

The Servant King

The Last Supper, from Mark 14 and John 13-14

IT WAS PASSOVER, the time when God's people remembered how God had rescued them from being slaves in Egypt. Every year they killed a lamb and ate it. "The lamb died instead of us!" they would say.

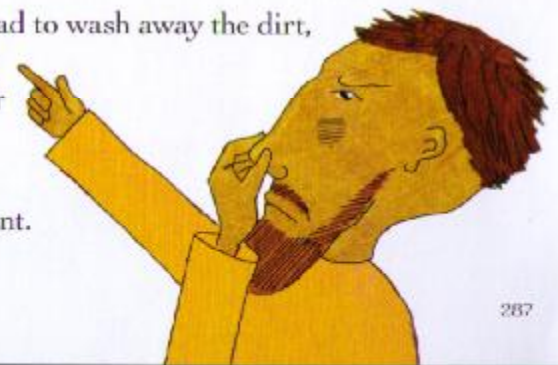
But this Passover, God was getting ready for an even Greater Rescue.

Jesus and his friends were having the Passover meal together in an upstairs room. But Jesus' friends were arguing. What about? They were arguing about stinky feet. Stinky feet? Yes, that's right. Stinky feet.

(Now the thing about feet back then was that people didn't wear shoes; they only wore sandals, which might not sound unusual, except that the streets in those days were dirty — and I don't mean just dusty dirty — I mean really stinky dirty. With all those cows and horses everywhere, you can imagine the stuff on the street that ended up on their feet!)

So anyway, someone had to wash away the dirt, but it was a dreadful job. Who on earth would ever dream of volunteering to do it?

Only the lowliest servant.



"I'm not the servant!" Peter said.

"Nor am I!" said Matthew.

Quietly, Jesus got up from the table, took off his robe, picked up a basin of water, knelt down, and started to wash his friends' feet.

"You can't," Peter said. He didn't understand about Jesus being the Servant King.

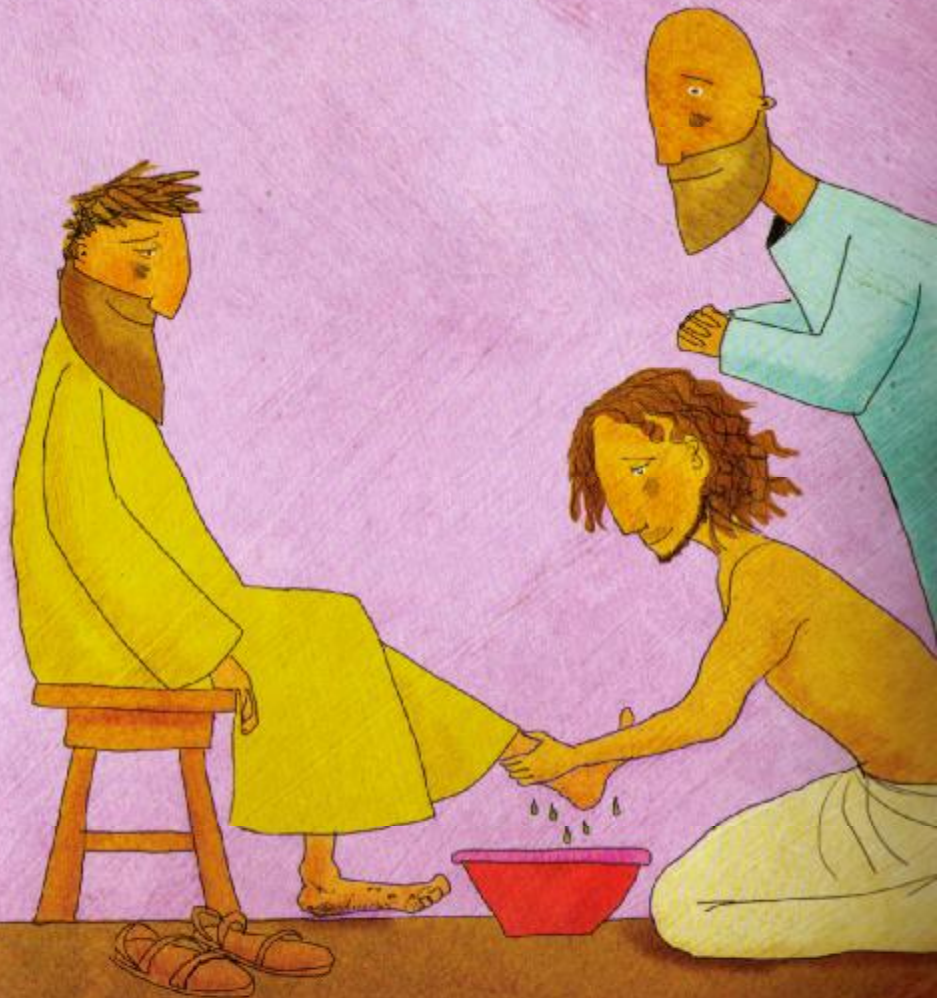
"If you don't let me wash away the dirt, Peter," Jesus said, "you can't be close to me."

