



THE KINGDOM AND THE
KING
STORYBOOK
BIBLE



BOB HARTMAN

CATALINA ECHEVERRI

For Jimmy O, who loved and served the King.

Bob

*To my loving family and my family in Christ: you have prayed,
encouraged and sustained me in so many ways through this marathon.
And to my team at The Good Book Company, especially André and Alison:
I couldn't have done this without any of you!*

"For when I am weak, then I am strong."

(2 Corinthians 12 v 10)

Catalina





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WELCOME

You meet plenty of kings and queens when you read the Bible. Some of them were good; some were okay; and some were very, very bad. But none of them ruled over everything – and none of them ruled for ever.

None of them, in other words, were like God – the awesome, eternal, loving God who we meet on the very first page of the Bible and on every other page too. As we read about him creating our world, we discover that God is the real King. He rules over everyone and everything.

God the King made a perfect universe, with a perfect world for the first people to live in, where he ruled as King. But that first family, Adam and Eve, turned away from God. They wanted to rule their own lives instead of living with him as their King. From then on, God's perfect world was spoiled, and everyone turned their backs on him.

Wonderfully, from that moment on, even while people were busy turning away from him, God began to make amazing promises to send his people a new King. He would be a rescuing King whose kingdom would last for ever.

The rest of the Bible is about how God kept that special promise. In the Old Testament, there are lots of clues about who it would be and how he would come. And then – at the very first Christmas – the promised King arrived. He was Jesus Christ, born in the royal town of Bethlehem.

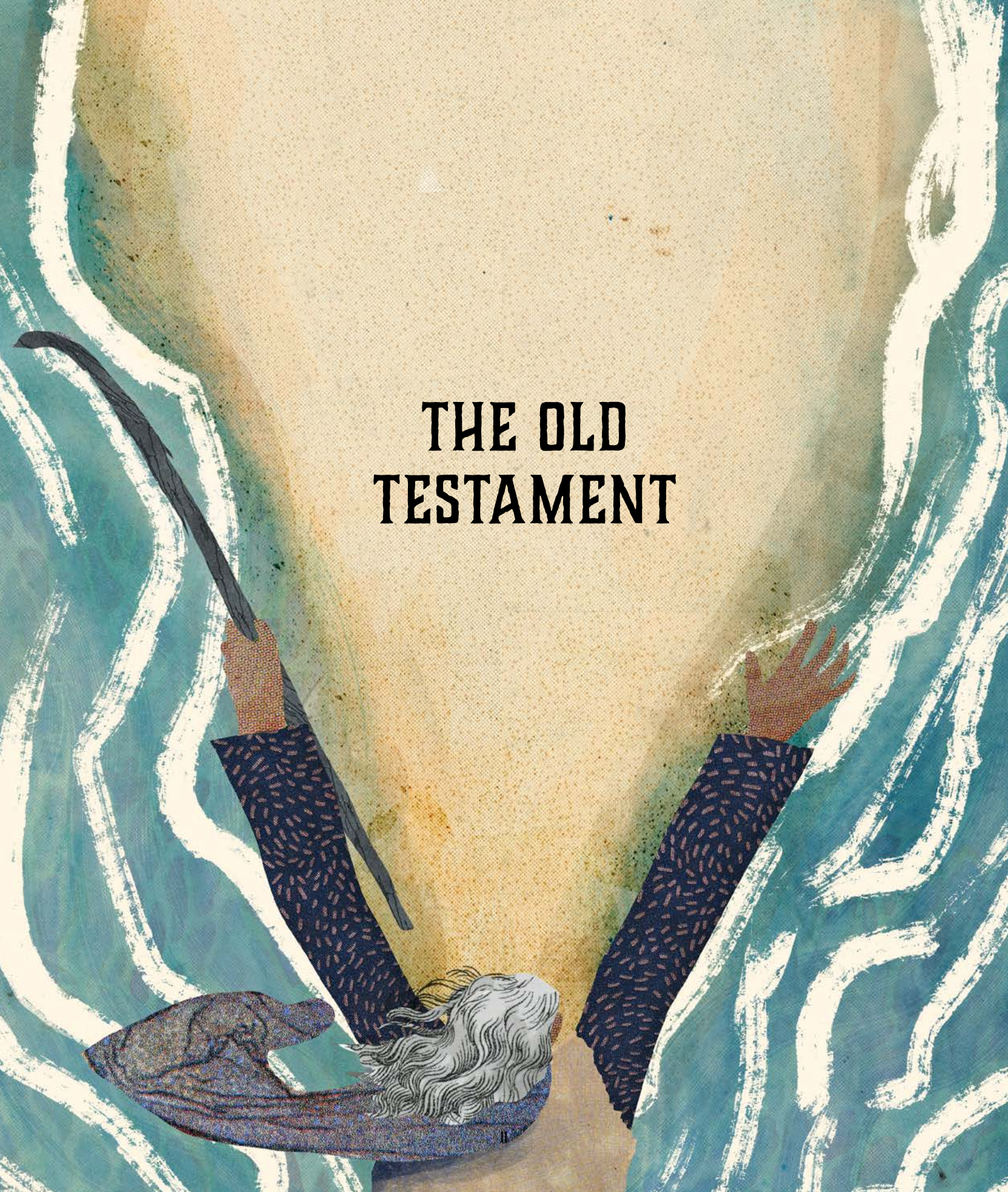
The New Testament part of the Bible tells us about Jesus' life and his teaching and the miracles he did that showed he was indeed the promised King. It also tells us that his enemies had him killed, but his Father, God, brought him wonderfully back to life, and how his friends watched Jesus disappear up into the sky when he went back to be with his Father in heaven. And all the while, Jesus grew his kingdom – starting with twelve followers, and then expanding to reach so many people that it soon became impossible to count them all.

