6 The Greatest Friend

Know the Gospel



Jesus died to take our sins. He came back to life so we can be His friends forever.

We have all done the wrong thing before and know what it is like to be punished for it. We do not like to be punished, but inside our hearts we know we probably deserve it. What if someone else said they would take the punishment for us? We would escape the pain and they would get what we deserved. It does not happen very often. Only a great friend would offer to do this.

The good news is that you have the greatest Friend! His name is Jesus. He came to earth because He loves you.

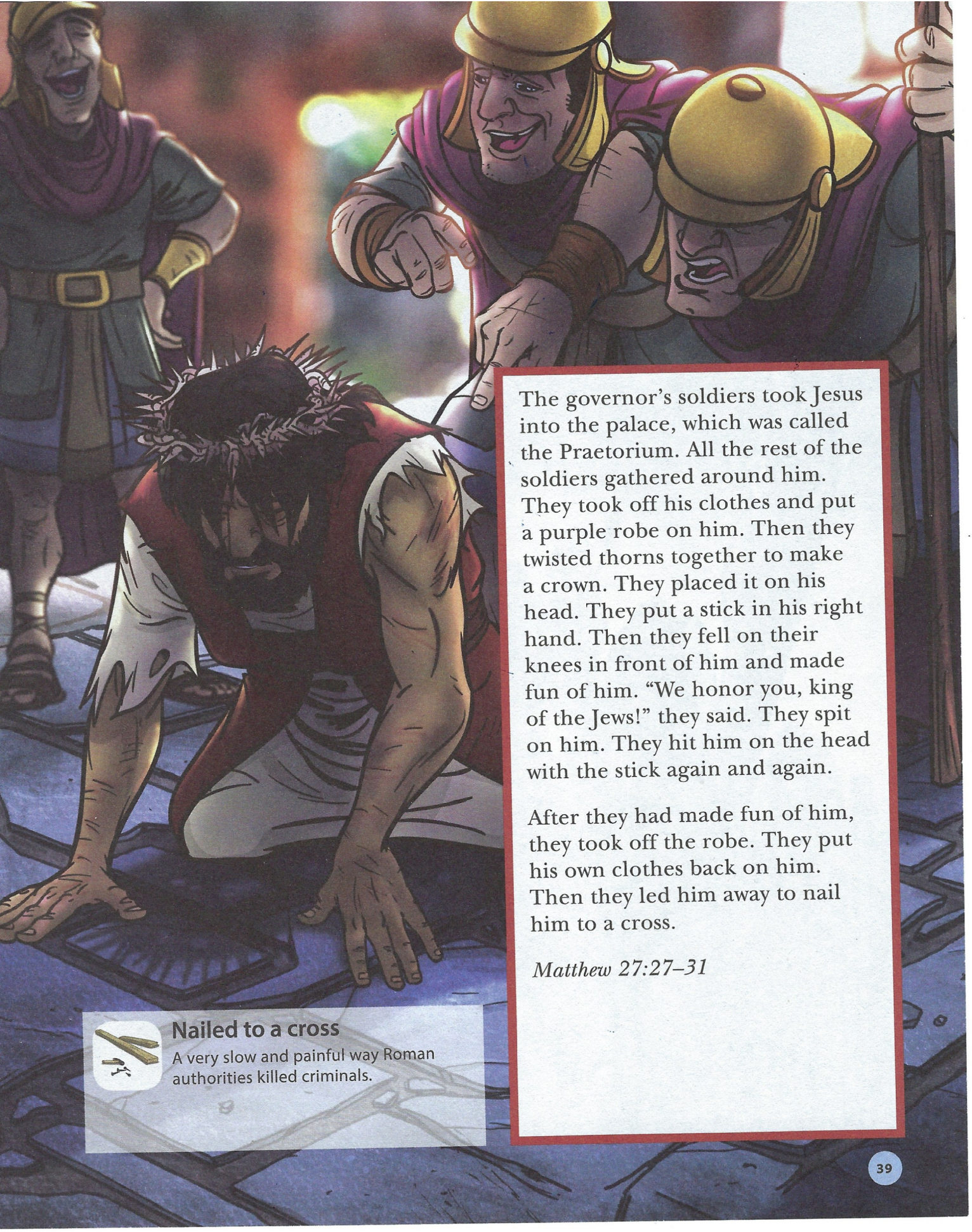
Large crowds followed Jesus everywhere because He taught with great wisdom and healed many people. At this time Jesus predicted that He would be killed but would come back to life after three days. The religious leaders of the time grew jealous and wanted to stop Him, so they arrested Him—even though He had done nothing wrong. The crowd, who had been praising Jesus just a week before, now demanded that He be killed.

