

The teeny, weenie ... true king

Samuel anoints David, from 1 Samuel 16

GOD'S PEOPLE had a new land. Now they wanted a king.

"But God is your King," Samuel told them. "He is the one who looks after you best."

"We want a real king!" they said. "One we can see!"

God knew that a king might not be kind to his people or look after them as well as he would. But God's people didn't care; they wanted a king and they wanted him now!

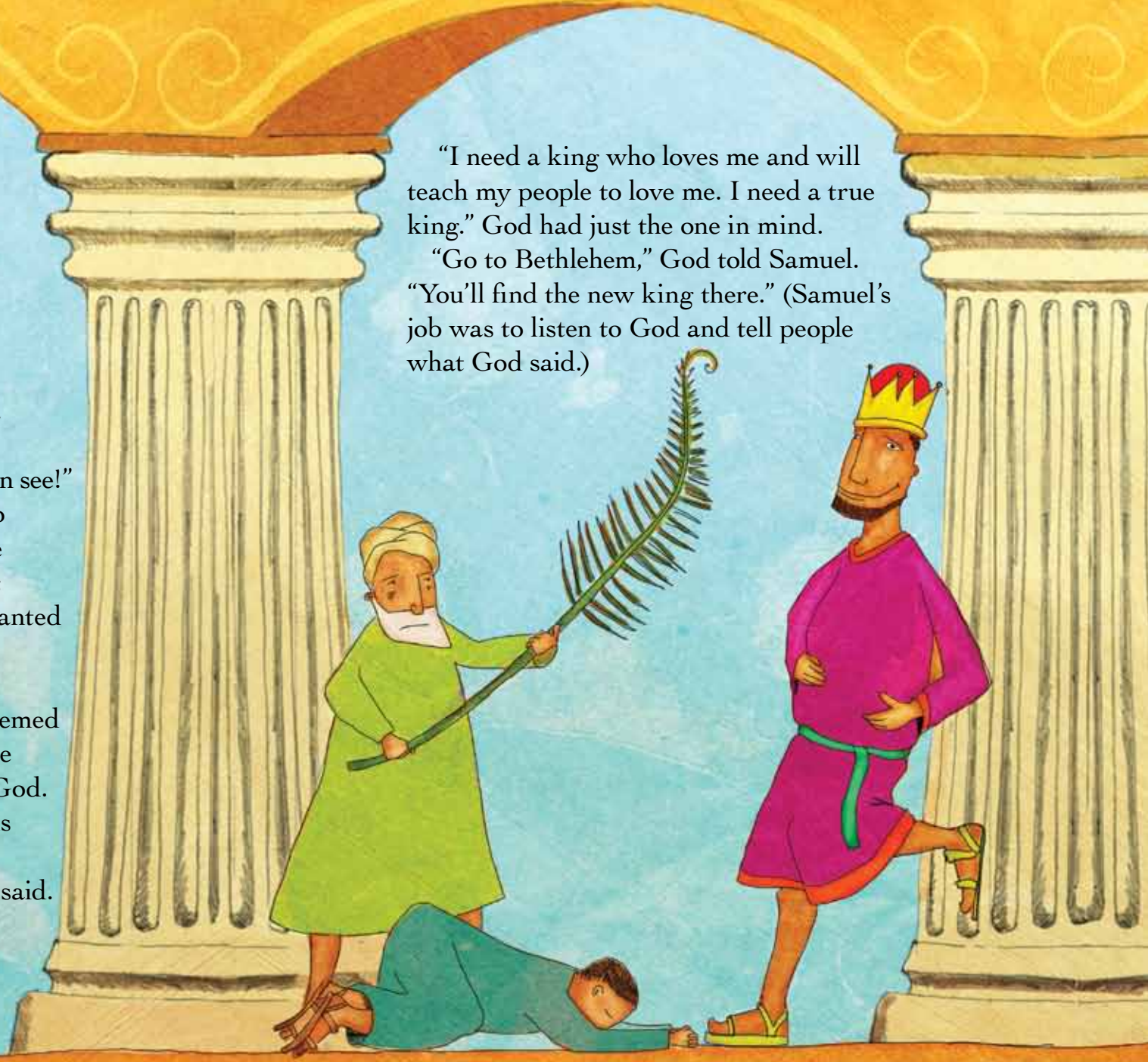
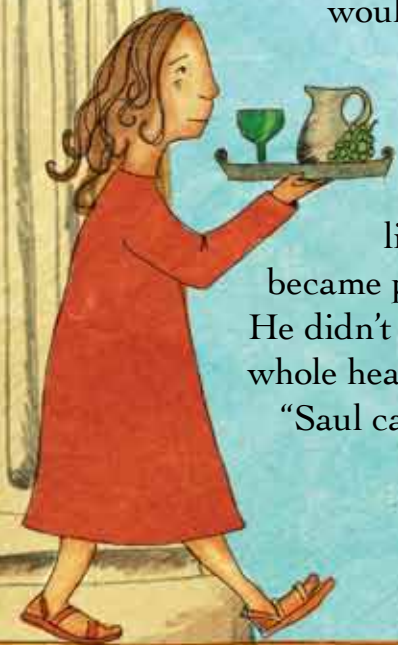
So God gave them a king.