In this storybook Bible, you'll trace the story of that kingdom and that King. Each story is carefully told to be true to the words in the Bible. If you also want to read the story for yourself in the Bible, that's great! You will find the Bible references (the parts of the Bible you need to read) under each chapter title. These are the main passages a story is based on, though there may be extra details that come from other passages as well.

We hope that this storybook Bible will help you get to know the King more and more, and to be excited about living in his kingdom – not just now but for ever.



THE OLD TESTAMENT





1. THE CREATOR KING

GENESIS 1 v 1 – 2 v 3

In the beginning, there was God, the King.

But there were no people, nor any place for them to live.

So the King created that place – the heavens and the earth.

The earth was covered with darkness.

So, with a Breath and a Word, the King spoke. And there was light!

Waters covered the earth – there was no shape to things, no order.

So, with a Breath and a Word, he spoke. And between the waters above and the waters below, he made a safe place.

Land! The King's people would need land beneath their feet.

So, with a Breath and a Word, he spoke. And the waters gathered into seas and left behind mountains and plains and hills.

Food! The King's people would need food.

So, with a Breath and a Word, he spoke. And grain flowed through fields, and trees filled with fruit.





The King's people would need a way to tell the time and to mark the seasons.

So, with a Breath and a Word, he spoke. And, up in the heavens, they appeared: a big light for the day; a smaller light for the night; and little lights twinkling far beyond.

The waters were empty.

So, with a Breath and a Word, God spoke. And life, large and small and strange, swarmed and swam through the seas.

Then the King turned to the skies.

With a Breath and a Word he spoke. And flapping and flocking, life burst through the clouds as well!

And as for the land, surely there should be life there too.

So, with a Breath and a Word, God spoke. And paws padded, and hooves hammered, and tiny insect feet skittered and scattered along the ground.

And when God the King looked at all he had created, he saw that it was good.

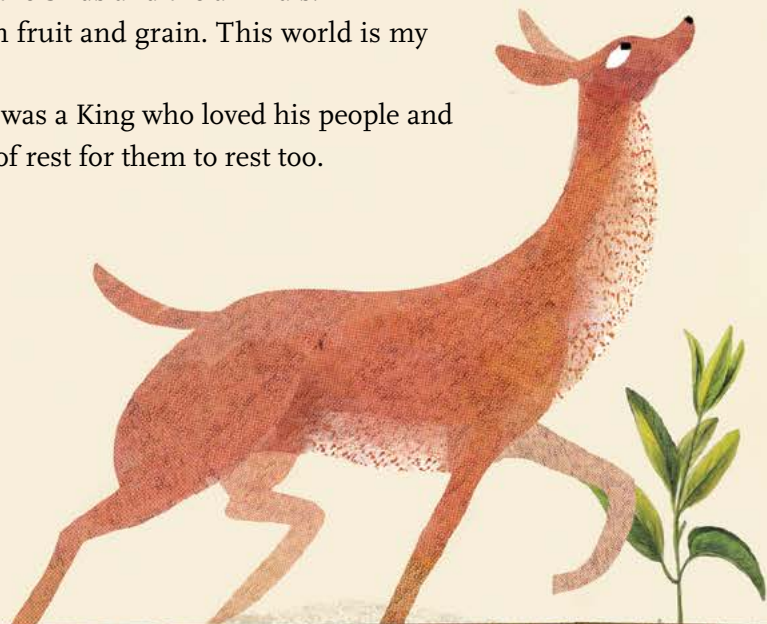
Good, but not finished. For everything the King made was made ready for the crown of his creation – for his people.