Was Jesus going to die? What about God's plan to solve our sin problem through Jesus? Let us see how God's great plan works out! God is always in control. You can find this story in Matthew 27 and 28.

Memory Verse

This verse reminds us how to respond to what Jesus has done for us. **Say with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord." Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead. Then you will be saved. Romans 10:9**





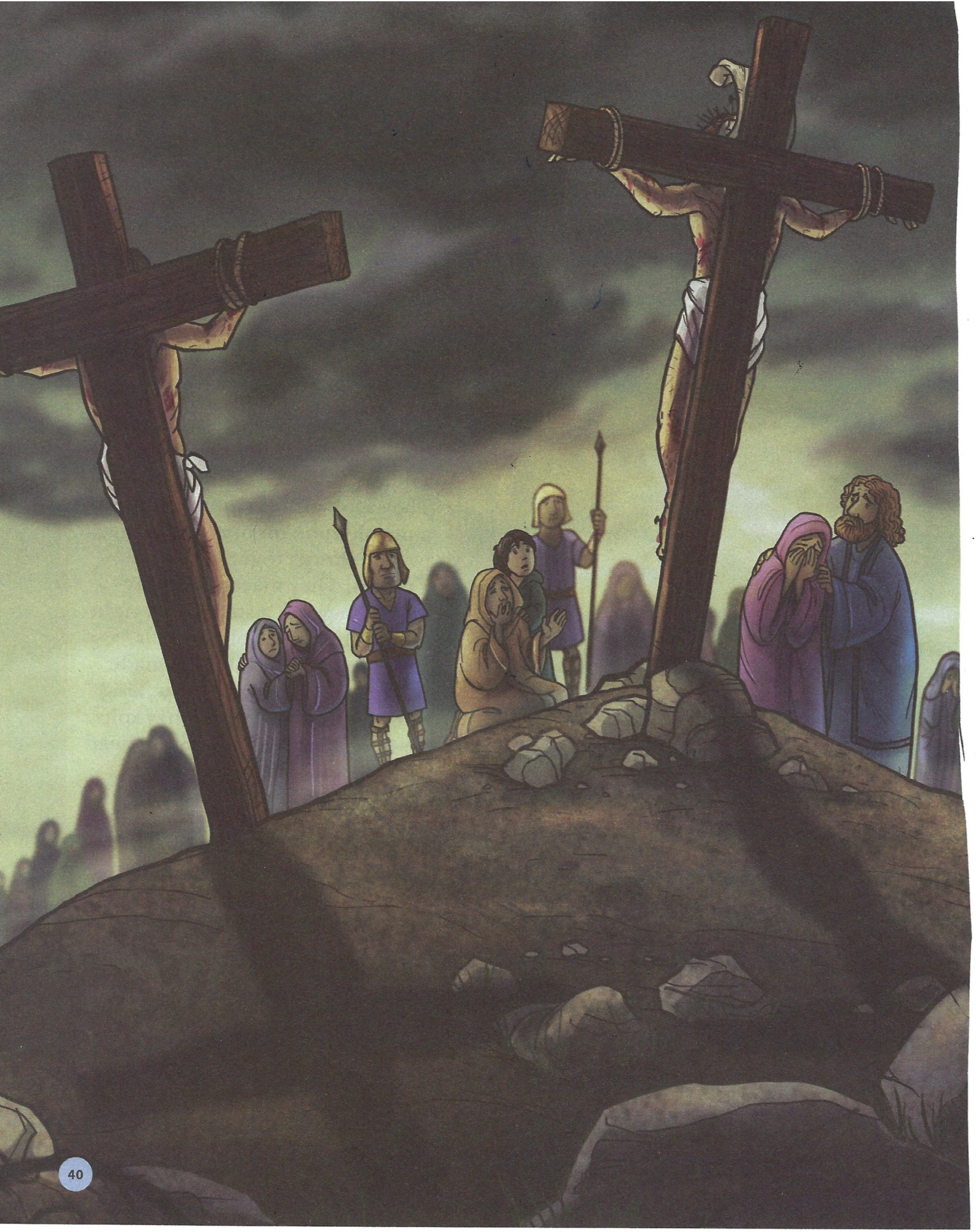
The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the palace, which was called the Praetorium. All the rest of the soldiers gathered around him. They took off his clothes and put a purple robe on him. Then they twisted thorns together to make a crown. They placed it on his head. They put a stick in his right hand. Then they fell on their knees in front of him and made fun of him. "We honor you, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him. They hit him on the head with the stick again and again.

