God to the rescue!

Moses and the Great Escape from Egypt, from Exodus 3 – 13

JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS grew old and died, but their children's children stayed on in Egypt where they became a very LARGE family.

Later on, a new king began to rule, but this pharaoh didn't remember Joseph and he didn't like God's people. He made them into his slaves and beat them and made them work harder and harder.

God's people cried out to God to rescue them.

And God heard them. He remembered his promise to Abraham. He would look after his people. He would find a way to set them free.

One day, Moses was looking after sheep when something caught his eye: a bush was behaving very oddly — it was flickering with flames, but its leaves weren't burning up. He took a closer look.
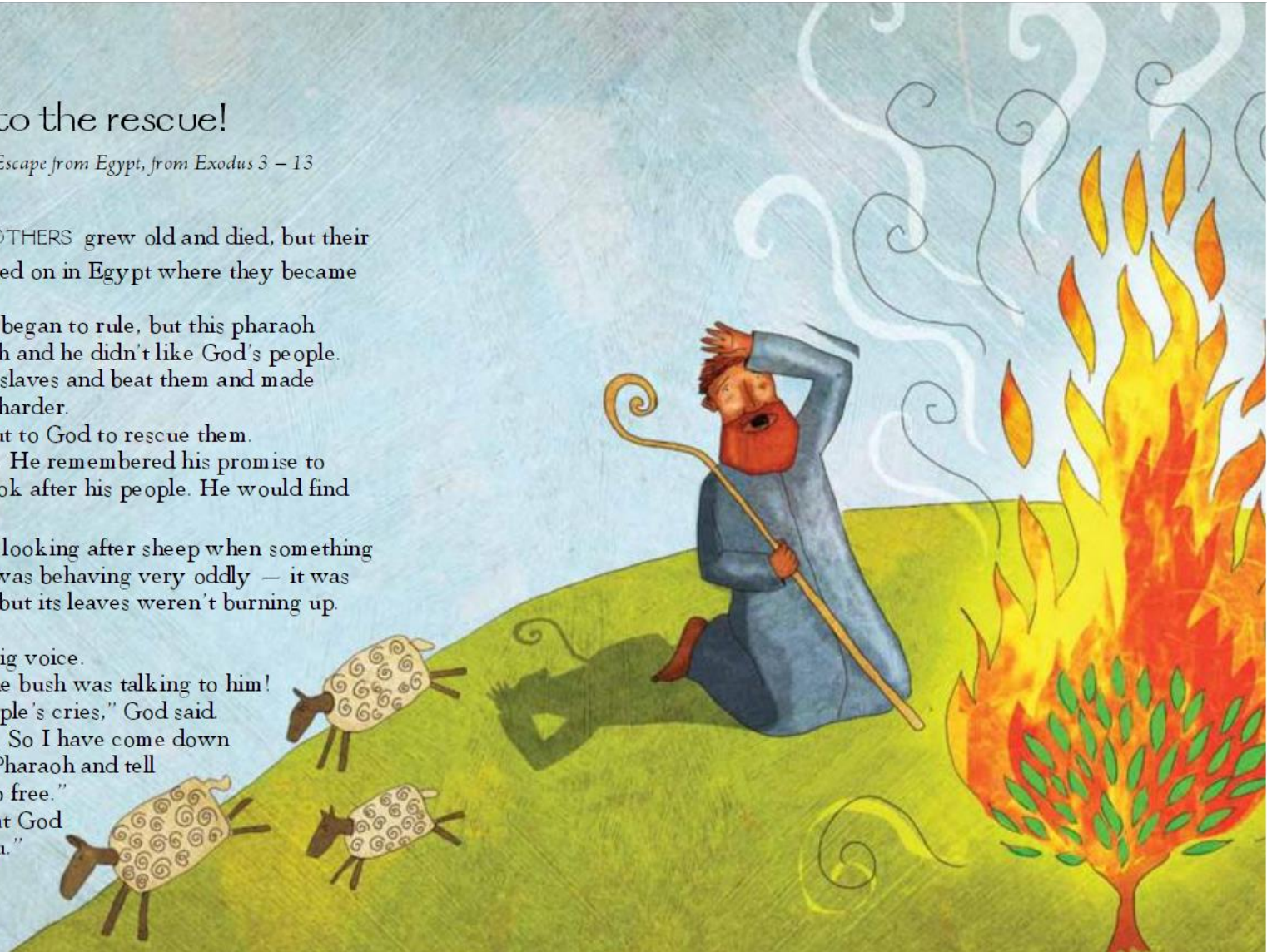
"Moses!" boomed a big voice.

Moses leapt back. The bush was talking to him!

"I have heard my people's cries," God said. "I have seen their tears. So I have come down to rescue them. Go to Pharaoh and tell him to let my people go free."

Moses was afraid. But God said, "I will be with you."