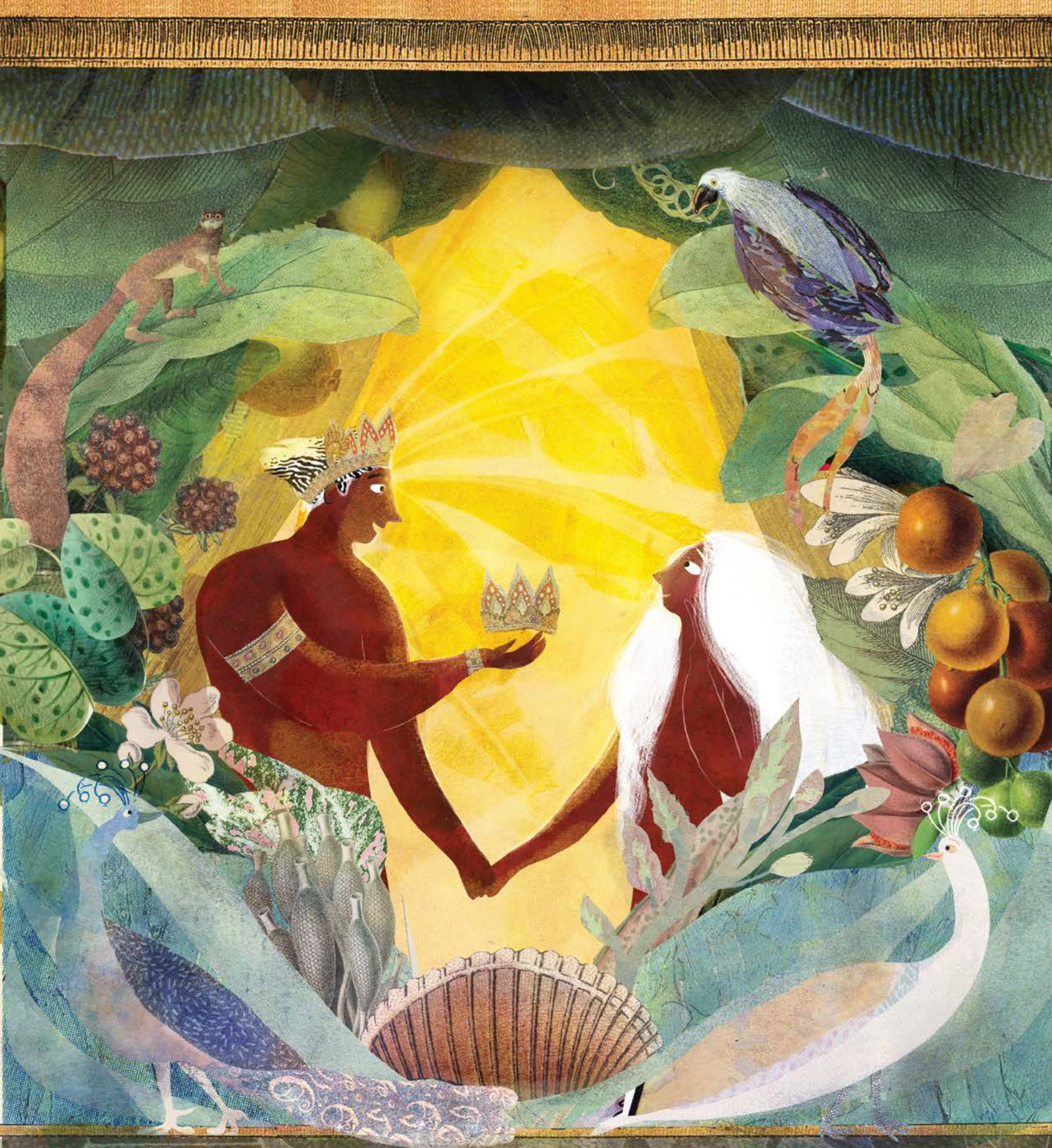
And so, with a Breath and a Word, he made the first man and the first woman. Made them in his image, to be in charge of the fish and the birds and the animals.