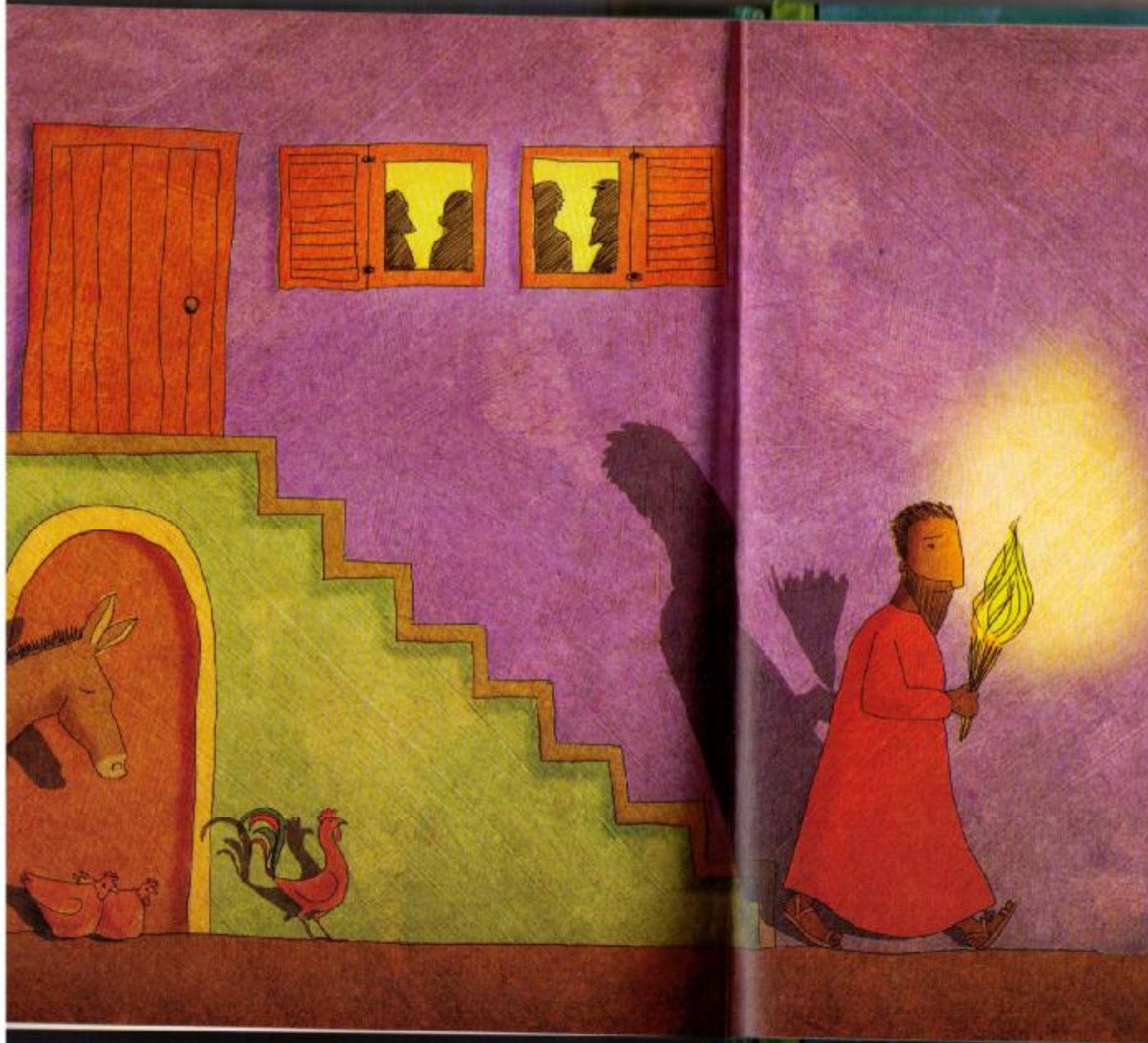
Jesus knew that what people needed most was to be clean on the inside. All the dirt on their feet was nothing compared to the sin inside their hearts.

"Then wash me, Lord!" Peter said, tears filling his eyes. "All of me!"

One by one, Jesus washed everyone's feet.

"I am doing this because I love you," Jesus explained. "Do this for each other."





Now, one of Jesus' friends had made a bad plan. No one else knew what the bad plan was. But Jesus knew — and so did Judas. Judas was going to help the Leaders capture Jesus — for 30 pieces of silver.

"Go on, Judas," Jesus said. And Judas got up from the meal, left the room, and walked out into the night.

Then Jesus picked up some bread and broke it. He gave it to his friends. He picked up a cup of wine and thanked God for it. He poured it out and shared it.

"My body is like this bread. It will break," Jesus told them. "This cup of wine is like my blood. It will pour out."

"But this is how God will rescue the whole world. My life will break and God's broken world will mend. My heart will tear apart — and your hearts will heal. Just as the passover lamb died, so now I will die instead of you. My blood will wash away all of your sins. And you'll be clean on the inside — in your hearts."

"So whenever you eat and drink, remember," Jesus said, "I've rescued you!"

Jesus knew it was nearly time for him to leave the world and to go back to God.

"I won't be with you long," he said. "You are going to be very sad. But God's Helper will come. And then you'll be filled up with a Forever Happiness that won't ever leave. So don't be afraid. You are my friends and I love you."

Then they sang their favorite song. And walked up to their favorite place, an olive garden.