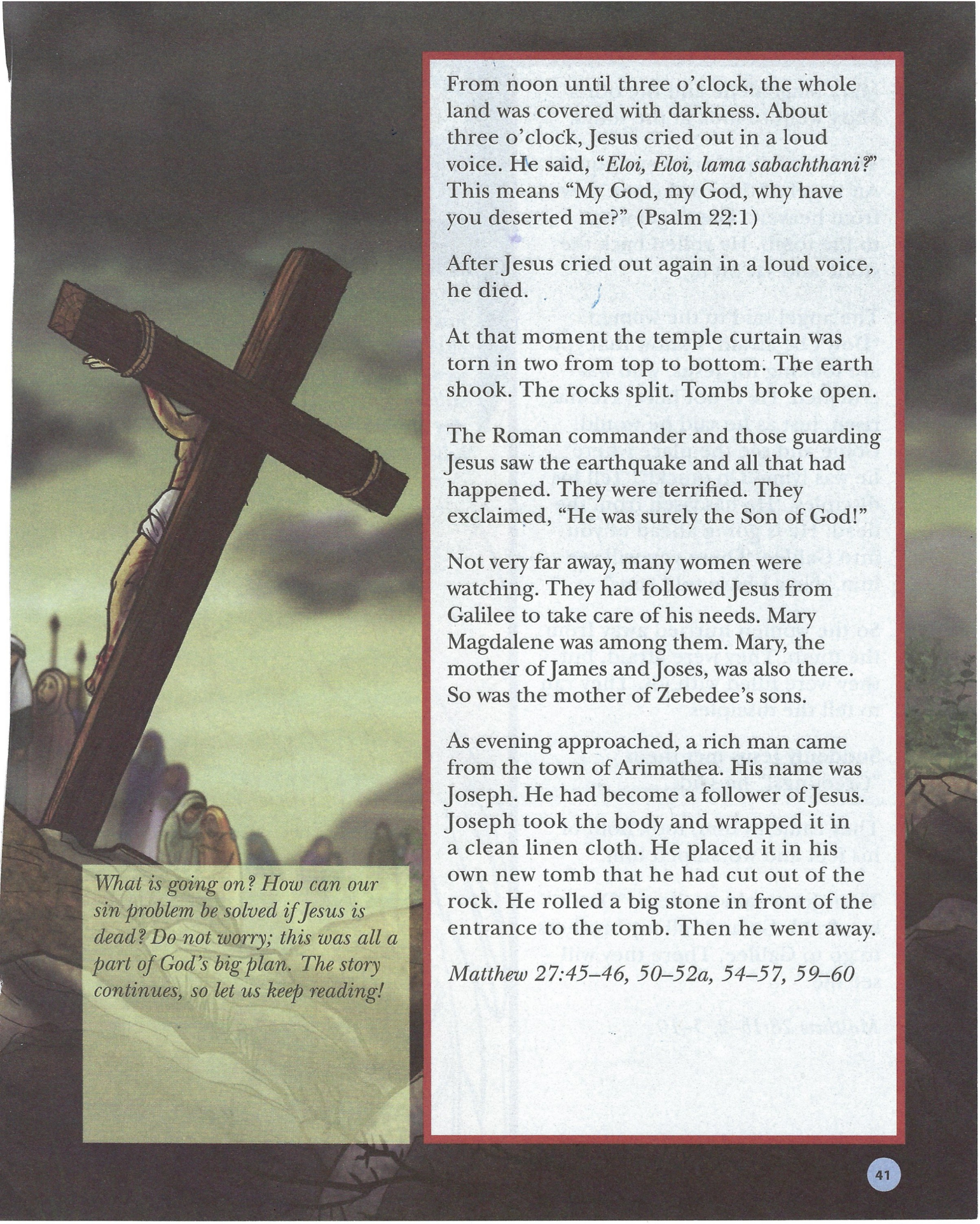
After they had made fun of him, they took off the robe. They put his own clothes back on him. Then they led him away to nail him to a cross.

Matthew 27:27–31

Nailed to a cross

A very slow and painful way Roman authorities killed criminals.





From noon until three o'clock, the whole land was covered with darkness. About three o'clock, Jesus cried out in a loud voice. He said, "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*" This means "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?" (Psalm 22:1)

After Jesus cried out again in a loud voice, he died.

At that moment the temple curtain was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook. The rocks split. Tombs broke open.

The Roman commander and those guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened. They were terrified. They exclaimed, "He was surely the Son of God!"

Not very far away, many women were watching. They had followed Jesus from Galilee to take care of his needs. Mary Magdalene was among them. Mary, the mother of James and Joses, was also there. So was the mother of Zebedee's sons.

As evening approached, a rich man came from the town of Arimathea. His name was Joseph. He had become a follower of Jesus. Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb that he had cut out of the rock. He rolled a big stone in front of the entrance to the tomb. Then he went away.

Matthew 27:45–46, 50–52a, 54–57, 59–60

What is going on? How can our sin problem be solved if Jesus is dead? Do not worry; this was all a part of God's big plan. The story continues, so let us keep reading!

