON. THEREFORE, BE EARNEST AND DISCIPLINED IN YOUR PRAYERS.

IF YOU ARE INSULTED BECAUSE YOU BEAR THE NAME OF CHRIST, YOU WILL BE BLESSED, FOR THE GLORIOUS SPIRIT OF GOD RESTS UPON YOU.

IF YOU ARE SUFFERING IN A MANNER THAT PLEASES GOD, KEEP ON DOING WHAT IS RIGHT, FOR HE WILL NEVER FAIL YOU.

DEAR FRIENDS, DON'T BE SURPRISED AT THE FIERY TRIALS YOU ARE GOING THROUGH, AS IF SOMETHING STRANGE WERE HAPPENING TO YOU.

BE VERY GLAD—FOR THESE TRIALS MAKE YOU PARTNERS WITH CHRIST IN HIS SUFFERING.

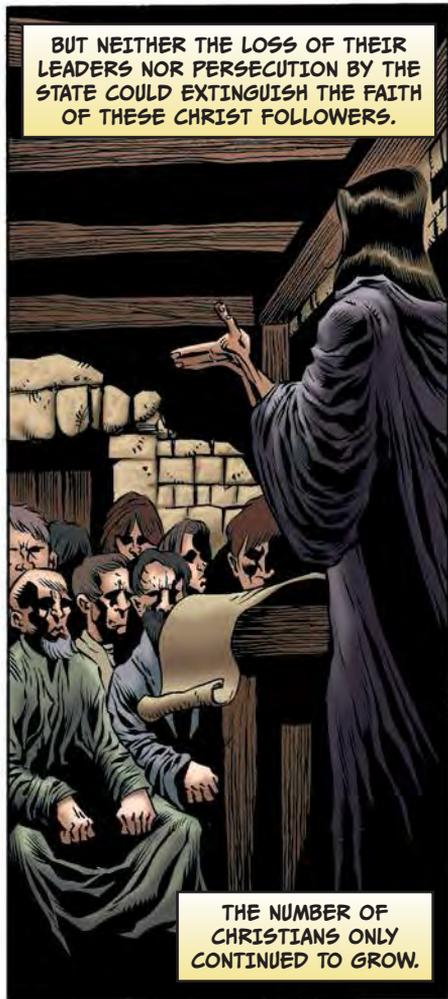


DEATH TO THE CHRISTIANS!

YES, THEY DESERVE IT—FOOLS FOR BELIEVING THAT A DEAD MAN IS NOW ALIVE.

THOUSANDS OF CHRIST FOLLOWERS WERE KILLED FOR ENTERTAINMENT IN THE INFAMOUS ARENA.

ANYTHING BAD THAT HAPPENED—WHETHER FAMINE, PESTILENCE, OR EARTHQUAKE—THE EMPEROR BLAMED ON THE CHRISTIANS.



BUT NEITHER THE LOSS OF THEIR LEADERS NOR PERSECUTION BY THE STATE COULD EXTINGUISH THE FAITH OF THESE CHRIST FOLLOWERS.

THE NUMBER OF CHRISTIANS ONLY CONTINUED TO GROW.