“Fill the earth with life,” he told them. “Feast on fruit and grain. This world is my gift—my blessing to you. Take care of it for me.”

And, with that, the King rested. And because he was a King who loved his people and knew just what they needed, he set aside that day of rest for them to rest too.

And that was very good!







2. THE FIRST REBELLION

GENESIS 3

God the King wanted to make a home for the first man, Adam, and the first woman, Eve. So he found a plot in a spot called Eden, and there he planted a garden.

“Spring!” said the King. And up the from the ground sprouted trees, beautiful to behold and bursting with fruit.

Then, in the middle of the garden, God grew two special trees. One was the tree of life. The delicious fruit from this tree meant that Adam and Eve could live for ever. But the other tree was very different.

“You can eat the fruit from any tree, including the tree of life,” God said, “except for this one – the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. For if you eat from this tree, you will die.”

No one knows how long Adam and Eve lived there, eating fruit from the trees and meeting each evening with their loving King.

But one day, Eve was approached by the serpent – a crafty creature who did not respect the rule of the King and had decided to rebel against him.

Keen that others should join his rebellion, the serpent asked Eve what sounded, at first, like a completely innocent question.

“Did God really say that you must not eat the lovely fruit in this garden?”

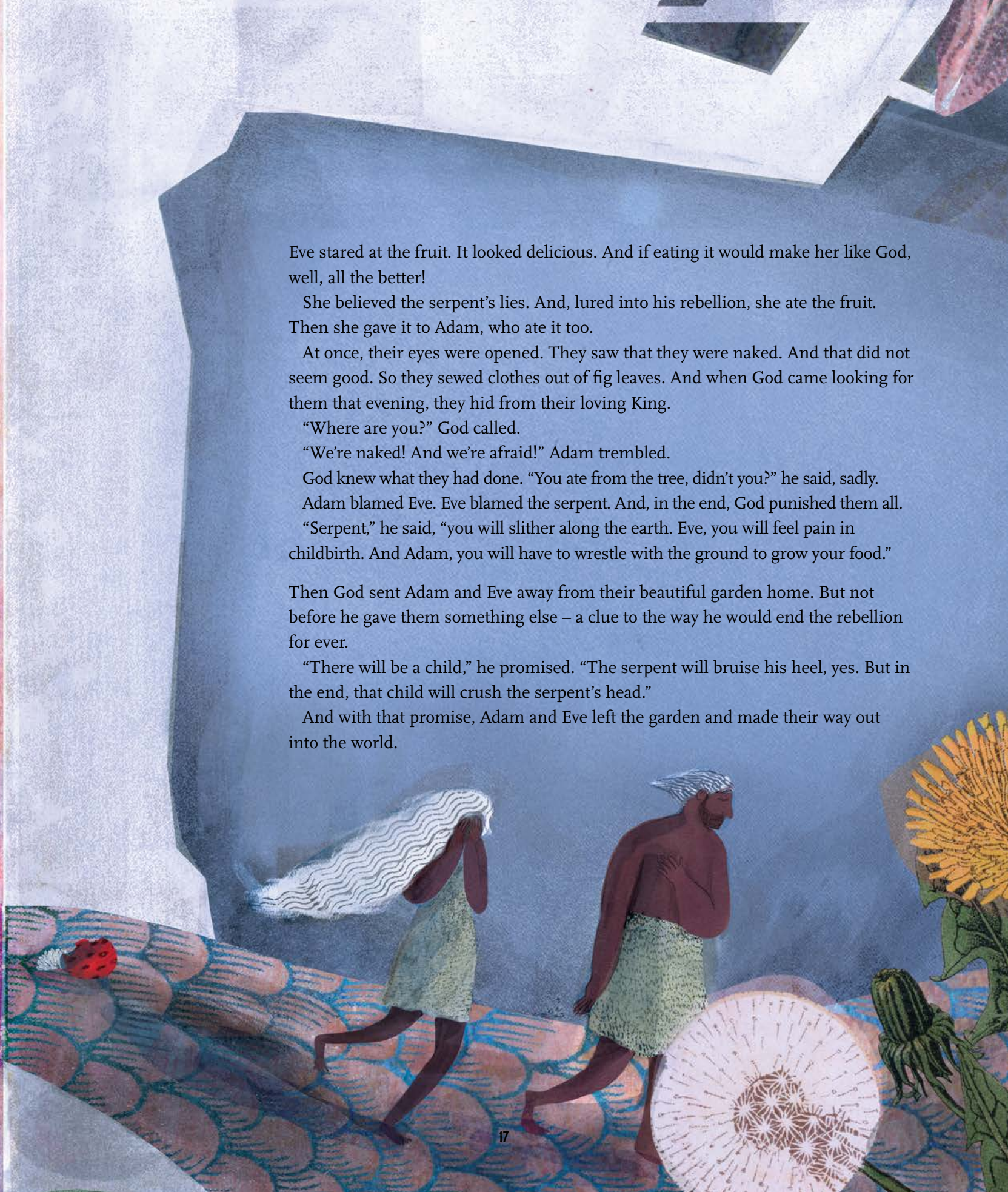
“Oh no,” she replied. “It’s just the tree of the knowledge of good and evil that we must avoid. If we eat the fruit from that one, or even touch it, we will die.”