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

There was a powerful earthquake. An angel of the Lord came down from heaven. The angel went to the tomb. He rolled back the stone and sat on it.

The angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here! He has risen, just as he said he would! Come and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly! Tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead. He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

So the women hurried away from the tomb. They were afraid, but they were filled with joy. They ran to tell the disciples.

Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings!" he said.

They came to him, took hold of his feet and worshiped him.

Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee. There they will see me."

Matthew 28:1b–2, 5–10



Heaven

Heaven has no sin and nothing bad. If we trust in Jesus to forgive our sin, we can be with Him in heaven forever.

After Jesus came back to life, more than five hundred people saw Him, talked with Him, and ate with Him. He then went to be with God in heaven. He is still there today. He promised that one day He will return for everyone who believes in Him.



Bible Discovery



What does this story tell us about Jesus?



What does this say about you and me?



What have I learned and what will I do?

Our greatest problem is sin. The punishment for sin is death—to be completely separated from God and everything good forever. The Bible calls this hell. But God wants us to be with Him forever because He loves us. He sent Jesus to be punished in our place. It was the great swap. Jesus got what we deserved—death for our sin.

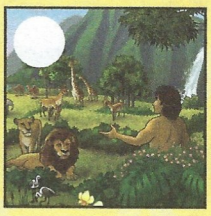
Jesus is alive now and can forgive our sin. We can be friends with God forever if we choose to believe and follow Him. The most amazing part of this story is God left us a helper, the Holy Spirit. Anyone who follows Jesus has God's Spirit living inside them. The Holy Spirit helps us follow Jesus every day and reminds us of the things Jesus has taught us (John 14:26).

The Good News Review

Number the images (in order) from each lesson. Now that you understand the Good News, do you want to follow Jesus? You can decide this today!

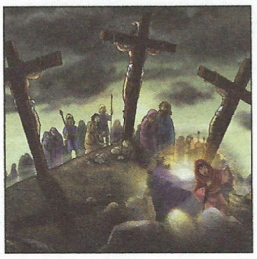
1. God made everything good.
2. We disobey God by sinning.
3. God sent Jesus to rescue us.
4. God loves children.
5. Trust in Jesus.
6. Jesus died and came back to life. We can decide to believe in Him and be His friends forever.





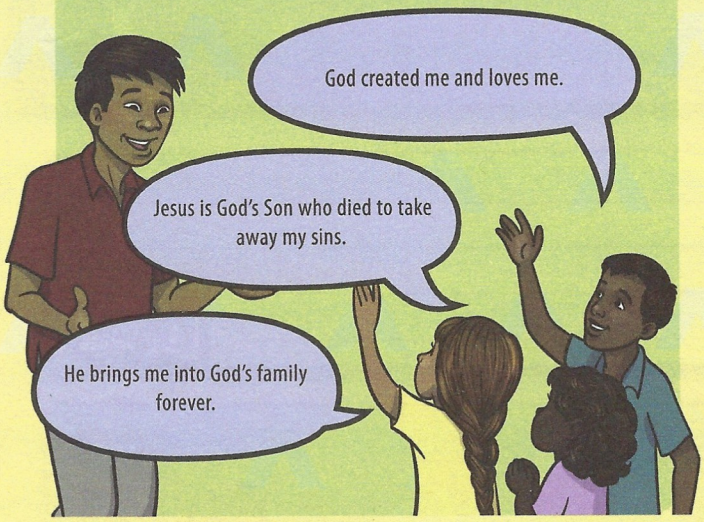



Challenge



With whom will you share this story? Draw a picture or write the names here.

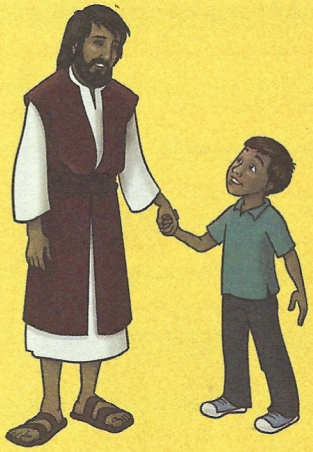
Remember



Talk with God

Dear God, I know that I have made wrong choices and have done bad things. I'm sorry. Please forgive me and change me. I believe Your Son, Jesus, died for my sins, and I believe You raised Him from the dead. I want to follow Jesus all of my life. Thank You for loving me and making me Your child. Please fill me with the Holy Spirit, so I will have all the strength I need to follow You. In Jesus' name, amen.





Commitment Certificate!

On this day I have decided to believe that Jesus is God's Son and follow Him for the rest of my life.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signed: _____ Teacher: _____