He was called Saul and he seemed like a good king — at first. But he became proud and stopped listening to God. He didn't obey God. Or love God with his whole heart.

"Saul can't help me with my plan," God said.

"I need a king who loves me and will teach my people to love me. I need a true king." God had just the one in mind.

"Go to Bethlehem," God told Samuel. "You'll find the new king there." (Samuel's job was to listen to God and tell people what God said.)



So Samuel went to the little town of Bethlehem. God told Samuel to go to Jesse's house. God was going to choose one of Jesse's sons to be the new king.

Jesse had seven strong sons.

Now in those days if you were going to be the king, you didn't have to be the richest or the cleverest (although that was always nice). You had to look like a king, which meant you had to be the tallest and the strongest. (So you could carry the longest swords and biggest armor and defeat everyone.) And it didn't hurt to be handsome, either.

Samuel asked Jesse to bring him each son in turn. So Jesse brought the oldest, tallest, strongest son. *This must be the new king*, Samuel thought. *He looks like a king.*

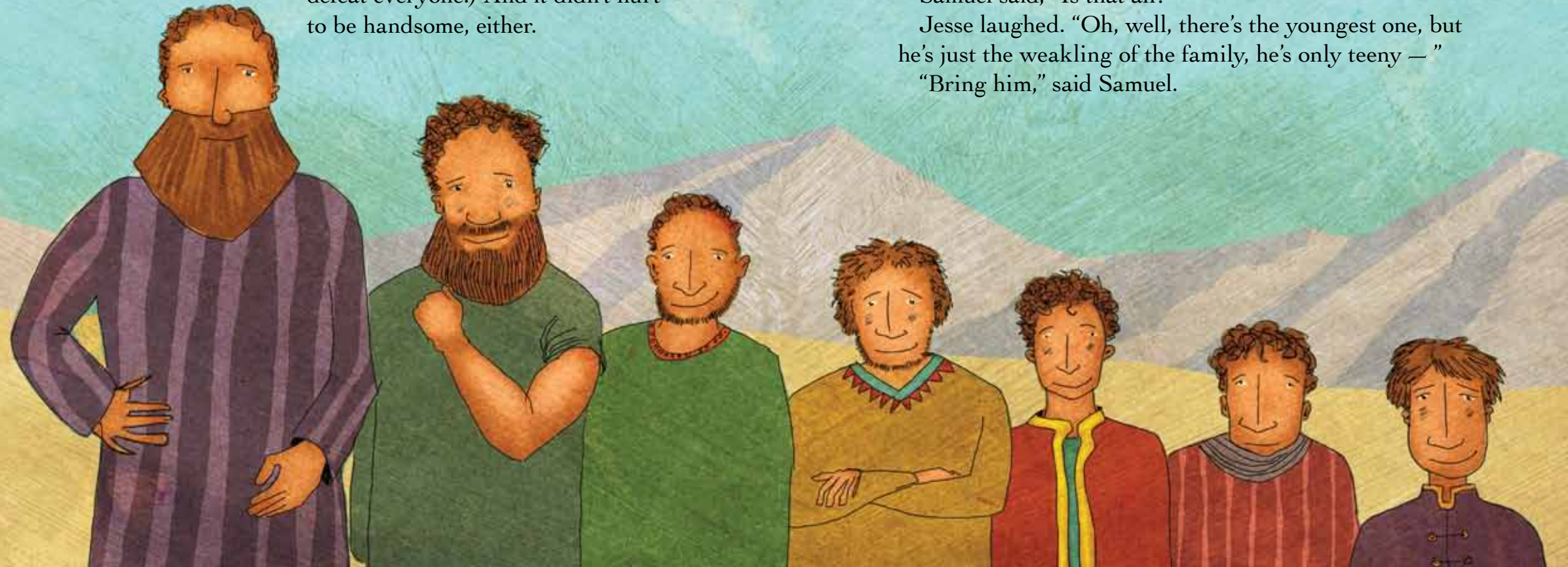
But God didn't choose him. "You're thinking about what he looks like on the outside," God told Samuel. "But I am looking at his heart, what he's like on the inside."

So Jesse showed Samuel his next oldest, tallest, strongest son. But God didn't choose him either. In fact, God didn't choose any of the seven sons.

Samuel said, "Is that all?"

Jesse laughed. "Oh, well, there's the youngest one, but he's just the weakling of the family, he's only teeny —"

"Bring him," said Samuel.





Jesse's youngest son came running up, and God spoke quietly to Samuel, "This is the one!"

His name was David.

"He has a heart like mine," God said. "It is full of love. He will help me with my Secret Rescue Plan. And one of his children's children's children will be the King. And that King will rule the world forever."

Samuel anointed David's head with oil — which was a special way to show that you are God's chosen king. "You will be the new king one day," Samuel told him.

And, sure enough, when he grew up, David became king.

God chose David to be king because God was getting his people ready for an even greater King who was coming.

Once again, God would say, "Go to Bethlehem. You'll find the new King there." And there, one starry night in Bethlehem, in the town of David, three Wise Men would find him.