“Ridiculous!” cried the serpent. “You won’t die!”

That was his first lie. And the second soon followed.

“Here’s the real reason,” he whispered. “God alone decides what is good and what is evil. If you eat the fruit from the tree, you will also be able to decide what is good and what is evil.

And the last thing God wants is for you to be God too!”



Eve stared at the fruit. It looked delicious. And if eating it would make her like God, well, all the better!

She believed the serpent's lies. And, lured into his rebellion, she ate the fruit. Then she gave it to Adam, who ate it too.

At once, their eyes were opened. They saw that they were naked. And that did not seem good. So they sewed clothes out of fig leaves. And when God came looking for them that evening, they hid from their loving King.

"Where are you?" God called.

"We're naked! And we're afraid!" Adam trembled.

God knew what they had done. "You ate from the tree, didn't you?" he said, sadly.

Adam blamed Eve. Eve blamed the serpent. And, in the end, God punished them all.

"Serpent," he said, "you will slither along the earth. Eve, you will feel pain in childbirth. And Adam, you will have to wrestle with the ground to grow your food."

Then God sent Adam and Eve away from their beautiful garden home. But not before he gave them something else – a clue to the way he would end the rebellion for ever.

"There will be a child," he promised. "The serpent will bruise his heel, yes. But in the end, that child will crush the serpent's head."

And with that promise, Adam and Eve left the garden and made their way out into the world.

3. THE ARK AND THE RAINBOW

GENESIS 6 v 1 – 9 v 17

When God the King made the world, he carved out a safe place between the waters above and the waters below, where his people could live.

But when Adam and Eve decided to choose for themselves what was good and what was evil, the rebellion that had started as a lie on the serpent's tongue and fruit in their mouths spread throughout the world, so that it was no longer a safe place for humans to enjoy.

One of their sons murdered the other, and within ten generations, violence had overwhelmed the world. Evil was all anyone could think about or do.

That made God sad – and sorry that he had put men and women on earth in the first place.

If they did not want a safe place, God decided that he would give them what they wanted. He would let the waters above crash down upon the waters below and take away that space with a great flood – and every living thing with it.

And yet... there was the loving promise God had made – of a child who would crush the serpent's head to set things right.