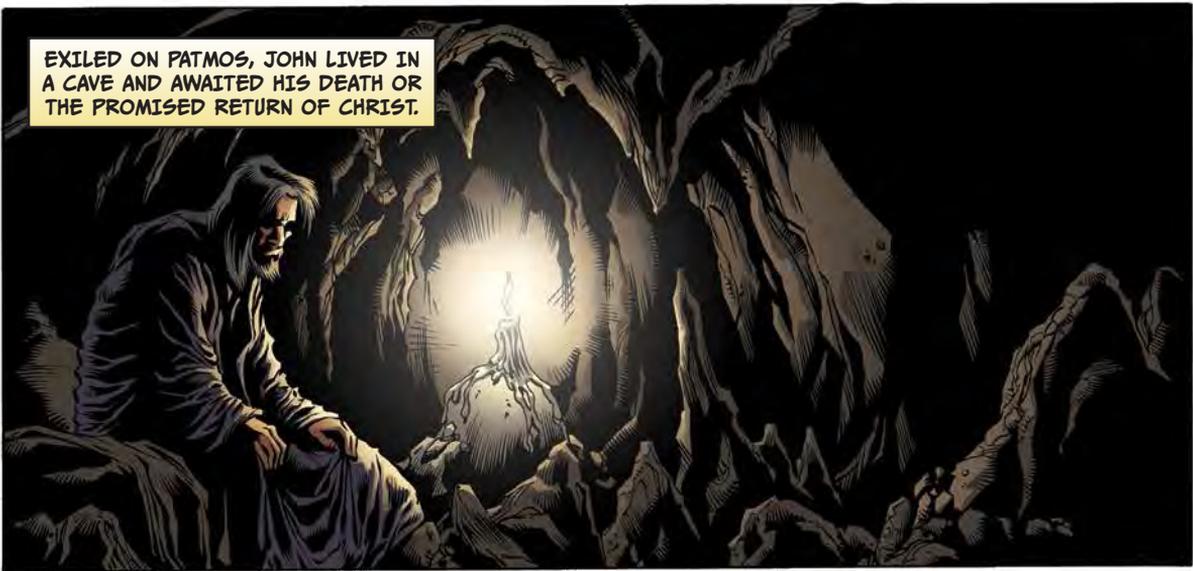


IN AN ATTEMPT TO STOP THIS MOVEMENT, EMPEROR DOMITIAN DECIDED TO REMOVE THEIR LEADER JOHN—THE LAST SURVIVING DISCIPLE OF JESUS.

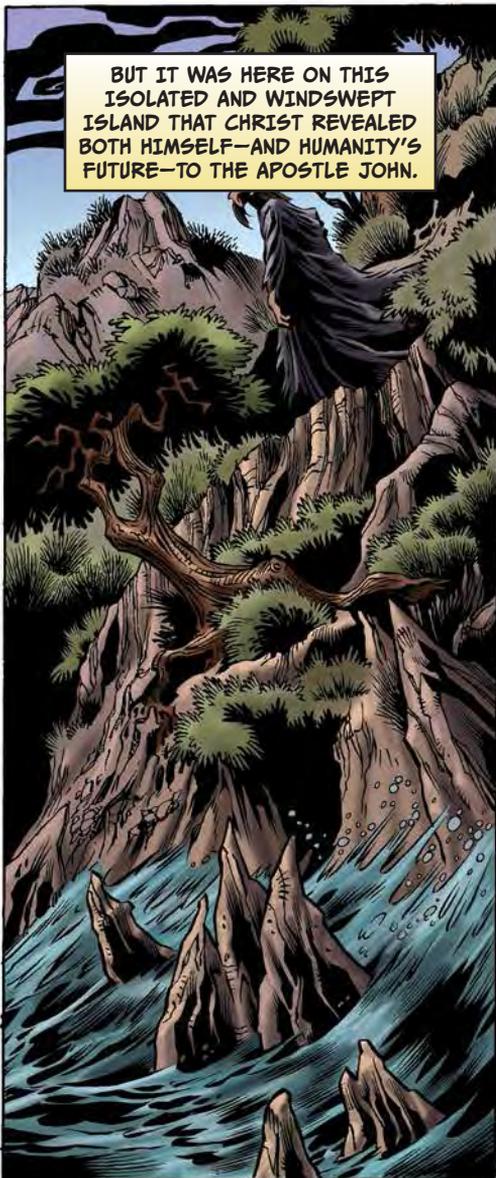


THE EMPEROR HAD JOHN EXILED TO THE ISLAND OF PATMOS OFF THE COAST OF GREECE. HE BELIEVED THAT FROM THERE JOHN COULD NO LONGER LEAD OR INFLUENCE THE CHRISTIANS.

EXILED ON PATMOS, JOHN LIVED IN A CAVE AND AWAITED HIS DEATH OR THE PROMISED RETURN OF CHRIST.



BUT IT WAS HERE ON THIS ISOLATED AND WINDSWEPT ISLAND THAT CHRIST REVEALED BOTH HIMSELF—AND HUMANITY'S FUTURE—TO THE APOSTLE JOHN.



IN A DIVINE VISION, GOD OPENED THE CURTAIN OF THE FUTURE AND REVEALED THE GRAND FINALE OF THE BIBLE STORY . . .



. . . THE LAST BOOK OF THE BIBLE—THE BOOK OF REVELATION.



AS HE DID EVERY SABBATH, JOHN SPENT TIME IN WORSHIP OF GOD.

BUT THIS LORD'S DAY WAS VERY DIFFERENT.



JOHN HEARD A LOUD VOICE LIKE A TRUMPET BLAST . . .