So Moses went to Pharaoh.
"Pharaoh," Moses began, "God says — "
"God?" said Pharaoh. "Never heard of him."
Moses kept going. "God says, let his people go free."
"Why should I?" Pharaoh said. "Don't want to. WON'T!" So he didn't.

So God gave Pharaoh ten warnings, called "Plagues."
First, God turned the River Nile into blood. No one could drink the water. But still Pharaoh would not let them go.

So God made frogs come hopping and leaping and jumping. In your bed frogs, in your hair frogs, in your soup frogs, all over everywhere frogs! "Make them go away!" Pharaoh screamed. "Then your people can go." So God took the frogs away.

But Pharaoh changed his mind. "You can't go!" he said.
Then God sent zillions of gnats. But still Pharaoh said, "NO!" So then God sent swarms of flies — flies buzzing in your eyes flies.
And after that, sickness; and horrible boils; and huge hailstones; and a storm of locusts; then darkness when it should have been day — until it seemed that the whole world, creation and everything, was coming undone, falling back into darkness. And emptiness. And nothingness.
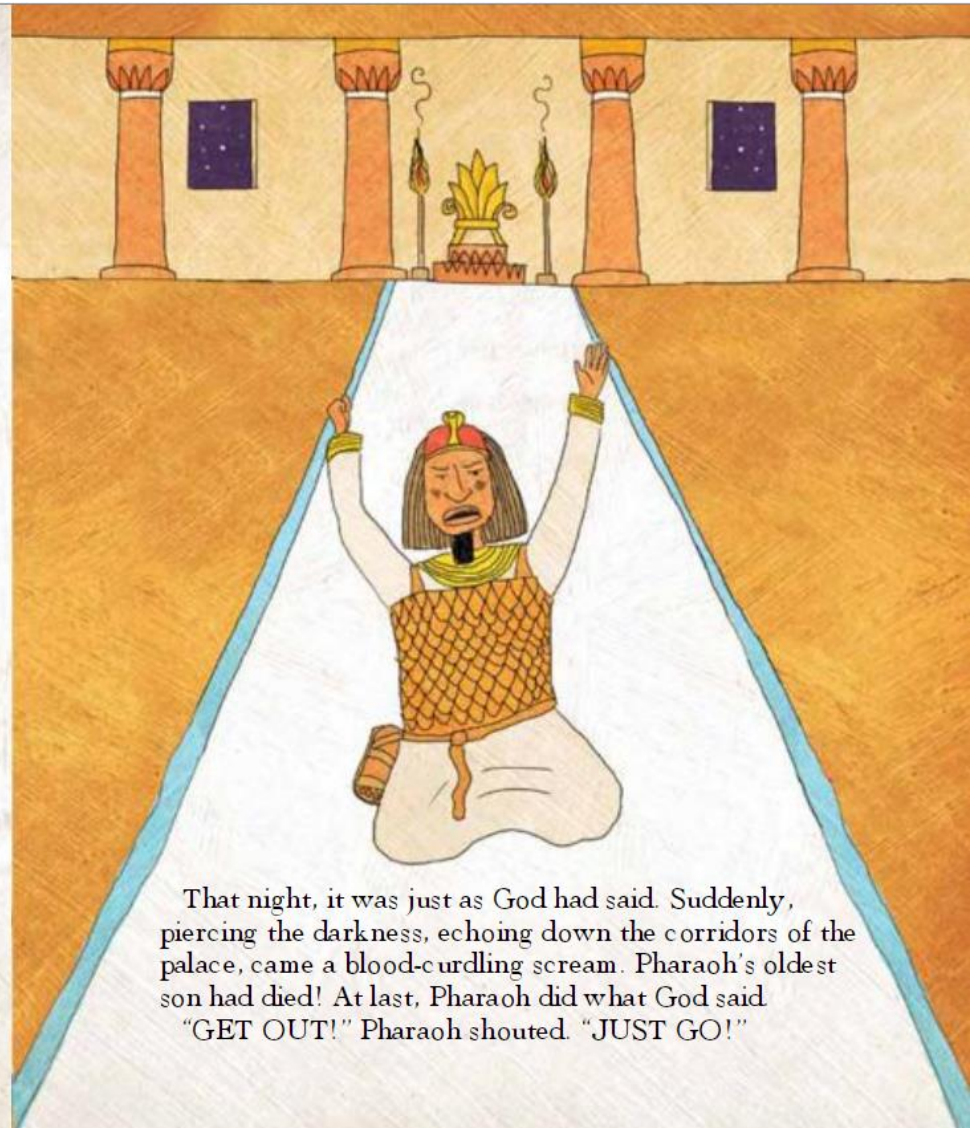