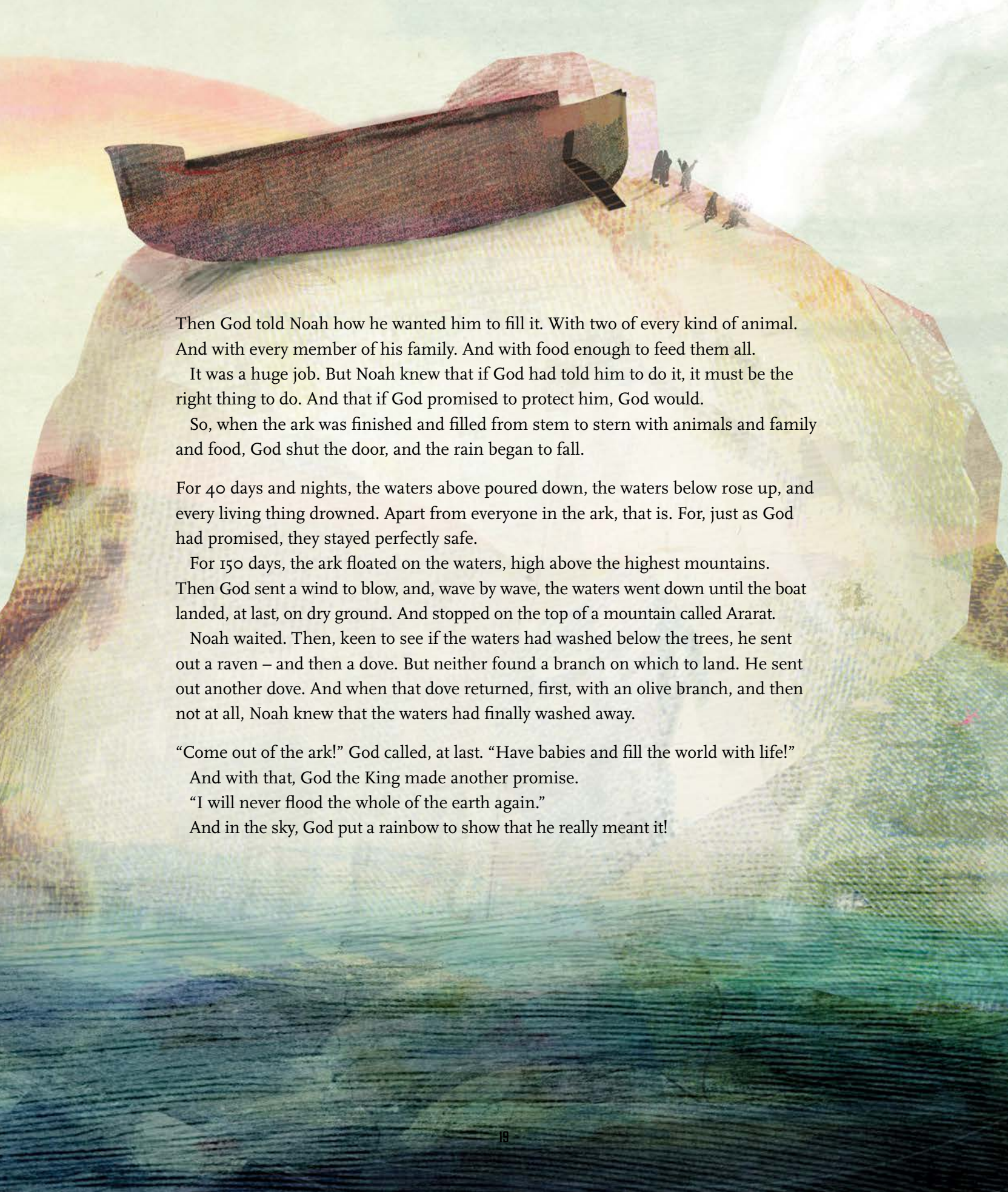
There was a man called Noah.

Noah didn't choose for himself what was good and what was evil. Noah did what God said was good. And he refused to do what God said was evil.

So God told Noah about the flood.

And God told Noah how to build an ark.





Then God told Noah how he wanted him to fill it. With two of every kind of animal. And with every member of his family. And with food enough to feed them all.

It was a huge job. But Noah knew that if God had told him to do it, it must be the right thing to do. And that if God promised to protect him, God would.

So, when the ark was finished and filled from stem to stern with animals and family and food, God shut the door, and the rain began to fall.

For 40 days and nights, the waters above poured down, the waters below rose up, and every living thing drowned. Apart from everyone in the ark, that is. For, just as God had promised, they stayed perfectly safe.

For 150 days, the ark floated on the waters, high above the highest mountains. Then God sent a wind to blow, and, wave by wave, the waters went down until the boat landed, at last, on dry ground. And stopped on the top of a mountain called Ararat.

Noah waited. Then, keen to see if the waters had washed below the trees, he sent out a raven – and then a dove. But neither found a branch on which to land. He sent out another dove. And when that dove returned, first, with an olive branch, and then not at all, Noah knew that the waters had finally washed away.

“Come out of the ark!” God called, at last. “Have babies and fill the world with life!”

And with that, God the King made another promise.

“I will never flood the whole of the earth again.”

And in the sky, God put a rainbow to show that he really meant it!