WRITE IN A BOOK EVERYTHING YOU SEE, AND SEND IT TO THE CITIES CHURCHES IN THE CITIES OF EPHESUS, SMYRNA, PERGAMUM, THYATIRA, SARDIS, PHILADELPHIA, AND LAODICEA.



JOHN TURNED AND SAW SEVEN GOLD LAMPSTANDS AND SOMEONE LIKE THE SON OF MAN.



JOHN, THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED, WHO KNEW EXACTLY WHAT CHRIST LOOKED LIKE, WAS AWED WHEN HE SAW THE RESURRECTED CHRIST IN THE HEAVENLY SPLENDOR OF HIS GLORIFIED BODY.

JOHN WAS OVERWHELMED AND FELL AT HIS FEET AS IF HE WERE DEAD.

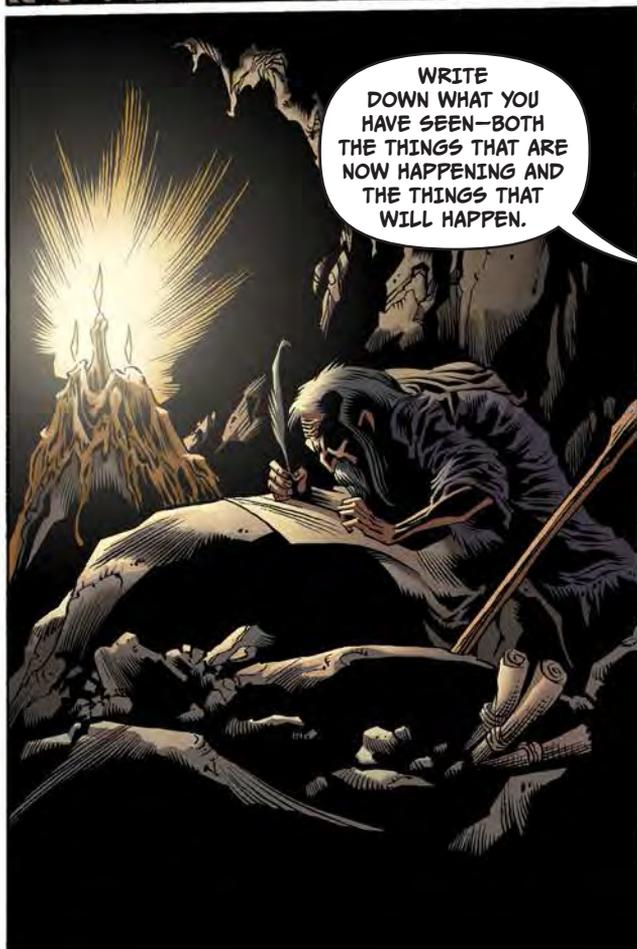




DON'T BE AFRAID! I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST. I AM THE LIVING ONE. I DIED, BUT LOOK—



I AM ALIVE FOREVER AND EVER! AND I HOLD THE KEYS OF DEATH AND THE GRAVE.



WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN—BOTH THE THINGS THAT ARE NOW HAPPENING AND THE THINGS THAT WILL HAPPEN.



GOD BLESSES THE ONE WHO READS . . .

. . . THE WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY TO THE CHURCH, AND HE BLESSES ALL WHO LISTEN TO ITS MESSAGE AND OBEY WHAT IT SAYS, FOR THE TIME IS NEAR.

THEN JOHN WAS GIVEN A VISION OF HEAVEN AND THE LAST DAYS OF THIS WORLD.

THEN AS I LOOKED, I SAW A DOOR STANDING OPEN IN HEAVEN.

THE SAME VOICE I HAD HEARD BEFORE SPOKE TO ME LIKE A TRUMPET BLAST:

COME UP HERE, AND I WILL SHOW YOU WHAT MUST HAPPEN AFTER THIS.

AND INSTANTLY I WAS IN THE SPIRIT, AND I SAW A THRONE IN HEAVEN AND SOMEONE SITTING ON IT.





THE ONE SITTING ON THE THRONE WAS AS BRILLIANT AS GEMSTONES—JASPER AND CARNELIAN.

AND THE GLOW OF AN EMERALD CIRCLED HIS THRONE LIKE A RAINBOW.

TWENTY-FOUR THRONES SURROUNDED HIM.

IN FRONT OF THE THRONE WERE SEVEN TORCHES WITH BURNING FLAMES.