But each time Pharaoh said, "Make it stop and then I'll let them go!" And each time when God made it stop, Pharaoh changed his mind and said, "Actually, NO! You can't go!"
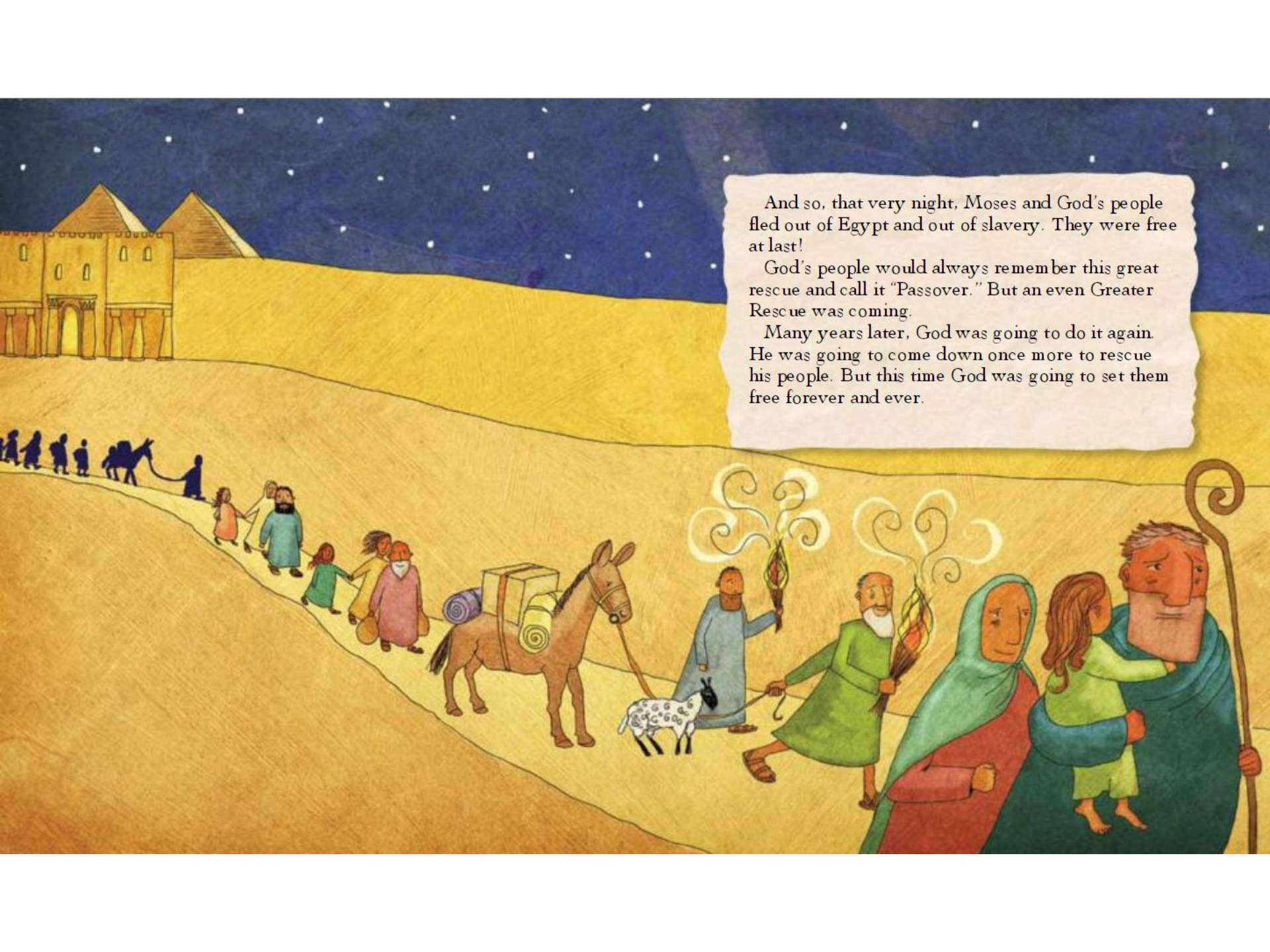
Finally, Moses warned Pharaoh, "Obey God or he will have to send the worst thing of all." Pharaoh just laughed.

So God said, "The oldest boy in each family of Egypt must die. But my people will be safe."

God told his people to take their best lamb, to kill it and to put some of its blood on their front doors. "When God passes over your house," Moses explained, "God will see the blood and know that the lamb died instead of you."

That night, it was just as God had said. Suddenly, piercing the darkness, echoing down the corridors of the palace, came a blood-curdling scream. Pharaoh's oldest son had died! At last, Pharaoh did what God said. "GET OUT!" Pharaoh shouted. "JUST GO!"

And so, that very night, Moses and God's people fled out of Egypt and out of slavery. They were free at last!

God's people would always remember this great rescue and call it "Passover." But an even Greater Rescue was coming.

Many years later, God was going to do it again. He was going to come down once more to rescue his people. But this time God was going to set them free forever and ever.